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The Parkview Canopy & Light Almanac

How the sun crosses this 1906 grid through the year, what the trees do and don't do about it, and what we'd fit on each elevation — with the honest catch written next to every recommendation. Free to read, no sign-up.

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- ✓ Written for Parkview, with every figure sourced at the foot
- ✓ Free in-home measure & a written per-window quote
- ✓ Child-safe cord & chain controls as standard

WHERE TO START

A grid drawn in 1906, and nobody aimed it at the sun.

Parkview — originally Park View — was proclaimed in 1906 and laid out that same year by Charles Presswell Tompkins in the traditional gridiron pattern, as the old Transvaal Republic Gold Law required. Stands went on sale in 1907. The name simply described the view: Hermann Eckstein Park, the Zoo, had been given to the city in 1903, and the Town Council sanctioned the damming of Zoo Lake in the very year the suburb was proclaimed. The streets took Irish names — Kilkenny, Kerry, Roscommon, Westmeath, Kildare, Wicklow.

A grid set out to a mining statute is set out to survey convention, not to the sun. So the aspect of a room here is close to an accident of which side of which Irish-named street the house sits on, and two houses forty metres apart can have opposite problems. That is the first practical thing to know: the useful unit is the window, not the house.

The second is the canopy — the thing everybody mentions about this suburb, and the thing that produces the most comfortable wrong conclusion: *we have*

big old trees, so we don't really need blinds. It is half true for about five months of the year. The rest of this page is mostly about the other seven.

THE LIGHT HERE

26 degrees south, 1,700 metres up.

Parkview has no weather station of its own, so every figure below is Johannesburg-wide — and every one of them is sourced at the foot of this page.

01 Overhead in December, low and due north in June

At the December solstice the midday sun reaches roughly 87° — near vertical, so the roof takes the load and a north wall is barely lit at noon. In June the same sun sits at about 40° , due north, right through the middle of the day: free winter heat through the identical window that cooked you in January.

02 In midsummer the sun rises and sets behind you

Midsummer sunrise is on a bearing of about 118° , south of due east, and sunset about 243° , south of due west — 13 hours 47 minutes of daylight between 05:13 and 19:00. East and west glass takes hours of low, direct sun, and even a south room catches a slice at either end. In June those bearings swing to 69° and 295° , and the day shortens to 10 hours 30 minutes.

03 **The canopy is deciduous — that is the whole catch**

The two species dominating this part of Johannesburg's street canopy are jacaranda, a 7–12 m tree, and London plane at 21–30 m. Both are deciduous. A satellite survey of the city found 65.92% of its study area under vegetation, those two species alone making up 38% of it. So the leaves are on from about October to March — exactly when the sun is nearest vertical and the roof is taking the heat — and off in June and July, when it sits at 40° and comes in almost horizontally at the glass. Generous when you need it least, gone when you need it most. And dappled light is still direct light: leaf shadow moves all day and thins the moment a limb does.

