

ROOM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT For 4-H Clubs

Dressing Unit

UNIT III

Dressing Table and Storage for Clothes



Circular 449

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
College of Agriculture and Home Economics
Agricultural Extension Division

Thomas P. Cooper, Dean and Director

ROOM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR 4-H CLUBS

Have you often wished for a room of your own in which to express your particular likes in furnishings, colors, and accessories? You may have this wish—though more will be needed, of course, than wishing. The 4-H Room Improvement Project gives you an opportunity to make your room attractive, so that you will be proud to show it to your friends, and so that you will enjoy working and playing in it. Whether you have a room of your own or share it with another, and whether your family owns the house or rents, may make some difference in the approach, but the final result can be the same.

Attractive rooms are not obtained with money alone. If the finished room is to be satisfactory, you must do intelligent planning before buying the furnishings. Many times a girl will find that with careful planning and her own skill she can create an attractive room at very little cost.

The first step in beginning the Room Improvement Project is to make a study of the room, considering the following 5 units in the Room Improvement Project:

1. Planning Unit
2. Arrangement Unit
3. Dressing Unit
4. Reading, Sewing, or Study Unit
5. Sleeping Unit

Each of these units includes enough study and work to comprise a 4-H Club Project. Older girls may complete more than one unit in a year if they have time to carry out the requirements satisfactorily.

The Planning Unit is basic in the Room Improvement Project, and, as a rule, should be the first unit taken. However, if the background of your room, the walls, floor, and woodwork, are in good condition, you may start with another unit. It is wise to start your room work with the unit which is needed most and that which you can carry out successfully. In any of the 5 units, consider color, pattern, and texture of the backgrounds of the room before starting work.

Dressing Table and Storage for Clothes

Room Improvement Project for 4-H Clubs

By EDITH LACY, DOROTHY GENTRY, and LYDA SUTHERLAND

To be well groomed and attractively dressed, you must have a convenient place for dressing, and plenty of space for your clothes. In this unit of the Room Improvement Project you should provide a dressing table or dresser with a mirror; a clothes closet with enough hangers, shoe rack or bag, garment bags, hat boxes, and enough drawer space for clothes and accessories. The Dressing unit is a project on which most girls need to concentrate. In this unit work is to be done not only on dressing table, closet, and drawer space, but on the arrangement of clothing and accessories in these spaces. With careful work and planning you can soon make an attractive dressing center in your room.

WHAT TO DO IN THIS PROJECT

Head H, or Study Group

Using the references suggested and any other material obtainable, learn as much as possible about the following:

A. Dressing

1. Types of dressing tables for girls' rooms.
2. Placing table for convenience, light, and appearance.
3. Hanging mirror for proper lighting.
4. Arranging top and inside of table.

B. Clothes Closet

1. Types of clothes closets—built-in or movable.
2. Finishes for walls and floor.
3. Rods and shelves.
4. Arranging clothes closets to save time.

C. Drawer Space

1. Arrangement to save time and energy.
2. Arrangement of top of dresser or chest.
3. Placing large pieces of furniture.
4. Refinishing different woods.

Hand H, or Work Group

Choose work from the following:

A. Dressing

1. Make or provide dressing table and stool, or chair.
2. Hang mirror properly.

3. Provide satisfactory artificial lighting.
4. Arrange top and inside of table conveniently and attractively.
5. Provide a mirror long enough for full-length profile to be seen.

B. Clothes Closet

1. Provide clothes closet.
2. Finish walls, shelves, and floor as needed, using color scheme planned.
3. Provide proper rods for hanging garments, and shelves for hats.
4. Make hat stands.
5. Make shoe rack, or shoe bag.
6. Make garment protectors, garment bag, and laundry bag.

C. Drawer Space

1. Improve condition of dresser or chest by cleaning, painting, or refinishing.
2. Make partitions and boxes for drawers.
3. Arrange top and drawers conveniently.
4. Hang picture, mirror, or other object in relation to chest or dresser.

