



mighty mac

it's **beary** clean

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We occasionally are asked if we clean blinds or drapes. Our immediate answer is: "May be". Drapery materials run the gamut in styles and materials, even more so than upholstery. We must test each item to make sure it is even cleanable.

Rayon is a fiber that is popular for sheer drapes, and is not found in carpet or upholstery because it is easily damaged. Rayon is a synthetic product. Cotton fibers are broken down using chemicals and turned into slurry. The slurry is forced through spinnerets. As it cools it becomes rayon fiber. Rayon was developed as an inexpensive alternative to silk as it can be made much thinner and with a softer hand (or feel) than cotton. Cotton contains Lignin, a brown chemical that resides deep in the fibers and binds the cells of the fibers together. Since rayon is remanufactured, the Lignin is exposed. Rayon is susceptible to browning from sunlight, high humidity or the cleaning process. This is known as 'cellulosic browning'. Rayon does not respond well to cleaning.

Cotton and silks generally are cleanable so long as the sun has not damaged the fibers. Patterned cottons and silks are susceptible to bleeding. When we discover this, all that can usually be done is vacuuming. Cotton is susceptible to cellulosic browning when exposed to high humidity situations such as from 'sweating' windows.

Wool is used occasionally when darkening of the rooms are preferred. Wool can be cleaned as long as bleeding is not a major issue.

Nylon and polyester are durable utility fibers that are easily cleaned. They do not have the exotic look or feel of others, but it gets the job done. The photos below are before and after cleaning of Nylon blinds from a house where the owner was a chain smoker. They thought the change in color could be sun damage. It was a build up of tobacco smoke.

