

Demountable awning

As climate change gathers pace and heat waves become more common, energy efficient ways of keeping cool in summer become more important.

We live in an Edwardian terraced house in a conservation area. The south facing windows are nice in winter, but we wanted a demountable awning that we could put up quickly and easily to stop the sun streaming in on hot days, but which could be removed and stored easily when not needed.

The answer was an appropriately sized piece of fabric, silvered on the top side to reflect the sun, and deep blue on the underside. This is erected (rather like a tent would be) and attached to 4 hooks in the outside wall of the house.

2 loops of elastic attach the awning to the upper hooks.

The lower edge of the awning is permanently attached to 2 bits of rigid hollow tubing. We used some lovely strong light industrial surplus tube, but you could also use the sort of hollow tubing sold for use as a hanging rail, or any other reasonably rigid and light tube or rod.

The “foot” end of the tube is located in the fitting screwed to the outside wall. Our tubing was a perfect fit in the fitting normally used to hold the end of a hanging rail for clothes. The fitting is rusting a bit, but it’s too far up for anyone to notice. Next time we’ll use stainless ones (find them by googling for marine handrail fittings)

Install these hooks so that you can reach them safely by leaning safely out of the window. The top ones should be slightly further apart than your fabric width, so that the fabric is tensioned by the elastic. The bottom hooks should be as far apart as you can safely reach.

The fabric and fittings all came from [point north](http://pointnorth.com) , another useful though rather slow UK supplier is www.profabrics.co.uk Tel 01407 760195 The hooks came from Mackays in Cambridge, our local hardware suppliers.

We also made a much larger one for the downstairs window. The top edge is attached to hooks on the fascia board, just below the gutter, while the bottom corners have guy ropes that are attached to hooks on our fence posts

The awnings keep the house much cooler on hot days. Both are reasonably strong, but we don’t use them if it’s very windy

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