BBSA
The Authority on UK Shading

PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS GUIDE

ROLLER BLINDS

This document has been produced by the British Blind and Shutter Association (BBSA) to highlight the key characteristics of roller 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.

Dimensions

To accommodate the operating system and brackets, the width of the fabric will always be narrower than the overall width of the blind.

Fabrics

Fabrics made from cotton or which have a high cotton content absorb moisture and can shrink. Therefore, these fabrics aren't suitable for high moisture environments.

Slight cupping (curving) of the fabric at the edges may occur. This is typically due to humidity level changes.

If the fabric has a different colour on the back than it has on the front and no cassette (cover) is used, this will be visible on the fabric roll (unless it is rolled off the front).

Where fabrics are stitched, there will be pin-holes in the fabric. These will emit light and will be more obvious on darker/opaque/blackout fabrics.

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

Fabric running off

Roller blinds need to be fitted level to prevent fabric running off to one side during operation, particularly on long drop blinds and/or woven fabrics. However, with some fabrics the blinds may not run absolutely square and this may also cause the hem bar on the blind to be slightly out of level.

Fabric 'smiling'

A roller blind is held by brackets on both sides so the roller tube is unsupported along its length.

On wide or heavy blinds this can result in a slight bow in the tube with a 'smiling' effect on the fabric - that is the fabric may not sit perfectly flat when lowered.

Dim-out

Roller blinds with opaque fabrics provide a good degree of dim-out but there will be light coming around the extremities of the blind.

This is more apparent with blinds fitted inside a reveal than those fitted outside.

Due to their product design characteristics, standard roller blinds do not offer blackout.

Fitting in a bay window

When fitted in a bay window, there will be some gaps where the blind brackets 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 fabric of each blind and 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

A roller blind is 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 blinds will either be fitted to run parallel to the window or to the edge of the reveal.

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™

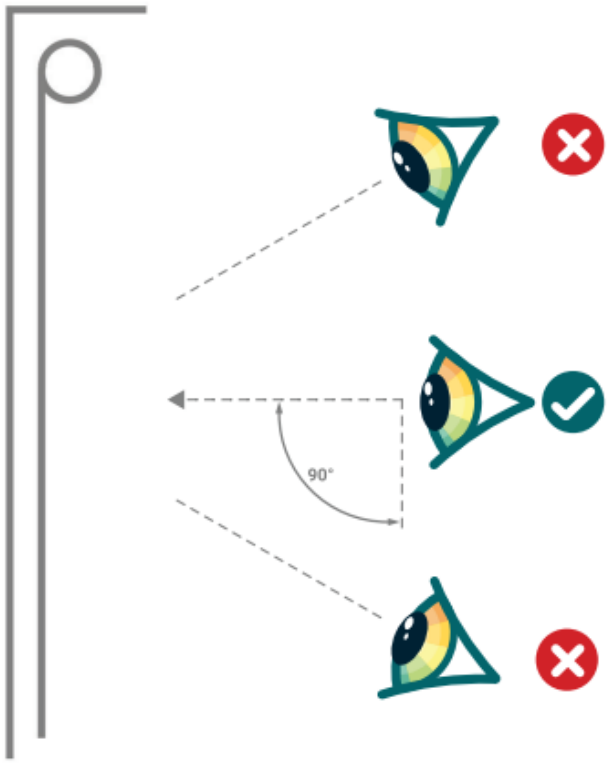
Visual product inspection

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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