Farm and home—meet "Needle Nell"

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Some Ideas in Plastic

By BRENDA CLEEVE, Home Science Teacher, Department of Education.

The plastic sheeting, which is now available in many weights and patterns, is a highly versatile material which lends itself to a number of uses in the home. Here are a few suggestions.

For the expenditure of a few shillings and a little time, a plastic wardrobe can be made easily and quickly. It will be found ideal for storing those filmy evening dresses or the silks which always seem to be a nuisance in the wardrobes when mixed up with every-day clothes.

The plastic covers not only keep them compact and free from "snagging" but also protect the fine fabrics from dust which soon destroys their freshness.

For the traveller or holiday maker, a plastic wardrobe is a particularly handy accessory, for how rarely are we fortunate enough to find adequate wardrobe space in holiday resorts and hotels, especially when we are compelled to take along winter clothes which require a lot of space?

MAKING THE WARDROBE

For preference choose a light-weight plastic to avoid placing too much strain on the shoulder lines of summer dresses. Material 30in. wide is the most economical width to buy, and a transparent material is preferable as removable of garments from the cover is facilitated when they can be seen clearly.

To make the plastic wardrobe, allow twice the length of the garment for which it is required plus 4 to 6in. extra for the box top. In the case of evening dresses, unless the material is firm, it is best to hang them from the waist in order to avoid stretching the bodice out of shape.

The width of the top portion may be increased so that several dresses or garments may hang inside the one cover.

The diagram shows how the material should be cut before joining up. It will be noted that three yards of material are used and this will effectively cover an overcoat for the average sized person. The width of the box sides and top (in this case 5in.) may be increased or decreased according to the type and number of garments to be covered.

JOINING THE SEAMS

Plastic may be joined by fusing or machining. Fusing, by means of heat, is generally preferable to machining as the stitches are liable to cut the material. In
fusing, the two edges or portions to be joined are placed together and covered with a layer of paper. The heel of an iron is then drawn down the edges to be joined. The temperature required to fuse the plastic varies considerably with the type of material being used. Some require a fairly hot iron while others will only stand a low temperature. It will be necessary to make a few trial seams before embarking upon the main task.

If fusing cannot be carried out satisfactorily, sew the seams on the sewing machine, using a large stitch and a fine needle.

To complete the wardrobe shown in the diagram place AA and BB together and join, then join CC and DD. The slit for the hook on the coat-hanger in the centre of the box top is best reinforced with an extra thickness of plastic. This may be fused or machined in place but if fusing is carried out it should be performed very carefully as it is easy to take a piece out of the surrounding material while putting the extra thickness in place.

If it is desired to close the bottom of the plastic wardrobe, attachments may be made to fasten this with tie-strings or a zip. If a zip is used, employ the same method as when sewing a zip into a dress. It is a wise plan to reinforce the sides of the cover before attaching the zip.

For a gent’s wardrobe, the width given in the diagram (20in.) may need to be increased to give extra width across the shoulders.

**LAUNDRY BAG**

In hot weather when clothes damped down for ironing are apt to dry out very quickly, a bag made from plastic material will retain the moisture for an indefinite period.

A suitable bag can be made from 1 1/2 yards of 27in. sheeting. Fold the plastic in halves and join the two sides by fusing or stitching. If you use transparent plastic for the bag you will be able to choose the clothes wanted first for ironing.

A word of warning is necessary if you are using this bag for your dampened clothes. The lack of air encourages the
growth of mildew and should you be unable to iron all the damped-down articles at one time do not leave them in the bag longer than two days.

This type of bag is also ideal for carrying soiled clothes when you are on holidays. It prevents odours of smoke and perspiration from marring the freshness of clean clothes in the suit-case.

HAT BAG

A lightweight plastic bag made as described above is an ideal dust-proof and waterproof container for carrying or storing spare hats. The lightweight plastic is to be recommended as the heavy material tends to flatten delicate flowers and veil trimmings.

ICING BAGS

Plastic icing bags to which the standard nozzles can be attached will be popular among cake decorators who find the metal syringes stiff and awkward to use.

Choose a heavyweight plastic as the thinner types lack body and are not really firm enough to allow the pressure to be regulated and the flow of icing controlled.

Cut a circle out of paper using a large dinner plate for size and fold or measure it so that the circle can be cut into three equal segments. One of these segments is the pattern for the bag.

To make the bag, join the two straight sides, preferably by fusing as the icing tends to squeeze out of the holes made when the plastic is machine stitched.