04 **Wet summers, bone-dry winters**

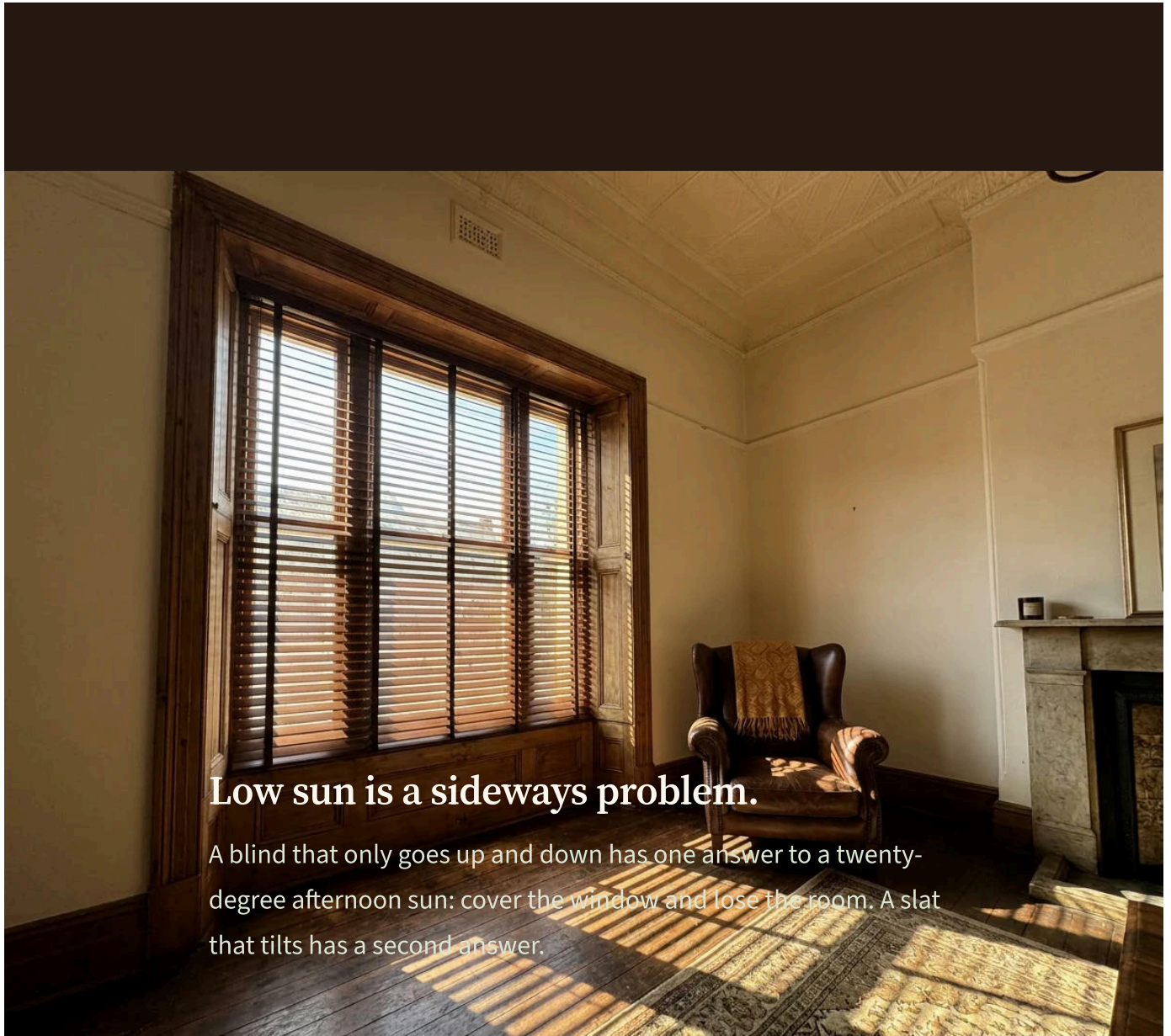
Johannesburg is classified Köppen Cwb: about 784 mm of rain a year, a mean of 15.9 °C, the rain concentrated October to March and falling as downpours and thunderstorms. Winter is a dry season, with June and July minima near 0 °C and roughly ten to twelve frost days a year. A single-glazed room with a high ceiling swings furthest between the two.

05 **Hail season runs October to March**

The Highveld takes intense afternoon and evening thunderstorms from October through March. Hail is most common in those same months and peaks in November, and severe-storm frequency over Gauteng peaks in October and November. Anything living outside the glass gets specified around that, not in spite of it.

06 **Altitude buys you extra ultraviolet**

Johannesburg sits at roughly 1,700 m, and high pressure over the Highveld gives long runs of cloudless sky. Both push ultraviolet up: intensity climbs about 10% for every 1,000 m of elevation, and the combination is documented as producing high ambient solar UV. Ultraviolet breaks the bonds in dyes — it fades a rug, an Oregon floor and, eventually, the blind itself.



Low sun is a sideways problem.

A blind that only goes up and down has one answer to a twenty-degree afternoon sun: cover the window and lose the room. A slat that tilts has a second answer.



— ROOM BY ROOM

Four elevations, four different problems.

