Version 3, July 2021

Aluminium Venetian Blinds

This document has been produced by the British Blind and Shutter Association (BBSA) to highlight the key characteristics of aluminium 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.

Colours/Finishes

Aluminium venetian blinds are available in an extensive range of colours and finishes.

As the head and the bottom rail are made of steel for strength, they may not be an identical colour match to the rest of the slats as the material differs. The edges on painted aluminium slats are not covered as part of the paint finishing process.

Similarly, the operating cords, ladders and any braids may not be an identical colour match to the slats.

Although suitable for rooms with high humidity, adequate ventilation is required with no direct water contact with the blind.

Slat closure

Aluminium slats are slightly curved. This adds strength to the slat and helps achieve a better slat closure. For aethestic reasons, the convex side of the slat is considered to be the facing side. Additional light blockage however may be achieved by tilting the slats, making the concave side face into the room.

Light exclusion

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

- **Slats:** There will always be some light filtering through. Expect any 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 blind. However, the bottom rail 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 around the sides of the blind and through the punched cord holes in the slats, as well as the sides of the blind.

The amount of light coming through may not be consistent over 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 neigbouring 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 drop/length of the blind may not be possible. In order to prevent the blind from 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.

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.

Fitting inside the reveal (window recess)

To allow for operating clearance, the width of the blind must

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be narrower than the width of the reveal. If there are any obstructions in the reveal, for example tiles at the lower part of the window or a dado rail, the blind will need to be made to accommodate the narrowest width.

Reveal (recess) not dimensionally consistent

An aluminium 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:** Some noise will be emitted from the motor operating the blind. 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 them from getting 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

make it safe™

Visual Product Inspection

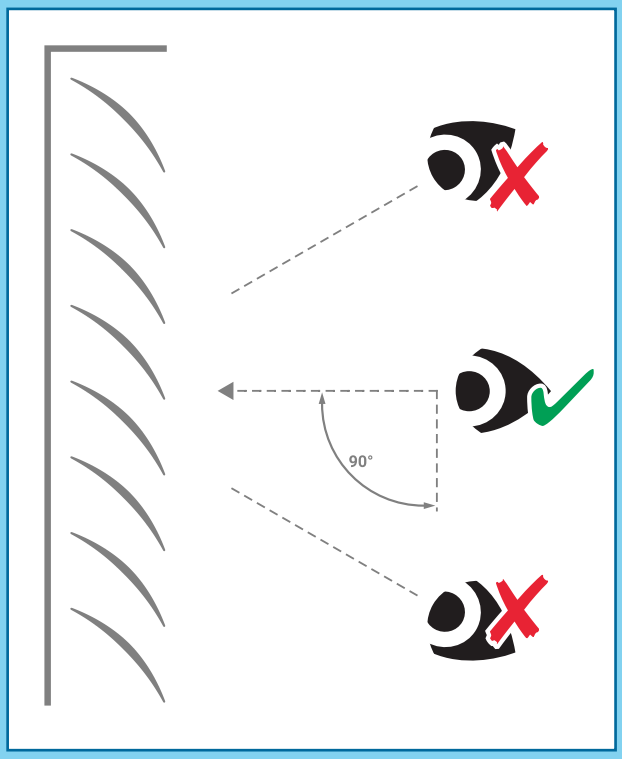
When checking the overall visual characteristics and aesthetics, the following should be observed:

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.