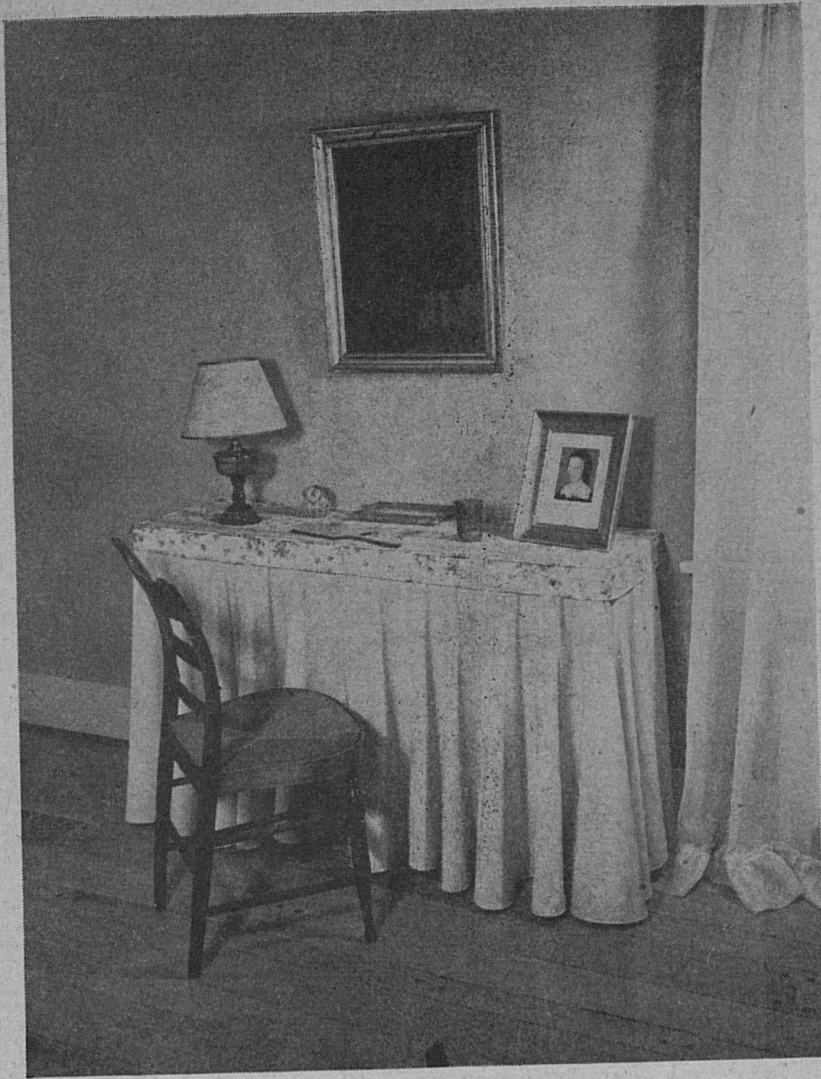
- D. Make a booklet for this unit or add a chapter to the Room Improvement Booklet already started. For suggestions on Booklet see Room Improvement Project, "Planning Unit," Circular 445.

DRESSING TABLES

Kinds

Several kinds of dressing tables may be used in a girl's room, but the kind you choose should harmonize with the room as a whole. An elaborate dressing table would not go well with simple furnishings. Neither would a fragile, dainty table harmonize with massive, ornate furnishings.

Unfinished tables are inexpensive to buy and may be completed at home. This type of table is usually made of a soft wood that has little natural color or beauty of grain and therefore looks better painted. To finish the table rub it with sandpaper and steel wool following the grain of the wood. Rub first with "0" steel wool, then "00" and finally "000." When the table is very smooth, dust it thoroughly, and apply a coat of filler. This fills the pores of the wood, so that less paint is needed. Choose a color of paint that will carry



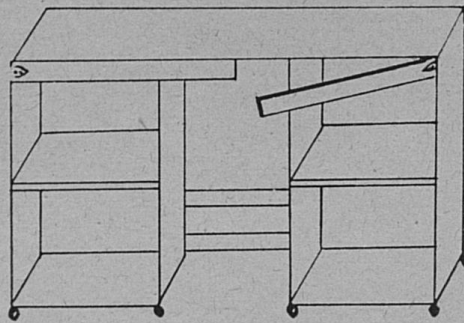
Homemade dressing table with circular skirt and fitted top cover.
(Illustration 1.)

out the color scheme of the room. Apply at least 2 coats. When the last coat is thoroughly dry, wax the table.

