



Drapery Types: Winning Window Treatments

7.120

Page 1

Easy-to-sew window treatments enhance the decorative style of every room, while helping create the desired atmosphere. Understanding different window treatments is the first step in window decoration. Many times a combination of treatments gives windows a more polished look. A brief overview of the most popular styles will get you started.

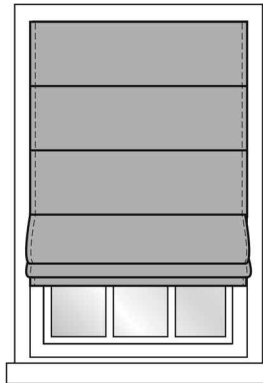
Types of Window Treatments

Although there are specific types of window treatments, you can achieve a multitude of different looks by your choice of decorative hardware and by layering multiple treatments.

Shades

Window shades are used alone or with curtains. They can be mounted inside or outside the window frame.

A **Roman shade** has horizontal rods or pleats from which the shade raises into a series of soft folds or pleats. A Roman shade hangs flat when lowered and is made with a system of cords and rings to control the pleats or folds (1).



1

A **roller shade** is used to block or reduce the amount of daylight in a room. Roller shades are available in vinyl or fabric and can be thermal lined. When not needed, the shade retracts onto a roller, making it almost invisible.

A **balloon shade**, a variation of the Roman shade, also uses a series of rings and cords to raise the lower edge, drawing the shade up into soft puffs. It can be permanently adjusted to remain stationary, so it resembles a valance.

The Purpose of Window Treatments

- **Provide privacy**—especially in bedrooms and bathrooms
- **Control light**—limit the amount of daylight in a room
- **Conserve energy**—reduce drafts and help conserve heat
- **Reduce noise**—minimize noise from outside
- **Obscure an unattractive view**—or draw attention to or “frame” a nice view
- **Add color, style and personality** to a room

Drapes & Curtains

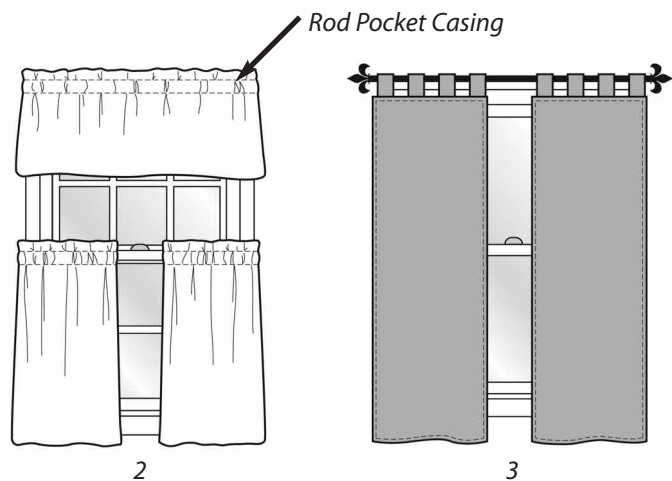
Basic curtains and drapes are straight panels of fabric. Variations are created by the “heading,” which refers to the way the window treatment hangs from the curtain rod or mounting board.

Many people use the terms curtains and drapes synonymously; however, curtains are associated with kitchens and bedrooms because they tend to be more casual than draperies. Curtains are usually made of lighter weight fabric and are not always lined. They typically hang from stationary curtain rods and have gathered, smocked or ruffled headings.

Draperies are more tailored, formal window treatments and are often found in living and dining rooms. They feature pleated, smocked or gathered headings and typically hang from drapery hooks on traversing rods. The drapes are opened or closed with pull cords at the outside edge of the window.

A rod pocket or cased heading is the easiest and most common heading. It features a casing or tunnel created by two parallel rows of stitching at (or near) the top of the curtain, through which the curtain rod is inserted (2).

Tab-top curtains feature fabric panels that hang from fabric loops or tabs; variations include tie tops, clip/ring tops (3).



Pleated drapes are made of long fabric panels that are pleated across the top (or header), often with the help of drapery tapes that simplify the pleating. There are many different styles of pleated drapes.

Café curtains are short, straight curtains that hang on the lower half of a window (for privacy); often paired with a valance or another pair of short curtains that cover the upper half of the window (see figure 2). The upper curtains can be made long to overlap the lower curtains for total privacy, or made short to leave the center of the window open for light and outside viewing.

Ruffled curtains feature fabric ruffles or a gathered trim attached to the top, inside and/or bottom edge.

Thermal lined drapes have a special lining that blocks out summer heat and winter cold to improve energy efficiency. Any drape can be thermal lined.

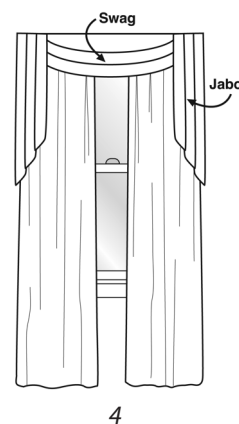
Bishop sleeve curtains resemble the bishop sleeves on garments, which are full at the top and then pulled back in the middle and draped or puffed out slightly to resemble a goblet.

Swags & Jabots

Traditionally, swags and jabots are found on more formal window treatments; the choice of fabric and the method of hanging or draping the fabric make the swag/jabot combination suitable for any window.

A swag is a piece of fabric that drapes over a decorative rod or is pleated onto a mounting board that spans across the top of a window (4).

Jabots can be separate pieces or simply the opposite ends of the swag that fall down along the sides of the window in soft folds or pleats (4). The term jabot refers to a short section of fabric that falls in soft folds at the outside of a window treatment.



Valances

One of the most versatile window dressings, valances vary in length and shape and are used alone or over the top of shades, curtains, drapes or even miniblinds. A valance is hung across the top of a window, often covering curtain hardware. A valance can be pleated, gathered or draped from a rod, or it can be stapled to a mounting board.

A **basic valance** is a straight or shaped, short fabric panel that can be stapled flat to a mounting board or sewn with a rod pocket opening. (See the upper treatment in figure 2.)

A **scarf valance** usually consists of a 6- to 8-yard length of fabric draped over a decorative rod, which hangs over a sconce or is held with special swag holders. A scarf valance is often used as top treatment with shades, draperies or curtains.

A **blouson valance** is similar to the basic valance, except that it has two layers. It's constructed like a tube, so it is self-lined, and the casing is stitched through both layers. Once completed, tissue paper is stuffed between the layers to create a soft pouf. 🖱