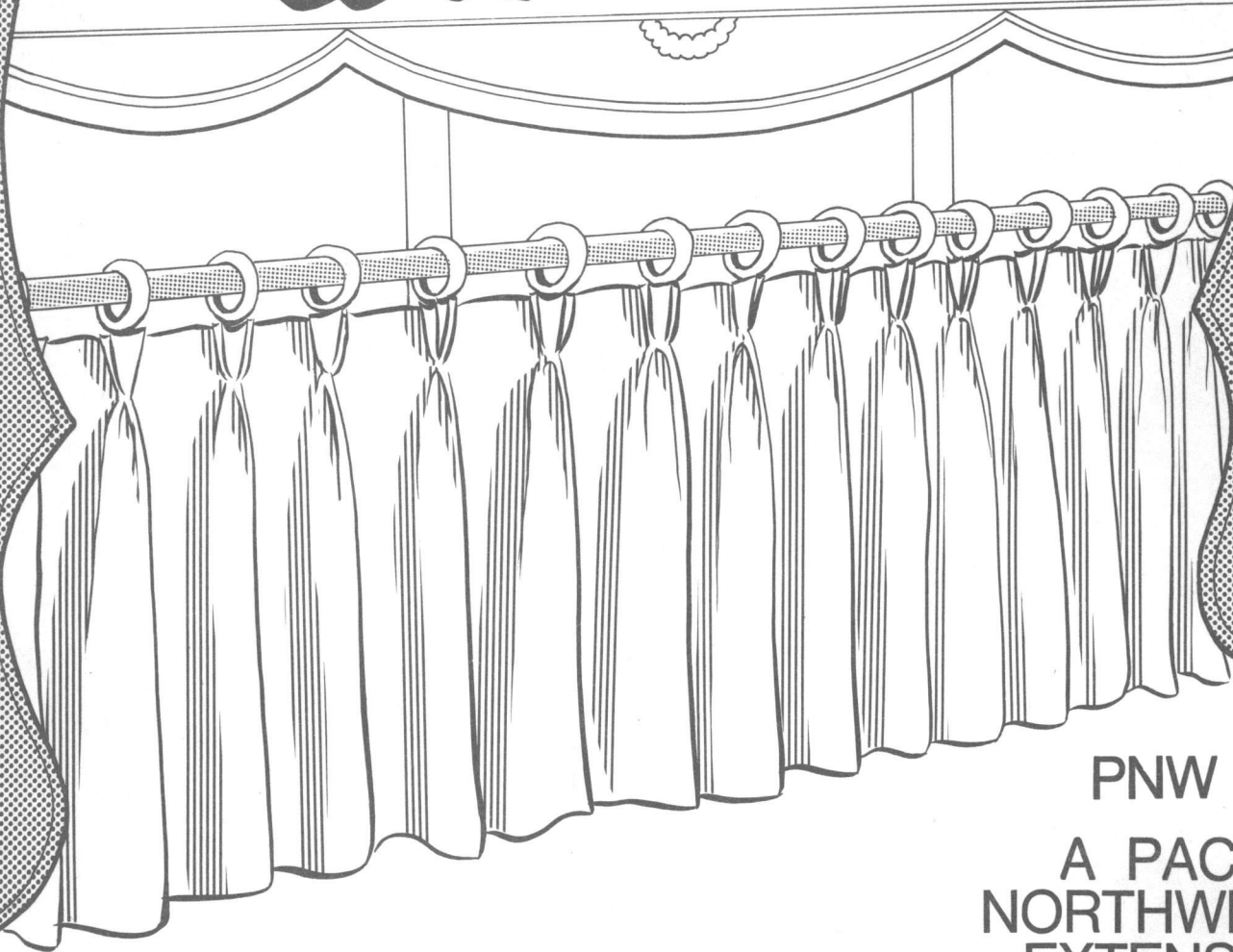


What to do with Windows



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What to do with Windows

The windows and glass doors in a home let in light and air, provide a view, and block outside noises. Ordinary glass also transfers cold from the outside, allows the sun's heat to penetrate, and permits a view of the inside of the home. As a part of walls, windows offer limitless decorating possibilities.

