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The Key to Good Storage in your Home : Extension Circular 11-121-2

Elsie DeLunger

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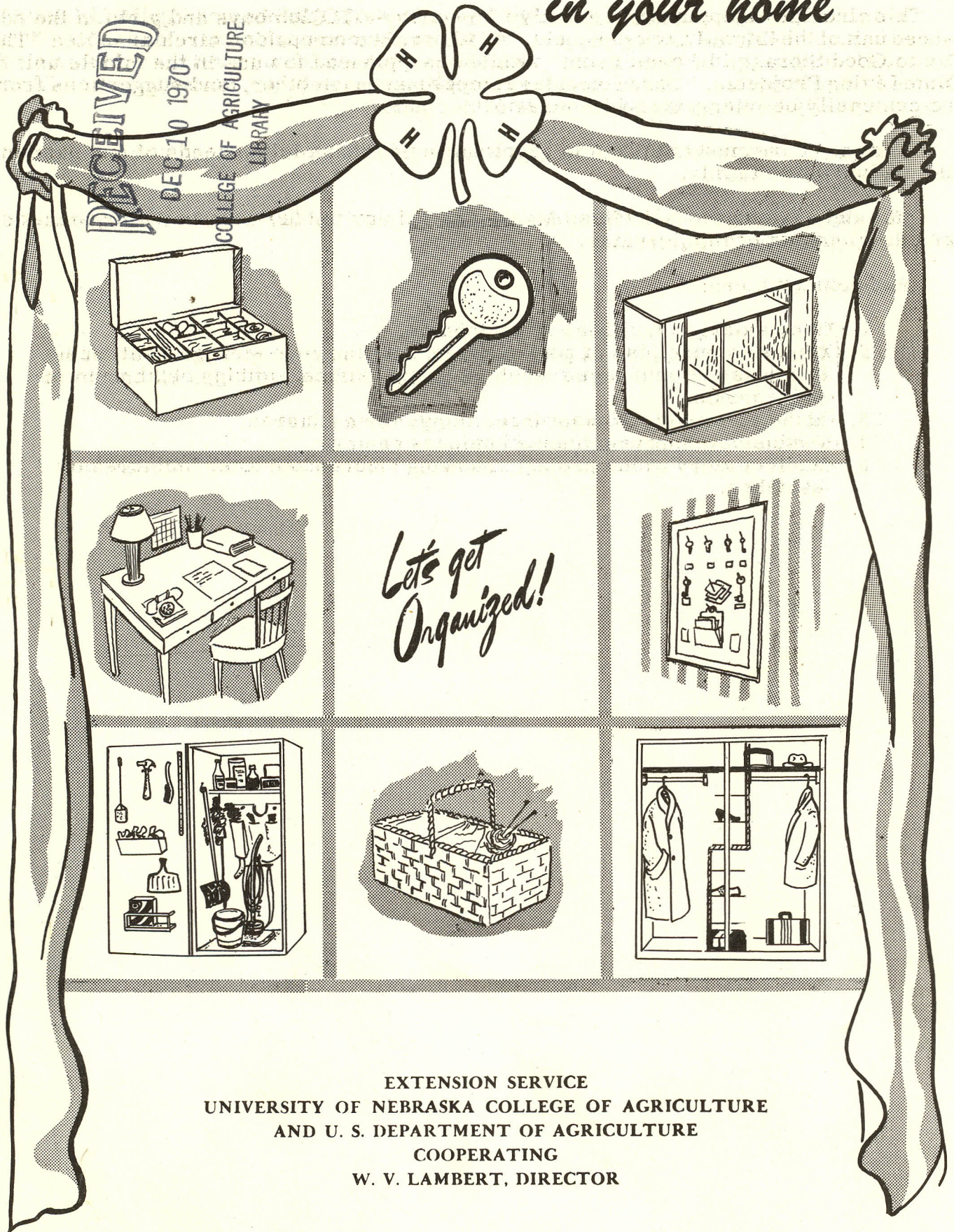
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E.C. 11-121-2

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THE KEY TO GOOD STORAGE

in your home



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*Let's get
Organized!*

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C. 3

INTRODUCTION

This circular was planned primarily for use by 4-H Club boys and girls in the advanced unit of the Home Living project. It follows the companion circular called "The Key to Good Storage in Your Room", which was planned for use in the middle unit of Home Living Projects. These circulars compliment each other, and suggestions from one can easily be integrated with those of the other.

In its use, care must be taken to adapt suggested ideas to the needs of any particular individual or family.

The author wishes to thank Miss Magdalene Pfister for her help in the organization and development of this circular.

Requirements are:

1. Check storage facilities in your home.
2. Observe principles of good storage, and improve storage in at least two areas of your home (such as living, kitchen, dining, bathroom or work areas).
3. Make or provide at least three things for each area.
4. Provide or improve a home business center.
5. Write a story of the project, showing "before and after" pictures or sketches.

THE KEY TO GOOD STORAGE IN YOUR HOME

PART II By Elsie DeLunger

When grandma and grandpa built the old home place, chances are they dreamed up a third story with full attic and a big basement. Sometimes whole rooms were set aside as store rooms! Often these huge storage places were used as rainy-day play rooms. Nowadays we feel that such use of space is too expensive, especially if we are building a new house.

Our roofs today are flatter. Gone are the walk-in attics of yesterday, but too many times all the "stuff" that used to be poked off in the old attic trunk and forgotten, is simply pushed in the back of "Jennie's Drawer".



Figure 1
Yesterday's House

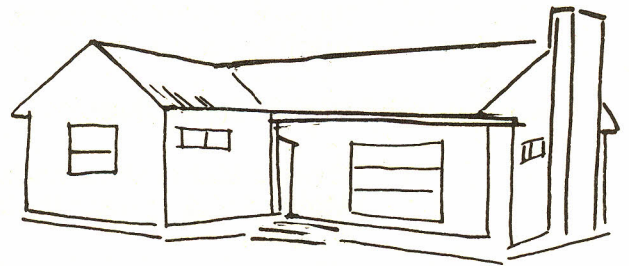


Figure 2
Today's House

As your cover suggests, organization is the Key to Good Storage. With that key you can plan to make better use of all the lazy space you may find in your home.

Part I helped with planning storage for personal possessions such as clothes and record book. Part II aims to help solve storage problems in other rooms of the home. This becomes a matter of family interest. To make everybody happy, the individual needs, likes or dislikes, and ideas must be considered before actual work is started. One may have to give up a point here and there, but no one person should do all the giving.

Whatever your individual situation, consider these general aims in planning storage:

1. Save time and energy.
2. Take better care of articles stored.
3. Build good habits for yourself and your family.
4. Do your share in keeping the house neat and orderly.
5. Make your home attractive.
6. Make your home safe. "Any storage is a safety device."

Whether you decide to improve the storage area in your back porch, the living room or elsewhere, you should consider and do these things.

1. Try to store each item appropriately.
 - a. Storage according to use or need means; for example, store spoons near the mixing center, hot pan holders near the stove, toys near the play area, fuel near the stove, and winter coats near the outer door.
 - b. Storage according to safety rules means; for example, putting well labeled poisons out of reach of children, providing a metal or non-inflammable waste basket where needed, storing children's coats where they can get them without climbing or so they will not run out in the cold without them.
2. Keep things in good condition.
 - a. Provide good light and ventilation so you can see everything easily, and to avoid odors and damage from moisture.
 - b. Control moths and other insects.
 - c. Have a place for each thing instead of stuffing many things into a jumbled mess in a box or drawer.
3. Sort and discard regularly.
 - a. Make a list of the things that are really essential in each storage area.
 - b. Move things into their proper groups or areas, discard the unused items.
 - c. Try to use available space before building new, and provide flexible or adjustable spaces whenever you can.
 - d. Plan each area so it is easy to clean
 - e. Use portable storage space when it is the most practical, or while you are rearranging things and trying out your ideas.

