

## Tips on Buying Used Furniture

If buying new furniture or replacing worn or damaged pieces doesn't fit into your budget, Miss June Wilke, Chester County Extension home economist, says that you may be able to find a bargain in used pieces.

You can often find many good old pieces at garage sales, auctions, Good Will and Salvation Army stores, and used furniture stores. But to get a bargain, you need to check the furniture carefully to see that it's sturdy and well constructed.

To check the quality of a chest, take out one or two of the drawers and look at the inside corners. Wood corner posts are a sign of good quality. Put your hands firmly to the top of the chest and try to twist or shake it. A good frame will not give or creak, but will stay firm and straight.

While you have the drawers out, examine them to see that the sides and bottom are good. Center guides, the grooved wood strips going from front to back across the underside centers of drawers, add to the strength of a chest and help keep the drawers from jamming. Very old pieces of furniture will not have center guided drawers since they are a comparatively recent structure feature. Wood panels fitted into the frame between drawers are called dust panels which give added strength as well as protection against dust.

Now, put all the drawers in place and step back a few feet to see if they fit squarely in the openings. If a drawer sags at one side it may need repairs. Check

to see if it is a repair you can make yourself.

Miss Wilke advises you to look carefully at the legs of tables, chairs, chests and desks—especially if the legs are small. Turn chairs and small tables upside down and notice how the legs are attached. Look for wood or metal braces where the legs are fastened at the top since these give strength to the furniture. Rungs, or stretchers, also give strong support to table and chair legs. If they are broken or loose, decide if you can fix them.

Use the same good judgement in choosing used upholstered furniture. Check the underside to see that the frame and springs are sound. Sit on the chair or sofa to discover if it is comfortable and substantial. Look carefully at the cushions and the back. Lumpy cushions can easily be replaced. But if the back is bumpy and uneven, the fabric will have to be loosened and the springs and padding reworked. Again, can you make the repairs or will you have to pay for it to be done? Look carefully at the shape and find out if you can buy slipcovers to fit. Or better, make your own professional looking slipcovers. Bright, well-fitted slipcovers can add years to the life of upholstered furniture.

In general, beware of furniture with loose joints, and wobbly legs. It may not be a bargain. Repair cost can make a used piece of furniture much too expensive. However, if you can make the repairs yourself, you only have to consider the initial cost and piece may become something quite special and fill a gap in your furnishings needs.



### Ladies, Have You Heard?

By Doris Thomas,  
Extension Home Economist



Doris Thomas

### Economy Meals for Good Eating

Did you know that in 1970 frozen French fried potatoes and other frozen potato products accounted for almost half of all potatoes processed for food?

Frozen French fried potatoes make a wonderful accompaniment to any meal. And now, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is reporting frozen French fries as plentiful, with an accompanying attractive consumer price.

Serve French fries in the morning alongside piping hot scrambled eggs; or for lunch, adding a warm touch to a cold sandwich. And of course with dinner, those tasty browned 'taters go steady with steak, chicken, hamburger, or whatever else you may have.

Frozen French fried potatoes are simple and quick to prepare. They go straight from your freezer into the oven or into the frying pan. Spice them anyway you desire; with a little salt, with onion and garlic powders, or any other flavoring that appeals to your taste buds. Serve them doused with ketchup or smothered in brown gravy alongside an open hot roast beef sandwich.

Whichever way suits you best,

frozen French fries supply needed nutrients to your diet, and a pleasing, hearty flavor to your meal.

### Use Shopping Carts in Store

No one likes to pay any more than necessary for the food he buys. You can help the retailer cut his costs of selling the food you buy and help to control the prices you pay.

Shopping carts are provided as a service for customers to do their shopping at the store. But sometimes people use these carts away from the store they were intended to serve.

Most people, of course, think of their taking carts as borrowing. But, too many times, it winds up being a one-way trip. Have you ever been in a store when they ran short of carts? It may just have been that some of the carts were borrowed.

Next time you wheel one of those convenient carts through your supermarket, remember that each of those carts was bought by your retailer for a sum of from \$40 to \$70. And when they need to be replaced you help to pay the bill.

## Fix-It Tip

You can wring much of the water out of the humid air in the basement with a dehumidifier. The electric dehumidifier has what is essentially a refrigerator coil that cools the air as it passes over it. This causes condensation, which runs off into a pan or drain. Best to get the kind that turns itself off and on depending on how much moisture there is in the air. Then it will function whenever needed.

## Needle Arts

By NANCY SEWELL



### Colorful Touch

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## FEED LETTER Experimenting!

I once had a farmer say to me "this is what I want, just give me a price and I'll do my own experimenting." His response was to my suggestion that 'contact our research staff concerning a complete feeding program for his cow-calf operation.

I can understand this gentleman's reluctance to expose himself to selling tactics, but did he realize what is involved in "experimenting" with feeds?

Research has as its goal, in the feed industry, the discovery of more efficient ways to feed the nation's livestock. To meet this goal requires hundreds of thousands of dollars and thousands of people who study animals, not just feed them. Only a small percent of feeding trails turn out to be an improvement over old formulas. Hundreds of animals must be fed, not in just one test, but each test must be repeated several times over, in order to be sure the improvement was the result of the formula change and not caused by something else.

Research is being conducted by large companies who can afford it. Do you want to do your own "experimenting"? Can you afford it? Maybe a better approach is to get with one of those big companies, and "pick their brains"?

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