

# CHIC DÉCOR

**Design – Colour Consultations – Space & Furniture Planning – Window Treatments**

## **Dressing the Naked Window**

Have you noticed that people have become obsessed with windows? They want more of them and they want wider, taller (two storey perhaps?), and shapelier (round tops, elliptical, oblique). The truth is that most of us are attracted to homes that are laden with windows, most likely due to our northern climate and the need for the warmth and light that an abundance of windows can afford us. That's why new home builders keep upping the ante by building homes with more elaborate windows than ever before.

The problem arrives when you move in and are surrounded by what feels like a sea of glass. You're on display during the day, the sun is fading your furniture, and you can't see a thing on the TV due to glare. By night privacy is even more elusive due to your beloved windows that now appear to be nothing but black holes! You decide a call to action is what's needed but what to do?

Don't despair; the answer lies in an analysis of the situation and a plan. First, determine your budget. Quality window treatments are not inexpensive but if chosen properly they will serve you well for many years to come. Secondly, analyze the rooms you are intending to dress. Decide how much light filtering and privacy you need for each room. Next, consider the style of window coverings that will best suit the design of the room, and always have an eye on cohesion so that your home doesn't end up looking fragmented and chaotic. Here are some options for different scenarios.

### **Great View**

Do your windows look out onto a beautiful view? If so, you won't want to cover them up with treatments that obscure the view. Instead consider a fabric treatment that flanks the view (such as side panels) without covering the window itself, particularly if the windows are north facing. The fabric should coordinate in colour and pattern with the other elements in the room, and the direction of light will have a huge bearing on the fibre selection. Never use silk on south facing windows, for instance, as the sun will destroy the fibres ruining the window treatment and its longevity.

### **Light Filtering**

If the windows face any direction other than north, then light filtering will probably be necessary. Consider a shade or blind mounted on the inside of the window that can be positioned to filter the light, or can be either pulled up/down entirely, to allow an unobstructed view of the outdoors.

Alternatively, there are new window films that filter UV rays while affording you a crystal clear view outside and are great for those who don't like anything mounted on the inside of their windows. For a classic look use wood shutters which have the added bonus of being great heat insulators. Couple any of these options with a fabric treatment that flanks the window, of course bearing in mind whether a more classic or contemporary look is in order.

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Or have a layered fabric treatment with sheers for light filtering, and fabric panels on either side. If you haven't seen the new sheer fabrics lately you're in for a huge treat-shimmer, metallic threads, even embroidery in a myriad array of colours. They're certainly nothing like the sheers of days gone by!

### **Security**

Some films allow you to look out while passers-by are unable to look in due to the mirroring effect that occurs from the outside, this is a great option for rooms where security is of the utmost importance such as home offices and family rooms where expensive equipment is on display to onlookers.

### **Undesirable View**

If your window has an undesirable view such as your neighbour's brick wall/window, or a parking lot, look at cellular or pleated shades with different opacities that allow the light to come through while obscuring or blocking the view entirely.

Another option is to use frosted and patterned window films to create an inexpensive alternative to stained glass thus disguising the offending view.

### **Privacy**

Bedrooms necessitate the most privacy, so do make sure the treatment has complete light control. In addition, creating a layered look is more attractive and feels and looks warmer. Use shutters, or blinds or shades that specify complete light control for privacy. In addition, have a fabric treatment the flanks the window and perhaps a valance above it depending on the style of the room.

Finally, if you're still unclear as to which products you should be entertaining for your home contact **Margarida Oliveira**, designer and owner of **Chic Décor**, for a design consultation.

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