Storage in Your Living Room

Let's venture out into your living room. Many times we forget that the "family part" of the home is as much our responsibility as is our own room. It's really not very fair, is it, to expect Mother to clean up the living room all the time. Let's make a list of the things in the "family" part of the house which need better storage.

Music and Musical Instruments - Shallow drawers can be constructed for sheet music and books of music. Sheet music can be filed in portfolios according to type, personal ownership, or family preference.

Cabinet tray doors are helpful and not too hard to make. They may be portable or built in.

There was once an old pine chest which suddenly found itself partitioned off inside to hold many phonograph records. A gay felt pad was made for the hinged top, and it became a convenient seat in front of the radio-phonograph.

Wire racks made especially for records are nice to have, but they should be placed out of sight and away from dust. Record albums can be decorative as well as useful if held between attractive bookends. Hollow glass bricks with ivy plants in them make attractive, heavy bookends.

Why not remodel and refinish an old phonograph cabinet for use today?

No matter what method of storage you use, remember that records should be on edge, not stacked, and that they vary in size.

A variety of small musical instruments, music racks, and similar equipment is often hard to store. Here is a well planned cabinet made with one commissary door.

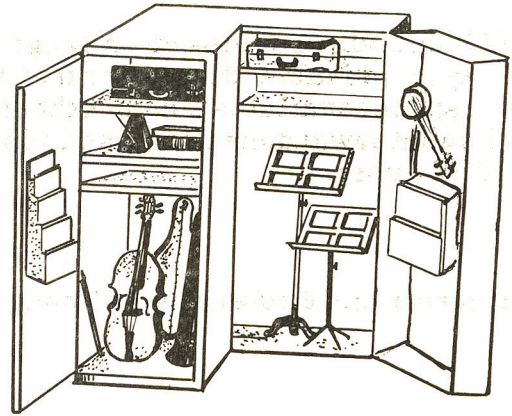


Figure 1

Books and Magazines - Glass enclosed shelves are the best storage for books. Children's books should be in a low place and a well lighted reading center should be close by. Some games and equipment for quite play might be in a part of this storage area.

Magazines and papers are often the most interesting things we have around us but sometimes they become one of our biggest problems. There should be a place near at hand for the new issues, and a larger storage space somewhere for accumulating issues still in use by members of the family. Graduated and sloping shelves with tiers of slots can make each magazine easy to find and easy to replace.

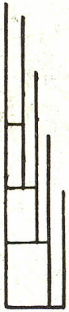


Figure 2

Hobbies and Sport Equipment - Family hobbies are often interesting to visitors, and should be attractively displayed if in evidence at all. One family made a sectional frame of many size boxes and each member of the family put some treasure found on the most recent family trip into a box in the frame. Then each member had the privilege of telling guests about his part in the adventure. Another family took pictures, made colored enlargements on glass panels, and illuminated these panels for a beautiful color effect.

Bats and balls, tennis rackets, fishing rods, skis, skates, movie screens and the like can be stored in tall cardboard boxes or covered with cloth or plastic bags and stored. An old fashioned umbrella rack or some special hooks on a wall might be the place to put them.

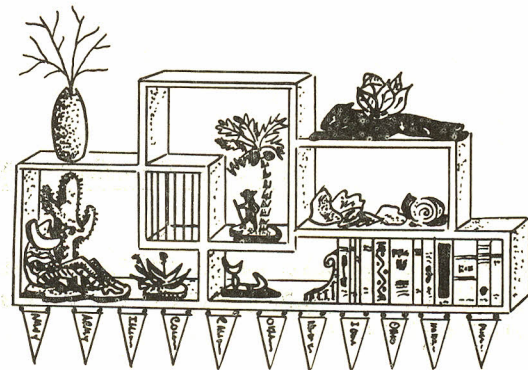


Figure 3

Room Divider - Very often homes are built with no provision for storage of coats close to the front entrance. Then, when the door is opened during cold, wet, windy weather people must step right into our living area, with no chance to remove wraps, smooth their hair, and put on a smile before meeting the family.

If the living room is quite large, with the door at an end or close to an end, a six-foot high portable divider might help solve such a problem. It should be planned to have space available from both sides; for example, storage for wraps and sporting equipment toward the door, and places for books, games and writing unit or radio toward the room.

Here is an illustration of one possibility.

This type of divider might be used facing the door or beside the door, depending on room proportions. Smaller or larger units could be made to suit family needs, or to scale with the size of room. In any case consider the things you plan to store there, and measure the parts to accomodate these items.

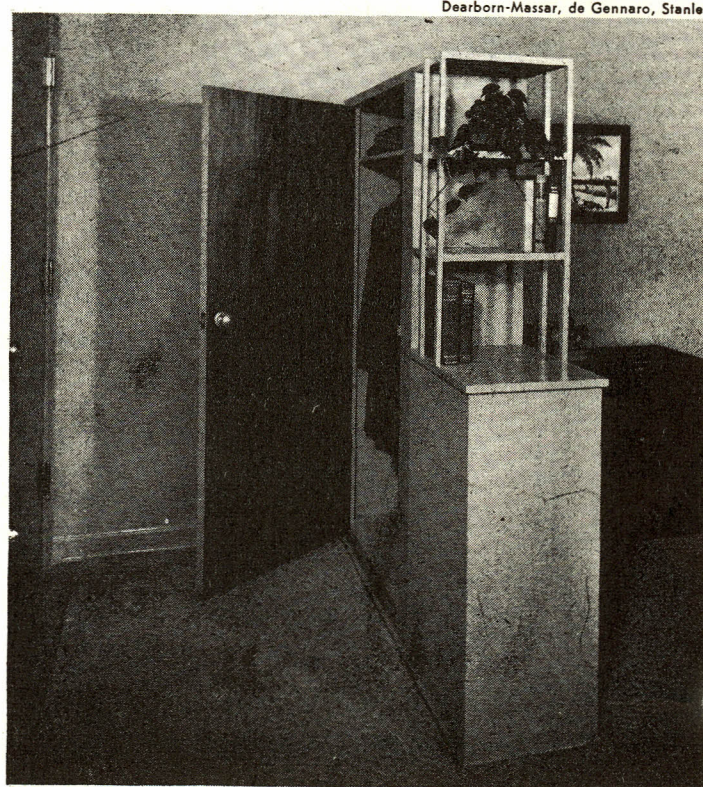


Figure 4

DINING ROOM AND KITCHEN STORAGE

If you wish to make, remodel, or rearrange kitchen storage or plan a place to store dishes, silver and linens, you may do so. Very good help is available in many booklets among the best are:

"Closets and Storage Spaces" - U. S. D. A. Bulletin #1865

"Easy-to-build Kitchen Cabinets for the Remodeled Farmhouse" -
U. S. D. A. Misc. Publication #680

"Planning the Kitchen and Workroom" - U. S. D. A. Home & Garden
Bulletin No. 12, Bureau of Home Economics.

"The Mixing Center" - C. C. 119, Nebraska Agricultural Extension Service

"Cooking & Serving Center" - C. C. 120, Nebraska Agricultural Extension Service

"Preparation and Cleanup Center" - C. C. 121 - Nebraska Agricultural Extension
Service.

Likewise, you may improve storage in your fruit room or vegetable center.

In any case do these things:

- (1) Read several good references for ideas.
- (2) Make a collection of clippings, so you can make a wise choice of methods.
- (3) Plan your work and check with Mother and Father.
- (4) Do your work carefully.
- (5) Keep records - on time, accurately, and thoroughly.

Storage of Bedding and Linens

Such articles should be stored close to wherever they are needed most. Sheets, pillowcases, doilies, and towels are usually stored near bedrooms and bath. Tea towels, dust cloths and dish cloths are best stored near the kitchen. Hallways are ideal, because they usually serve several rooms. Find and put to work all the lazy space in your hallways.

