

Be an "Aware" Shopper

# DRAPERIES AND CURTAINS

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Are you thinking of changing the window treatment in your home? Or are you facing the exciting experience of choosing draperies and curtains for a new home? Being an "Aware" Shopper can give you the confidence to make satisfying choices.

Before you shop, ask yourself: what is the purpose of the window treatment? What do you want the draperies or curtains to do for your room?

Do you want privacy? Sheer glass curtains will give privacy plus light and see-through quality by day. Add opaque draw draperies, and you will have privacy at night. In this combination, the glass curtains can act as the drapery lining.

Do you want to shut out an undesirable view? Again, the sheer glass curtain may be the answer to soften the view, yet allow for light.

Do you want to frame a delightful view? In this case, unless privacy is at times needed, why use either curtains or draperies? Let the outside become a part of your decorating plan, omitting any type of window treatment. If privacy is required, either window shades or simple, unobtrusive draw draperies hung to clear the window, unless drawn, would do the job.

Do you need protection from sunlight?

For this, a lined draw drapery is probably the answer.

Regardless of its other purposes, the drapery or curtain you choose must enhance the attractiveness of the room. Window treatment is an important part of room decor and can make or break a well-planned decorating scheme.

What general atmosphere do you want to achieve in your room? If it's informal, consider textured, easy-to-care for fabrics with simple treatment. But, if a room that's on the formal side is your goal, more elegant materials are indicated.

What about color and design? Remember, every line gives action. Each added line or design in a room will intensify the feeling of action, which can build up to be quite overwhelming. If you have a room that is already rather "active" with design, you'll probably want a window treatment of a plain fabric in a color that enhances your color plan.

Small rooms can give the illusion of almost-spaciousness when draperies or curtains blend in color with the walls. On the other hand, a contrasting color or a bold design can result in an exciting window treatment for the room large enough to handle the action.

## YOUR SKILLS OR SOMEONE ELSE'S?

Decorating windows is one place in the furnishings venture where you can be a "do-it-yourself'er". However, be sure to take time for careful evaluation. Compare the possibilities of "custom-made," "made-to-measure," "ready-made" and "do-it-yourself." Consider services and quality as well as cost, especially if the project is to be draperies. Making curtains is one thing, but making lined draperies is a vastly more complicated problem.

**CUSTOM-MADE** — is the curtain or drapery made especially for your window. A specialist takes the measurements, constructs the drapery or curtain and then installs it, making adjustments if any are necessary.

The custom-made window treatment is usually the most expensive, but you get considerable service and convenience. Also you have unlimited choice of materials and styles.

Expect these features of quality workmanship in custom-made draperies: true grain line; all hems hand-stitched; bottom hem at least 3½ inches deep, blind stitched; heading 3½ to 4 inches deep with permanent finished buckram inter-lining; pleats sharp, even and securely stitched; design, if any, matched so that motif runs straight across panels and appears in the same place in each panel; width generous—at least 2½ times width of space to be covered.

**MADE-TO-MEASURE** — like custom-made, these are curtains or draperies made especially for your window, but you provide the measurements. You also do the installing and make any adjustments that might be necessary, unless they are due to construction error.

Made-to-measure curtains and draperies are usually less expensive than custom-made ones. Any difference in cost is because you're paying for fabric and construction only, since you are the one responsible for accurate measurements and the final installation.

In quality, you can expect the same workmanship as in custom-made. You will usually find a good range of fabrics from which to choose and, of course, made-to-measure can be done for any size, shape and style of window.

**READY-MADE** — this type of curtains and draperies is somewhat limited in choice of fabrics and styles. It's quite possible that you can find just what you need in this group of less expensive curtains and draperies. Prices depend on quality of fabric and construction. Look for these features: true grain; ample, straight hems with squared corners; stitching even and smooth with no puckering; designs matched; bottom width of drapery panels at least twice width of the pleated top.

**DO-IT-YOURSELF** — these are usually the least expensive curtains and draperies. You can spend the full amount budgeted for window treatment on high quality fabric, because you'll eliminate construction and installation costs.

## DRAPERIES

Study the Fiber Chart to determine the fiber that will be the best for your particular need. Labels on both drapery fabrics and ready-made draperies give fiber content—this is required by law. If the draperies are to be subjected to intense sunlight, be sure to check carefully the column "Effect of Sunlight." Remember, "solution-dyed" and "Savalux" mean built-in fade resistance.

You may want to consider the flammability factor. Fiberglass will not burn and fabrics of either Verel or Saran yarns will not support combustion.

