

Workroom Threads

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Workroom to the Trade



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Grommets Galore

Grommets have become "trendy" making ever more appearances in window treatments and other room decor. They are sized from small to oversize, sport a vast array of finishes, and come in a variety of shapes. Of course the center is always round.

Grommets allow for easy management of drapery panels. They lay flat for transportation, need no drapery pins, and allow a rod to slide easily through them. With grommets, drapes hang in a natural undulating manner creating a neat, natural appearance.

Following this introduction is some practical information to consider when using oversize grommets in drapes. Also included are some ideas for using grommets as a decorative element in other products.

Sylvia Marvelli

Details Make the Difference

The tailored horizontal pleats at the top of this drape combined with the contrast fabric lift the eye upward. Additionally, the heavier weight fabric at top is ideal for withstanding the application of grommets, yet allowing the main fabric to be sheer.


Grommets must always be used in even numbers to allow the center and return to fold to the wall. The number of grommets used depends on the size of the grommet. Usually grommet placement is 6"-8" apart on center.

When designing panels for outdoor living areas oversize grommets are a good choice for durability, function, and neat hang.


Grommets are often chosen to provide a somewhat contemporary look. Here is an example of combining grommets with a traditional pleat. Generally the fullness of a grommet panel remains at 2.5X the space to be covered although it can be reduced to 2X fullness. If combining grommets with pleats the amount of fabric width would be slightly more than 2.5X fullness. This style offers very small stackback on the window. One width of 54" fabric stacks back to approximately 6". This could also be done with other pleat styles.



The Challenge to Be Creative




The creativity of designers and their ability to find new ways to use products continues to amaze. As shown here, grommets are used as a decorative element in each corner of a mock flange pillow. Consider using just one oversize grommet in a corner of a floor pillow. In addition to being a decorative element it becomes a handle for a large pillow and also allows it to be hung on a wall bracket when not in use.



Oversized grommets can be an effective way to have a contrast fabric show from behind. Try this on a decorative valance over a shade exposing the shade fabric beneath. Or, simply add a contrast layer of fabric behind oversize grommets on a pillow or decorative valance.

Rather than mounting a mock Roman valance on a board, consider using oversize grommets at the top and mounting the valance from medallions.



Smaller grommets are ideal for lacing accents. At left are a pillow and a valance using this detail. A fitted tableskirt with inverted pleats at the corners is also an ideal placement for laces. That small addition gives a tableskirt the extra touch of a stylish custom product. Lacing can also be a featured design element on an otherwise plain cornice board.

Where the ordinary becomes extraordinary

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