A shelf with skirt around it also makes a good dressing table. If the room is small, the shelf can be used on the inside of a closet door. Follow the same instructions in finishing the shelf as for finishing the dressing table.

An old table and mirror can also be used as a dressing unit.

Two packing boxes placed on end about 18 inches apart with a board for the top and one for the base makes an attractive table. Sand the boxes, cover the cracks with paper or strips of wood, and paint or paper the table to match the room. Casters at the 4 corners prevent scratching the floor, and make it easier to move the table.



Two orange crates made into a dressing table.

(Illustration 2.)

Skirts for Tables

Gathered or pleated skirts may be used on dressing tables. They may be tailored or dainty, depending on your own preference and the other furnishings in the room. The material, color, and type skirt and the furnishings in the room should harmonize. Accurate measuring and careful workmanship will add much to the attractiveness of the finished skirt. The skirt should be full and it should reach from the top of the table to the floor. For a gathered skirt, allow $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the distance across each end plus the distance across the front. For a box pleated skirt allow 3 times that distance. Divide the flounce in the center front. Use a heading, pleats, a double ruffle, or other methods of finish at the top of the flounce. Fasten the flounces to the dressing table with thumb tacks through a tape sewed on the wrong side of the flounce at the top edge. Place the table where it will get the most light. The table will look better if you leave only a few articles on top such as a small vanity box and 2 lamps. Scarfs are not usually practical, because they make cleaning more difficult.

Stools for Tables

Use a chair or regular dressing-table stool. If you have no stool, make one from a box or keg. Pad the top and dress the stool with a flounce of the same material as the table.

CLOTHES CLOSET

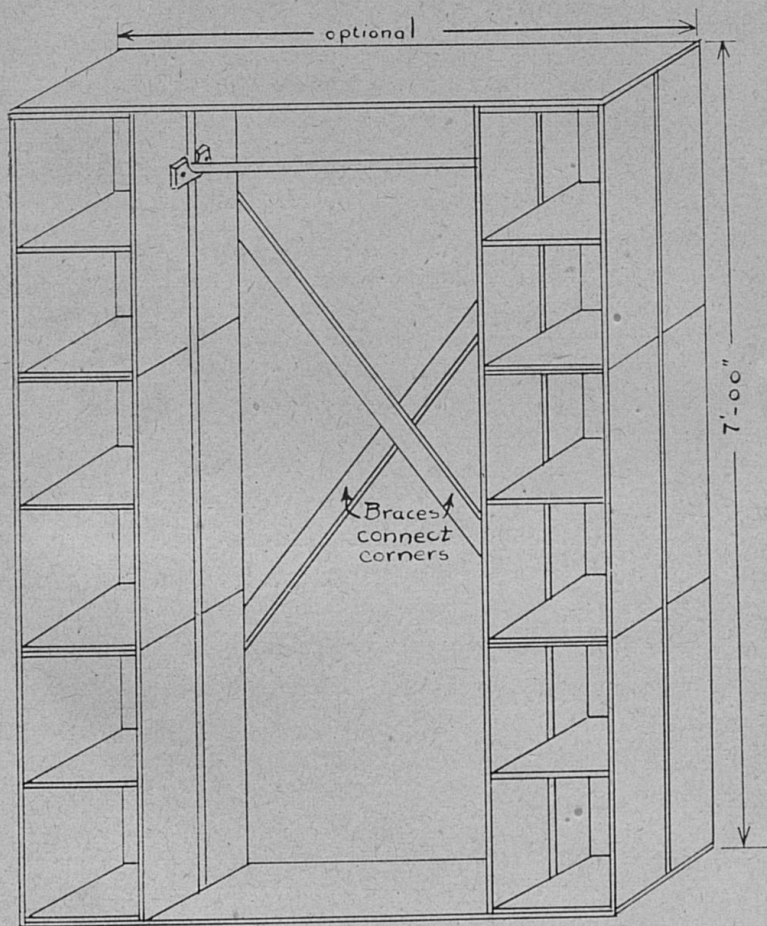
Every girl's room can have space for hanging clothing and for keeping shoes and hats. Most satisfactory is a closet built into the house. But if there is no built-in closet, and you cannot build one in, you can have movable storage space. The walls of a built-in closet may be either painted or papered, carrying out the color scheme of the room. A full length mirror can be attached to the inside of the closet door.

