

Enjoying decorating on a budget

The best definition of budget is "value for your money." By following that rule of thumb, overspending would entail paying \$50 for an ashtray. Conversely, the purchase of a \$100 sofa would be underspending. While few of us can afford to splurge, none of us can afford to skimp on our homes — whether they are country estates or space-shy apartments.

In the eyes of one outstanding furniture executive, budget does not mean cheap — it means intelligent use of money. Buy a really good bed, sofa and carpet and make do with things such as chairs, tables and storage pieces that will be replaced gradually as they can be afforded.

Perhaps the key to the whole idea is that a budget should guide and not nag. It is a measure of what you can afford to spend, and within that measure, there can be delightful freedom of choice. There are many ways to decorate on a budget.

SOME FOLKS are dedicated scavengers. From some of the fussiest attics and secondhand shops across the country, you can assemble enough beautiful finds to furnish two homes. You will rarely need to spend more than \$50 for anything but a major item. There are baskets of all shapes and sizes to decorate a kitchen wall. Few of the baskets cost for than 50 cents



design

Gloria Cohen

apiece. There is crisp charming wicker, which can be restored, painted and brought up to snuff with little effort.

Some people are romantics who believe you should approach life with curiosity and a sense of impulse that permits you to buy the emotional, even nonsensical item you love at first sight. These objects enrich your awareness and appreciation of life and should be written right into any decorating budget just as if they were necessities.

There is another view of budget decorating — that is to make a distinction between investment and expenditure. Investments are things that you will live with for a long time. Expenditures are things bought for short-term use. A well-decorated home should be a natural mixture of both.

Another point of view is to invest in classic furniture, for example a sofa, covered with a neutral colored, unpatterned fabric that doesn't date over the years and become yesterday's style.

If it is a classic design, upholstered well and of sturdy construction, it will serve you well through the years of

other changes. A piece such as a classic big, beautiful armchair that can be shifted from room to room to changing storage demands falls into that type of category.

Investments also include a work of art that improves with age, or a piano that serves several generations as a piece of furniture as well as a source of immense personal pleasure.

EXPENDITURES are principally the changeable elements in your home. They are those things used expeditiously

and experimentally and discarded when they are no longer useful or pleasing. Window shades, curtains, slip covers, area rugs, accessories, wall hangings, are all temporary furnishings that suit the mood of the room at a certain time.

Improvisation is the best way to fool the budget and make furnishings suitable for the intended purpose. You can, for example, lay your tile floor just to the edges of a large area rug, and not under it. A beautiful skirted table is actually an unpaired circular piece of plywood on a plain wood cylinder base. It is cleverly concealed by a floor-length felt cloth trimmed with braid.

There are many ways to decorate cleverly and judiciously. The main thing is to give furniture air, let it breathe. Don't crowd a lot of furniture into one room.

Bird houses, feeders, win prizes for 3 youth

Three new blue ribbon winners in the Farmington area are Alison Frontier, Michael Kopitz and Kitty Wheeler who won the honors in the 1980 Bird House and Bird Feeder Contest sponsored by Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department in cooperation with Farmington Kiwanis Club.

Alison, 8, is a Farmington resident who won the top prize in the bird feeder category. Her feeder was fashioned from her own design, and created from

a plastic bowl and an egg carton.

Michael is an 11-year-old Farmington Hills resident who won the blue ribbon for his home for woodpeckers in his age category. It had a removable backing to facilitate cleaning.

Kitty is a 9-year-old resident of Farmington Hills who won in the bird house category for her age group with a neatly constructed home for bluebirds. It was constructed of plywood with a detachable roof for cleaning.

40-mile bike path opens

The longest bicycle path ever constructed by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is the most complex project built in the state for non-motorized transportation.

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