



INSTANT EXPERT

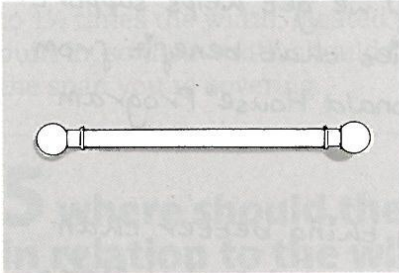
curtains

Paralyzed by possibilities when it comes to dealing with your windows? This quick primer will give you the know-how to find the right treatments for every spot in your home.

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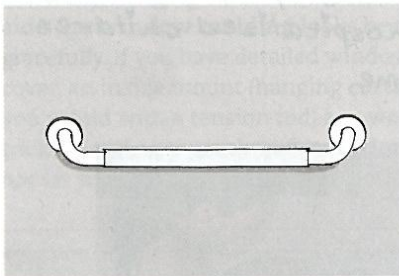
what type of rod should I use?

Decorative curtain rods should relate to the style of the room. Those that are completely hidden from view can be chosen based on function alone. Here are common options.



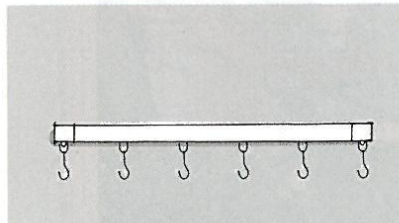
classic rod

An adjustable pole, often featuring ornamental end caps (finials), that attaches to the wall with brackets. Match the metal to other finishes in the room. You can buy a double-rod version if you want to layer with sheers.



return rod

An adjustable U-shaped rod that screws directly into the wall. Panels wrap around the curved sides, making this a good solution for blocking out light. Also available in a double-rod style for layering.



track rod

Drapery hooks attach to pulleys inside a track. Can be installed on a wall or the ceiling. Some tracks resemble a rod with finials, concealing all moving parts inside the pole. Curtains glide effortlessly.

dimension rod

The easiest and cheapest (at least sturdy) option, it just fits inside a window frame with no hardware. Bare-bones, it's meant only for lightweight panels or café curtains.

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do I need tiebacks?

If you want to be able to pull curtains to the side for **more light or a swoopy, formal look**, tiebacks are the answer. They're also a nice way to showcase a view. Mount a curved metal bracket or a peg (known as a rosette) on the wall about two-thirds of the way down the window. Match the room and the rod for style and finish. There are simple fabric tiebacks and fancy ropes with tassels for a grander effect. More casual: tying a curtain in the center of a window with matching fabric or a wide grosgrain ribbon.

9 what about installation?

A handyman can hang curtains for you. Expect to pay \$55 to \$95 an hour, depending on where you live. Figure about **20 minutes per window** for a basic rod with brackets, and 45 minutes per window for a track rod. If you would rather do it yourself, hanging ready-made curtains is not that difficult. Rods usually come with mounting hardware and instructions. You may need to buy rings separately. Beyond that, hanging panels involves a stepladder, a tape measure, a pencil, a level, a handheld drill, a screwdriver, and a stud finder. If there are no studs where you're anchoring brackets, use toggle bolts instead of screws. You can view helpful how-to videos at potterybarn.com (search for "video") and barbarasway.com.

10 where should I shop?

There's no substitute for touching fabric and feeling its heft, so **it's a good idea to check out curtains in the store or order swatches** (higher-end sites will allow you to do this) before making a purchase. Some retailers will even lend you large fabric samples to take home and hang in front of your window. Below are some reliable sources, most of which you can visit in person as well as online.

LOWER PRICED

A range of colors and pretty patterns abound, but materials are mostly limited to unlined cotton, linen, and polyester.
curtainworks.com
ikea.com
lowes.com
urbanoutfitters.com
westelm.com

MIDPRICED

Many curtains from these retailers are lined, so they'll drape better.
anthropologie.com
crateandbarrel.com
potterybarn.com
restorationhardware.com

HIGHER PRICED

Expect to find every style, rendered in especially luxurious fabrics.
calicocorners.com (only made to order)
horchow.com
laylagrace.com
smithandnoble.com (also has made to order)
thecurtainexchange.com (also has made to order)

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