What can be done with windows? The practical problems can be solved and the attractiveness of the home enhanced. Many choices are available. This publication will discuss the basic window coverings in terms of practical considerations. The application of design principles to windows, treatment of unusual window styles, and information about window hardware are also included. For additional information on fabrics, styles, and hardware, the drapery departments of stores, mail order catalogs, and home furnishings magazines should be consulted. Directions for making window treatments are available in separate publications at the county extension offices, and can also be found in the pattern section of fabric shops and in do-it-yourself magazines.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In homes that are already built, the existing windows have to be dealt with "as is." With new homes, the selection of window types and their placement can be planned to keep problems at a minimum. In either case, the starting point should be asking what needs to be accomplished and how it might be done. A combination of two or more coverings may be desirable if one alone cannot meet all needs.

Maximum daylight

If the maximum possible light is desired through the window and glass door openings, window coverings need to extend as little as possible over the glass. Consider:

- No window covering at all. The "bare look" is fine if there is no need for privacy, insulation, or for blanking out an unpleasant view. At night, those inside can enjoy looking out upon artfully lighted trees or shrubs. Outside lighting will keep the dark glass from acting as a mirror, and extend the feeling of space.
- Roller shades, with or without a narrow valance board at the top. Shades may also be installed at the bottom of the window to roll up, to provide privacy when needed (see Fig. 12).

- A lambrequin around the window with a roller shade that pulls down from behind the framework for sun control and night privacy (see Fig. 1).
- Stationary drapery panels hung over the window casings and walls so as not to cover much of the glass. Add a roller shade for night privacy.
- Traverse draperies or cafe curtains stacked on the wall space beside the window instead of covering part of the glass.
- Vertical blinds or slim horizontal blinds that allow almost full light penetration when they are in the open position (see Fig. 7).
- Roman shades hung from the ceiling, so the fairly deep stack space required will be mostly above the window.
- Sliding panels that pull completely off the windows when light is desired (see Fig. 3).
- Folding shutters that can be moved out onto the walls or folded compactly against the side casings of the window (see Fig. 4).

Reduced daylight

Large windows on only one side of a room may be a cause of glare when the light is bright outside. Consider:

- Horizontal or vertical tilting blinds.
- Sheer curtains to filter the light without blocking the view.
- Sheer roller shades of porous fabric or transparent vinyl. Translucent shades will filter the light but block the view unless pulled only partially.

Daylight with privacy

In bathrooms and front entry halls, daylight may be needed, with privacy desirable most of the time. Consider:

- Translucent glass or plastic in place of transparent glass.
- Liquid plastic coating on transparent glass. Self-adhesive vinyl film that gives a frosted look to glass is also available in 18"-wide rolls.
- Austrian shades or pouf panels made of semi-sheer fabric (see Fig. 5).
- Jalousie windows of frosted glass (see Fig. 6) provide privacy when closed but allow a view when opened.
- Fences or shrubbery on the outside of bathroom window.

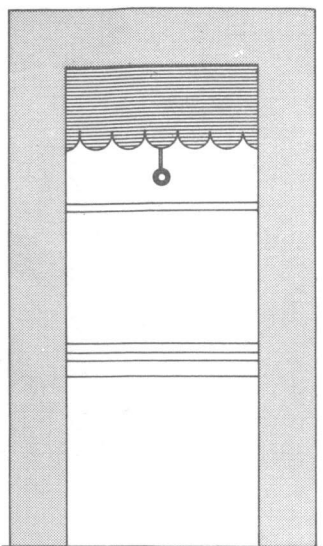


Figure 1. Lambrequin — a wood frame covered with fabric, wallpaper, or paint which surrounds double-hung window sash.