Wide doors on cupboards are better than narrow ones. Pull-out trays are better for small linens and fancy linens. Depth of this storage depends upon the type of article to be placed there. Try folding articles in various ways, to see how they best fit into your space. Find an arrangement which does not jam too many items into too small a space. Sliding trays in deep drawers are helpful.

Pillowcases and towels may be folded into thirds lengthwise, then folded once crosswise.

Sheets usually perform best if folded into fourths, then crosswise into eighths. Keep sizes sorted and labeled. Simple labels on shelf edges help save time and temper.

Wash cloths may be folded once lengthwise and then once crosswise. Flat type book ends or dish racks can be adapted as dividers for linens.

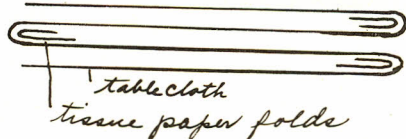


Figure 6

Table cloths and lunch cloths should be folded once only--lengthwise, and then rolled upon a cardboard core or folded gently without crosswise creasing. Paper worked into the fold helps prevent creases.

Napkins should be given special attention. One excellent hostess irons her napkins flat and stores them unfolded, then folds them just as needed.

For 12" to 15" lunch napkin

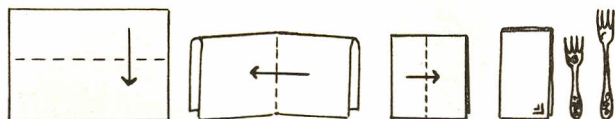


Figure 7

For 18" or 20" dinner napkin

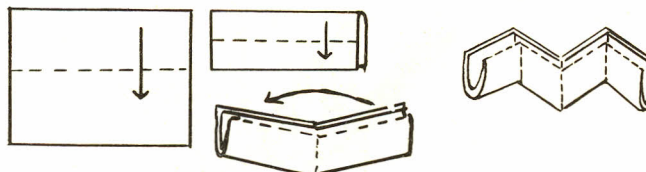


Figure 8

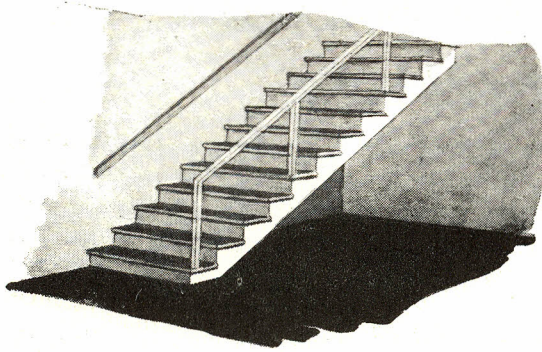
Watch the rectangular ones. The decorated corner must be in lower right position.

Lazy Space in Hallways

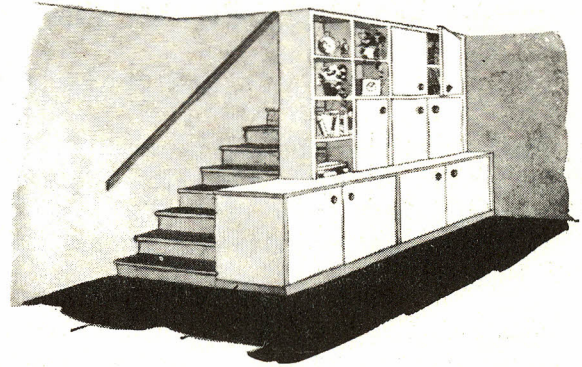
Often in hallways there is extensive lazy space. Look around your hallway, especially if there is a stairwell in it.

Could you do this?

Figure 9



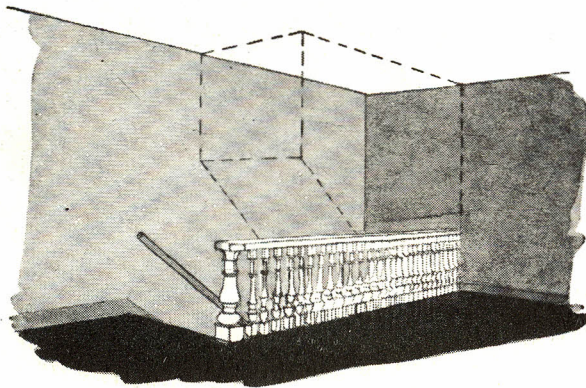
Before



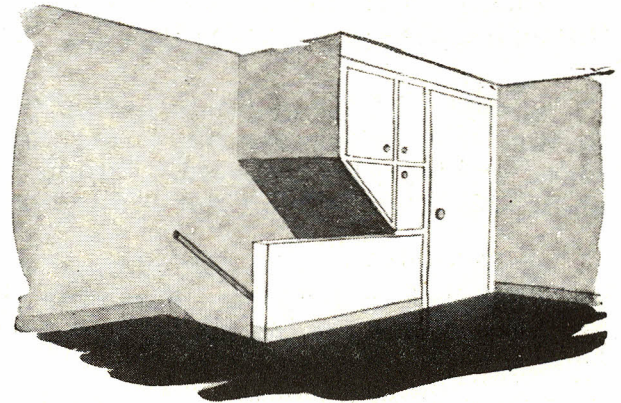
After

Or this?

Figure 10



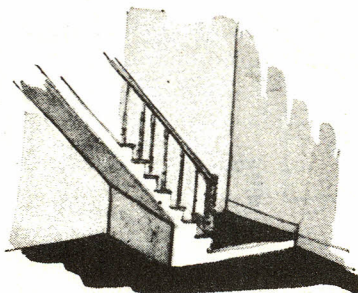
Before



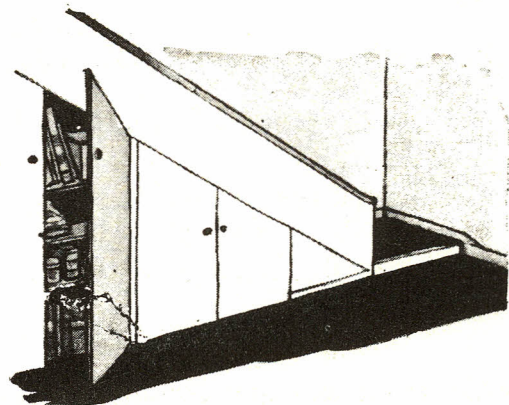
After

Or this?

Figure 11



Before



After

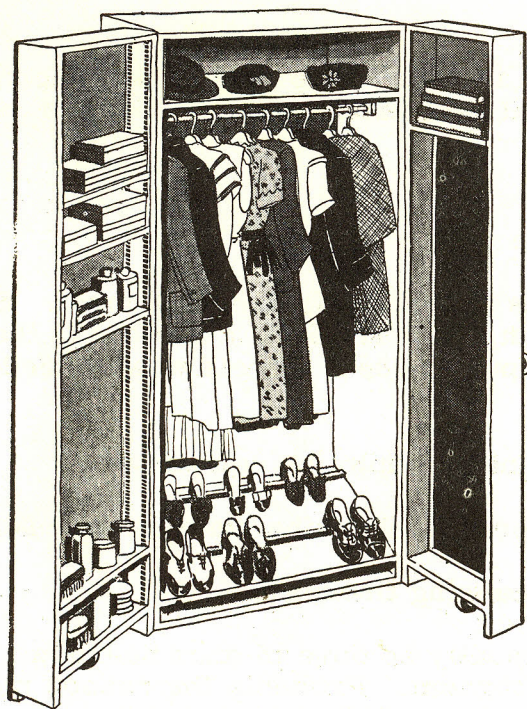


Figure 12

Commissary type closets are useful and can be built to increase storage shelves. Be sure to put a roller under the extended shelf construction to ease the load if heavy articles are to be stored in the bins or shelves. Guard rails or bin sides are necessary in this type of swinging structure.

