

Design Ideas and Tips

Long and narrow triangle shade sails should be avoided. Ideally, a shade sail should be at least half as wide as it is long. A center attachment point on long sides of the shade sail is possible.

Ideally, any one side of a shade sail should not be longer than 25-30 feet. Larger sails may be possible but are not generally recommended.

When planning a shade sail design, do not forget to consider the curves in the perimeter of the sail along with the angle of the sun and where the shadow cast from the shade sail fabric will be located.

When installing square or rectangle shade sails the strength may be increased by twisting the sail into a hyperbolic parabola which gives a 3 dimensional stretch to the fabric. You can also achieve a 3rd dimension by attaching one corner of the four sided sail significantly higher than the other corners. This distribution of overall tension results in a stronger shade sail that lasts longer than 2 dimensional shade sails.

Shade sails should slant sufficiently as to prevent water from temporarily pooling during rain. A slope of at least 15-20% is recommended. Larger sails require more of a slant to avoid sagging and to facilitate shedding of rain.

To assure a taut shade sail, a long cable should ideally be used on no more than one corner when connected to a mounting point. All other corners should be attached directly to a secure mounting point or with only a turnbuckle, D shackle, or short cable. The use of long cables or chain on more than one corner of the shade sail allows it to move up and down excessively during wind. This extra movement increases the wear on the shade sail and in turn reduces the life of the shade sail.

Do not leave sails up if you are expecting extremely windy conditions or in snow prone locations during winter months. The longevity of your sail is largely dependent on how well you maintain tension on your sail. If you will be installing and removing your sail on a regular basis, keeping it tensioned is not as critical.

Shade sail installations with several smaller overlapping sails connected at different heights provide a more interesting and dramatic look than just one or two larger non-overlapping sails.

To avoid chafing of the fabric, overlapping shade sails may need up to 18" distance between them. Otherwise, windy conditions may cause the sails to rub against each other and may damage the fabric over time.

Outdoor fabrics can be subject to harsh conditions. Color fading is normal over time. Colors containing red and yellow pigments have a tendency to fade more than others.

These suggestions are offered as a courtesy and are not meant to serve as installation instructions. Custom Shade Sails, LLC does not, and cannot, know the specific variables for individual installations. Variables such as wind and soil conditions, existing structure strength, underground obstacles, weather conditions, etc. should be taken into consideration by the person or persons performing the installation. The above is offered only as general guidelines and a summary of installation information. Custom Shade Sails, LLC makes no warranty based on these general guidelines and disclaims any responsibility for the installation, design of installation, engineering requirements, code compliance or any other installation related issue. No warranties are extended to any works carried out by any person using information covered in this flier