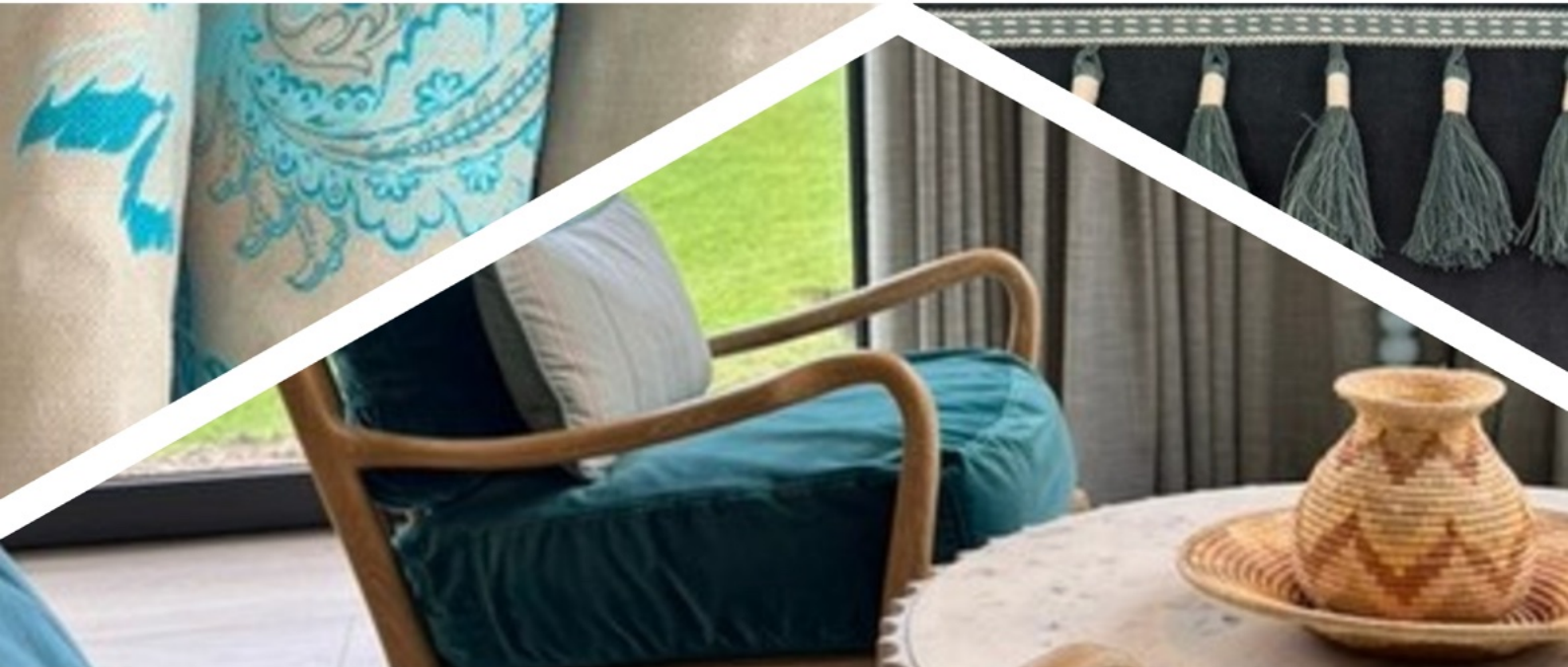


Choosing Window Treatments



CLOSS & HAMBLIN

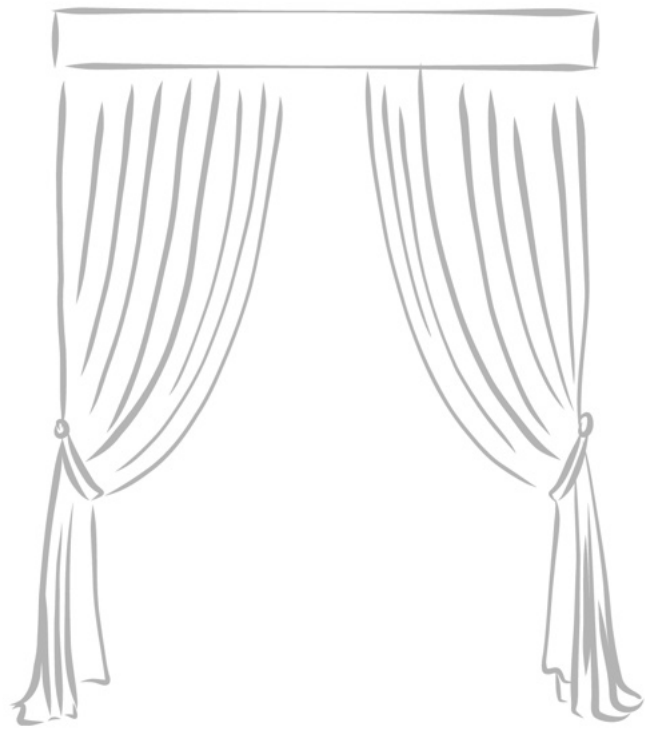
