

Specifying MechoShades

The original manual clutch driven roller shades

By David Shannon

One of the best things about MechoShades (and ElectroShades) is that they are only there when you need them - then only to the extent that you need them. Even when down, MechoShades can be fully transparent and offer protection even on south and west elevations.

- Determine how you want to mount your shades. Generally you have four choices: (i) flush mounted in ceiling (ii) ceiling mounted on soffit (iii) within mullion (iv) wall mounted above window.
- Give Shannon your worst case [width] x [height], and we can determine the rolled up diameter (RUD) for you. Then we can determine how much room you need to mount your shades. Generally the space needed is [RUD] + 1”.
- Pockets (shade housings) are available in various sizes - an accoutrement. You do not have to use a pocket. However, pockets are usually less expensive than the fussy drywall framing needed otherwise.
- The Mecho 5 clutch is the workhorse of the line. This is the strongest clutch in the industry. It allows the shade to stop at any position in the window. The clutch end is called the drive end of the shade. The chain can fall on either side of shade.
- How big can my shades be? MechoShade has charts that can define this. And it depends on what type of space they are going in. The Mecho 5 clutch is so strong that it can technically handle very large shades. But we have found that you should try not to exceed ~10' wide x 12' high shades because an overly large shade can be heavy to operate. What is your vertical mullion spacing? Your breaks should occur there.
- Most MechoShade fabrics come 96” wide as standard. But if the shade is wider, we railroad the fabric. (turn it on its side) If the height exceeds 96”, there will be a horizontal seam at 96”. (or it can line up with a horizontal mullion.)
- What do you want the shades to do? Sunscreen? Privacy? Room Darkening? Both? The answer to this question will help you choose the correct shade cloth(s) for your project. MechoShade is the only shade company with a dedicated fabric mill.

Sunscreen: MechoShade has shade cloths / fabrics that can offer protection from the sun's heat gain and glare – while completely transparent. We have found that it is best to **choose a shade cloth that is no more than 5% open.** *I have never had a client complain that a shade cloth was too dense; but often*

clients wish they had chosen denser weave for more protection – so be conservative. There are many choices that fit this criteria:

- Basket weaves: 1300 series + Euroveil.
- Vertical weaves: 1000 series.
- Twill weaves: 3000 series + 6000 series.
- *Note: darker fabrics are more transparent than lighter fabrics of the same openness / weave. White is least transparent of all.*

Privacy: Obviously you must sacrifice transparency for privacy. The more privacy the less the transparency. 3000 series – semi transparent: you can see forms through it but not detail. 0900 series – cannot see through; but feeling of light.

Room Darkening: Ask your client just how dark they want their space to be. For powerpoint presentations it is not necessary to use totally opaque fabrics. But for AV, opaque may be best. 0700 series + Equinox are best for this.

Do I need side channels? Most people are uncomfortable in total darkness. So we recommend side and sill channels only for labs and other such spaces.

- What if I want both sunscreen and room darkening? This is often the case. It is called a DoubleShade condition. We have DoubleShade brackets available for ease of installation. You can mount them side by side or up and down at an angle to one another.
- MechoShade offers a standard sealed hembar at the bottom of the shade. This is an understated detail – a metal bar heat sealed on three sides to make the shade hang straight and true. There are exposed hembars available for a high tech look.
- If the shade is not mounted in a pocket in the ceiling, specify the SnapLoc fascia. This is an extruded aluminum fascia that covers the front and half of the bottom of the shade.
- MechoShades have an extruded aluminum roller tube – sized for the span on your project. The fabric is attached to the tube via a SnapLoc spline. Fabric can be easily removed if need be yet is firmly in place for everyday use.

