

What is the difference? “Curtains” in Britain are called “drapes” in North America. Usually “curtains” are not lined – such as café curtains, sheer curtains or a shower curtain – and “drapes” have a lining and/or interlining.

The Heading

If you already have hardware, it may dictate the type of heading you choose for your drapes:

- **Inverted (box) pleat** : The fullness of the drape is taken away at the back, leaving a neat, flat look in the front. This type of heading works best for drapes with up to 2 times fullness.
- **Pinch (French) pleat** : This look is more traditional and works especially well if you choose drapes that are fuller than 2 times fullness. Inverted pleats and pinch pleats can be installed to cover the hardware or expose the hardware.
- **Grommets**: Grommet drapes are fun for children’s rooms, or look very sophisticated in a modern minimalist interior. Because grommet drapes are not gathered, you will need less fabric.
- **Ripple folds**: This option works well for ceiling-to-floor drapes or sheer drapes.
- Other heading options are **Athena drapes** , tab tops or rod pocket drapes.

The Length

Drapes can be floor length or window sill length. For windows with heating radiators below, sill length drapes work best. Floor length drapes can be **slightly above the floor** (to clear a heating or air vent) or

just touching the floor

. You can also choose to have your drapes

puddle

on the floor for a luxurious look.

Fullness

This refers to the amount of fabric used for drapes. Drapes are usually gathered at the top, but the amount of fabric taken in by the gathers can vary. Two times fullness means for every one inch window width, you will need two inches of fabric. For example, if the area you want covered by the drape (usually the width of the window plus 8" to 10" overlap on either side of the window) is 100 inches wide, you will need 200 inches of fabric. (This equals roughly 4 panels/drops of standard 54 inch wide fabric). "Two times" fullness works well for inverted pleats. For pinch pleats, 2½ times fullness is often better. Sheer drapes are usually calculated at 3 times fullness. For grommet top or tab top drapes, 1½ times fullness will be enough.