Open the compass on your phone and do one slow lap of the house. On a grid nobody aimed at the sun, aspect changes the answer more than what the room is used for.

01 North — solve it with geometry before you spend

North glass takes a near-vertical sun in summer and a low one in winter, so it is the one elevation where a horizontal projection genuinely works: a deep veranda or a generous eave blocks most of December while still letting the whole of June in. That is the orientation logic SANS 10400-XA:2021 applies to new buildings — it does not bind a 1907 cottage, but the physics is the same. Plenty of Parkview houses already have the veranda; check what it is already doing before buying anything for that wall.

02 West — the elevation that ruins afternoons

Across the year the sun sets between 243° and 295° , and by then it is low: it arrives *under* the eave and straight at the glass, so overhead projections do almost nothing. This is also where the deciduous canopy lets you down hardest, because the worst low-sun months are the bare ones. If there is one elevation to spend on in this suburb, it is this one.

03 East — the same geometry, half the penalty

East glass gets the mirror image, from about 05:13 in midsummer, but the air and the building fabric are still cool — so glare and waking at first light matter more than heat gain. East bedrooms are a blackout conversation. An east breakfast room usually is not; there, the sun is the point.

04 South — not immune, just late to it

Because midsummer sunrise (118°) and sunset (243°) both sit south of the east–west line, a south wall takes low direct sun early and late in December, then none at all in winter. The coolest, flattest-lit rooms in the house, and often best left lightly dressed. Sometimes the honest recommendation for a south window is to spend nothing on it.

— WHAT WE'D FIT, AND WHY

The reasoning — and the honest catch with each.

Nothing here is right everywhere. Each of these beats its obvious alternative on a particular elevation, and each one costs you something, so the catch is written next to it. Tap **Add to my window list** and it carries down to the form at the foot of the page — nothing to retype.

Roller blinds — sunscreen or blackout

BEST ON: CANOPY-FACING LIVING ROOMS (SUNSCREEN) ·
BEDROOMS (BLOCKOUT)

Why here. A 3–5% openness sunscreen keeps the tree view that is half the reason people buy in Parkview, while cutting glare and much of the ultraviolet that fades floors and rugs at this altitude. Blockout does the opposite job: first light is 05:13 in midsummer, and one flat sheet of fabric on a tube answers that.

The catch. Sunscreen reverses after dark — lights on inside and it gives away more than you expect. Blockout is only as dark as its edges: inside a reveal there is a light line down each side. A double roller puts both on one window, which in a bedroom is usually the real answer.

Day & night blinds

BEST ON: ROOMS FRONTING THE PAVEMENT OR A SHARED
BOUNDARY

Why here. Alternating sheer and solid bands slide past each other, so one blind moves from open view to eye-level privacy without ever being raised. On a suburb of walkers and

low front walls, that is gentler than a vertical and less final than a blackout.

The catch. Never a true blackout, and the banding is a strong horizontal pattern against plain period joinery. Hold a sample up in your own room before you commit a whole street frontage to it.



Cellular (honeycomb) blinds

BEST ON: SINGLE GLAZING YOU CANNOT OR WILL NOT REPLACE

Why here. The fabric folds into cells that hold still air against the glass. In a 1907 room with single panes, a high ceiling and June minima near freezing, that trapped air is the least invasive comfort upgrade going: no new frames, no altered sashes, nothing about the window changed — which in a house past sixty is worth more than it sounds.

The catch. It sits on the wrong side of the glass for summer heat gain. Against a hard west sun an external product beats it, because a cellular blind is only slowing heat that

Timber & aluminium venetian blinds

BEST ON: STUDIES AND LIVING ROOMS (TIMBER) • KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS (ALUMINIUM)

Why here. Low western sun is a sideways problem, and a tilting slat answers it sideways: close the angle and the room stays bright while the direct beam stops. A roller has one move; a slat has two.

The catch. A timber venetian stacks deeper than a roller, so it eats more of the glass when fully raised — noticeable on a short sash. And timber dislikes steam, which is why wet rooms get aluminium instead.

