



"INSTANT" NEW KITCHEN: JUST ADD WATER! Fastest lift for a dreary kitchen is a bright new pattern on the walls... and nothing's easier than the new pre-pasted wallcoverings from Wall-Tex. It just takes water to activate their adhesive, so it's a cinch to smooth these vinyl wallcoverings onto walls, cabinets, even window shades! Shown here, "The Patch Works", from the "Home Free" collection. P.S. Give woodwork an instant fresher, too, with a spray of Krylon color. No need to worry about the ozone: spray paint contains no fluorocarbons.



# Spring is here at last!

## Advice to Bath Decorator: Turn Back the Clock to Achieve Subtlety and Warmth with Wood

When it comes to decorating the American bathroom, the newest idea — wood — is also the oldest. Thus, Nancy Evans says it's time to turn back the clock.

"Take your bath decor back beyond the plastic-dominated 1970s, the chromium 1950s, the baked-enamel 1930s," advises Nancy Evans, consumer affairs coordinator at Malack. Go back 200 years to colonial wood. Wood began functionally, then became decorative and now it's both — the renaissance of a gentle and graceful era.

In colonial days, nearly everything was made of wood: door hinges, buckets, tools, even water pipes. But as metals and plastics came along, wood was overlooked for function and kept for decoration.

"Today, form and function are combined in waterproofed, colonial, wooden accessories," Nancy points out.

Maybe you see wood as a single theme in your bath-

room. Or, you want to continue your overall colonial home style in the once neglected bath. Either way, try these thought-starters from Nancy:

- Replace that dated, chrome-frame medicine chest with a new wooden chest and its wide, slightly distressed frame.

- Add warmth with a new, vented, wooden hamper that prevents mildew of soiled clothes. Transform the hamper into a vanity stool by topping it with a gingham or print pillow.

- Create a spacious feeling with an artful arrangement of four or six miniature wooden-framed mirrors on a wall. It will also reflect your good design throughout.

- Try framed prints to dress up the walls.

- Provide a soft nighttime glow with the classic beauty of hurricane lamps.

- Select a variety of waterproof, wooden, bathroom accessories for added warmth and charm: soap

dishes; toothbrush holders; simple, but attractive tissue holders.

- Consider a floor-standing, wooden quilt-rack for towels — if space permits.

- Maybe you need a wall-rack for cosmetics and toiletries.

- Complete the nostalgic, but practical effect with wooden towel-racks — available in a variety of sizes and widths. Many are multi-tiered to hold both bath and hand towels. Base your selection on available wall and floor space — and family size.

- "Good home decorating is an extension of you in every room," Nancy Evans concludes. "So why not use practical, economical wood in your bathroom? Wood is gentle to the touch, exquisite to contemplate, tractable in loving hands, stronger by weight than iron. Wood is — as William Penn said — 'a substance with soul.'"

## Explore Home to Find More Living Space

Just as children go exploring for private spaces to play in the attic or basement, so, too, do adults look for room in the home that can be turned into useful work or hobby areas.

Where a child might create a magic kingdom with trunks and piles of suitcases for walls, an adult is more likely to search for a place to organize an interest. The object is to contain the clutter that goes with pursuing a business activity, doing volunteer work, and running a household. Furthermore, work goes more easily when conditions are right, i.e., when lighting, file storage, and a writing surface are arranged to accommodate a work flow.

Short of adding a room to the house or remodeling a bedroom to become an office-in-the-house, what is possible?

Tom Doherty, design director for Naugahyde vinyl fabric, has some ideas.

"First, survey the house," he says, "to see how traffic patterns and conversational groupings interact."

"Look for ends or corners of rooms that get little use. Consider minor structural changes. Maybe a door can come off a closet and, with the addition of shelves and a work surface, the closet can become a mini-office."

Doherty makes the point that very little space is often enough to serve the purpose, making the addition or conversion of an entire room unnecessary. As little as 35 or 40 square feet in an existing room can make an ideal office, for instance.

Doherty spends most of his time on design and engineering of the vinyl upholstery and wallcovering fabric with a tough, laminated construction.

"Vinyl can be made to look like anything," Doherty said. "We give it slick, glossy, vinyl finishes in nearly three hundred colors, but we also make it look and feel like leather, suede, or corduroy. What makes it different from these materials are its easy-care properties. Lamination gives it great resistance to tears and scuffing. Naugahyde can be wiped clean with a damp cloth or scrubbed with soap and water."