In Figures 13 and 14 the use of stairwell space has been well planned.

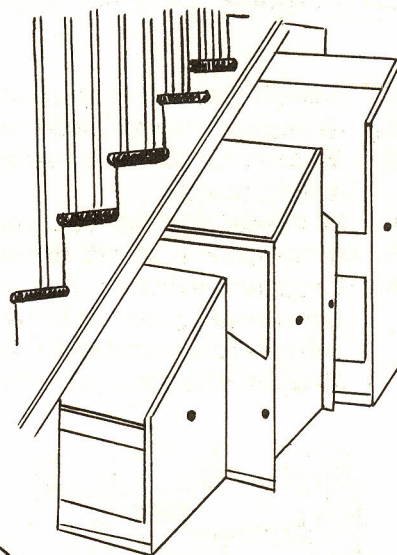


Figure 13

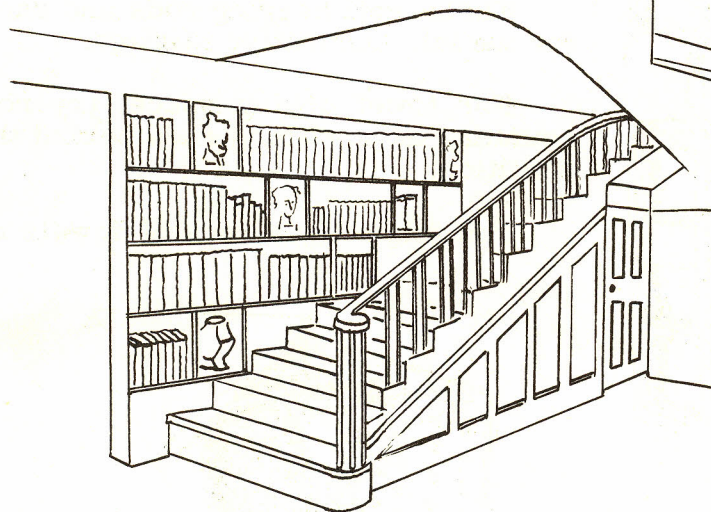
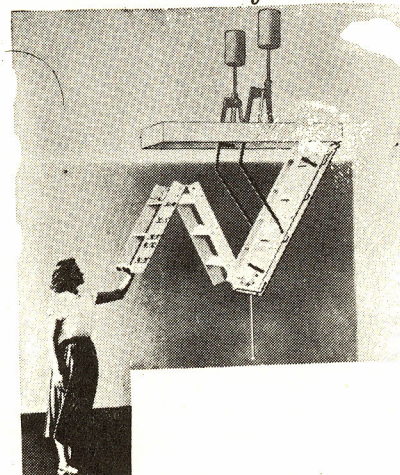


Figure 14

Does your hallway have a trap door into a shallow attic? If so, you are lucky, because so often these trap-doors are inside closets and quite hard to use. If you can use your attic to store things, think about a ladder which can be hinged at one end to one side of the trap-door, raised and hooked against the hall ceiling when not in use.

Figure 15



Nowadays staircases which fold out of sight into the attic and work on counter weights, pulleys or roller bearings are available at reasonable prices. Consult your local dealer or your mail order catalog.

Bathroom Storage

Of all the rooms in the house, the bathroom is probably the one used most. Because of its size it must be kept orderly and clean, or it really is a mess. Is there any lazy space in your bathroom which can be put to use? Here's what's needed.

1. Towel rack for each person in the family and a couple for company.
2. Adequate towel and wash cloth storage.
3. Space for tooth powders, tooth brushes, personal drinking glasses, and some medicines.
4. Storage for extra soaps, toilet papers, cleansing tissues.
5. Someplace to sit (besides the edge of the tub).
6. Lighted mirror space. (priming should usually be done in ones bedroom, so someone else will have a chance at the bathroom. Probably the reason most people like the bathroom best is that it has the best lighting around the mirror. Maybe that's a hint for you to check your bedroom priming space.)

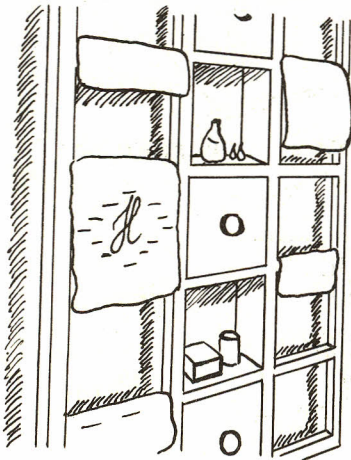


Figure 16

These wall hugging rods and shelves are "naturals" for useful, decorative storage.

For towel drying space, try rods on the door of a counter, or a sliding rack behind the louvred wall of a partition.

You might try a rack of dowels and spools.

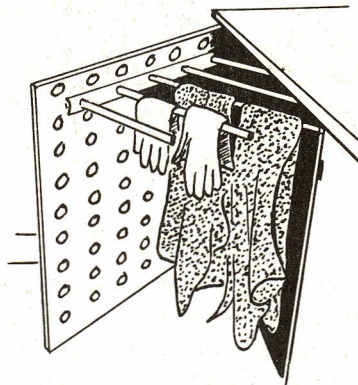


Figure 17

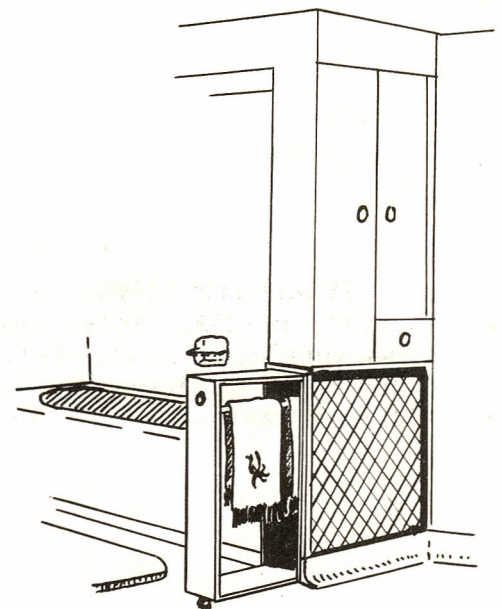
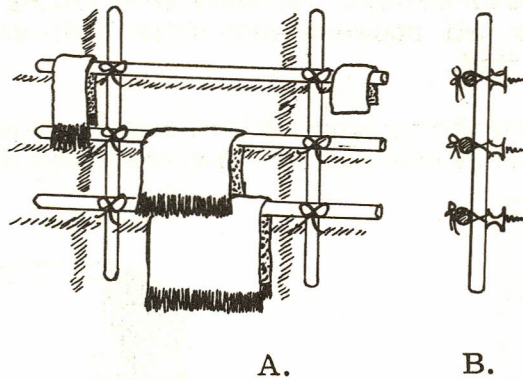


Figure 18

Figure 19



Who could resist this painted mailbox, or the wooden horse - just right for Junior.

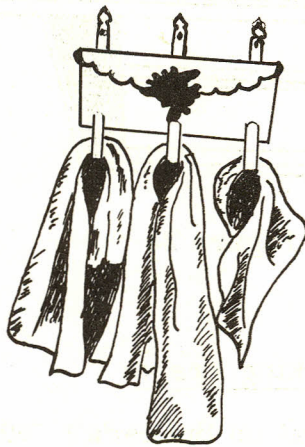


Figure 20

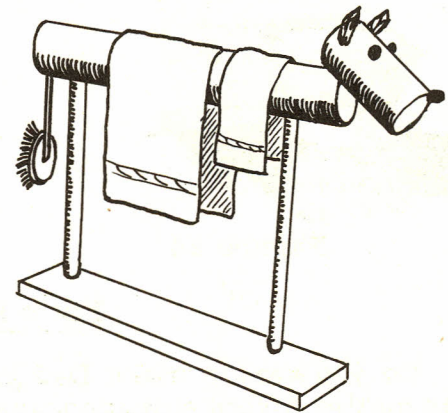


Figure 21

For a seat in the bathroom, a slipcovered nail keg could double as a seat and a laundry hamper.

