

# LADIES HAVE YOU HEARD?



By Doris Thomas, Extension Home Economist

### Tips on Working With Corduroy

Corduroy—cord of the king! At least that's what the French called it when the fabric was invented back in 17th century France. Corduroy is still valued for its rugged, practical uses. But today we have so many varieties of corduroy that we are more apt to choose it because of its beauty.

Today's corduroy is available in narrow and wide

wale, with no ribs at all and many variations in between. Some are printed, others are plain, but they all have one thing in common. They are pile fabrics, which means they have extra threads in the weave. In the case of corduroy, these are cut and brushed in one direction to create a nap.

Because of the nap you must place the tops of all pattern pieces in the same direction of the nap when

cutting. If not, they will show a color difference caused by the way the nap reflects light.

Which direction should the pile or nap fall? Designers use the nap in either direction and sometimes cut the garment on the crosswise grain. The important thing to remember is that all the pieces have the nap placed in the same direction. Most manufacturers suggest that corduroy be cut so that the nap falls down on the body. This way, the fabric will appear darker. However, you may find the color more becoming if the nap is placed in the other direction. Hold the fabric up to you to see which effect is more pleasing.

Corduroy has a tendency to make the figure appear larger, so it may not be the best choice for everyone. The ribs or wales in the fabric will affect your choice of a pattern. Choose a simple style with an absence of detail. Diagonal darts will cause an apparent distortion of the wales which is more apparent on wide wale and on plain colored corduroy.

Choose a style with a zipper closure rather than buttons or buttonholes. It is possible to make bound or worked button holes in this fabric, but each has some problems.

If possible, plan construction details to eliminate bulkiness. Make facings from a lighter-weight fabric that is compatible with the care required for the corduroy. Don't turn under raw edges of hems or facings. Leave them flat for apparent smoothness on the outside of the garment.

Try to avoid top stitching. The ribs of the fabric make it

difficult to stitch a perfectly straight line, unless the stitching follows one of the ribs.

Experiment with pressing. Usually light steam pressing on the wrong side of the fabric will be enough. Heavy pressure of the iron can flatten the nap and leave seam impressions on the right side of the fabric.

Most corduroy fabrics can be machine washed and dried, but check care directions first. The fabric will retain its new appearance longer with dry cleaning.

### Tips On Choosing Firewood

Choosing the firewood to burn in your fireplace is much like selecting a favorite wine or cheese. At least, that's the notion put forth by some of the Forest Service specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture. Their reasons are that each species of wood can offer something different in aroma or heat value.

Softwoods, such as pine, spruce and fir are easy to ignite because they are resinous. They burn rapidly with a hot flame. However, a fire built entirely of softwoods—just like a fire of scrap paper—burns out so quickly that it requires frequent attention and replenishment. If you want only a quick warming fire or a short fire that will burn out before you go to bed, then softwoods are a good choice.

For a longer fire, use softwoods in combination with the heavier hardwoods such as ash, beech, birch, maple and oak. These hardwoods burn less vigorously and with a shorter flame. Oak gives the most uniform and shortest flames and produces steady, glowing coals.

You get aroma from the woods of fruit trees such as apple and cherry, and nut trees such as beech, hickory and pecan. Their smoke

generally resembles the fragrance of the tree's fruit.

By mixing softwoods with hardwoods you can get an easily-ignited and long-lasting fire. Later, by adding some fruit or nut woods, you can capture the nostalgic wood smoke aroma as well.

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