

“ASK THE EXPERT”



Faced with a multitude of challenges ranging from the fiddly to the huge, a day in the life of an installer is never dull. WFA talks problems and solutions with Melbourne based expert installer, Simon Akester of Esenar Shading Systems.

PROBLEM

HOW TO MINIMISE CORNER GAPS

Solution: Sadly this is a common affliction. If people could avoid having windows in corners, or having corners at all (!) an installer's life would be much easier. One solution is to stagger the blinds so they sit at different positions. Another solution is to front roll the blinds so the blind fabric rolls out at the front of the blind.

This closes the gap in the corner of the room, but does require painstaking patience, a good eye and years of experience to ensure the blinds line up beautifully. It's also not always the right solution; for example, it can create wide gaps between the blind and the window on the outer edges of the treatment. If your window is recessed, sorry, but you just won't get away with it. However if it has a large window frame that juts some way into the interior, you're home free.

PROBLEM

CABLES IN THE WRONG SPOT/HIDING MOTORISED CABLES

Solution: This is horrifyingly common; electricians putting cables where they want. We recently had a project in which the cable came out just where the bracket sat on the Vertilux rollers. As it happens this spot was possible to deal with, as the cable could tuck up into the ceiling without being seen and prevented interference with the blind. Most suppliers and retailers recommend 50mm in from the end of pelmet x 50mm into the room to the electricians, which is in fact the worst possible spot (guilty parties take note) as it is usually where the fattest part of the roll is, due to the structure of the blind.

PROBLEM

RECESSED TRACKS

Solution: Recessed tracks are a tricky one; getting the depth of the track right and cutting the timber correctly so the track aligns properly with the ceiling depends on detailed measurements, a good eye and, in some cases, the power of prayer. A recent project we did in Nagambie (Victoria) is a case in point on how to approach this problem. We measured up, installed the track, taped up the slot so dust couldn't get into the track and then the plasterer plastered around it.

PROBLEM

CROOKED CEILINGS

Solution: Some buildings, particularly older buildings or those built on land affected by soil movement are, for want of a better phrase "all over the shop". The ceiling is going one way, the floor is going another, and the treatment just has to fit somehow. I wish there was an easy way to solve this problem, but after years of experience the only catch-all to offer, short of re-building your home, is basically: compromise. Some high-end clients (usually eccentric retired engineers) may have a stab at custom building a head box to fit their equally eccentric interior, but generally the expert advice is to learn to love your treatment's imperfections.

PROBLEM

CRUMBLY WALLS

Solution: The unforgettably named Glug Plug is a fast acting liquid plug for light duty fastening and anchoring and is a godsend in terms of meeting the challenge of crumbly walls. This product goes off in about five minutes, so speed is of the essence. What you do is drill all the holes first then squirt the product into the crumbly wall. After those five minutes you can screw straight into it. The downside of the product is that it's not cheap, about \$25. And of course, you have to be quick!

MINI CASE STUDY

PRIX FIXE RESTAURANT, MELBOURNE

This job was for Lovelight Blinds and the interior designer was Fiona Lynch. Being a French restaurant, the client was after a cool continental vibe, meaning all the curtains had to be on 'droppers', in other words they were hung considerably lower than the ceiling. Stylish but highly visible black rods were used, so it was essential that the curtains lined up. We lined up the rods with the walls, the ceiling and the windows by eye and then used detailed measurements as a double check before final adjustment and fixing. The project is being featured in the latest edition of Vogue Living, so it seems to have made the grade!

AND FINALLY

Question: What single product is essential to an installer's survival?

Answer: Screws - an installer's best friend.

The full range of screws we carry covers lengths from 10 mm to 90 mm, and are also offered in a variety of breadths. We have our screws custom painted white and black and we also carry silver and gold. We have an excellent relationship with trade suppliers, who can hunt down more or less anything and everything we could possibly need.