Top Down/Bottom Up Cordless Roman Shade

Supplies Needed:

2,3,4-cord Widget kit for the width of the shade and number of lift cords needed for the bottom up function, Additional 2-cord Widget kit for the top down function, Face Fabric, Lining Fabric, Wood mounting board - Example is a 1x4" (deep enough for 2 Widgets, Wood Baton (firring strip) ¼" x ¾", Steel Weight Bar 1/8" x ¾", Micro screw eyes – 1-2 per vertical cord (for Top Down Widget)

Tools Needed to Fabricate:

Scissors, Long Ruler, Pencil, Iron, Needle/Thread, White Glue, White Duct Tape, Hand-held or pneumatic Stapler & Staples, Phillips head Screwdriver, Awl, Metal Blade Hand Saw (or power tool), Wood Hand Saw (or power tool)

- ✓ Test your fabrics first to know if they are suitable for iron heat or steam setting.
- ✓ Consider pattern match.
- ✓ If there is more than one shade per room, match the pattern on all shades as best as possible.

These 8 steps correspond to the YouTube series on our Centurion Roman Shade Channel (https://www.youtube.com/@CenturionRS/playlists) for "Make Your Own Top Down/Bottom Up Roman Shade" published July, 2026. Each daily video matches each step in the instructions printed here. If you need a visual for a particular step, please refer to the YouTube video for that step. It is recommended that you watch the entire series before making your shade so that you are familiar with the steps. You will need to adjust the dimensions if you are making a shade for a specific size window.

Centurion Playlists

Step 1 – How Many Lift Cords Does My Shade Require?

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- 2 or 3 – cord Widget kit for the “Top Down” function
- 2,3,or 4-cord Widget kit for the “Bottom Up function. It is recommended that lift cords be no more than 10” apart if you have an un-structured shade. If you put structure into your shade like ribs, you may go further between lift cords. This is determined by your fabric selection and the basic principles of Roman shade fabrication, not the Widget.
- Fabric weight is generally irrelevant, but the rigidity of the fabric and the look of the shade design both have a bearing on how the shade will look when it is functioning and how much care is needed to dress the folds after raising the shade. Top Down/Bottom Up Cordless Roman Shade

Step 2 – Cutting the Face Fabric, Lining and Valance

Face fabric – Width = Exact width + 6” (for 1.5” side hems)

Height = 2” top rod pocket + finished height – 1 ¾” + 10” for concealed grip/hem facing

Lining Fabric – Width = Exact finished width of shade.

Height = Finished height – 1 ¾”

Valance - Once the shade base is fabricated, you will need to cut a valance piece so that it matches the shade pattern. The valance depth should be 6-8”, determine which looks best for your shade proportions and conceal the Widgets mounted to the board.

If you have a printed fabric, you may want to determine the print placement from the top of the shade. You can do this but remember that 1 ¾” will be the drop of the pattern on the actual face fabric for the shade, because of the depth of the board and Widget.

