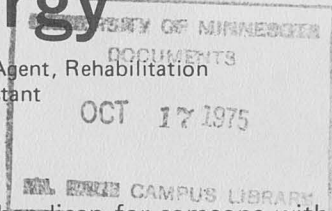


ABILITY -- not disability

With Low Energy

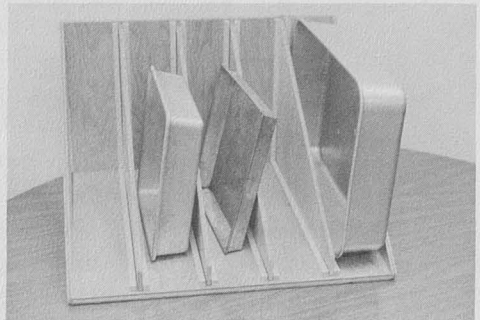
HARRIET E. MELDAHL, Area Extension Agent, Rehabilitation
with JOYCE WASCOE, Rehabilitation Assistant



Low energy can be a very real handicap for someone with multiple sclerosis, heart disease, or rheumatoid arthritis. People with any disease that leaves them fatigued should use energy saving principles and equipment.

Take short rest periods between activities. Don't try to do too much at once. Plan activities and take your time. Rushing uses energy.

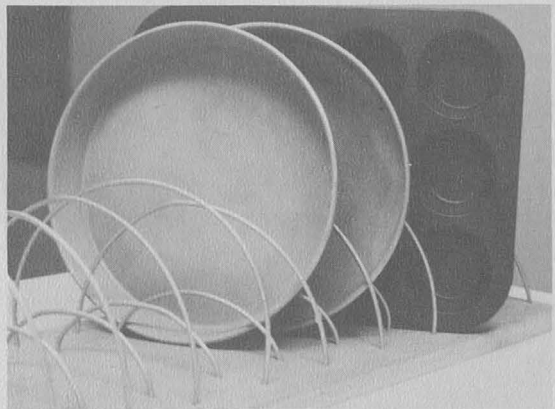
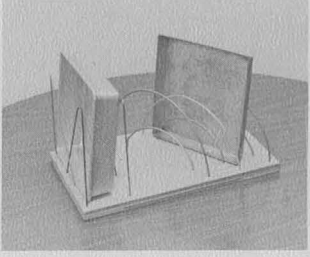
When preparing a recipe or starting on any project, first gather all ingredients and equipment. A tea cart is ideal for this. A TV tray on wheels serves the same purpose.



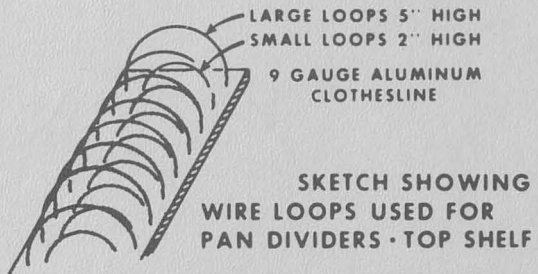
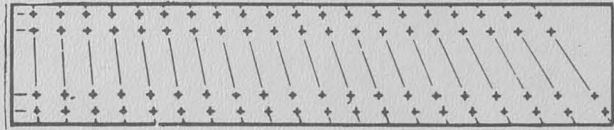
Storage

Vertical files. Store baking pans vertically rather than in heavy stacks so each utensil can be seen easily and taken out separately.

Dividers made of plywood, metal, hard board, or any thin material, are placed in grooves made in a cupboard shelf and the shelf above it, or narrow pieces of wood may be nailed on to form grooves. You could build a box-like file and set it on a shelf if the shelf itself cannot be used. Space between the grooves depends on the size of pans.



Aluminum wire or clothes hanger wire can be placed in holes drilled into a piece of plywood. This works well for lightweight pans. The 2 inch and 5 inch wire loops are spaced at any distance. Placing them at an angle permits the storage of longer pans on a narrow shelf. Aluminum wire does not rust or require painting.