Vertical & panel blinds

BEST ON: THE WIDE SLIDING DOORS ON A REAR ADDITION

Why here. Vanes and sliding panels cover a three-metre opening edge to edge and stack clear of the glass, so the door still works and the garden still reads.

The catch. Vertical vanes swing about in the draught through an open door, and a panel blind needs wall to stack onto. Where an addition runs right to a corner there is none, and a wide roller is the better answer — we will say so.



External venetians & roller shutters

BEST ON: HARD WEST AND NORTH-WEST GLASS WITH NO OVERHANG

Why here. Both stop the sun outside the glass, which keeps a room cooler than absorbing it inside: an interior blackout kills glare instantly, but the pane behind it still heats and radiates into the evening. External venetians tilt, so a view survives them; roller shutters close fully and roll away into a smaller box.

The catch. In relative terms these are the dearest answers on this page. Both need a wind strategy through hail season, both usually want a motor, and — the specifically Parkview part — both are exterior alterations to a house very likely past sixty years old. Read the next section first.

Shading, not security. Our roller shutters sit outside the glass and work on sun, heat, glare and being overlooked. A security-rated shutter is a different product altogether; ask and we'll quote it.



Folding-arm awnings & zip screens

BEST ON: THE STOEP, THE TERRACE, THE POOL SIDE

Why here. An awning shades a terrace with nothing standing in the way of the table, which is exactly why it beats a fixed pergola where you want the June sun back. A zip screen does a different job: fabric under tension in side channels, holding its shape in wind while you still see the garden.

The catch. This is the Highveld from October to March. Wind and hail ratings are engineering limits, not marketing copy, and an awning caught open in a November gust does not survive it — so we would rather specify a motor and a wind sensor than a cheaper manual awning.

Motorisation & automation

BEST ON: TALL SASHES, GABLES, SKYLIGHTS, ANYTHING OUTDOORS

Why here. Under a pressed-steel ceiling, a blind nobody can reach is a blind nobody adjusts — and an unadjusted blind is just a permanently dark room. Outdoors, a wind sensor retracts the awning before the storm arrives, including while you are down at Zoo Lake. It also removes cords entirely, the safest answer for a child's room.

The catch. Motors need power, and finding a cable route that does not chase an original wall is a genuine question in a house this old. Battery motors trade that for a charging routine you have to actually keep.

— OPTIONAL

Want this Almanac marked up for your own house?

Tell us which rooms are the problem and we'll send this back to you with notes against your actual elevations — which of the answers above we'd start with, and which we'd leave well alone. No visit involved, and no obligation to book one.

The sixty-year rule, and a committee that meets fortnightly.

Parkview was proclaimed in 1906 and built out from 1907, so an original house here is comfortably past sixty — and that age alone matters. Section 34(1) of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 says no person may alter or demolish any structure, or part of a structure, older than sixty years without a permit from the relevant provincial heritage resources authority. The Act's definition of "alter" is deliberately broad: any action affecting the structure, appearance or physical properties of a place. Age is the trigger, not listing.

Parkview also has a live local process. The Parkview Residents' Association sits on the Joint Plans Committee — the Westcliff, Parktown, Forest Town and Parkview residents' associations together with the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation. It meets fortnightly, building plans and land-use applications for those four areas are tabled and reviewed there, and residents planning work on a structure over sixty years old are advised to present plans to that committee before submitting to the provincial authority.

That draws a clean line through this Almanac. Blinds fitted *inside* a room touch neither the structure nor how the house reads from the street. Anything mounted *outside* — external venetians, roller shutters, a wall-fixed awning cassette, face-fixed guide channels — does. We fit blinds and we are not heritage practitioners, so we will not tell you what the answer will be for your address. We

will raise it at the measure, and design the interior specification so you have a good option either way.

It's a little bit like the old saying, "measure twice, cut once." You want to make sure you have a good idea of what you're getting before you start cutting. It's not just about the size of the window, but also the quality of the materials and the craftsmanship of the installation.

