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## Plan Your Room : Extension Circular 11-21-66

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# PLAN YOUR ROOM

BY MAGDALENE PFISTER

Extension Specialist in Home Furnishing

	No.
Let's Get Started - - - - -	3
Talk it Over - - - - -	3
Collect Ideas - - - - -	3
How to Make a Portfolio - - - -	3
Arrange Furniture - - - - -	5
Consider Your Needs - - - - -	5
Plan On Paper - - - - -	5
Measure Your Room - - - - -	5
Group Furniture For Use- - - -	6
Provide for Good Lighting - - -	6
Plan For Safety- - - - -	6
Plan For Spaciousness - - - -	6
Arrange For Beauty - - - - -	7
Check Your Furniture Arrangement	8
Learn About Color - - - - -	8
Become Aware of Color - - - -	8
How Colors Differ- - - - -	9
Put Color To Work - - - - -	9
Factors Affecting Color - - - -	10
Plan Your Colors - - - - -	11
Color Harmonies - - - - -	11
Start Your Color Scheme - - - -	11
Consider Pattern & Texture - -	12
Deciding on Colors - - - - -	12
How to Apportion & Distribute -	12
Check Your Color Plan- - - - -	13
Add Color With A Pillow - - - -	14
Select & Frame A Picture - - - -	16
Choose A Picture - - - - -	16
Decide if it Needs A Mat - - - -	16
How to Mat A Picture- - - - -	17
How to Cut the Mat - - - - -	17
Frame the Picture - - - - -	18
Using Old Frames - - - - -	18
Cutting A Frame From Molding	18
Finish the Frame - - - - -	18
Hang the Picture - - - - -	19
Learn to Finish Woods - - - - -	19
Make A Hobby Case- - - - -	19
Prepare the Boards- - - - -	20
For A Natural Finish- - - - -	21
For a Painted Finish - - - - -	21
Some Reminders - - - - -	22
Put Your Plan Into Action - - - -	22

# project requirements

## 1. Room Arrangement

Consider choice and arrangement of furniture for needs

Make floor plan showing "before" and "after"

Collect ideas and place in portfolio

## 2. Color Principles

Assemble swatches showing color scheme

Add color by making picture and/or pillow

## 3. Learn how to refinish woods

Make brick and board bookcase, wall shelves or

Refinish a small piece of furniture

## 4. Make these things:

Portfolio

Picture and/or pillow

Bookcase board or a small re-finished or finished piece

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
DELORIS CLOUSE Extension Artist





## let's get started

Furnishing and decorating a room can be exciting and rewarding; or it can be tiring and disappointing. By following a few basic principles you can have fun and avoid costly mistakes.

In this project you will learn how to arrange the furniture and how to use color and design to best advantage. You do not have to "do over" a room to carry this project. You will develop a plan that will guide you whenever you can make the changes you need or like.

### Talk It Over

Discuss your plans with your family and your leader. Little progress can be made without their interest and support. (Fig. 1)



FIG. 1

Do you share a room with someone? Don't let that discourage you. In fact, it may be an advantage to have "two to share and two to care". If the person with whom you are sharing is very young, you still

may find something simple for him to do and he will seem less of a "nuisance" if he has a place for his things. If the person is nearly the same age as you, you may have to share alike in improvements. Each of you may have to give in a little, especially if your ideas are quite different.

This may be a good experience for the day when you will have a home of your own and when you will need to consider the needs and tastes, likes and personalities of others to make a house a home.

### Collect Ideas

Good decorating depends on good ideas, so take a tip from experts who keep a file of ideas for future use.

Decorators find inspiration in magazines, newspapers, theaters, museums, television and other things they see. Why not start collecting ideas and keep them for future reference?

### How to Make a Portfolio

A portfolio is a good place to store clippings, booklets, and inspirational ideas, as well as your own plans.

#### This is what you need:

2 pieces heavy cardboard 10" x 14"

Self-adhesive plastic, wallpaper or fabric for the cover:

2 pieces 16" x 11"

2 pieces 9" x 13" for lining

1 piece 2 1/2" x 13" for inside hinge strip

1 piece 2 1/2" x 16" for outside hinge strip

2 ties 8" long -- shoe laces, twill tape or grosgrain ribbon

Scotch Tape

If you use self-adhesive plastic you will need:

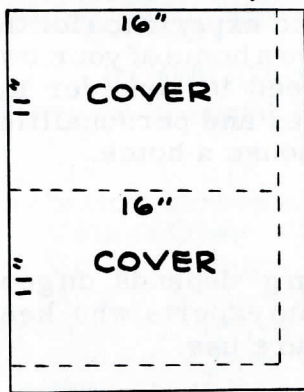
2/3 yd. small figured



1/2 yd. plain to harmonize and cut it out this way (Fig. 2). since it is usually 18" wide:

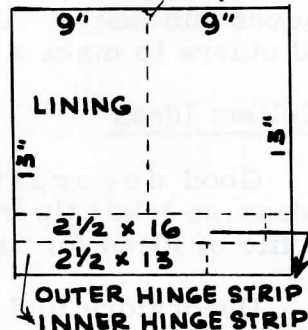
If possible, have the heavy cardboard cut at a print shop.

**FIGURED 2/3 yd.**



**FOR OUTSIDE**

**PLAIN 1/2 yd.**

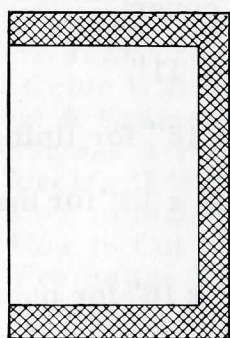


**PORTFOLIO**

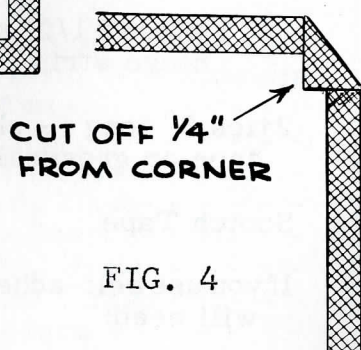
**FIG. 2**

1. Cover each cardboard with plastic or fabric leaving 1 inch to turn over on three sides. Smooth. (Fig. 3).

2. Miter each corner. Draw a line 1/4" from corner of cardboard leaving a triangle of plastic material which may be cut off. Fold over the remaining 1/4" and then fold the sides over to form a mitered corner. (Fig. 4).



**FIG. 3**

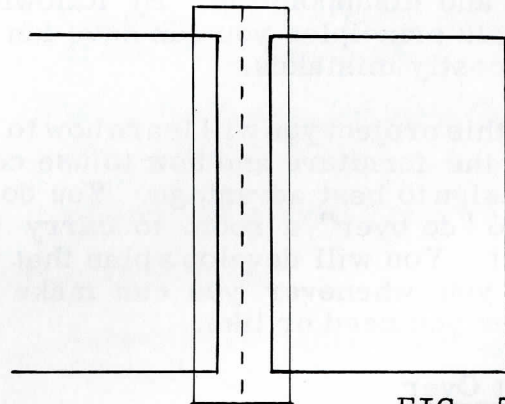


**FIG. 4**

3. Fold the outside hinge strip in center lengthwise. (See dotted line in (Fig. 5). Place strip on the table with sticky side up.

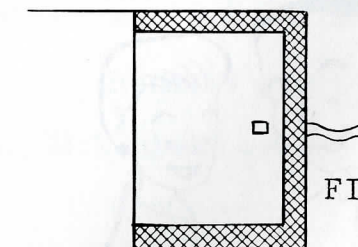
4. Place the two covered cardboards right side on the longer size strip leaving 1/4" space between. (See Fig. 5). Smooth and turn in end of strip.

5. Measure 3/4" in from center of outside edge and cut a slash in each cover board. Insert ties from outside and secure with glue or scotch tape. (Fig. 6a)

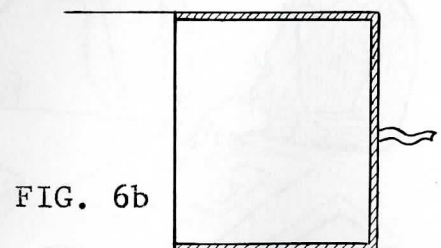


**FIG. 5**

6. Place lining which will leave 1/2" margin along outside edge, and finish with inside hinge strip. (Fig. 6b).

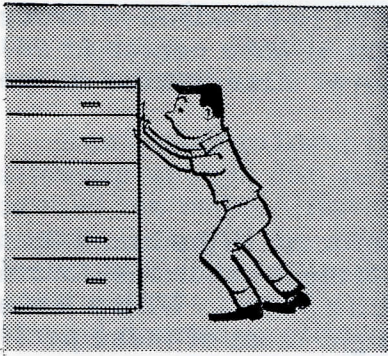


**FIG. 6a**



**FIG. 6b**





## arrange furniture

Most of us can't make all the improvements we would like at one time, but it's

surprising what a difference re-arranging furniture and getting rid of clutter can make!