This padded built-in seat is hinged at the top to provide storage below. A handy man could soon make a few drawers instead of the bin, if preferred.

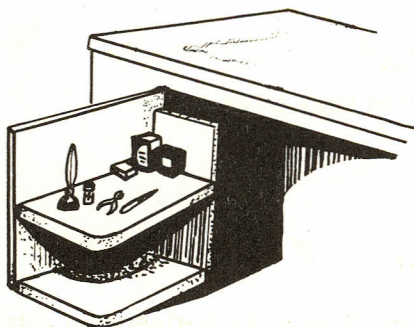


Figure 23

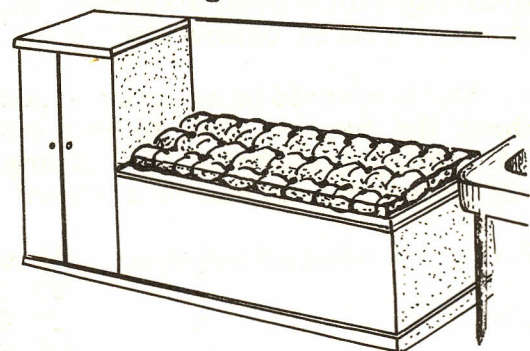


Figure 22

A swing-out panel helps keep your manicure equipment off the top of the dressing table space. Perhaps you will want this in your bedroom instead of the bathroom. Sometimes manicure supplies are best kept in a special box that can be carried here and there.

Give the medicine chest some thought. Carefully dispose of any medicines which are outdated or no longer useful. Mark any poisons with pins through the cork, or with a tack scotch taped to the top. Be sure everything is labeled. If you need shallow shelves and have only tall spaces, use some half-shelves. Have the First-Aid Kit complete and easy to find.

Check the lazy space above your water closet. Could a shelf or built-in be added? Perhaps a cut-back set of shelves are just what you need.

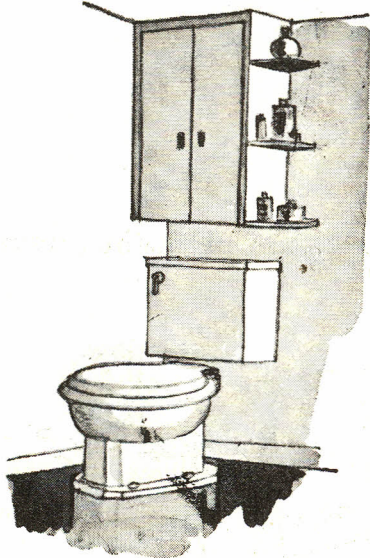


Figure 24

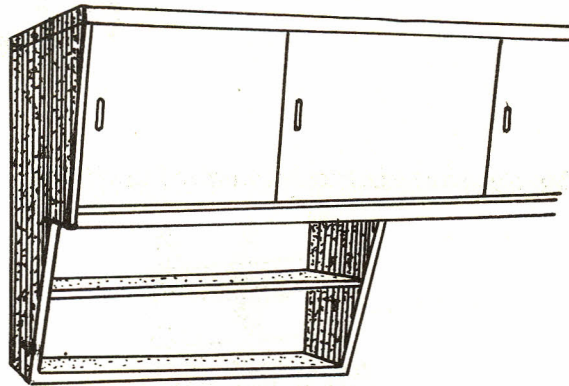


Figure 25

Let's Reorganize our Working Areas

Do you want to make Dad grin and give you a pat on the back? Why don't you give this matter of tool storage some thought? Maybe it's natural that boys are more interested in tools than girls, but both should know how to care for them. Nothing is more annoying than to need a special tool, have to stop what you're doing and go search two or three places before finding it.

Mother would be so proud of you if you'd fix a carry-kit of very simple tools needed about the house. Add to this list of what a carry-kit should have for such things as (a) putting up pictures, (b) fixing curtain rods, (c) mending roller shades, (d) tacking down stair treads or carpets, (e) minor repair of light cords and gadgets.

- (1) Small hammer
- (2) 1 large and 1 small screw driver
- (3) Pliers
- (4) Scissors
- (5) Ruler
- (6) Pencil
- (7) Variety of tacks, nails and screws in special packages.
- (8) Adhesive tapes
- (9) Can of oil

(you may list others)

Now you can find a small basket for them, or a small box to which you can add a handle. It would be especially nice if each tool had a bright color painted on its handle, so one could see it easily and put it back into its place.

Usually the men's kit of tools is larger and is in a tool shed or garage, outside. Many ways of hanging the tools in panels can be planned with Dad. If the position of the tool is painted on the panel, one can tell at a glance which tool goes where. Then each tool will be better cared for and will last longer and give better service. By the way, if the person who takes a tool off the rack hangs on the peg a tag with his name on it, one can tell at a glance who has not put back the tool.

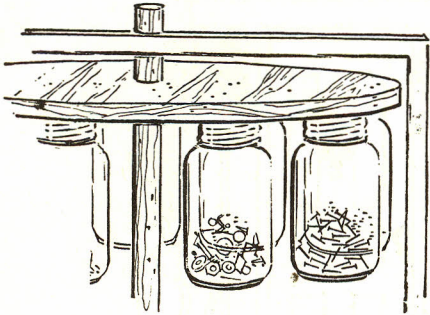


Figure 26

To the left is a sketch of a lazy-susan arrangement for storage of bolts, screws and the like.

Let's Shine the Heels as Well as the Toes!

You've heard of "putting your best foot forward", haven't you? We spend a lot of time fixing up the front of the house and keeping it shining. And then what happens? Why, of course, company always comes to the back door, especially on farms! And sometimes it's so hard to keep the back steps and back porch looking nice because it has to be used hard all the time.

If the back porch isn't enclosed, this storage will have to be placed somewhere inside, maybe in the entry, utility room, or kitchen.

Look around your home, and see where there is space for a (1) chore-clothes closet, (2) clean-closet, (3) waste bins or boxes.

Storage should be close to the back door, but not across the kitchen. Often a grade entrance or back hall is a good place.

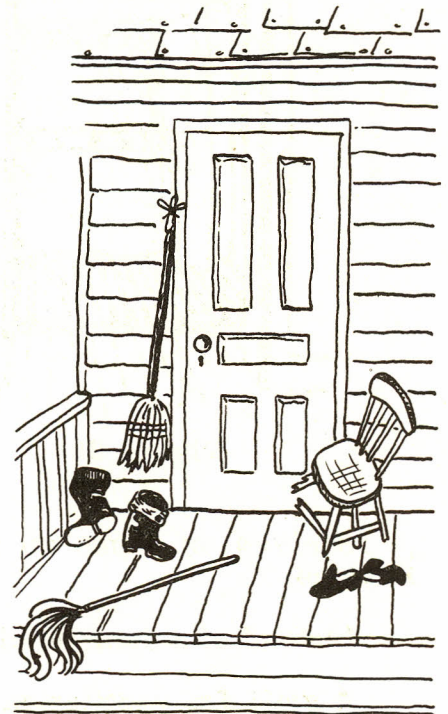


Figure 27 "Before"

Let's list all the things that are used and stored around the back porch.

