With curtains

Make your windows come alive

With drab curtains, or worse yet, no curtains. If you have priced curtains, you know how expensive they are. If you would like a great window covering but do not wish to spend oodles of money for one, just read on.

Start with some lightweight fabric measuring 54 inches wide. You will also need a swinging extender rod set. Grab some double-stick carpet tape, a tape measure and scissors. Wash and iron your new fabric so it will not shrink or fade later on. Place the extender rods above the window and install. Then measure from the top of the rod to the floor adding 60 inches for the large valance and drape of the material. Cut two pieces of the fabric to the length you just measured. Get out the double-stick tape, measure it for the wrong side of the extender rods and apply. Fold four inches of the fabric over the rod from the front to the back. Pull the sides of the fabric around to the back of the extender rod so that you have a sort of cylinder of fabric. Gather the material in the back about 36 inches from the top. Drape the gathered material over the rod from the back to the front. Your loop, or valance, after arranging, should hang about 18 inches long. Pool the fabric at the bottom for a dramatic effect.

Another charming curtain design can be constructed from one sheer panel, a button, a bow and five small hooks. Measure the width of your window and double the width for the panel. Sew a single button in the center of the panel. Attach the five hooks to the top of your window frame in an evenly spaced pat-

tern. If you can, make buttonholes along the top of your panel and pop them onto the hooks. You can gently force the hooks through the material if you cannot make buttonholes. At the bottom of the panel, in the center, make a small ribbon loop with needle and thread. Use the needle and thread to attach the ribbon loop to the curtain. Then run some more of the ribbon, about 16-18 inches, through the loop and tie it into a loose bow. Bring your bow up to the button and attach it. Your panel will not only look billowy and fresh, but will also let a fresh breeze float through your window.

You can make another gorgeous window covering in an hour or less with this super-simple idea. If you have a window that only needs half a treatment, this is the answer. Measure your window from the halfway mark to the sill and from side to side. These are the measurements you will use for your light-colored, translucent panel of fabric. You can use filmy, frosty fabric, too. You will need to sew a casing along the top so that you can run a rod through it. Buy a rod to place across the window or use a slim stick for a natural, outdoor look. Find some appliques that match your fabric, as many as you like, and sew or iron them onto the front of the panel. The light will glow through and around your appliques creating a fairy tale feeling in your room.

Often the windows are the focal point of a room. You want something covering them that is not only pleasing to the eye but looks like you spent a bundle doing it. So let your imagination run wild.

—By Kathy Scott, special