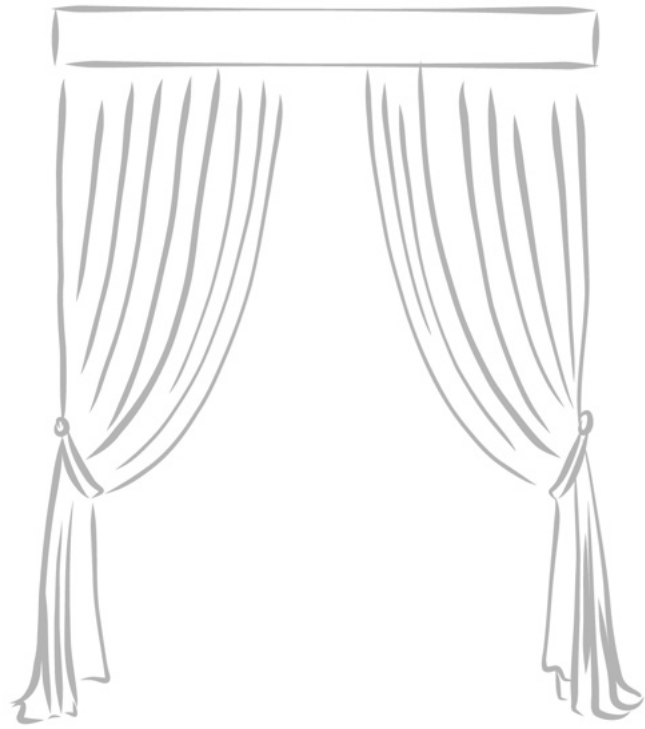


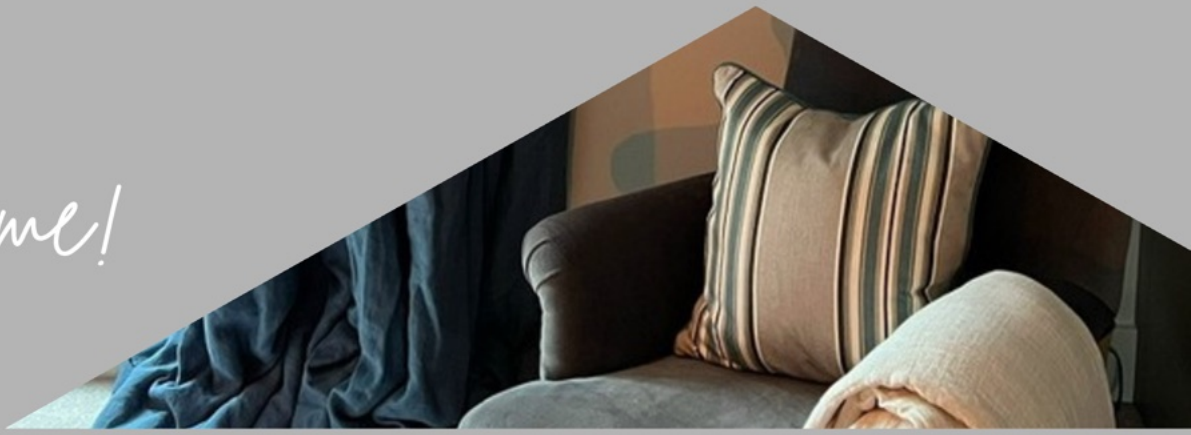


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Welcome!