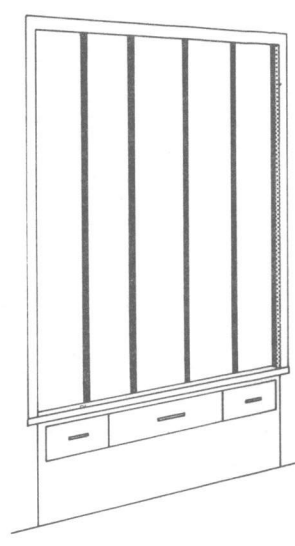


Figure 2. Roman shade is shown pulled up and lowered. The shade fabric is lined, then tapes are attached on the back near each outside edge and at intervals of 12"-15" in between. Cords run through rings in the tapes, drawing the shade up in horizontal folds.

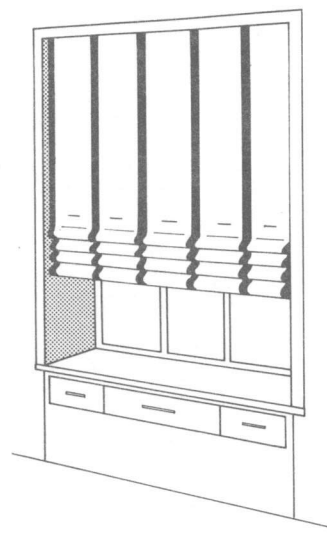


Figure 3. Sliding panels of fabric are attached by nylon tape to an overhead track designed for the number of panels desired. As the first panel is pulled back by a metal wand, it catches the second panel, which in turn catches the third panel, etc. All of these panels are stacked on wall space to one side of a sliding glass door. This same treatment with shorter panels can be used for sliding windows.

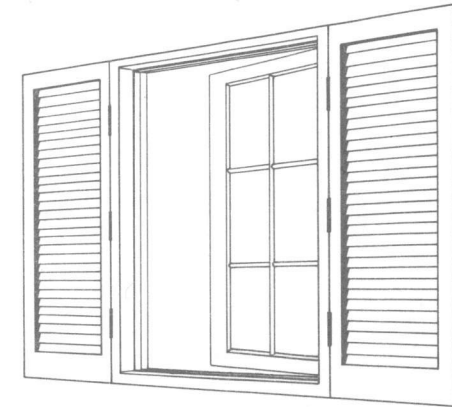


Figure 4. Shutters may be louvered or have inset panels of fabric or rigid plastic sheets. Adjustable louvers are available. Used here with an outward-swinging casement window.

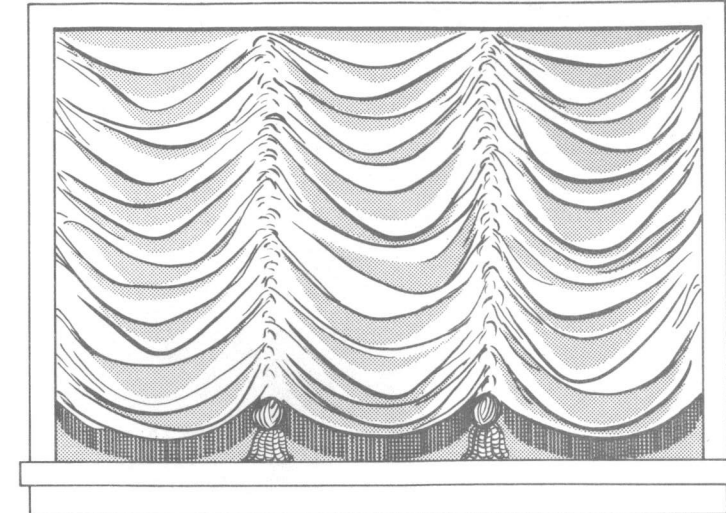


Figure 5. Austrian shades (and Austrian-styled pouf panels) are shirred on vertical tapes. Shades may be raised by cords run through rings sewn on the tapes, but the quantity of fabric used does not make this very feasible. This style is most suitable for a fixed window that does not open for ventilation.

