

new

OPTIONS OPENING UP FOR

CURTAINLININGS

Triple weave, dim out, light filtering and blackout are just some of the products available in an ever-widening choice of curtain linings.

Dawn Adams reports.



Suppliers warn not to skimp on the cost of a curtain lining. Selecting the correct one for a particular purpose is important to ensure end customers are satisfied.

But consumers also need to be guided through the wide variety of choice in the market to make sure they make an informed selection.

House of Drapes' Leanne Carter tells how she highlights how linings protect the face of a curtain fabric from fading and also guard against elements like dust.

She points to their ability to insulate while providing a pleasing uniform exterior to a home using colours or plains like white or ivory.

In Queensland, she observes polyester linings are popular because they are more resistant to mould or mildew and the trend is to attach the lining to the back of the curtain with a hook or on a separate track for easy cleaning.

"They might have a sheer on the front track for daytime privacy but at night, they can draw the lining for extra privacy," she says. "In colder climates like Melbourne or South Australia, they sew in the blackout lining."

But among the latest trends in recent years, she notes, are triple weave and dim out options in a range of beautiful modern colours. "People are using lots of darker linings with sheer curtains to get the effect of the colour coming through," she says.

And while she remarks that the standard original linings from 20 years ago are still sold in the market, she is also looking for something new. "If someone brought out a reflective lining with a silver backing, that would be brilliant," she says. "I have seen it overseas."



A WILSON STRONGEST SELLER

Wilson Fabrics' strongest selling linings are the Suede-Lina range, a polyester/cotton blend. "The most popular is our three pass coated full blackout in ivory," says marketing manager Jennifer Donnelly.

"This blend of polyester and cotton provides a more versatile fabric; cotton fibres can withstand high temperatures, which is ideal for linings as they are facing the sun," she says. "With a blend you get the added benefits of the strength, durability and wrinkle resistance of the polyester."

She claims these options provide the most versatile construction and fully blackout light and heat to provide maximum sun protection in summer, as well as the highest warmth retention in winter. The selection is also washable and dry cleanable and she points to the ability of linings to protect curtains from fading and deteriorating quickly. "Linings also protect the curtains from any dirt or moisture entering from the window which, over time, could cause mould," she says. "Another added benefit of using lining is it can be made on a separate tape to the curtain fabric so it can be removed and washed separately or easily replaced."

While she concedes blinds have taken over a substantial portion of the window furnishings market in recent years, she points to a continuing high level of demand for curtain fabrics. "Drapery offers an enormous array of designs which gives flexibility and options in matching and designing décor," she says. "Drapes and pelmets are the most efficient at reducing heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer; therefore they will remain an extremely popular option for window coverings." And she points to more variety in terms of colour and design that can be achieved by selecting drapery allowing consumers to easily match decor and tastes.

SAVING ON LINING A 'FALSE ECONOMY'

Attempting to save a few dollars on curtain linings is a 'false economy,' according to Charles Parsons creative director Michelle Greeves. "We sometimes get asked why it's worth paying more for a quality lining," she says. "Our view is that the price of a quality lining is a small part of the total value of the window treatment and saving a few dollars here is a false economy due to the enhanced potential for expensive problems later on."

Greeves suggests a benefit of a quality lining is that it can be dry cleaned or machine washed. "Many low cost linings cannot be dry cleaned nor machine washed and attempting to do so will cause disintegration or delamination of the coating," she says. "This limitation is a huge problem if the face fabric attached to the lining is dry clean only or machine washable."

Greeves also suggests inferior polymers used in the foam coating formulation for low cost linings can compromise the light fastness and durability of the finished product. "The consequences are especially evident when the coated fabric is placed in harsh UV light conditions and the coating changes from an ivory to a dark grey colour," she says. "The chemicals used in the coating may also start to break down resulting in moisture being released." Claiming this happens due to insufficient curing of the coating during manufacture, she says curtains can become damp leading to the development of fungus in humid climates.

Charles Parsons linings are tested in the firm's AS/NZS ISO 9001 2000 certified laboratory. "We apologise for the error which meant that our lining was classified as not drycleanable in our current price list," she says. "This is incorrect. All Charles Parsons linings are drycleanable."



“There is an opportunity there for all retailers.”

Wayne Leslie
Basford Brands

VARIETY OF LININGS AT BASFORD BRANDS

Basford Brands is increasing the options available for retailers to encourage the use of curtain linings by providing more choices in its Filigree and Maurice Kain selections. Managing director Wayne Leslie points to the benefits of choosing Thermoline, a woven 100 per cent polyester, or Microline, a knitted 100 per cent polyester. "The 100 per cent polyester base cloth is coated and has a lot less propensity to mould under humid conditions in areas like Queensland, northern NSW or parts of New Zealand," he says. "You can wipe them clean, whereas, with a polycotton cloth, mould can leave a residue or stain."

The firm's 100 per cent polyester uncoated blackout, Night Shade from Maurice Kain, is machine washable and fire resistant and is about to become available in 12 colours. "Now, we're using solid colour fabric with sheers which is the biggest trend and has a really good look," he says. "The darker colours are more common like black and charcoals."

Meanwhile, Leslie points to demand for a six star rating for new buildings in Victoria as having the potential to generate demand in this category. He says the terminology 'heavy drapes' is being used to signify a curtain with a blackout lining fit into a pelmet to enable home owners to secure the higher rating.

"In modern homes, box pelmets in plaster are being used to recess curtains," he says. "If you put heavy drapes with blackout lining, it's an enormous advantage for the thermal properties of a home."

His personal story reflects the opportunities. When Leslie was building his own home four years ago in Victoria, we was having trouble securing the five star rating that was required at the time. Installing heavy drapes ensured his project was approved. "I couldn't get across the line to get a five star rating unless I put in heavy drapes," he says. "There is an opportunity there for all retailers."