Welcome to our guide to choosing window treatments.

Selecting curtains or blinds can feel overwhelming. With such an array of styles, fabrics and finishes, product comparison is often impossible. Yet window treatments have a powerful influence over the atmosphere of a room. They frame the light, soften acoustics and add a tailored finish that transforms how a space feels and functions.

That's why Closs & Hamblin and At Home by Design have teamed up to create this guide; a collaboration between interior design expertise and heritage craftsmanship. Between us, we bring decades of experience in bespoke soft furnishings, colour and design detail.

This booklet explores the practical and aesthetic considerations behind choosing the right window dressing: from curtain styles and blind mechanisms, to fabrics, trimmings and professional advice. It's designed to help you make informed decisions and understand what's possible when design and craftsmanship come together.

In partnership, Closs & Hamblin and At Home by Design offer a unique end-to-end interior design service, combining design insight, technical know-how and impeccable finishing. Whether you're embarking on a full home refurbishment, renovating a period property or simply refreshing a single room, we can help you create a cohesive, considered scheme that enhances both comfort and character.

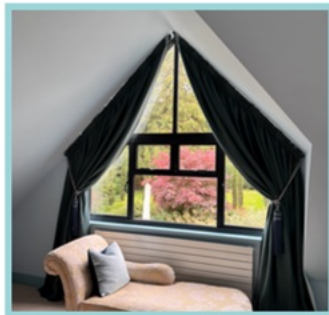
We hope this guide helps you see window treatments not just as decoration, but as an integral part of how your home works and feels.

James Hamblin
Managing Director
Closs & Hamblin

Helen McClure
Interior Designer
At Home by Design

How to Choose the Right Window Treatment

Window treatments are one of the most important design decisions you'll make, and one of the most transformative. Beyond style, they affect privacy, light, temperature and acoustics. Here's what to consider when making your choice.



1. The style of your home

The architecture of your property often guides the most appropriate treatment.

- Period homes often suit fuller, softer drapery, with natural fabrics and layered details that echo their character.
- Modern homes may benefit from cleaner lines and minimal profiles - think wave headings, concealed tracks or motorised blinds.

Sometimes, contrast can be just as striking: pairing traditional architecture with contemporary finishes can create a refined, balanced look.

Designer Insight

In heritage homes, window treatments can highlight original mouldings or sash frames. A skilled designer will ensure proportions and scale feel right - particularly important in rooms with tall ceilings or uneven openings.



2. Room function & mood

Every room tells a different story.

- Bedrooms may need blackout lining and soft textures for calm and comfort.
- Living rooms often benefit from layered solutions, combining sheers for daylight with lined drapes for warmth.
- Kitchens or bathrooms need practical, moisture-resistant fabrics.

Think about the role of the space: is it formal or relaxed, bright and airy or cocooning and intimate?

3. Light & orientation

The direction your windows face influences your fabric and lining choices.

- South-facing rooms can benefit from UV-protective linings or solar-control fabrics.
- North-facing rooms often need warmth and texture to soften cooler light.

4. Window type & practicality

The shape, height and accessibility of your window can dictate whether a curtain, blind or shutter will work best. Consider:

- Available space for hardware.
- Whether furniture or radiators obstruct the drop.
- Accessibility for operation: motorised options can be especially useful for high or awkwardly placed windows.



5. Fabric & finish

Your choice of fabric determines the overall feel of the room.

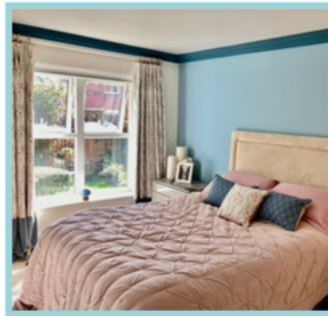
- Sheers diffuse light and add softness.
- Velvets or wool mixes bring luxury and insulation.
- Linens offer relaxed texture and timeless appeal.