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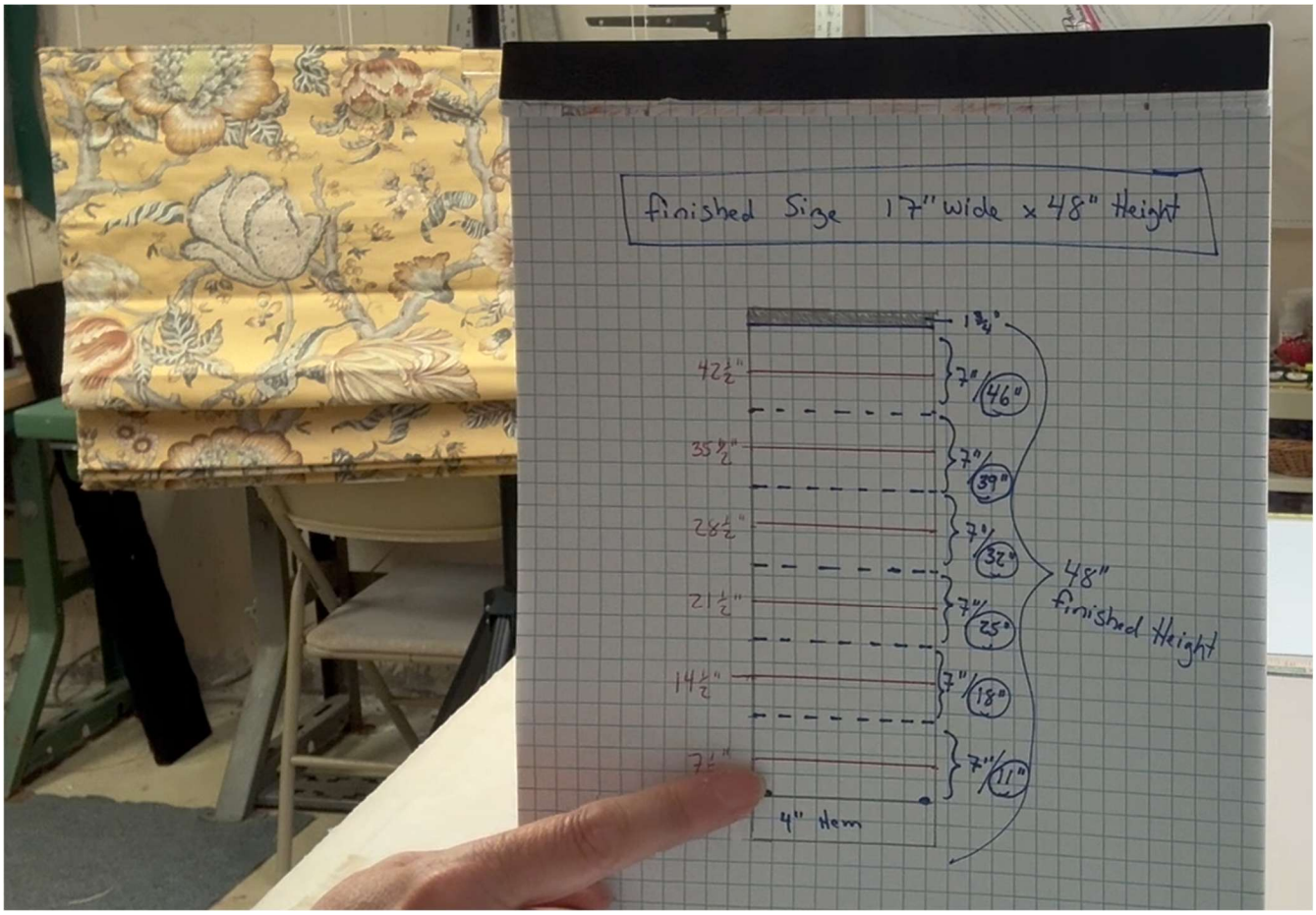
Step 3 – Determine Spacing of Tack Points & Optional: Adding Ribs



- Sketch out the shade on paper with the finished size indicated at the top of the page.
- Make the 1 ¾” deduction on the height and draw out the shade length x width, does not need to be to scale but a close approximate of the proportions.
- Indicate the brass ring placement from the bottom hem. Subtract this depth from the height of the face fabric with the rod pocket already stitched in place.
- Dived that height by a whole number that gives you and answer less than “8”. This will be the distance between tack points.
- Ribs can be placed either at the tack point spacing or between tack points. To determine the placement of ribs in the middle of the space, divide your tack point spacing by 2 and add that number to the hem depth (brass ring location). Add the tack point spacing increment to each measurement going up the shade.
- Cut fiberglass ribs ½” less than the finished width and cut the number of ribs needed for each space and/or tack point.
- On the inside of the lining, draw a dash line for every rib placement. Run a thin line of glue along the dash line and place a fiberglass rib in the glue. Let dry as required to the tacky glue used.

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Step 4 – Putting the Lining and Face Fabric Together; Turning Side Hems & stitching

- Place the face fabric right-side down on the table with the lining on top, right side out. If you used ribs, they will be on the inside of the shade.

