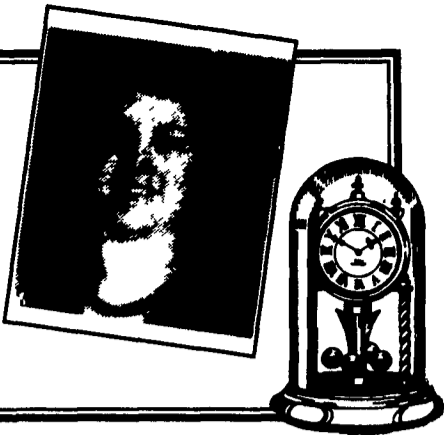


Taking Time

by
Lehigh Co.
Extension Agent

Rebecca Escott



Wallpapering Lessons

If I had it to do over again, I would do it all differently. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas (on my days off and then some...), I decided to wallpaper my kitchen. Well little did I know just how much I would learn from this experience

Oh yes, I should mention that this was my first wallpapering experience EVER. And my kitchen is not your basic, four-walls room. Mine has nine corners, five doors, two windows and a soffit. In the hasty fashion that is standard for my family, my husband and I, in one afternoon, selected and purchased the needed rolls of wallpaper, primer, and pre-paste activator. We borrowed equipment and

an instructional video. Now the story begins.

We chose a country pattern with baskets of fruit on an ecru and green background. It looked great up close—just what I wanted to convert my kitchen from a blue and tan theme to an ivory and hunter green theme. What we didn't consider in the decision was how it would look from six-feet away. Just like gingham fabric "changes" color at a distance, so did this paper. The subtle green print disappeared, and the dark brown baskets dominated. We also didn't explore what it meant to have a pattern that was a 21-inch match. At times, I had to cut off 18-19 inches of paper to get to the next spot where the pattern began again. In a room with lots of

windows and doors, it means waste. For us it also meant another trip to the paper store for more paper.

My husband would come home at lunch to see how I was doing. Unfortunately given my fatigue, I didn't always receive his comments in the manner that they were spoken. And the more I worked, the more I noticed the mistakes and patches; the more I struggled, the more I started to hate the brown baskets for overpowering my hunter-green print.

A project that I thought would be concluded in a weekend and two vacation days actually took that long plus three more evenings to finish. Did I happen to mention that during that time my refrigerator, kitchen table, microwave and stand were in my living room? They had been there for more than two weeks (we had a new linoleum floor put in the week before Thanksgiving).

Well not wanting to miss an opportunity to turn something bad into something good, as I hung the final strips of paper, I began to think...life can be like hanging wallpaper. Here are the lessons I learned:

- It's good on first-time efforts to not do things perfectly so you

have room for improvement in future attempts.

- A short time table for making a decision (allowing little time for planning or seeking alternatives) may result in a less-than-ideal choice.

- It's okay to simply be proud of the effort even though the resulting product may be imperfect.

- No good thing is accomplished in a single day's time.

- Things often look better from a distance.

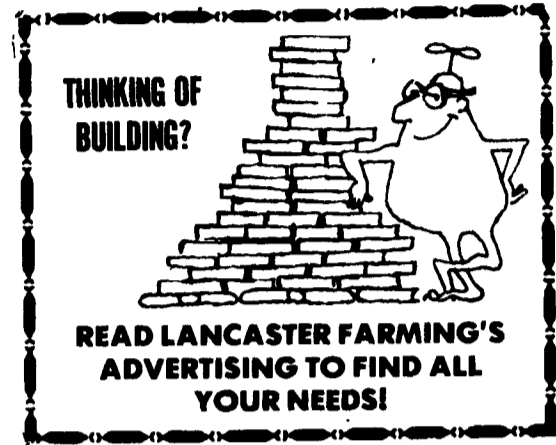
- It takes patience and careful attention to keep "matches" from slipping apart.

- No matter what, always find something good to comment on!

- If you don't like the way things are, most of them can be changed over time.

If you're an experienced wallpaper hanger, you can appreciate these lessons. I noticed that these lessons don't just apply to wallpapering, they apply to life, too. Take time to think about how they apply to your life and your family.

P.S. Other people love how the room looks, and my hunter green linens and decorations are helping me to love it too.



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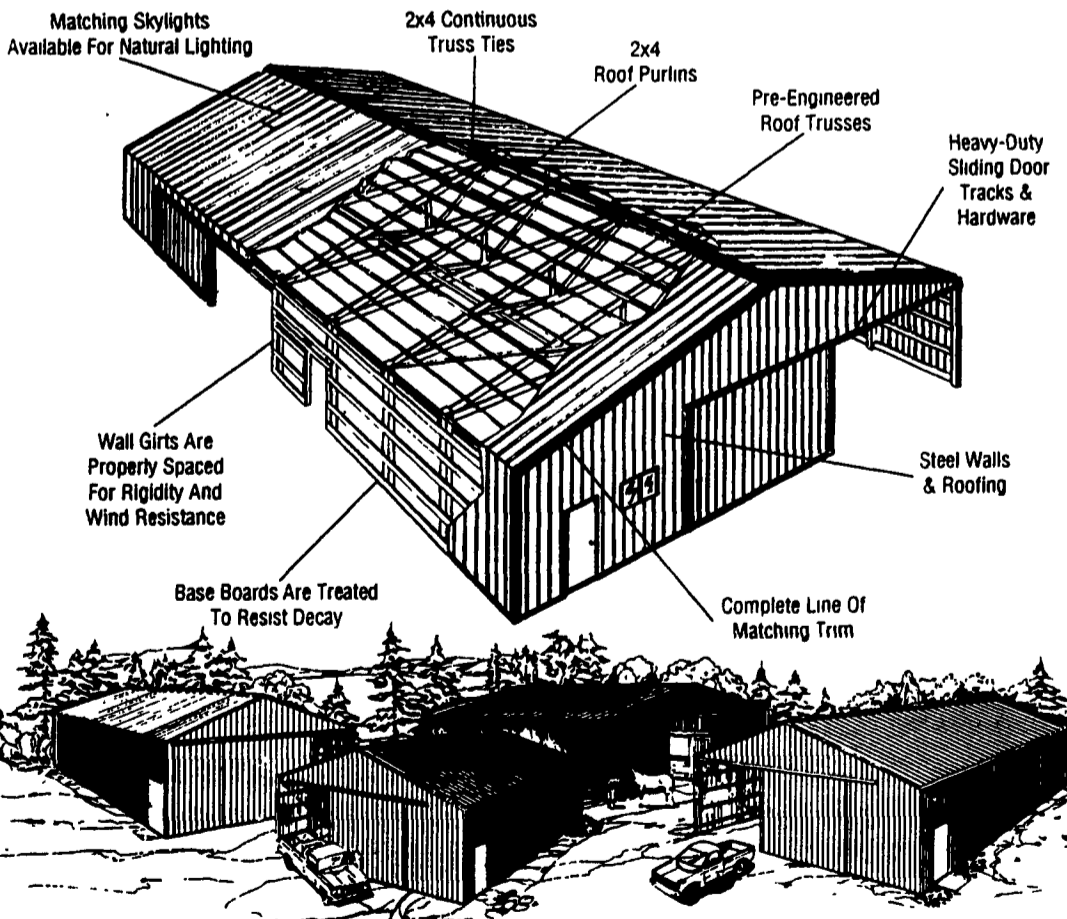
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