Add trims, borders or contrasting leading edges for a bespoke finish.

6. Budget & value

While bespoke window treatments are an investment, they offer long-term value. They are made-to-measure solutions that fit precisely, hang beautifully and endure daily use.

Professionally designed and installed treatments can also improve insulation, helping to manage heating and cooling costs.



Expert tip

A beautifully designed curtain or blind can last decades. Choosing quality fabrics and professional installation ensures longevity and a finish that's impossible to achieve with off-the-shelf products.

Curtains in Context

Window treatments have been part of domestic architecture for thousands of years, not merely for decoration, but as an essential layer of comfort and protection.

In ancient Egypt, fine linen curtains were used to filter sunlight and create shade within open stone dwellings. In medieval Europe, heavy drapes and tapestries lined castle walls and windows to trap warmth and shield against draughts. As techniques developed, function evolved into art.

By the Renaissance period, decorative drapery had become a sign of refinement and status. Silks, damasks and brocades adorned grand windows, while tassels and trims became emblems of luxury.

The Industrial Revolution transformed access to fabrics and fittings, bringing beautifully tailored curtains and blinds into middle-class homes for the first time. Window treatments were no longer purely practical: they became a reflection of changing taste, culture and design sensibility.

Today, we continue to see window treatments evolve. Motorisation, sustainable textiles and thermal linings mean they are as technologically advanced as they are decorative. Yet the core principle remains unchanged: a well-dressed window softens architecture, filters light and defines the atmosphere of a space.

Designer Insight

In heritage properties, window treatments must respect the building's character while enhancing modern comfort. The right solution can bridge centuries, combining historical integrity with contemporary performance.

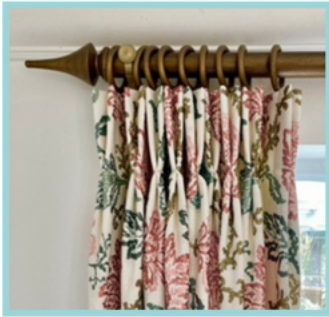
Types of Window Treatments

Choosing between curtains, blinds and shutters isn't just a matter of taste, it's about finding the right solution for the architecture, proportions and lifestyle of your home.

Before deciding, consider:

- Is there space beside the window for curtains to stack without blocking light?
- Is there sufficient height for a track or pole above the frame?
- Do you wish to highlight or conceal decorative mouldings?
- Is the window deep enough for a recess blind, or would an external mount look cleaner?
- Are there radiators or furniture in front of the window?
- Would a motorised control make operation easier (especially for bay or tall windows)?





1. Curtains

Curtains remain a timeless, flexible choice. They add texture, movement and softness to a room, and can completely change the sense of scale or symmetry within a space.

Ready-made curtains are ideal for quick updates but are limited by standard sizing and finishes.

Bespoke curtains, however, are crafted to exact measurements and specifications: hand-sewn hems, mitred corners, interlined fullness and considered pleats create a refined, lasting result.

A professional maker will balance fabric weight, lining and heading style to ensure the curtains hang beautifully and perform well. Details such as trims, contrast borders or tailored tiebacks add individuality and depth.

Expert tip

Hanging height matters. Mounting a track close to the ceiling gives the illusion of taller windows and adds elegance to any space. Hang a curtain too low and it can make the ceiling feel lower.



2. Blinds

Blinds offer a sleek, structured aesthetic and are ideal when space is limited or when you want a cleaner look. They can stand alone or layer beautifully beneath curtains for a versatile finish.

