



# Home crafters have advantage in redecorating

Are your digs looking a little worn, but you don't have the cash (or the time) for a complete design overhaul? Check out your local fabric or crafts store, or take a class at a local community college.

Chances are that a few hours and a little patience are all you need to perk up the bathroom or enliven an old chair.

To paint a headboard onto a wall, begin by preparing the wall for painting. Wash away dust and any soil that may prove damaging to the paint job. Smooth out the area to be painted by lightly sanding with a fine grain sandpaper. Then dust a final time with a damp cloth.

Define the design area for your headboard. The width of the design will need to be just slightly larger than the width of your mattress. But when marking the top and bottom of the headboard, remember to allow a space not only for the mattress but also for the pillows.

A GOOD RULE OF THUMB is to begin the base of the design approximately 1 foot up from the top of the bed.

After selecting the design area, you may want to mark it with chalk. This will help keep the line straight when you paint, and any chalk not covered in the painting process can easily be washed away later.

The next step is important as you give the overall design a strong background. To do this, either paint the entire headboard area with a color that contrasts with the wall, or use a contrasting color in a large border design around the four sides of the headboard.

Another option for your background is to divide the area vertically into equal thirds, with 3 inches between each square. After stenciling, these three panels will work to help you form a cohesive design.

Once this background paint has dried, begin applying your stenciled design. A large central motif with smaller geometric elements on either side is one way to approach the design. Or apply an all-over pattern, such as diagonal stripes or a checkerboard effect.

If you have a favorite stencil pattern with a scale too small for the head-

board, follow a few simple steps to enlarge it.

Use a large piece of cardboard and draw a grid on it with a ruler. Next trace your stencil pattern onto graph paper. Then carefully draw the design represented in each graph paper square onto the corresponding cardboard square. Once you have finished transferring the pattern, cut out the design portion to create an enlarged template.

ONE EXCITING project to brighten up your bathroom is a new cloth shower curtain.

The easiest method of sewing a shower curtain of your own is to find bed linens that fit the style of your bath. A flat sheet for a double bed, for example, is the ideal width for a standard tub/shower. For the more narrow corner shower, a twin-size sheet fits the bill.

Among the linen designs for your bath are nautical designs such as sailboats or anchors, wildlife patterns, including ducks or geese, and floral or paisley patterns.

Because all sides of a sheet are al-

ready finished, the only sewing involved is to make buttonholes along the top of the sheet through which the curtain rings can fit.

Remember to count the number of rings before planning the spacing of the buttonholes. The standard number of rings is 12 for a tub/shower and six for a shower stall.

Space the buttonholes properly by first placing one on either side of the top border one inch from either side. Measure the fabric between these two holes. Now divide that measurement by the total number of rings, minus one. The length that remains is the space that should be allowed between each ring. Place a straight pin to mark the spacing across the top. Adjust the pins as necessary to make the spacing more exact.

AT EACH PIN marker, sew a buttonhole. Then hang the curtains simply by inserting a shower ring in each hole. At the same time, hang a plain plastic curtain on the inside of the cloth curtain. You may be able to use the plastic curtain you had been using to retain shower water. With both the plastic curtain and the cloth curtain in-

place, your fabric will be better protected from water and mildew.

You can keep water off the floor by tucking the plastic curtain inside the tub or shower rim. Then the full length of the cloth curtain hangs outside the rim for maximum effect.

There are a couple of inexpensive tricks that are less thorough than completely reupholstering the furniture.

One popular solution to the problem today is to sew a slipcover for a padded chair, loveseat or sofa. Although the fabric will fit more loosely than fabric stapled into place with upholstery staples, the furniture will end up with a fluffier, more rounded look as a result.

ADDING RUFFLES around the rim of the slipcover will also give the piece a softer look, and because exposed wood on the back, arms or legs of the furniture will be covered, you won't need to worry with wood that has become scratched and nicked.

To sew a slipcover, cut a piece of fabric the size of each of the various parts of the furniture — the back, seat, arms front and so forth. As a guide, compare the pieces you cut with

the fabric already on the furniture but remember when cutting the slipcover fabric, to add a bit more than an inch on all sides to allow for seams and for fitting the cover around the furniture.

Sew the pieces of fabric together, shaping them to a casing that will fit over the sofa or chair. After slipping the cover into place like a pillowcase, add decorative accents such as buttons or fabric bows across the back, in front of the arms or along the base.

Another temporary covering that is even simpler than a slipcover is a fabric throw. This solution requires no sewing, although you can stitch together a throw if you don't have anything suitable. The idea is to use a bedspread or blanket, a large shawl or an old dropcap to wrap over the seat, arms and backs of the chair, then tuck into place to help it stay.

In selecting something to use as your furniture throw, make certain that the fabric is large enough to cover an effective area of the furniture. It isn't important if portions of the original upholstery go uncovered — as long as these are not the torn or stained parts.

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