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EC64-434 Ready to Wear through Care

Gerda Petersen

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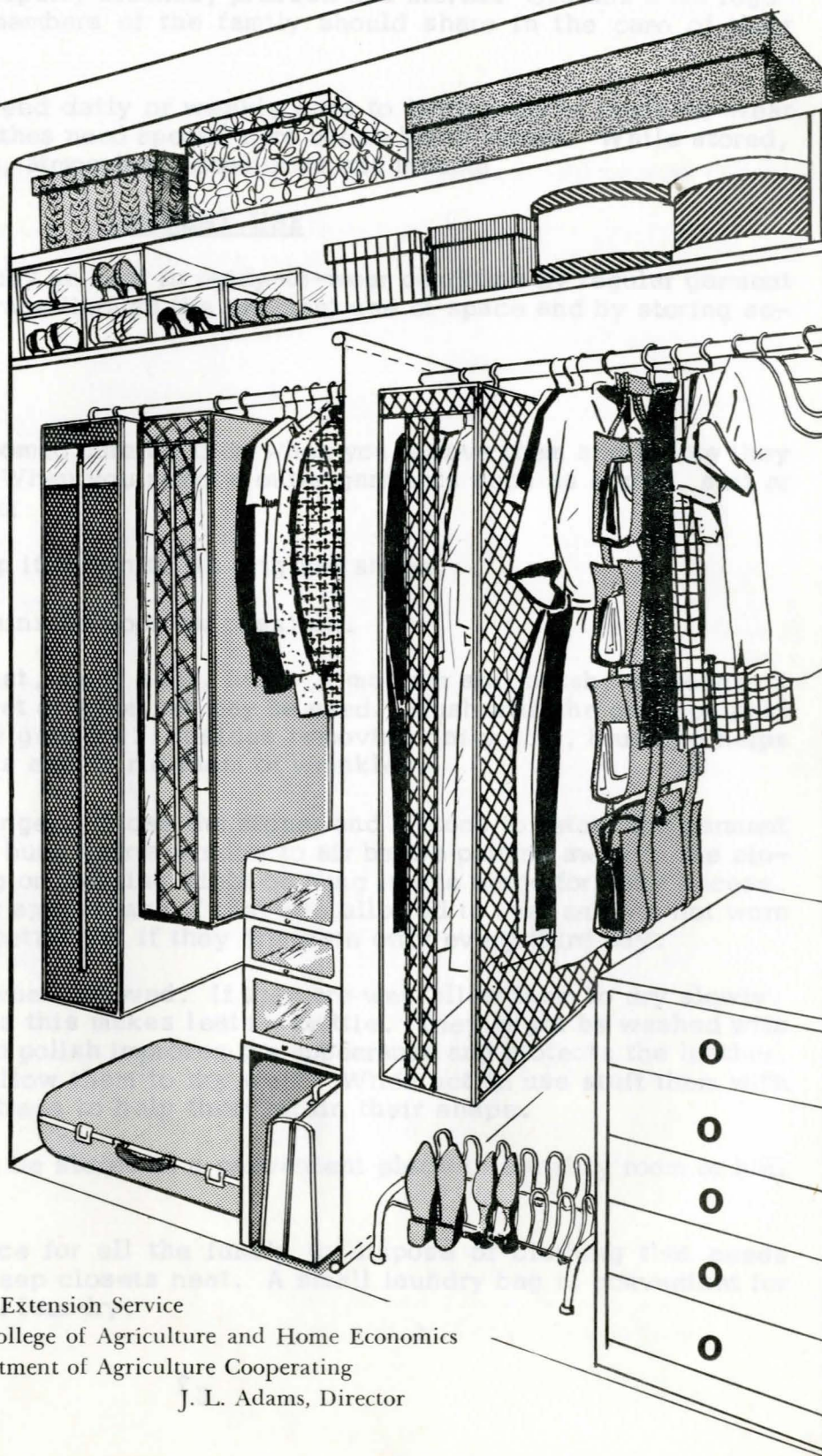
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Ready to Wear through CARE

*READY TO WEAR
Through*

CARE



Extension Service

University of Nebraska College of Agriculture and Home Economics
and U. S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating

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Ready to Wear through CARE

By Gerda Petersen
Extension Clothing Specialist

Good clothing deserves good care. The best designed and most stunning clothes lose their appeal when not properly cleaned, pressed and stored. Clothes need regular, systematic care. All members of the family should share in the care of their clothes.

