BBSA
The Authority on UK Shading

PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS GUIDE

WOOD VENETIAN BLINDS

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

Wood is a natural material

As your blind is made using real wood, the slats are likely to display their natural characteristics such as knots and grain patterns. Wood Venetian blinds can be heavier compared to other types of blinds. You may find that raising wood venetians requires some effort. Absorption of moisture and drying of the wood over time may result in slight warpage or twist and therefore it is not recommended to use wood Venetian blinds in high moisture areas.

Colours and finishes

On stained finishes, natural shade variation can occur. Painted finishes may display minor imperfections on the surface which are caused by natural characteristics such as grain or knots in the wood.

The colour of the slats may gradually fade, just as any piece of wooden furniture placed in direct sunlight could. As the headrail is covered by the valance, minor defects in the headrail are deemed acceptable. Headrails will be the closest colour match to the wood colour. Exposed (uncoated) wood will be visible on the punched holes in the slats and possibly the ends of the slats.

Light exclusion

Although wood Venetian blinds provide a good degree of light exclusion, they are not blackout blinds and light may enter via:

- **Slats:** There will always be some light filtering through. Expect any gaps between the fully tilted slats to be greater towards the bottom of the blind.
- **Bottom rail:** This may be supplied to rest on the sill. This prevents the blind from swaying should a window be open and reduces the amount of light entering underneath the blind. However, the bottom rail can limit the full closure of the slats at the base of the blind allowing some additional light to filter through at this point.
- **Sides/punch holes:** A limited amount of light will also filter through the punched holes in the slats, as well as around the sides of the blind.

The amount of light coming through may not be consistent across the whole blind. If you are right next to the blind and the slats are fully tilted, it will be possible to see through the gaps between slats to the outside. This is normal.

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. The gaps will be more noticeable when the slats are closed.

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.

Finished drop (length)

Due to the set distances of the slat support rungs, achieving the exact drop/length of the blind may not be possible. In order to prevent the blind from being too short, an extra slat may be added to ensure a suitable drop is reached. This may result in the blind having a slightly longer drop than originally ordered.

Raised blinds

When in the raised position the blind may not raise perfectly horizontally and may have a slight bow on the bottom bar. This is due to how the ladder/tapes fold between the slats, the quantity and positioning of the lift cords, and the weight on the product.

Slat alignment

The alignment of slats can vary due to tolerances in the ladder support rungs and so absolute alignment between adjacent blinds cannot be guaranteed. For the same reason, the number of slats in the blind may differ even when the same drop dimension is ordered.

For all Venetian products the number of ladders/tapes is dependent on the width of the blind and will vary. For example a 615mm wide blind could have two ladders and a 630mm wide blind on the same order could have three.

Cut-down blinds

These are competitively priced standard-sized blinds that can be trimmed to fit your window. If you choose this option, be aware that the slats' ends may not be stained or painted. Also, the cords that raise, lower and tilt the blind and the ladder cords and tapes may be in different positions if you order for multiple windows.

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

© BBSA, 2026 | Version 5 | June 2026

WOOD VENETIAN BLINDS

Cut-down blinds (*cont.*)

If you order non-standard controls there may be additional holes in the headrail which will be covered by a cap or sticker. Consider this option carefully if you are buying multiple blinds for the same room with different sized windows.

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, e.g. tiles at the base, the blind will need to be made to accommodate the narrowest width.

Reveal (recess) not dimensionally consistent

A wood Venetian blind is made square but 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.

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.

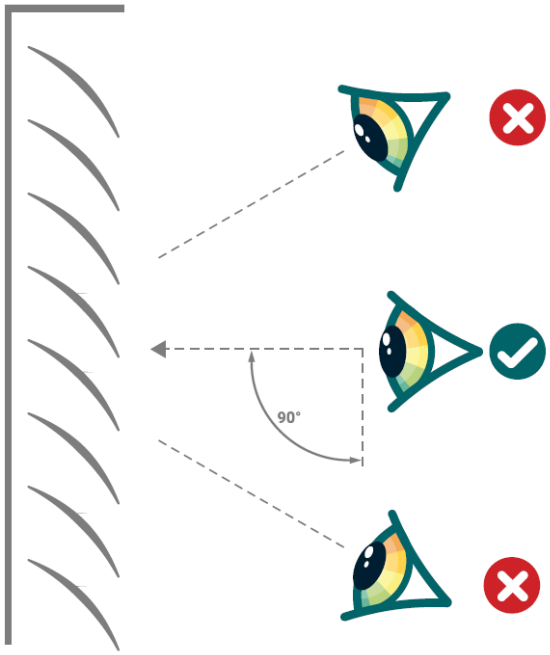
Visual product inspection

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).



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™

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

© BBSA, 2026 | Version 5 | June 2026