- Press the side hem; press 3” on each side and another 1.5” under

- Create a 1-1/2” Rod pocket for the wood baton at top. Whip stitch the seam of the rod pocket to the ling and top stich by machine ¼” from the top edge. Insert a wood dowel or wood lathe in this pocket. Add required steel weight in the pocket as well. You could use a flat bar or a thin steel rib, the amount of weight needed is determined by the width of your shade. If your shade is narrow, you will need more weight than if it is wide. You need the minimum weight for a 2-cord Widget.

- Concealed Hem Grip at bottom - Fold up the bottom hem 10”. Fold 6” back down over the hem. Fold up 2”, then 2” again forming a 2” pocket.

- Fold a 4” piece of Skirtex in half to 2” and insert in the fabric pocket and whip stitch bottom pocket to lining fabric after folding up bottom hem and inserting the hem stiffener and the steel weight bar. Insert the plastic hem grip over the weight bar.

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Step 5 – Stitch Tack Points/Ladder Tape & Brass Ring

- Stitch brass rings and tack points on the ladder tape at the appropriate intervals. If you skipped Step 3 - Try to have an even spacing all the way up the shade. The shade will sit under the Widget and not up directly under the wood. Allow this space (1 ¾”) when working with a pattern to match the valance pattern to the body of the shade. Define the length from the hem to the top of the shade, divide by a whole number that gives and answer that is 8” or less.

- On the top wood baton, stitch a ring at the bottom of that rod pocket for the “top down” Widget cords. Once the wood baton is in the top pocket, put the mini screw eyes in as a guide to the brass ring and to keep the wood baton from flopping forward. You may also be able to extend the ladder tape as a cord guide for the “top down” cords.

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Step 6 - Wood Mount Board & Installing the Widgets

- Cover the mount board with lining fabric. The valance will also be attached to this mount board in a future step.
- Remove the rubber bands and uncoil the cords from around the outside of the Widgets.
- Mount the Widgets with 2 screws going into the designated, most outboard holes (Caution: Only tighten mounting screws until Widget is gently attached to the mounting board… over-tightening will prevent the cords from reeling/unreeling. The Widget should have a slight rock back and forth on the mount board.
- The Widget should be placed closest to center as possible.
- The Widget should be placed so that the cords go out in both directions. The stickers should be visible.
- Screw down the Widgets to the headrail in the appropriate placement so that the cords of each can pass each other as freely as possible.
- Secure the screw eyes where needed for guide. Position the screw eyes perpendicular to the board.

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Step 7 – Threading the Shade & Pulling the Pins

- Place the wood mount board perpendicular to the shade (in the mounting position). Clamping the board to the edge of a table is helpful.
- Weave the cord through the ladder tape for the "Bottom Up" Widget cords through the entire body of the shade, knot off to include the brass ring in your knot. DO NOT PULL THE PIN at this stage!
- Move the top of the shade to fold down upon itself as it will in operation. (The cords are not tensioned, so you can hold the shade up vertically and let the top "fall" down.) The top wood baton should now be at the bottom finished length. Align the cords for the top baton so they are coming down straight with no interference. Thread through the micro screw eyes, the brass ring and tie off at the ring.

Crucial Sequence to Pull the pins

YOU MUST DO IT IN THIS ORDER!

1. Pull the pin on the "Top Down" Widget and allow the top of the shade to come up to the mounting board.
2. Pull the pin on the "Bottom Up" Widget and let the bottom hem fold up to the mounting board.

Now you should be able to test the shade. You may find that angling the screw eyes helps reduce friction on the cords to provide a smoother retracting action.

IMPORTANT: The pin must ALWAYS be re-inserted before untying any cords at the top or hem!

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Step 8 – Valance

These shades should have a valance to conceal the exposed Widgets when the top is down. You can make the valance out of the same fabric or use grass cloth or another material for a contrasting valance option. An upholstered hard cornice would also be an attractive valance option.

Determine the depth of the valance required. A simple soft valance can be fabricated by either pillow-casing or turning hems for side and bottom.

Staple the valance on the top of the wood mount board, matching pattern as required. Cover and conceal staples as required.

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