Clothes in current use need daily or weekly care to keep them in ready-to-wear condition. Out-of-season clothes need special care before being stored. While stored, they need protection from dust, atmospheric conditions and insects.

CURRENT USE

Garments in current use may be kept in ready-to-wear condition by regular garment grooming and by suitable storage through the efficient use of space and by storing according to type of garment.

Garment Grooming

To keep garments well groomed care for them when you remove them and before they are put away in the closet. When you remove outer garments such as a coat, suit or dress that won't be laundered:

1. Shake garment to help it return to its original shape.
2. Remove spots and stains as soon as possible.
3. Brush to get rid of dust, mud, soot, hair. A medium soft brush, a sponge, a lint remover or a piece of velvet or nylon net may be used. Brush with the grain on both the inside and outside of the garment. Besides removing daily soil, brushing helps restore springiness to fabrics and to rid them of wrinkles.
4. Hang on a suitable hanger. Close the zipper and buttons to retain the garment shape. The garment might be hung near a window to air before putting away in the closet. Those that need mending or pressing might be hung in one place for easy access. Garments will retain a better appearance if they are allowed to rest and are not worn on consecutive days. It is better yet if they are worn only every third day.

Shoes should be cleaned when removed. If they are wet, allow them to dry slowly. Do not expose them to heat as this makes leather brittle. They might be washed with saddle soap if needed. A good polish improves the appearance and protects the leather. Alternate pairs of shoes to allow them to dry well. When not in use stuff them with crumpled paper or use shoe trees to help them retain their shape.

Rainwear and boots might be stored in a convenient place in a utility room or hall closet.

Provide a convenient place for all the family to dispose of clothing that needs laundering. This will help keep closets neat. A small laundry bag is convenient for temporary storage of personal laundry.

Efficient Use of Space

Make the most of the space you have available by:

1. Removing articles of clothing from closets and drawers that are not in current use. These articles might be divided into (a) those that should be discarded (discard them or send to charitable institution); (b) those that should be mended or could be re-made (place in a convenient container until they can be cared for); (c) those that are out of season (these may be stored elsewhere leaving more room for the clothes now in regular use).
2. Storing articles where they will be used, where they are easy to reach and where they can be removed without first removing items that are not needed.
3. Storing like articles together, such as lingerie, belts, etc.
4. Hanging long garments in one end of the closet and short ones, such as blouses, in the other. Other things can be stored under the short garments.
5. Making use of drawer dividers, see-through hat boxes, shoe racks and other closet accessories.

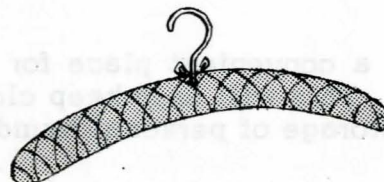
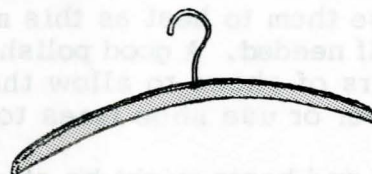
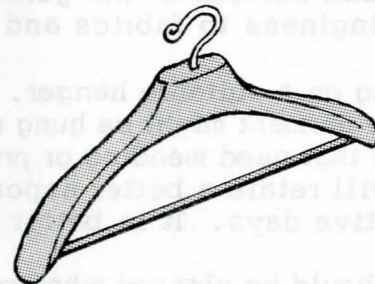
Storing According to Type of Garment

Garments such as coats, suits, dresses will retain their shape best if hung on hangers.

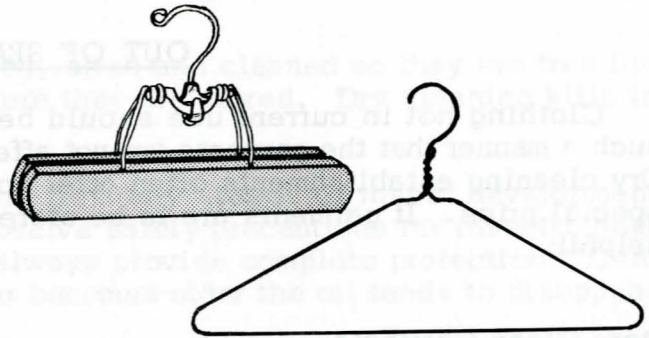
a. Allow sufficient space to permit garments to hang free and accessible with some air space around them. Two inches of rod space for women's clothes; 2 1/2" for men's; 4" for coats or 5" to 6" for coats with fur collars are desirable if garments are to retain their original shape.

b. Choose a suitable hanger for each type of garment.

