BBSA
The Authority on UK Shading

PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS GUIDE

PLEATED AND HONEYCOMB (CELLULAR) BLINDS

This document has been produced by the British Blind and Shutter Association (BBSA) to highlight the key characteristics of pleated and honeycomb blinds to help you make an informed choice when buying your blinds. The characteristics detailed below represent the state of the art and any relevant standard.

Fabrics

When fully lowered the blinds may not exactly line up at the bottom due to varying tensions in the fabric.

With pleated fabrics, unless the pleats are held in place (called pleat equalisation), gravity will cause them to become flatter at the top of the blind and more gathered at the base. The alignment of pleats on adjacent blinds cannot be guaranteed.

Pleated and honeycomb blinds should be retracted for a few hours each week to help preserve their pleated shape.

If buying multiple blinds, the pattern on the fabric may not match adjacent blinds and may not be centralised on the blind.

Fitting in a bay window

When fitted in a bay window, there will be some gaps where the neighbouring blind headrails meet each other. The size of any gap will depend on several factors including; the shape of the bay, the style of the window and the specification of the blind system.

Similarly, at the edge of the bay there may be light gaps/ potential loss of privacy depending on the angle of the bay and the adjoining walls.

Fitting inside the reveal (window recess)

To allow for operating clearance, the width of the blind must be narrower than the width of the reveal. If there are any obstructions in the reveal, for example tiles at the base or a dado rail, the blind will need to be made to accommodate the narrowest width.

Reveal (recess) not dimensionally consistent

Pleated and honeycomb blinds are made square, however in reality reveals are often not. The head of the window and/ or sill may not be level and the distances between the side walls of the reveal often vary.

The distance from the edge of the reveal to the window may also vary so the blinds will either be fitted to run parallel to the window or to the edge of the reveal.

Obstructions

With chain operated and motorised window blinds it is imperative these are not allowed to be lowered onto obstructions such as plant pots etc. This can cause the cording system inside the blind to become slack and may cause the blind to jam or not be level.

Roof blinds

Roof blinds may have holes through the fabric for operating cords and tension wires; these may be visible when the blind is retracted. When in the extended position, the cords/ cables will be more visible on single pleated fabrics than on honeycomb pleated fabrics.

With shaped roof blinds the top rail used to raise/lower the blind is restricted to a minimum size, so the blind may not pull up to the tip of shaped glazing.

The fabric on shaped blinds will fan up when retracted unless a layflat system is used. Shaped edges which have been cut with a hot wire cutter, may have visible melt marks when the blind is fully retracted.

Unless the pleats are equalised (held in place), gravity will cause the pleats to gather at the base of the blind and the fabric will be flatter at the top.

Where blinds are fitted to the sloping apex of gable windows the gap between adjacent blinds may not be consistent when they are lowered.

Dim-out

Pleated and honeycomb blinds are available in blackout fabrics but there will always be light ingress around the extremities of the blind (reduced if fitted in a frame or with side channels).

Pleated blinds have holes in the fabric for the operating cords which will emit some light. With honeycomb fabrics the cord runs in the cell of fabric so there are no visible holes.

Due to their product design characterstics these blind styles do not offer blackout.

Always ensure you read and carefully follow the operating and maintenance instructions.

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Motorisation

There is a wide range of motorised solutions available for your comfort and convenience and each system will have its own characteristics. Some points to consider are:

- **Speed and alignment:** Blinds in the same installation may not travel at the same speed and may not line up if stopped during the travel of the blinds due to mechanical and electrical tolerances.
- **Noise:** Some noise will be emitted from the motor operating the blind particularly on 240v powered blinds. Quiet motors may be available.
- **Wiring:** Some surface wiring may be required. Where 240V mains power is involved, a competent person, who can certify the works, will be required to provide a power feed unless the blinds can be powered from a plug inserted into an existing socket.
- **Motor protection:** For safety reasons, most motors are fitted with a thermal cut-out to protect them from getting too hot (usually from over-use). When cooled sufficiently, the motor will start working again.

Smart Home Hub

Where a smart home hub is used the signals to the blinds may occasionally be interrupted by other wireless devices in the home such as smart speakers or doorbells. This can affect the operation, or seamless operation of the blind.

Child safety

Blinds with cords or chains could pose a risk of strangulation to young children. The BBSA recommends inherently safe products (safe by design). If you choose a product with additional child safety devices these must be securely fitted as advised.

For further information on window blind safety visit **www.makeitsafe.org.uk**.

make it safe™

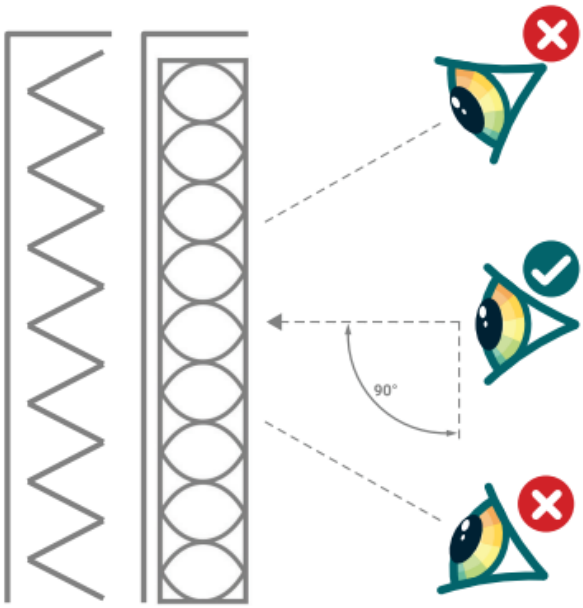
Visual product inspection

When checking the overall visual characteristics and aesthetics, the following should be observed:

Viewing distance and lighting
3m for exterior products in diffuse daylight;
2m for interior products with lighting suitable for normal room use.

Viewing angle
Perpendicular to the surface being checked.

Viewing aids
Naked eye (and any corrective glasses if applicable).



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