

# The Asian Art of Window Coverings

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One of the best ways to add an Asian flare to your room is with your window treatments. Because windows often take up such a large portion of a room, treating them with a theme can often create a work of art while still serving a function. If you are thinking about decorating with an Asian feel, you must first decide which country you want to visit. Two of the biggest Asian countries, China and Japan, have very different design sensibilities.

Japan has a sparse, clean, almost bare look both in the overall room design and in the window treatments. Windows aren't so much decorated, as they are covered up, with decorative valances and cornice boards are almost never used. Vertical and horizontal blinds are very popular, but if you want a softer look for your design, sheers completely covering the windows, flanked by stationary or traversing panels adds some warmth to your room while still maintaining a clean line. Pinch pleat or euro pleat headers are used quite often with the panels mounted on either strictly functional hardware or thin metal rods with very plain finials. For smaller windows flat roman shades are often a great choice. Color trends for Japanese window treatments, including both panels and roman shades, lean more toward those found in nature, such as white, cream, muted grays, blues, and yellows.

For an even more traditional Japanese look, consider a Shoji screen. These screens are

a hard wood frame with a grid pattern across the frame. The wood is then covered with a variety of different types of papers, such as rice paper or for the more modern sensibility, fiberglass or acrylic. In Japan the screens are not used to cover windows. Instead they are used as room dividers, closet doors, and covers for an interior window pass through. That doesn't mean the screens can't be used on exterior windows

though. The multiple choices in papers and acrylics provide you with any level of visibility for the windows. They can also be mounted like shutters to open during the day and can cover the entire window or only part of it.

If your design sensibility is less

modern and more colorful, you might consider Asian design from China. For interesting windows treatments, try taking your inspiration from the gorgeous historical Chinese architecture and roof tops, with their curved roofs and sweeping end points. These roof tops are highly adorned with carvings, statues, and color and often tiled in bright primary colors, such as red, yellow, and blue. To translate this to your windows, try a cornice board, which is wood covered in batting and fabric. Have the base wood of your cornice cut in a curved shape with a peak at the top. Then cover your cornice in batting and brightly colored red fabric with a yellow band on the bottom edge.

Add adornments, such as metal cutouts, to the front of the board and hang tassels from the sides. **HD**