A patent ring for attaching icing nozzles may be purchased for about 2s. This should be tied firmly to the point of the bag and it may be necessary to cut away the points until the opening is large enough to take the ring. The plastic should fit tightly around the rim of the ring so that the pressure of the icing will not force it out of position.

Should the patent ring be unobtainable, the nozzles may be used without the ring simply by putting the nozzles inside the bag and allowing just sufficient room for the tip of the nozzle to protrude. The nozzle is held in position by placing an elastic band firmly around the threads on the top of the nozzle. A bag made in the same manner but about 12 in. long may be used for piping out the mixture for cream puffs, chocolate eclairs and meringues. Leave a hole ½ in. in diameter at the top unless you have a cream pipe which may be placed inside the bag.
Meet "Needle Nell"

By BRENDA CLEEVE.

"NEEDLE NELL" is a quickly-made bazaar or gift novelty. To make her you need three pipe-cleaners (a packet of eight costs 3½d.), a shank button (i.e., one without holes punched through), two thimbles, a few pins and needles and some small scraps of bright material.

The shank button makes her face. The features are painted on with enamel or, if you want a quick result, use bright nail polish. If a shank button is not available, cover a flat button with a scrap of plain material. Just cut a circle of cloth a little larger than the button and gather the edges together, then fasten at the back of the button and work the features in with a few simple stitches.

Place one pipe-cleaner through the shank and fasten the button on one end by bending the cleaner over. For the arms take another cleaner and bend in two. At each end bend ⅜ in. of the cleaner round to form a ring. These rings form the hands. Place the arm piece over the body with the centre point below the rim of the button, leaving a small length for a neck. Fasten by crossing the arms to the opposite sides.

The legs are shaped in the same manner as the arms using the third cleaner. Fasten them to the end of the body cleaner by bending and twisting the cleaners.
“Needle Nell’s” clothes consist of a skirt, cape and apron. To make the skirt take a piece of material about 3in. x 6in. and join the short sides. Run a gathering thread around one edge, draw together and fasten into position on the body.

To form a bodice, wind a length of bias binding or ribbon around the top body section to cover up the cleaners.

The pattern for the cape is made from a piece of paper cut the size of a small saucer and divided in halves. Wrap this semi-circular piece (cut in cloth) around the shoulders and catch in front with a few small stitches.

If the button forming the head has a sharp rim, conceal it by tying a strip of material around it, finishing with a bow on top. Keep it in position with a dab of glue or clear nail polish.

The apron is simply a piece of white material about 1in. x 1¼in. held in position with a pin.

To finish off, place a few pins, needles and brass safety pins down the front of the apron. Place small elastic bands around the tops of two coloured plastic thimbles and fasten one to each hand, to simulate milk pails. A larger elastic band may be tied around the neck and forms a loop for hanging.

An attractive finish to the clothes is provided by a pinking edge. If pinking shears are not available, the edges may be fringed by withdrawing a few threads.

SPECIMENS HELP DIAGNOSIS

WRITTEN descriptions of plant diseases are often insufficient for accurate diagnosis. Send specimens, preferably several, showing the disease at various stages. They will usually carry well if wrapped in moist newspapers and enclosed in well-ventilated containers.

DUSTING OF POTATOES

ONLY the derris preparations as recommended by the Department of Agriculture should be used for dusting stored potatoes to guard against insect pests. Full particulars concerning the use of recommended dusts can be obtained from the Vegetable Branch of the Department of Agriculture.

This was emphasised by the Director of Agriculture (Mr. G. K. Baron Hay) who said that the use of insecticidal dusts containing DDT and BHC (benzene hexachloride) contravened regulations under the Agricultural Products Act and the Public Health Act.

Mr. Baron Hay said that the derris dusts are harmless to human beings and, until experimental work now being undertaken provides convincing evidence that other dusts are not likely to endanger human health, derris dusts were the only ones that could be recommended by his Department.

CERTIFIED “WESTRALIA” BEAN SEED

THE “Westralia” rust-resistant pole bean variety which was bred by the Western Australian Department of Agriculture, has become very popular commercially, and every effort is being made to ensure that certified seed is maintained at a high standard.

Crops of “Westralia” submitted for seed certification are inspected by Departmental officers during growth to ensure trueness to type and freedom from disease, and finally the harvested seed is tested for purity and germination.

Recently crops grown for seed certification purposes were inspected for disease freedom by Senior Plant Pathologist H. L. Harvey with gratifying results. Although the prescribed tolerance for mosaic, a seed-borne virus disease, is very low, the amount observed was less than 0.5 per cent., which is well below the permissible limit. Other diseases such as bacterial blight, were virtually absent.
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