

DIY Shade – Shadesails Made Easy!

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Lets Review 5 Shadesail Designs and see what Lessons we can learn.

1. Sail A vs. Sail B

Both these sails are in Childcare centres where maximum useable shade is essential. Both designs are similar in that is they have high central poles stretching out to lower outer poles in a kind of tent design.



This first set of sails fails the design test. Look at the central area, the area where the shade is most important and you can see a big gap and sunlight getting through. This job has been done as two sails. It is poor design because of the light it lets in and it would have been more expensive to do it as two sails instead of a single sail.



This sail achieves the same coverage but instead of it being two sails with a big gap in the middle, it has been done as a single sail. It is still nice and high in the middle to accommodate the play equipment but no light gets in. This sail would have been less expensive to do than the sail above and achieves an infinitely better result.

2. A good example of a bad example



This job was done by a builder who thought he knew everything about shadesails. His idea was to install a large triangle shadesail to cover his outdoor seating area. As you can see, the table gets virtually no shade what-so-ever. The main reason for this is the issue of triangular shadesails. Quite simply, triangular shadesails don't really work if your intention is to create a shaded area. The reason is because shadesails are made with curved edges and this curvature is greatly accentuated in triangular shadesails. I've heard it referred to as "the G-string

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effect. Put simply, triangular shadesails are expensive (you're paying for the area of a rectangle, it's just that the excess fabric is cut off and discarded), and provide very little shade.

Here is another example of triangular shadesails in action. The owner of these premises (a café) wanted to create a striking design for his outdoor seating area but also to provide an inviting shade area for his customers. What he ended up with is two expensive strips of shade cloth which provide virtually no shade whatsoever.



What could he have done differently?

3. Hypar Shadesails



Have a look at this sail. First glance it looks like its' actually two triangular sails but in actual fact, it's just a single sail. This type of design is called a "Hypar Design." It is widely used in the shade industry because it is so effective at ticking all the boxes of good shadesail design'

It's a single sail which is more cost effective than multiple sails.

It get the shade where you need it and doesn't leave any open areas in the centre for UV radiation to enter.

It tensions up easily and evenly across its

entire surface.

It looks architecturally striking.

The effect is achieved simply by installing diagonally opposite high and low posts. This create a 3D twist or hypar (hyperbolic paraboloid). If you're thinking about installing a shadesail then this is a design you should consider. We cover all the relevant factors of design in the our book *DIY Shade – Installing Shadesails like the professionals*

4. A Common Mistake DIY shadesail Installers Make

Installing a professional quality shadesail isn't that hard – once you know what you're doing.



In the book we cover the biggest mistakes people make – and how to avoid them! Here are just a couple;

1. This is what you don't want! What happened here was the people measured the area and then went out and purchased a shadesail the same size. The reason this shadesail looks so bad is because the installers didn't allow for any tensioning.

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Shadesails need to be smaller than the area into which they are going to go otherwise they will sag, flap look terrible and in a short period of time, fail!

2. Not preparing a big enough footing. Most people fail to realise the tremendous loads that shadesails put on the poles particularly in high winds. Think of a shadesails as not unlike a sail on a yacht. They catch large volumes of wind and unless the structure itself is up to the job the whole thing will fold in on itself. We cover in detail the correct depths of the footings in the book so that your shadesail posts will never move.



5. Poor Design



This shadesail doesn't really work and there's a very simple reason why. It's because it is twice as long as it wide. Making a shadesail twice as long as it is wide, e.g. 7 metres long x 3 metres wide is a recipe for a disappointing end result. This is because shadesails are made with curved edges and with long narrow sails, this curvature is accentuated. Even though at the end points the sail will be 3 metres wide, at its mid-point it could end up being less than 2 metres wide. Wherever possible make sails as symmetrical as you can, e.g., 5x 6 metres. If you must do a long narrow shadesail we show you some

clever ways to get maximum coverage.

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a professional quality shadesails”*

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