

# Treat Your Home with the Right Window Treatments

By Karen S. Weiner, owner of Idealspace Design

It is said that eyes are the windows to a person's soul and the windows of a home have a similar significance. They are visible from the inside and outside alike, play a role in the general style, and can say a lot about the inhabitants of the home.

Window treatments serve many purposes and are actually more important than many people realize. A lined drapery can help reduce cold air in winter months by acting as an insulator for the cold glass and any slight drafts; in summer months the window treatments can keep the indoor temperature down by blocking out heat produced by the sun; you can choose to feature or conceal the view with your choice of window coverings; and window treatments alone can set the style for any room.

Choosing how to ideally cover windows is best done by considering the following:

**Opacity** – Does this room require that all light be blocked out sometimes?

**View** – Should the view be featured or concealed?

**Style** – Is the room best suited to a fussy balloon valance with flowing pleated draperies, something more transitional like a box-pleat valance over simple draperies, or the simple, crisp lines of a pleated shade?

**Wash-ability** – Is the window in a room prone to humidity or grease such as a kitchen or washroom? Will children frequently be touching or operating the window treatments? Would you mind if every so often the window has to go uncovered while the treatments are out for professional cleaning?

**Corrections** – Is there a detail that you hope to correct with your choice of window coverings? A wide variety of anomalies can be addressed including an off-centred window; a draft; a short window can be made to appear taller; and so on.



The majority of windows are best suited to versatility. There are times when natural light might be wanted, but not the glare, such as for working at a computer or watching television, and other times privacy from neighbours or passerby might be desired yet it would be nice to still be able to see out a bit. The appearance of the window dressings must be considered for all situations as well, and the best way to achieve versatility and style is with layers. A great option for bedrooms is a shade, which offers opacity, with a drapery in front of it. Rooms not used for sleeping don't require the same degree of black-out feature, so sheers topped with a drapery are often perfect. Depending on the style of the room and the architectural features, a valance can be a nice finishing touch.



**Q:**

We just put an offer in to buy a 20 year old house. Some renovations and upgrades will have to be done before we move in. When is the right time to call in an interior designer to start assessing the project?

**A:**

As soon as there is an accepted offer you can speak to the real estate agent about scheduling a convenient time to have an interior designer see the home. Because there are several people's schedules to consider, make sure the designer understands that until the house is officially yours (meaning you have signed at the notary's), only the one visit is likely. This meeting should take one to two hours depending on the scope of your projects and the size of the house. You can even schedule this to be done at the same time as the home inspection provided you discuss the basics beforehand and the details later. The designer should have no problem handling the project from the measurements and photos (s)he takes at that one appointment.

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