

How to Measure for Curtain Rods

Measuring for curtain rods isn't as difficult as you may think. Below is a general set of guidelines for determining curtain rod width.

First, decide what type of curtain you are installing. Is it a fabric curtain or drapery, a sheer curtain, or a valance? Each is measured differently. Second, what type of curtain or drapery hardware are you interested in? Decorative hardware that is a visible component of the finished product, or basic hardware that is hidden or mostly hidden after installation?

Fabric Drapery or Curtain

The idea is to use a drapery or curtain rod that will allow the fabric to stack "off the glass". This accomplishes two things. First, you won't lose your view, and second, your windows will actually look bigger after installation (your eye will assume the glass "continues" behind the drapery panels). Accordingly, when you measure your windows, measure from frame to frame, then ADD an additional amount to allow the fabric to stack. We typically add 5 inches to each side of the frame for windows up to 50 inches wide, then add another 2 inches for each additional 10 inches of window frame width. Here is a simple chart:

<u>Frame Width</u>	<u>Rod Width</u>
Up to 50"	Frame width PLUS 10"
51" to 60"	Frame width PLUS 12"
61" to 70"	Frame width PLUS 14"
71" to 80"	Frame width PLUS 16"

Sheer Curtain

Because a sheer curtain is, well, . . . sheer (it can be seen through), we generally recommend installing a curtain rod that is 3 or 4 inches wider than the window frame. The reason for this is that if your curtain rod is much wider than this recommended width, you'll be able to see too much "wall" through the sheer curtain, and your curtains will look too wide for the window.

Stand-alone Valance

Same rule as the Sheer Curtain above. Measure the window frame and ADD 3 or 4 inches.

Valance Over Drapery or Curtain

Add 4 inches to the width of your drapery or curtain. The result is your valance width.

Some notes on height

Things get a little more complicated when discussing "how high" to install your curtain or drapery rods. Rods can be hung high above their window frames, just a couple inches above or split the distance between the top of the frame and the crown molding or ceiling. Since a curtain rod or drapery rod becomes a focal point once it is installed, if it is installed too low it will "bring down" the height of the room. A drapery rod installed higher makes the windows and room look "taller".