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Homes and Gardening



PLAY PLATFORM IN YARD ANSWER TO CHILD'S DREAM

Play structure is replacing slides, jungle gyms and the like in many parks and kid gathering places everywhere. Psychologists claim these structural abstractions stimulate young imaginations and what yesterday was Alibab's cave might today be a 25th century rocket ship.

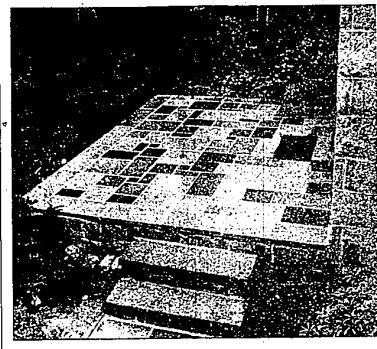
A play platform built of Douglas fir in your own back yard follows this same concept of transforming a simple object into a thing of rare delight through the magic of "let's pretend."

Children love to get off the ground, so the play platform should be elevated—not too high so that it is dangerous, but high enough to be the deck of a pirate ship or an opera stage for the dainty diva.

You can build a big, sturdy stage by using inexpensive grades of fir. For the floor, two-by-fours spaced a quarter-inch apart will allow water to run through, keep it dry under foot, and a fir frame underneath set on cement piers will form a base for flooring.

Fences will serve as supports for three of the corners. If the platform is built in a corner where they intersect, a post will support the fourth corner.

And such a platform will keep the kiddies out of the mud, to a certain extent, on rainy or damp days, and will keep their feet dry.



Use Of Stone Adds Distinctive Touch And Extra Value To Low-Cost Home

If you own a low cost house, or one that's a look-alike with a dozen others on your street, or if you're just bored with the appearance of your property, try using natural stone to add a touch of distinction and beauty.

A flagstone patio such as the one shown above can be constructed by just about any "do-it-yourself" enthusiast in spare hours.

If possible, face your patio toward the east. It will be warm in the morning and relatively cool during the late afternoon.

When you are laying out your patio, keep in mind that you may want to add a barbecue, and keep a shut reserved for it.

Another do-it-yourself project which is practical as well as attractive is a stone curb along your driveway. With such a curb you can reduce your upkeep to a minimum of trimming. A stone edging along your flower beds will serve the same purpose.

Use natural building stone to improve the appearance of your property. A little imagination, a little work, and you'll be surprised at what you can do with a minimum financial outlay.

Especially if you are the owner of a low cost house, make it a point to add an item of natural building stone each year. You'll not only increase the beauty of your house, but you'll increase the resale value of your property as well.

FABRIC DESIGNS TREND TO INTERNATIONAL

There's plenty to talk about in the new drapery fabrics. The geographic influences that have been coming up are here in strength, with Far Eastern, Italian and Egyptian patterns suitable for any number of uses. Sophisticated prints and colors, in chintz are fast moving this cloth out of the kitchen-linoleum category.

There is diversity in both design and cloth in the new spring prints. There are no absolutes when it comes to either, except that white grounds still prevail because of easy washability, and the colors are clear and fresh rather than grayed down. Cotton constructions—bark, sail and chintz—are more popular than blends at this time of year, although Fortisan sheer weaves for draperies are becoming more and more popular.

In design, the patterns that tell a story are receiving more than usual attention. Vignettes have world-wide themes; sophisticated novelties are for all-over-the-house. Provincial means little more than small scale, all-over designs using any number of different motifs.

Advices On Tree, Shrub Pruning

Pruning your evergreens and shrubs need not be a troublesome task if a definite program is kept in mind, says Harlow W. Whittemore, professor of landscape architecture at the University of Michigan.

Pruning may be done to improve the natural shape of a tree or shrub by removing those branches which are not in conformity with the natural shape.

Shrubs and small trees are frequently used as border plantings for purposes of privacy and protection. It is desirable then to retain a dense foliage right down to the ground. Pruning, therefore, consists of removing growth above, say, seven feet, and encouraging the low branches.

This is best accomplished by heading the lateral growth in, being careful not to undercut the plant so as to open up the inside of the shrub. Pruning in this case should be done somewhat on a slant so that the sun is able to reach inside of the shrub right to the ground, the landscape authority indicates.

Such shrubs as lilacs and bush honeysuckles are bound to become somewhat "leggy." The only solution may be to cut the plant back.

