

A collage of four images: top-left shows a window with white and grey striped curtains; top-right shows white orchids in front of white blinds; bottom-left shows a wooden table with red vases and a fruit basket; bottom-right shows a balcony with a view of the ocean and a building, with a potted plant and a chair in the foreground.

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO **Window Treatments**

Dressing Your Windows to Impress

DECOR & YOU[®]

table of contents

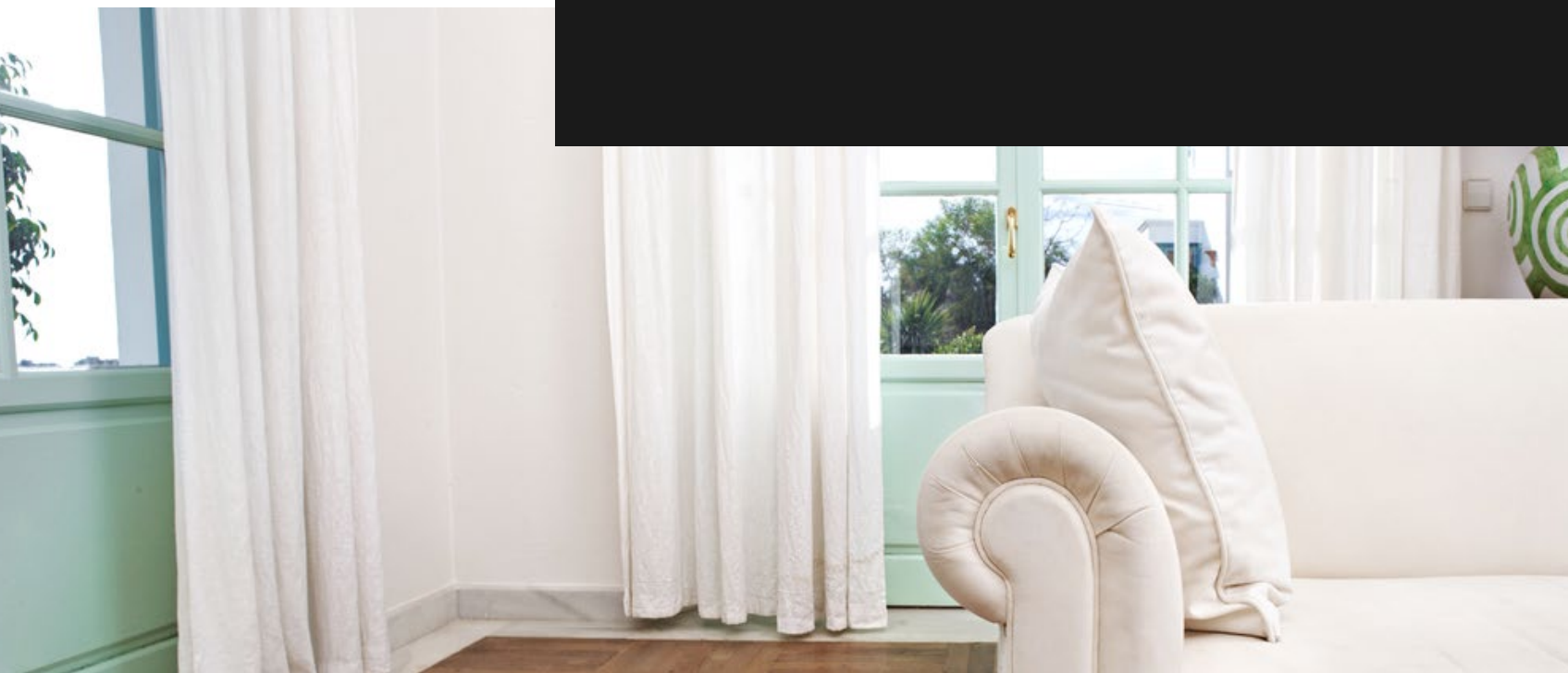


Introduction	3
The First Step: Privacy versus Light	4
The Basics of Hard Window Treatments	5
The Basics of Soft Window Treatments	7
The Art of Lining	9
Top Treatments: Valances and Cornices	10
Rods, Rings & Other Hardware	11
Window Treatments for Hard-to-Manage Windows	12
Finding Window Treatments to Fit Your Personal Aesthetic	13
Creative and Colorful: Not-So-Ordinary Window Treatments	14
Conclusion	15



When you enter a room for the first time and take in the window treatments your eye absorbs the color, style and function of how each piece fits together. Done correctly, the overall treatment should create comfort and enhance the space's style. When this does not happen, it doesn't take a professional to know that something isn't quite right. You may not be able to pinpoint exactly what is wrong, be it improper length, a misalignment or a distasteful color, but your gut will tell you something is off.