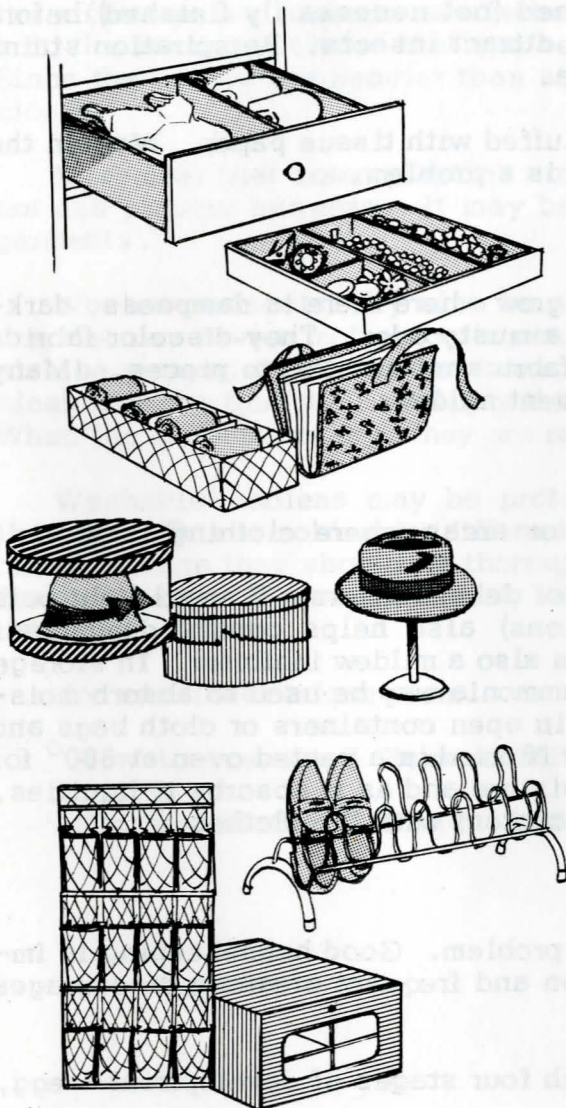
1. Garments shaped by interfacing such as suits and coats, are heavy and should have a broad, well-shaped hanger. These are more expensive but when you consider that a good hanger can be a lifetime investment and that it does much to help maintain the nice appearance of garments in the years ahead, it is well worth the money spent.
2. Hangers for dresses are shaped but need not be as large and broad as for suits and coats.
3. Garments of sheer materials, velvets or other delicate fabrics retain their shape best on padded or velvet hangers.



4. Spring clamp hangers are good for skirts and slacks.
5. Wire hangers are for temporary use such as delivery by cleaners. If used for a longer time they allow creases to form at the shoulders and heavy garments may hang out of shape.



Sweaters and knits should be stored flat so they won't stretch out of shape. They might be lightly stacked in drawers or shelves. If garments are lined with tissue, fold marks will be less noticeable. Plastic bags or see-through boxes protect them from dust.



Undergarments may be folded and stacked in drawers. Sometimes space can be used more efficiently if they are rolled. Smooth drawer dividers that won't snag or tear garments help to keep them organized.

Hose or socks may be rolled and placed in hosiery boxes or bags.

Hats may be stored in boxes to keep them free from dust. To insure a good shape stuff the crown of the hat with crushed tissue paper and keep the brim supported in its natural shape. Hat holders that may be attached to doors are available for men's hats.

Shoes should be kept off of the floor and out of dust and lint. Shoe bags or racks are storage possibilities. Shoes worn less frequently may be kept in labeled boxes.

Purses may be stored in plastic bags on shelves or in a purse caddy.

Belts and ties may be stored on special racks or hangers.

Gloves may be stored in boxes on shelves or in drawers.

