

Window Treatments are used to control light, heat, provide privacy, subdue sound, add decorative value and help to change the apparent size and shape of a room. Window Treatments come in many different forms and are described as Curtains, Draperies, Valances, Shades and Swags. There are limitless design variations of these general categories. A window can be dressed in a layered manner using one or more of each category.

Curtains

Curtains are the most popular type of window treatment and have a pocket hem at the top through which a rod is placed and the fabric is gathered to the desired fullness. Generally curtains are installed on stationary rods and have gathered smocked or ruffled headings.

Types of Curtains

Bishop Sleeves are an elegant window treatment that is simply a rod pocket curtain with extra length allowed for blousing. The bishop sleeve look is achieved with tiebacks pulling the curtain tight to the window frame. Any number of poufs may be used. Arrange and tie the poufs at a position that is in proportion to the window length and width. Additional fabric may be added to create soft drapery folds on the floor, called a "puddle".

Cafe Curtains are made of a piece of fabric stretched between two thin rods: one at the top and one at the bottom. Typically pleated, cafe curtains can be mounted to either the inside or outside of a window frame. Because cafe curtains attach to the frame at both the top and bottom, they are an excellent choice for adding privacy to a French door. Cafe Curtains are also excellent for dressing up a decorative screen. A scalloped heading is a popular top treatment for café curtains that features semicircular spaces between the curtain rings.

Cottage Curtains are a combination of café curtains and tieback curtains. The café curtains cover the lower part of the window with the tieback curtains over them.

Grommet-top Curtains are similar to tab-top curtains, except that they are hung from eyelets sewn into the fabric at the top. Grommet-top curtains can be hung either by threading a rod through the grommets (which can look quite contemporary), or by attaching decorative hooks to the grommets for a more traditional look.

Hourglass Curtains take their name from their shape. They are held taut between sash rods at the top and bottom of the window glass, and then pulled in at the center to create the hourglass shape. Tension rods are used, instead of sash rods, for mounting inside a window frame. Because these curtains are held tight to the glass, they are a practical treatment for doors. They also work well on windows where there is not room for a return. They allow sunlight to get in and, for extra airiness, are attractive in lace and sheer fabrics.

Pocket Rod Curtains are curtains with a pocket sewn at the top where a rod can be inserted. Because they tend to look very crisp and tailored at the top, they're much more formal than other types of curtains. Rod-pocket curtains are typically mounted outside the window frame.

Priscilla Curtains are a pair of extra-wide, ruffled tieback curtains hung on crisscross curtain rods so the panels crisscross in the center. They are often used with an attached valance.

Tab-top Curtains are flat curtain panels that hang from a decorative rod by tabs (which can be of varying lengths). Tab-top curtains tend to be more casual than other types of curtains and are often mounted outside the window frame.

Tie-top Curtains feature short lengths of fabric at the top that are used to attach the curtains to the curtain rod. Because tie-tops are the most informal-looking of curtains, they work best with informal fabrics, especially sheers.

Tent-flap Curtains require a minimal amount of fabric and provide a tailored, uncluttered look. Choose two fabrics that complement each other for the outer fabric and the lining. The lining is just as important as the outer fabric.

Sash Curtains are any sheer material hung close to the window glass. Usually hung from spring tension rods or sash rods mounted inside the window casing.

Shirred Curtains are any curtain gathered onto a curtain rod, but the term is frequently used for curtains gathered onto rods at both the top and the bottom edges.

Tiered Curtains are usually café curtains hung in two or more tiers with the top curtains slightly overlapping lower curtains.

Draperies

Draperies are more tailored and have pleated, smocked, or gathered headings, which can either completely cover the window or can be pulled back to the sides, and can be lined or unlined. They are attached to traversing rods with special pin hooks.

Types of Draperies

Draw Draperies are any window treatment designed for use with a traverse rod, creating a window covering that can be drawn to open or close, either from both sides to the center (center draw) or from one side to the other (one-way draw)

Hand-Drawn Draperies are drapery treatments that are pulled open or closed by hand or with a baton.