Shelf Wardrobe

A wardrobe can be made by fixing a shelf to the wall, about 18 inches wide and 4 to 6 feet long, and high enough to keep garments from touching the floor. Attach to the edge of the shelf a curtain in plain neutral color made of feed bags, osnaburg, cotton, or some such material.

Packing-Box Closet

Two sets of 3 packing boxes on end, about 3 feet apart with a board across the top, make a convenient closet. Finish the boxes in the same way suggested for dressing tables, and hang a curtain over the closet.



Packing-box closet.
(Illustration 3.)

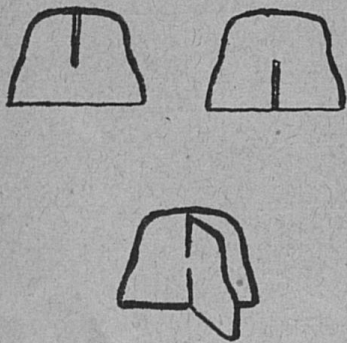
A rod to hold clothes hangers should be provided. If the closet is at least 18 inches deep, place the rod lengthwise of the closet. A broomstick makes a good rod for this purpose and may be fastened

in a socket of wood or metal. If the closet is less than 18 inches deep, screw a metal rod to the wall and hang the garments parallel to the wall. In a closet 4 feet wide, use 2 such rods.

Shelf space should be provided for hats, and boxes for clothing not in use. Fasten a shoe bag or rack to the door, or the closet wall.

Hat Stands

Make hat stands from round cardboard boxes, and paper with wall paper which matches the room, or cut the stands from cardboard as shown in Illustration 4.



These hat stands are easily made from pieces of heavy cardboard.

(Illustration 4.)

Garment Protectors

Make garment protectors for garments not frequently worn, and those easily soiled, such as party clothes and best dresses. Use feed sacks, percale, cretonne, or chintz. Cut pieces the shape of the top of a wire coat hanger and about 12 inches deep. Sew together on top edge leaving a hole for hook or hanger to go through. Bind the bottom edge of the protector.

Laundry Bags

Cut 2 strips 30 inches long by 18 inches wide. Curve the top of both pieces to the shape of the top of a coat hanger. Make a slash from the top of the front piece down 10 inches in the center crease. Bind this slash. Let the lower edge of the back lap 3 inches over the front and then fasten it with buttons and loops. This makes it easier to get the soiled clothes out. Sew up the top and sides, and place bag on coat hanger.

Reference: U.S.D.A. Farmers Bulletin 1865, "Closets and Storage Spaces."

CHEST OF DRAWERS

The outside surface of the chest should be put in good condition. If the color and condition of the finish is satisfactory, clean it by washing a small area at a time with mild soap and water and then with clear water. Dry thoroughly and wax. This is a good way to clean any painted or varnished surface. If the chest is made of cherry, walnut, mahogany, or maple, it will probably be best to remove any old paint or varnish, and finish to bring out the natural beauty of the wood.