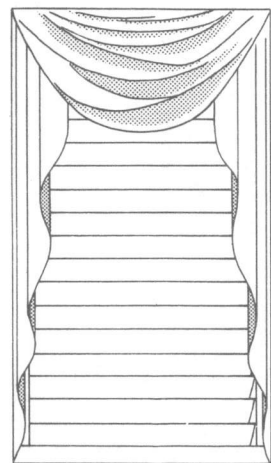


Figure 6. Jalousie window with overhead swag and side jabots.

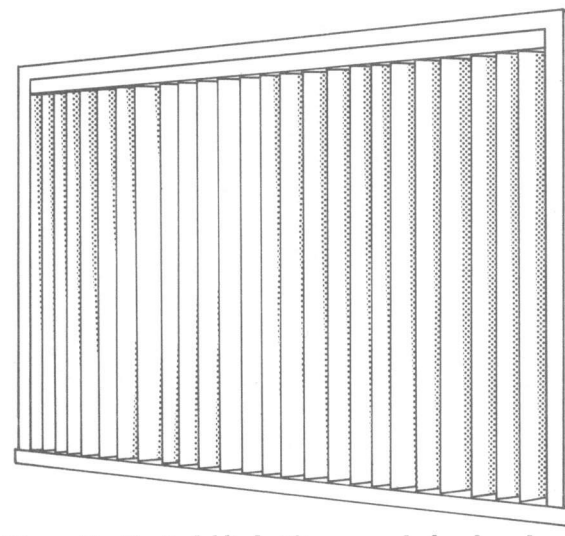


Figure 7. Vertical blinds tilt open and closed, and can be pulled completely to one side if desired. The strips are plastic-impregnated cloth, and each can be completely detached from the blind framework for easy cleaning. View and sunlight can be controlled while still admitting ventilation.

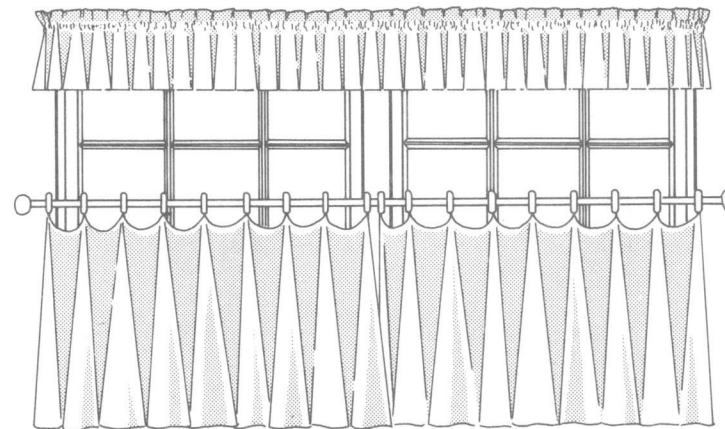


Figure 8. Cafe curtains may be made of any weight fabric, or of bamboo or vinyl reeds. They are hung by metal rings, cloth loops, or on traverse rods so they can be opened and closed across the window.

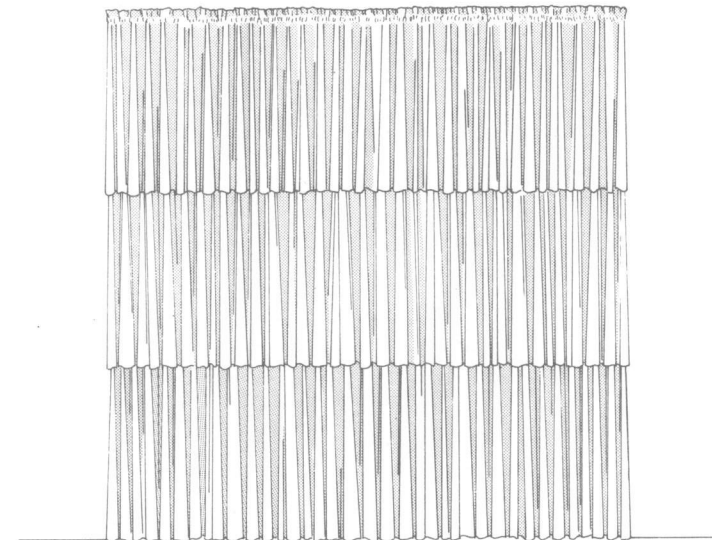


Figure 9. "Rod pocket" curtains may be made of any weight fabric, may be of any length, and may hang straight or be tied back. One rod may be used alone. Three tiers are shown.