### Consider Your Needs

To begin planning, start with the person or persons who use the room and consider what they do in the room, and then what furniture and equipment these activities require before deciding what area will accommodate them best. You might make a list like this for your bedroom:

What I Do	What I Need	
	Furniture	Other
Sleeping	Comfortable bed	Good Bedding
Dressing	Chest of drawers Ample space for hanging clothes	Boxes for hats, and accessories, Good mirror Good light
Studying	Desk and comfortable desk chair	Good lamp Wastebasket Bookshelves
Reading (in bed)		Back-rest pillow Good bed lamp Bedside table
Reading (daytime)	Lounge chair	Small table Good light Ottoman
Entertaining	Extra seating space	Games Radio, etc.

Such a list might show that there are some furnishings you have that could be eliminated. A good motto is "have nothing in your room except that which is useful or beautiful".

If you put on make-up in the bathroom, then you may not need a dressing table.

Or if it's too cold in your room to study, then you'd better plan for a study center in some other part of the house.

### Plan on Paper

It is easier to plan on paper and move cut-outs than it is to push furniture. Use the furniture from your record book or draw your furniture to scale.

### Measure Your Room

You will need accurate measurements of your room. Use a yardstick or steel tape and start in one corner of the room and measure to the first opening or architectural feature such as chimney. When measuring windows or doorways, measure the actual opening, do not include the frame. On a rough sketch of your room record the measurement in the proper place. (Fig. 7). When you have finished all the way around the room, transfer the floor plan to the squared paper in your record book so that you can show the "before and after" plan.



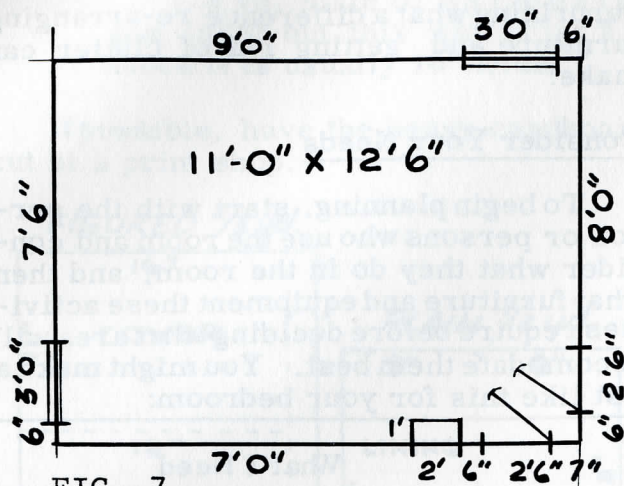


FIG. 7

### Group Furniture for Use

All furniture used for an activity should be grouped together for convenience. If your room is small, you'll be wise to choose pieces that can do double duty. For example, a desk might serve as dressing table and hobby center as well as for study.

Store things close to the place where they are used. The dresser should be near the clothes closet.

### Provide for Good Lighting

Make the best possible use of natural light. Place the dresser so the light will fall on you rather than the mirror. Light at the study center should fall from the back and opposite the writing hand. Sometimes one light may serve two areas. (Fig. 8).

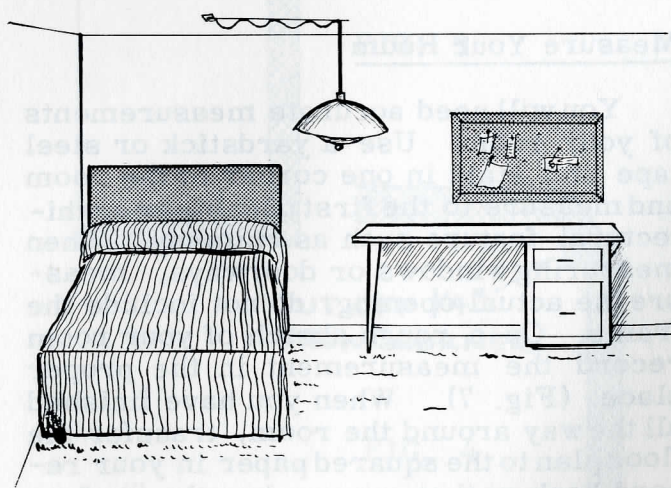


FIG. 8

Outlets may need to be added in order to provide good light at each center in addition to the general illumination in the room.

### Plan for Safety

More accidents occur in the home than anywhere else. Of these about one-fourth happen in the bedroom. With a little thought and foresight most of these accidents could be prevented.

Check your room for safety. (Fig. 9). Furniture should be arranged so that there is a clear path from door to bed with light switches at both places. Lamp cords and extension cords should be in good repair. Anchor rugs with skidproof pads. Keep the room in order. A nonflammable waste basket is preferred to a cardboard one.

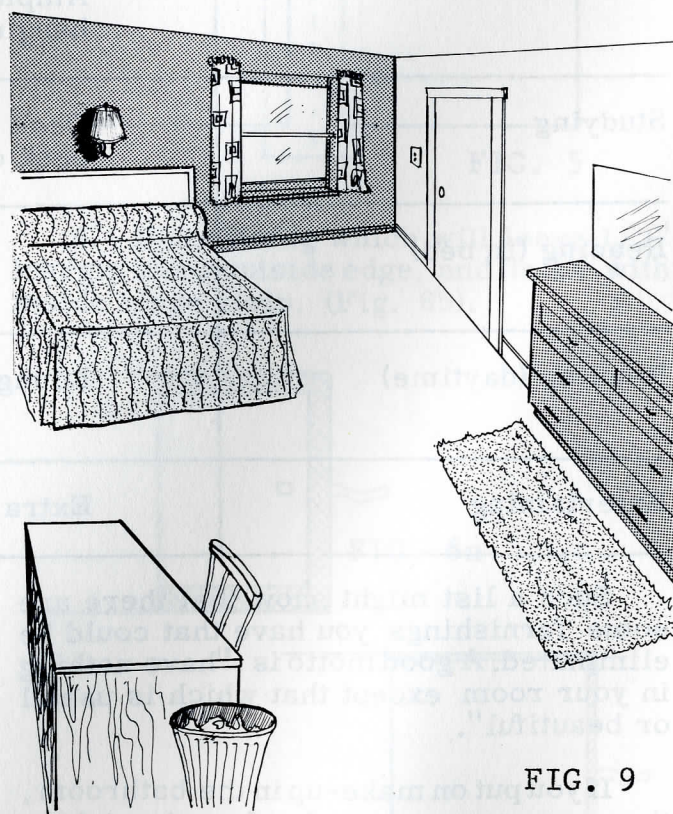


FIG. 9

### Plan for Spaciousness

Arrange for the best use of space. Place large pieces parallel with the walls to avoid a cluttered looking room. Beds are usually placed with heads against the wall and with space on three sides so they are easy to make. Single beds placed broad side against a wall or in a corner



gives more free floor space and can double for seating. Double deck beds conserve space but are hard to make.

Remember to leave traffic lanes clear; allowing enough for passage way in and around the room. Not only will this look better, but will be easier to clean. At least 30 inches is needed for a person to pass comfortably between furniture; around doorways allow more space.

A minimum of 30 inches is also needed for pushing back a chair from table or desk. Pulling out drawers part way requires 36 inches - so leave more space if you plan to open the drawer completely.

### Arrange for Beauty

Not only do you want the arrangement of furniture to be convenient and comfortable, but also you will want it to look attractive. It has been stated (Goldstein - Art in Everyday Life) that all problems calling for good taste can be solved by the application of these fundamental design art principles:

Harmony, proportion, balance, rhythm, emphasis.

You probably have heard of these, but you may not have related them to room arrangement.

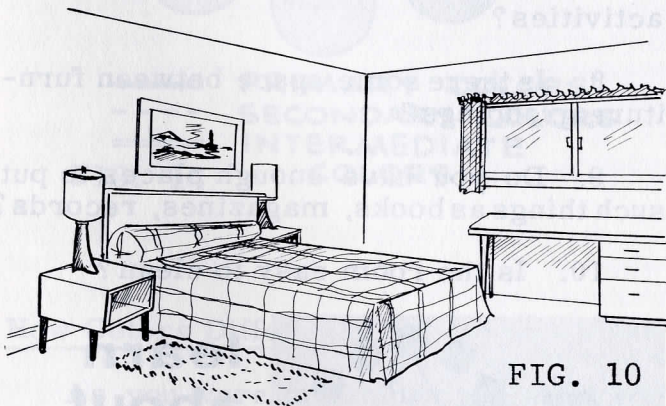


FIG. 10

Harmony means friendliness in objects, color, textures and ideas for a room. Harmony or unity results when your entire furniture arrangement and the groups of which it is composed are related to each other, to the room and to the needs it must serve. Objects seem to go together, yet there is some variation and contrast. When a room is unified, it is simple and orderly. (Fig. 10).

Rooms are rectangular in shape, and the furniture should be placed to repeat this feeling. Big pieces like the bed should be placed parallel with the wall.

Proportion is relationship of the size and space of objects to one another and to the room.

To achieve good proportion, choose furnishings that are built on the same scale and fit the room. Generally, big bulky furniture and big patterns belong in large rooms, while small delicate furniture belongs in smaller rooms. Small-scaled furniture can be over-powered with massive objects: a dainty table with curved legs may lose its charm and appear spindly when combined with a large chair. (Fig. 11).

