



# How to fix leaking gutters

## Introduction

Gutters and flashings can be a cause for many a headache due to the leaks which not only damage the gutter but also pose a greater risk for the main roof and internal timbers of the home. However it is not always necessary to remove and replace the offending gutter, especially if the leak is more from a join before the rust sets in.

## Materials

- Old towels
- Bucket
- Bondall Waterbased Bitumen
- Old paint brush
- Gloves
- Tin sheeting or Bondall Polyweave
- Paint

## Step 1 - Safety

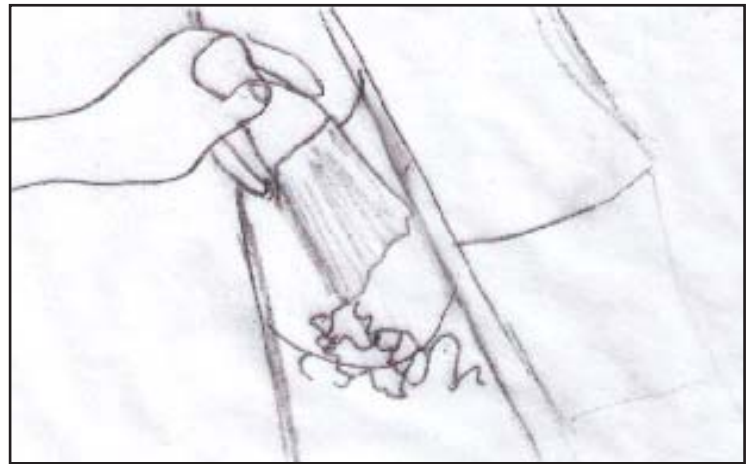
As with any job around the home, and especially when working at height, it is important that safety is the priority. When working on roofs, it is safer (and better for the roof) to avoid getting onto the roof it at all possible. This will avoid cracking any tiles and further damaging the gutters as well as making a fall less likely.

## Step 2 – Preparation

To avoid having to re-do the gutters on a regular basis, it is important to properly prepare the area to provide the bitumen membrane with maximum area for adhesion. Depending on the season when this task is undertaken, you may need to remove de-composing leaf litter. If this is the case, wearing gloves is vital to protect you from insects and other sharp object that may be in the gutters. It is important to remove all litter and dirt at least 300mm either side of the damaged area.

Once the litter is removed, the bare metal of the gutters should be clean and dry before attempting to apply the first coat of the bitumen. Therefore it is advisable to fit the gutters prior to the wet season, when the gutters are clean to be able to detect the leaks, without risking the adhesion of the bitumen. If there is some moisture in the gutter, it is best to use old towels to line the gutter and soak up any moisture.

If there are any signs of rust in the gutter, you will need to clean the area and apply a rust converter or neutraliser to stop the spread of the rust. Depending on the size and spread of the rust, a bitumen coating may not be enough.



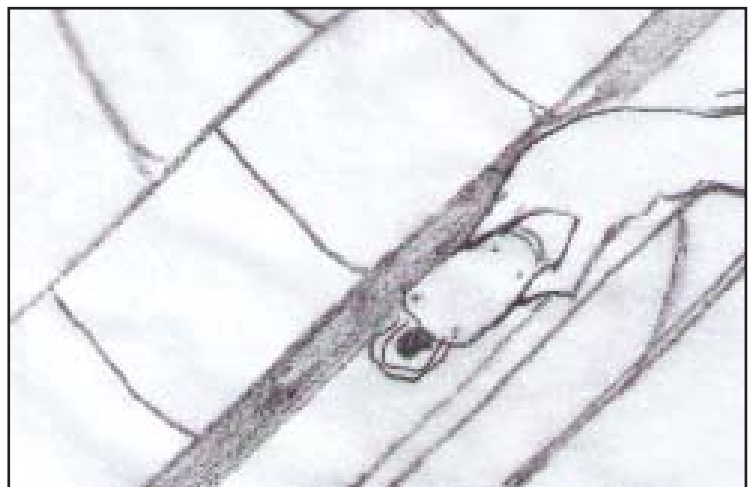
*For a reasonable seal, you will need to ensure that all moisture is removed prior to applying the bitumen.*

In this case you will need to attach a metal plate or Bondall Polyweave that is then covered with the bitumen to create a better seal which once complete will be less obvious than an external fix.