The particulars that go into selecting window treatments shouldn't be rushed during an overnight design project. There are a multitude of options to accomplish a number of tasks, from function to aesthetic appeal. In this eBook, we will look at the fundamentals as well as some of the more delicate details of selecting window treatments.



YOU WILL LEARN:

- How your need for privacy and natural light will affect your window treatment selection
- The basics of selecting and installing both hard and soft window treatments, from practical blinds to luxurious draperies
- The functional and artful benefits of lining your window treatments
- About top treatments and their roles as partners with other window coverings
- About selecting hardware for functional and decorative purposes
- How-to select treatments for hard-to-manage windows, including the very large and oddly-shaped
- To find treatments that blend with or highlight your personal style
- How creative, colorful and not-so-ordinary treatments can boost your window's design and purpose

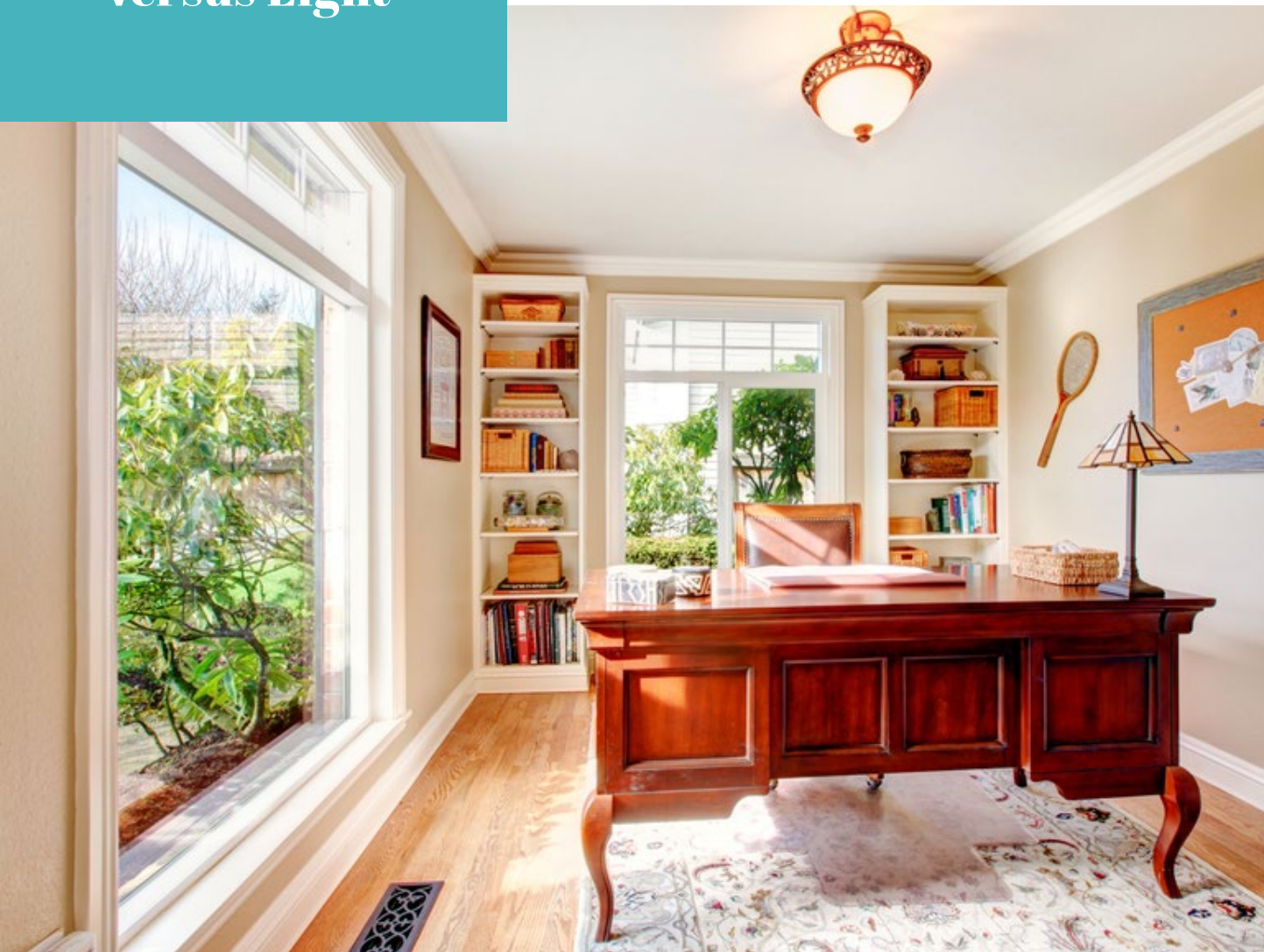
THE FIRST STEP:

Privacy versus Light



HunterDouglas
Alustra Silhouette

The first question you must ask yourself is what practical function, or functions, must my window treatments accomplish? Simply put, **what is more important to you: privacy or natural light?**



As it turns out, most of us need a combination of both. There are shades that deliver a nice balance of light and discretion. Blinds give you a number of options with slats that can pivot up and down while lowering from the top, raising from the bottom or both in order to let in the perfect amount of light any time of day.

If you need ultimate privacy, blackout shades or liners are your go-to. They are an affordable piece that come in a wide variety of colors, even white. Then there are window treatments that strictly add visual interest when privacy is not a concern. Light curtains tied back and valances won't exert effort to block any precious light.

Keep your unique light and privacy goals in mind as you continue through this eBook. In each section, you will discover details on how specific window treatments will further your objectives.

THE BASICS OF

Hard Window Treatments

Tip: When placing shutters in the kitchen or bathroom use vinyl. It is easy to clean and will not warp in steam or moisture.

Let's discuss hard window treatments, a covering category that includes blinds, shutters and woven wood shades.

BLINDS: a window treatment constructed of solid slats that are traditionally adjustable by a combination of manual pull cords and wands.

Blinds provide a very functional and flexible window covering option. Tilt slats open at various angles, raise or lower them for an unobstructed view or tightly close them for thorough privacy.

Once you know how you want your blinds to operate, consider the slat width. Standard sizes include ½ inch, 1 inch and 2 inches. The largest size provides a more traditional look. Think old-style Venetian blinds. ½ inch slats provide the most contemporary look and are generally the most popular. Finally, 1 inch blinds are the least expensive and create a balance between the other two sizes for transitional appeal.

Blinds may also be arranged vertically. These treatments are best installed for use with wide windows or sliding glass doors. The slats stack to the side when open and you can find them in a variety of materials and colors to complement a wide range of styles.

SHUTTERS: are individually hinged panels constructed of louvered slats.

Shutters cater to a traditionally-styled home providing classy enrichments for interior and exterior appeal. They do well in formal living or dining rooms, but are also perfect options for kitchens and bathrooms. Bonus, shutters are considered a durable investment and work to enhance a home's resale value.

Shutters are usually custom made for the perfect fit. They are easily manipulated with individual louvers as to control light and each panel is hinged so you can open the panels to the side for an unobstructed view. Keep in mind that the larger the louver, the more light you can let in when the panels are closed. And complete privacy can be ensured by securing the louvers shut.

You will find two main types of shutters:

- Full-height shutters that cover your windows completely. Or cover a door made out of a full glass panel.
- Café-style shutters that cover only half the window for a simple combination of privacy and light.



WOVEN WOOD SHADES: a window treatment typically made of grasses, reeds, jute or bamboo that when retracted forms a neat roll at the top of the window frame exposing a perfect full view of the outdoors.

While shades can be made from a number of different materials, the focus on woven wood makes them fit in to the hard window treatment category.

Bamboo is probably the most popular woven wood shade. Its benefits include:

- Easy installation
- Affordable for practical budgets
- Durable
- A readily available and renewable resource
- Distinct organic texture warms almost any décor
- Provides a no-fail look that is streamlined and modern yet relaxed and comfortable



HunterDouglas
*Provenance Woven
Wood Shades*

THE BASICS OF

Soft Window Treatments



The most common forms of soft window treatments are curtains and draperies. And yes, there is a difference.

Curtains versus drapes: draperies fall to the floor while curtains can vary in length, but tend to hover around the window sill. Draperies are also lined with a full, tactile appearance whereas curtains lean towards a lighter and less formal feel.