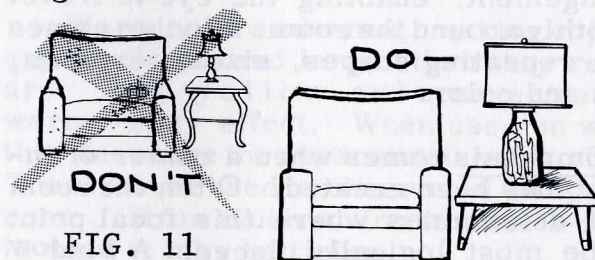


FIG. 11

Faulty room proportion can be improved by the wise use of color and well-planned furniture arrangement.

Balance is the key to a restful room. It is gained by distribution of visual weights so it gives rest to the eye. Heavy pieces of furniture and dominant colors and patterns must be so distributed that one section of the room does not appear to outweigh the other.

There are two kinds of balance: Formal or symmetrical balance is achieved by placing objects of equal size and shape equal distance from the center. Informal or occult balance results when objects of unequal size and shape are placed at unequal distance from the center. (Fig. 12).

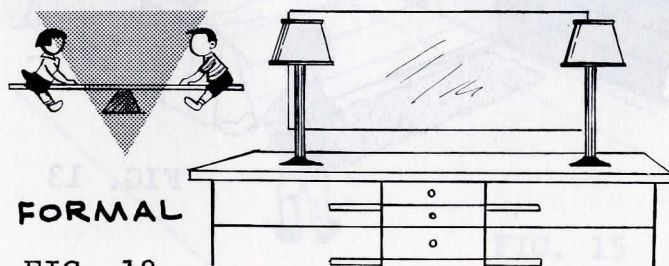
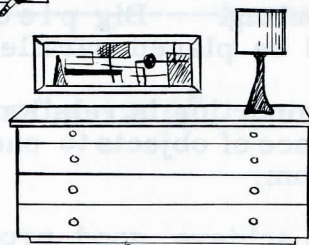


FIG. 12





## INFORMAL



It is well to use both types of balance, for each adds interest to the other. Rooms without any formal balance may have a hit-and-miss look, while rooms with all formal balance may appear stiff and unfriendly.

Rhythm is always a part of an orderly arrangement, enabling the eye to travel smoothly around the room. Rhythm comes from repeating shapes, sizes, textures, lines and color.

Emphasis comes when a center of interest has been created. Often the room itself determines where this focal point can be most logically placed. A window or a broad wall space against which the bed can be placed, makes a good center of interest and should be treated importantly. (Fig. 13). Simplicity is closely related to emphasis. If you have too many things, it is hard to emphasize the one you wish.

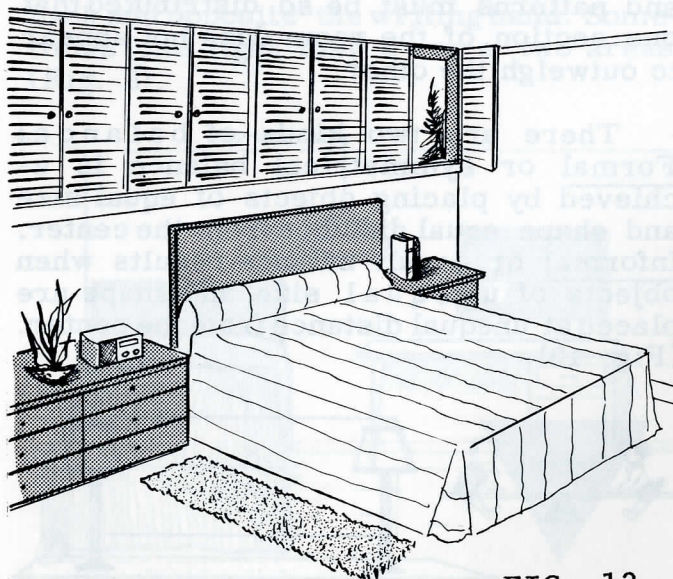
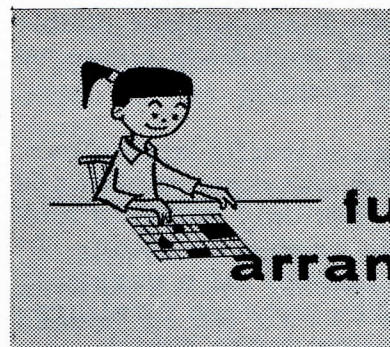


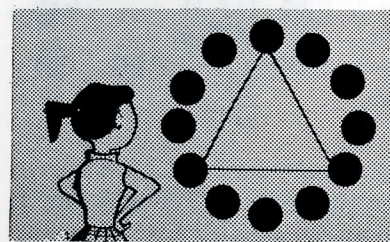
FIG. 13



## check your furniture arrangement

Shift your furniture cut-outs on the floor plan in order to find the best possible arrangement for your needs. When you have found a satisfactory arrangement check it with these questions:

1. Is the furniture grouped for use?
2. Do you have a center of interest?
3. Are large pieces of furniture placed against or at right angles to the longest walls?
4. Are traffic lanes kept open?
5. Have you distributed color and size so as to give a feeling of balance?
6. Does the furniture fit the room -- not too much or too large?
7. Is there sufficient lighting for all activities?
8. Is there some space between furniture groupings?
9. Do you have enough places to put such things as books, magazines, records?
10. Is the room easy to clean?



## learn about color

### Become Aware of Color

Take time to see colors around you. It is the first step toward developing a fine color sense. Being able to recognize differences in colors will help you when you are planning your colors.



Try playing the "color matching" game. Take a small sample of a color snipped from a magazine ad, fabric or paint chip, and take a good look at it before going out to match the color exactly with some other object. When you think that you have found the color, check with the small sample. Do this with many colors until your eye is able to recognize all kinds of differences in color.

To see the relationship of colors to one another, a color wheel can be made and kept in your record book for reference. (Fig. 14).

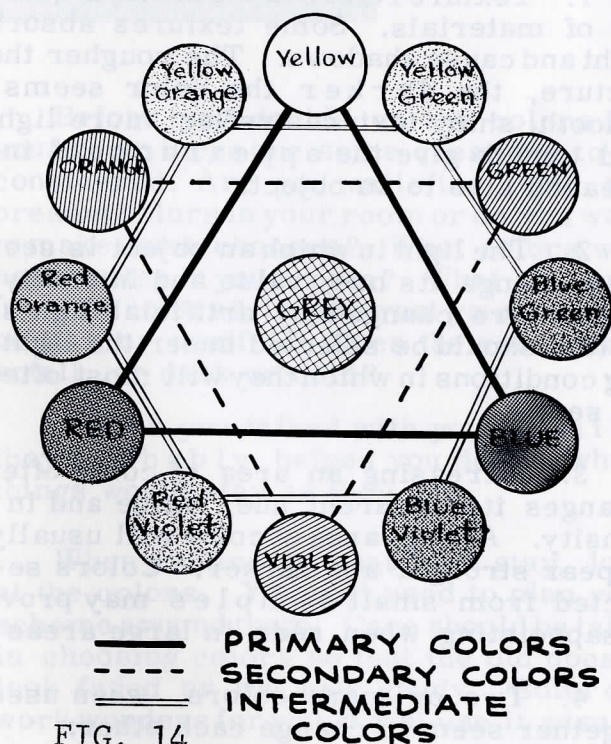


FIG. 14

### How Colors Differ

As you were matching colors did you find that you could find the color exactly from memory? Or did you find the red was a little more orange or purple than you thought, or darker or brighter than the sample? You see, colors can differ in three ways.

Just as a box can be measured by three dimensions, height, width and depth, so can color be measured with three dimensions: hue, value and intensity.

Hue is the name of a color such as red or green. Some hues are warm and some are cool. Red and yellow and colors containing these hues are considered warm colors because they suggest fire and sunlight. Cool colors are those containing blue and green and suggest water and sky.

Value is the lightness or darkness of a color. Colors lighter than the normal color are called tints and those darker are called shades. Pink is a tint and maroon a shade of red.

Intensity refers to the brightness or dullness of a color.

### Put Color to Work

Warm colors advance, making objects appear closer and larger than they really are. Red, yellow and orange create a warm, cozy effect. When used on walls they decrease the apparent size of a room. These can be used to cheer up a dull, cold room. If too much or too intense a color is used it may be tiring.

Cool colors recede, making objects appear smaller and farther away. Blues, greens and purples give a cooler, more formal feeling and tend to push the walls out. These colors are restful, but if too much of a cool color is used, maybe depressing.

Pale or light colors increase the apparent size of an object. Walls will appear farther away because they tend to recede from the eye. Light walls will make a room seem larger than it is. (Fig. 15).

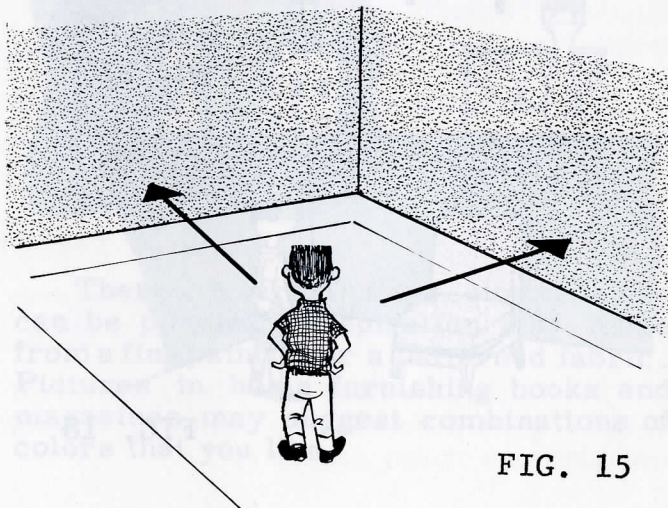


FIG. 15



Dark colors make objects seem smaller and walls closer, usually making a room seem smaller. Dark colors absorb a great deal of light. (Fig. 16).