Refinishing Dresser or Chest

Remove old, thin, scaly finish by scraping with a piece of glass or a steel scraper. If the finish is thick and old, it is best to use a good grade varnish remover according to directions given on the can. Apply thickly with an even stroke. Let stand a few minutes and scrape with a flat knife. Then rub off the remaining sticky mass with a fine steel wool dipped in ammonia water. If the wood is dark or stained, bleach with a solution of oxalic acid made by dissolving 1 tablespoonful of the crystals in 1 pint of warm water. Wash carefully with ammonia water or with the neutralizer suggested on the can of varnish remover. When dry, sandpaper or rub down with "00" steel wool, until the wood is smooth. Rub with the grain of wood. Fill cracks or holes with plastic wood or stick shellac in color to match the wood. Open-grained woods, such as oak, may require a paste filler before the finish is applied.

If the wood is very old and dry it may need a coat of raw linseed oil. Let the linseed oil soak in. Wipe off thoroughly, and apply the finish. Oiling darkens the wood and brings out the grain. Stain is not usually needed on cherry, walnut, mahogany, or maple, but it is sometimes used to darken very light streaks in the wood. On poplar a stain to make the wood appear darker is often used. Stain may also be needed to darken plastic wood. The piece is now ready to be finished.

For directions for finishing, see Room Improvement Project "Reading Unit."

Dresser Drawer Boxes and Partitions

Arrange the drawers of the chest conveniently and attractively. Boxes of different sizes and shapes may be covered with wall paper, shelf paper, cotton prints, or glazed chintz and used in the top drawer. They help to keep handkerchiefs, jewelry, and accessories in order. Cardboard partitions may be made, covered like the boxes, and used in the drawers for separating underwear and other clothing. These partitions may be made as follows:

Cut 2 pieces of stiff cardboard 1 inch shorter than the height of the drawer and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches longer than the width of the drawer. Measure 2 inches from each end of each piece. Place ruler on this line and with the back of a case knife, crease along this line. Bend the cardboard back along this line. Paste the middle sections of the 2 pieces together. Put a weight on them and let them dry. Cut 2 pieces of cardboard, 1 inch shorter than the height of the drawer and 4 inches long. Spread ends apart, and paste small pieces to ends. Weight down and dry. Cover with same material as the cardboard boxes.

CHECK SHEET FOR DRESSING UNIT

The check sheet is to help determine just what needs to be done on this phase of the room. The Club girl, the leader, the agent, and the mother should help in making this check.

Name of girl _____ Age _____

Address _____

Date of First Check _____ Date of Final Check _____

	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Will improve as follows
Clothes Closet			
1. Hanging space for all dresses and coats (rod or rods)	_____	_____	_____
2. Shelf space for Hat boxes	_____	_____	_____
Boxes for clothing out of season	_____	_____	_____
3. Garment bags or dress protectors for clothing not in daily use	_____	_____	_____
4. Shoe rack or shoe bag	_____	_____	_____
5. Laundry bag	_____	_____	_____
6. Hat stands or boxes	_____	_____	_____
7. Finish and color of walls, shelves, and floor	_____	_____	_____
8. Lighting for inside of closet	_____	_____	_____

CHECK SHEET (Continued)

Dressing Table	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Will Improve as follows
1. Placed to receive proper light (day and night)	_____	_____	_____
2. Condition of finish or skirt	_____	_____	_____
3. Chair or seat (condition)	_____	_____	_____
4. Mirror (hung for convenience and proper lighting)	_____	_____	_____
5. Arrangement for convenience and attractiveness			
(1). Top of table	_____	_____	_____
(2). Drawers or shelves	_____	_____	_____
6. Rug in relation to group	_____	_____	_____
Dresser or Chest			
1. Adequate drawer space for			
(a) Undergarments	_____	_____	_____
(b) Accessories	_____	_____	_____
2. Located for			
(a) Convenience	_____	_____	_____
(b) Lighting	_____	_____	_____
3. Condition of finish	_____	_____	_____
4. Arrangement of accessories on top of chest	_____	_____	_____†
5. Drawers equipped with boxes and partitions for orderliness and convenience	_____	_____	_____
6. Rug in relation to group	_____	_____	_____
7. Picture, mirror, or wall hanging in relation to group	_____	_____	_____
8. Light	_____	_____	_____

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