## Step 3 – First coat

Ensuring the product is well mixed according to the manufacturer's instructions, apply the first coat along the length of the gutter. While it is important to ensure all areas are adequately covered, you do not want to have that much product within the gutter that may affect water flow.

As bitumen is a non soluble product it is important to use old brushes and if possible clean the brushes as soon as possible.



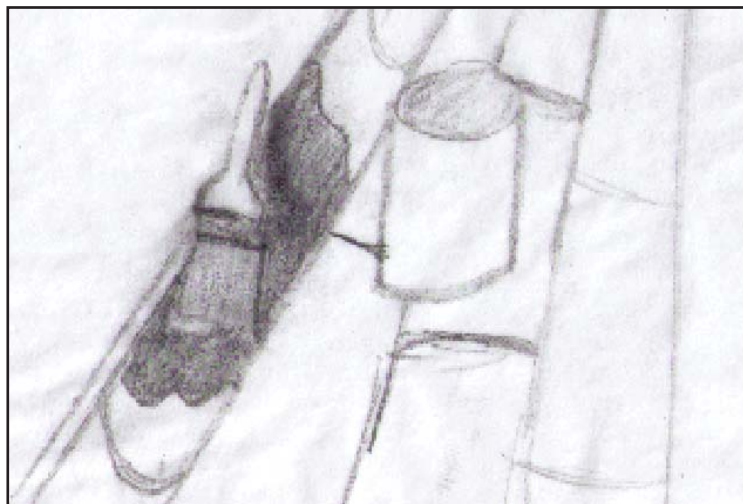
*Attaching a metal plate to fix a larger rust hole. This will be coated with bitumen to provide a complete seal.*

## Step 4 – Second coat

Once the first coat has dried, you are able to add a second coat. It is recommended to apply the bitumen in the at right angles to the first coat to provide greater strength and less likelihood that any air bubbles or gaps will remain in the mix. Again you need to keep the coats fairly thin to allow the gutters to function properly. As the Bitumen Membrane is a combination of bitumen and rubber, it will provide a flexible and waterproof barrier that is able to expand and contract with the gutters without compromising the bond.

## Step 5 – Finishing

With the gutters repaired, the final step is to finish the external surface of the gutters. If the leak was caused from a weak joint, external repair may not be required, however if the bitumen is covering small holes or sheet tin was used to cover these holes, you will need to paint the repair. Paint is available in most gutter colours, however you may need to prime the surface if the surrounding surface is in poor shape. If the joint is still obvious, you are able to fill the edges with a flexible outdoor sealant which once set, can be painted.



*Ensure that an even cover is achieved to allow the water flow to the downpipes without disruption.*

## OTHER WATER PROBLEMS

### 1. Flashings

While gutters are the main source of roof leaks and water damage, flashing can also play its part.

Depending on the material used the flashings can corrode or in the case of lead (commonly used for corrugated sheeting) will eventually split due to the constant expansion and contraction over time. Bondall's Bitumen based products have the flexibility to be used to seal flashings and minor cracks in tiles (which is especially useful rather than trying to match a couple of old roof tiles which are no longer manufactured).

Any area which penetrates the roof system, (tiles or sheeting) provides the opportunity for moisture to enter the join. As a preventative measure, you should inspect solar vents, roof vents and chimneys.

## 2. Walls

Another common water problem especially in older homes is moisture seeping through the walls, especially when garden beds are located against the walls or if the ground level outside is higher than internally.

Majority of the time this moisture is penetrating through the damp-course. The solution is to expose the wall to the slab and coat the top of the slab to the spoil line with bitumen. If the walls are rendered, you are able to coat the wall higher as the bitumen can be painted over once cured.

## CONCLUSION

Bondall's Bitumen Membrane has many other uses around the home and garden where water problems exist, especially on the roof and roof plumbing such as downpipes, eaves and valley's.

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