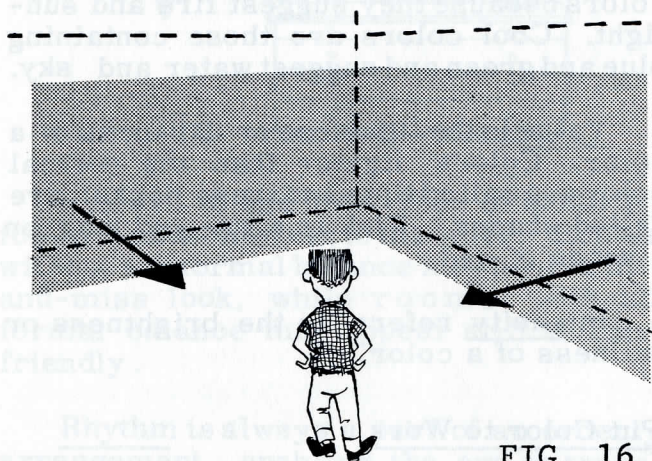


FIG. 16

Blended colors are those that have little contrast in value and intensity with their neighbors. Use these to hide such things as radiators, awkward looking furniture. Lack of contrast helps to make a room seem larger and more restful. (Fig. 17).

Strongly contrasting colors, bright with dull, light against dark or strong differences in hue used in one part of a room will call attention to that section. A great deal of contrast will make a room seem smaller. (Fig. 18).

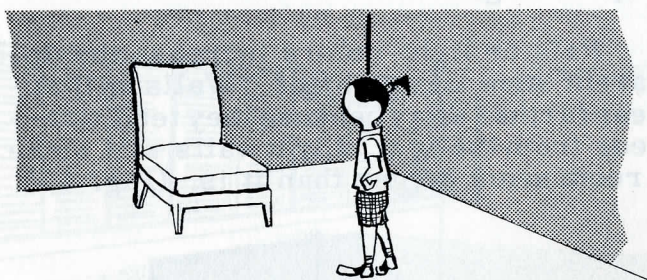


FIG. 17

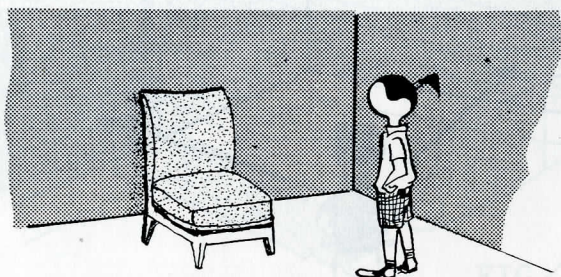


FIG. 18

Neutrals are black, white and gray, but in common usage a neutral is any hue with little or no decided color. It is well to use some of these in any kind of color scheme. Neutrals make an excellent background for other colors. Bright colors attract attention and make objects appear larger and closer. When used on walls, they decrease the size of the room.

### Factors Affecting Colors

There are several factors, such as texture, lights, area, and other colors that affect the appearance of colors.

1. Texture refers to the surface quality of materials. Some textures absorb light and cause shadows. The rougher the texture, the darker the color seems. Smooth, shiny textures reflect more light and tend to give the appearance of increased size to an object.

2. The light in which an object is seen may change its hue, value and intensity. Colors are changed by artificial lights. Colors should be selected under the lighting conditions in which they will most often be seen.

3. Increasing an area of color often changes its apparent hue, value and intensity. A large area of color will usually appear stronger and darker. Colors selected from small samples may prove disappointing when seen in large areas.

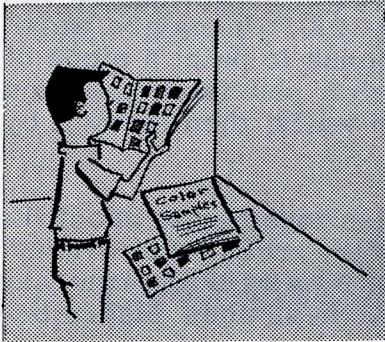
4. Two or more colors, when used together seem to change each other:

- A. A hue may apparently be changed when it is placed beside another. For example, green will force a blue-green to take on a more bluish cast. Soft colors or those of low intensity are more easily influenced by other colors, but even bright colors are affected by the colors with which they are combined.

- B. The value seems changed when a color is placed with either a lighter or darker tone. When a color that is quite dark is placed beside black, it can be made to look several degrees lighter. A color that is quite light can be made to look darker if it is placed beside an even lighter tint.



C. A color seems brighter when it is placed next to its complement, a neutral color, or a large area of the same color that is duller. Remember this if you have colors that seem dull and faded.



## plan your colors

Before you decide on the colors for your room there are some questions to be considered. Are you satisfied with the present colors in your room or do you want to make some changes? What colors will need to stay in your room? What are your favorite colors? Do you want your room to be gay or restful? Does the room seem small, or dark or cold?

When you talked with your family, they probably helped you decide which things would stay as they are.

When you find out what must stay, look at the colors. You will need to plan your scheme around them. Care should be taken in choosing colors so that the old doesn't look faded or the new gaudy. Color can work wonders for you if you use it wisely.

### Color Harmonies

As you notice color combinations in pictures or fabrics you will find that these often are planned from the color wheel with related or contrasting colors. These can be grouped into the following kinds of harmonies?

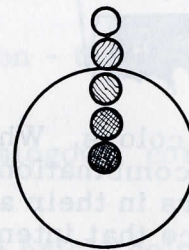
Monochromatic or a one-color harmony is made up of shades and tints of one color and may be combined with a neutral. This type of color scheme gives a quiet, unified effect. To avoid monotony, some variety of dark and light, dull and bright, plus different textures should be used. (Fig. 19).

Analogous or related color harmony is a combination of colors that lie next to each other on the color wheel with one hue in common. (Fig. 20).

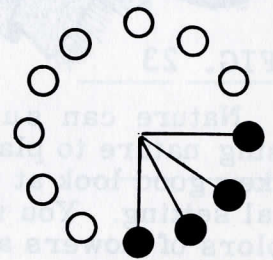
Complementary color harmony is a combination of colors directly opposite each other. Variations of the complementary color harmony such as split or double complements give pleasing effects also. (Fig. 21).

Triad is a combination of three colors that are equal distance apart on the color wheel. (Fig. 22).

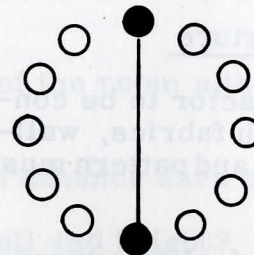
Other combinations of colors may also be used effectively.



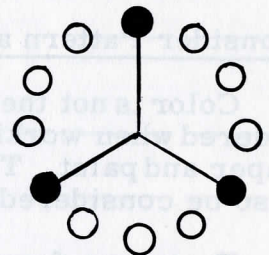
**MONOCHROMATIC**  
FIG. 19



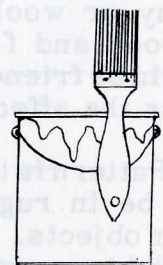
**ANALOGOUS**  
FIG. 20



**COMPLEMENTARY**  
FIG. 21



**TRIAD**  
FIG. 22



There are various ways color schemes can be planned. Inspiration may come from a fine painting or a patterned fabric. Pictures in home furnishing books and magazines may suggest combinations of colors that you like.



You can take advantage of skilled designers' knowledge of color by using a patterned fabric or wallpaper that you will be using in the room. You then will have several colors to start your scheme.

A great deal can be learned about color composition and distribution from a fine painting. (Fig. 23).

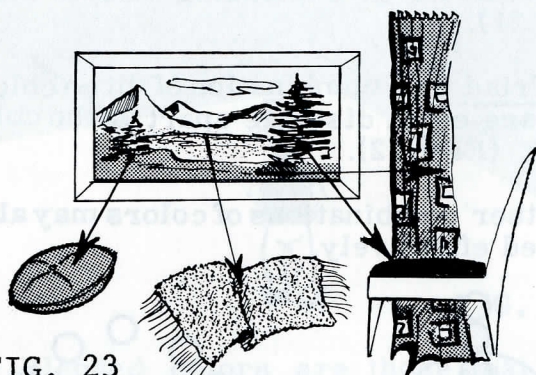


FIG. 23

Nature can suggest colors. When using nature to plan color combinations, take a good look at the colors in their actual setting. You will notice that intense colors of flowers and leaves are actually small accents to larger background areas of muted greens, blues, grays and tans.

#### Consider Pattern and Texture

Color is not the only factor to be considered when working with fabrics, wallpaper and paint. Texture and pattern must also be considered.

Texture refers to the feel or appearance of a surface. It may be rough or smooth, fine or coarse, shiny or dull, satiny or wooly, stiff or soft. Texture in wood and fabrics in the same room should be friendly with each other and express the effect you wish to give.

