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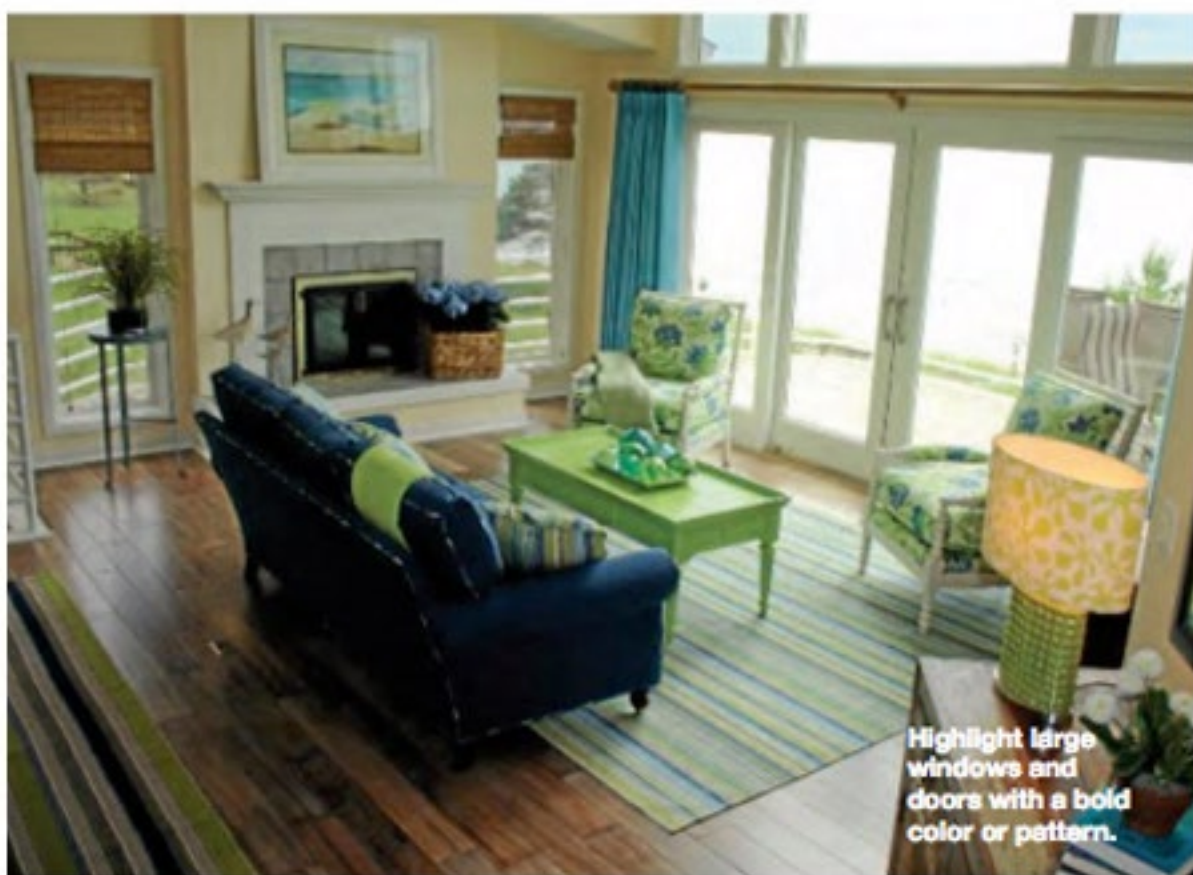
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Dress Your Windows



Highlight large windows and doors with a bold color or pattern.

Window treatments often are the finishing touches for your room. They can add softness, color, texture, privacy and personality. As an interior designer, it's my job to help my clients define their style, create spaces that reflect their personalities and bring functionality to their everyday living.

I take my cues from the style and architecture of the house, the lifestyle of the homeowner, and even something special like a piece of artwork that they bought on their trip to Europe.

Following are some simple tips that will help you make the right decisions when you're ready to dress your windows.

- Always hang your draperies as close to the ceiling as possible. This simple trick will help to lift the eye and will make your ceilings look higher and your room look larger.

- You can use side panels for softness and style as well as blinds for privacy on your windows. Just determine style when making this choice—if your style is more casual, make sure all the elements stay relaxed.

- Don't ever worry about your windows or doors being too large—it's really not possible, like being too pretty! You can choose to highlight large windows by bringing color or pattern into your treatments. If you don't want to overwhelm your room, choose a



Shades made from rattan, bamboo, or other natural fibers (left) bring nature into the home. The patterned draperies on the right complement the rest of the décor and are hung near the ceiling to add height to the room.

fabric that is closer to the wall color that doesn't create contrast.

- Drapery length is a matter of preference. The easiest is to have the panels "float" just an inch above the floor, allowing your drapes to hang perfectly straight for a cleaner look. You can also opt to have them just "kiss" the floor, creating a more custom and intentional look. If formal is your style, you can choose to "puddle" your drapes. This can be a beautiful look, but make sure that you are using quality fabric—it should be thick and rich, not a casual cotton.

- Make sure your window treatments complement your room. Not every element in the room can be the star. If you choose bold patterned draperies, only do so if the rest of your fabrics are in a supporting role—solids, soft prints and patterns.

- For bedrooms, you might consider blackout shades, particularly if you like to sleep in. These are made with a heavier lining that will completely block out light.

- Bring nature into your home! Some of my favorite window treatments are natural woven shades made from rattan, bamboo or other natural fibers. They add visual interest with their texture while letting the light and the view filter in. These easily roll up like a traditional Roman shade.

- For those windows that look out at something unattractive but let in needed light, consider using stained glass. Not only will you have a focal point in your room, but it completely blocks the view while allowing light to filter in.



These cheery draperies accent the large windows and bring a nice pop of color into a monochromatic space.