- Roman Blinds: The most popular fabric blind, folding neatly when raised. They can be lined or blackout-backed, and bordered for added detail.
- Roller Blinds: Simple and contemporary, available in blackout, sheer or patterned fabrics. Cassette systems conceal the roll for a polished finish.
- Venetian Blinds: Horizontal slats in wood, aluminium or plastic offer precise light control and a timeless look.
- Honeycomb blinds: Structured shades that provides excellent insulation, which is ideal for conservatories or energy-efficient homes.
- Concertinered or shaped blinds: Lightweight and crisp, suitable for irregular window shapes.
- Vertical Blinds: Perfect for wide expanses of glass such as patio doors.
- London, Austrian and Festoon Blinds: Soft, decorative options for more traditional or romantic interiors.
- Top-down/bottom-up blinds: Adjustable from both directions, offering flexible privacy and light control.
- Day & night blinds: Dual-layered fabrics that glide over each other for variable transparency.
- Fixing-free: This type of window covering doesn't require drilling or screws for installation, making them ideal for renters or temporary situations.

Expert tip

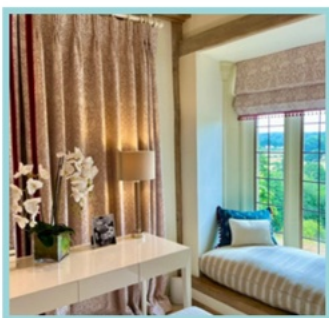
Layering: Combining a Roman blind in a patterned fabric with plain curtains creates depth without overwhelming a scheme. It also offers flexible light levels and enhanced thermal properties.



3. Shutters

Shutters are architectural, elegant and enduring. They provide privacy, sound reduction and insulation while complementing both period and contemporary homes.

- Full height shutters: Clean and classic, often with a mid-rail for adjustable light control.
- Tier-on-tier shutters: Independent top and bottom panels, perfect for sash windows.
- Café style shutters: Cover the lower half of the window for privacy while allowing light above.
- Solid panel shutters: A traditional option for heritage homes, excellent for room darkening and heat retention.
- Bay window shutters: Custom-crafted to follow the angles of a bay for a seamless fit.
- Skylight shutters: Designed for roof windows, offering both insulation and light management.



Fabric, Lining, Trimming & Embellishments

The true artistry of window treatments lies in the detail. Beyond their practical purpose, curtains and blinds are an opportunity to express individuality and craftsmanship. Every element, from the fabric weight to the lining and trimmings, contributes to how they look, feel and perform.



1. Fabric

The choice of fabric defines the mood of the room.

- Linen and cotton: Relaxed, natural and perfect for informal, light-filled spaces.
- Velvet and wool: Luxurious and insulating, ideal for creating warmth and depth.
- Silk and taffeta: Opulent and light-responsive, best suited to formal rooms and low-traffic areas.
- Performance and sustainable fabrics: Modern weaves offer UV resistance, flame retardancy or recycled content, ideal for family homes or environmentally conscious design.

Designer insight

When selecting patterned fabric, consider the scale of both the pattern and the room. Large prints need space to breathe; smaller patterns work beautifully in intimate rooms or on blinds.

2. Lining & inter-lining

A professional lining makes all the difference, enhancing drape, longevity and thermal performance.

- Standard lining adds body and protects the fabric from sunlight.
- Blackout lining blocks light entirely, which is perfect for bedrooms or media rooms.
- Thermal lining improves insulation in draught-prone properties.
- Interlining (a layer between the face fabric and lining) gives fullness, helps curtains hang elegantly and provides additional warmth.

3. Trimmings & embellishments

Details bring distinction. Fringes, braids, contrast borders or inset trims can define an edge, echo a colour from elsewhere in the scheme or add a bespoke touch. Used sparingly, these finishing elements elevate a design from beautiful to memorable.

Other decorative features include:

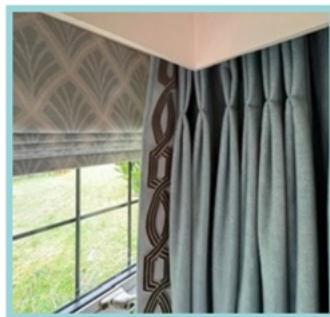
- Swags and tails: Dramatic, formal dressing for statement rooms.
- Valances and pelmets: Conceal curtain headings and add structure.
- Lambrequins: Upholstered frames for architectural grandeur.
- Tiebacks and holdbacks: Functional or purely decorative, available in coordinating fabrics, rope or metal.