Pattern is the decorative design which may be in rugs, fabrics, wallpaper and other objects. As you buy or make home furnishings, you will need to know what is good design.

A room is more restful when there are more plain areas than patterned ones.

Too much design or too many different figures give a restless, cluttered feeling and makes a room smaller.

#### Deciding on Your Colors

When you are reasonably certain of your colors collect large samples -- a full length drapery material, a piece large enough to cover a good portion of the bed, a roll of wallpaper -- most of which can be borrowed. (Fig. 24). It may be worth the trouble and expense to paint a piece of wall board the color you think that you would like for your walls; then study it by daylight and night.

Put the samples together in about the same proportion of the areas to be covered. Materials that look beautiful alone can lose all their effectiveness when placed beside others.

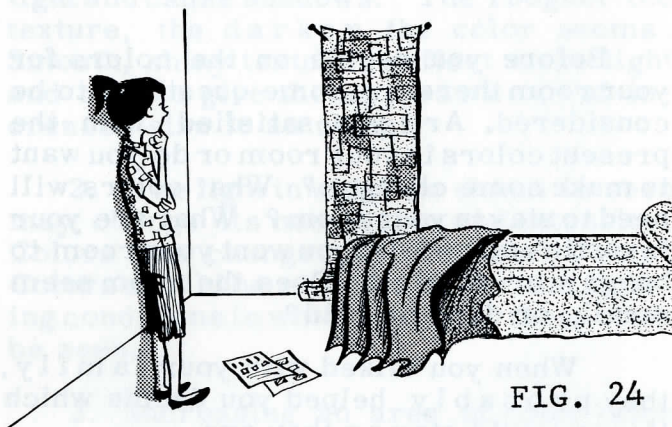


FIG. 24

When you have decided on your colors mount samples in your record book.

#### How to Apportion and Distribute Color

The walls, ceiling, woodwork and floor make up the background area of the room. When these areas are in softened or grayed colors, the furnishings look well against them.

The ceiling is usually made a light color so that it will reflect light. A floor of medium light color reflects more light and shows less soil than a dark one.

Sometimes when several colors have been put together, the results are uninteresting. The reason may be that the same amount of each color has been used. It is better to have the amount vary with one color dominant, a second color in less amount and a third color which is used in small amount for accents.



It takes a lesser amount of warm color to balance a larger amount of cool color. A little dark will affect a large area of light. A small bit of brilliant color is needed to balance a muted tone.

Repeat the colors in all parts of the room. Arrange colors around adjoining

halls or rooms so that there will not be an abrupt change in color.

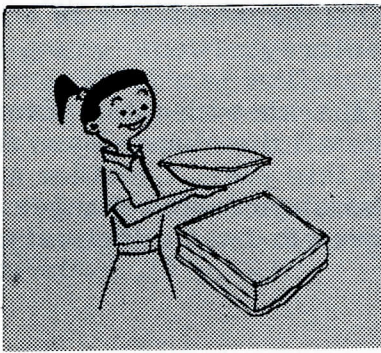
Let your room sparkle with color. You probably can't make all the changes you'd like now, or even this year. Consider a long range color plan as you make changes. Color will make your room distinctively yours!

## CHECK YOUR COLOR PLAN.....

- |   | Yes   | No    |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Does the scheme give a single impression - that of warmth or coolness with an accent of the other? | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Is the scheme a definite type such as analogous, complementary or triad?                           | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Are large areas in quieter effect and the bright colors confined to smaller areas?                 | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Does one color dominate with one or more additional colors in smaller areas?                       | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Are colors repeated in various parts of the room although changed somewhat?                        | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Do colors seem to belong together and enhance each other?  | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Is there variation of dark and light, dull and bright?   | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Have some neutrals been used?  | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Does the eye find enough space to rest and enough pattern and texture for interest?                | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Would you wear the combination of colors, texture and pattern in an ensemble?                     | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Have you used color to emphasize good features and disguise the poor features of your room?       | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Do you and your family like the color plan?   | _____ | _____ |

If you can answer "yes" to these questions, you should have a room with colors that give pleasure to you, your family and friends.





## add color with a pillow

Using a color from your color scheme in a pillow can be an effective way to repeat and balance colors in your room.

A pillow can be both decorative and useful if the stuffing is soft and resilient and the fabric has an agreeable texture and pleasing color. Choose a fabric that is washable and durable.

The size and shape is important. A pillow too small is a nuisance; one too large is clumsy. A square, rectangle or circle makes the best shape.

### Simple Pillow

Here is an easy pillow top to make. The back has two hemmed pieces overlapping about 3 inches, making snaps or other type closings unnecessary. A corded seam gives a tailored appearance. (Fig. 25).

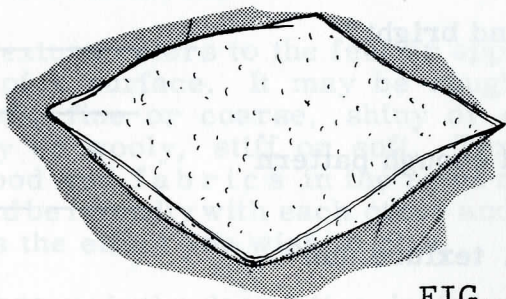


FIG. 25

Directions are given for a 14" pillow. You will want to change the measurements to fit the pillow you have.

This is what you need:

2/3 yd. 36" fabric or 1/2 yd. 48" fabric

thread to match

1 2/3 yd. cord

### Method:

1. Straighten end of fabric.
2. Cut these pieces on the grain of material:
  - a. 1 piece 15" x 15" for front
  - b. 2 pieces 15" x 11" for back
3. Cut enough true bias strips 1 1/2" wide to make a strip 60" long when all ends are joined. (Fig. 26).
4. Fold bias strip, seams inside over the cord. Stitch with zipper foot. (Fig. 27).
5. Baste this cording to the right side of pillow top. Clip to stitching line of cording at the corner so your material will lie flat. (Fig. 28).

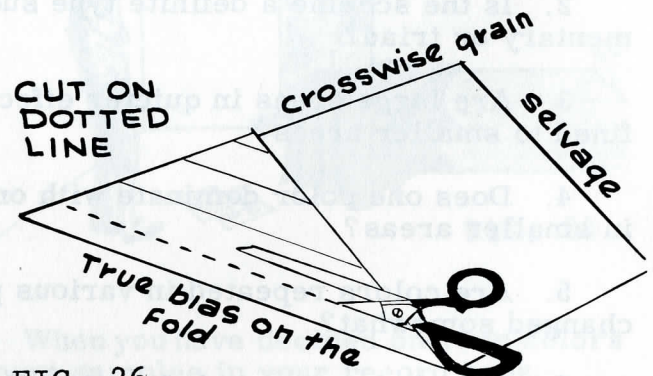


FIG. 26

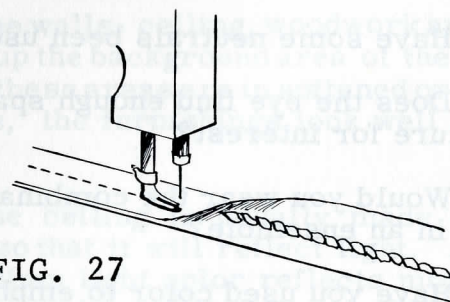


FIG. 27

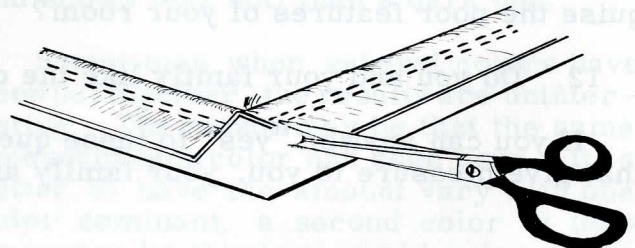


FIG. 28



6. To join the cording, rip the stitching for about 2 inches, and hold the ends of the cloth together to find the point where they meet. (Fig. 29).

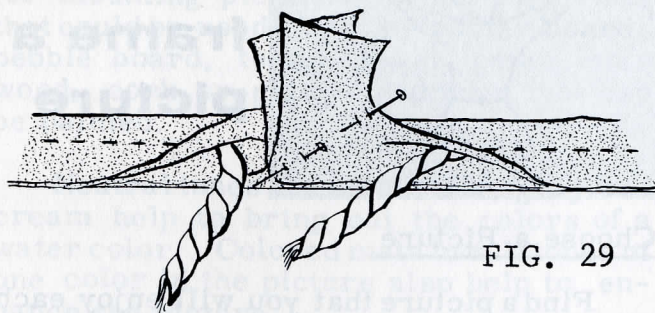


FIG. 29

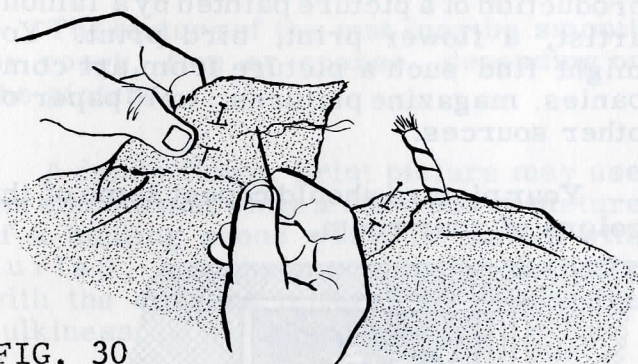


FIG. 30

Pin at this point on each end and draw threads  $\frac{1}{4}$ " inch out from the pins to get a straight edge and to allow for a seam. (Fig. 30).

