

Inverted-Pleat Panels on a Curved Board

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Recently a client came to me with a drapery panel idea for her two dining room windows. Her inspiration came from some drapery panels that she had seen while attending an event in the Chicago area.

My client loved the panels she had seen in the hostess's dining room, and proceeded to describe them to me. Her favorite part of the panels was that they were hanging from a curved pole, similar to a curved shower curtain rod. Luckily, I was able to contact the hostess, and she very graciously sent me pictures of her window treatments. Instead of a curved pole or rod, however, the panels were actually hanging from a piece of plywood that was cut in a curved shape on the front edge. An easy — and much less expensive — way to hang the panels than a custom-curved pole.



Making the Pattern



After finding a beautiful fabric for the draperies, my first step was to make a pattern for the curved pieces of plywood. I knew that I wanted to be able to take the pattern to my client's house, and lay it on top of her existing sheer traversing rods. That way we could see how the shape of the curve would look at the windows. I used two layers of Skirtex stiffener (that I use for soft cornices) for the pattern. I glued them together, making them very stiff. It took three attempts to get the right curved shape and depth for the pattern, so I was very glad that I had made the pattern out of stiffener instead of plywood. The pattern we ended up with was 9 inches deep at the center point, and the board width was 3 inches wider than the existing traversing rod.

Fabricating the Panels



Once the board's pattern was done, I used it to cut the two pieces of plywood, one for each of the two windows. Because the tops of the boards could be seen from my client's stairway, I covered them in the face fabric. Next, I stapled hook tape onto the front curved edge of each board. The drapery panels were going to be lined with blackout lining and interlined, so I knew they were going to be very heavy. Because of the weight of the panels, I didn't trust that just the hook and loop tape would hold them in place. Greater stability was achieved with Kirflex eyelet rodding (a Kirsch product) screwed to the underside of the curved edge of the plywood and combined with drapery hooks inserted into the back of the drapery pleats.

The drapery panels don't overlap, but meet in the front middle of the curve. To figure the finished width of the panels, I measured the curve of the board, which was 55 inches. I divided that figure in half (27½ inches) and added ½ inch or so for ease to get my finished width for one panel (28 inches).

I fabricated the inverted pleat panels in my usual way, except I also added loop tape to the back side of the heading, as well as the drapery hooks. The eyelet rodding would have been enough, but the hook and loop tape helps keep the top edges of the panels snug to the curved board.

Hanging the Panels



Installing the panels was very easy. The plywood boards were installed onto L-brackets, and then the panels were hung using the Kirflex eyelets and the hook tape already installed on the boards. For proper support for the middle of each board, I did make a custom cut L-bracket by using a shelf bracket, which had a depth of about 9 inches, and had the wall part of the L-bracket cut down to 4 inches to match the L-brackets on either end of the board.

My client was thrilled with the drapery panels, and even gave me a big hug when she saw them! ☺