Expert tip

Even simple curtains can look bespoke with a tailored border or contrasting leading edge. It's a cost-effective way to achieve a designer finish.

Hardware

Hardware plays a vital role in both performance and aesthetics. The right pole or track ensures smooth operation, while the finish and material can enhance the overall design.



1. Poles & tracks

- Poles are ideal for eyelet or tab-top curtains and are available in metal, wood, or bespoke finishes to complement your interior style.
- Tracks can be surface-mounted or recessed into the ceiling for a seamless look, particularly effective with wave headings.

2. Decorative cornices & pelmets

A decorative cornice can conceal tracks or hardware while framing the top of the window. These can be fabric-covered or painted to coordinate with wall colours and architectural detailing.



3. Motorisation & smart technology

Motorised systems have become increasingly popular, and more accessible. They provide effortless control via remote or app and can be integrated with smart home systems. Both curtain tracks and blinds can be motorised, powered by battery or mains. It's the ideal solution for hard-to-reach windows or for a clean, modern aesthetic.

Designer insight

Motorisation isn't just about convenience. It also extends fabric life by ensuring smooth, even operation and preventing unnecessary handling.



Co-ordinating with the Rest of the Room

Beautiful window treatments rarely stand alone. They're most successful when they work in harmony with the rest of the interior.

Custom fabrics can be repeated across:

- Bed Treatments: Headboards, bedspreads, valances or bolsters.
- Cushions and seat pads: Matching or contrasting fabrics create visual continuity.
- Accessories: Lampshades, throws or ottomans upholstered in the same fabric can tie a room together subtly.

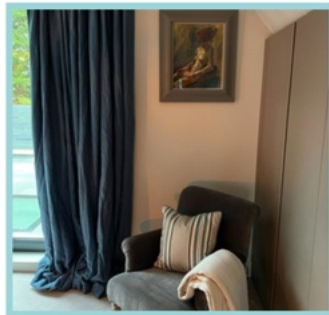
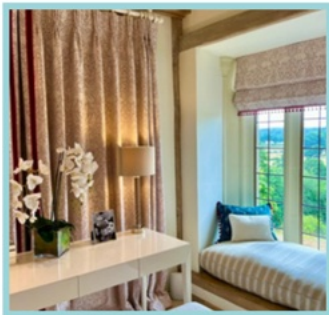
Expert tip

Repeating a fabric or a colour in smaller accents throughout a room creates a cohesive feel without overwhelming the design.



Benefits of Engaging Professionals

While ready-made solutions can serve simple needs, professionally designed and installed window treatments deliver a level of precision and polish that's difficult to achieve otherwise. When you engage experts, you're not just paying for materials. You're investing in design, creative thinking, technical knowledge and craftsmanship.



1. Creative design solutions

- Every home is unique. Professionals assess proportion, architecture, natural light and existing finishes to develop a solution that complements the space rather than competes with it.
- At Home by Design specialises in creating interiors with character and colour, while Closs & Hamblin bring generations of textile and fabrication expertise, a partnership that ensures a perfectly executed result.

2. Seamless end-to-end services

From design concept through to installation, every stage is managed with care. Measurements are precise, fabrics are handled professionally and fittings are tailored to each window. The process is coordinated so you can enjoy the transformation without the hassle.

3. Avoiding costly mistakes

The biggest pitfalls often occur in the details: incorrect measurements, poorly chosen linings or incompatible fixings. A professional ensures that every technical aspect is accounted for, so your investment lasts for years to come.

Designer insight

Professionally made curtains or blinds don't just look better, they perform better. They hang properly, function smoothly and are designed to stand the test of time.

Myths & Facts

When it comes to window treatments, there are plenty of misconceptions that can influence decisions. Here we clear up some of the most common myths.



You shouldn't hang long curtains over a radiator because it blocks the heat.



