

MN 2000  
EF-188  
c.2

Extension Folder 188

September 1954

# SHORT CUTS in the home

*Lucile Holaday*



*using time and energy efficiently*

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
*Agricultural Extension Service*  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



3 1951 D04 088347 5

# What Makes for Efficiency?

A homemaker who wishes to save time and energy for other phases of family living can learn short cuts which make housekeeping easier. She can improve her efficiency and enjoy her work more if she has a real desire to improve. Some of the things which make a difference in the amount of work which can be done are:

## Attitude Towards the Job

How one feels is the greatest factor in determining the amount and quality of work that can be done. Homemaking is the most important job in the world. The homemaker is the key person in a family in establishing the right attitudes towards use of time and energy. Keeping physically well, alert, happy, and enthusiastic about the job will make work easier and more satisfying.

## Planning and Preparation

Take time to save time. Careful planning eliminates wasted time and energy and directs effort towards

those things which are important to your family. Preparation is an important step in doing any task.

## Working Conditions

Your home is your laboratory. Plan working conditions that make your tasks as easy as possible. Well arranged work areas with step saving features, good lighting, adequate ventilation, and proper working heights will increase the amount of work you do.

## Methods

Knowing the principles of good work methods enables one to do tasks with the least effort and greatest success. Study to find the easiest, fastest way of doing things to get the best results. Fit these better methods into the scheme of living for your family.

## Skill and Practice

Skill is developed by practicing until something becomes a habit. Practice better methods, develop speed, and establish habits that you do with the least amount of effort.

# You Can Improve

Are you an efficient worker? Check items where you could make improvements.

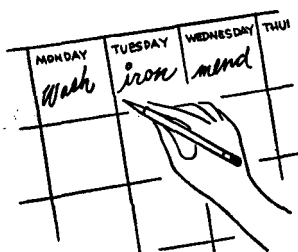
## Start with Yourself

- Keep in mind the importance of your career as a wife, mother, homemaker to your family and community.
- Base decisions on use of your time and energy according to what is important to your family.



- Decide which jobs are essential to making the home comfortable and attractive.
- Adjust your standards to meet changing conditions and needs.
- Have an open mind to new and better ways of doing things. Be willing to experiment.
- Know your own best speed and make plans accordingly.
- Maintain the kind of atmosphere in which you can work easily.
- Eliminate tension in every possible way.
- Dress attractively in clothes comfortable for the job. Keep well groomed.
- Have regular periods of rest and relaxation.

## Plan and Prepare for the Job



Plan in advance for work to be done in each period—day, week, month, season.

Form the habit of classifying jobs according to their importance and urgency.

- Check jobs to see which can be eliminated, shifted to another time, or done by some other person.
- Use lists as a check on your progress.
- Plan work so difficult tasks are distributed throughout the week.
- Eliminate the hurry, confusion, pressure of big events or busy times by advance planning and preparation.
- Leave flexibility in plans to allow for the unexpected.
- Use share-the-work ideas in your family. Keep a cooperative spirit.
- Plan jobs so they can be dove-tailed.
- Get work space and supplies ready before starting to work.
- Plan to use commercial products and services to release time and energy when practical.
- Plan uninterrupted periods for difficult tasks.
- Plan time for rest, relaxation, recreation, time with the family.

## Improve Your Working Conditions

Arrange work areas close together to reduce steps.

Arrange equipment so work moves in one direction.

Provide several working heights suited to the person and the job.

Locate tools, utensils, and supplies where first used.