MORE ON CURTAINS

It is easy to see why curtains are a staple window treatment. They fulfill many roles beyond privacy and light control including adding depth and warmth to a space. They also serve to refresh a room without large, drastic changes to your style or color palette.

The key to perfect curtains is a perfect length. Appropriate lengths for bathrooms, kitchens and window seats includes right at or just below the window sill. Café curtains also work well in more casual settings. These curtains cover only a portion of the window, typically the bottom two-thirds. It is a very light and airy curtain, simply constructed and designed to let in a lot of light. More formal settings, such as living and dining areas thrive on longer, more substantial curtains.

MORE ON DRAPES

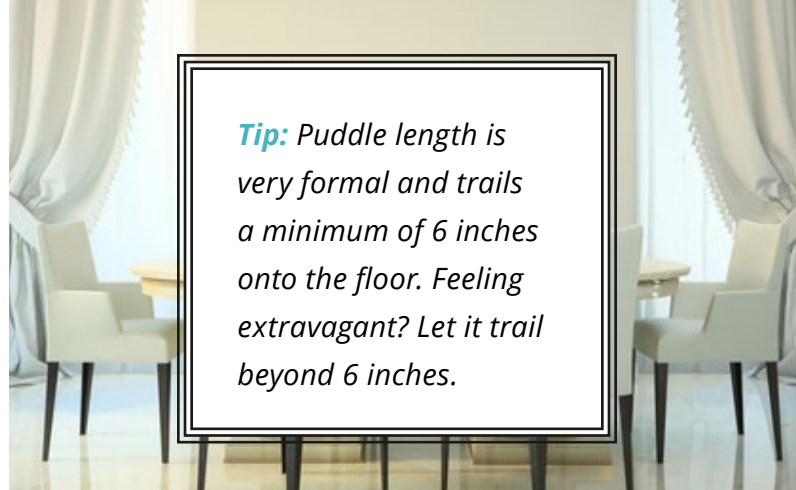
Hanging draperies requires effort to master. The formal, floor length treatment warrants precision when it comes to selecting the right length and how they will open.

But isn't floor length, simply floor length? No, it is not. You will typically find three recommended lengths when it comes to drapes and they all serve to ward off the dreaded too short panels that doom the look of your window coverings.

Stationary panels embody two lengths: "puddle" and "trouser break."

- Puddle length is very formal and trails a minimum of 6 inches onto the floor. Feeling extravagant? Let it trail beyond 6 inches. The name is derived from the literal puddle of fabric created on the floor. The "puddle" needs to be occasionally fluffed for the perfect effect.
- A trouser (or 3 inch) break is another standard length. It helps break the visual vertical lines created by the fabric. The result is a simple fold at the bottom of the fabric instead of a puddle. The drape lightly collapses on the floor similar to tailored pants as they break on the shoe.

Operative draperies embrace the final standard length. These window treatments traverse the window, therefore, letting them drag along the floor is not optimal. Instead, opt for a barely grazing effect. It should look like it's touching, but it's technically a fraction short.



Tip: Puddle length is very formal and trails a minimum of 6 inches onto the floor. Feeling extravagant? Let it trail beyond 6 inches.

Once you have decided your drapery length you may think the hard work is over, but since none of us have perfectly level floors and ceilings, creating a consistent break across your window treatment is not as easy as it appears. Spend quality time working with your seamstress to help implement your treatment for a consistent and beautiful look. You will also want to discuss a bottom hem and leading edge. A 3 inch hem is standard, but a larger hem will create a more luxurious look. A leading edge is the fabric edge at the opening of the drapes. Contrasting fabric here can really add extra flare. And coordinating with another element or accent in the room creates a cohesive vision.


A final piece to look at for your drapes is tiebacks. They hold the fabric away from the center of the window when you want to let in light or show off your view. From matching fabric sewn into a band to dramatic braided cords and tassels, your tiebacks make a statement. Pay attention to the size of the tieback and any contrasting nature. For example, a large rope tieback for a nautical-inspired room would fit perfectly, yet within a romantic setting it would be overwhelming and bulky.





THE ART OF:
Lining

Tip: Bedrooms always invite blackout lining.



