

An introduction to Thermal Curtain Lining

Simple Solutions for Saving Energy: No. 9

Why should I line my curtains?

Creating a thermal lining for your curtain is an excellent way to keep the heat in during cold winter nights. Curtains provide important insulation and can reduce cold draughts; especially if they are long enough, thick enough, and they have plenty of folds to help trap pockets of air.



To get the best from your curtains, remember to close them as soon as it gets dark, and to tuck them behind radiators or up on to window sills – you don't want the warmth from your radiator to be trapped behind your curtains.

Is it difficult to line curtains?

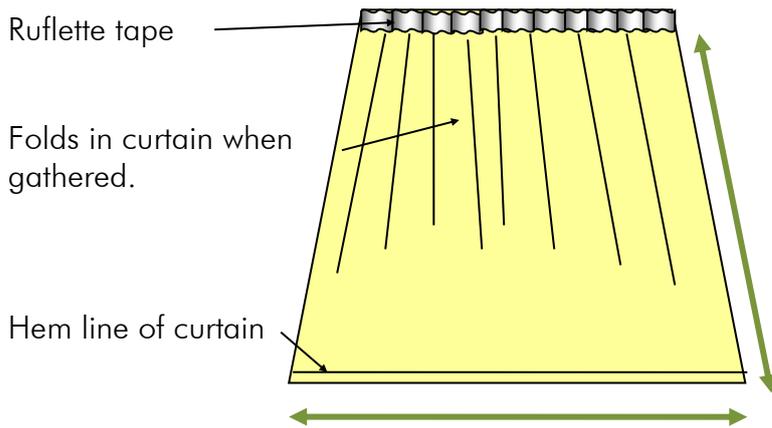
Creating a detachable lining for your curtains using the method shown in this guide is very straightforward. We believe anyone with a basic level of experience using a sewing machine (or needle and thread) can do it. Of course there are other methods you could use which need a bit more skill and knowledge, or you may have curtains with special designs that don't suit this approach. However, we hope what you find here is enough to get you started!

What will I need?

- * Thermally coated lining material. This costs about £4 per metre from fabric shops or online retailers
- * Ruflette tape, one inch (25 mm) wide. Also available from fabric shops, haberdasheries or online
- * White cotton
- * Tape measure
- * Fabric scissors
- * Pins
- * A sewing machine (or a needle)
- * Curtain hooks



Step 1: Measure your curtains



a. Measure drop from bottom of ruflette tape to bottom edge of curtain.

- * Subtract 1.5 cm if not hemming.
- * Add 2 cm if creating a hem.

b. Measure width along the bottom of existing curtain. If you are not making a hem, cut lining fabric 4cm less than width of curtain.

'Coated' fabrics don't fray, so if you are using one of these you can choose not to create any hems. Make sure you cut your lining fabric smaller than the actual curtain do it doesn't show around the edges.

Non-coated fabrics do fray, so you will need to hem all sides. Cut the lining fabric the same size as the existing curtain so that once you have sewn the hems, the lining will be smaller than the curtain itself.

Create your hems by folding each edge of the fabric over by 1 cm then over again by 1 cm and stitching to secure.

Step 2. Cut your lining fabric

Now cut out your lining. You may find that the width of your fabric is less than the width you need for the lining, in this case you will need to cut 2 or more lengths of lining fabric and join them together down the sides. In this case, you will need to add an extra 2cm to the total width so you can create a 1 cm wide seam joining the two pieces together.

A note on cutting fabric: fabric always has two finished edges along either side called the selvedge; the direction of the selvedge is the direction of the fabric's grain, and this is the direction you will measure the length of the lining along.



Step 3. Get sewing!

If you need to join 2 widths together, place the two pieces of lining material right sides together and pin to hold in place. Sew along the edge to create a 1 cm seam. If your fabric is non-coated you will also need to create hems along the sides and the bottom edge.



Step 4. Attach the ruflette tape

Measure and cut a length of 1" ruflette tape the width of your lining, plus an extra 6cm in order to fold over the raw edges at either end.

For coated fabrics: place the ruflette tape along the top edge of the lining and pin in place (folding about 3cm under at either end). Now sew along near the top and bottom edges to fix it in place.

For non-coated fabrics: Fold over about 1.5cm along the top edge of the lining and then pin the ruflette tape in place all along the top of the lining covering the folded top edge (folding under the raw ends of the tape by about 3cm either end). Sew along the top and bottom edges to secure.



Step 5. Attach your lining

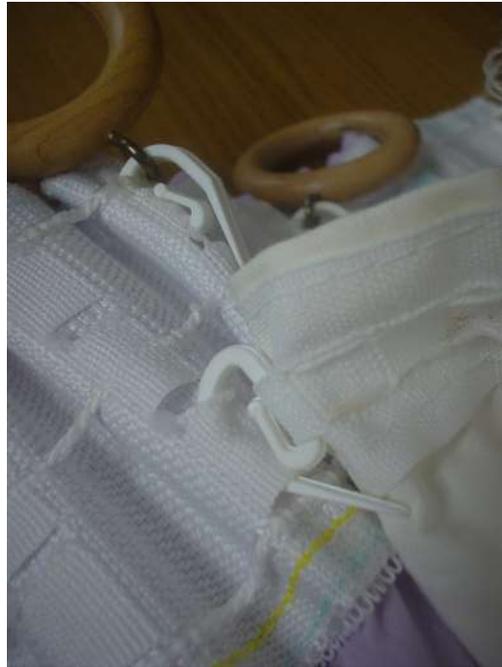
Pull the ends of the rufflette tape to ruffle your lining to the same ruffled width of your curtain.

Count out enough curtain hooks so that they can be evenly spaced along the length of your ruffled lining. Approximately 15—20 cm gaps between each hook usually works well.

Feed the hooks into the rufflette tape as you would normally feed hooks into the tape on the main curtain. This leaves the large part of the hook exposed, so that it can be fed into the rufflette tape of the main curtain.

Work your way along the length of the curtain, feeding each hook into the main rufflette tape until the lining is fully attached.

The curtain can now be re-hung as normal, with the lining material in positioned between the curtain and the window. The curtain lining can easily be removed and re-attached, without even taking the curtains down from their rail.



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