- \_\_\_\_\_ Store utensils and supplies that are used together in the same location.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use gravity to move supplies—chutes, sifter bins.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Plan work lanes and doorways that are sufficiently wide for using carts, wheel trays.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Provide comfortable chairs and working levels for sit down jobs.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Have good light and good ventilation in all working areas.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use work surfaces that are easy to clean and maintain.
- 

## Develop Good Work Methods

### ★ Be motion conscious.



- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep both hands working.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use holding device to free both hands for work.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use one hand to get work in the correct position.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Shift tool from hand to hand to save shift in work or body.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Make direct motions. Avoid jerkiness.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Develop rhythm in motions. Work automatically.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Keep a relaxed, easy swing as you work.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use one repeated motion or process continuously until job is done rather than shifting motion, or laying down tool.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Arrange work sequence—usually right to left.
- 

### ★ Keep everything within reach.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Arrange equipment and supplies within easy reach at center where work is done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use highest and lowest storage for seldom-used items.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hang frequently used equipment near place it is used.



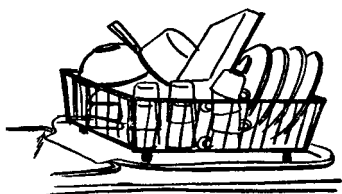
- \_\_\_\_\_ Add step shelves, half shelves, vertical dividers, drawer dividers to make space more usable.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Avoid stacking dishes and utensils or placing some behind others.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Have several sets of commonly used utensils and tools.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Elevate work to where it can be reached without bending.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Make use of racks and small shelves on closet and cupboard doors.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Hang frequently worn clothes nearest closet door.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Have low hangers, low shelves for children's clothes and toys.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Keep extra cleaning supplies where easily accessible.
- 

★ **Use the best tool for the job to be done.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Use long handled tools to avoid stooping and reaching.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use vacuum cleaner for all dusting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Invest in good tools that require little care.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have variety of knives and use proper one for the job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use sewing machine for mending when practical.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discard unused equipment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have tools properly adjusted and in good condition before beginning work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adapt habits to improved tools and equipment.



★ **Eliminate anything that doesn't have to be done.**



- \_\_\_\_\_ Drain dry the dishes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Choose clothing that does not require ironing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fold sheets, towels, and household linens without ironing.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Serve simple foods such as raw fruit instead of pie, raw vegetable plate rather than salad.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Bake cookies in sheets or squares instead of using round cutters.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use simple place mats that can be wiped off rather than large table cloths.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Put away the "dust catchers."
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Discard things no longer needed.
- 

★ **Make one task of two or more.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare food for two meals while cooking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Watch the baking while washing dishes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fold clothes to be put away as they are taken from the line.



- \_\_\_\_\_ Use a furniture cleaner that will clean and polish.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Clean and polish wood floors by applying liquid cleaning wax.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Make one trip to town serve several purposes.
- 

★ **Work without strain.**



- \_\_\_\_\_ Use a table on wheels or a cart to do a job in one trip or to carry heavy loads.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sit down to work whenever possible.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Maintain good posture in easy work positions.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Place work at comfortable level to avoid stooping and reaching.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use a tray to save steps.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Push, pull, or slide heavy objects rather than lifting them.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Get close to the object to be lifted.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Bend at knees and hip joints instead of bending back.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use leg muscles rather than back muscles when lifting.
-

## Develop Skill Through Practice

- \_\_\_\_\_ Know the important points to a new method before beginning.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do task carefully until job is standardized.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Practice until speed and skill are obtained.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Set time goals to stimulate speed.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use routine when habits are established.
- 

## *Where Can You Improve?*

How many checks do you have under each heading? Summarize them and you'll know where you can make improvements.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Improving yourself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Planning and preparing for the job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Improving your work conditions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Developing good work methods.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Developing skill through practice.

### *Short Cuts Improve Use of Time If —*

- ★ Important uses of time are kept in mind.
- ★ Effects on people are more important than minutes saved.
- ★ Short cuts are a part of total plans and good methods.
- ★ Efficiency is for a purpose—not an end in itself.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, INSTITUTE OF  
AGRICULTURE, ST. PAUL 1, MINNESOTA

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Minnesota, Agricultural Extension Service and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, Paul E. Miller, Director. Published in furtherance of Agricultural Extension Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914. 8-54—10M