How-To CLINICS

HURRICANE READINESS





Prepare your home. Protect your family.

How To Install Fabric Panels

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As a hurricane approaches, protecting your home becomes a priority. One of the most vulnerable areas for damage are the windows, so it is essential to consider installing fabric panels.

Often the task of boarding windows takes quite a bit of time. And when a hurricane is approaching, time is of the essence. Boarding windows, while effective, requires more time and more effort than a permanently-framed and easily removable system like Fabric Shield.

Fabric Shield has many other advantages. Fabric Shield is translucent to allow light into your home. It's flexibility can significantly reduce wind driven rain damage through window and door openings. Should one be damaged by flying debris, replacement cost is low. Fabric Shield does not warp, corrode or rust. It's easy to store and retrieve when you need it.

As a side benefit, Fabric Shield may reduce your homeowner's insurance premium.

Lesson One: Preparation

First, determine your home's underlying material. This will tell you which type of anchor you'll be using and where you'll place your grommets on your Fabric Shield panel.

Make note of your windows and door casings. Do they have an extended or recessed sill? Are they flush to wall or protrude past the wall? Also, look for obstructions like downspouts or other items.

Remember, fasteners must penetrate your home's outer covering and anchor into solid substrate to ensure proper installation.

Next, use the Fabric Shield worksheet to count and number each opening on your home. Count the number of openings to which you wish to attach panels. Include all windows and doors with glass, roof and gable-end vents, any other openings that would allow wind to enter your home if damaged.

Measure each opening's width from the inside of the exterior trim. Measure the opening's height from the sill to the bottom of the top trim. When measuring a window with an extended sill, measure from the top of the sill to the bottom of the top trim.

Write this information down on your worksheet.

Lesson Two: Grommets

Grommet Placement

Grommet placement varies based on the surface to which it will be attached.

For hollow and concrete block walls without protruding sills, you can mount the panel with the grommets left to right or top to bottom.

For hollow and concrete block walls with a protruding sill, mount the panel with the grommets left to right.

For the panels themselves, their length is calculated by adding the measurement of the opening to the desired amount of overlap on each unfastened end of the panel.

More overlap increases the systems resistance to small flying debris that can come in around the unattached edges. A minimum 1-inch or greater panel overlap is recommended.

On your worksheet, record each panel's orientation, the amount of overlap desired, and the type of framing and exterior the fastener will be going through.

Grommet Spacing

Use The Grommet span chart in the installation kit to determine where your grommet span falls. Enter the appropriate Panel Letter from this chart into your worksheet.

Because some openings are larger than the 96" Fabric Shield panel, you may have to use more than one on per opening. In that case, simply change the mounting style or adjust the grommet span to fit.

Next, cut your panels to size. Begin by marking the panel to the correct length. Measure corner to corner to check for squareness. Using a carpenter's square or straight edge, cut the panel to the appropriate length with a sharp utility knife.



To grommet and mount the panel, determine the spacing between grommets based on your local wind zone – local building officials can help you if you don't know that information - the panel size, your home's framing material and the type of fastener you will use.

Based on this information, the chart will tell you how much space should separate each grommet.

Marking Grommet Holes

Locate and mark the center of your panel. Divide the grommet span by 2 and mark this distance on each side of the centerline on the non-grommeted side.

Measure at least one and a half inches in from the edge of the panel and set the location of the four corner grommets.

Grab the provided Marking Guide and place it on the outside edge of the panel's wide welded side. Move the guide until the edge of the marking guide is aligned with the edge of the panel. This then positions the location of the one and a half inch set-back. The guide can then be used to mark the grommet spacing.

The distance between grommets can be evenly spaced, located to match mortar joints or any other spacing of your choosing, so long as it does not exceed the maximum grommet spacing listed on the Chart. Mark the grommet locations along both edges.

Setting Your Grommets

To prevent drilling into your work surface, place a scrap piece of wood under the panel. With the drill bit provided in the installation kit, drill a 9/16-inch hole in the panel at each marked grommet position.

Place a grommet up through the drilled hole and place the washer over the grommet. Set the grommet using the grommet tool and a hammer. Several blows of the hammer will set the grommet. Repeat this process to set the remaining grommets on the storm panel.

To complete the panel, apply the Florida Building Code Compliant Label to a convenient location on the back of the panel. Using a permanent ink pen, write in the area provided on the label a description of the location where the panel is placed on your home.

Lesson Three: Setting Your Fasteners

- Next, set the fasteners on the wall of the house.
- Locate the center of the window opening. Measure up from the edge of the window opening. Include any overlap.
- Either use the panel as a template or measure over half the grommet span distance on both sides of the window's centerline and make a vertical mark.
- Measure down one and a half inches from the top edge of the storm panel and make a horizontal mark on both sides of the centerline. This indicates the location of the top left and top right fasteners.
- Before drilling for the fasteners, make sure they are level and the window opening is plumb. Adjust if necessary.
- Using the appropriate drill for the material through which you are drilling, follow the fastener manufacturer's instructions to secure the fastener properly.
- Using the appropriate drive socket for the fastener, install the fastener.

Lesson Four: Attaching the Fabric Panels

- Attach the storm panel to the top left and top right fasteners.
- Holding the storm panel in place, use the grommet holes on each side of the panel as templates to mark the remaining fastener positions on the wall of the house.
- Either use the panel as a drill guide or remove the storm panel so it is not in the way while setting the remaining fasteners.
- After the remaining fasteners have been set, place the storm panel over the window by attaching and tightening all the
 wing nuts to properly secure the storm panel. The storm panel is now in place and ready to protect your home from
 damaging winds.



Lesson Five: Storage and Maintenance

Make certain the panels are clean and dry before storage. Should they need cleaning, use only soapy water and a clean sponge or rag. Do not use abrasive cleaners. Vertical storage off the ground, in a dry, protected and easily accessible area is recommended. Do not store wing nuts outside on the stud or in any type of a corrosive environment.

Before installing shutters, check local building code for current requirements.

Your windows are now protected against the damaging winds of hurricanes. Remember to save and store all materials you have used in case you would like to use them again in a future storm.

Materials/Products:

Recommended Items	Item Number
FabricShield Installation Kit	
FabricShield Storm Panels	
5/32 Tapcon Drill Bit or 3/16 Tapcon Drill Bit	
3/16 or 1/4 Inch Width by 2 1/4 or 2 3/4 Length Tapcons	74247, 79367, 55086
Circular Saw	136556
Large Washers	68882
Black & Decker 24 V Hammer Drill	136533
5/32 Tapcon Drill Bit or 3/16 Tapcon Drill Bit	
2 inch Coarse Thread Drywall Screws	60038
3/16 or 1/4 Inch Width by 2 1/4 or 2 3/4 Length Tapcons	74247, 79367, 55086
Tape Measure	
Screwdriver/Nutdriver	
Permanent Marker and Paper	