

Discover dozens of easy, elegant,
inexpensive ways to give your home a makeover

Window Treatments & Slipcovers

FOR

DUMMIES[®]



Mark Montano

*Lead designer, The Learning Channel's
While You Were Out*

Carly Sommerstein

Freelance writer

A Reference for the Rest of Us!



**FREE eTips at
dummies.com**

Discover dozens of easy, elegant,
inexpensive ways to give your home a makeover

Window Treatments & Slipcovers

FOR
DUMMIES[®]



Mark Montano

*Lead designer, The Learning Channel's
While You Were Out*

Carly Sommerstein

Freelance writer

A Reference for the Rest of Us!



**FREE eTips at
dummies.com**

***Window Treatments &
Slipcovers For Dummies***[®]

**by Mark Montano and
Carly Sommerstein**



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Window Treatments & Slipcovers For Dummies®

Published by

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2006 by Wiley Publishing, Inc.,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400, fax 978-646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Legal Department, Wiley Publishing, Inc., 10475 Crosspoint Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46256, 317-572-3447, fax 317-572-4355, or online at

<http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

Trademarks: Wiley, the Wiley Publishing logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: The publisher and the author make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales or promotional materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every situation. This work is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If professional assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought. Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for damages arising herefrom. The fact that an organization or Website is referred to in this work as a citation and/or a potential source of further information does not mean that the author or the publisher endorses the information the organization or

Website may provide or recommendations it may make. Further, readers should be aware that Internet Websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 800-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit www.wiley.com/techsupport.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2005924594

ISBN-13: 978-0-7645-8448-0

ISBN-10: 0-7645-8448-0

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

10/RZ/RQ/QV/IN



About the Authors

Mark Montano is best known as the lead designer on *While You Were Out*, the hit designing show on TLC, which he joined in 2003. It's one of the most-recognized and best-loved home redesign shows on television.

Well before *While You Were Out*, Mark began designing clothing for his mother at the age of 14. After graduating from Colorado State University (where he earned a bachelor's degree in business), Mark moved to New York City, where he continued his education at the Fashion Institute of Technology, earning a master's degree in costume history. An internship at Oscar de la Renta gave him an appreciation for exquisite fabrics and the inspiration to begin his own clothing line.

He opened his flagship boutique in New York's East Village and established himself in the world of haute couture. As the youngest member ever to be inducted into the Council of Fashion Designers of America, Mark designed a signature collection of ready-to-wear and custom couture for more than ten years, which was shown to great acclaim on the runways of New York's Fashion Week.

Mark joined the staff of *Cosmo Girl!* magazine as a contributing editor in 1999, where he began a monthly room makeover column called "Cool Room." In early 2002, Mark continued inspiring teens with the publication of his first book, *Super Suite*, a collection of

room makeovers for 15 teenage girls, which was selected for inclusion in the “Books for the Teen Age 2003 List,” published by the New York Public Library.

He also writes a weekly column entitled “Make Your Mark,” syndicated in more than 70 newspapers by Knight Ridder, in which he answers a wide range of readers’ decorating questions. In August 2004, Mark began work as a feature columnist in the New York Post’s home section, where his column “Mark Your Territory” tackles city-living design problems.

Mark’s book, *Dollar Store Décor*, was published to great acclaim in 2005, and he’s currently hard at work on a new TV show, TLC’s *10 Years Younger*. He lives in New York City and Los Angeles.

Carly Sommerstein attended New York University, where she studied English and American literature. She has worked as a freelance book editor for more than 13 years. Her writing has appeared in the *NY Press*, the *Utne Reader*, *Jane*, www.playboy.com, and elsewhere. She also collaborated with Mark Montano on *Super Suite*. Carly lives in the New York City area with her husband and two-year-old son.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to our loved ones, and to everyone who has the desire to make things more beautiful.

