

# WINDOW FASHIONS— Selecting the Right Decorative Treatments for Your Windows

By Penny K. Bartlow, ASID, CID

**W**indow treatments are so important to the overall finished look of an interior space. They often help in defining the style of a room; can add needed texture, color, or pattern, and serve as an architectural element. Both the function and aesthetics of an environment can be completely altered and enhanced with the addition of appropriate window dressing.

As with other interior elements, determining a suitable type of window treatment involves answering some key questions: Is there a need for light control, privacy, heat control, or insulation? Will the drapery or blinds be opened and closed on a daily basis, or will they be stationary? How does the window that they will be covering operate?

After resolving the functionality issue of the window or windows, you may begin the design process, remembering that whatever you choose to do, window treatments must be practical, as well as beautiful. Now, the architecture of your home, the type of window, and the style of your furnishings all need to be considered—window fashions should be an extension of the existing interior, whether traditional or contemporary, light in scale, or heavy. A room that is balanced allows the eye to travel harmoniously throughout the space without an over emphasis on any one element. A well-designed window treatment will not dominate a space but complement it.

There are many types of window decorating options from which to choose—shades, shutters, blinds, drapes, valances, and cornice boards, just to name a few—and a vast array of fabrics, high-tech materials, and decorative hardware in many colors, finishes, and styles to consider. Working with a qualified interior designer will ensure a window treatment solution that meets both the function and style requirements of your home. ♦

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**Top:** These sheer linen roman shades exude a natural quality—bamboo stays are stained to match the window sashing and applied to the linen with criss crosses of heavy thread. Design: Lois Macaulay. Photography by Karen Hendrick and Silvio Caligayo. **Above left:** This subtle décor is completed by Schumacher silk and wool satin overdrapery in robin's egg blue with an underdrapery in forest green and antique hardware. Design and photograph by Lois Macaulay. **Above right:** This room called for darkly antiqued valances and sumptuous tonal green velvet draperies. Interior by Lois Macaulay. Photograph by Julie LeGal.