

Limited space? Try the casual approach

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Today with space, time and available income all limited, Americans have discovered a need for (and come to expect) furnishings which function in more ways than one.

"The casual way of life shuns the home as a showcase," explained Dave Farrar, national home furnishings coordinator for Montgomery Ward.

"Living space is limited, as are time and the family budget. This has led people to entertaining at home during leisure hours. Today's casual furnishings are easy and multifunctional, which means when designed properly they take up less space and require less time to keep organized and clean," Farrar said.

The furnishings he refers to often make use of natural fibers such as cotton, exposed wood surfaces and earthen colors.

"This look has become so popular that even synthetics seem to strive for a natural look and 'hand' (feel)," Farrar said.

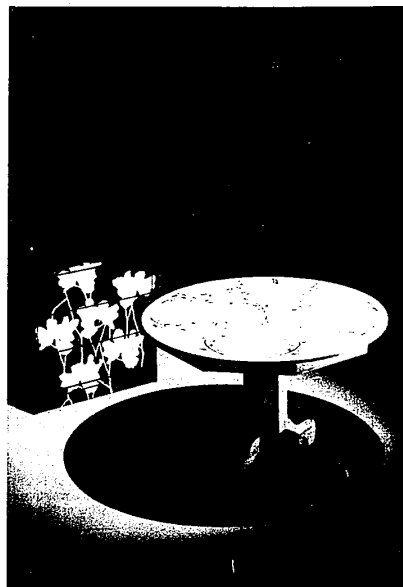
Perhaps the most important element in a casual room is multifunctional furniture.

"Furniture that serves more than one purpose is a help to save space. For example, a modular pit group functions as a sofa, as a sleeping unit and can be a great relaxation area for conversation for as many as eight to 10 people. A sofa folds out to become a sleep area. A wall unit functions as bookshelves, bar, desk and storage area all at the same time—with a minimum amount of space used," he explained.

"Adding your own personality to your casual environment can be done in many ways," he said. "One way is to use natural, unfinished, inexpensive furniture."



Sheets draped over a brass bed create a charming tent effect. The sheet treatment for the windows adds to the casual mood as do the wicker etagères.



Unfinished pieces allow for self-expression in casual atmospheres. Combine them with old favorites or use them as accents with new things. The design on the table was drawn on with pencil and finished with felt-tip pen. The flowers are from a drapery pattern, traced on the chest and then completed with paint. Cover with lacquer or clear finish.

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