

Say goodbye to raising your blinds

Motorized window treatments will bring light into your home

By Mary E. Hart

In the recent movie, "The Holiday", Kate Winslet's character arrives in LA from England and is desperate for some sleep due to jet lag and her system thinking it's 1 a.m. when it's far earlier. She lays down in the bed of the mansion she's visiting and notices a button on the bedside table. Once the button is pressed, every single window shade in the room automatically descends, bringing soothing, sleep-inducing darkness into the room. Now, wouldn't that be easier than having to go around to each window and closing the shades when you're tired? With motorized window treatments, that kind of luxury can be yours, and the cost makes it accessible to not just mansion owners, but almost anyone.

"Motorization has become more popular from the advent of radio-controlled window shades and blinds," says Vincent Lozzi, Owner of Stacey's Home Décor. "Previously, with motorized window treatments, you had to point and click a remote directly at the blinds. Now, through radio-controlled transmitters, you can be in the next room and raise or lower blinds." This feature would come in very handy in a nursery, for example. If you realize after the fact that you didn't close the shades in your baby's room before putting your little one down for a nap, you could use the transmitter to close the motorized shades without having to go back into the room and wake up your baby.

Another perfect place for motorized window treatments is a newly constructed home. "With new homes, large two-story windows and skylights at the top of a cathedral style great room are quite popular," says Lozzi. For these very hard-to-reach windows and skylights, motorized blinds, shades and skylight blinds come in quite handy. The ideal situation would be to choose motorized treatments as you're selecting your home's options. That way, the windows in your home could be hard-wired along with all of the other wiring for your home and your systems would be planned out ahead of time." Wouldn't pressing a button be far easier than climbing a two-story ladder to close the blinds on your skylight?

All of the major window treatments brands, from Hunter Douglas to Levolor and others, have infrared ("point and click") and radio-controlled motorized options. Hunter Douglas offers motorized systems for almost all of their products, including Alustra Duette honeycomb shades; Silhouette window shadings; Remembrance window shades; and Somner Collection Vertical Blinds. Hunter Douglas' motorized tilt system, named PowerTilt, offers a quiet motor and a remote control that operates up to 6 window treatments at once from up to 50 feet away from the treatments.

"Somfy is the company that makes the motors of our motorized window treatments," says Lozzi. "Their systems are easily hidden behind a decorative headrail or valance of your treatment, so you won't mar the look of your room." By choosing motorized treatments, you'll also find that your window treatments last longer, as they won't be subject to the wear and tear of constantly being open and closed manually.

Motors can be retro-fitted to fit your existing blinds if you don't want to get all new window treatments. However, if you are interested in motorized window treatments, you might just be surprised that the cost could be up your alley. Generally, the cost for motorization is \$100 to \$400 per treatment, and would be higher for more complicated systems. For example, skylight blinds are currently very popular due to the new homes with high ceilings and a skylight at the top. For such a motorized skylight blind, you could find a motorized treatment with a Lithium battery and remote control for around \$400 to \$700, based of course on square foot of the skylight and other criteria.

“In the past five years, concealed batteries have become the norm for window treatments,” says Lozzi. “Some motorized systems use Lithium batteries that last for about five years in the place of hard-wiring the system. If you have six window treatments, you could get them all motorized with Lithium batteries and they'd all be controlled by one remote. Open and close the window shades all at once or one at a time. It's your choice.

For more information about motorized window treatments and how they can work in your home, and to even see samples of motorized blinds in the showroom, visit Stacey's Home Décor at 136 Andover Street in Danvers; call 978-774-1001 or check out [www.staceyshomedecor.com](http://www.staceyshomedecor.com)