Lining can be utilized across all forms of window treatments; however, they are most commonly used for curtains and drapes to create fullness and enhance privacy control. **Fullness relates directly to correct proportions as panels immediately go from meager to charming.**

For curtains and lightweight fabrics, lining ensures they hang precisely instead of limply. Thicker fabrics not only look fuller, but also more tailored while providing an insulator when panels are closed.

Three types of lining to consider:

- Bumph: a lightweight cotton flannel that increases insulation and absorbs external noise while creating a super luxurious feel.
- Three-pass lining: a polyester cotton base covered with a layer of white acrylic, followed by a black membrane and then another layer of white acrylic. Where effects of UV rays are an issue, your furniture will thank you for the three-pass lining.
- Blackout lining: there are many fabrics with blackout acrylic already sprayed on to it giving you the flexibility to select the color and look you desire. Bedrooms always invite blackout lining.

Lining can also serve a purpose for some hard window treatments, such as the woven wood shades. As we said before there is no variable light control here, it's open or shut. A sheer lining can be added to the back to let in partial light. Keep in mind that you will see this lining from the outside of your home instead of the woven wood.

TOP TREATMENTS:

Valances and Cornices

Let's enter the sphere of top treatments and discuss valances and cornices. The goal of these two gems is to create a stylish horizontal header above windows and any selected window treatments.

Valances typically hang freely from a concealed board or rod. Style options are nearly limitless as they can be gathered, laid flat or shaped as desired. When paired with drapery they function to hide hardware or tracks in a chic manner.

Valances can also be strictly ornamental and a budget-friendly décor option when privacy is not an issue. They require less material than full draperies and provide a sleek and simple upholstered look that can be designed for any style. They also have the ability to create intimacy in rooms with tall ceilings as they pull the appearance of the ceiling down.



Next, let's address the cornice, a close relative of the valance.

The difference lies in the cornice as a hard treatment rather than soft. While still upholstered, it is stretched tightly across a board. It is a very affordable solution for high-end fabrics as it makes economical use of the textile. It is not gathered or pleated in any way so you use less fabric while showing off every detail of your selected pattern.



Rods, Rings & OTHER HARDWARE



Hardware is known as the accessories for your shutters, curtains and drapes and yet they are functionally very important as they physically mount your treatments.

When selecting hardware you will have to consider where you will be mounting the window coverings. Inside the window frame, outside the window frame, from the ceiling? You will also have to consider your necessary return, or the distance your treatment hangs from the wall. A standard return is 3.5 inches, but large and tall windows often require a deeper return to keep proportions correct. Otherwise, it will look like your treatment is shoved up against the wall in an unpleasant manner.

Here are some hardware options to consider:

- **Basic rod:** what your curtains or drapes will hang on. Narrow and small windows use thinner rods while large, wide windows require a more substantial option.
- **Traversing rod:** works well for a full wall of windows where opening and closing panels will prove difficult. Being able to open and close them by operating a string at the end is much easier.
- **Café rod:** fits with café curtains. It's an inconspicuous rod that sits at eye level. Think very delicate to hold a lightweight fabric.
- **Center support:** a functional piece that holds up the rod in the middle to keep it from bowing over time. Typically, rods require center supports at 30 to 36 inches.
- **Draper arms:** think of these as short segments of rods used with stationary drapes. They flank a window instead of spanning it and are a fun way to add texture to a space through fabric.
- **Elbow brackets:** used when your wall angles and your rod needs to follow that angle. It is placed in the corner to realign the rod with the angle of the wall.
- **Finials:** a decorative ornament for the end of a rod. Use it to add style, but think about how visible they will be from various vantage points. If the window is the main attraction in the room, finials are well worth the investment.

- **Rings and hooks:** used to attach your drapes or curtains to the rod.
- **Ceiling-mounted track:** a great option for floor to ceiling windows where you have little wall space. Definitely a contemporary design where your drapes will effortlessly glide along the ceiling.
- **Hinges:** are used for shutters. Select decorative options and jazzy finishes. You will highlight your shutter's uniqueness and add a bit of personality.

Aesthetically, your hardware can make or break the statement you are trying to make. Consider finishes carefully. Do you want a matching rod and ring set? How about coordinating with other finishes in your room for a cohesive design?

WINDOW TREATMENTS FOR:

Hard-to-Manage Windows

HunterDouglas

Heritage Hardwood Shutters

Custom window treatments always look better than off-the-shelf options, but there are times when you really can't skimp because of large or oddly-shaped windows.