It depends on the property. In modern, well-insulated homes, long curtains can actually help trap warmth and improve efficiency. In older properties where draughts are common, shorter curtains or well-fitted blinds may perform better. The key is understanding your building's behaviour, something a professional can help assess.



All linings make curtains blackout.



Not all linings block light. Standard linings protect fabric and improve drape, while blackout linings are specifically designed to block sunlight. There are also dim-out and thermal linings that balance light control with insulation. Choosing the right one depends on the room and its function.





Blinds are always a modern choice and don't suit period homes.



Roman blinds, London blinds and even festoon blinds can feel perfectly at home in heritage properties. It's about selecting the right fabric, proportion and finish. Traditional patterns or textured linens can soften a blind's appearance, blending practicality with charm.



Shutters make rooms dark.



Not necessarily. When angled correctly, shutters allow plenty of light while maintaining privacy. White or light-painted shutters can even amplify daylight by reflecting it around the room.



Ready-made curtains are just as good as bespoke.



Ready-made options work well in straightforward windows, but rarely fit perfectly. Bespoke curtains are made to measure, hang better and last longer. Professionally made treatments also allow for superior lining, hand-finishing and choice of heading, details that elevate both performance and presentation.





Motorised blinds are only for luxury homes.



Motorisation has become more affordable and adaptable. Battery-powered systems are now suitable for single windows or entire homes. They offer convenience, protect fabrics from handling, and integrate seamlessly into smart home systems.



You have to choose between style and function.



With the right advice, you can absolutely have both. Modern textiles, fittings and design expertise mean beautiful fabrics can perform just as well as technical ones. A well-planned scheme always balances the two.



Choosing window treatments happens at the end of a renovation project.



It's best to make decisions early in the design process. Knowing what you want allows wiring, recesses or tracks to be built in seamlessly. Early planning avoids compromise later and ensures your final look feels truly integrated.

Expert tip

Every home is unique. The best window treatment is the one that respects your architecture, complements your lifestyle and enhances your daily experience. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Design is most successful when it's collaborative.

Choosing with Confidence

Selecting the right window treatments isn't simply about choosing a fabric. It's about designing comfort, character and longevity into your home.

The right window dressing transforms a space. It softens hard edges, controls light, improves acoustics and enhances energy efficiency. Whether you prefer the elegance of handsewn curtains, the simplicity of blinds or the structure of shutters, expert guidance ensures every decision is made with purpose.

By working together, At Home by Design and Closs & Hamblin bring the best of both worlds:

- Design expertise that considers colour psychology, proportion and architecture.
- Craftsmanship and technical precision from an established soft furnishings specialist.
- A seamless process from concept and fabric selection to final installation.

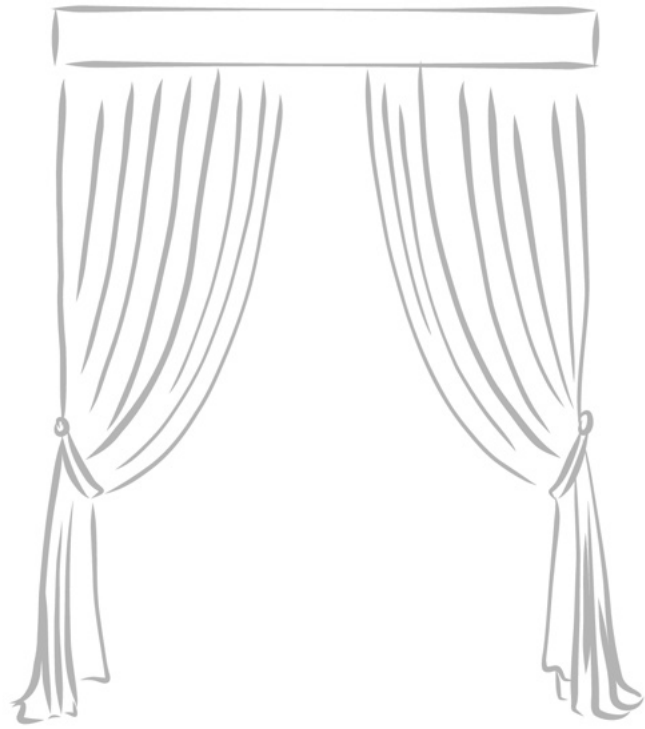
Every project, large or small, benefits from this collaboration. You'll receive tailored advice, beautifully executed products and peace of mind knowing your home is in expert hands.

