

MN 2000 EF 155

Extension Folder 155

Revised August 1952

Copy 2

Managing the Home



with ease and satisfaction

Mary May Miller

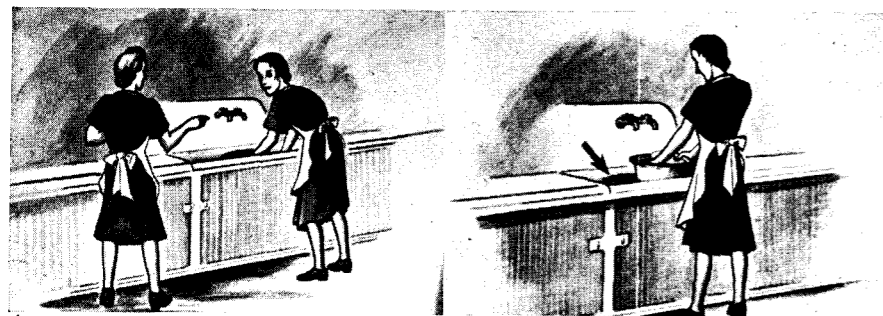
MANAGING the home with ease and satisfaction to all of the family is one of the goals of every homemaker. Many women never seem to find time for the things they should do; others never find time for what they would like to do. Here are some short cuts and timesavers for the busy homemaker ● ● ● ●

Simplify Household Tasks

PROBABLY every homemaker has days when she feels like a "Clutter Upper" and days when she is a "Polly Prim." Doubtless, there are days when she is extremely weary and days that she manages with ease and satisfaction. What makes the difference? Does she always do housework the simple way? Are there too many things requiring attention? Are family members encouraged to cooperate? Are there jobs that could be done with fewer motions, with both hands, in less time, or that could be actually eliminated? It has been said, "It is not the hours that one puts in but what one puts into the hours that counts."

Planning Easier Days. Plan with the family—what should be done, who will do it, and when, where, and how it should be done. Family cooperation is essential for specific tasks and in the care of things that are used and worn. A "nightly pickup" might well be in vogue so that an orderly house will greet the family in the morning, making way for the jobs of the day. Be willing to let down the bars in daily routine when seasonal jobs appear on the horizon. If emergencies arise, cut the corners to meet them. Do an easy job after a strenuous one—paring potatoes after washing walls and woodwork. Adjust working surfaces to comfortable heights. Provide suitable play equipment to keep children contented during the busiest hours of the day. Time out for rest is a must in a plan for easier days.

Streamlined Housekeeping. Housekeeping would not be so trying if the house were not so full,



Adjusting working surfaces to comfortable heights.

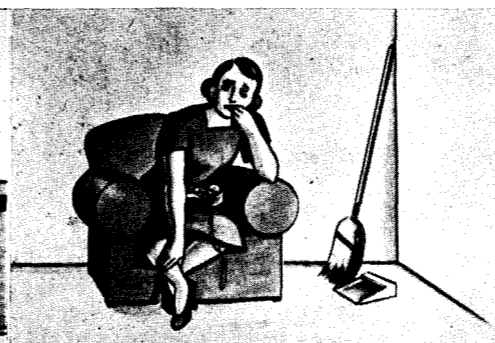
Four Busy Homemakers — Which One Are You?



MRS. CLUTTER UPPER probably finds that her most serious problem in housekeeping is storage space which is so limited that she wastes time and energy hunting, handling, sorting. Every time she tackles the overflowing attic, closets, or cupboards, she vows, "Never again will they become so cluttered. Never, never again!"



MRS. ALWAYS WEARY is so tired at the end of the day that she can scarcely put one foot ahead of the other. What is the matter? Perhaps she crowds too many tiring jobs into one day, forgetting that there is always another day. Maybe she fails to take time out to rest and does too many jobs the hard way.



MRS. POLLY PRIM is one of the stay-at-homes. She probably takes housekeeping so seriously that she is a slave to her house and family by being too fussy, too particular. She participates very little in outside interests that would widen her horizon. Neither does she spend much time with the family—she is just too busy!



