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Groom your Room: Extension Circular 11-01-74

Magdalene Pfister

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GROOM YOUR ROOM

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Leo E. Lucas, Director

MARCH 1978
Project Suggestions

Hi there! Are you nine years old? If so, this may be your first 4-H Club project. Or are you ten or eleven years old, and have had a foods or clothing project?

It doesn't matter if you are 9, 10 or 11 years old, Groom Your Room is for you. All of you are interested in making your room look pretty aren't you? It can be fun as well as hard work. You will feel grown up when you find you can do some of the things grown ups think you are too little to do. And you know what! You'll have such a good time showing your room to your family and friends that you will forget how tired you sometimes got working.

Of course, you will have to work things out with your family. If you share a room with a family member, talk things over and make plans together.

What can you do to make your room look prettier? Here is a list of ideas:

1. Make some things to bring beauty and interest to your room such as:
   - Wall hanging
   - Arrangement from nature

2. Make or choose things to bring order to your room such as:
   - Laundry bag
   - Waste basket
   - Bulletin board
   - Shelves
   - Drawer dividers
   - Covered boxes

3. Help change your bed.
4. Make your bed regularly.
5. Clean your room regularly.
Groom Your Room
By Magdalene Pfister
Extension Home Furnishing Specialist

Do you know what the word "groom" means? It means to make neat and tidy. And in this 4-H project you will learn to make your room neat and tidy. You will also learn how to make your room more attractive. You do not need a room of your own to do this project. The room you share with someone else can be the special place in your home to show friends what a good homemaker you are.

With the many things you learn you can help mother in other parts of the house.

LET'S BEGIN WITH COLOR

Color is an important part of home furnishing. It can make homes cheerful and inviting. Color is more important than the amount of money you spend.

Take a look at the colors in your room. These will be the guides for the colors of articles you make or choose for your room.

How many colors are there in the world? Actually, millions. Being able to see color differences and how colors affect each other will be helpful when choosing colors for your room.

Colors belong to different families — yellow, green, blue, violet, red and orange. Colors in the same family will differ. Notice some are dark, some are light, some are soft and some are bright.

Now take another good look at the colors in your room. Find samples of the main colors and put them in your record book. Try to decide what colors would look nice in your room. Often it is wise to repeat some of the colors already there.
FIND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

When you step into your room does it look like Messy Bessy or Careful Carrie lived there?

Having a handy place for your things will help keep them in better shape, save you time and keep your room looking nice.

Why not make a list of your belongings and decide on the best place for them. Are there some things you no longer play with, or clothes you have outgrown?

Decide Whether to Make or Buy

You will find many things in stores and catalogs which will help to make your room more attractive and orderly. Why not take a look at some of these? Compare the cost with the cost of making it. For example, what does a waste basket or bulletin board cost? Can you find one in the size and color you need? What would supplies for making one cost?

Making decisions such as this will help you in many ways. Homemakers must make decisions every day. Many have to do with whether they should make or buy things for their homes.

Your Closet

A well organized closet is a big help in keeping your room neat. You will want to group clothes of one type together, such as all skirts together, and blouses in another group.

Often, space that is wasted on a closet door, floor or wall can be used by adding shelves, racks, hooks and rods. Can you find ways to make better use of the space in your closet? What kind of accessories could be added?
YOUR DRESSER TOP

Too many things on the top of your dresser or chest will give a messy, cluttered look. Combs and brushes usually belong in a drawer with other grooming articles.

It is necessary to consider the color, size and shape of things when choosing and combining them on the dresser top. A good reminder is "something large, something small, something short, something tall, something in between."

Arrange articles in a group rather than scattering them over the surface or lining them in a row. Leave space around groups or individual objects.

When placing these articles on the dresser make them look balanced. You may place a pair of lamps on each side with a trinket box in the middle. This is an example of formal balance. Or you may place different articles with the bigger, brighter or darker object nearer the center to balance a smaller less important object. This is called informal balance. It works just like a see-saw doesn't it? Why not try making different arrangements each week.

INSIDE DRAWERS

Not only should your room be in order, but also things that are kept in drawers. A good way to organize things is to put like things together. Discard items you no longer use. Line the drawers with paper or self-adhesive vinyl. You can use drawer dividers, boxes or trays to keep like articles in their own place. The number, shape and size will depend on the articles. Put articles you use most often in the front of top drawer.