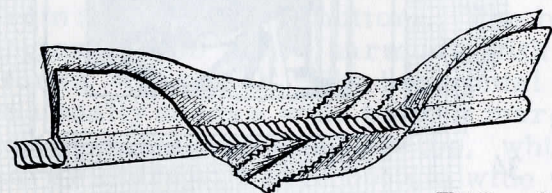


FIG. 31

Stitch and press the seam. Cut away part of the cord so that the ends overlap but will be no thicker than any other part of the cording. (Fig. 31).

7. Hem one of the 15" sides of each back by first turning  $\frac{1}{4}$ " over and then  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Press. Sew the hem on the sewing machine close to the edge. This is the part that will overlap.

8. Place top of pillow with right side up. Place the two back pieces on top of this right sides down and overlap

them so all raw edges are even. (Fig. 32). This should form a square. Stitch with  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam, sewing closer to cord than you did before to hide the first stitching. Turn to right side.

9. Slip on your pillow!

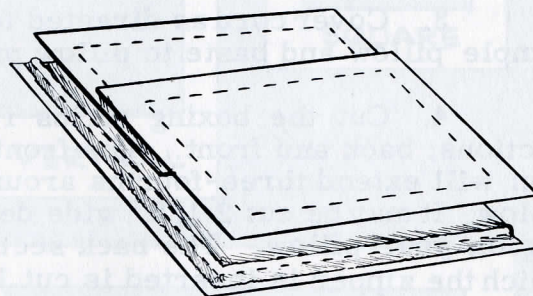


FIG. 32

### A Boxed Pillow

If you have had quite a bit of sewing experience, you may wish to make a pillow cover that is more difficult. (Fig. 33). You may make one with side boxing and a zipper closure:

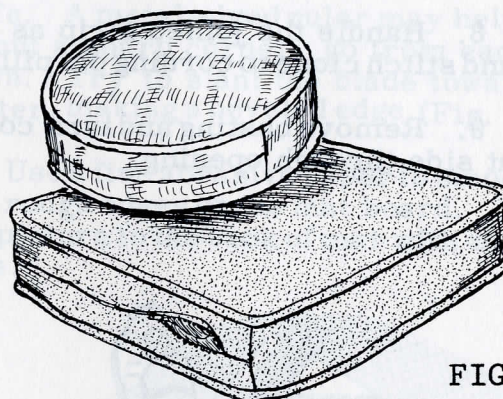


FIG. 33

Materials - For a 14" circular or square pillow you will need:

1 yd. 36" fabric or  $\frac{1}{2}$  yd. 48" fabric

thread to match

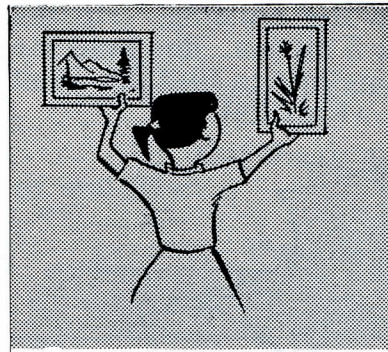
3  $\frac{1}{2}$  yd. cord

14" dress zipper



### Method:

1. Cut two circles 14" in diameter or two pieces 15" x 15" for square pillow.
2. Cut bias strips 1 1/2" wide to cover the 3 1/2 yd. cord.
3. Cover cord as directed for the simple pillow and baste to pillow pieces.
4. Cut the boxing strips in two sections; back and front. The front section will extend three-fourths around the pillow. It may be cut 2 1/2" wide depending on your pillow. The back section in which the zipper is inserted is cut 1 1/2" longer than the metal part of the zipper and 1 1/2" longer than the front boxing strip.
5. Cut the back section in two lengthwise and baste 3/4" seam. Press seam open.
6. Insert zipper as directed on the package. Leave zipper open after it is stitched.
7. Join front and back sections.
8. Handle the joined strip as one piece and stitch close to cording on pillow.
9. Remove basting and turn cover to right side through opening.



**select  
and  
frame a  
picture**

### Choose a Picture

Find a picture that you will enjoy each time that you look at it. It might be a reproduction of a picture painted by a famous artist, a flower print, bird print. You might find such a picture from art companies, magazine pictures, wall paper or other sources.

Your picture should repeat some of the colors of your room.

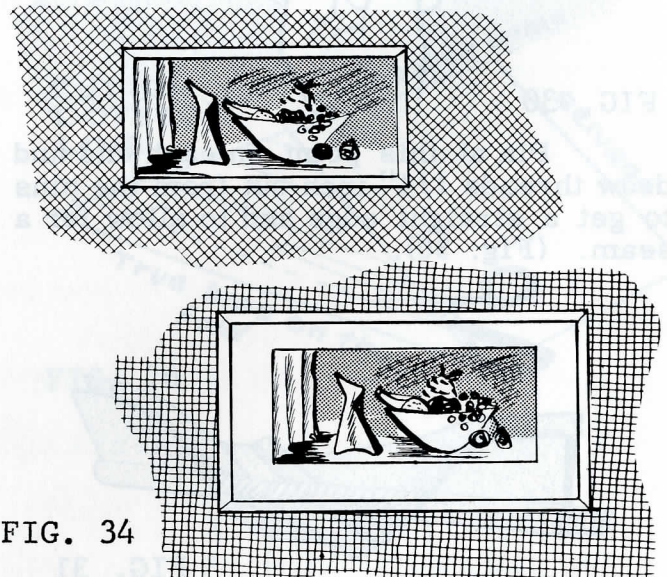


FIG. 34

### Does It Need a Mat?

A mat is a border around the picture between it and the frame. A mat is often used to set a picture off from a patterned wall or to keep it from appearing "closed in" by the frame and helps to focus the attention directly into the picture. (Fig. 34). A small picture can be made more important with a mat. Watercolors, prints and photographs are usually matted.

Oil paintings generally do not require mats since they appear stronger and are finished with wider frames.



## How to Mat a Picture

Materials that can be used for making a mat include mat board especially made for mounting pictures. Other materials that could be used might be poster board, pebble board, textured wall paper, thin wood, cork or glass on which a mat can be painted.

Neutral tones such as white, gray and cream help to bring out the colors of a water color. Colored mats in dull tones of one color in the picture also help to enhance the picture.

The texture of the mat may be smooth or rough, fine or coarse, depending on the picture.

A dainty flower print picture may use the smooth mat while a dark heavy picture of a hunting scene would be matted with burlap, homespun or similar fabric with the corners mitered to reduce the bulkiness.

### How to Cut the Mat

A picture should not be mounted on top of a mat. It should be fastened back of the mat cut to fit the picture.

The size of the mat in relation to the picture is important. The mat's widest margin is always at the bottom. The other margins should be in harmony with the pictures. (Fig. 35). The horizontal picture usually needs a wide bottom margin, medium sides and smaller top, while a square picture will have bottom wide with equal top and sides. A vertical picture may have the top margin wider than the sides.

Try experimenting to determine the proportion of margin to picture. Remember that a small picture can become more important with a wide mat.

After you have determined margin allowances, mark with faint pencil lines.

Draw the outline for cutting the board  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in from the edge of the picture so opening is slightly smaller than the picture.

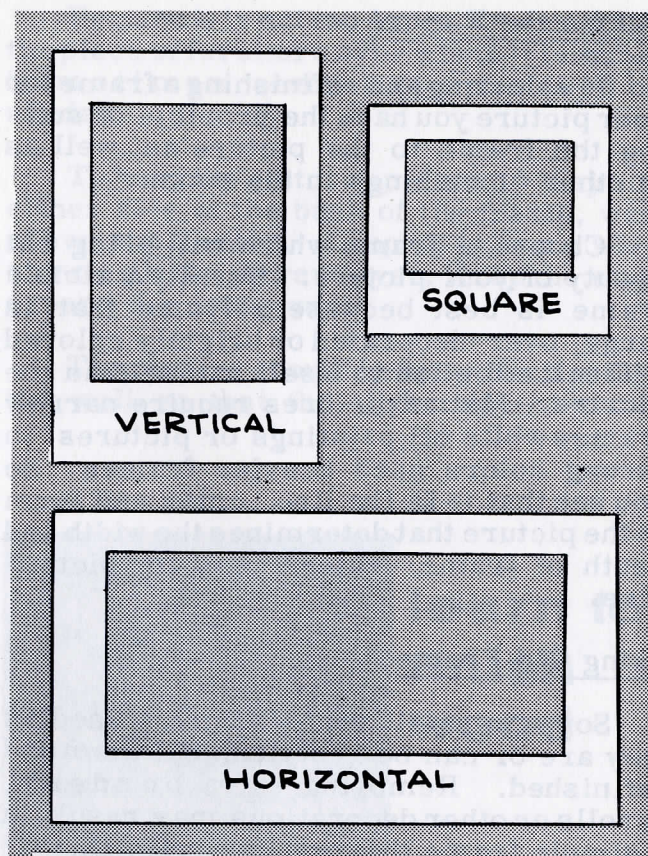


FIG. 35

It takes skill to cut a mat well. Practice first cutting lines and corners on cardboard with razor blade or a sharp knife. A metal edged ruler may help you. To cut a sharp corner, go from each line down. Try to slant the blade toward the center, making a beveled edge. (Fig. 36).