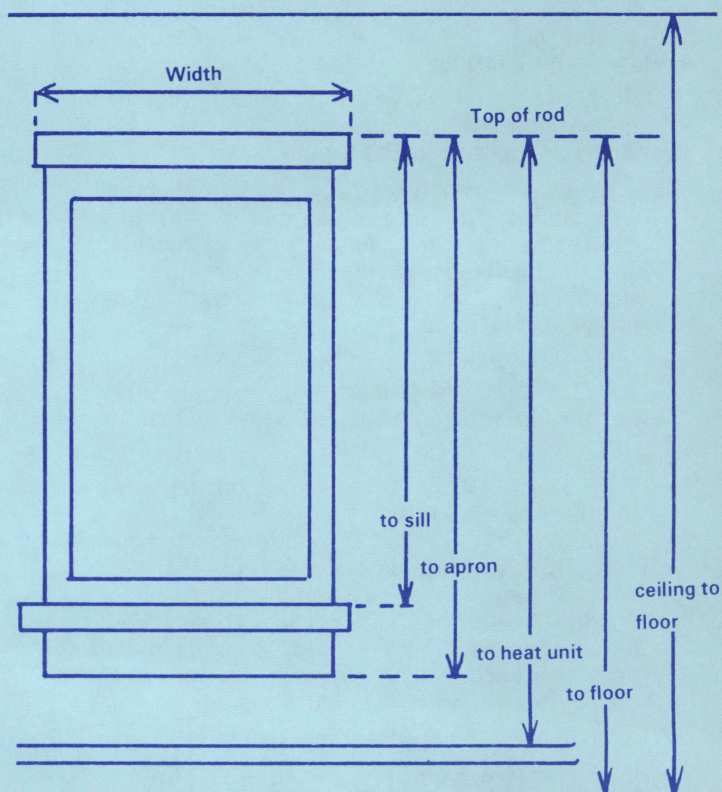
Fabric construction is important, too. Fabrics that are firm and closely woven are more durable and sun resistant than loosely woven ones.

Drapery lining is optional. Lining tends to improve drapability and gives a good appearance from the outside. It also protects the drapery fabric from sun and soil.

Some drapery fabrics have a "self-lining," which consists of a satin face woven on the back of the fabric. This provides a smooth, opaque appearance.

Important in the self-lining category is a new acrylic-foam-backed drapery. The backing is a very thin, aerated acrylic coating that forms a barrier against light and, to some extent, against outside noises and air around the window. It also adds body and drapability and can be applied to most fabrics. The kind of fabric determines whether the acrylic-backed drapery should be washed or dry-cleaned.

WHERE TO MEASURE FOR DRAPERIES OR CURTAINS



## Measure and Figure for Drapery Yardage

Measure carefully — the final appearance of your draperies depends a great deal upon accurate measurements. Have rods in place before you measure, or know exactly where they will be positioned. No two windows are alike, so measure each window using a steel tape or yard stick (not a cloth tape as it might stretch). As you measure, make sketches of the windows and fill in the figures. Then double check for accuracy.

**LENGTH** — measure from the top of the rod to the floor, or to the bottom of the window apron, or to the sill, or to a structural point such as a heat unit. (Never extend a drapery over a heat unit as it impairs heat circulation and could be a fire hazard. Furthermore, with some fabrics, concentrated heat can cause deterioration.)

**WIDTH** — measure between rod brackets, adding an extra 12 inches for center overlap and returns (the space the rod projects from wall). Draperies should be at least twice the width of the space to be covered and draw draperies should be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times the space.

When you buy, the width listed on ready-made draperies is the finished width of the pleated top. Draperies are usually available in several lengths and widths. If you cannot find draperies to fit your windows, buy larger ones to allow for alterations.

Extra fullness gives added attractiveness, but skimpy draperies are not acceptable.

To figure fabric needed for making draperies, add  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches for top and bottom hems (7 inches total) and 3 inches for side hems ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches each).

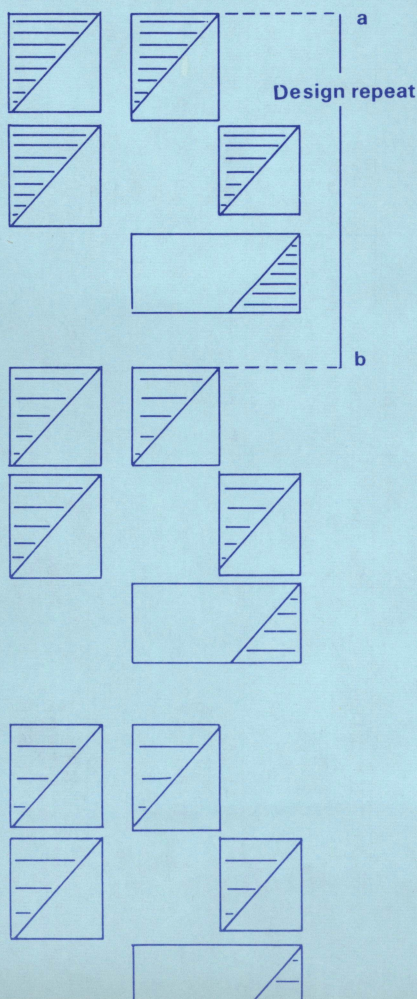
**Design repeat** — if the fabric has a design, allowance must be made for matching. Do this by measuring the distance from the top of one design to the top of the next identical design. This is called design repeat. This measurement should go evenly into the required length of the drapery.