What You Need To Make Drawer Dividers

Boxes
Water-base paint and brush or
Paper for covering boxes and
Rubber cement or paste and small brush.
Pencil
Scissors
Ruler
Newspapers
One Way to Cover Boxes

1. Trace around one side of box on wrong side of paper. Add 1/2 inch to one long edge. See Fig. 1

2. Fold paper on other long line. Cut along outer lines through double thickness of paper. This piece will cover the inside and outside of box side. See Fig. 2

3. Crease lines 1/2 inch from cut edges. One 1/2 inch allowance laps under bottom of box. The other 1/2 inch goes on the inside bottom.

4. Fit piece to side of box and trim edges so piece will fit inside corner.

5. Repeat steps 1, 2, 3 and 4 for other three sides of box. See Fig. 3

6. Trace around bottom of box and cut out. Fit piece inside box and trim edges so paper will lie flat.

7. Cover sides of box first. Apply paste to one piece of paper and attach to side of box. Smooth out wrinkles and wipe off excess paste. Attach paper to other three sides.

8. Attach paper to inside bottom of box.

Note: When boxes are covered in this way, the outside corners may not be completely covered. This doesn't matter when they are used inside a drawer for dividers. If boxes are used where outside corners are seen, extend the short ends one-half inch.
WASTEBASKET

A wastebasket serves a very useful purpose and can add a decorative note to your room. You probably wouldn't want it so bright that it would be the first thing you saw when you came into the room.

What You Will Need for a Covered Wastebasket

Large can or carton such as from oil, grease, frozen food or potato chips.

Plastic coated gummed paper, or wallpaper as long as distance around can and as wide as length of can, or water-base paint or spray paint.

How to Cover Container

Make pattern for the cover by rolling container over newspaper or tracing along the top and bottom. Add 1/2 inch to each end. Cut out pattern.

Fit and correct if necessary.

Trace around pattern and cut out. Apply to container.

Smooth out air bubbles with clean cloth.

Fit edge under rim of top and bottom. If container has no rim, finish upper edge with masking tape.

How to Paint Container

Sand or use steel wool on metal wastebasket before painting. Spray paint is easy to use but be sure to follow directions to avoid waste.

Hammered Waste Can

An interesting all-over surface pattern can be made with a ball peen hammer. Pound the inside of a metal can which is held against a cement block.

LAUNDRY BAG

A laundry bag will help keep order in your room by giving you a place to put your dirty clothes.

If you have had the "Let's Sew" project or have had some experience in sewing you will find a laundry bag easy to make. Even if you haven't used a sewing machine before, the stitching is not hard to do. Ask mother or your leader to show you how to use the machine and then practice.

There are many different types of laundry bags. The size will depend on the place where you hang it and how much you put into it.

What You Will Need for a Laundry Bag on a Hanger

2/3 yd. or 3/4 yd. fabric such as denim, sailcloth, Indianhead.

Needle, thread, scissors, sturdy hanger.

Sewing tools: needle, thread, scissors, tape measure.

How to Make

1. Straighten fabric by tearing or pulling a thread and cutting.

2. Square the fabric by pulling if necessary. Press.

3. Fold cloth in half lengthwise, right sides together.

4. Stitch 5/8" from edge, along selvage, leaving 10" unstitched for the opening. Retrace stitching 1/2".

5. Press seam open and continue pressing to the end.

6. To make the opening stronger cut a piece of cloth 1 1/4" square. Fold it in the center.
7. Place the square of fabric with the fold at bottom of the opening. Open and stitch along the crease.

8. Fold stitched pieces over and press.

9. Stitch on right side of opening, using pressure foot as guide.

10. Refold material so that seam is in the center.

11. Holding bottom edges even, stitch another seam 5/8" from bottom edge.

12. With pencil shape top of bag to fit the curve of hanger and stitch along this line. Trim for a 5/8" seam.

13. Turn bag right side out. Press.

14. Insert hanger and your laundry bag is ready to hang in your closet.

**DRAW STRING LAUNDRY BAG**

**What You Will Need For a Draw String Laundry Bag**

- 2 hand towels about 16" x 30".
- 2 pieces of cable cord each 36" long.
- Sewing thread to match towels.

**How to Make**

1. On wrong side of towels turn down 3" across the top.

2. Pin, press and machine stitch lower edge.

3. Mark 1 1/2" down from the folded edge with chalk or pencil.

4. Machine stitch on the lines marked. This will form a "casing" for the drawstring.
5. Lay right sides of towels together with the turned-down edges together.

