

save energy and money...

with blinds, shades and window treatments



Partially open shades block bright sunlight.

by Rhonda Pike
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As we head into the cooler, crisper months of autumn and winter, energy efficiency becomes one of the top priorities for most homeowners. Who doesn't want to save money on heating bills, right? Well by following a few simple guidelines and having blinds and window coverings professionally installed, you'll have found one of the simplest and most effective ways for saving energy.

Let's break things down into the three basic ways to save both money and energy: insulation, solar heat control and daylighting.

Insulation. While insulating is typically more important in cold climates than warm or hot, insulating blinds and window coverings can effectively reduce heat transfer through windows during both winter and summer. Of course, window coverings in the winter months are not only more appreciated, because they keep more warmth inside, but also very cost-effective.

Solar Heat. The science of sunlight heating is basic and natural. Solar heat control is brought into the home by direct or reflected sunlight, and sunlight becomes heat when it warms the air and furnishings in its path. During the winter months, solar heat gain is desirable to help heat the home. Hence, blinds and window coverings should be opened when direct sunlight shines on south, east or west windows on sunny winter days.

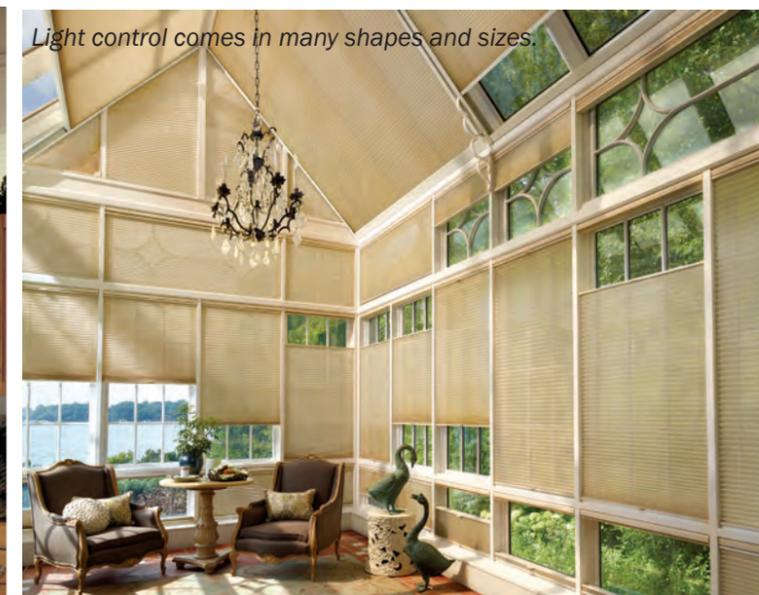
Daylighting. By definition, daylighting is when you lower or tilt the vanes of your window covering to diffuse the incoming light and soften the brightness of the room. Glare is eliminated and visual comfort is improved, but daylighting's major benefit is reduction in electrical lighting needs—which saves money.

In addition, blinds and window coverings help control two other types of energy: ultraviolet light and sound. Ultraviolet (UV) light is an invisible part of sunlight. When shades are fully closed they are very effective in blocking UV rays,

which can gradually fade furniture, upholstery, wood floors, draperies, carpeting and artwork. Sound absorption can also be a big part of your purchasing decision. Soft window coverings can absorb up to 70% of sound energy, which helps quiet the room; while hard window coverings reflect most sound, blocking exterior noise without dampening interior sound.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Like with most things in life, timing is everything. And nowhere is it



Light control comes in many shapes and sizes.

more important than the quest to achieve ultimate energy efficiency in your home. Window coverings must be opened and closed at the correct times, which vary with the season and the direction the window faces. When window coverings are added to bare windows, we are adding *values*—which actually controls the flow of energy.

Put simply, when window treatments are open, the value and energy comes in (or goes out) through the window; and when closed the value and energy stays out (or stays in).

A general rule of thumb: during winter months, open the window covering when the amount of solar energy



Shutters can be used to adjust incoming sunlight.

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Window coverings save energy, soften the glare and make a room beautiful and inviting.



A touch of the finger raises and lowers this cordless window covering.



Single Cord Operating System eliminates dangling cords.



and linings available, you can create a warm and cozy atmosphere inside your home.

entering through the uncovered window is greater than the amount of heat energy being saved by the lowered shade. This usually means opening the *value* whenever bright, direct sunlight shines on the window.

On the other hand, in summertime, since energy through windows typically flows in one direction only—into the room—you could optimize efficiency and decrease the load on your cooling system by choosing to keep your window coverings closed at all times. But for those of us who prefer more light, visibility and ventilation, a reasonable compromise is to do just the opposite of what's suggested for winter: close the *value* when direct sunlight shines on the window.

Finally, window treatments not only reduce energy use in your home, they are less expensive than purchasing new energy-efficient windows. In addition to saving energy, window treatments enhance the window and add style and depth to the room. With so many endless choices of fabrics

Remember—safety should go hand-in-hand with energy efficiency. A few helpful tips...

- Keep safety features in mind, especially with curious infants or pets in the home.
- Window coverings, as well as basic household items, can turn into potential hazards.
- To reduce the risk of entanglement choose blinds from a reputable company that designs window treatments with safety considerations.
- Safety operating features to look for are:
 - Retractable cords that maintain a constant length.
 - Cordless operating systems or remotely operated motorized systems.
 - Wand controls, which allow blinds to be controlled without the need of operating cords.

Air is trapped within each layer of a honeycomb shade making it the most efficient in energy savings.



Window coverings let you be in control of the amount of light entering the room.



For Your Information... Shutters are cordless by design and eliminate the potential safety hazard posed by operating cords while adding extraordinary beauty to any room.

Blinds with long dangling cords or any cords that can be reached by a child from the floor, bed or furniture, etc. should be used with a Cord Cleat.

A Cord Cleat is mounted out of a child or pet's reach and allows any excess cord to be tightly wrapped around it for both enhanced safety and a neater appearance at the window.

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Cord free lifting systems are a child safe option.

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R&A

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