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## Beginning Storage Improvement : Extension Circular 11-26-2

Jerre L. Whithrow

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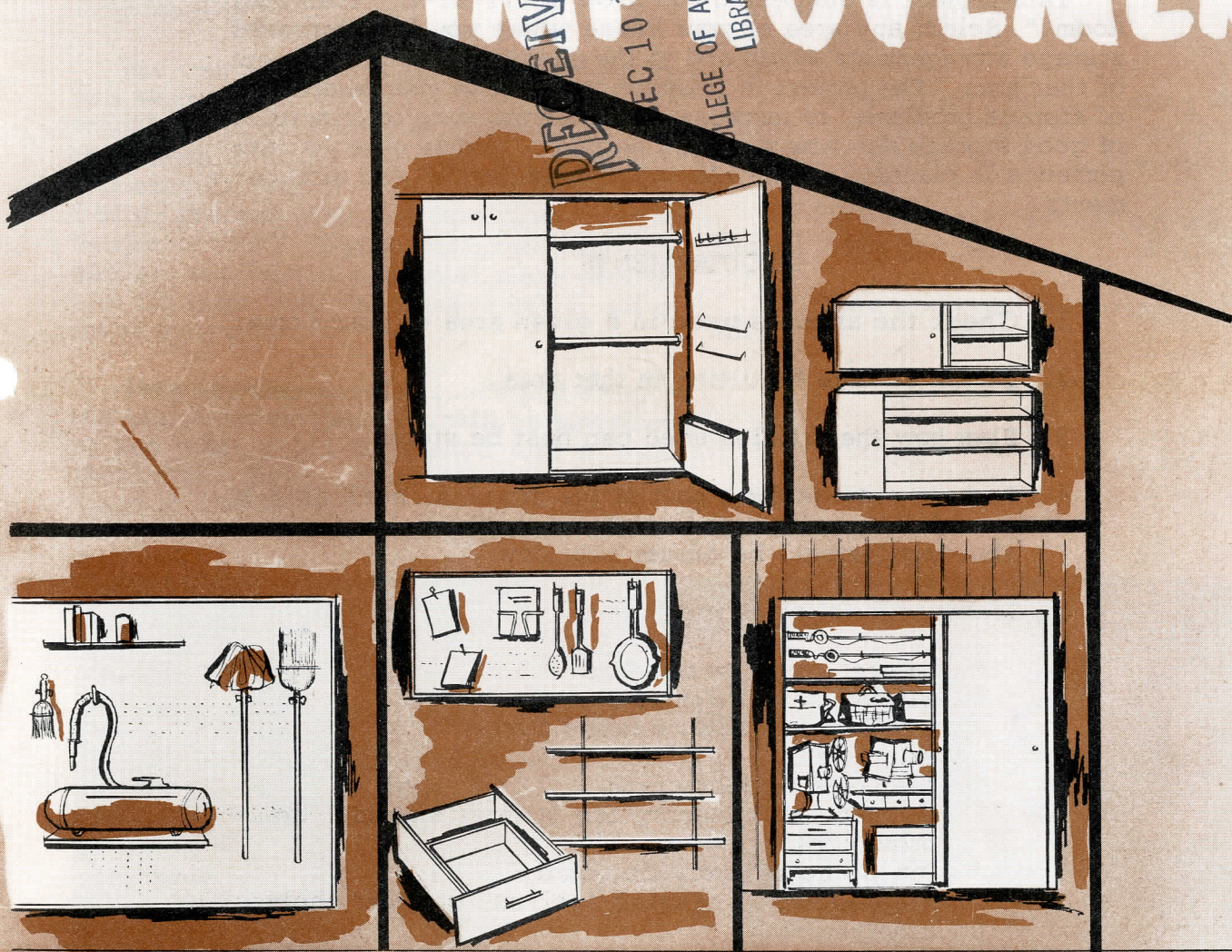
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beginning

# STORAGE IMPROVEMENT



EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COOPERATING  
E. F. FROLIK, DEAN      E. W. JANIKE, DIRECTOR



# Beginning

# STORAGE IMPROVEMENT

by Jerre L. Withrow

This project is suggested to follow EC 11-21-2, "Plan Your Room." Select any area of your house where you feel improved storage arrangements would add to the usefulness and enjoyment of that area. The project is intended to increase your awareness of storage problems, to increase your understanding of principles of good storage and how they can help you, and to give you experience in planning and developing storage devices and arrangements.