Over draperies is the topmost drapery in a double or combination drapery treatment.

Pinch Pleated Draperies are a popular treatment for windows because draperies open to let light in and close for privacy. The pleats are spaced at intervals to control the fullness of the drapery. The more fabric that is pleated into the drapery panels, the fuller the draperies become.

Valances

Valances are simply shorter curtains, draperies, or soft shades, usually about a foot long that hang over the top edge of curtains. Valances can be hung on their own or in pairs in a

tall window where one set is hung at the top and one set in the middle. They are also a simple way to dress up a set of tab-top curtains.

Types of Valances

Austrian Valances are a shortened version of the elegant Austrian Shade, characterized by vertical rows of shirring, horizontal gathers, and soft scallops at the lower edge. Sheer and soft fabrics work best for this treatment, which is often trimmed with fringe. The valance is unlined to gather and drape beautifully.

Balloon Valances are pleated valances that appear to "puff" out like a balloon, and are generally used to dress up a plain curtain rod.

Cloud Valances are a short variation of the cloud shade, with gentle poufs or scallops across the bottom and a Shirred heading at the top. It can be Shirred on a flat curtain rod or Continental rod, made with Shirring tape and attached with hooks through the Shirring tape to a curtain rod, or attached to a mounting board.

Festoons are decorative valances made of folded fabric that hangs in a graceful curve over the window.

Pouf Valances are variations of soft cloud or balloon shades, made by Shirring fabric on two curtain rods. The double pouf valance uses three curtain rods. For deeper headings and taller windows, Continental rods may also be used for pouf valances.

Tapered Valances are often used over mini-blinds and pleated shades to soften the severe lines, or with shorter café curtains for a comfortable, casual look. They are usually lined when print fabrics are used, because you see the wrong side of the fabric as it cascades down the side of the window. If the lower edge has a ruffled finish, however, it does not have to be lined because the fall of the ruffle hides the wrong side of the fabric. Lightweight or sheer fabrics are also good choices for a ruffled valance, and do not require lining.

Shades

Shades move up and down via a corded pulley system or spring loaded rollers. They can be made of fabric or vinyl.

Types of Shades

Austrian Shades are fabric shades that rise and lower in soft scallops by means of a series of tapes that are threaded through a series of rings.

Roman Shades are mounted on a board attached to the top of the window. A lattices strip inserted through a pocket at the lower edge of the shade provides the necessary weight.

Balloon Shades are a variation of the Roman Shade. It has inverted box pleats which give it a formal flatter look and it tends to bunch forward when pulled up. It provides a soft gentle window covering that is easy to install.

Reverse Roll-Up Shades are a practical, tailored shade covering the window frame and hanging from a rod inside a padded cornice. The contrasting lining that rolls to the outside of the shade is fused to the shade fabric.

Russian Shades are similar to Balloon Shades, but the Russian Shade has a Shirred or rod pocket heading, which gives a softly gathered look to the shade as it operates up and down.

Swags

Swags are large pieces of fabric that are hung either above or on top of the curtains themselves. They are usually attached to a mounting board, although a more informal look is to drape a swag over a wooden or decorative pole, or pulled through a decorative scone. These valance treatments are draped into soft graceful folds that take on the shape of a half circle. Swags can be used by themselves to accent a small window or in multiples (usually an odd number) to become a dominant design theme. All swags should be lined.

Jabots are window treatments that consist of a tapered width of fabric that can be self-lined or contrast lined. It is pleated and used as a frame on each side of a row of Swags. Jabots should be 1/3, 2/3 or the full length of the window frame.

Flags are double sided Jabots used in the center of a swag treatment or in corners when swags are installed in a bay window. Flags are usually 5" to 7" longer than swags.

Cascades are soft unstructured Jabots that consist of fabric draped lengthwise in a zigzag fashion, usually ending in a point. Finished length and fabric requirements are the same as for Jabots.

Throw Swags are made up of fabric draped over a wood pole or café rod. Other types are constructed in several sections, but look like one continuous piece.