6. Machine stitch 5/8" seams beginning three inches from folded edge, down the long side, across the bottom and up the other side. Secure stitches by back stitching.

7. Cut off the corners so they will be smooth when turned.

8. With a heavy safety pin thread the cable cord through the casing on both sides. Knot ends together.

9. Put the other piece of cord in opposite direction and knot.

10. Pull on both knotted ends to close bag.

11. Hang on hook or door knob.

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**CLOTHES HAMPER**

Some of you may keep your dirty clothes in a hamper. One can be made from a strong box. The flaps of the box are turned to the inside. The entire box may be covered with paper to make it more attractive. Clothes line cord forms handles and strengthens the box. See Fig. A.

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**BULLETIN BOARD**

A bulletin board will give you a place to put your souvenirs. Snapshots, 4-H ribbons or party favors can be pinned and displayed for friends and family to enjoy, too.

There are a number of ways to make a bulletin board. The simplest one may be covered with fabric or have the edges covered with colored gummed tape.

Decide where you will want to hang it so that it will fit the space. Keep in mind the colors in your room if you are adding color to the bulletin board.

**What You Will Need to Make a Fabric Covered Bulletin Board**

- Wall board cut to the size you want.
- Picture wire twice the width of board.
- Two flat buttons, or beads about 1" across or wooden dowels or clothes pins and ribbon twice the width.
- Cloth, such as denim, flannel, burlap, or felt 6" longer and 6" wider than board.
- Box of small carpet tacks, No. 3 or No. 4.
- Tack hammer.
- Scissors.
- Nails.

**How to Make**

Press cloth and lay evenly on board and thumb tack at corners.

Turn board over.
Tack edges at center of each side. If cloth ravels turn raw edges under 1/2" or cover edges with masking tape after they are tacked.

Miter corners to make them smooth.

You can miter the corners easily if margins are exactly the same width on all four sides.

Fold the corner (BDE) of the fabric over the corner of the board. If the fabric is very heavy cut along line A-C.

With point A held firmly or tacked to board, bring D up to position. Do the same for the other corner.

The lengthwise and cross wise grain of the material should follow the edges of the board. Turn raw edges under and tack in place. The same could be just overlapped at the corner so one or two tacks would hold it in place.

Finish tacking edges of cloth to board working from center of both sides to the corners. Attach hanging wire to the back of the board in this way:

Measure down 3" from top corners and side of board and mark.

Make a small hole through board and cloth using a nail. Work carefully.

Run end of wire through one hole in board and both holes of button.

Carry wire to other corner hole and run it through board and button.

Draw wire tight and wrap ends tightly around each other.

Bulletin Boards with Frame

Old picture frames can be used if simple and large enough to make a useful bulletin board. A coat of paint or a finish to blend with the other colors in the room will freshen an old frame.

Frame from molding. A new frame can be built from simple molding which can be bought at a lumber yard. The corners should be mitered, glued and nailed before the glue sets. This is quite a difficult task so ask someone to help you.

How to Hang and Arrange

When the board is hung it should be flat against the wall. The screw eyes and wires should not be seen from the front.

Next, make an orderly arrangement of things you would like to display on the board. Is there one main idea or theme? Are articles well balanced? Does your eye follow easily? If so, stand back and admire.
SHELVES

What You Need to Finish Shelves

It's easy to finish boards and use them as shelves to store or display books, magazines, records, hobbies and collections. And who can't use more shelf space.

Shelves may be hung above chests or desks by using brackets that fasten on the wall. With bricks or cement blocks they may be placed on the floor.

Boards - 1" thick, about 10"-12" wide, cut the length you want.

Bricks, concrete blocks or glass bricks.

Abrasive paper - 1 sheet medium, 1 sheet fine.

Steel Wool.

Water base paint and brush, or penetrating sealer (clear or colored), mineral spirits or turpentine, fine steel wool, old nylon hose, cup or small dish.

Newspapers.

To Prepare Boards

Rub with the grain of wood, using the medium "sandpaper" wrapped around a sanding block. Finish sanding with the fine paper so wood will be very smooth. Don't forget to sand the ends and the sides.

