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## **Selecting the Correct Window Covering**

Of all the design elements in a home, window coverings have the strongest impact on a room and should be designed early in the process of decorating a space. In an aesthetic sense window treatments convey the style of the room (e.g., formal vs. casual) and enhance the furniture design of the room (e.g., contemporary, retro, or traditional). One of the hallmarks of architectural design over the last fifteen years is the diversity of window sizes and shapes in each home. The windows lend interest to tall lofty spaces, but covering them to prevent sun damage to carpets and furniture can present a perplexing array of problems.

Windows are a source of heat transference, contributing to high heating and cooling bills. Duette® and Silhouette® shades can cut heat loss by 25% and reflect 60% of direct sunlight, while still allowing a view of the outdoors through the shade. Layered draperies trap air, providing a good energy shield. Consider custom draperies whose custom fit means more energy savings. Ceiling-mounted draperies and closed-top cornices keep warm room air and cold glass separated to decrease the heat transference through the window. If glare is a problem, select a window covering that has an open weave for the daytime that will soften the light coming into the room. Shutters and blinds send bright shafts of light into the room as the vanes are adjusted, never solving the glare problem unless they are completely closed.

Modern improvements in fabric durability give today's homeowners more value for their window covering investment than ever before. Some fabrics resist static electricity and thus dust build-up. Other fabrics have permanent pleating and lifetime warranties against sun damage. The easy maintenance and prolonged durability of shades make them the most popular product choice for today's homeowners. Retractable elastic cords, cordless shades and battery operated lift systems controlled with a remote provide safety and ease of operation like never before.

In an open floor plan where you can see several rooms from one vantage point, coordinate all the window treatments with similar colors and fabrics. When there are several windows butted frame-to-frame, they should be treated as a single focal point to look their best. Unify the windows with a decorative rod or valance over the top of all the windows.



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In small rooms use curtains with fabric the same color as the wall to expand the space. Minimizing the amount of wall covered by fabric will also make the room seem larger. Small rooms are the best places to use window coverings mounted inside the window frame.

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