



Contemporary

For many of us, modern life is fast-paced and hectic. At its best, contemporary style can provide an antidote to that perplexity by creating a sense of calm and order. An essential element in any contemporary decorating scheme is minimalism – the look is pared down to the bare essentials, with clean, uncluttered lines and sleek surfaces that foster a feeling of space and airiness.

Windows are vital in creating this sense of spaciousness, but it is important to retain the spirit of minimalism when choosing window treatments for a contemporary setting. Blinds or shutters are the obvious unobtrusive option, but curtains are sometimes more appropriate, especially when a hard-edged scheme needs softening, or the insulating, sound-absorbing properties of fabric are necessary. Essential in creating a contemporary look is choosing fabrics, headings and accessories that are as sleek as the other

elements in the scheme. Choose fabrics where the texture plays a more important part than the pattern. Opt for simple headings such as eyelet, tabbed or a neat cartridge-pleated heading that use less fabric, while holding it in undulating folds instead of deep pleats. In order to streamline the look, stick to sleek metal rods or discreet tracks built into the ceiling, or attach a hard, straight cornice that hides the support mechanism. Keep embellishments to a minimum and choose metal, glass or wood accessories to add a stylish finish.

With poles fitted close to the ceiling to emphasise the height of this elegant city living room, filmy white sheer curtains filter the light that floods through a double set of French windows.

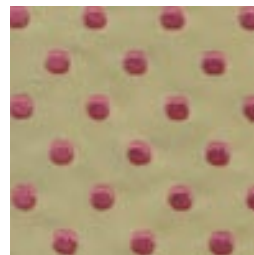
Arched windows



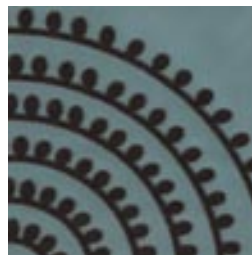
Arched windows are a blessing for an advocate of eclectic style. Stylish and unusual, they make it easy to surprise the eye with an unexpected twist. Here, a subtle purple colour palette adds a touch of moody luxury to this bedroom. A dark sheer curtain printed with a large motif coupled with sensuous, purple satin, full-length curtains frame a trio of tall, arched windows with classic fan-shaped transoms.



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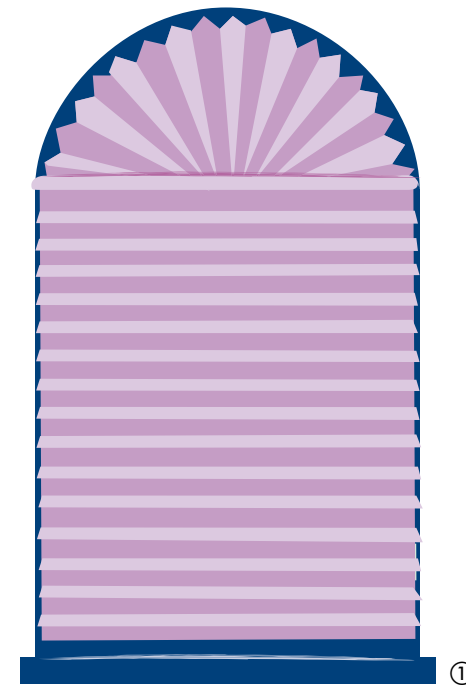
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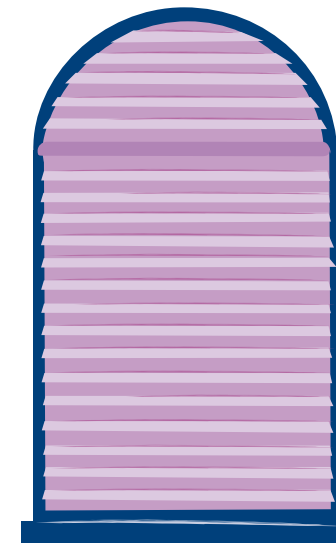
Fabrics with unusual colour combinations and textures suit eclectic style. A printed linen in taupe on white with splashes of bright pink ①, a velvet spot in pink on lime green ②, a shot blue taffeta with black flock dots ③.

