

Wood Venetian Blinds

This document has been produced by the British Blind and Shutter Association (BBSA) to highlight the key characteristics of wood venetian blinds to help you make an informed choice when buying your blinds.

The product characteristics detailed below represent the state of the art and any relevant standard.

Wood is a natural material

As your blind is made using real wood, the slats are likely to display their natural characteristics such as knots and grain patterns.

Wood venetian blinds are heavier compared to other types of blinds using man-made materials. You may find that raising wood venetians requires some effort.

Absorption of moisture and drying of the wood over time may result in slight warpage or twist and therefore it is not recommended to use wood venetian blinds in high moisture areas.

Colours and finishes

On stained finishes, natural shade variation can occur. Painted finishes may display minor imperfections on the surface which are caused by natural characteristics such as grain or knots in the wood.

The colour of the slats will gradually fade, just as any piece of wooden furniture placed in direct sunlight would. As the headrail is covered by the valance, minor defects are deemed acceptable.

Exposed (uncoated) wood will be visible on the punched holes in the slats.

Light exclusion

Although wood venetian blinds provide a good degree of light exclusion, they are not blackout blinds and light may enter via:

- **Slats:** As they do not fully touch when tilted, so there will always be some light filtering through. Expect gaps between the fully tilted slats to be greater towards the bottom of the blind.
- **Bottom rail:** This will normally be supplied to rest on the cill. This prevents the blind from swaying should a window be open and reduces the amount of light entering underneath the bottom rail. However, this can limit the full closure of the slats at the base of the blind allowing some additional light to filter through at this point.
- **Sides/punch holes:** A limited amount of light will also filter through the punched cord holes in the slats, as well as around the sides of the blind.

The amount of light coming through may not be consistent across the whole blind.

If you are right next to the blind and the slats are fully tilted, it will be possible to see through the gaps between slats to the outside. This is a normal characteristic of venetian blinds.

Fitting in a bay window

When fitted in a bay window, there will be some gaps where the neighbouring blind headrails meet each other. The size of any gap will depend on several factors including; the shape of the bay, the style of the window and the specification of the blind system. The gaps will be more noticeable when the slats are closed.

Similarly, at the edge of the bay there may be light gaps/potential loss of privacy depending on the angle of the bay and the adjoining walls.

Finished drop/length

Due to the set distances of the slat support rungs, achieving the exact size ordered may not be possible. In order to prevent the blind being too short, an extra slat may be added to ensure a suitable drop is reached. This will result in the blind having a slightly longer drop than originally ordered.

Raised blinds

When in the raised position the blind may not raise perfectly horizontally and may have a slight bow on the bottom bar, due to how the ladder/tapes fold between the slats and the weight on the product.

Slat alignment

The alignment of slats can vary due to tolerances in the ladder support rungs and so absolute alignment between adjacent blinds cannot be guaranteed. For all venetian products the number of ladders/tapes is dependent on the width of the blind and will vary. For example a 600mm wide blind could have 2 ladders and a 615mm blind on the same order could have 3.

Cut-down blinds

These are competitively priced standard-sized blinds that can be trimmed to fit your window. If you choose this option, be aware that none of the slats' ends will be stained or painted.

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Also, the cords that raise, lower and tilt the blind and the ladder cords and tapes may be in different positions if you order for multiple windows. Consider this option carefully especially if you are buying multiple blinds for the same room with different sized windows.

Fitting inside the reveal (window recess)

To allow for operating clearance, the width of the blind must be narrower than the width of the reveal. If there are any obstructions in the reveal, for example tiles at the base or a dado rail, the blind will need to be made to accommodate the narrowest width.

Reveal (recess) not dimensionally consistent

A wood venetian blind is made square however in reality reveals are often not. The head of the window or sill may not be level and the distances between the side walls throughout often vary.

The distance from the edge of the reveal to the window may also vary, so blinds will either be fitted to run parallel to the window or to the edge of the reveal.

Motorisation

There is a wide range of motorised solutions available for your comfort and convenience and each system will have its own characteristics. Some points to consider are:

- **Speed and alignment:** Blinds in the same installation may not travel at the same speed and may not line up if stopped during the travel of the blinds due to mechanical and electrical tolerances.
- **Noise:** Being operated by a motor, some noise will be emitted. Quiet motors may be available.
- **Wiring:** Some surface wiring may be required. Where 240V mains power is involved, a competent person will be required to provide a power feed unless the blinds can be powered from a plug inserted into an existing socket.
- **Motor protection:** For safety reasons, most motors are fitted with a thermal cut-out to protect the motor if it gets too hot (usually from over-use). When cooled sufficiently, the motor will start working again.

Child safety

All blinds with cords or chains could pose a risk of strangulation to young children. The BBSA recommends inherently safe products (Safe by Design). If you choose a product with additional child safety devices, these **must** be securely fitted as required.

For further information on window blind safety visit:
www.makeitsafe.org.uk



Visual Product Inspection

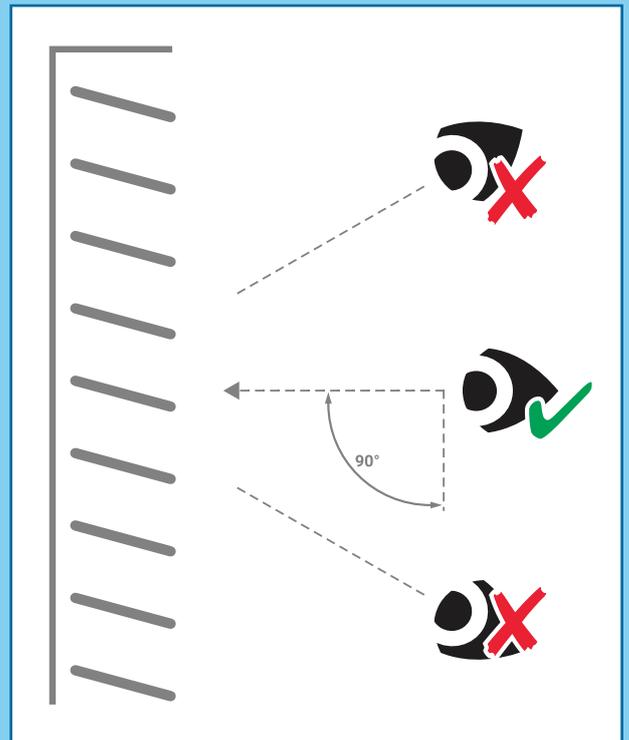
When checking the overall visual characteristics and aesthetics, the following should be observed:

Viewing distance and lighting

3m for exterior products in diffuse daylight;
2m for interior products with lighting suitable for normal room use.

Viewing angle

Perpendicular to the surface being checked.



Viewing aids

Naked eye (and any corrective glasses if applicable).

Always ensure you read and carefully follow the operating and maintenance instructions.