

# INSTALL WINDOW BLINDS

**Skill Level: BEGINNER** These how-to's are suitable for people who are new to DIY and who have a basic knowledge of tools. If you've painted a room or re-potted a plant, you can probably complete one of these projects by yourself in a few hours or less.

# **MATERIALS**

- New Window Blinds
- Drill with Driver and Drill Bits
- Screwdrivers (Slotted/Standard and Cross-head/Phillips)
- Metal Tape Measure
- Pencil
- Level
- Safety Glasses
- Shims
- Utility Knife
- Small Ladder
- Wall Anchors—for outside mount blinds
- Mount Returns—for outside mount blinds
- Extension Brackets—for outside mount blinds, if needed

Window blinds allow you to control light and privacy of your home while offering many choices including vinyl, wood, or even blinds without cords. Window blinds are easy to install and are functional additions to your home. The following installation can be used for installing inside or outside mounted window blinds.

#### **PREPARATION**

- 01 Measure the window and select the appropriate window blinds.

  Refer to the video and printable instructions on *How to Measure Window Blinds*, available at Lowes.com/Videos.
- 02 Read the manufacturer's instructions.

### **INSTALLING THE WINDOW BLINDS**

Installation instructions for inside and outside mounted horizontal window blinds are similar. Differences will be noted as appropriate. Installation instructions for vertical window blinds are also similar but refer to manufacturer's instructions for specific details.

- O1 Mark the position of the headrail centered within or above the window opening.
- 02 Mark the position of the mounting brackets, typically 1/4" wider than the head rail.
- 03 For outside mounted blinds, hold an end bracket in place on the wall or trim (with holes in the back and top) and mark the screw holes in the back.
  - Some outside mounts will require extension brackets. Mount them to the wall so they extend past the window trim and the blind will clear the trim.
  - For inside mounted blinds, hold an end bracket in place on the inside top of the window frame (with holes in the side or top) and mark screws in the side or top.



#### **IMPORTANT**

Before you begin this project, read the all of the following instructions and those of your chosen window blind manufacturer. If you're not comfortable installing window blinds, discuss the job with Lowe's—we can install your blinds for you.



#### **INSTALLING THE WINDOW BLINDS (cont.)**

#### 04 Pre-drill the mounting bracket holes.

- If you are attaching outside mounted brackets to wallboard, install wall anchors.
- Inside mounts typically don't require wall anchors.
- 05 Hold the bracket in place and insert a screw.
- 06 Insert and attach other screws required for the bracket.
  - Some manufacturers require that the screws be mounted diagonally from each other.
- 07 Install the other end bracket in the same manner.
- 08 If you're doing an outside mount on the window trim, you may need to use shims to keep the brackets plumb.
  - 1. Hold the bracket in place, using a shim to make it plumb.
  - Mark a cut line on the shim.
  - 3. Set the bracket aside and cut the shim with a utility knife.
  - 4. Attach the bracket to the trim with the shim in place. Don't forget to pre-drill through the shim too.
- 09 Verify that all brackets are parallel and even using a level.
- 10 If required by the manufacturer, install a support bracket in the middle of the headrail following the above instructions.
  - A support bracket will not be needed for shorter blinds. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for your blinds.
  - Make sure the support bracket will not interfere with the blind's ladder cords.
  - Make sure it's level and even with the end brackets.
  - If you're mounting on the trim, you may have to use shims. See Step #08 above.

#### 11 If the kit includes a separate valance, attach the valance clips to the headrail.

- Some blinds have a valance integrated with the headrail.
- Make sure the valance clips don't interfere with operation of the window blinds.
- 12 Insert the headrail into the mounting brackets and close the bracket doors to lock it in place.
- 13 Snap the valance into the clips.





#### **INSTALLING THE WINDOW BLINDS (cont.)**

- 14 For outside mounts, install the mount returns following the manufacturer's instructions.
- 15 If your blinds have bottomrail end caps, install them according to the manufacturer's instructions.



# **ADJUSTING THE CORD-STOPS**

Make sure the cord-stop is 1"-2" from the headrail when blinds are all the way down. If the stop is not within that range, you'll need to make an adjustment.

- 01 Lower the blind to its longest length.
- 02 Loosen (don't untie) the knot.
- 03 Push the cord-stop and knot to 1"-2" from the head rail.
- 04 Hold the stop while pulling on the cord to retighten the knot.
  - **TIP:** To keep blind cords out of a child's reach, consider adding a cleat high on the wall or trim and wrapping the cord around it.





# SHORTENING THE WINDOW BLINDS

If necessary, shorten the blinds. This procedure may be different for your blinds, so check the manufacturer's instructions.

- 01 Completely lower the blind.
- 02 Select the slat that will be the new bottom slat.
- 03 Using sharp metal scissors, carefully cut the ladder cords two rungs below the new bottom slat.
  - Do not cut the lift cords yet.
- 04 Allow the excess slats to fall to the bottomrail.



#### **SHORTENING THE WINDOW BLINDS (cont.)**

- 05 Cut the lift cords 6" below the new bottom.
- 06 Remove the last two slats.
- 07 Remove the plastic buttons from the bottomrail.
- 08 Remove the cut cords.
- 09 Place the bottomrail in the spot directly below the new bottom slat.
- 10 Insert the lift cords in the holes on the bottomrail and tie a knot.
- 11 Hide the remaining cord in the larger hole and seal it with the plastic button.
  - TIP: Keep the extra slats in case you need to replace damaged slats in the future.

## **CLEANING THE WINDOW BLINDS**

- 01 Fully extend the blind.
- 02 Tilt the slats down, but not completely closed.
- 03 Wipe the blind slats with a soft cloth, dusting mitt, or with a brush attachment on a vacuum cleaner.
  - TIP: You can use a damp cloth on painted wood or faux wood, but not on stain-finished blinds. For stain-finished blinds, use lemon oil or a wood preservative as recommended by the manufacturer.



Window blinds will give your home some privacy and help control incoming light. For help with other home improvement projects, check out the other installation videos with instruction sheets at Lowes.com/Videos.

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