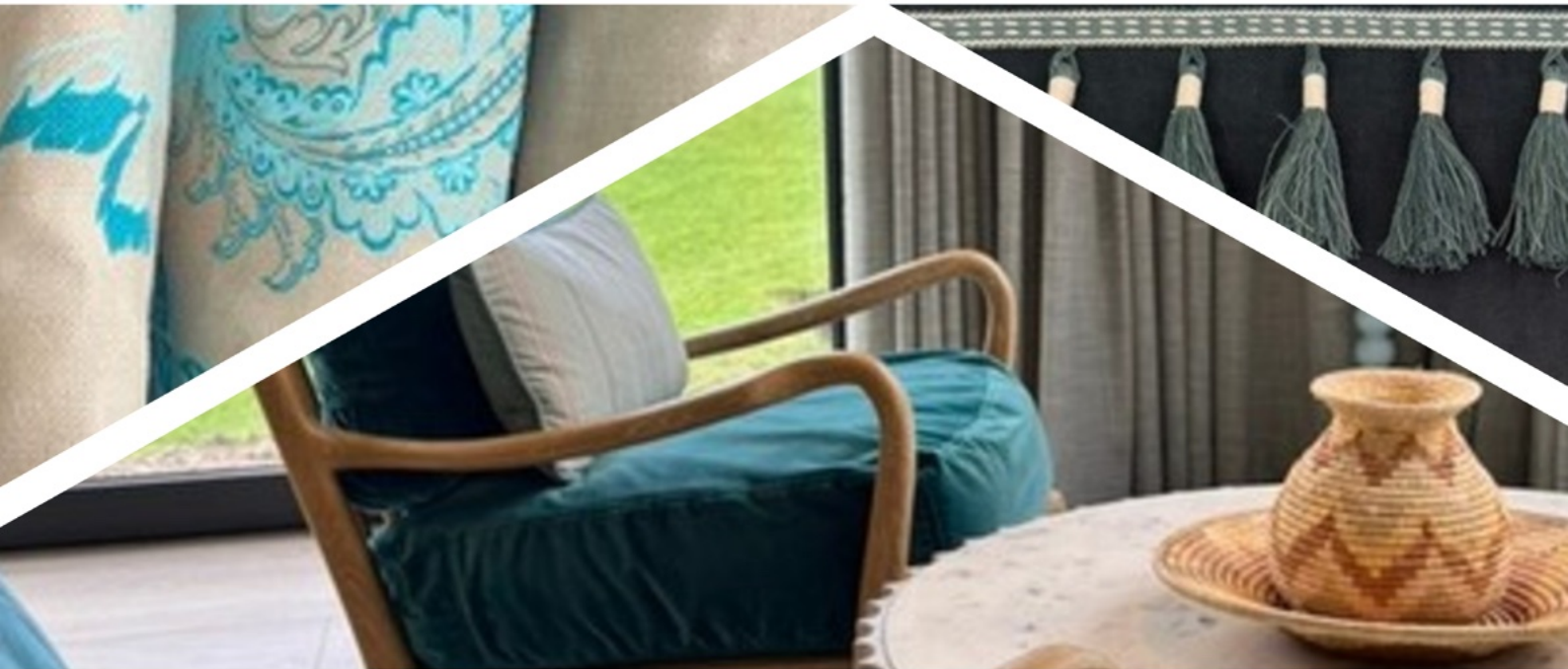
We hope this guide has given you a clearer understanding of what's possible and the confidence to make informed choices for your windows. If you'd like personalised advice or to discuss your project, we'd love to help.

Contact us to arrange a consultation:

At Home by Design: helen@athomebydesign.co.uk

Closs & Hamblin: jameshamblin@candh.co.uk





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