

# CURTAINS



Resene Chevron.

## Quality v Cost

**Good quality curtains will cut down on maintenance, keep rooms warm, and reduce water related damage (if installed correctly).**

Full length curtains are more efficient at keeping in warmth and they make most rooms appear larger.

**Investors:** Where possible all curtains should be the same length and also full length (down to the floor). If all curtains are the same length (colour, style etc.) you can rotate them within the property ensuring they last longer (e.g. move the curtains from a sunny lounge to a south facing back bedroom). It is also possible to replace one damaged curtain instead of an entire room.

## Pelmets

To cut down on condensation and mould damage, put up some pelmets (remember the old fashioned pelmets we pulled out of so many of the older properties?)

They work like this – cold air is sucked in under the bottom of the curtain, it moves up between the back of the curtain and the window warming as it rises (causing condensation). It then continues straight out through the top of the curtain and is released into the room (usually carrying on up to the ceiling). More cold air is sucked in the bottom of the curtain and the process begins again.

If there is a pelmet at the top of the curtain

rail – the warm air is trapped, and there is nowhere for the cold air to flow – simple – but it works!

(Flounces draped across the top of the curtains can perform a similar task to pelmets, and can dress up an otherwise boring room).

## Colours and materials

Choose curtains that follow the same colour rules as your paint choice.

Buying cheap curtains may seem fine for a short time, however in the long term, the colours often fade or the curtains become damaged, and you will have to replace them.

**Investors:** Purchase neutral curtains made from material which is readily available such as a good quality Calico. If a curtain is damaged, you can just replace one curtain as opposed to replacing an entire room.

If you buy floral or coloured curtains, you may not be able to find an exact match to the colour or pattern you originally purchased.

## Spend on linings

It is preferable to purchase good linings for curtains.

Sew curtain tape at the top of the lining and use curtain hooks to attach the lining to the main curtain. This will enable you to detach and replace the cheaper lining without having to replace the main curtain (usually it is the linings which get condensation, mould and sun damage and sometimes it is impossible to freshen them up).

An option is to purchase double curtain rails – but often the lining material is not pulled fully closed, and the good main curtain will suffer damage.

If a property is susceptible to mould and condensation damage from damp winter conditions – there are mildew guard polyester lining fabrics which claim to be: mildew resistant; light to wash; and last longer in the sun than cotton linings.

These linings are quite a bit more expensive than cotton, but ideal if the problem is costing a fortune in new drapes.

## Rods and rails

Incorrectly installed curtain rods or rails can pop plaster board lining out from behind a window architrave.

Purchase good quality metal curtain rails – plastic rails do not stand up very well to rough treatment (e.g. in children's bedrooms).

Lengthen mounting brackets to their maximum limit. Rails held out by heavy wall mounting brackets will keep curtains from lying against the window (causing moisture damage).

Extend curtain rails beyond the window frame so when the curtains are open, they are against the interior wall (not  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  way across the window). This will allow maximum light, give rooms a spacious feel and reduce moisture damage.

Some homes do not have Lintels above the windows – you should ensure you find adequate studs to firmly secure rails.

If you are replacing wall linings – put in an extra nogg between the lintel and the stud for easy curtain rail attachment.

Ensure your curtains have a full complement of curtain hooks – lack of curtain hooks can cause curtains to tear when pulled.

## Curtain quicktips

- ✓ Ensure curtain rods are extended beyond the edge of the windows.
- ✓ Full length curtains are better than curtains which reach the window ledge.
- ✓ Pelmets are excellent to reduce condensation.
- ✓ Quality curtains can be professionally dry-cleaned and repaired – and can look like new.
- ✓ Use heavy duty curtain rods and extendable wall mountings.
- ✓ Blinds are handy for awkwardly placed windows and where there is limited space.
- ✗ In the winter, the worst culprits for curtain damage are the combination of a modern home closed up all day while the occupants are at work, and on their return they fire up the gas heater on full – welcome window waterfalls! ■

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