



GAY'S GUTTER SCREEN METHOD

Many companies offer gutter screens, covers, or devices devised to keep leaves out of gutters, to keep from having to clean gutters. The problem is that many of these devices don't allow the runoff from the roof to go into the gutters, instead overshooting gutters and causing basement seepage, often when none occurred previous to covers being installed. Other covers or screens cause debris to collect on top of screens, or have gaps between sections of screens allowing debris to get into gutters. Other mesh types that actually go into gutter diminish the capacity of gutter volume while allowing organic material to decompose in the mesh which becomes clogged quickly and gutters ultimately overflow.

The only method I have found that is fool proof that even works with maple tree seeds, if installed properly, is the use of $\frac{1}{4}$ " hardware cloth cut to fit and secured to gutter. Here's how.

Buy $\frac{1}{4}$ " hardware cloth from hardware or home store (similar to chicken wire but square holes and stiffer). Buy it in 3' wide roll.* You will be cutting off pieces that are approximately 6" wide using tin snips. The width of strip may vary depending on how far down the gutter is hung from the roof eave, but 6" is an average width that should suit most houses.

The gutter screen piece will attach to the top of the gutter at the front edge using truss head, self-tapping sheet metal screws. Size is $\frac{1}{2}$ " in length for screws, available for sure at Lowes, and stainless varieties on line. The other edge of screen will be inserted beneath the starter row of shingles. If there is ice and water shield on roof deck the screen will be inserted on top of that, or on top of drip edge. The shingles will be stuck to the roof and will need to be loosened. The best time to do this is in cool weather. If it's summer first thing in the morning is coolest. I use a pry bar to loosen them and it's fairly easy. The risk is tearing or puncturing the shingles. Keep the pry bar end flush with roof deck so tip of bar doesn't poke through shingles. Using the palm of my hand to push bar under shingles I insert bar and with slight pressure and work the shingle loose and work my way across until I have an area long enough for one 3' strip of screen to be inserted. Ideally I stand on a ladder that is resting on house wall not against gutter, but if no other option work to one side of the ladder or the other. If the house is a one story an 8' step ladder may be adequate. Once the shingles have been loosened I insert one end of screen beneath shingles and work it in until the entire 3' strip is beneath starter row of shingles. Then I bring the other edge flush with front edge of gutter and fasten with a screw about every 16". I overlap strips about 2".

* To determine how much hardware cloth you will need measure how many lineal feet of gutter on house. You will get about two 3' strips, 6', for every foot of hardware cloth. So if you have 30 feet of gutter you will need 15' of hardware cloth. Allow for about 2" of overlap for each piece of screening when installed.



Gutter screen installed left. Tin snips, screws, pry bar center. Truss head screws $\frac{1}{2}$ " right.