## REQUIREMENTS

1. Check the articles used in a given area of your home.
2. Check storage facilities in that area.
3. Plan how the articles used can best be stored.
4. Provide storage for a part of the articles, such as 4-H records, out of season clothing, hobbies, tableware, shop equipment, bathroom supplies.
5. Make at least three devices:
  - . Drawer boxes or dividers
  - . Sliding trays for deep drawers
  - . Hat boxes or other storage boxes
  - . File box
  - . Tie, belt or ribbon rack
  - . Garment bag, laundry bag or three shoulder dress protectors
  - . Pin-up board, bulletin board
  - . Step shelves, hanging shelves, or other shelves
  - . Storage chest
6. Write a before and after story using sketches or pictures.



# WHY

Belongings satisfy either a need or give us pleasure. A coat satisfies our need for warmth, while a light scarf adds gaiety to the outfit.

Good storage is not an end in itself, but a means of increasing the enjoyment and usability you receive from your possessions. Improving storage can spark your imagination and give you an opportunity to express your individuality.

Are your collections displayed so that you can enjoy them and your friends can see them? Is your room easy to care for? Are the games or books you want always handy and easy to reach? Are your clothes still freshly pressed when you take them from the hanger or hook? If your possessions are organized and kept in a special place planned just for them, you can answer yes to all of these questions.

Planning this special space and arranging things can be fun. You will be surprised to see what a big difference just a little change can make. Here are a few simple steps to follow:

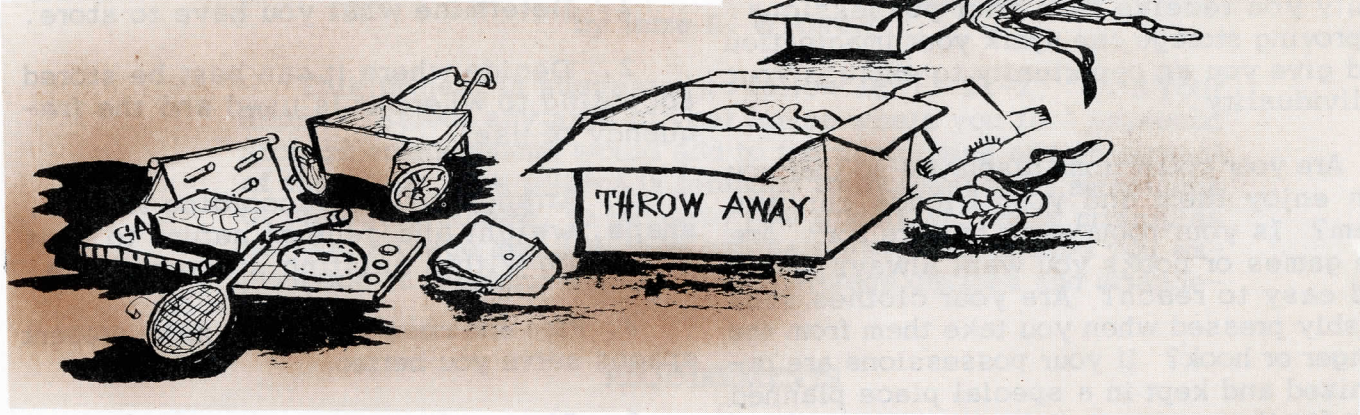
1. Determine what you have to store.
2. Decide where it can best be stored according to where it is used and the frequency of use.
3. Arrange articles according to size, shape, weight and general nature to best advantage within existing storage space.
4. Plan and make devices to make present spaces serve you better.
5. Plan and construct simple storage units.