Jewelry and small items are easily accessible if stored in divided trays in drawers.

OUT OF SEASON STORAGE

Clothing not in current use should be clean when stored. It should be stored in such a manner that the garments are not affected by atmospheric conditions and insects. Dry cleaning establishments often offer combination cleaning and summer storage at a special price. If garments are to be stored at home the following suggestions may be helpful:

Store Clean Garments

1. Washable garments should be freshly laundered but not ironed. They should be free from starch since this may cause fabrics to yellow and they are more apt to be attacked by insects such as silver fish, crickets and roaches.

2. Dry-cleanable garments should be cleaned (not necessarily finished) before storage. Food spots, lint and dust in a garment attract insects. Perspiration stains may discolor fabric if not removed before storage.

3. Shoes should be cleaned, polished and stuffed with tissue paper. Wax on the uppers and soles will help prevent mildew if this is a problem.

Prevent Mildew

Mildew is caused by a tiny plant (fungus) that grow where there is dampness, darkness and warmth. As the molds grow they leave a musty odor. They discolor fabrics and sometimes eat into them so severely that the fabrics rot and fall to pieces. (Many man-made fibers are resistant to mildew.) To prevent mildew:

1. Thoroughly clean all soiled garments.

2. Provide adequate ventilation in closets or areas where clothing is stored.

3. Control dampness in entire house by use of dehumidifiers. A small light bulb left burning in a closet (observe fire precautions) also helps control dampness. Paradichlorobenzene, which is a moth protective, is also a mildew inhibitor. In storage areas substances such as Silica gel or activated ammonia may be used to absorb moisture from the air. These substances may be put in open containers or cloth bags and hung in closets. These can be used over and over if dried in a vented oven at 300° for several hours. Calcium chloride also absorbs moisture and as it absorbs it liquifies. Caution: This chemical is harmful if it comes in contact with the clothes.

Protect from Moths & Carpet Beetles

Insect damage to stored clothing is a common problem. Good housekeeping is important to keep the house insect free. Ventilation and frequent cleaning discourages insects.

Clothes moths and carpet beetles pass through four stages of development - egg, larva, pupa, adult.

The moth does damage to clothing when it is in the whitish wormlike larva stage. Eggs are laid by the moth in the nap of fabric, in cuffs, seams, etc. The eggs develop into the larva.

Garments should be well brushed, sunned, aired and cleaned so they are free from any of the stages of insect development before they are stored. Dry cleaning kills insects in all stages.

Closets or containers must also be free from any stages of insect development. Surface spraying of closets kills insects (observe safety precautions for insecticides). Cedar chests or cedar-lined closets don't always provide complete protection. Cedar repels but doesn't kill insects. As the cedar becomes older the oil tends to disappear.

Clothes stored in closets, trunks, or boxes may be protected from moth damage by the use of paradichlorobenzene crystals or naphthalene flakes or balls. As these chemicals evaporate they produce a vapor. This vapor must be strong enough to kill insects. The average amount needed is one pound of crystals, flakes, or balls for an average sized trunk, or one pound to each one hundred cubic feet of closet space. Much of the effectiveness depends on whether the container or closet is sealed tight enough to hold the vapor. A closet that can be used just for storage will be the most effective. Since the vapors are heavier than air the flakes or balls should be placed high in the closet.

Remember that some plastics are affected by the paradichlorobenzene fumes. Do not use plastic hangers. It may be necessary to remove some plastic buttons from garments.

Woolen garments may also be sprayed to protect them from moth damage. Most dry cleaners have a moth-proofing service. Fluoride solutions or 5% DDT solutions may also be sprayed on woolens at home. Before spraying be sure the woolen garments are clean and free from stains. Apply the spray freely until the surface is uniformly moist. When the articles are dry, they are ready for storage.

Washable woolens may be protected by washing or rinsing in water containing E.Q. 53. This is sold under different commercial trade names. After woolens are taken out of storage they should be thoroughly aired. Any flakes that adhere can usually be brushed away. If sprayed heavily with DDT the woolens may need dry cleaning before use.

For additional information:

"How to Prevent & Remove Mildew" - Home & Garden Bulletin 68, U.S.D.A.

"Clothes Moths & Carpet Beetles" - Home & Garden Bulletin 24, U.S.D.A.