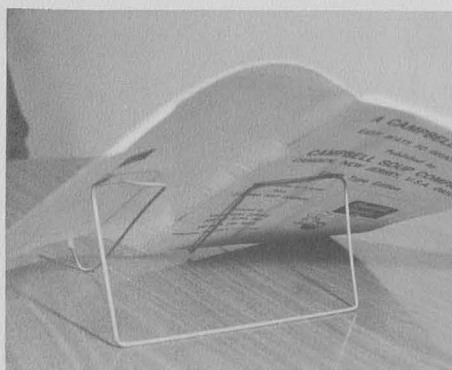
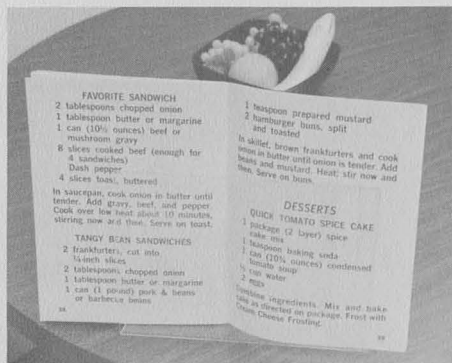
PLAN OF TOP SHELF SHOWING HOLE SPACING



Lazy Susans. Lazy Susans come in many sizes and can be purchased at hardware stores. They bring boxes and bottles around to you.

Pull-out drawers. Pull-out drawers also can be purchased at hardware stores. They bring items from the back of shelves to the front where you can reach them.

Drawer dividers. Drawer dividers can be bought or made of stiff cardboard or plywood. They keep utensils organized and easy to find.



Peg board. Peg board can be used to hang utensils within easy reach.

Convenience Foods

Often a person with a handicap lives alone and does not like to cook for one or does not have the energy to put a meal together. A well balanced diet is essential to health. Use convenience foods such as soups, instant potatoes, dried onions and parsley, and frozen dinners.

Recipe Holders

Vision problems often accompany a stroke or multiple sclerosis. When cooking, use large print recipes. A holder keeps the recipe where you can see it. A transparent plastic holder that also keeps the recipe clean is available from Sphere Designs.*

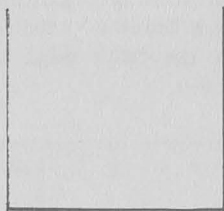
A holder can also be fashioned from a coat hanger.

MATERIALS:

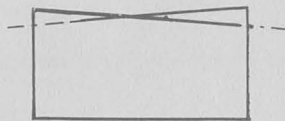
- ordinary wire coat hanger
- wire cutter
- pliers
- ruler

STEPS:

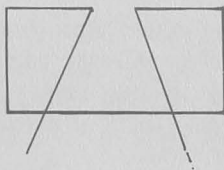
1. Twist or cut off curved end of hanger.
2. Straighten hanger with pliers.
3. Find center of hanger and with pliers form a right angle bend 4 inches either side of center.



4. Measure 4 inches up either side and form another right angle toward the center.



5. Measure 3½ inches in on either side and again form a right angle, bending wire out and downward.



6. Bend 1 inch up on the ends to hold the book. Cover sharp ends with tape or small corks. Ends may be turned up more to accommodate larger books.



Sit Down Work Area

Sit to work whenever you can. Have all ingredients at hand so you are not jumping up constantly for something.

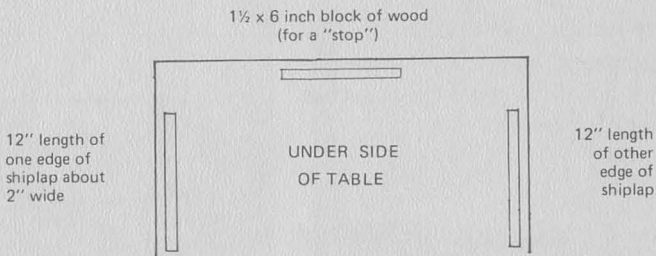
Many kitchens do not have a good sit down area, but one can be made. A TV tray fitted with a plywood top can be stored in a small space when not in use.



DIRECTIONS:

Cut a 2 inch strip from each of the grooved sides of the shiplap. This makes the grooved strips to slide the tray into. Nail these pieces to the underside of the plywood as far apart as necessary to permit the tray to slide easily into the grooves.

Nail a block of wood (approximately 1½ inch x 6 inches) as a "stop" near the back edge of the plywood. Finish with varnish, wax, or paint.



MATERIALS:

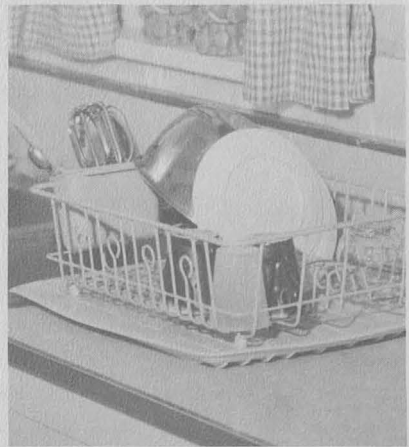
- TV or snack tray with legs
- 1 3/8 inch piece of plywood approximately 20 inches x 25 inches
- 1 12-inch piece of shi lap.