MRS. EASY DAY is a "middle-of-the-road" homemaker. She has found it doesn't pay to crowd several strenuous jobs into one day. She has decided which are the "musts," the "slights," and the "needn't do's" in homemaking. She tries to be cheerful and attractive, never too weary to join her family or friends during leisure hours.

Hanging Clothes on the Line. Shake, then hang them straight without sags or wrinkles. Flat pieces will not "sprout" ears at corners if hung with 3 to 6 inches over the line. Fold dish towels, lunch cloths, and similar pieces in half to gain space on crowded lines. They will dry as quickly as other pieces and with another fold or two will be ready for storing or sprinkling. Folding the clothes when taking from the line—if weather permits—will reduce ironing time. Use a clothespin bag with a wide opening to save time.

Ironing the Clothes. Prevent wrinkles by folding sprinkled clothes tightly. Cover to keep them damp. Set basket up high and near left end of the board. Place a clothes rack, table, and clothes hangers where they will be handy. Sort the clothes by rooms, watching for tears and missing buttons. A mending kit

near by can be used while someone else takes over the ironing. Sit when possible.

according to many homemakers. Why wait for an auction or a rummage sale to launch a weeding out spree? Make it a family affair so that nothing will be overlooked. Away with surplus ornaments, extra dishes, never-used gadgets, old medicines, and the loafers in attic and basement! Clean, store, and seal "out-of-season" clothing in labeled boxes to make room for the "in-season" garments. See that useful articles you don't need are placed in the hands of those who will use them. Plan clothes closets for the adults and others for the children to reduce time in clothing care.

Three Steps in a Job. Getting ready for the job, doing the job, and cleaning up after it are the usual steps. Getting ready involves clearing a work space and arranging the equipment and supplies. The doing is done with both hands when possible and each motion and step made to count. Sitting when one can is practical. Leaving traces behind—where the potatoes were pared, the meat unwrapped, containers emptied, or the bread cut—clutters the kitchen and slows the work. A wastebasket will help. Cleaning up to make room for another job includes picking up as you go along.

Taking Blue Out of Monday

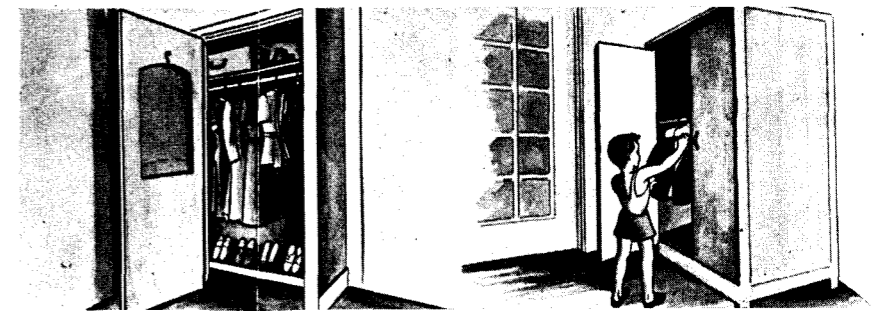
Before Wash Day. Washing and ironing are time-consuming jobs. Consider them carefully to find simpler and easier methods. Many homemakers reserve Monday for a "pickup" day and for replenishing the food supply. Food consumption is usually high over the week end and who wants to face a bare cupboard on wash day? A laundry corner or room with supplies near at hand and with tubs, machine, and ironing board at comfortable heights helps to ease washing and ironing. Several containers for small items, another for large pieces, one for colored articles, and one for rayons and nylons will save time on wash day.

Washing Clothes. On wash day, sort the articles as to kind, fabric, colors, and soil. Empty all pockets, close zippers, fasten buttons and snaps. Rub badly soiled areas with soap to loosen the dirt. Use lard for grease. Soak the clothes for a short time before plunging them into the hot water in machine. When wringing clothes or taking them from the dryer, drop small articles into one basket and large pieces into another to save time at the clothes line. Basket liners prevent stains and tears.

The Tale of a Shirt

"Ironing day would not be so hectic if 'shirt time' could be cut," says the bride. It can be cut if a padded table or a board 22 by 54 inches is used; shirt dampened evenly, not excessively; folded, not rolled. The wide board with cleats can be attached to regular ironing board. The following steps are well worth considering.