To Apply the Finish

If the boards are full of knots or spots, they are better finished with paint. Water-base paint is easy to use. It dries fast and brushes can be cleaned with water. If you want to use oil-base paint, ask your leader or parents how to apply the paint and how to clean the brushes.

Penetrating sealer may be put on with a pad made of old nylon stocking. Apply the seal generously. Allow to soak in about 10 minutes. Wipe off extra sealer. When completely dry rub with fine steel wool.
LET'S MAKE YOUR BED

One of the first things others see as they go into your room is the bed. Is it well made—
with covers straight and smooth?

If the bed is made carefully when you change bedding it will be easy to make each day. In making your bed try to save walking around bed as much as possible.

Help Change Your Bedding

1. Straighten the mattress and mattress pad.

2. Place the bottom sheet right side up with the center fold on the center of the mattress. Slip the sheet pockets of the fitted sheet over the corners of the mattress. If you are using a flat bottom sheet miter the corners in this way:
   a. Grasp the edge of the sheet about two feet from the corner.
   b. Lift it straight up, forming a triangle. With the hand nearest the corner tuck the base of the triangle under the mattress, making a tight, square corner.
   c. Now drop the top edge and tuck that side completely under the mattress. This makes a neat diagonal fold on the side of the mattress.

3. Finish tucking in the sheet on the side, being sure it is absolutely smooth and free from wrinkles or creases.

4. Place the top sheet right side down with wide hem at the top, allowing at least 8 inches for turning back over the blanket at the head, and plenty of room to tuck in well under the mattress at the foot.

5. Spread the blanket smoothly. Turn the top sheet back over the blanket at the head. Tuck the blanket and top sheet under together at the foot and miter the corners.

6. Fluff up the pillows. When you are putting on clean pillowcases try this method of putting them on the pillows:
   a. Grasp pillowcase at the bottom seam. Put free hand through the open end of the pillowcase to make an opening for the hand holding the bottom seam.
   b. Slip the arm holding the bottom seam through the pillowcase, and push the bottom seam through beyond the opening. Then grasp the pillow.
   c. Pull the pillowcase down over the pillow. Push the pillows well into the corners of the clean cases.

7. Put on the spread, place the pillows at the top of the bed and cover the pillows with the spread. The spread should be wide enough to hang over the sides of the bed.

8. After completing one side of the bed go around to the other side, straighten the sheets, blanket and spread and miter the corners just as you did on the first side.
Make Your Bed Every Day

Try to make your bed, taking as few steps as possible. Some 4-H'ers can do it with just one trip around the bed. Each day try making your bed better and faster.

1. Begin at one side of the bed.
2. Straighten and tighten bottom sheet as needed.
3. Pull top sheet and blankets into place.
4. Fold end of top sheet over the edge of blanket at the head of bed.
5. Pull bedspread into place, fold back top of spread.
6. Plump up pillows and lay in place.
7. Turn end of spread smoothly over pillow nearest you.
8. Walk to other side of bed and finish making bed.

MAKE YOUR ROOM SPARKLE

Now that your bed is neatly made you will want your room to be spic and span. At least once a week dust floors and furniture.

Assemble Cleaning Supplies

The first step to easier cleaning is to keep your supplies in something that can be carried easily from room to room. You might use a basket or a softdrink carton. In it keep such cleaning supplies as:

- Clean, lint-free cloths.
- Dust cloths in container or dusting paper.
- Wisk broom or brush.
- Window cleaner.
- Sponge.

Dust Furniture and Floors

Before dusting, pick up papers or other articles that are out of place. Empty waste baskets. Brush upholstered furniture and pillows. This can be done with a brush or wisk broom but the attachment on the vacuum cleaner does a better job without scattering the dust.

Start dusting in one spot and work around the room. Dust the whole piece of furniture, not just parts of it.

It is better to use dry cloths for dusting waxed surfaces. Oil may soften the wax and hold the dust.

Dust window sills as you work around the room. Use a dust cloth in both hands whenever possible. You can do this whenever you are dusting chairs, tables or any surface where there isn't something to pick up or move. Straighten books and articles as you dust.

If you have a small rug take it outdoors and shake it or use the vacuum cleaner or carpet sweeper. Washable rugs should be laundered when they become soiled.

Clean the floor after you have dusted unless you sweep the floor with a broom. A dust mop can be used on linoleum or wood floor. Be sure to dust in the corners and under large pieces of furniture. Don't try to move large pieces of furniture alone.

