

## The Hardware Behind the Treatment

By Sydney Schwartz Hardiman

Decorative drapery hardware comes in thousands of different forms. Yet those hardworking pieces, which are primarily functional rather than decorative, often get overlooked. While it would be impossible to go over all the various hardware products used in drapery treatments (after all isn't that what supply catalogs are for), here are some of the hardware basics and a couple of cool, new products out on the market.

A traverse rod is a system by which drapes, liners, and sheers can be opened and closed easily with a quick pull on a cord. These rods can be bought as a one-way draw—the drape opens only on the left or right; or a two-way draw—drapes opens from the middle of the rod. Most of the rods marketed today can be changed from a one-way to a two-way draw and vice versa for when your client changes their mind.

The traverse rod also comes as a double rod, which will hold two sets of drapes, such as sheers under draperies. The majority of companies sell the side and support brackets as a package with the traverse rods, but make sure you open and check your hardware BEFORE you leave the workroom. This simple step can save you from hours of installation frustration and an unhappy client.

Rod pocket drapes and valances call for a basic utility rod, which includes two pieces of straight metal with angled returns. The pieces fit inside one another and are adjustable. Many of them can even be easily cut during installation to make a perfect fit. The rods come in widths ranging from 1½" up to 4½". They can also be ordered as a single, double, or triple rod. Kirsch Hardware ([www.kirsch.com](http://www.kirsch.com)) carries rods that are angled for a bay window, rods that are curved, and a spring pressure rod used for shower curtains.

Their newest products include clear curtain rods and an adjustable bracket kit, which can add up to 3" of clearance to the returns on the rod.

Valances, swags, and stationary shades are typically mounted on a covered board treatment. A 1"x4" pine board is covered in lining and held up with two or three angle brackets. The wood of choice is usually #2 pine, because of its soft nature. This is one case where harder isn't better. The softer the wood, the easier it is to get those staples in and then out again when you aren't happy with the drape of your treatment.

When calculating your treatment returns, don't forget that in real life a 1"x4" is really a ¾"x3½", and if you're using a 1"x2" board, it is actually a ¾"x1½".

Most often boards are covered with lining, but if you will be able to see the board from any angle, for instance when installing in a bathroom over a toilet, it would be nice to cover the wood with the face fabric of your treatment. And

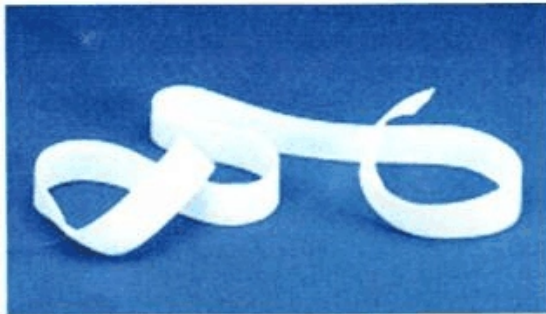


Illustration 1

if you're still fighting sewing that stiff hook and loop tape onto your swag, Textol Systems, Inc., carries a new product—soft and flexible sew-on hook and loop tape. See illustration 1. For more information, contact Lawrence Wolfen at Textol Systems, Inc. by calling 800-624-8746 (201-935-1220), or visit their website at [www.textol.com](http://www.textol.com).

Here's a little tip. Ever wonder exactly why wood is sold in "board feet" and how you calculate it? Board feet are the measurements of lumber volume and it is how the lumber companies determine how much wood they can get out of a tree. One board foot is equal to 144 cubic inches of wood, or one foot long by one foot wide by one inch thick. So to calculate the cost of a six foot 1"x4" priced at \$2 a board foot, use the following calculation:

Thickness inches x width inches x length inches ÷ 144" = number of board feet.  
Example:

1"x4"x72" ÷ 144" = 2 board feet x \$2 = \$4 for the entire piece of lumber. An alternate calculation is:

Thickness inches x width inches x length in feet ÷ 12' = Board Feet.

The basic hardware for a workable Roman or balloon shade is a covered board with eye rings and a single cord lock attached to the wall with angle brackets.

Several suppliers, including Designer's Den (800-624-8746, 404-767-8763) and Rowley's (800-343-4542, 704-866-0650) [www.rowleyco.com](http://www.rowleyco.com)) carry the RollEase® System. This is a complete system for shades, which works by lift cords that wrap all around a shaft at the exact same rate. The control also is a fixed length loop, eliminating the left over cord that typically ends up on the floor or has to be wound around a cleat. RollEase® also has a system for rollershades, which also works with a looped control cord, eliminating the usual pull and snap.

An interesting company called Infinette™ Alternatives is a manufacturer located in Canada. It is distributed by several companies, including Royal American Wallcraft, Inc., in Crescent City, FL. This company carries a line of hardware that is a wrought iron, decorative

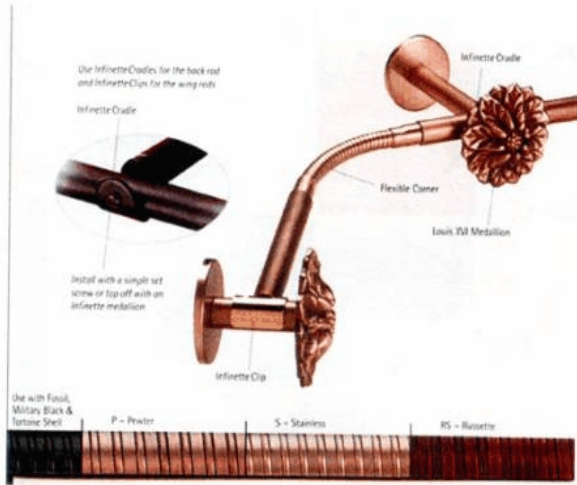


Illustration 2

medallion on a stem (similar to many decorative tie backs), which allows you to clip your rod to the post and then add additional rods behind it. See illustration 2. They also offer clips which can be attached to any traversing drapery track. Their mounting

hardware has clips to add a roller shade, or attach a valance to the front of a post.

What this company has mastered are angles, bays, and ceiling installations. They have an L bracket with a post attached to it that rotates 360°, allowing you to install on any type of angle. You can even install a decorative rod in a bay window with their

San Francisco rod, which is a flexible metal corner rod, not unlike the plumbing tube used to bring water to your toilet tank. The problem of 90° bays and corner windows are solved by a small nylon plug which attaches to the post and into a new rod, creating a

corner that is an exact angle. Royal American and Infinette™ Alternatives can be reached at 800-330-9435 (386-698-1236), or visit their websites at [www.infinette.com](http://www.infinette.com) or [www.rawi.com](http://www.rawi.com).

When choosing hardware for your treatment, remember to pick that which best fits your client's needs and makes your work and installation a little easier.



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