Often these windows get left uncovered because of the hassle, but there are solutions so you don't have to compromise privacy or deal with sunlight damage to furnishings and floors.

Very large windows embrace shutters well as they can be customized to fit any size and shape. While an expensive option, it is hard to beat a customized shutter for function and attractiveness.



For odd shaped windows, mount treatments on the outside of the window frame with a slight overlap on to the wall. Your treatments will be uniform in size even if your windows are not. Shades are perhaps the best option here as they are simple to install and won't glaringly show off the overlap.

Finally, consider selecting a standout fabric for curtains or drapes. Draw attention away from the architectural oddities and highlight the window treatment with bold colors and patterns paired with luxurious fabrics such as silk, velvet and linen.

FINDING WINDOW TREATMENTS TO FIT

Your Personal Aesthetic

As with any design element, learn to bring your favorite style to life with your window treatments. They should enhance your chosen style not work against it.

Small changes in window treatment details can change the whole look and feel of your space. From manipulating fabric through hanging methods and pleating to selecting decorative features, they all must be kept in proportion and work together to directly align with your style.

Let's look at three popular styles and how your window treatments work towards enhancing these looks.

For a more traditional look:

- Traditional doesn't necessarily mean highly decorative. While, historically, the amount of fabric used in drapery was indicative of wealth, now a traditional nature can still be captured through simple shades and elegant fabric patterns.
- Try a pleated, skirt-style valance for traditional elegance. Make it toile and you will really capture stunning results.



- Formal-traditional style is embraced in the swag. Try it in a historical home for the perfect match.
- Finally, consider midcentury-styled wood rods with brass accents for real luxury.

For a more contemporary look:

- Give drapery panels a clearly defined role. Contemporary treatments focus on simplicity of both structure and fabric. Think streamlined with the goal of lines designed to draw the eye up to heighten a room or out to widen it.
- An inside-mount installation is always more contemporary.
- A contemporary take on the industrial pipe curtain rod includes a gold outer layer to add character and uniqueness.
- Something Lucite is definitely contemporary, from rods to embellishments.

For a more transitional look:

- Halfway between traditional and contemporary, you will find treatments that are simple in nature, but incorporate shiny details, colors and patterns.
- Try over-scale prints to keep the look from being too traditional.
- Aim for gender-neutral details such as inverted box pleats or a top-pinch, tailored pleats.
- Bronze is always a real showstopper and integrates well with traditional and contemporary designs.



CREATIVE & COLORFUL:

Not-So-Ordinary Window Treatments



Once you know the basics of window treatments, feel free to step outside the box. Let's look at some examples of unique window coverings, stretching from bold color choices to no coverings at all.

Blinds and Color

When dealing with color the safe bet for most blinds is to stick with a neutral color that is close to the color of your window's trim. This look is considered classy and makes a great base layer. This classic approach ensures long-term results, but sometimes you want a little visual prominence. If you aren't planning to change your color palette anytime soon, have some fun with color. Bright and bold are perfectly acceptable as you create an accent piece out of your blinds.

Curtains and Color

Lightweight curtains are perfect for working in unexpected colors and patterns. Try oversized florals or a classically striped full length curtain.

Shutters and Color

Instead of a bright or bold color for shutters, try a neutral in a glossy sheen finish. It reflects light beautifully and draws your attention to the windows without being over the top.

Keep in mind that neutrals don't have to be white, cream or beige. Try a deep neutral like rich chocolate brown or black to create an instant focal point. These colors also radiate cozy warmth for any space. Try it in a living room or bedroom.

Shades and Color

Shades do a wonderful job of complementing a neutral color palette. They add texture to give a space a sense of understated elegance. For a little more style, try woven shades in a metallic finish. Light neutral palettes won't feel

so stark while deeper colors get layered with dimension and shine.

