
Behind the Blinds

Written by Jaime-Lynn Dyck - Photos Submitted



At Budget Blinds of Southwest and Southeast Manitoba, learning doesn't stop at the showroom door. It travels across provinces, into manufacturing plants, national tradeshows, and into every home they serve. That commitment to ongoing education was on full display recently when Sue and Alaura returned from an inspiring trip to Ontario, one that deepened their industry knowledge and strengthened the partnerships that help them deliver exceptional window coverings to Manitoba homeowners.

Sue and Alaura travelled to Mississauga for the opening and celebration of Norman Window Fashions' first Canadian showroom. They also visited several long-standing vendor partners, including Mera Window Coverings, a company Budget Blinds has proudly partnered with for 15 years, as well as Elite Window Fashions and Maxxmar Window Fashions. Each facility offered something different. Some operations feature skilled hand-cutting and detailed manual craftsmanship, while others showcase advanced automation and cutting-edge production lines. Seeing these contrasts firsthand reinforced how much thought, precision, and evolving technology go into every custom blind, shade, and shutter.

For Alaura, the experience brought her training to life. Touring the plants and meeting vendor teams created a deeper understanding of the products and the people behind them. Real conversations and real experiences have given her a strong foundation as she builds her career in the window fashions industry.

Sue believes these experiences are essential. "Ongoing education is imperative in this industry," she says. Regulations are continually evolving, particularly around child safety standards and motorization requirements, and staying informed isn't optional. It's a responsibility. With increasing demand for smart home integration and automated systems, what Sue calls "future proofing your home" has become a key part of client conversations. Motorized shades, programmable controls, and energy-efficient materials that were once thought of as luxuries; are now thoughtful investments in safety, convenience, and long-term value.

The Ontario trip is just one example of how the team continues to grow. Back at home, ongoing product education is a regular part of their routine. The staff



participates in bi-monthly webinars to stay current on new releases, innovations, and regulatory updates. They continue to expand their expertise through online courses and hands-on practice, applying what they learn in real-life situations with clients. In mid-March 2026, Shane will travel to Texas for business training, at Budget Blinds Home Office, and to say he is excited is an understatement.

That dedication to learning directly shapes how they guide homeowners, especially as new design trends begin to take hold for 2026.

One emerging direction is Vintage and Heritage style, think “Grandpa’s Den.” Rich wood tones, deeper colours, layered textures, and heavier fabrics are making a comeback. Moody Roman shades, tailored drapery panels, and classic shutters complement this nostalgic yet refined aesthetic.

At the same time, Nature-Inspired or biophilic design continues to flourish. Leaf and floral patterns, organic textures, and materials that echo the outdoors are gaining popularity. Woven wood shades and subtle botanical prints bring softness and life into a space while maintaining functionality.

Warmth and Soul, an evolution of the modern farmhouse look, focuses on comfort and authenticity. Warm neutrals and textured linens create inviting rooms that feel personal rather than staged. Window coverings in this category lean toward layered treatments, pairing blinds or shades with soft drapery for added depth.

Finally, Well-Being and Unplugged spaces are influencing lighter, spa-like interiors. Natural fabrics, airy sheers, and light-filtering shades help create calming retreats from busy, tech-heavy lives. Interestingly, this trend pairs beautifully with discreet automation; motorization that enhances comfort without visually overwhelming a peaceful design.

For the team at Budget Blinds of Southwest and Southeast Manitoba, staying ahead of these trends isn’t about chasing fads. It’s about understanding how products are made, how regulations evolve, and how design influences everyday living. By continuing to learn, whether inside a manufacturing facility in Ontario or from a tradeshow floor, they ensure that every recommendation is thoughtful, informed, and tailored to each client’s lifestyle.



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