1. Fuel pails
2. Wet waste pails
3. Dry waste containers
4. Overshoes
5. Brooms, mops
6. Chore clothes
7. Gardening tools and supplies
8. Egg container

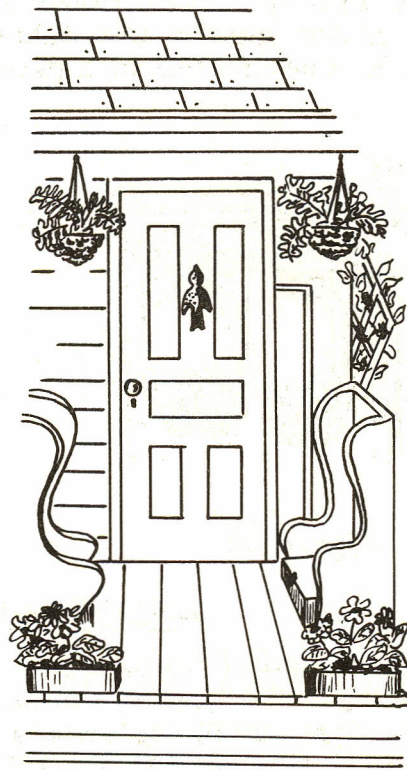


Figure 28 "After"

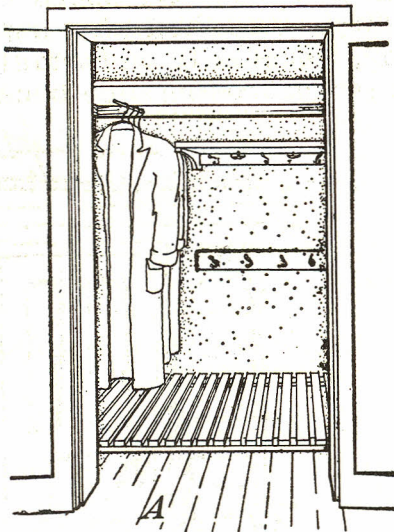


Figure 29

Since chore clothes and play clothes are usually hung on hooks instead of hangers, a depth of 16 inches for the closet is possible, although 20 inches - 24 inches is preferred. Hooks for adults' clothes can be higher than those for the children, allowing double rows. A shelf of slats - about 3 inches - 5 inches off the floor will allow wet boots and overshoes to dry and not spoil the floor. This rack must be removeable for easy cleaning. If overshoes are washed before storing, the rubber will last much longer and the garments will look better too.

Shelves or racks on the door of the cabinet should be provided for caps and mittens.

Instead of a door on closets, some homes are using woven reed curtains.

A grill for ventilation can be put into the sides or back of the cabinet to prevent mildew and staleness. Winter garments should be in a warm place.

One farmhouse boasted a back porch with hinged lids on bins, which opened to the outside of the porch. The housewife simply set the waste paper cans in one bin and the garbage can in the other, and closed the lid. When chore time came, these cans were removed from outside the porch, emptied, and replaced. Screened vents allowed circulation of air, but prevented entrance of pests. Another bin allowed fuel to be put in from outside, also.

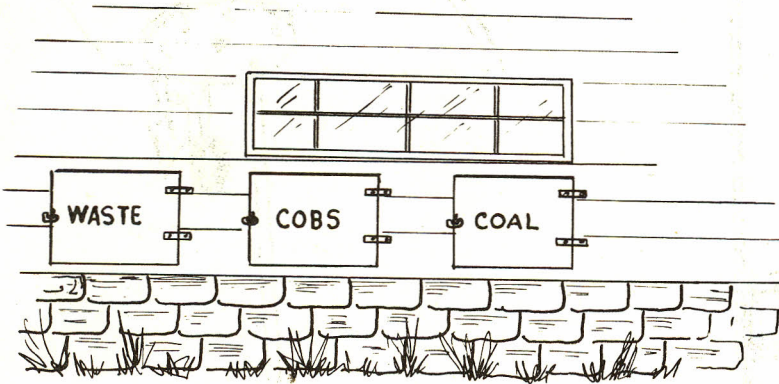


Figure 30

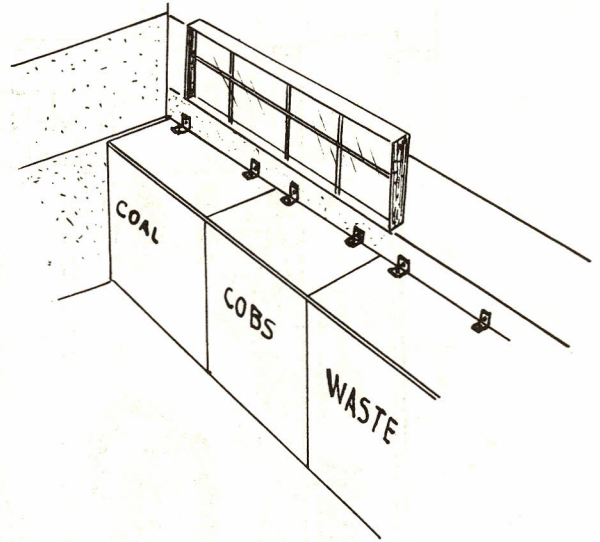


Figure 31

Storage of Cleaning and Laundry Supplies.

Perhaps you will want to store these articles separately. Be sure to think through your needs and plan accordingly.

Make a list of cleaning and laundry supplies. Check your list to see:

- (1) Which things need deep storage near the floor (heavy vacuum)?
- (2) Which items are tall and narrow?
- (3) Which items can be hung up?
- (4) Which are liquids in breakable containers?
- (5) Which ones are poison or corrosive?

Now make a plan to get all these items into as small a space as is practical, but

- (a) Don't crowd
- (b) Don't put frequently used things in front of each other
- (c) Keep similar items or items for one job, together.

The sketch of the cleaning closet shows what can be done to store tall, short, fat, and slim things together. Room could also be planned for extra table leaves, and a small step stool or ladder.

Notice that expanding pockets of fabric can be used for things other than shoes. String, paper sacks, clean polishing cloths, a few clothespins, or household tools may be so stored.

A rotating wooden wheel bolted to the bottom of a shelf can hold cup hooks from which may be suspended any number of handy brushes, measuring sticks, funnels, electric cords, or you-name-it.

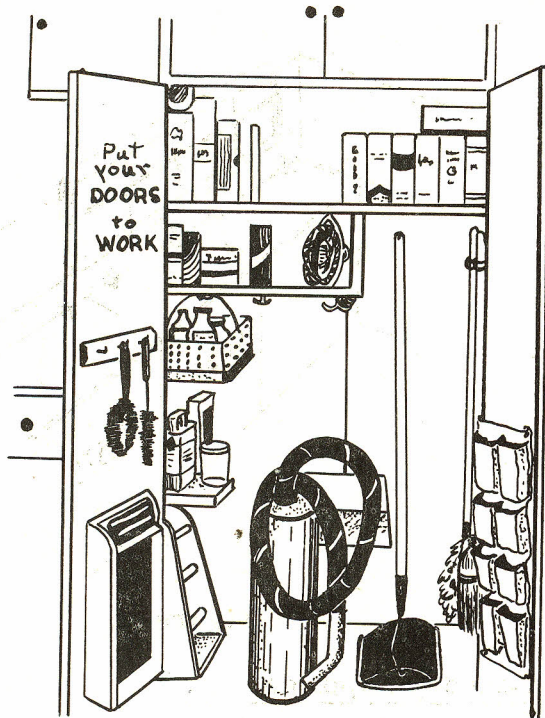


Figure 32

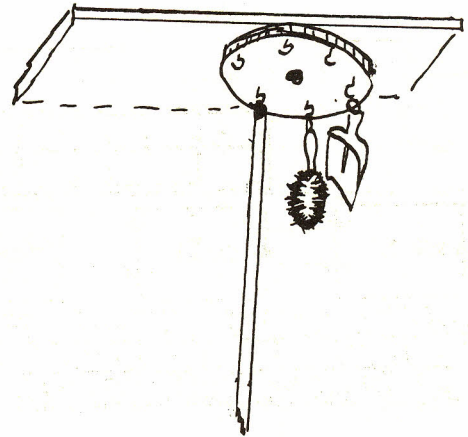


Figure 33

Neat as a Pin

"I thought I laid my scissors right here in my work basket. Sally did you see my scissors?"