Authors' Acknowledgments

So many people had a hand in creating this book, and we want to extend our deepest thanks and lasting gratitude to every one of them. Thank you, Diane Graves Steele, vice president and publisher, and Mikal Belicove, acquisitions editor, for coming up with the concept for the book and for giving us the chance to execute it. Thanks to Janet Rosen, our adorable and energetic agent, and Sheree Bykofsky of Sheree Bykofsky Associates, for their faith and on-going moral support. The great Jeremy Nelson did the interior photography, and the fine folks at Kreber in Columbus, Ohio, provided the color-insert photos; thanks and kudos to you both. Many thanks to the graphics department at Wiley, who created this book's line drawings.

The project editors and copyeditors of the publishing world are rarely given their fair due. These diligent, highly organized, and creative multitaskers contribute hugely to the final product. Thank you, Chrissy Guthrie and Sherri Pfouts, for your amazing brains and for your dedication and encouragement during the shaping of this book from start to finish. Copyeditors Chad Sievers and Neil Johnson corrected our spelling and syntax and made many smart comments and suggestions that helped a great deal. We also want to acknowledge the helpful contribution of our technical editors, Carol Spier and

Sandra Rea, for going behind our work and pointing us in the right direction.

Mark thanks his parents for helping him to think out of the box, Jorge Montano for his organizational skills and good cheer, and his cowriter Carly Sommerstein.

Carly thanks her late grandmother Betty Liner, a talented seamstress and fabric lover who first exposed her to creativity with cloth. Thanks to her husband, J.R. Taylor, for his unconditional love and support. She also thanks her mother-in-law, baby genius Barbara Taylor, and Sherylann Matthias, her amazing nanny, who both helped to care for her son, Judah Ray Taylor, during the writing of this book; it truly does take a village. And thank you, Mark Montano, for your sense of humor and giant talent. It's a pleasure to work with you and an honor to be your friend.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our Dummies online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

Acquisitions, Editorial, and Media Development

Project Editors: Sherri Pfouts, Christina Guthrie

Acquisitions Editor: Mikal Belicove

Copy Editors: Chad Sievers, Neil Johnson

Editorial Program Assistant: Courtney Allen

Technical Editors: Carol Spier, Sandra Rea

Editorial Manager: Christine Meloy Beck

Editorial Assistants: Hanna Scott, Nadine Bell

Cover Photos: © Ira Montgomery/ Getty Images/The Image Bank

Cartoons: Rich Tennant (www.the5thwave.com)

Composition Services

Project Coordinator: Adrienne Martinez

Layout and Graphics: Jonelle Burns, Brian Drumm, Kelly Emkow, Joyce Haughey, Stephanie D. Jumper, Barbara Moore, Barry Offringa, Brent Savage, Amanda Spagnuolo, Julie Trippetti

Special Art: Color section photos by Mark Madden, Kreber; in-text photos by Jeremy Nelson

Proofreaders: Leeann Harney, Jessica Kramer, TECHBOOKS Production Services

Indexer: TECHBOOKS Production Services

Publishing and Editorial for Consumer Dummies

Diane Graves Steele, Vice President and Publisher, Consumer Dummies

Joyce Pepple, Acquisitions Director, Consumer Dummies

Kristin A. Cocks, Product Development Director, Consumer Dummies

Michael Spring, Vice President and Publisher, Travel

Kelly Regan, Editorial Director, Travel

Publishing for Technology Dummies

Andy Cummings, Vice President and Publisher, Dummies Technology/General User

Composition Services

Gerry Fahey, Vice President of Production Services

Debbie Stailey, Director of Composition Services

Contents

[Title](#)

[Introduction](#)

[About This Book](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[What You're Not to Read](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[How This Book Is Organized](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

[Part I : Window Treatments & Slipcovers 101](#)

[Chapter 1: Covering the Basics Before You Start](#)

[Thinking about Color](#)

[Uncovering Sources of Project-Planning Inspiration](#)

[Some Assembly Required: Necessary Construction Skills](#)

[Creating a Workspace and Gathering Your Supplies](#)

