



HANG TEN

Windows and window treatments can make or break your rental, writes **Sharon Newey**

THE
RESENE
EASY
DECORATING
GUIDE

IT'S THE DECORATIVE touches that can make or break any property, even a rental. If you're showing tenants through a house that has scuffed walls, cracked tiles and dirty carpets, you're not only unlikely to get a decent rent but also caring tenants.

What's on the windows is also part of that decorative package. There are many options for window coverings, from venetian blinds through to drapes. Many of these are now available off the shelf for a reasonable price. Be aware of quality however as the lower price tag may not be so attractive if you have to go to the hassle of replacing the curtains more often than if you had invested in better quality products.

When choosing window coverings for kitchens and bathrooms, make sure they can be wiped down or washed. You may not need any for a bathroom if the window already has opaque glass but for a kitchen, greasy steam will soon coat any window treatments – roller blinds or venetians that can be wiped are better than fabric blinds.

Here are the window treatment types most likely to be used for rental properties.

There are others – internal shutters, UV treatments and more – but if we're talking practicality with a reasonable price tag, the ones below are probably where we're at.

SHEER CURTAINS

You can either use sheers in conjunction with normal curtains or by themselves as the only window covering. By themselves, they will have very little thermal value and also give much less privacy at night. As an add-on to normal curtains, they may seem like a luxury to a landlord but if the room has strong sunlight or there are privacy issues from neighbouring properties, they will be much appreciated by tenants and are neither expensive nor tricky to install. You can buy them readymade, or off the roll ready-hemmed and with header tape for curtain hooks or for threading through curtain wire.

CURTAINS

There are many types of curtains. When it comes to fabric, the main two are those with a thermal backing that don't need

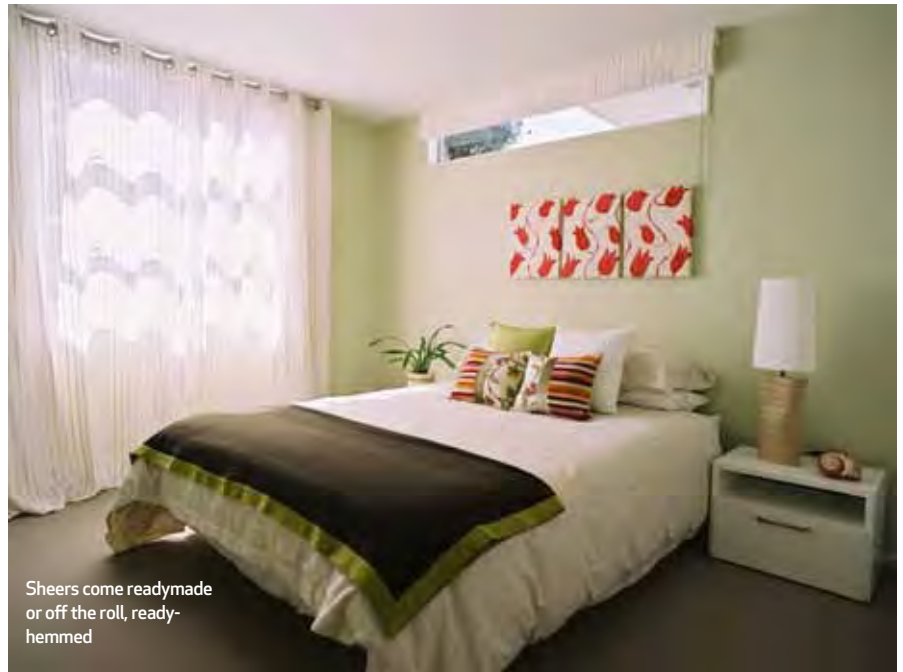
FOR KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS, MAKE SURE THEY CAN BE WIPED DOWN



UV filter fabric can be used on roman blinds



Control light, sun and privacy with venetian blinds



Sheers come readymade or off the roll, ready-hemmed

added lining and those without, that have a lining attached. Technology in thermal back has advanced but some cheaper ones may be affected by our strong sunlight and slowly disintegrate. A thermal backing or a heavy lining will certainly help keep retain heat in winter.

There are an almost limitless number of fabrics types, patterns and colours. If you're after an easy all-over scheme, Resene offer curtain ranges that are matched to their paints – on the curtain cards, there are suggestions of various paint colours to use.

There are many styles of readymade curtains from various retailers, or they can be custom-made to your windows.

Curtains need to be hung on rods or rails, of which there are various styles. The basic rails are hidden behind the top of the curtain. You can buy extendable versions to fit all window widths. Others have the tracks hidden inside decorative rods and the curtains hang below. Then there are curtains with eyelet headers that are threaded onto rods with no tracks.

ROMAN AND ROLLER BLINDS

As with curtains, both these types of blinds can be bought readymade but you have to have quite standard window widths to be able to fit them as they come in a limited range of widths. You can hang roman blinds outside of the window frame rather than in it, so that gives some flexibility in measurement.

Both can be custom-made and are quite

reasonably priced, depending on the fabric you choose. The benefit of these types of window treatments is that you need little more than the dimensions of the window in fabric unlike curtains where you need double the width to allow for gathering, as well as the lining fabric.

Roller blinds can be made of normal fabric fused to a backing, or in fabric specially developed for roller blind construction. Some fabrics have UV-filtering properties and some allow you to see through them from the inside but not from the outside.

There are also fabric blinds made of fabric with special thermal pockets.

VENETIAN BLINDS

Venetian blinds give the benefit of being able to easily control light, sun and privacy by tilting and opening or closing the slats.

Again, readymade venetians are available but only come in a range of standard widths. With timber venetians, you can actually cut them down at the ends to fit.

Painted venetians are cheaper than timber (normally cedar) as they are made of MDF, then painted. There are also versions made of faux timber.

Aluminium venetian blinds come in a vast range of colours and a couple of slat widths. The slim slat look has been the most popular in recent years but, as with all things retro, wider slats are making a bit of a comeback. ■