

Decorative Window Shutters

Window shutters add a nice touch to a home's exterior. In other parts of the world, especially Europe and the Caribbean, shutters serve a functional purpose. They cover windows by night or in bad weather to keep out bad weather or cold air. By day they are pushed open from the inside and secured in place to let daylight and the sun's warmth into a home. This is especially important in communities where the majority of residents lack central heating or air conditioning.

But in many industrialized nations, housing includes shutters more as accent pieces or adornments than as functional window covers. Shutters may cover the home's largest windows, the windows on the front side of the house, the windows on the sides as well as the front, or every window in the home.

Shutters typically coordinate with a home's design to bring out a certain style in its appearance. For example, you can get shutters that are rectangular-shaped, or those that come in other forms. Here are some things to consider when selecting shutters for your home.

1. Does the home's exterior paint or paneling come with matching shutters? If so, consider using these to match the existing design, even if you had the siding done first and now want to add shutters. If not, check with the home supply provider for suggestions about the type of shutters that will go well with your current outdoor siding. You may be able to look at a print or online catalog, or view samples at the store. Some stores provide references of previous customers who have purchased these shutters, and you may be able to talk with them about their level of satisfaction or drive by their homes to have a look.

2. Choose a coordinating design and color. If your home's siding or finish does not come with matching shutters, check out several possible options before selecting one for your home. Popular styles are made of aluminum and vinyl, along with other materials that are weather-resistant, so find out what's available, along with the merits of each.

3. Compare styles to find one that suits your home's design and structure. Some shutters come with two matching panels, while others have four. You can get louvers, but keep in mind these can collect dust and may be difficult to clean. Even when operational shutters are not needed, some people choose to install them for special effect on their homes.

4. Find out all you can about the product's quality. Ask the sales associate about each product's durability and lifetime expectancy. Also ask about how to clean various shutter types, and what type of special cleaning substances will be needed, if any. You might also want to know about any particular conditions that afflict certain products. Wood shutters, for instance, may tend to get dry rot, termites, or other wood-associated conditions. Any type of shutter might attract insect nests, and aluminum shutters may be prone to rusting.

Take your time in asking questions like these to find out what you need to know before buying shutters for your home.

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About the Author

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