

Design Ideas and Tips

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.

Long and narrow triangle shade sails should be avoided. Preferably, the length of the longest side of a shade sail should be not more than twice the length of the shortest side of a shade sail.

To insure a taut shade sail, a long cable or chain should ideally be used on only *one* corner when connected to a mounting point. All other corners should be attached directly to a post or secure mounting point or with only a 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.

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

Triangles and other flat shade sails should slant sufficiently as to prevent water from temporarily pooling during rain. A slope of at least 1:6 is recommended. Larger triangles or flat sails require more of a slant to avoid sagging and to facilitate shedding of rain.

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 quadrilateral 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 exposed to the same conditions.

Shade sails are not intended to hold snow and should be taken down in climates where snow is a possibility.

We have found that shade sail installations with several smaller overlapping sails connected at different heights provide for a more interesting and dramatic look than just one or two larger non-overlapping sails.

To avoid chafing of the fabric, overlapping shade sails should have a minimum of 12" distance between them. Otherwise, windy conditions may cause the sails to rub against each other and may damage the fabric over time.

Following these suggestions you can look forward to enjoying a practical and esthetically pleasing addition to your environment for years to come.

We know every installation is different, so if you have specific questions feel free to contact us.

DISCLAIMER: These design suggestions are offered as a courtesy. Custom Shade Sails, LLC does not and cannot know the specific intentions of purchaser and makes no extension of warranty by these general guidelines and disclaims any responsibility for any installation related matter including, but not limited to, the actual installation, design of installation, engineering requirements, code compliance, soil or wind conditions.