Use a fine abrasive paper to smooth off any rough edges on the mat board. Fasten the picture to the back of mat with masking tape.

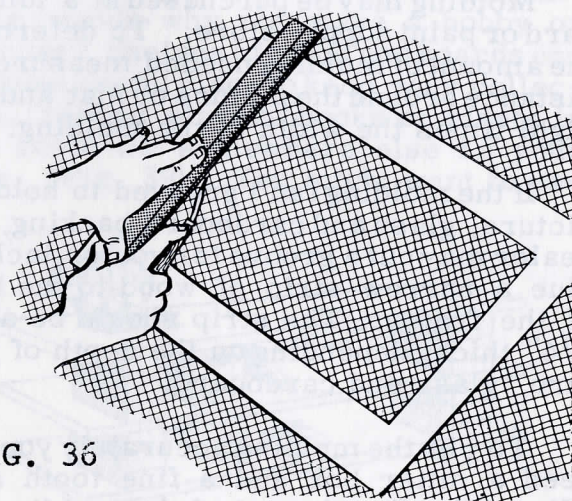


FIG. 36



## Frame the Picture

In selecting and refinishing a frame for your picture you have the problem of suiting the frame to the picture as well as to other furnishings in the room.

Choose a frame which will bring out beauty of your picture. Usually a simple frame is best because a frame that is large, over-decorated or brightly colored will call attention to itself rather than the picture. Matted pictures require narrow frames while oil paintings or pictures in strong colors need heavier frames. So you see that it is the line, color and form in the picture that determines the width and depth of frame, rather than the picture size.

## Using Old Frames

Sometimes old frames can be used as they are or can be restyled, cut down and refinished. Removing extra borders, scrolls or other decorations may result in a simple frame that you can refinish.

A little paint remover may reveal fine wood under the dark finish of an old frame.

Inexpensive pictures may have frames you can use as they are, or cut down to the size you need.

Frame sizes are determined by the size of openings.

## Cutting a Frame From Molding

Molding may be purchased at a lumber yard or paint supply store. To determine the amount of molding needed measure the distance around the picture or mat and add eight times the width of the molding.

If the molding isn't grooved to hold the picture, glass and cardboard backing, the dealer may cut a groove for you or tack or glue a narrow strip of wood to the back of the frame. The strip should be about 1/4" thick, depending on the depth of picture, glass and cardboard.

To cut the molding accurately you will need a miter box and a fine tooth saw. (Fig. 37). Saw the end of the molding off at a 45 degree angle, making sure you cut

it so the outside edge is the longer one. Then measure the length of one side of the picture along the picture or mat along the grooved edge of the molding. Put a pencil mark at this point. This time reverse the molding in the miter box so that the cut angle will be in the opposite direction. Always saw slightly outside the pencil mark.

Cut a duplicate length of molding for the opposite side of the frame. Then cut pieces for the top and bottom.

Glue and nail one corner at a time using a couple of brads from each side. Let the frame set for 12 - 24 hours in clamps or vises.

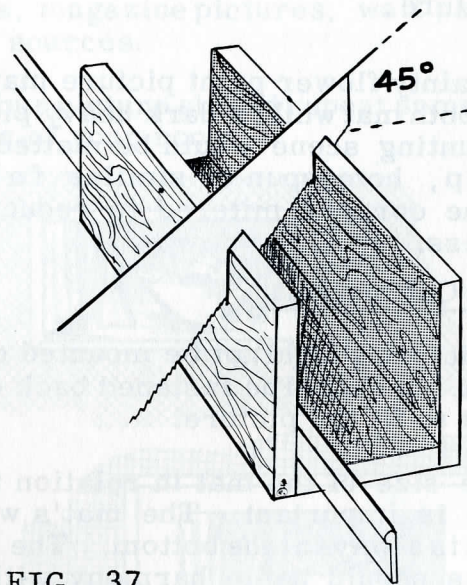


FIG. 37

## Finish the Frame

To give a natural finish to a wood frame, smooth with 6/o production or garnet paper. Then apply 3 or 4 coats of shellac or some other clear finish, allowing each coat to dry well and rubbing between coats.

Oxalic acid solution or a commercial bleach may be used to lighten the color of an old wooden frame.

Some frames may be painted to fit the picture. Enamel undercoat gives a dull finish and the cost is low. It can be tinted with oil color. The painted frame with molded design may be given an "antique finish". To do this a glaze may be pur-



chased or may be mixed by thinning a standard color with turpentine then adding clear varnish. This glaze is put on over painted frame. Use an absorbent cloth to remove glaze from low places on the frame. Make high lights by wiping high places with a cloth dampened with turpentine. Dry thoroughly.

Most pictures need glass to protect them, but oil paintings do not. Less expensive pictures can be sprayed with a plastic coat to retard soiling.

The back of the picture should be covered with paper to prevent dust from entering.

### Hang the Picture

You might like to hang the picture over a chest of drawers, over a desk or table or the headboard of the bed. Place the picture so that it becomes part of a group by hanging it near the piece of furniture. (Fig. 38).

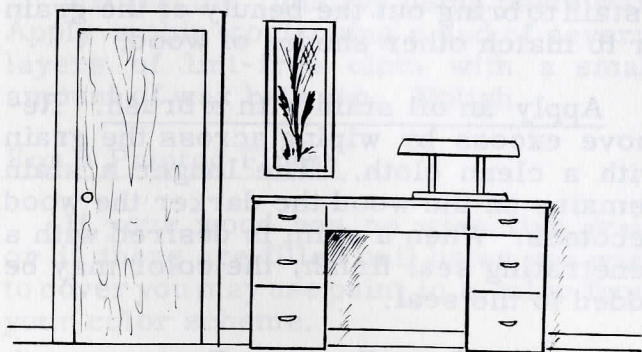
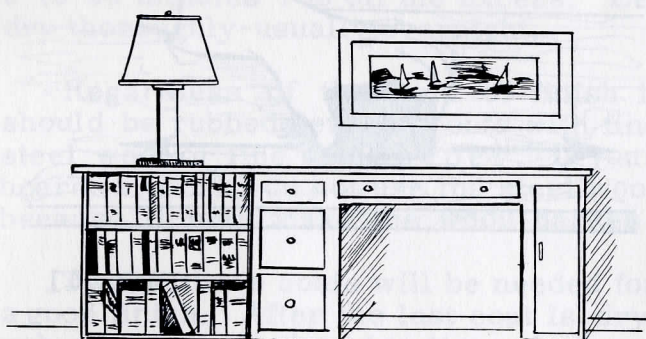
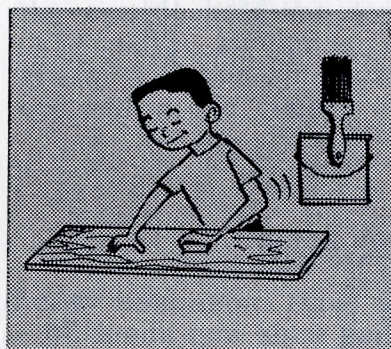


FIG. 38

Be sure it is not too large or small for the piece of furniture over which it is hung. Sometimes several pictures will be needed.

To hang the picture, put a screw eye on either side of the back of the frame, well above the center. Loop picture wire through the screw eyes. Wrap the ends around the cross wire.

The picture should be hung flat against the wall so that the wires do not show.



## **learn to finish wood**

Knowing how to finish woods is helpful information. It is possible to transform shabby pieces into attractive useful articles. Unfinished furniture can be a smart and thrifty way to add needed furniture to your room. If you or someone in your family is handy you might design some of your own furniture.

### Make a Hobby Case

In order to get a little practice in finishing woods why not make a hobby or bookcase? Shelves of brick and boards can be a most useful place to keep your collections, record player, books or plants in your room or somewhere else in your home. (Fig. 39). You might want to use

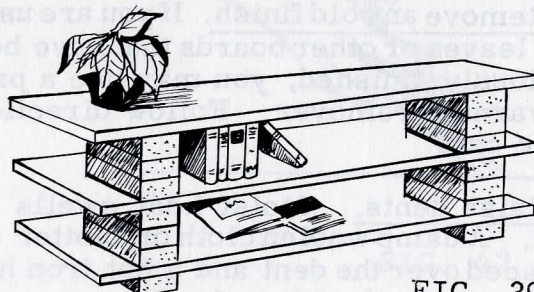


FIG. 39



the finished boards on the wall with shelf brackets. (Fig. 40).

