

## Down to earth

# Bring early spring indoors

This is a good time to go outdoors with a kitchen knife (not clippers, because they will squeeze the stems which should take up water) and cut Forsythia branches which have formed buds.

Bring in a big bunch. Place the stem in the laundry tub, and spray the branches with warm water. Allow the branches to soak in water over night. Arrange bouquets for your friends and yourself. A plastic waste basket is good for long stems.

You can have a "today and tomorrow" look by adding some spring flowers while the buds are swelling toward bursting out in their welcome yellow. While you're soaking the cuttings, you can force bud expansion by covering the branches with a plastic dry cleaning bag in the laundry tub. Another tip—it is a good idea to "wham" the ends of the branches with a hammer to break the fibers so absorption is easier.

There is a good handbook you "dyed in the wool" gardeners will enjoy having on your garden shelf. It is Nursery Source Guide, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225, 96 pages, \$1.75.

**IN YOUR READING** and listening to other garden friends talk, you may hear about wonderful plants. Then maybe when you go to your local source, you get a blank look. If you have this handbook, you can read where to obtain plants from an extension list.

As an illustration, take Cornus Florida Welchii. The first two names identify the tree as the common white dogwood. The last name, Welchii, identifies average flowers but the foliage has beautiful leaves which may be mottled with green, white and pink. Probably a man by the name of Welch discovered the unusual dogwood and began to develop it by cuttings. Krieger Nurseries, Middlebury, Ind., 46540, carries this unusual tree.

Your columnist continues to have good luck with a poinsettia, a holly and a large fern by taking them to the kitchen every two or three nights and placing each in a bowl of water. Pour a little in the top of the pot to encourage rapid absorption. Next use your mister to moisten the flowers and leaves. Say: "Good night, sleep tight!"



By  
ALICE  
WESSELS  
BURLINGAME

and the next morning return them to their own spot. Oh, well, I don't believe in talking to plants but they like this TLC.

A LARGE, three tiered, fluorescent-light cart in the bedroom is a good idea. The moisture you spray on the leaves from the mister, the water you pour into the tray (carefully, not too much) gives good, fresh air for sleeping. And gather in a few of this and that, cuttings from your friends. Set your timer to water you with a greeting and off goes the light at your command at night. A fluorescent-light cart can make a gardener very happy in the winter as she looks outdoors and sees high snow drifts.

By the way, don't complain about the snow unless you are stuck. Remember it is a gardener's best friend, a blanket for your plants. Of course, on your foundation evergreens, you may wish to switch off the snow with a broom if your branches are in danger of being damaged by the weight of the snow.

## Room for Design

# Try mind before muscle when rearranging rooms

by Gloria Cohen

It is a long-standing joke that women have a passion for rearranging furniture. Husbands will complain loudly that they come home at night and can't find their shirts and socks. I don't think there is anything wrong with shoving furniture around and trying it new ways, if you have a theory and a strong back.

People who go in for novelties such as setting the sofa catty-wampus or a table across the corner just to be different can make bad matters worse.

You can save time and strength if you study the problem of furniture placement before you move it around. Consider the traffic patterns. Traffic lanes usually establish themselves by family living styles. Entrances and exits to a room have to be taken into consideration.

It is easier to understand a floor plan if you draw it out on a sheet of paper. Even without training, using a scale of a quarter-inch to a foot, you can draw in approximations of your furniture on the ruled squares and see how much space they occupy.

You will probably unconsciously put the large pieces where they won't have to be moved around. This may seem sound at first but if you arrange furniture on this basis entirely, you may

defeat the function of the furniture and the room.

In a dining room, for instance, the buffet, sideboard or serving table, to give the best service, should be near the kitchen or pantry door.

Furniture arrangement is a pretty personal thing and most people, especially women, pride themselves on being able to arrange well. There are a few general rules to mull over.

In the living room there ought to be more than one good seating group—even if the room is very small. Arrangement can accomplish miracles. The living room of a home should emanate cheer, comfort, hospitality and still maintain a sense of dignity. A living room shouldn't be all things to all

people, such as kitchen and bedroom combined.

Some living rooms have odd proportions. Eccentric dimensions can be used to advantage in many ways. A very narrow room, for instance, can conceivably be arranged around a huge cocktail table so that the life of the room revolves around the table.

Keep "air" around areas and furniture groups to allow for freedom of movement.

There is nothing worse than being centered in a room with a group of people and unable to dislodge yourself without hurdling myriad feet and legs. Men especially resent being confined to the middle of a sofa with little elbow and leg room.

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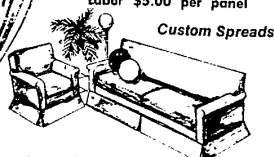
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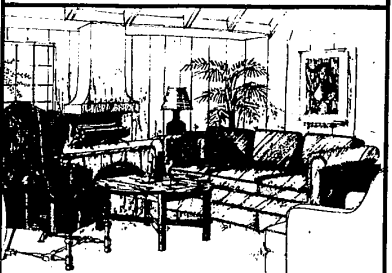
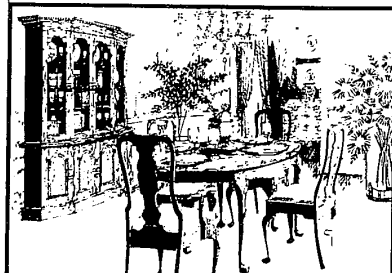
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