

# Shutters can add to 'green' building ratings

In an effort to meet sustainability norms, local legislation (Sans 10400 XA) stipulates that all newly erected buildings need to have solar water heaters, heat pumps or comparable technologies in place. This also extends to ceilings, walls and windows, which have to meet 'minimum requirements in insulation, to minimise heating in winter and cooling in summer'.



Taylor Shutters & Blinds

Recommended R values (a measure of resistance to heat flow through a given thickness of material) and U values (a measurement of the overall heat energy transfer rate through a particular section of construction material) needs to be achieved before building approval is granted.

“Good news for architects is that with known U and R values, shutters are no longer just stylish window treatment options but, because they are deemed a permanent fixture in a building, they can be incorporated into the design to promote thermal insulation and energy efficiency,” says Anthony Mederer, md at Taylor Shutters & Blinds.

In spaces with large glass windows, shutters not only offer a thermal insulation barrier between outside and inside, but also their light and ventilation control helps keep a space cool during summer and warm during winter.

## Eco-friendly roller blinds

“Another eco-friendly window treatment to consider is roller blinds; not only for their light-filtering properties but also for their environmentally safe, natural fabric make-up.”

Current guidelines, from the internationally recognised Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (Leed), recommend the furniture, including window treatments, contain minimal chemical content.

“With our roller blinds, half of the compound components in their design are derived from crop-based feed stocks and minerals. Two thirds of the total compound are from non-fossil fuel feed stocks, which means that these blinds are made from materials that have a smaller carbon footprint.”

“Furthermore, the fabric is made using Dow Ecolibrium bio-based plasticisers, as opposed to those made from fossil fuels. These plasticisers come from raw materials that have the added bonus of lessening greenhouse gas emission during the manufacture process. The application of this treatment defends fabric against bacteria, mould, fungi, yeast and algae – a big plus for buildings in areas with high humidity.”

Other eco-friendly window treatment options include woven wood and bamboo blinds. “In addition to being better for the environment, they are aesthetically pleasing. “By being mindful of both the production process and elements involved in the creation of window treatments, finding a sustainable, long-lasting option to make buildings ‘greener’ will not be a stretch. The importance of eco-friendly fixtures and their longevity cannot be denied – make them a ‘green’ building essential,” concludes Mederer.

For more information, click [here](#).

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