"No Mother, not since I finished cutting flowers."

"Charlie, did you use my scissors."

"Umhum - I cut out some maps, but I laid the scissors on the desk".

"They're not on the desk now! Daddy, did you see my scissors?"

"Scissors? - nope. Never use 'em. Better find Sue. Maybe she knows where they are."

"Sue, do you know where mother's scissors are?"

"Yes, Mommie, Fido needed a hair cut. I put the scissors out on the sidewalk."

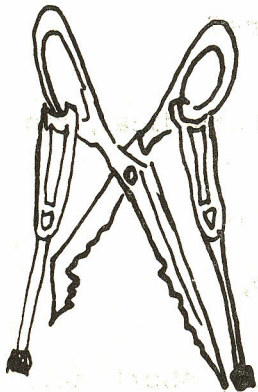


Figure 34

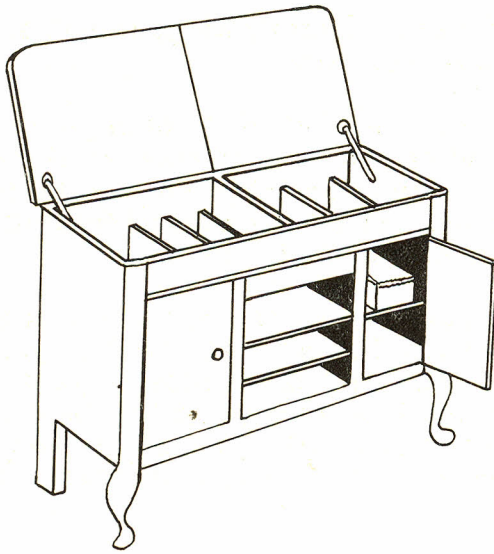
"Oh, my nice scissors - what'll they be like now?"

And no wonder mother feels ready to cry. Cutting paper, hair, and flower stems is no way to keep sewing scissors in good condition! Wouldn't it be a good idea to start a campaign for "Being Fair to Mother"? That might mean getting several heavier scissors perhaps, so the sewing scissors could be used only for cloth. Find a special place for each pair and help keep them in place.

And while you're doing that, it's only one step further to making a complete storage unit for all the sewing equipment.

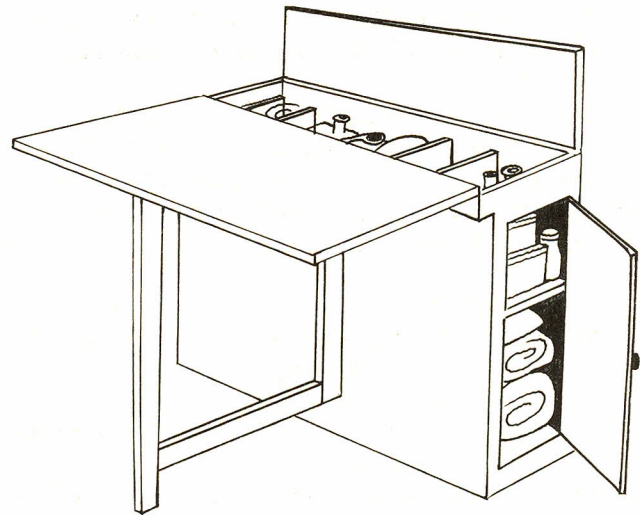
If you do this sewing equipment storage, be sure to keep an accurate record of just what you do and how you do it. Maybe you'll need help with this.

Figure 35



Old phonograph case remade into sewing cabinet.

Figure 36



A drop leaf table attached to a box type sewing cabinet.

Storage of Special Articles

Because accidents are combinations of (1) a dangerous article and (2) a thoughtless person, we must give special attention to storage of firearms. Some people like a horizontal rack best; some like vertical storage.

If there are small children in your family, it would be best to use a locked case for such articles.

Sharp edged cutlery must be stored with care, partly because it is dangerous and partly because careless handling can spoil it. Here are sketches of practical, safe storage racks for sharp knives.

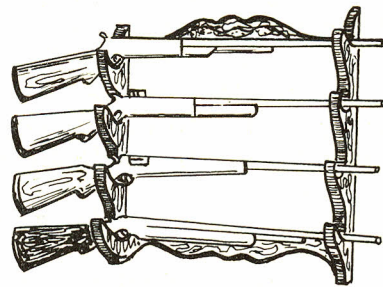


Figure 37

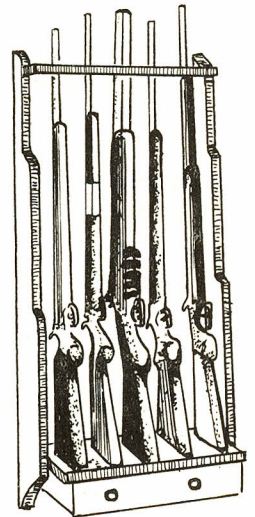


Figure 38

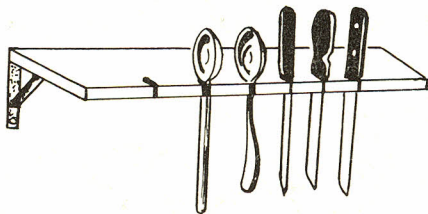


Figure 39

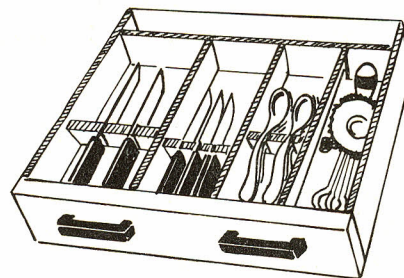


Figure 40

Scissors should be kept in a box, drawer, or hung on special hooks, as suggested in this bulletin.

No matter what type of article you are storing, it is necessary to have a good solid ladder or step stool to help reach the high places. Don't ever take a chance on wobbly chairs or boxes, or climb up on shelf or drawer edges.

If young brothers or sisters must use the same lavatory as grown-ups, a step stool or firm "climbing stool" should be available for them.

Folding table and chairs are often hard to store, a slot for standing them inside a closet helps keep them from falling. Try standing single card tables behind large pieces of furniture, being sure to protect the wall from scratches during the process. One family put a low shelf on their hall closet door, set the tables and folding chairs on the shelf, then hold them in place with two cinch-belts of webbing.

Sometimes picnics and packed lunches are hard to manage because it's so hard to collect all the necessary supplies. Try to keep oiled paper, sandwich bags, paper cups, forks, spoons and plates, aluminum foil, rubber bands, plastic bags, screw cap jars or carrying-dishes close together, perhaps in a sturdy handled basket which will hold the lunch too. Place them near the knives and cutting board so sandwiches can be made quickly. It might be wise to have a reserve supply of canned meats, olives and pickles, and some sandwich spreads.

If thermos bottles are used, be sure there is a good rack or shelf with a rim near at hand to put them on, so they won't be broken. Never close a thermos tightly while storing it.

Luggage and other leather and plastic goods should be well cleaned and stored carefully. Saddle soap and special finishes help with the cleaning; be sure to use them according to directions. Goods of such materials should be kept cool, dry, and free from dust. Good ventilation in the storage place is important.

All materials should be cleaned before storing. Woolens and furs may then be sealed in a tight wrapping, or stored in a moth proofed or cedar lined closet.

One mistake very often made in planning storage is to put cottons and linen in a cedar chest. Only animal fibers (wool, silk, furs) need this type of odorous storage because moths do not eat vegetable fibers or man-made fibers.