Doherty developed his theories on exploring for special spaces in the home while researching fabric performance standards.

"There are chairs in every home that are sat-in every day for at least four or five hours. There are other chairs that are rarely touched," he notes. "Furniture in family rooms, hobby rooms, and in-home offices gets the hardest wear. They need a tough, durable vinyl fabric that should be available, ideally, in many colors and many textures."

The vinyl upholstery comes in 535 colors and about thirty different textures.

An example of Doherty's office-in-a-closet is one designed by Gerri Lewin of Cheltenham, near Philadelphia. This was a large, walk-in closet with a window, but it was just wasted space. The designer laid a forest green-and-cream ceramic tile floor,

then added a storage chest covered with poppy red cushions as a window seat. She repositioned the existing shelves to put more storage and work area at arm's reach. For a softening effect, for warmth, and for acoustical control, she covered the walls with yew green vinyl, a color that matched the deep green of the ceramic tile floor. The pattern she selected, "Burnished Antique," has the soft, pebbly texture of fine kid.

### Flow-on Lamination Makes Tough Fabric

Soaring building costs have produced a space crunch with new apartments and homes scaled down to offer less living space per capita, per dollar. Often remodeling and home improvement projects offer greater value as home owners seek ways to get more use from fewer square feet. Separate dining rooms are in decline and multi-use rooms are becoming standard.

One result of this is that fabrics and finishing materials, especially upholstery, are being subjected to harder and more intense wear.

Working on the problem are manufacturers like Uniroyal, maker of Naugahyde, which has found a way to laminate as many as eight layers of fabric to form a tough surface with unusually high tensile strength. Jim Foster, director of research and development, believes that new techniques in flow-on lamination will provide the answer.



DEEP CLOSET WITHOUT DOOR becomes pocket-size office. Acoustical Naugahyde vinyl fabric on walls deadens sound in room with ceramic tile floor. Shelves have been repositioned to bring storage space and work surface within arm's reach. Leather-look vinyl in deep yew green wipes clean with a damp cloth. Used as wallcovering, it has great resistance to tears and scuffing. Storage chest covered with poppy red cushions serves as window seat. Interior design by Gerri Lewin, Cheltenham, Pa.

## Color Puts the Spotlight On Today's Housewares

Bright and brassy. Subtle and sophisticated. The colors of housewares today are light-years away from the austere hues of the past.

Hot orange, chocolate brown, brandywine, and brilliant yellow are currently among the front-runners in today's color-conscious housewares market. Next year? It's anybody's guess.

Says Sam Hohulin, chief industrial designer for The Eureka Company: "You can never say a particular color is here today and will stay forever. It's like clothing styles and new car models; manufacturers' have to be continually on top of color trends."

In 1909, when the first electrically powered sweepers were introduced, vacuum cleaners were black and gray. These somber shades gave way to beiges and off-whites. More recently, avocado and gold were the leading hues.

Hohulin says that this year's prevailing colors in vacuum cleaners are the "richer, more expensive colors, such as brandywine, and the deeper shades of blue, brown and green."

Eureka's new line of Power Teams, for instance, comes in brandywine, a color chosen, says Hohulin, "after we surveyed housewives recently on their color preferences in vacuum cleaners."

The company's new up-rights, in metallic ginger

brown, also reflect new consumer color choices.

Hohulin believes color ranks third — after price and product features — in the consumer's buying decision. "Nobody is going to tell you that she buys something because of the color — especially if it's a household appliance like a vacuum cleaner."

"But surveys conducted by the Eureka Home Care Institute confirm that color and appearance play an important part in the purchase decision."

Louis Cheskin, director of the Chicago-based Color Research Institute, says his studies have shown that people are deeply affected both physiologically and psychologically by color. Warm colors (red and related shades) tend to stimulate; cool colors (blue and related shades) are noted for their calming effects.

Hohulin says that color trends in the housewares industry are strongly influenced by shifts in the automotive, clothing and furniture industries.

Color? "It's something we're watching at all times," says Hohulin. "There's no particular color or group of colors that are going to stay popular forever," he adds. "That's why we've got to look at all areas of living where color is important and keep pace with consumer preferences."

and with it fresh ideas for our winter-weary homes. Whether it's new wallpaper for the kitchen, a colonial wood look for the bath or the transformation of that walk-in closet, you can raise some of the money you'll need for these and other projects with an Observer & Eccentric classified ad.

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