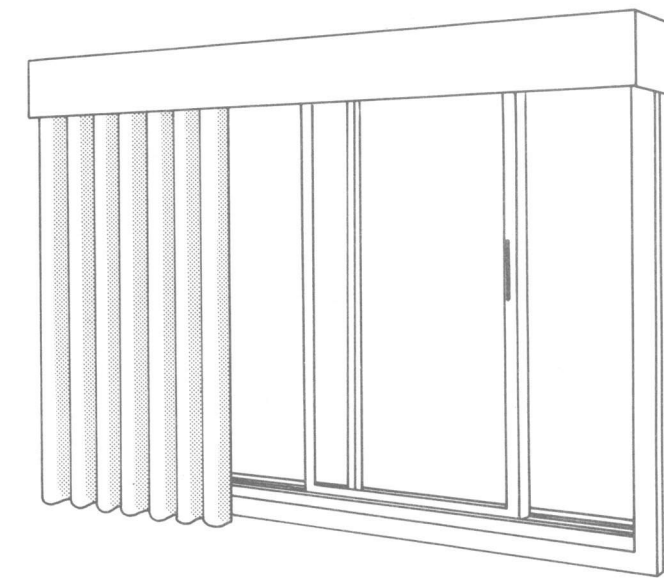


Figure 10. Sliding windows and doors should have one-way draw traverse rods so draperies and curtains can pull back in the same direction as the window or door opens. A cornice board is used above.

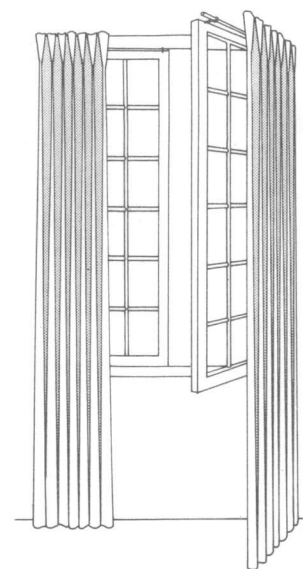


Figure 11. In-swinging windows and doors may have coverings attached to special rods that swing open when the door or window is opened.

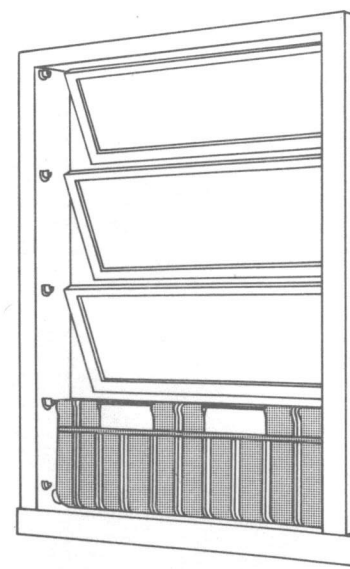


Figure 12. Awning windows have a series of sashes that open outward. A bottom-up roller shade has a brass rod inserted through loops in the top of the shade. The ends of the brass rod can rest in any of the rod holders fastened to the window casing sides at various heights.