Shake dust mop and dust cloths outdoors. Wrap the cord loosely around vacuum cleaner. Put cleaning tools back in their places. Your room should be well groomed now.
LET'S ADD BEAUTY AND INTEREST

There is beauty in cleanliness and order. In addition to keeping your room clean and in order you may add beauty with the colors you choose, the furnishings and accessories you select. Keeping your eyes open for beauty adds extra enjoyment to everyday living.

Make a Dried Arrangement from Nature.

An arrangement of plant material for a decorative panel can be an attractive addition. It is especially nice for long, narrow wall spaces. Combine weeds, flowers and twigs.

What You Will Need

Dried plant materials such as pods, cones, grasses, fungus growths.

White shellac and thinner (alcohol).

Liquid glue.

Wooden panel - shingle - straw mat.

Clear plastic spray.

Steel wool - fine sandpaper.

Frame.

How to Make

Be sure material is dry. Grass, and wheat can be hung upside down to dry. Bake fungus, nuts and cones in 200° oven to remove moisture.

Dip materials in thinned shellac (2 parts shellac, 1 part thinner) and let dry.

Arrange materials on wood panel or shingle so they appear to be growing gracefully.

Seal wood panel with thinned shellac or sealer for a natural wood finish. If you prefer a color paint over shellac-sealed wood.

Glue the layers of material to panel. This takes time and patience. Some heavy pieces may need to be screwed.

Scrape off excess glue when design is finished. Sand background smooth. You do not want it shiny. Polish final coat with steel wool. Apply gummed hangers to the back and hang your arrangement.

Create a Wall Hanging

Why not add some color and interest to your walls with stitchery pictures? This will give you a chance to design something special for your room.

Decide where you can use a wall hanging. That will help you decide the size and shape. Look at the colors in your room. Plan the colors to blend or contrast with your walls.
What You Will Need

- Heavy fabric such as burlap, drapery remnant that is not figured.
- Yarn in many different colors.
- Darning or tapestry needle.
- Wooden dowel.
- Fabric scraps.

Experiment with these basic stitches:
- Running
- Cross
- Outline
- Blanket
- Couching
- Feather
- Chain
- Satin

See the different effects you can achieve by changing the length of stitch or the weight of yarn.

Other Ideas for Your Walls

Collections of arrowheads, pressed leaves, butterflies or other things may be mounted on a suitable background and put into a deep frame.

Mount a map on half inch wall board with wallpaper paste. Cut the wallboard the same size as map. Cover edges with plastic tape in a harmonizing color.

In much the same way, a picture can be mounted on a board which can be finished.

At the top or bottom of a travel poster, glue or tack strips of wood after you sand and paint them a harmonizing color.

A fabric wall hanging can be made by lining it with sateen or muslin. Insert a wood dowel to hang, or wooden strips.
4-H PROJECTS BUILD INTEREST AND
BACKGROUND FOR CAREERS

The things you like to do in this pro-
ject may help you decide on your future, career. Have you developed a color awareness about
your surroundings? Perhaps you would like
to become an artist or an interior decorator and
help plan room arrangements and decorate
complete homes. If you liked working with
color and making pleasing room arrangements,
you have a start on this career.

Didn't you find that it seemed to tie your
room together when you made your bulletin
board, shelves and other room accessories in
the same color scheme used in the rest of your
room? Your 4-H project circulars make helpful
suggestions like this to help guide you in
making decisions.

If you get a thrill out of having a place for
everything and everything in its place, you
should keep thinking about coming to college to
learn more about a career in home economics.
This career will also prepare you for life as a
homemaker. All girls expect to be homemakers
where they will need to know how to make a
home a delightful place to live in harmony with
their family.

Home economics provides not only this
background, but also prepares one for a position
outside the home. You could be an interior
designer, home economics teacher or extension
agent.

Portions of this manual were adapted from
California, Iowa and Tennessee materials.

A FINAL CHECK

In this project you have learned to care for
your room.

Have You Made These Habits?

Daily
2. Dresser top in order.
3. Drawers neat.
4. Clothes properly hung.
5. Shoes in proper place.

Weekly
6. Floors cleaned and mopped, or
vacuumed as needed.
7. Furniture and woodwork dusted and
cleaned as needed.
10. Room thoroughly aired.

Occasionally
11. Wash windows and mirrors.
12. Change decorative objects.

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