

# 5 Window Treatments That Can Reduce Your Energy Consumption

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**By Emily Green**

Window treatments offer more than privacy and décor. They can also help with lowering your utility bills. Check out these five window treatments that can **reduce your energy consumption**.

## **Shades**

Window shades are an easy addition to any room and come in a variety of colors and materials.

- **In the summer:** Shades work best to lower energy consumption in the summer by blocking harsh sunlight. Choose thick fabrics to maximize
- **In the winter:** To improve your shades' ability to stop heat loss in the winter, mount them close to the window and make sure they reach the sides of the window.

## Awnings

Awnings add curb appeal to your home, while blocking intense sun rays.

- **In the summer:** Use them on southern and western facing windows to cut the heat that enters your home by **65 to 75 percent**.
- **In the winter:** Try a retractable awning that you can lower in winter months to allow southern light in. Look for awnings that allow proper air flow and don't trap heat underneath.

## Blinds

Due to their versatility, blinds are the one of the many **contemporary window treatments** available for homes. You can raise and lower them like shades, but they also have slats that you can move to allow sun and air to pass through.

**In the summer:** Because blinds are versatile, they are less effective than shades in the summer. Some light can still pass through the slats in closed blinds.

**In the winter:** To minimize winter heat loss, make sure your blinds fit your window snugly and are hung close to the glass.

## Draperies

Draperies add a touch of luxury to your living space. Better yet, the right drapery can **lower your energy bill**. When used properly, draperies work well in both summer and winter. Follow these tips, and you will love the year-round energy efficiency of your drapes:

- Use two drapery panels instead of one.
- In winter, close drapes on windows that do not receive sunlight.
- Close all drapes on cold winter nights.
- In summer, close drapes on southern and western facing windows.
- Hang drapes as close to the window as possible.
- Attach drapes to the wall at the bottom and sides to **reduce heat loss by 25%**.

## Reflective Film

High-reflectivity films on your windows cut the glare of the sun and allow rays to bounce off the window. Reflective film is a more permanent solution than blinds, shade and draperies, because you cannot remove film to allow more light to enter.

- **In the summer:** Films are best used in warm climates where they can reduce heat gain year round.
- **In the winter:** Reflective film is most effective on east and west-facing windows. When used on southern facing windows, films block sun rays that could warm your home in winter.

Go green today by doing one or all of these effective treatments to your home. Not only will you help the environment, you will also save money.

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