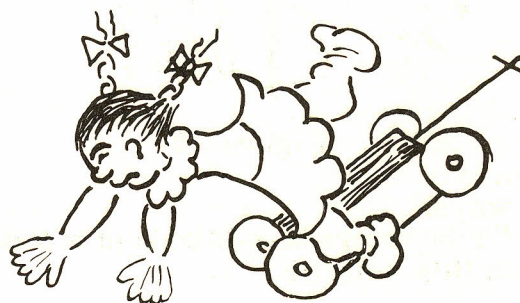
Supplies for Pets

Whether you have one or a dozen pets, and pets of one kind or ten, it is important that they have good clean dishes for food and drink, and that they have an area that is their haven. All the feeding equipment and materials for the pets' care should be assembled close to this area. Does this give you an idea for a kit, or a special shelf for these things? List the things you need in caring for your pets. Then plan a proper place to store them.

Storage for Toys

A toy or a trinket, now why do you think it
Is always out of place?
There's nowhere to store it! But if I ignore it
It will trip me flat on my face!

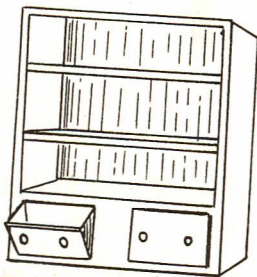
Figure 41



To be successful in storing toys, you'll have to consider several things, such as: (1) where will these toys be used? Inside toys should be stored close to the play area. Cuddle toys can be used and stored in the bedroom. Outside toys must be near the outside doors. (2) Will this storage space help the child learn to be neat? (3) Can it be easily used? Is it large enough or will he have to "cram" things in? Is it within reach for a child. (4) Is it safe? The storage box should be easily opened and not be likely to slam shut on a tiny finger. Space must be low enough to avoid climbing. (5) Is it attractive? Will the child be proud of the looks of his storage area?

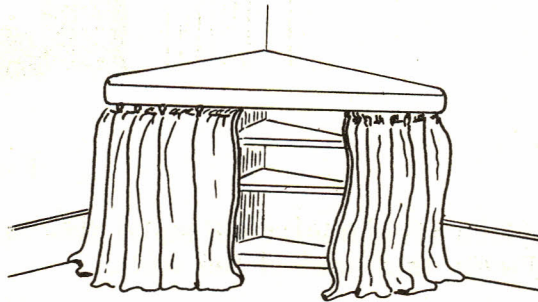
Here are some interesting toy storage units successfully used by others. One mother enjoyed using a wicker wash-basket which could be carried from room to room. An old fashioned buffet, with legs cut off, served very well for toy storage in one family.

Figure 42 ,



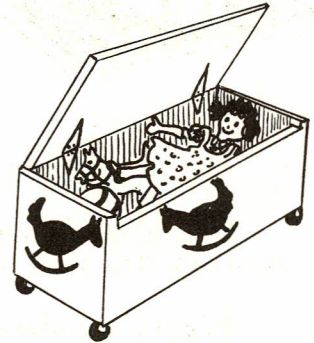
Bins below shelves

Figure 43



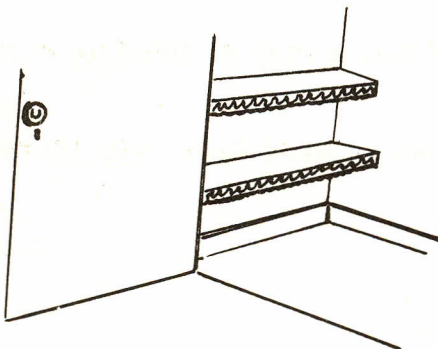
Corner seat and shelves

Figure 44



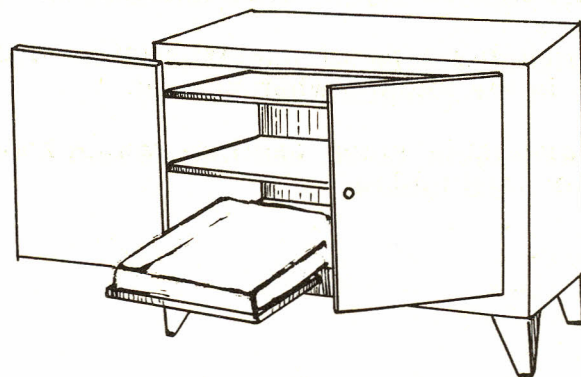
Rollaway chest

Figure 45



Low closet shelves

Figure 46



Old Buffet cut down

Electric and mechanical trains have a way of absorbing space in the middle, edges and up the walls of any room. Interesting fold-away space can be provided in several ways. Definite measurements and detailed instructions can be found in the magazines "Toy Trains", "Model Railroads" and popular homemakers editions.

Here are some suggestions:

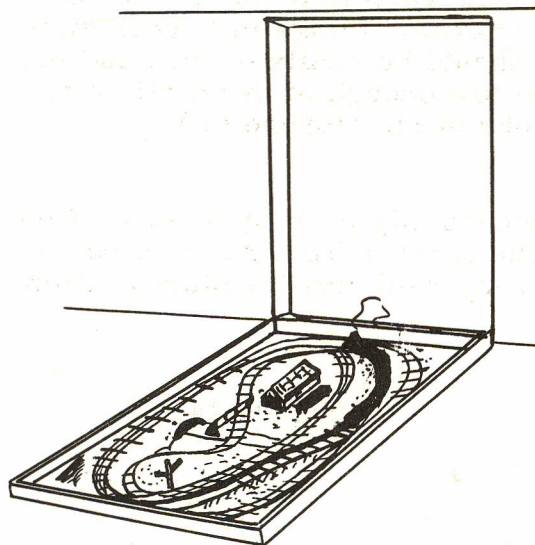


Figure 47

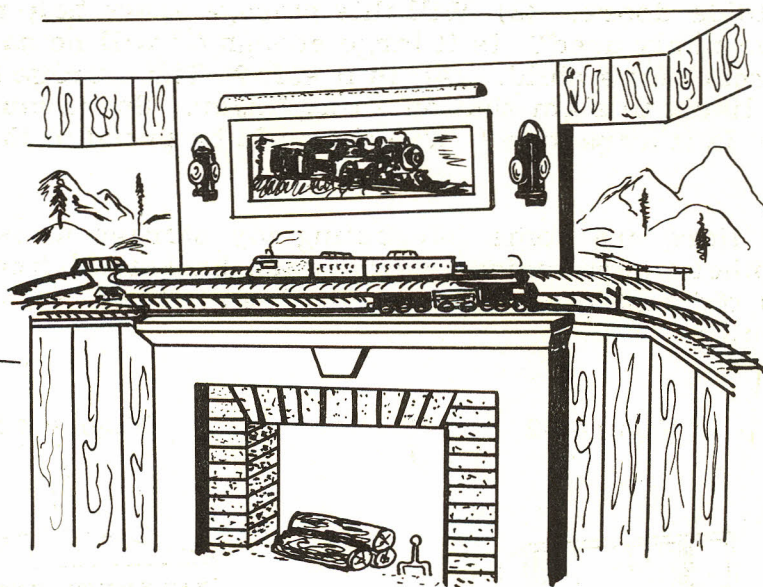


Figure 48

6' x 8' x 4" tray to fit a set of shelves of equal size against the wall. When raised, the tray fits into the room as a part of the wall.

Figure 48 shows an "around the room" arrangement which might be of interest if space allows.

Try a train track board which folds into a cabinet hung on the wall.

Tray on rollers to slide under a bed out of the traffic. Hinged lid becomes part of the extended layout when unfolded for use.

Sandtable type of constructions with lid, the top of which may be used as work space in the kitchen when needed.

Card-table-sized sections which hook together and can be used over two, three, or four card tables.