A sit down area should be low enough for the knees to fit underneath and for the hands to be below the point of the elbow when working. The chair should give good support and be comfortable. Sitting up straight with feet flat on the floor reduces fatigue and enables you to work for a long time.

Make It Easy

Let dishes air dry after washing. They will be just as clean, and you will conserve your energy. Take as many shortcuts as you can to make home-making fun.

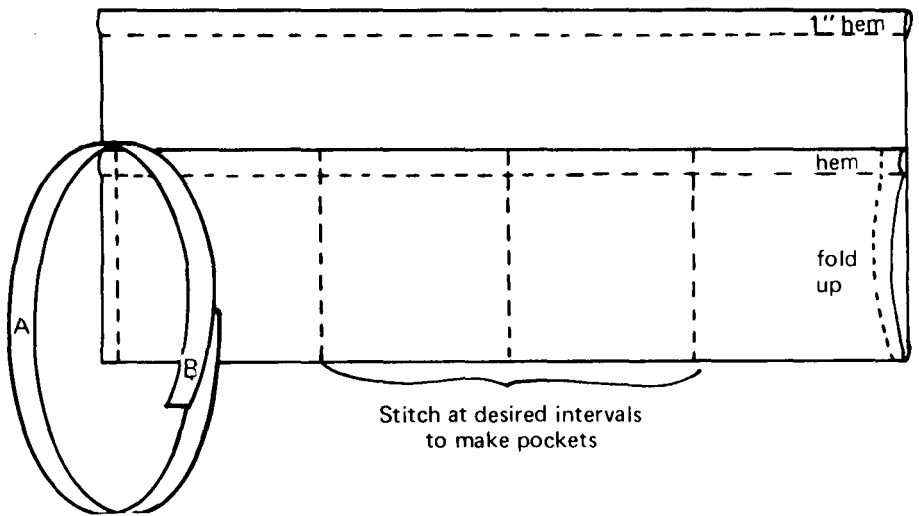
Often a house must be rearranged to suit a physical limitation. A sunporch on the main floor can be converted into a sunny bedroom so you do not have to climb stairs. Low windows that give a good view are very important for someone who is confined.



Cleaning Apron

Gathering all supplies in one place is also important when cleaning.

This cleaning apron has paper bags in two pockets: one to hold scraps to be thrown away and the other to hold items that must be returned to their proper place such as scissors. A damp sponge in a plastic bag in the third pocket wipes up stubborn spots. Old cotton stockings in the fourth pocket can be used on one or both hands for dusting. The apron clip eliminates the need for ties.



MATERIALS:

30 inches of cotton material such as terry cloth, denim, or some other easy care fabric. Amount of material may vary with height. It should be short enough to be comfortable without the contents of pockets hitting the knees.

Apron clips can be purchased at notions counters. Clips come in three sizes: small, medium, and large.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Sew a 1 inch hem at the top edge as a casing for the hoop.
2. If the material has no right or wrong side, hem the bottom edge to right side and turn up about 10 inches to form pockets. If material has right and wrong side, cut off a 12 inch piece of material and make seam with wrong sides together to turn up for pockets.
3. Stitch down along apron side edges.
4. Stitch at desired intervals to make pockets.

TO PUT ON:

Grasp the apron at center front of hoop at "A" in sketch. Hook the outside end of hoop "B" at your side and straighten until the hoop curves around your waist.

Shampooing Hair

Persons with unsteady limbs may find shampooing hair a problem. If it is done in the shower, someone should be close by in case of a fall. Sit on a stool or chair with suction cup feet. A rubber shower hose attached to the bathtub faucet can be used while sitting on a stool or chair in a tub.

Keep shampoo in a plastic container to avoid breakage. Pour it into a plastic cup first to get the correct amount if your hands are unsteady.



Be Creative

If you are confined to the home, it is important to find a creative outlet. Once you may not have had the time to pursue a hobby, but now there is plenty of time. Many ready made craft kits of every description are available from hobby and needlework shops. Art classes may develop a talent you never knew you had.

Needlepoint, crewel work, and rug hooking can give hours of pleasure. One person with multiple sclerosis saved pictures from favorite magazines and made them into collage placemats by sealing the completed picture with transparent shelf paper. The same technique can make interesting wallpaper for a kitchen.



*Mail order house for rehabilitation equipment:

Sphere Merchandising
 P O Box 266
 Northfield, Illinois 60093

The information given in this publication is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service is implied.

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