## WHAT

What do you have to store? Probably you have outgrown some of your clothing. Perhaps there are some games you no longer play. Articles no longer used should be cleared out to reduce clutter and free space for other things. Sort through and decide what articles are not satisfying a physical or psychological need. Discard them.



Seasonal clothing such as snow parkas and swim suits may be hung in another part of the house when out of season if facilities are planned. If off-season things need to be stored in your closet, designate one end of the closet for this purpose. Special precautions should be taken with woolen things not currently in use. Be sure the garments are clean. Soil may cause deterioration of fabric or attract moths. Items that do not need washing or cleaning, but have been in a closet for some time, should be aired.

Clothing that can be hung should be sealed in plastic, paper, or cloth bags to protect it from dust. Sweaters may be neatly folded and put into bags or boxes. Perhaps you have a high shelf (not suitable for everyday use) on which these may be placed.

Now that you have discarded things you no longer use and have organized things you wish to keep, but are not using, you are ready to consider the many items still on your list.

Next, divide according to use. Do this on paper by making lists of like articles, or actually make groups on the floor so that you can see what is to be stored and what things serve like purposes or are similar in themselves.

## WHERE

Personal belongings in your room fall into logical classifications. Some are used in dressing, such as underthings, shoes and shirts. Some are used for studying or working on hobbies or projects, such as books, scrapbooks and writing paper. Some items, such as hair brushes are necessary for grooming. Articles used in any one activity should be kept together and close to the place where the activity takes place. Closet location is probably predetermined, so you will want to place your chest of drawers, shelf unit or whatever you use to hold clothing not on hangers as close to the closet as possible.

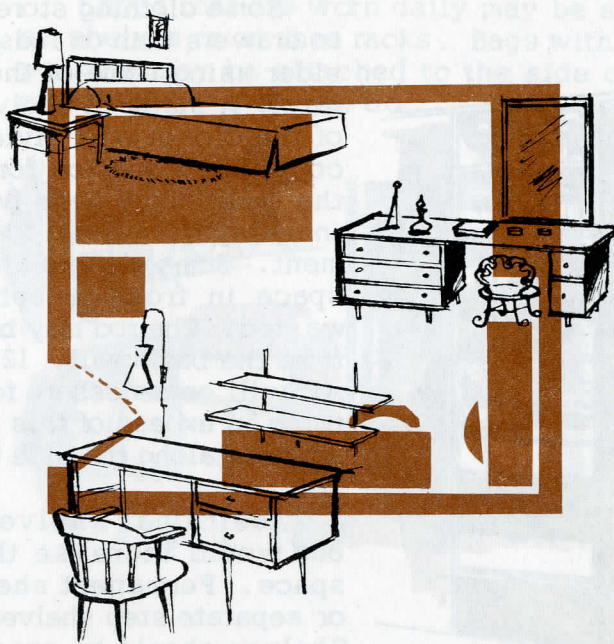
If you have completed the "Plan Your Room" project, you have already arranged for this. If not, E.C. 11-21-2 "Plan Your Room" and E.C. 58-1135 "A Space and Place for Leisure" will help you decide on a plan best suited to your needs.



If you have no closet at present, and are planning to build one, or have one built, plan the furniture arrangement on paper before you build so that all things used in dressing can be in one area of the room.

The things used in studying or in hobbies should be grouped together in a special area. A desk or table, plus storage facilities, will make this spot one you can enjoy. A separate area for grooming may be developed or perhaps you prefer to have it a part of the dressing area. Sleeping, of course, is a very important activity in your room. Perhaps bedding needs to be stored in your room - if so, it should be near the bed. If you use your bed for reading, some provision needs to be made for a book storage area.

Now that you have your things divided into activity groups you are ready to determine the best way to store each individual item.