Motorized Options

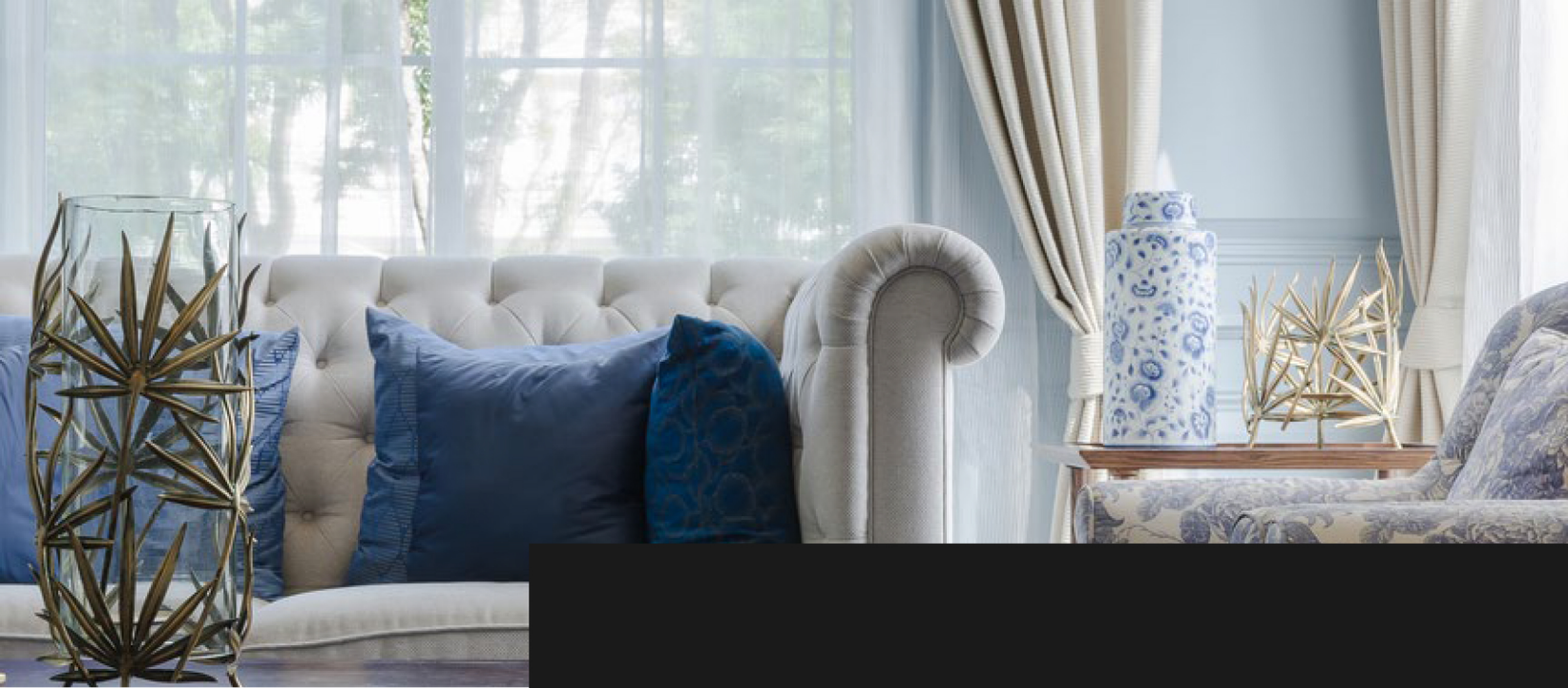
Blinds, curtains and drapes all come in motorized forms. Many people can benefit from these treatments including: parents, pet owners, the elderly, or those who deal with mobility or dexterity issues. You also might be plain tired of dealing with tangled cords or heavy fabrics and are looking for a modernized, flawlessly functional look that makes managing natural light easy.

Select from remote or wall switch controls. The variety of systems include: hardwired, plug in, radio frequency and battery operated. Many of these controls can group up to a dozen or more shades on a single remote complete with individual shade control for each window.

You can even use your motorized coverings in conjunction with sun sensor technology. The sensor allows shades to be lifted or lowered according to the sun's intensity. Or simply program a timer for a regular window routine each day.

Don't Want to Hide Your Window? Try Smart Glass

Some windows are so architecturally beautiful that they need a very minimal window treatment or perhaps none at all. If you want to show off your window, or the view just outside, but still need some privacy and sun protection, consider smart glass. Smart glass controls light, glare and heat filtering in to your home. The high-tech glass changes from transparent to tinted and can block heat and light independently of each other. And of course, they can all be adjusted to your personal preferences.



We hope you learned a little bit about window treatments today. At the very least, you now understand they are not an afterthought. All the details, from how you hide, or show off, your hardware to how the covering fits into your overall design scheme, play an important role in what treatments you should be using and how they should be hung.

For more information on selecting the proper window treatments for your home or office, contact the Interior Design Professionals at Decor & You.

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