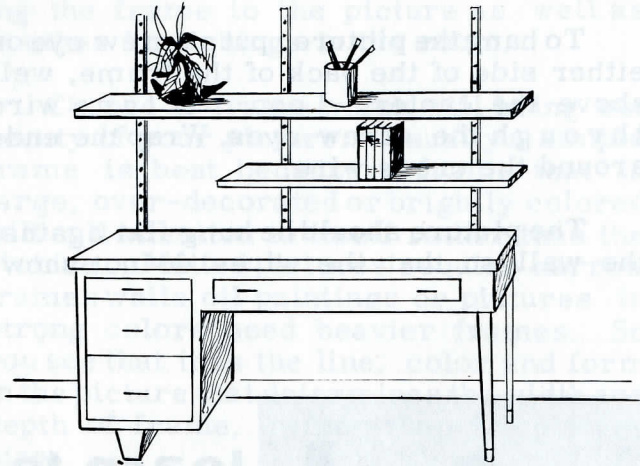


FIG. 40

This is what you need:

Two or three well seasoned wood boards about 9 inches wide and about 36 - 48 inches long depending on the space, or 3/4 inch plywood - or maybe you have old table leaves you could use. 4 - 6 glass bricks or concrete blocks or 10 - 18 smooth building blocks.

Abrasive paper such as production or garnet paper in medium and fine grits.

Penetrating seal or paint to finish boards.

Fine steel wool.

Prepare the Boards

For a fine satin finish, you need to be sure that the surface is very smooth and clean.

Remove any old finish. If you are using table leaves or other boards that have been previously finished, you may use a paint and varnish remover. Follow directions on the can.

Raise dents. Moist heat swells the wood. A damp woolen cloth or blotter can be placed over the dent and a hot iron held over until the dent is raised.

Fill Cracks and Holes. Fill any holes in your board. If the surface is to be painted, cold water putty may be used.

Remove dark spots. Ink stains may be removed with a commercial bleach, or by using a solution of 4 tablespoons of oxalic acid crystals to 1 pint of warm water. Let stand 10 - 20 minutes. Repeat as necessary. Rinse with solution of 1 tablespoon soda to 1 cup water.

Sand with the grain of the Wood. Use a block of wood padded with felt or a regular sanding block to hold a quarter sheet of the paper. (Fig. 41). Start with the medium grit abrasive paper, and finish rubbing with the fine paper until it is smooth as glass. Wipe off the board with a cloth dampened in turpentine, before applying a finish. Do not use an electric sander unless you are skilled.

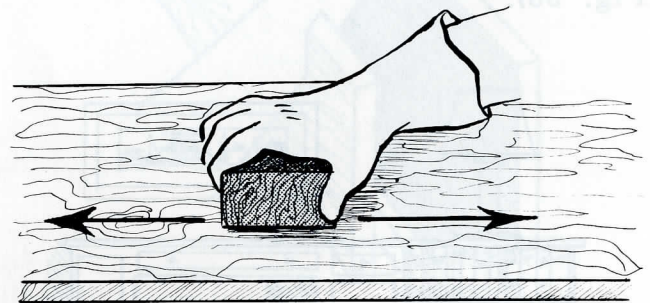


FIG. 41

Stain if Desired. You may wish to use a stain to bring out the beauty of the grain or to match other shades of wood.

Apply an oil stain with a brush. Remove excess by wiping across the grain with a clean cloth. The longer a stain remains on the wood the darker the wood becomes. When a stain is desired with a penetrating seal finish, the color may be added to the seal.

Fill the Open Grain. For a smooth surface on open grain wood such as oak, or walnut, the pores of the wood should be filled with a paste filler, especially if the finish is to be painted.



Paste filler comes in natural (beige) or in wood colors. The colored filler is needed on dark woods such as walnut to prevent streaks from showing. Stain can be added to the natural.

The filler is brushed across the grain with a stiff brush. As it dulls (5-10 min.) rub across grain with a coarse cloth to pack the filler into the pores and remove the excess filler. Let dry at least 24 hours before applying a finish.

#### For a Natural Finish

You may use a clear finish such as varnish, shellac or a penetrating seal. Shellac is not as desirable as either of the other finishes.

Penetrating seal is the easiest to use and provides a durable surface that is scratch and water resistant.

Follow directions on the can which usually will be to use a brush or cloth to apply seal. Then before this dries - after 5 to 20 minutes - rub off the excess. Let dry thoroughly - usually overnight.

Regardless of the kind of finish it should be rubbed between coats with fine steel wool or fine sandpaper. If your boards are oak, do not use the steel wool because it may make the wood darken.

Two or three coats will be needed for a good finish. After the last coat is dry, rub with a cloth dipped in linseed oil and pumice stone.

Protect the finish by using paste wax. Apply a thin coat using a pad of several layers of lint-free cloth with a small amount of wax between. Polish.

#### For a Painted Finish

If your wood has no attractive grain or if there are filled nail holes you wish to cover you may use paint in a color from your color scheme.

Be sure the paint or enamel is mixed thoroughly. If you should find oil on the top of the can pour it off into a clean container. Stir the remainder bringing up the pigment that has settled to the bottom.

Stir up the remainder thoroughly from the bottom. Pour the oil back into the mixture a little at a time, stirring continuously. Then pour from can to can until it is well mixed. A nylon stocking may be used to grain out any lumps.

Before applying a primer coat, give the piece a rub down with a cloth dampened with turpentine. Let each coat dry thoroughly before applying succeeding coats. Sand lightly or use fine steel wool and dust carefully between coats.

When applying the paint, use a new or absolutely clean brush. Dip the brush into the can to half the depth of the bristles. (Fig. 42). Brush across, then with the grain. If you get a sag or run, brush it out with a wet brush.

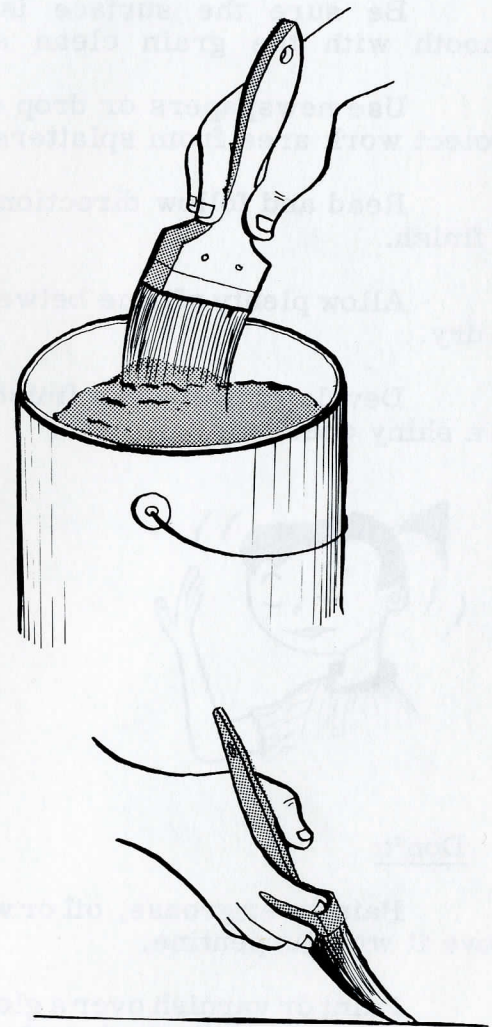


FIG. 42





### Do:

Wear old clothes; and possibly gloves to protect your hands.

Open windows enough to allow ample ventilation.

Be sure the surface is sanded smooth with the grain clean and dry.

Use newspapers or drop cloths to protect work area from splatters.

Read and follow directions on can of finish.

Allow plenty of time between coats to dry.

Develop a soft satin finish instead of a shiny one.

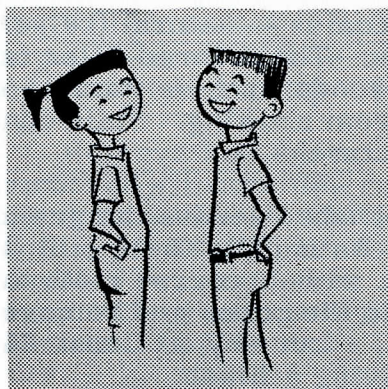


### Don't:

Paint over grease, oil or wax. Remove it with turpentine.

Paint or varnish over a glossy surface. Rub it down with steel wool or sandpaper.

Pile on thick coats of a finish. Two thin coats are better than one thick coat



## **put the plan into action**

The plan which you have developed will be a helpful guide in making larger improvements when you are ready.

Even if you take a few years to transform your room, you can be sure everything will look well together.

These are some of the projects that will help you put your plan into action:

Backgrounds Unit: (Walls, floors, windows)

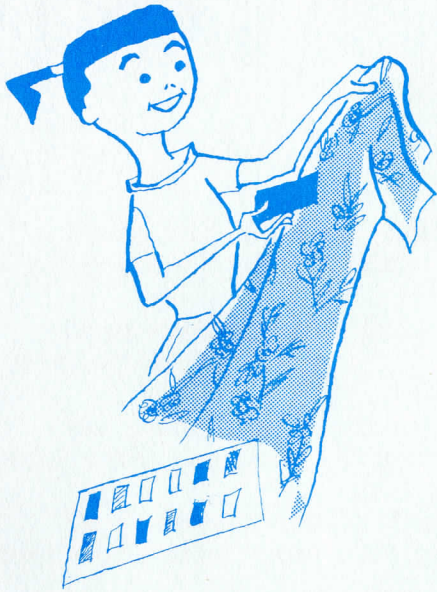
Sleeping Unit

Dressing Unit

Study, Reading or Business Unit

Storage in My Room





plan your  
Room....