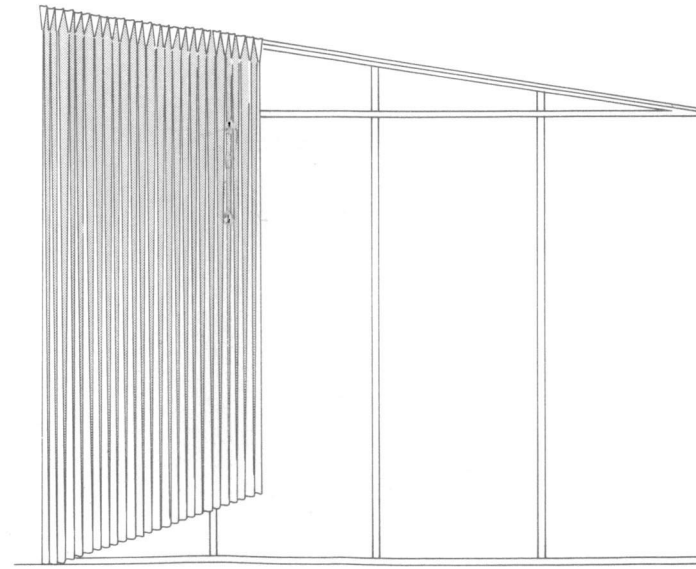


Figure 13. Cathedral window with traverse draperies.

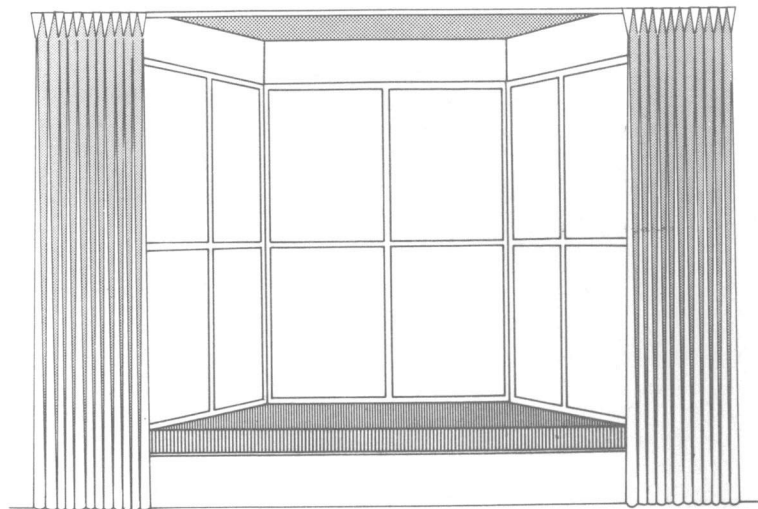


Figure 14. Bay windows with traverse draperies hung from ceiling of room.

Daylight with privacy but a view outside

Seeing inside the window from the outside is made difficult, but anyone inside can see out when one of the following is used:

- Louvered wire screens (used for sun control) and regular wire screens.
- Sheer full length traverse curtains. For night privacy, a double rod would allow for heavier drapery to be pulled across window.
- Loosely woven drapery or casement curtains. For night privacy, hang a lining fabric on the window side of a double rod which could be pulled across window behind the drapery.
- Horizontal or vertical tilting blinds (see Fig. 1).
- Cafe curtains (Fig. 8) or "rod pocket" curtains (Fig. 9) across the lower part of the window, leaving a full view through the upper part of the window. Sheer, semi-sheer or opaque fabric will give varying amounts of view from the lower part of the window.

Privacy at night

When the lights are turned on inside a home, those outside can see inside unless one of the following is used:

- Closely woven unlined or lined draw draperies or cafe curtains.
- Opaque folding decorative screen, shutters, shades, blinds, or sliding panels.
- Fencing or shrubbery on the outside of the house.

Protection from the sun, with a view outside

The sun will enter east and west windows in the early morning and late afternoon unless trees or architectural baffles have stopped it. Consider:

- Tinted or reflective glass to cut down on both heat and glare.
- Roller shades of transparent vinyl in a sunshade tint.
- Metal horizontal or vertical blinds, slightly tilted.
- Bamboo traverse draperies or roller shades.