There are a lot of factors to consider when choosing a window. The first is the size of the opening. You need to make sure the window is the right size for the space. Then there's the material. You want something that's durable and looks good. And finally, there's the price. You want something that's within your budget.

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The honest limit of any guide, this one included. Everything above narrows the field. These five decide it — and all five are what the free measure is actually for.

01 True reveal depth, and whether the opening is square

A century of settling leaves sashes and casements out of square, and reveals vary wall to wall inside one room. Depth decides whether an inside mount is possible at all — which decides how much light escapes past a blackout. Measured in three places, not one.

02 What the frame is made of, and what it will carry

Oregon, meranti, steel casement and modern aluminium each take a fixing differently, and some original timber is either too soft or frankly too good to drill. Then we mount to the surrounding masonry instead — but only once we have seen it.

03 How exposed that elevation really is

Anything external lives or dies on wind exposure through hail season. A stoep tucked behind a gable and one thrown open to the west are

different specifications, and sometimes different products entirely.

04

Where the power for a motor can actually go

Motorising a tall sash is simple in principle and fiddly in an old house: the cable has to arrive without chasing an original wall or disturbing a pressed-steel ceiling. Sometimes a roof void solves it. Sometimes the answer is a battery motor.

05

What the trees and the veranda already do — at the hour that matters

A fair share of the afternoon shade in Parkview is already free. Knowing which windows need no spending at all is worth as much as knowing which do — and that is a judgement made standing in the room at four o'clock in February, not read off a plan.

— TWO ROUTES FROM HERE

Book the measure, or start with a rough range.

The same short form below starts either one.

RECOMMENDED

The free expert measure & written quote

A consultant comes to you with fabric and slat samples, walks the elevations with you at the hour that actually matters, measures every opening properly, and leaves a

written quote itemised per window. Free, and with no obligation at the end of it.

[Book my free measure ↗](#)

OPTIONAL

Want a ballpark first?

Rough sizes go in here and the budget range follows on the next working day. Not sure how to measure? Leave it out — our consultant measures for free either way, and that is where the exact per-window pricing comes from.

[Show me the window list](#)

LAST STEP

Get your free expert measure booked in.

One short form. If you'd also like a budget range, add rough window sizes underneath it — that part is entirely optional and nobody will chase you for it.

SOURCES

Where the numbers on this page come from.

Every climate, sun-path, canopy, heritage and history figure above is taken from the following. Where a figure was disputed or could not be verified, we left it out rather than round it into a sentence.

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- Solar altitude and azimuth by date, used to check the winter and equinox figures — [SunEarthTools sun position calculator](#) and the [NOAA solar position calculator](#)
- Köppen classification, annual mean temperature and rainfall — [Climate-Data.org, Johannesburg](#)
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- Hail season and hail-prone regions of South Africa — [SouthAfrica.co.za, hail in South Africa](#)
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- Ultraviolet intensity by elevation — [Koolasun, South African UV index guide](#)
- How ultraviolet degrades textile dyes — [Trivantage, guide to UV-resistant fabrics](#)
- Canopy species, their mature heights, their deciduous habit and the measured vegetation cover — [Mapping the distribution and tree canopy cover of *Jacaranda mimosifolia* and *Platanus × acerifolia* in Johannesburg's urban forest, *Scientific Reports* \(2022\)](#)
- Orientation and shading guidance for new buildings — [Summary of the revised SANS 10400-XA, 2021 edition](#)
- The sixty-year rule — [National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, section 34](#), with the definition of "alter" from [The Heritage Portal's heritage-process FAQ](#)

- The Joint Plans Committee, its member associations and the advice to present plans before submitting them — [The Heritage Portal, Parkview Residents' Association](#) and [the association's own committee list](#)
- Proclamation in 1906, the gridiron layout, the developer, the Irish and Scottish street names and the origin of the suburb's name — [The Heritage Portal, A Brief History of Parkview](#) and [Wikipedia, Parkview, Gauteng](#)

Reading this from a neighbouring window? The same sun-path reasoning applies across **Parktown North, Forest Town, Saxonwold** and **Craighall Park** — it is the housing stock and the exposure that change.