[Chapter 2: Choosing the Right Fabric for the Job](#)

[Factoring in Fiber Content](#)

[Weighing Your Fabric Options](#)

[Examining Window Fabric Essentials](#)

[Slipping into a Comfortable, Sturdy Slipcover](#)

Chapter 3: Buying, Pretreating, and Caring for Your Fabrics

[Gathering Info — At Home and at the Store](#)

[Shopping for Fabrics in the Right Location](#)

[Deciding How Much Fabric You Need \(and Can Afford\)](#)

[Cheating with Sheets](#)

[Pretreating: A Must for Happy Fabrics](#)

[Caring for Your Finished Products](#)

Chapter 4: Latching On to Hardware

[Why Choosing Hardware Early On Matters](#)

[Honing In on Hardware for Your Window Treatments](#)

[Installing Window Hardware](#)

[Utilizing Slipcover “Hardware”](#)

Chapter 5: Getting the Right Tools within Reach

[Identifying the Must-Haves in Your Sewing Tool Kit](#)

[Zeroing In on Special Accessories](#)

Part II : Window Treatments in a Snap

Chapter 6: Measuring, Making Patterns, and Cutting Fabric for Your Windows

[Considering Form and Function](#)

[Lining Up Your Measuring Tools](#)

[Acquainting Yourself with Your Windows](#)

[Looking Closer at a Window’s Measurements](#)

[Getting the Gist of Measuring](#)

[Making and Using Patterns](#)

[Cutting Your Fabric](#)

[Chapter 7: Making Easy No-Sew and Low-Sew Window Treatments](#)

[Skip Sewing: What Rings, Pins, and a Little Glue Can Do](#)

[Draping Windows: Easy-To-Crete Looks](#)

[Hiding Your Unmentionables: A Simple Lace Shelf Valance](#)

[Whipping Up Ultrasuede Curtains](#)

[Fashioning Frayed-Edge Draperies](#)

[Cruising with Car Wash Curtains](#)

[Avoiding the Sewing Machine: No-Sew Shades](#)

[Chapter 8: Accessorize! Window Details That Dazzle](#)

[Decorating Your Curtain's "Face"](#)

[Adding Charm with Decorative Trim](#)

[Tweaking the Look with Tiebacks](#)

[Tassels: The Final Touch](#)

[Chapter 9: Quick Fixes and Timesaving Techniques for Window Treatments](#)

[No Fretting Over Those Inevitable Mistakes](#)

[Taking Shortcuts That Nobody Notices](#)

[Part III : Slipcovers Made Easy](#)

[Chapter 10: Calculating, Measuring, and More: General Tips for Slipcovering](#)

[Measuring Furniture and Cutting and Sewing Fabric for Slipcovers](#)

[Calculating Fabric Needs Based on Your Furniture's Measurements](#)

[Calculating Seam Allowance, Hem Allowance, and Tuck-ins](#)

[Making Patterns](#)

[Fitting Tips](#)

[Chapter 11: Tackling the Easy Stuff: Simple Slipcovers](#)

[Slipcovering a Loveseat or Sofa](#)

[Covering an Armchair](#)

[Making Slipcovers for Dining Room Chairs](#)

[Giving Your Ottoman a New Look](#)

[Slipcovering a Vanity Stool with Lace](#)

[Chapter 12: My Slipcover Is Better Than Yours: Knockout Accessorizing](#)

[Choosing Decorative Trim](#)

[Attaching Decorative Trim](#)

[Adding Appliqués](#)

[Looking at Alternatives to Sewing on Trims and Appliqués](#)

[Embellishing Your Slipcover](#)

[Chapter 13: Easy Street: Slipcover Shortcuts and Mistake Meltaways](#)

[Simple Slipcover Shortcuts](#)

[Messing Up Isn't the End of the World](#)

[A Few Slipcovering Tricks for "Problem" Furniture](#)

[Part IV : Challenging Projects to Try](#)

