

# WHITE PAPER

WINDOW SHADES

## SHADE FABRIC MATERIAL: FIBERGLASS VS POLYESTER



Product: Motorized Shades/Dual Roller Shades. Dealer: Best Blind & Shade, Louisville, KY.  
Location: Mercantile Gallery Loft Condominiums, Louisville, KY. Photographer: Kenneth Hayden, Louisville, KY.



- With an outstanding selection of colors, fabric types, weave, composition, and interior and/or exterior uses, Draper has the shade fabric to meet your needs.

There are many choices to make when considering which window shade fabric will work best for your project. Color, openness factor, PVC vs. non-PVC coated, and single color vs. duplex are some decisions to be made. One of the more basic choices is material construction: polyester or fiberglass core shade fabric. Each fabric has its own advantages and provides an excellent solution, but there are some pros and cons to consider when making your choice.

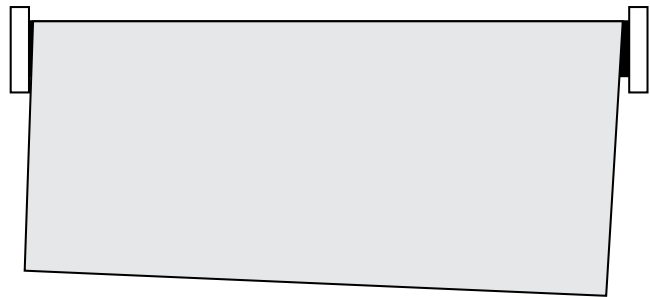
### STRENGTH AND DURABILITY

While it is true that polyester core yarns have a higher strength rating than fiberglass, it is also true that fiberglass is, pound for pound, several times stronger than steel. So, both polyester and fiberglass fabrics are more than strong enough for window shade applications.

Polyester can be affected by heat. Polyester loses its dimensional stability and stretches under high temperatures, while fiberglass is unaffected because of its much higher melting point.

### KEEPING ON TRACK

Both fiberglass and polyester yarns can sometimes mis-track—also known as telescoping or not running exactly square with the roller. Polyester yarns are straight and so are somewhat less prone to tracking issues than fiberglass with its twisted yarns. In either case, this is easily remedied by placing a piece of high quality gaffer tape about 1” wide on the exposed roller (where the fabric will cover it) on the side that you want the fabric drawn toward.





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Polyester Fabric with Fraying



Fiberglass fabric with Fraying

## DON'T BE FRAYED

Although Draper uses modern cutting techniques that reduce the likelihood of frayed edges, any time a fabric is cut—whatever the method—there is a small possibility of fraying after some time in the field, depending on the usage of the product.

The ultrasonic technology used by Draper to cut shade fabrics creates enough heat to make a clean, non-frayed edge on polyester shade fabrics, capitalizing on polyester's greater sensitivity to heat. In the event there is some fraying, repairs can be made on polyester by careful use of heat/

flame to melt the frayed pieces away. Draper's advanced cutting methods also reduce the likelihood that fiberglass will fray, although fraying is more likely than with polyester. If fraying does occur, scissors can be used to trim the fabric. Because both fiberglass and polyester core yarns are white, fraying is more visible on dark colors.

## THIN IS IN

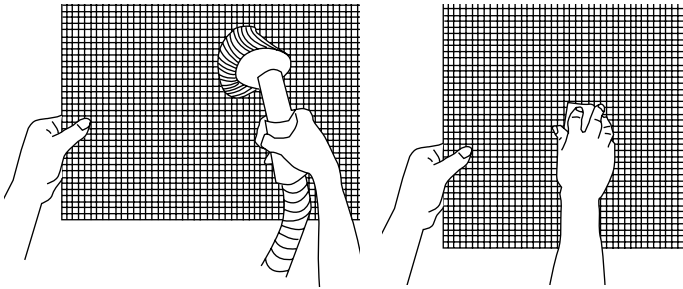
Because fiberglass yarn has traditionally been thinner, those shade fabrics have been touted as having better glare control, improved view-through characteristics, and more uniform coating ability. The big payoff: thinner yarns also mean lighter materials, so larger shades can be made because the diameter of the bundle is not as great. In addition, fewer materials need to go into the manufacturing of the operating mechanism, fascia, and other hardware, saving material cost and resources. The smaller product and hardware also presents a cleaner and slimmer profile at the window. In recent years, thinner polyester yarns have been developed so these advantages are no longer exclusive to fiberglass fabrics. As a general rule, fiberglass fabrics are thinner.

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### KEEP IT CLEAN

Because these yarns are coated, both types are equally cleanable. Draper's standard fabrics may be cleaned at the window by vacuuming with a soft brush attachment. Most may also be cleaned by using a sponge or soft cloth and mild solution of warm soapy water. A dishwashing liquid, such as Ivory liquid, is recommended. Some uncoated fabrics are exceptions, and must be cleaned with a dry art sponge, but that is the same whether fiberglass, polyester, or a blend.



Right: Vacuuming with a soft brush attachment.  
Right: Cleaning with a soft cloth/art sponge.

### THE ECOLOGY

Draper offers many options for environmentally-friendly shade fabrics. As in other areas, both polyester and fiberglass offer options for those concerned with using the "greenest" materials available.

Several of Draper's polyester fabrics are made with non-PVC coatings, and Draper's GreenScreen Revive polyester fabric is Cradle to Cradle Certified<sup>CM</sup> Bronze by MBDC, indicating that it meets or exceeds a rigorous and holistic 5-criteria standard for environmental impact. These criteria include Material Health, Material Reutilization, Energy, Water, and Social Responsibility.

Environmental benefits are not exclusive to polyester. Both polyester and fiberglass fabrics offered by Draper are GreenGuard Gold certified for low chemical emissions. In addition, as noted above, fiberglass fabrics are generally thinner than polyester, so fewer materials need to go into the manufacturing of the operating mechanism, fascia, and other hardware. This conserves resources.

Draper takes its responsibilities as a leader in Green awareness very seriously. For more information on Draper's role in sustainable design and building, go to: [green.draperinc.com/](http://green.draperinc.com/).

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