Roller Shade Glossary of Terms

Solar Performance

Openness Factor
Based on the percentage of open space produced by the weave structure, the Openness Factor represents the percentage of UV light blocked by a fabric. A low number means the fabric blocks more of the UV (the openness factor of a blackout is 0%.) Both openness factor and color affect the amount of daylight allowed to penetrate a fabric.

Solar Transmittance (TS)
The proportion of solar energy transmitted through the fabric—a low percentage means better performance at reducing solar energy

Solar Reflectance (RS)
The proportion of solar radiation reflected by the fabric—a high percentage means better solar energy reflection.

Solar Absorptance (AS)
The proportion of solar radiation absorbed by the fabric—a low percentage means less solar energy absorption

The sum of TS + RS + AS equals 100, the sum of solar energy received.

Visual Transmittance (TV)
The total portion of light radiated through the fabric—darker colors allow less light to pass through and perform better at reducing glare than lighter fabrics.

Solar heat gain or Gtot
Measures the solar energy transmittance through windows based on the combined effect of the shade fabric and window glazing

Fabric Types

Blackout Fabric
A 100% opaque fabric with an Openness Factor of 0%. Designed to block all light from passing through

Solar Fabric
A fabric that allows daylight to filter into the room to varying degrees, with an Openness Factor of 2% and higher

Privacy Fabric
A fabric with an Openness Factor of 1% or less that allows some light to pass through but provides privacy by limiting views from the outside to shapes and shadows

Shade Configuration

Regular Roll
In this standard shade roll configuration, the shade fabric falls off the back of the tube, close to the window glass.

Reverse Roll
On a reverse roll, the shade fabric cascades over the front of the tube, creating space between the shade and the window glass.

Dual Roller Shades
A system that features two shades on a single bracket—typically used to combine blackout and solar shades in the same window

Duplex Shade
A single shade comprised of two pieces of fabric on one tube that connect at the bottom with a specially designed hem bar

Open Roll
An installation where the shade roll is exposed

System Components

Cassette
A wall- or ceiling-mounted covering that conceals the shade roll and helps to block light from the front, back, sides, and bottom

Recessed Pocket
A site-built enclosure that conceals the shade roll, installed above or below the ceiling line

Fascia
A detachable cover that conceals the shade roll and helps to block light from the window—front, back, and side fascia (end bracket caps?) can be installed individually or combined

Channels
Side and sill channels are stationary frames that overlap or enclose the shade fabric along the sides and bottom of the window. They are used to help to guide the shade and prevent light leakage. Both side and sill channels are available in U and L shapes. For large windows, H-shaped side channels are installed between two shades.

Hem Bar
An exposed or fabric-covered bar across the width of the bottom of the shade

Light-blocking Brush
A fringe of bristles added to the edge of a side or sill channel or the bottom of a hem bar to help prevent light leakage

Operating System

Manual Clutch Drive System
A system operated with an attached bead chain that turns the drum and spins the tube, allowing the shade fabric to roll up or down

Spring Assist Mechanism (SAM)
Aids in the operation of heavy or super-sized shades by reducing the torque required by the clutch to lift the shade

Motorized System
Motorization replaces the clutch and uses a powered motor to raise and lower the shade by turning the tube to which the fabric is attached. Motorized systems are powered with a battery, plugged into the wall, or hardwired into a junction box. The shade is operated via wireless remote, wired wall switch, or programmed for use with a smart device.