## HOW

### RODS

Rods can increase usefulness of space without actually increasing the amount of space. Place them at a height easy for you to reach, but also at a height suitable for the articles. A space of 3 to 6 inches between the bottom edge of a garment and the floor is sufficient. More space than this is wasted space. The rod may be lowered to allow space for an extra shelf above or the space below can be put to use for shelves or drawers. If part of your wardrobe consists of separate skirts, shorts and shirts, two rods may be placed in the space now occupied by one. One rod is located low in the closet with just enough clearance below. A second rod is placed above the first. A clearance of 3 inches above the rod is desired for removing hangers. Measure the length of the garment to be hung on the upper rod to determine its position. Thirty-six inches between the upper and lower rods will probably be sufficient and still permit you to easily remove hangers from the higher one. If you share a closet with a younger child in your family, double rods will give you each hanging space.





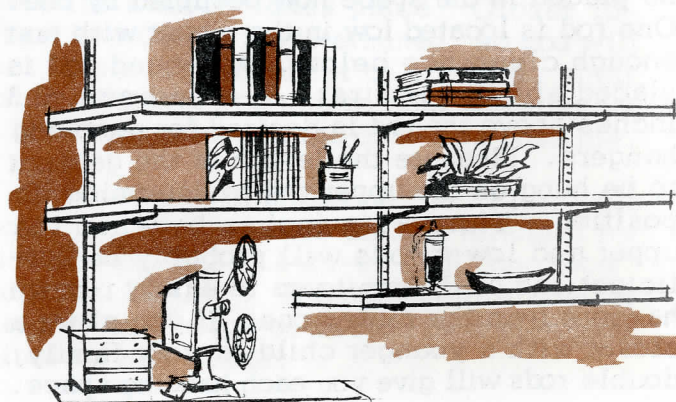
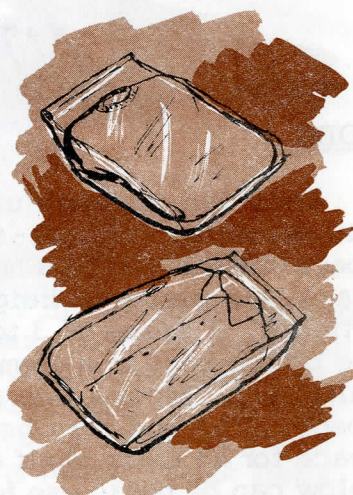
## SHELVES

Some clothing stores better on shelves or in drawers than on rods. If so, why not consider using some of the closet space in this way? A stack of shelves through the center of the closet will divide it so that one side could have one rod for longer garments and the other could have two rods. Twenty-four-inch depth is needed to hold a hanger and garment. Some closets are deeper than this and space in front or behind the garments is wasted. The rod may be placed 12 inches out from the back wall. 12 inches in front of the rod will be necessary for clearance, but anything in excess of this may be developed into shelves along the side walls.

Additional shelves above the present one would increase the usefulness of the space. Permanent shelves may be inserted or separate step shelves may be constructed. Shelves should be spaced according to their use. Plan so that only two sweaters, pairs of pajamas or whatever need to be stacked on top of one another.

More shelves, with fewer articles per shelf, keep things from wrinkling and make it easier for you to remove and replace. Shelves that are above eye level should not be more than 12 inches deep in order to prevent things from being pushed back out of sight. Shelves that are below eye level may be staggered so that every other one is deep, but the ones in between are shallow. This allows you to see the contents of each. Where like articles are stacked on one shelf they would be easier to handle if each is placed in its own plastic bag. Special sized bags may be purchased or the ones received with new articles or even food items from a store will do nicely.

