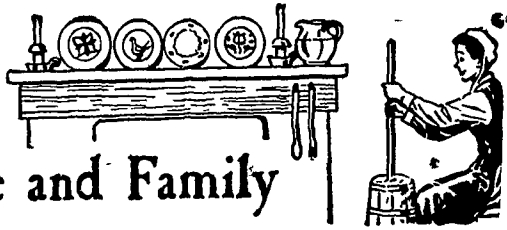


For the Farm Wife and Family



Most Out of Your Sewing Machine

By Mrs. Richard C. Spence

If you have been the lucky recipient of a new sewing machine for Christmas or if you are a beginner in sewing we have some suggestions today that might be helpful to you. And if you are an old hand at sewing you might like some of these ideas too.

It is a good idea to try new ideas that are put before you occasionally — no matter if it is in cooking, sewing, cleaning or other areas you are interested in. You might find many worthwhile time-savers (this way as well as simpler ways to do the many tasks that you have to do).

First of all, if you have a sewing machine you will want to clean and oil the machine regularly to make your sewing job easier. A sewing machine that runs hard probably needs a good cleaning. A clean, well-oiled sewing machine is a pleasure to operate and it makes your sewing job go along smoothly.

The job of cleaning is an easy one. You'll need to take out some parts of the machine to do a thorough cleaning job. Have a pie tin and masking tape handy so you can fasten the parts to the tin to keep them in order. You'll need good quality sewing machine oil and it may be worth the cost of a new can if it's been years since you've used the can you now have.

Kerosene will remove gum and grease from machine parts and a coffee can is a good container for holding parts that need to soak. Presser foot, throat plate and face plate may need cleaning in this way. Use a brush to remove lint and dust from all the working parts that aren't removed from the machine.

Locate all the oil holes and use a drop of cleaning fluid in each hole and wherever metal works against metal. Run the machine fast to force the cleaning fluid to all moving parts. This should dissolve any grease or gum. Wipe off any cleaning fluid and oil the machine in the usual way.

Now that you've gotten your sewing machine in first-class running condition, use it for everything you can. It will do more than sew a straight seam so try to use it to full advantage. Even without an attachment your machine will baste and tie threads.

Fastening threads at the end of a dart, collar, pocket or other detail is usually important to the looks of the garment. Naturally, you want the stitching to hold securely, so you can always back-stitch for two or three stitches to make sure the threads will hold. If you're going to

needle so that it won't feed through the machine. Stitch a few times in the same place. You'd better practice this method a few times before you try it on your garment.

For those who have treadle machines you can do the same thing by turning the balance wheel by hand.

Baste stitching, so handy for holding garment pieces together temporarily, is just a matter of stitching with the largest stitch. You'll save time by using the machines, rather than doing this job with hand stitching.

PROPER EQUIPMENT FOR PRESSING

As you stitch darts and seams in your garment, you'll want to press them as you go. Pressing a garment as you sew gives that professional finish. But you need the right equipment to do a good job.

A well covered ironing board and a steam iron are a good start. But a sleeve board with a point presser as a base is a good addition. The point presser is really a

slot cut in the base of the sleeve board. The narrow points left by cutting the slot fit well into the points of collars and cuffs. Then, hard to reach seams can be easily pressed open.

If someone in your family is handy with tools they may be able to make you a beater. Not one that will stir or mix, but one to press edges flat. A beater is a narrow piece of wood about a foot long that's used for putting sharp edges on hems, pleats and trouser creases. You steam the hem and then slap or beat the edge to flatten.

A steam roll is especially handy for sheers or on fabrics that show every press mark. This roll is made by covering a tightly rolled up magazine. If you press a seam open with the point of the iron the edge of the seam won't leave a mark on the right side of the material.

Pressing cushions or mitts are used to shape darts, press sleeve caps and shape the curved areas of a blouse or skirt. You can buy these in several shapes. Or you can cover a ham can or kidney shaped can, a circle or other design that fits your needs.

PROPER PRESSING PROCEDURES

You need to do two kinds of pressing when you sew a garment. Underpressing and top pressing are needed.

Underpressing is the pressing you do as you sew a garment. You'll want to press each construction detail as you stitch it. Before one seam is stitched to cross or meet another you'll want to press each seam. First, press the seam flat with the two edges together. Then, open the seam and press it with point of the iron over a seam roll (made by padding and covering a tightly rolled magazine) to keep the seam from showing through to the right side.

You'll want to shape the areas around darts or tucks as these fit over curved areas of the body. Shoulders darts, bust darts and darts, tucks or pleats over the hips all need rounding out.

You'll do the best job of giving the rounded look if you press over a pressing cushion. This gives a soft but firm rounded surface which to work. You can press the dart flat first, using the

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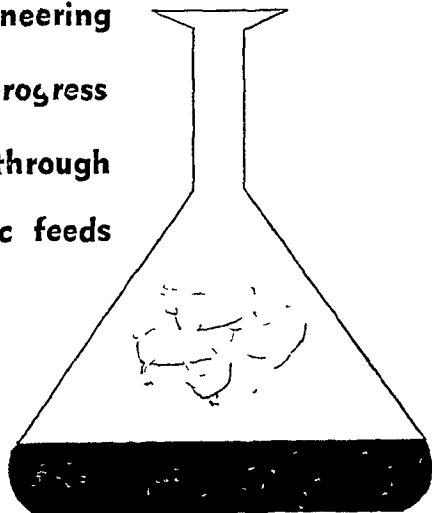
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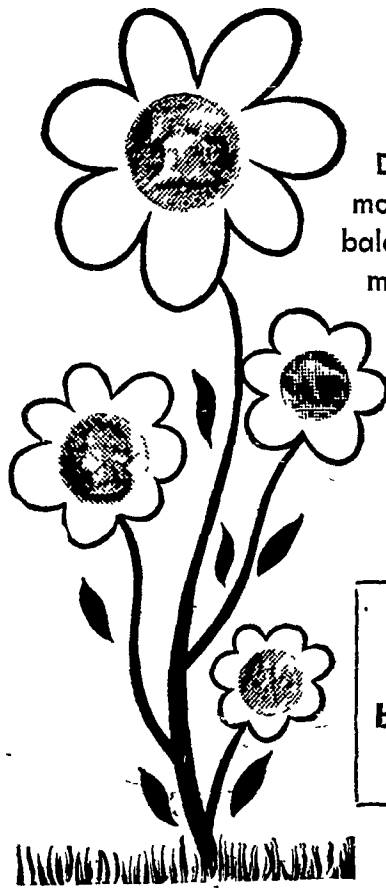
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