

Frequently Asked Questions

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We love talking about shade and will always make time to answer any/all questions you might have for us. In this forum due to limited space, we have taken the most frequently asked questions and provided brief but informative answers to each question. Feel free to call us for additional info or specific questions about your project (480) 775-7245.

What type of fabric is used in outdoor shade projects?

We use the best materials available of commercial grade solution dyed acrylic often described as canvas or Sunbrella-like fabric. All of the fabrics are water resistant. Additional options available are waterproof fabric or metal. Equally important is the thread used for hems & seams of your canopy – areas we see the most failures in installations by others. We use Tenara by Gore with a lifetime warranty on ALL of our canopies. See “Ultimate Product” section for addition info on fabrics available.

How does the fabric hold up to extreme UV exposure & other weather conditions?

Fabrics we used are selected based on quality, warranties and long life expectancies. The manufacturers of shade fabric have made many improvements as far as life expectancy and ROI on fabrics. Warranties range from 8 to 15 years depending on fabric type & manufacturer. At the end of a fabric’s life cycle, replacement of canopies is very economical. The Tenara thread we use has a life time warranty against UV degradation. Best-in-class fabrics and expert manufacturing guaranteed longer life expectancy and high rate of return on your invest.

How long does it take to install shade products?

Project timelines vary by size and scope. The installation work itself averages about 2 to 4 weeks. Keep in mind, pre-construction activities like engineering & permits can add 3 to 6 weeks depending on complexity of project and city planner's workloads. Planning well in advance is a very smart move.

Is engineering & permits required for my shade project?

Almost all projects require engineering and city permit approval. The few exceptions involve awnings with less than 48" projection, and canopies less than 200 SF and even those may vary by city. General rule of thumb is – if there are foundations (footings) or connections to a building, engineering & permits will be required. As a licensed contractor, we are required to have engineering & permits completed prior to any installation we perform. We offer these (fee based) services as part of a turn-key solution for your convenience and can provide stamped engineered construction plan sets for every state in the USA.

What do shade systems typically cost?

There are many factors that play a role in the cost of shade projects including type of system, complexity of design, size, height, location, and quantity or size of project. There are also several key cost drivers in any shade project including the amount of steel required, number of foundations and/or building connections, even the number of canopy corners play a role in project costs. A general rule of thumb is \$12- \$15 per SF for tensile/shade sail projects and \$18 – \$24 SF for projects involving more steel like the shade structures or metal roof structures. We are the best in the industry at 'value engineering" and will provide you with alternatives at different price points. Projects can also be done in phases as budget allow. Proven fact – having a budget number in mind, will help you save time and money.

What other services do you offer?

We are a full service solution provider. You can choose a

complete turn-key package or opt to do certain services yourself. Our services include graphic design, sun studies, CAD & shop drawings, structural engineering by state certified firm, fabrication of steel & canopies, foundations, building mounts, steel erecting, canopy installation, project QC and warranty support.

What geographic areas do you cover?

We are currently a licensed contractor that can install projects in AZ, CA and HI, with licenses pending in NV, TX and NM. We work on projects with Architects and Contractors nationwide on a daily basis and can mobilize crews to assist with installations anywhere in the USA. We can also design, fabricate and ship your system(s) anywhere in the USA.

What are the major differences between a shade structure and a tensile / shade sail project?

The fabric used is the same. Shade structures use columns and frames to support the canopy. The most common type are the gabled roof shade structures, known as a Hip & Ridge, that are commonly seen over parks & play areas and are often used when plenty of space is available. Tensile / Shade Sails are supported by columns and steel cabling system sewn in hems of canopies in lieu of top frames. Tensile / Shade Sails offer much more flexibility in design and are often more economical due to less steel required.

How much wind load will your shade products withstand?

Our shade systems are engineered to withstand wind loads specified by International (IBC) and your local building codes that can range from 90 to 140 mile per hour wind loads. In areas known for hurricane and extreme wind conditions, we recommend the use of safety slings at corner connections or a quick release options for canopy removal. Please be assured, our engineered systems will be designed, installed and inspected per all required building codes.

Can we attach to an existing building or structure?

Yes – if the building or structure is examined and confirmed to be able to handle the (significant) additional loads the shade system will impose. We have attached to many concrete tilt-up and have engineered and installed mounts to wood frame buildings as well. We'll need "as built" for existing structures or new construction plans for new buildings. Give us a call to discuss.

Can I buy a shade "kit" from you and install it myself?

Yes. We offer standard and custom "kits" for contractors and construction savvy homeowners that include shop drawings and all of the hardware & materials you'll need to install your shade systems. We also offer fee based engineering, permit assistance and project consultation if you need more hands-on help with your project.

What is the longest span you can cover?

Both fabric structures and tension/ shade sails have limitless coverage capability as long as steel support is involved. We have engineered and installed tensile / shade sails spanning to 80' between columns but keep in mind the column diameters & foundations will be quite large. We recommend a max of 40' span to keep steel & foundation sizes more manageable.

Is the shade mesh used in tensile/shade sails waterproof?

Standard commercial shade mesh (HDPE) used in 95% of shade projects is water resistant – not water proof. The fabric is a tightly woven knit so precipitation does mist through in normal rain conditions and gets heavier as amount of rain increases. The most effective way to ensure limited moisture passing through fabric is to ensure there is minimum of 12:1 slope for run off and be sure low points are away from building. Waterproof fabric options are available but are not as economical as the shade mesh commonly used. Let's review key objectives and fabric options to see what fabric might work the best.

How do we get started?

We recommend you visit the gallery section of this web site to see the different design and product options available to you. If you have designs or layouts in mind, even better! Sending us your ideas, size of area, pictures of the site will all speed up the process. Our Contact form and Quick Quote requests the information we need to get started.

Call us to discuss your project particulars (480) 775-7245.