Shelf storage may be desirable in the study area. Shelves for books or for displaying models or collections, would be convenient. These shelves may be supported by metal strips purchased at the lumber yard. Brackets of various widths are to make it possible for you to have shelves from 4 inches on up to 18 inches. The strips are attached to the wall on the studding. Brackets are inserted into slots provided every half inch. Shelves may also be fastened to a shadow box frame and hung onto a wall. Peg boards



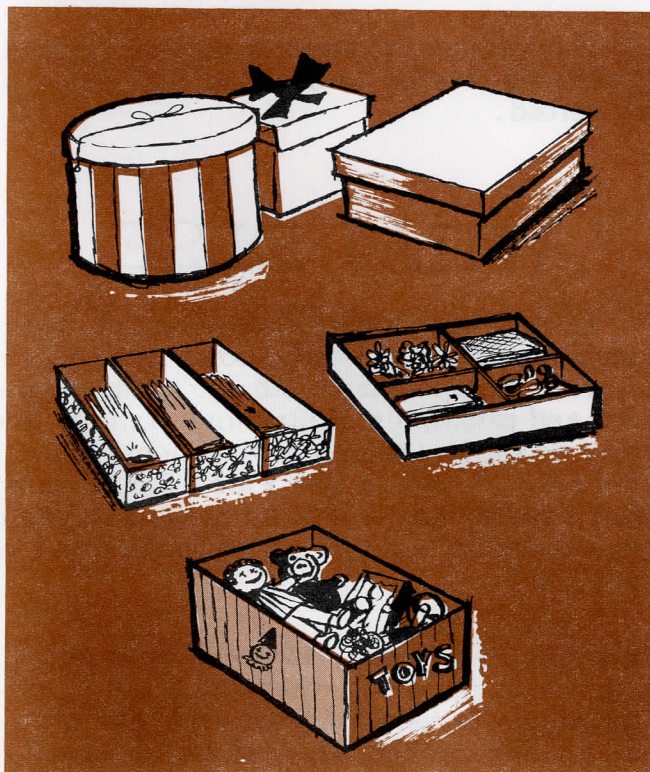


may be mounted on strips such as lath to allow space behind it and shelf brackets fastened to it. Peg boards would not only give you possible shelves, but the other gadgets available for use with it might serve to display ribbons or other trinkets.

Remember that a more effective display is one that is simple. Perhaps some trinket or models could be stored in a box and only a few put up to enjoy at one time. Changing your display from time to time can renew your interest as well as that of your friends.

## BOXES

Some items store well in boxes. Hat boxes, shoe boxes, boxes for hair ribbons, flowers, gloves, etc. are convenient. These articles are light in weight and can be supported by the cardboard boxes in which such articles come from the store. A box keeps articles organized, wrinkle-free and protected from dust. Boxes may be covered with wall paper, or any of the self-adhesive plastics to make them attractive. A slot to hold an identification tag or some other device to label these boxes is important. One box can be removed from beneath another readily, but it is a nuisance to have to open to determine its contents.



## DOORS

Shoes that are worn daily may be stored on shelves or on shoe racks. Bags with shoe pockets may be attached to the side of the closet or hung on the door.



Cup hooks screwed into a strip of wood may be used for belts and things that hang. Attaching peg boards to the back of a door will give maximum flexibility, allowing you to place special hooks where you need them now and to change them as you need changes.

These spaces can also accommodate laundry bags or racks for ties, belts, handbags, scarves and other small items.

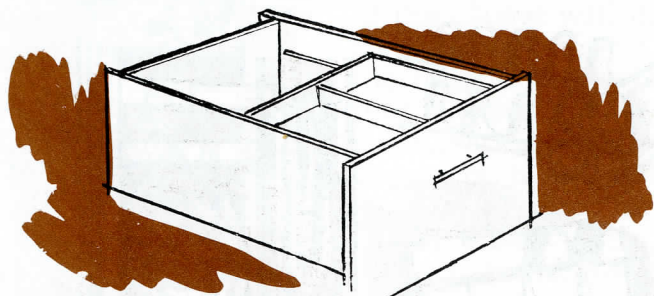
Shelves also may be hung on peg boards. In most closets there is 5 inches between the door and hanging garments. A narrow shelf with a lift or rail to prevent things spilling would hold small articles or bags.