Example: if the design repeat occurs every 8 inches and the total amount of material needed for a drapery is 101 inches (including hems), add 3 inches to 101 to make 104 inches. Dividing 104 inches by 8 inches gives 13. Thus you will have 13 design repeats for each drapery panel. If you left the material at 101 inches, the repeat would not have occurred in the same place and the finished draperies would not be matched.

By careful planning you can have a continuous repeat of design in all of the draperies. The design must be on grain or printed straight with the weave. This is an important feature to check before buying either fabric or ready-made draperies.

Take care of your draperies. Clean fabric lasts longer because soil deteriorates fibers. Periodic vacuuming will keep dust from accumulating. Be sure to get instructions for cleaning at the time you purchase either the draperies or the drapery fabric. Usually draperies, especially lined ones, should be dry-cleaned. Washing lined draperies may cause uneven shrinkage and puckering.

### ALLOW FOR MATCHING DESIGN



## CURTAINS

It is required by law that fiber content be listed on ready-made curtains and on curtain fabrics. For information to help you decide which fiber is best for your needs, check the Fiber Chart. Select fibers resistant to sunlight deterioration if curtains will be hung in very sunny windows.

You'll need accurate measurements of the windows to be curtained. Follow the measuring instructions given for draperies. Then for selecting curtains of the correct size, follow this guide:

- Tailored straight curtains (glass curtains) ... total width should measure  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 times the width of the window
- Criss-cross curtains ... each panel should be twice the window width
- Ruffled curtains ... each panel should be the full width of the curtain rod. The length should be to the sill, bottom of apron, floor, or to a structural point such as a heating unit.

Wash curtains frequently. Embedded dust and soil, when acted on by sunlight and/or heat, can cause deterioration. Check and save for future use any care instructions that are attached to the curtains or curtain fabric you select. Most curtain fabrics are washable and synthetics usually are easy to care for (quick drying with little or no ironing), but to realize these qualities, care instructions must be followed explicitly.

## DRAPERY AND CURTAIN FABRIC FIBERS

GENERIC TERM	*TRADE NAME	PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	HEAT RESISTANCE	FIRE RESISTANCE	ABRASION RESISTANCE	DURABILITY	EFFECT OF SUNLIGHT	CARE
COTTON NATURAL FIBER	Cotton	Drapes well	Excellent	Poor	Good	Good	Fade resistance fair; Savalux dyed — good	Machine and hand wash. Need to iron unless drip-dry or no-iron finish
ACETATE; SOLUTION-DYED ACETATE	Avisco Celanese Celaperm Chromspun Arnel	Soft, lustrous, drapes well	Loses strength	Fair	Fair	Fair to good depending on construction	Fade resistance excellent in solution dyes; average for regular acetate	Dry clean usually. Iron
TRIACETATE								
ACRYLIC	Acrlan Creslan Orlon Dynel Verel	Soft hand, drapes well	Highly susceptible to heat. Iron at low heat	Does not support combustion	Good	Excellent	Very little effect. Will darken after long exposure	Wash as directed. Dry clean. Iron at low temperature
MODACRYLIC								
GLASS FIBER	401 Fiber glas Varitex (texturized)	Weighty fabric, translucent, lustrous, drapes well.	Excellent	Fireproof	Fair	Excellent	None	Wash as directed. Dry clean. Do not iron
NYLON	Antron Chemstrand Caprolan Enka Nylon	Soft hand, adaptable to both sheers and heavy fabrics	Melts at 480° F.	Melts before burning	Excellent	Very strong	Is affected, loses strength from exposure	Wash as directed. Dry clean
POLYESTER	Dacron Fortrel Kodel	Drapes well, wrinkle-resistant, wool-like hand	Melts at 480° F.	Melts before burning	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent resistance; can lose strength after long exposure	Wash as directed, holds creases when wet. Needs little ironing
RAYON; SOLUTION-DYED RAYON	Benberg Enka Fortisan Coloray Jetspun	Drapes well	Loses strength at 450° F. Decomposes above 500° F.	Burns relatively fast; depends on construction	Fair	Fair	Fade resistance average; excellent for solution dyes	Hand wash or dry clean
SARAN; SOLUTION-DYED SARAN	Rovana Velon Saranspun	Drapes well, soft, sturdy hand	Melts above 340° F.	Does not support combustion	Excellent	Excellent	Unaffected	Wash in water under 140° F. or dry clean

\* Only a limited number of each is listed — there are many more of equal importance. No criticism is implied of similar products not named.

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