[Chapter 14: Intermediate Window Treatments to Sink Your Needle Into](#)

[Discovering the World of Valances](#)

[Working with Ruffles](#)

[Making Other Types of Curtains](#)

[Chapter 15: Gearing Up for More Ambitious Window Treatment Projects](#)

[Easy-Switch Style: Reversible Draperies with Tabs](#)

[Weatherproofing Your Home: Lined Draperies](#)

[Seriously Swank: Fabulous Swags](#)

[Fear Not: Stitched Pleats Made Easy](#)

[In Charm's Way: Making Shades for All Seasons](#)

[Chapter 16: All in a Day's Work! Intermediate Slipcover Projects](#)

[Before You Get Started . . .](#)

[Slipcovering Sofas and Chairs](#)

[Fixing Up Those Ottomans, Stools, and More](#)

[Chapter 17: Slipcover All-Stars: Advanced Projects](#)

[Making Slipcover Cushions with Zippers](#)

[Adding Piping to a Slipcover Cushion](#)

[Concocting Reversible Slipcovers and Cushions](#)

[Making a Pleated Skirt for a Sofa or Loveseat](#)

[Stitched Vanity Stool Slipcover with Ruffle](#)

[Creating Slipcovers for Tables](#)

[Part V : The Part of Tens](#)

[Chapter 18: Ten Interior Design Tips to Follow](#)

[Let Color Be Your Guide](#)

[Complement Solid Colors](#)

[Match Colors in Solids and Prints](#)

[Contrast Print Sizes and Match Print Colors](#)

[Avoid Certain Prints](#)

[Cheat with Sheets](#)

[Be a Copycat](#)

[Use a Bit of Black](#)

[Don't Fuss Over Pennies](#)

[Keep Your Pattern Handy \(And Out of Sight\)](#)

[Chapter 19: Ten Interior Design Rules to Break](#)

[Start from the Ground Up](#)

[Keep the Colors Muted](#)

[Mind Your Proportions](#)

[Less Is More](#)

[Never Mix Styles and Periods](#)

[If You Want Your Treatment to Look Good, You Have to Sew It](#)

[Draperies Have to Be of Certain Lengths](#)

[Draperies Are for Windows Only](#)

[Only Use Home Decor Fabrics for Your Creations](#)

[Different = Tacky](#)

[Chapter 20: Ten \(or So\) Web Resources for Fabric, Hardware, and Notions](#)

[Acme Notions](#)

[Antique Drapery Rod & Co.](#)

[Calico Corners](#)

[Curtains on Call](#)

[DiscountFabric.com](#)

[Hancock Fabrics](#)

[Home Trends](#)

[Jo-Ann Fabrics](#)

[Lace For Less](#)

[Linens 'n Things](#)

[M&J Trimming](#)

[Reprodepot Fabrics](#)

[: Color Insert](#)

Introduction

We're delighted to welcome you to our take on window treatment and slipcover design. If you're bored with what's being offered to you in the stores and want to take a crack at doing it yourself, you came to the right place. We think making your own window treatments and slipcovers is the perfect way to express your individual style, to make a room truly special and entirely your own. This book provides you with our formula for a little style magic: We provide several fun ideas to jazz up your windows and furniture and explain step by step how to make them come to life. All you need is some money, time, and effort, and before you know it, you'll be creating beautiful window treatments and slipcovers for which you'd pay an interior decorator a king's ransom (not to mention bragging rights!).

As soon as you get the do-it-yourself bug, don't be surprised if you scoff out loud at all the store-bought home decorating products, their inflated prices, and their listless design quality.

About This Book

Window Treatments & Slipcovers For Dummies is a book for everyone — from those of you who don't own a sewing machine, and don't want to, to those who are

learning the ins and outs of sewing, to those of you who have some good basic sewing knowledge that you want to flex a bit, to those of you who have been sewing for years and want to pick up a few new design ideas. We include useful background knowledge and practical information on choosing materials (such as fabrics, trims, and hardware), tips on planning your construction, as well dozens of step-by-step projects that you can create as is, or adapt to your design needs.