## DRAWERS

Drawers can serve you better if they are arranged according to use. Many are so deep that things must be stacked or part of the space is wasted. A deep drawer may be improved by adding a tray. The tray should not be more than half the size of the drawer so you can easily see and reach those things which are stored below. The tray may slide from side to side or from front to back depending on the size and shape of the things to be placed in it. Jewelry and socks, for instance, fit nicely into a long narrow tray, while underthings lay easily into a more nearly square tray. The depth of the tray depends not only on the quantity to be placed in it,



but also on the bulkiness of the things below. The tray slides on wooden glides made of small quarter round. It may be a box, a plastic tray or pan which you bought or a tray you constructed out of thin plywood or hardwood.



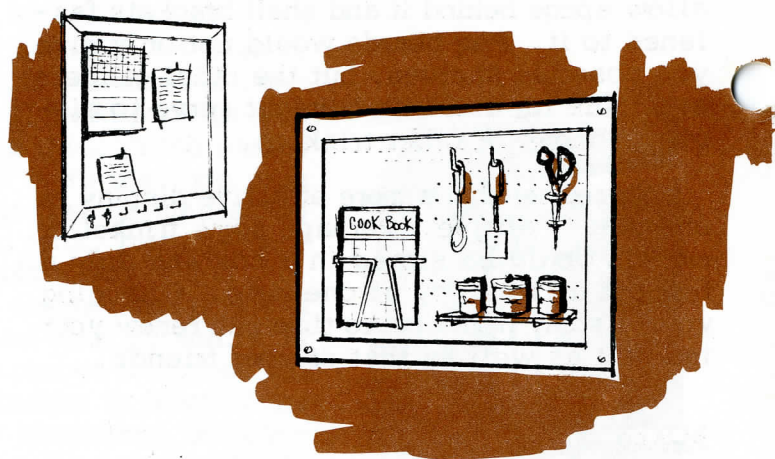
Organization of drawers may be improved by simply changing the manner in which the article is placed. For instance, sweaters may be rolled instead of folded and filed one behind the other instead of stacked. Gloves may be placed on the side and filed. Perhaps changing the way socks are put away would improve their accessibility. Folding garments or towels a new way may make it possible for them to fit more compactly.

Usefulness of drawers also may be increased by inserting dividers. The divisions may be separate boxes or one box with several divisions. The size of the boxes or the divisions depends again on the articles to be stored in it. Trays or dividers may be covered to match closet accessories if you like, or may be sanded smooth and waxed to prevent snagging of garments. Drawers in the study or hobby area may be improved in the same way. Here, of course, they will be planned to hold supplies used in these activities, so sizes and shapes will be different than those used for clothing items.

### BULLETIN BOARDS

Wall board or cork makes a good bulletin board. Cork can be purchased mounted or can be mounted on hardboard. The edges of the bulletin board may be framed, taped or finished in some other way. A bulletin board to be used in the kitchen, back entrance or hallway might have a blackboard inserted for notes, shopping lists or other messages.

When you have completed this project you will see that having things in good condition, available when you wish to use them and handy to the place where they are used has increased your enjoyment of them. Caring for things is reduced when they are kept in a suitable place, and having planned the changes and carried them through yourself will give you a real thrill of accomplishment. Perhaps next year you will want to try Storage II and actually construct a new closet or unit for some area of your home.



A cup hook might be added for storing keys. Try to design your bulletin board or shelves to meet your particular needs and to finish it to reflect your personality and to harmonize with the room in which it is to be located. Remember that the supporting nail, screw or hook should not show.

A file box for your club projects will be handy in your study area. Select a box or construct one from heavy cardboard that is between 10 and 15 inches tall and 14 inches wide. The depth will depend on the number of folders you wish to keep. A hinged lid will complete your file. Manila folders will fit into this space and keep clippings, etc. separated according to subject.

If additional storage is needed, look around to see what is on hand that could be converted.

## WHAT ELSE

Kitchen cupboards, linen closets, bathrooms and living or family rooms may be useful with some improved storage. The procedure and principles of planning would be the same no matter what room you choose. E.C. 58-1134, "A Space and Place for Leisure" (Part I Living Room) will be helpful to you if you choose to work in one of those areas of your home.