The south windows can be protected by four feet of overhanging roof, which keeps out the hot summer sun but allows the lower winter sun to enter and help keep the house warm. If the roof does not overhang, vertical slanted louvers can be constructed to extend the roof line. The louvers can be straight up and down or slanted outward at the bottom. Trees that lose their leaves in winter will provide summer shade but allow the winter sun to enter.

Insulation from the cold

- Insulated glass or storm windows and doors are the best solutions to heat loss through glass. The cold radiated from the glass and inside moisture condensation are also minimized. The view is not blocked out.
- Insulated draperies provide cold control at night but do not help during the daytime when the draperies are opened. Foam-backed draperies, insulated lining fabrics, and plain lined draperies are all useful.
- Roller shades, Roman and Austrian shades provide some insulation if they fit closely to the window casement and trap air between the glass and the shade. Insulated material is more effective than plain material.

Reduction of room noises

Bouncing sound waves can be caught in the folds of drapery and curtain fabric. Porous and nubby fabrics will trap more sound than will slick, closely woven fabrics or hard materials such as shutters or blinds.

Ventilation

Windows may open up or down, in or out, or by sliding to one side. Consider each possible window covering in relation to letting in air and still maintaining day or night privacy as needed.

- Double-hung windows that can be opened by lowering the top sash permit cafe curtains or shutters to be closed across the lower half of the window. A roller shade can be pulled up from the sill.
- Horizontal sliding windows and doors require tilting vertical blinds or horizontal blinds if privacy plus air are needed. If privacy is not necessary, draperies can be pulled open to admit air by using a one-way draw in the same direction that the window slides (Fig. 10). If a two-way draw is used, the rods should be extended onto the wall so the fabric will not hang over the open window.
- Windows or glass doors that open inward may have curtains attached to the window framework, or free-swinging drapery rods attached by hinges (Fig. 11).
- Awning windows open outward with hinges along the top, and may have several sashes one above the other. The top one or two sashes can be opened for ventilation, with privacy achieved by a roller shade that rolls up from the bottom (Fig. 12) or by cafe curtains across the lower part.

- Windows that open outward may hinge at the side. Ventilation with privacy can be achieved with tilting horizontal or vertical blinds, cafe curtains, or shutters (Fig. 4).

DESIGN FOR DECORATIVE EFFECT

Appearance from the outside of the home

Consider the effect of the window treatment on the exterior appearance of the home, both during the daytime and at night:

- A uniform appearance on each side of the house is desirable. If different treatments are used, the color and design should be compatible with each other.
- The color of the window coverings should be harmonious with the exterior color of the house.
- The design lines of the window coverings should be harmonious with the lines of the window itself. Divisions of window glass may be horizontal or vertical, or both. A cafe curtain rod, for example, looks best when it is in line with a horizontal division of window panes.
- Drapery and curtain headings should be above, and hems should be below the window opening so they are not visible from the outside.
- Patterns printed on unlined drapery fabric should be checked for appearance on the outside of the window. At night, the pattern will show through when the inside light is on unless the fabric is very heavy.

Appearance on the inside of the home

Window treatments should be designed to express personal tastes of color, pattern, and texture. Harmony with other furnishings should be considered, with elegant fabrics and styling used with formal furniture and more textured or casual treatments combined with informal types. Some people prefer sheer, ruffled curtains and others want tailored effects. The most important aspect is for those who live in the home to enjoy the appearance of the windows.

Design principles will operate regardless of personal taste. Color, texture, pattern, and lines produce certain effects, and knowledge of these will allow the designer to achieve the desired result. Consider:

- Bold pattern or a contrasting color will call attention to the window and make it a center of interest. Braid and trim can be used for this purpose on plain fabrics. A large, noticeable window treatment will visually move that wall closer into the room and change the room proportion.