We wrote this book so you can make window treatments and slipcovers easily at home and in the style you love. We conceived and translated into writing many projects that don't require any sewing knowledge, for those who want to create without sewing, and many projects that only require rudimentary sewing knowledge. We wish we had the time and space to give you a sewing tutorial for each project, but that just wasn't possible. If you want to attempt an "advanced" sewing project that we offer, but feel that your sewing skills aren't quite up to snuff, we encourage you to pick up Jan Saunders Maresh's *Sewing For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, (Wiley) which shows you all the basic step-by-step sewing concepts and techniques, and some fun projects, as well.

Conventions Used in This Book

We want to take a minute to point out some conventions we used when writing this book:

- ✓ To get you started on the right foot, each project begins with a formula for figuring out how much fabric you need to cover your particular window or piece of furniture. We also always provide an example, so that you can see the math in action.
- ✓ In addition to addressing fabric needs upfront, we also provide a list of needed tools and materials before each project. We arrange these lists of supplies alphabetically, not in their order of importance. Making sure you have all your tools and supplies handy before you begin a project is essential.
- ✓ We simplify many standard sewing practices to make this book as accessible and easy as we possibly can. If you've been taught to sew in a way that contradicts our advice, certainly do what makes you the most comfortable. But consider trying it our way. We've thought it all through, and we believe our suggestions will work out great for you and your room. Mark has been sewing for decades and really knows his stuff!
- ✓ Anytime we introduce a new sewing, fabric, or decor term, we *italicize* it.
- ✓ We **bold** all keywords as well as the steps in a numbered list.
- ✓ Web sites and e-mail addresses appear in monofont to help them stand out.

What You're Not to Read

Of course, we'd love for you to read each and every word of this wonderful book — after all, we wrote it! However, if you're not interested in all the details and just want to get to the heart of each project, you can skip the sidebars, which are shaded gray. Sidebars contain good-to-know but nonessential info, so they're totally skippable if you want to do so.

Also, any paragraphs marked with the Nice to Have icon are skippable as well. These paragraphs point out tools and gear that are (you guessed it) nice to have but not necessary to complete the project successfully.

Foolish Assumptions

As we wrote this book, we made some assumptions about you and your needs:

- ✓ You want to be able to create great-looking rooms without having to first achieve seamstress status. (Although for some projects in this book, we do assume that you at least know your way around a sewing machine.)
- ✓ You want a wide range of style choices to fit many different rooms.

✓ You're looking for tips, shortcuts, tricks, and smart advice — from soup to nuts — to lower your frustration level down to zero (or at least pretty close to zero).

✓ You want to start making window treatment and/or slipcover projects to spiff up your rooms right away.

If any of these assumptions fit the bill for you, welcome to our world and to this book!

How This Book Is Organized

We organized this book into five parts so that you can quickly and easily find what you want.

Part I: Window Treatments & Slipcovers 101

In this part, we talk about planning your window and slipcover projects including how to determine your style, your color likes and dislikes, your fabric choices and where to shop for them, and information on hardware and “softwear” for your windows and furniture. We also give advice on what tools you need and how to create a useful workspace.

Part II: Window Treatments in a Snap

The chapters in this part deal exclusively with the easiest no-sew and low-sew window treatments — everything you need to know about measuring, cutting, and creating simple curtains, draperies, and shades. We cover the wonderful world of window treatment accessorizing, so you can personalize your creations. We also offer some helpful timesaving shortcuts and quick fixes in case you find yourself in a jam.

Part III: Slipcovers Made Easy

This part shows you all about simple no-sew or low-sew slipcovers and how to calculate your fabric needs and measure properly so you can cover nearly any piece of furniture in your home. We offer some advice on adding accessories, such as trims and other add-ons, to your slipcovers and, as in Part II, a few shortcuts and plenty of advice on how to melt away mistakes.