Some persons like to use thorny plants, such as bush roses, wild plums, wild crab apples and toothache trees, to keep out animals. It is advisable to let such plants grow on their own until they reach a point where a good vigorous cutting back is called for. A formal hedge, a privet or barberry, requires constant pruning because, if neglected, it is difficult to reshape.

Evergreen hedges can not be very well pruned at the height desired but they should be kept back into proper form and allowed to grow slowly. It is a mistake to assume that hedges can be kept within a width of two feet. Minimum width which can be kept is about four feet.

If your child's breakfast appetite is not what you'd like it to be, try letting them play for half an hour before calling them to the table. A little exercise before eating will increase anyone's appetite.

No two children are exactly alike, especially if one is yours and the other isn't.

Fireplaces Have Dual Role In Home

There's not such a great difference between the picturesque, huge old fireplace with its iron wall bracket to hold utensils, and the clean, modern fireplace you see in today's home fashion news. The former was an absolute necessity to take care of all cooking and heating requirements. The latter, today's modern fireplace, isn't an absolute necessity, but it has become once more as functional as it was then.

A good many modern homes, which combine the kitchen and dining area, include a fireplace. Often with a barbecue unit, in this living center. Made warmer and friendlier by the fireplace, it becomes suitable for informal entertaining and it permits the family to enjoy barbecue dinners long after warm weather has passed.

Functional fireplaces such as these have been the bulk of functional materials. But they can also be decorative and fit into the overall design. More and more architects and decorators are turning to natural stone. Stone offers both beauty and durability. With the choice of colors and textures available in this building material, it is possible to design a completely modern period or traditional fireplace.

The house of old was often literally built around a fireplace. Stone fireplaces are built to function as part of the architectural design. Their role has changed, but not their importance. In an entirely different sense, fireplaces are again becoming the center of the home.

CAUTIOUS HANDLING ADVISED IN USE OF INSECTICIDES

Recent accidents from handling insecticides on the farm—both in spraying and dusting—should mean greater care with the materials, says John Trocke, assistant county agricultural agent.

The concentrated insecticide is especially dangerous when taken from the bin because it is poisonous, Trocke emphasizes.

Diluted forms of the concentrated material generally are more dangerous than the powders, but this doesn't mean, he cautioned, that powders can be handled carelessly.

Extension entomologist Ray Jones of Michigan State College believes these pointers in handling insecticides are important:

Masks and protective clothing should be worn when concentrated insecticides are handled and when spraying with especially poisonous materials.

Don't put in a full day when you're dusting with such materials as parathion.

Don't expose yourself to drifting sprays or dusts.

Don't climb into the spray tank or dust hopper to clean them out.

Wash and change clothes if insecticides are spilled on your clothing.

Be sure to read the label on the container for instructions on the use of each chemical.

Report Heavy Inquiries On Dutch Elm Disease

Oakland County Extension Agent John Bray reports that five or six calls daily are coming in from home owners asking about Dutch Elm Disease.

Twice samples from suspected trees sent to the state forester or to the County Extension office, are forwarded to the laboratory at Michigan State College at East Lansing for diagnosis.

A glider describing the disease is being used for the asking, says Lyle Abel, county agricultural agent.

TODAY'S FURNITURE MADE TO FIT INTO MOST ANY SPACE

Today's variety of sizes in furniture provides a selection that is practically made to measure. Furniture is planned to span the widest wall area or to fit snugly into tight quarters. Moreover, it is varied enough so that each room can avoid monotony by enjoying the contrast of lengths and heights.

Sectionals, long the greatest proponent of a variety of sizes, more frequently appear in chair-size pieces, giving them a potential not alone as sectionals, but also as individual chairs.

And this wider variety of chairs includes a greater selection of small tub chairs, long absent from the scene. These mighty mites carry decorative frames which can enhance any setting.

The size of upholstered pieces naturally affects items closely related to them—especially tables. Tables take to longer lengths to complement sofas, and they also take to height to meet the special needs of the wealth of Tuxedo styles which are in evidence.

About 1400 Michigan home-makers are expected to attend the Homemakers' Conference to be held on Michigan State College campus July 12-22. They will enroll in classes of their choice, take part in recreational activities and tours, and listen to nationally known speakers who represent a variety of fields including a P. H. I. agent, a Michigan minister and a popular psychologist.

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- 6 Remove air bubbles, adjust lid and seal
- 7 Place in canner
- 8 Process for specified time
- 9 Remove from canner; readjust lids, cool
- 10 Test for tight seal
- 11 Label and date
- 12 Arrange on shelves

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- 5 Label and date
- 6 Place in freezer

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