- Color and pattern that blend with the wall will make the window treatment inconspicuous, but the folds of drapery or other variations from the wall texture will add a subtle interest. A close blend of color between the background of a printed fabric and the wall color provides a sense of unity. Wallpaper with matching fabric can be purchased, or tightly woven fabric can be pasted on the walls as well as used for window coverings. (Bed sheets are both a suitable weave and are large, so seams are fewer.)
- Vertical lines will increase the apparent height of a wall. Ceiling to floor window treatments can be used for this purpose.
- Horizontal lines will shorten the apparent height of the wall, but will make the wall seem longer, as vision will be carried back and forth. Valances, cornices, and swags add a horizontal line at the top of a window treatment.
- Optical illusions can be created by using window treatment material on wall space to change the apparent size or proportions of windows. A valance or cornice board will cover up window and door tops of different levels, and can provide more height. A cafe curtain hung from the sill of a high ranch window will make the window seem to come down to the bottom of the curtain. Two or more windows close together can be treated as one window to unify the appearance (Fig. 8).
- The bottoms of curtains or draperies make a horizontal line that is most attractive when in line with a part of the window or other architectural line below the window. (Safety dictates that draperies not be close to an electric baseboard heating unit, so with it the sill or apron of the window is the line at which to stop.)

UNUSUAL WINDOW STYLES

Cathedral window

The upper glass can be left uncovered with the window dressing hung from the horizontal division of the glass. Shades may be installed above, to roll up to the top of the window (the top of the shade is cut on a slant). If desired, the entire window can be covered by cutting the top of the curtain or drapery at a slant. It is necessary to use a one-way draw rod and pull the fabric to the high side of the window (Fig. 13).

Corner windows

Traverse drapery hardware can be installed to pull toward the corner across each window, or in the opposite direction. Separate rods are needed for each window.

Bay windows

Three or more windows set at an angle to each other form a bay. Separate rods are needed on each window for curtains or draperies. Roller shades or Roman shades may be used. If the bay is shallow and does not contain furniture, a traverse rod can be hung on the ceiling of the room itself, so draperies can be pulled across leaving the windows recessed behind (Fig. 14).

HARDWARE FOR WINDOW COVERINGS

Before any window treatment materials are purchased, it is necessary for the hardware to be secured and installed. The casing and molding around windows, plus the header boards and studs in the wall, can affect the type of hardware that may be used. No accurate measurements can be taken for the window covering materials until the hardware is in place, because original plans may need to be changed.

Stack space

Curtains and draperies that open and close will require space for "stacking" when they are open. The amount of space is dependent upon the type of rod and also on the weight of the fabric. Draperies hung so the top of the pleats comes above the rod take from four to six inches of stack space per foot, because the heading has to fold between the pleats. Decorative rods that require the top of the drapery to come below the rod will stack in a little over three inches per foot of rod because the folds of the drapery can be pushed back toward the window. The size of the carriers will determine how close together the pleats can be pulled. Plain rods with concealed carriers, used behind valances and cornices, can have the top of drapery come below the rod also. On very large windows, the

stack space with some carriers can be reduced to slightly more than two inches per foot of rod. Accordion pleated draperies, installed with special hardware, also take up minimum stacking space.

Hardware types and quality

Hardware varies in quality for all types of window treatments. Special types of hardware are available to solve most problems. For example:

- Heavy-duty traverse rods for medium and heavy fabrics.
- Metal shade rollers for wide windows.
- Curved drapery rods for bow windows or windows with arched tops.
- Spring tension rods for use inside window casings, or for dormer windows.
- Rods with special extensions to hold drapery out over the walls.
- Drapery rods for French doors and in-swinging casement windows.
- Overhead tracks for sliding panels.
- Oval rodding and brass rods for curtains, valances, Roman and roller shades, or special designs requiring rods at top, bottom, or in between.
- Molly screws, toggle bolts, and screw anchors for fastening hardware brackets on plaster or sheetrock walls with no wood stud behind, or into masonry walls.

Experienced window treatment salesmen can secure or make hardware custom-fitted to most window situations.

One of the most important requirements for a successful window treatment is accurate measurement of the window parts, using a steel tape that does not stretch. A sketch of the window to show exactly what was measured will communicate more accurately than words.