Sprinkling and Rolling. Shake out as many wrinkles as possible. Sprinkle the front and sleeves.



Streamline housekeeping—plan a clothes closet for an adult and another for a child.



Timesaving cupboards—conveniently arranged pans; upper shelves close together save space.

- Turn the collar and yoke down over the front about one-third the length of shirt. Sprinkle collar. Yoke will absorb from collar.

- Fold shirt with tail on under side. Roll lightly to prevent deep wrinkles.

Ironing the Shirt in 4 to 7 Minutes (Research study at Cornell University). Place at left end of board to leave room for ironing right sleeve. Unroll with tail over farther side of board and yoke toward you. Pick up right sleeve by cuff and shoulder. Turn placket side up.

- Start ironing from center toward shoulder of right sleeve. Nose into cuff with iron in left hand. Iron inside of cuff with right hand. Stretch seams and dry them well.

- Turn sleeve over. Repeat.

- Iron top of collar and band without moving shirt, or later when ironing the yoke.

- Crossing your arms, turn shirt over by shoulders. Ironed right sleeve now hangs over left end of board. Iron left sleeve and outside of collar and band.

- Crossing arms again, turn shirt over, fronts up. Fold yoke—not always at seam—iron yoke.

- Lift shirt by shoulders and lay it lengthwise on board with collar toward left end of board. Iron inside of left back. Stretch and press seams.

- Fold unironed left front over ironed back, smooth and iron it. Press buttonhole hem, turn hem over to press on wrong side. Retouch shirt front if necessary.

- Move shirt slightly toward back of board to iron inside of right back.

- Iron right front over right back.

- Turn button band over to iron it on wrong side. Touch up shirt front if necessary.

- Turn collar in position by folding. Ironing is not necessary. Shirt has been turned only three times—very little handling to cause wrinkles.

- Shirt is in position for folding. Button collar button and the third and fifth buttons.

Other Timesavers

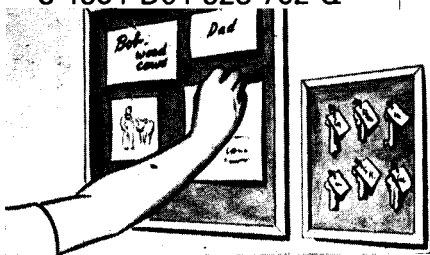
Timesaving Cupboards. Mrs. Clutter Upper marvels at the arrangements in her neighbor's cupboards—the pigeonholes for baking pans and trays, the space in lower cupboard for the pressure cooker and other heavy equipment, the divided trays in drawers for table knives, forks, and spoons, and the slots for sharp kitchen knives.

Only bowls and dishes of the same size are stacked together and favorite bowls and equipment are within reach. By spacing shelves close together and by frequent weeding out, time and energy are not wasted in useless handling and hunting.

Work Clothes Make a Difference. Homemakers can speed up if work clothes are comfortable, washable, and easy to slip into. A sleeveless house-dress of cotton crepe or seersucker does not require ironing and is just right for hot days in the kitchen. An apron with large pockets is handy for pickups when one is cleaning. Roomy, practical, safe garments for work about the farm are desirable. Work shoes with broad heels are safe and comfortable.



Training Children to Help. The wise mother will take time to tell and show her children how to do a task. She will watch, then put the child on his own. She will permit the children to choose and exchange tasks and she will encourage independence. A bulletin board will be used for messages from family members. The family that believes that the best medicine comes from a garden will plant one and take care of it.



Successful Managers

And so, the four busy homemakers—Mrs. Clutter Upper, Mrs. Always Weary, Mrs. Polly Prim, and Mrs. Easy Day—and thousands of others can find time to participate in community activities. They can find the time by planning ahead, by using short cuts, by simplifying family living, by making “good enough” do, by gaining the cooperation of family members, and, above all, by having the will and desire to participate. So, here they go, determined to manage their homes with ease and satisfaction to themselves and their family.



Drawings, Courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture;
from Film “Finding Minutes.”

UNIVERSITY FARM, ST. PAUL 1, MINNESOTA

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Minnesota, Agricultural Extension Service and United States Department of Agriculture Co-operating, Paul E. Miller, Director. Published in furtherance of Agricultural Extension Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914.