An eclectic approach attempts to fuse disparate styles. The formal arrangement of furniture here belies an unusual colour combination of gold and purple, highlighted with black and orange. Two arched windows are elegantly delineated by vertical blinds in a deep purple vinyl to create a cohesive and structured composition of colour and shape.

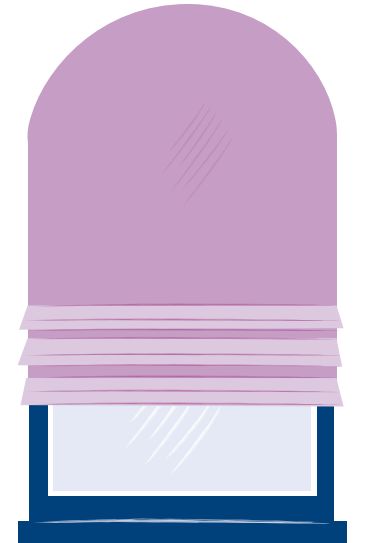


①

Blinds that remain within the structure of the window frame are an excellent way of emphasising the shape of an arched window. A standard-shaped, pleated blind with a separate, stationary, fan-shaped blind for the arch ①, a standard-shaped, cellular blind with a separate operative blind for the arch ②, a Roman blind attached to a fabric-covered board for the arch ③.

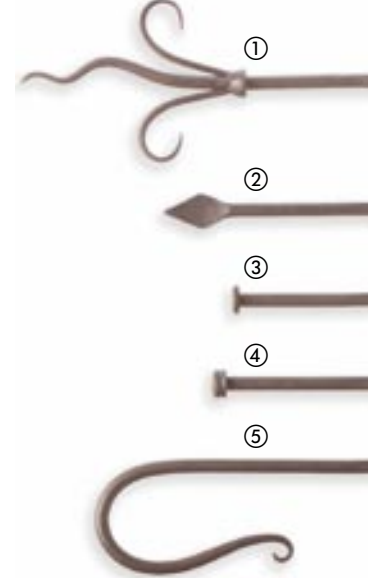


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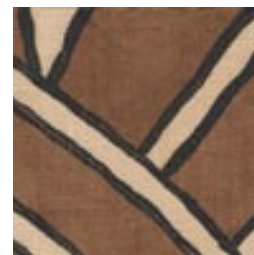
French windows



Slender steel rods with forged finials suit the graphic prints on display. Fleur de lis finial ①, arrowhead finial ②, flat-end cap finial ③, stud end finial ④, crook finial ⑤.



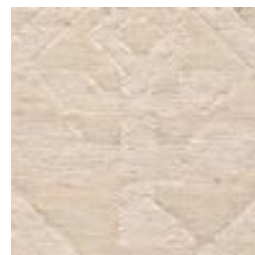
Fabric choice is crucial for an ethnic look. For inspiration, look at sarongs, pareus and saris. In this room, French windows are dressed with one curtain panel hanging from a slender metal rod. The dark wood floor and furniture are complemented by a collection of ethnic textiles on display in this room, creating an atmosphere that evokes the Far East.



①



②



③

Ethnic prints and textured sheers are key fabric choices that evoke far-off places. An earthy block print on rough textured cotton ①, a block-printed stripe ②, a rough textured open-weave sheer ③.



③

Venetian blinds are very versatile. In this room, the windows have been given a simple treatment with wooden blinds. Notice how individual blinds have been hung on each door of these inward-opening French windows, while the transom above has one blind across the entire width. The blinds have been stained dark to match the hardwood floor of this room, which looks like it has come straight out of Africa, with its huge, metal-framed four-poster bed swathed in simple white cotton.

Colour choice is crucial for introducing an exotic flavour into your home. White paintwork contrasts with an ebony floor to evoke Africa ①, deep blues and earthy terracotta are reminiscent of the Mediterranean ②, natural hues bring to mind the Far East ③.