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# Decorating Your Home With the Family in Mind

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# *Decorating Your Home With the Family in Mind*

by Jan Wheeler, H. JI. 1

New ideas and products are forever popping up in the world of interior decoration, and new and exciting trends are always in swing. These ideas and tendencies may be completely novel or may be delightful revivals of a past era, as seems to be prominent with the current emphasis on early American and provincial decor.

An example of the early American or colonial influence is the return to hardwood flooring accented by throw rugs, which include animal hides and skins for a rugged flavor. Bright, roughly woven rugs of Mexican or Indian design can be a rich addition to the use of bare wood floors.

Popular for their feeling of luxury and air of femininity are the "pouf" rugs, which come in many sizes, shapes and colors and are best used in a bathroom or bedroom.

Synthetics have made wall-to-wall carpeting in plain, solid surfaces more practical for today's hurried homemaker, for they not only wear well but are treated to be soil-resistant. Patterned carpets are often used now in bedrooms, and Oriental rugs seem to be enjoying a return to popularity. Large, woven, mat-like rugs are favorites for porches and recreation rooms.

What to do with walls is one problem often encountered in redecorating an older home, but it might be successfully solved by using wood paneling. Many beautiful, subtle finishes are now available in natural woods or synthetic products and can lend warmth and charm to many a room. One suggestion might be to utilize such paneling in a large, homey country kitchen.

## **Wallpaper Is Back**

To keep up with new ideas in other phases of interior decoration, wallpapers have become very unique and are now used mainly as points of distinction rather than as backgrounds. Scenic wallpapers depicting views from a terrace or a lovely winegarden are used in dining rooms; while rich, subtle grass cloth papers add texture to living room and bedroom walls. Thanks to Mrs. Kennedy, reproductions of wallpaper prints from the

homes of famous American patriots are now much in demand. Papers with matching draperies have also received much recent attention.

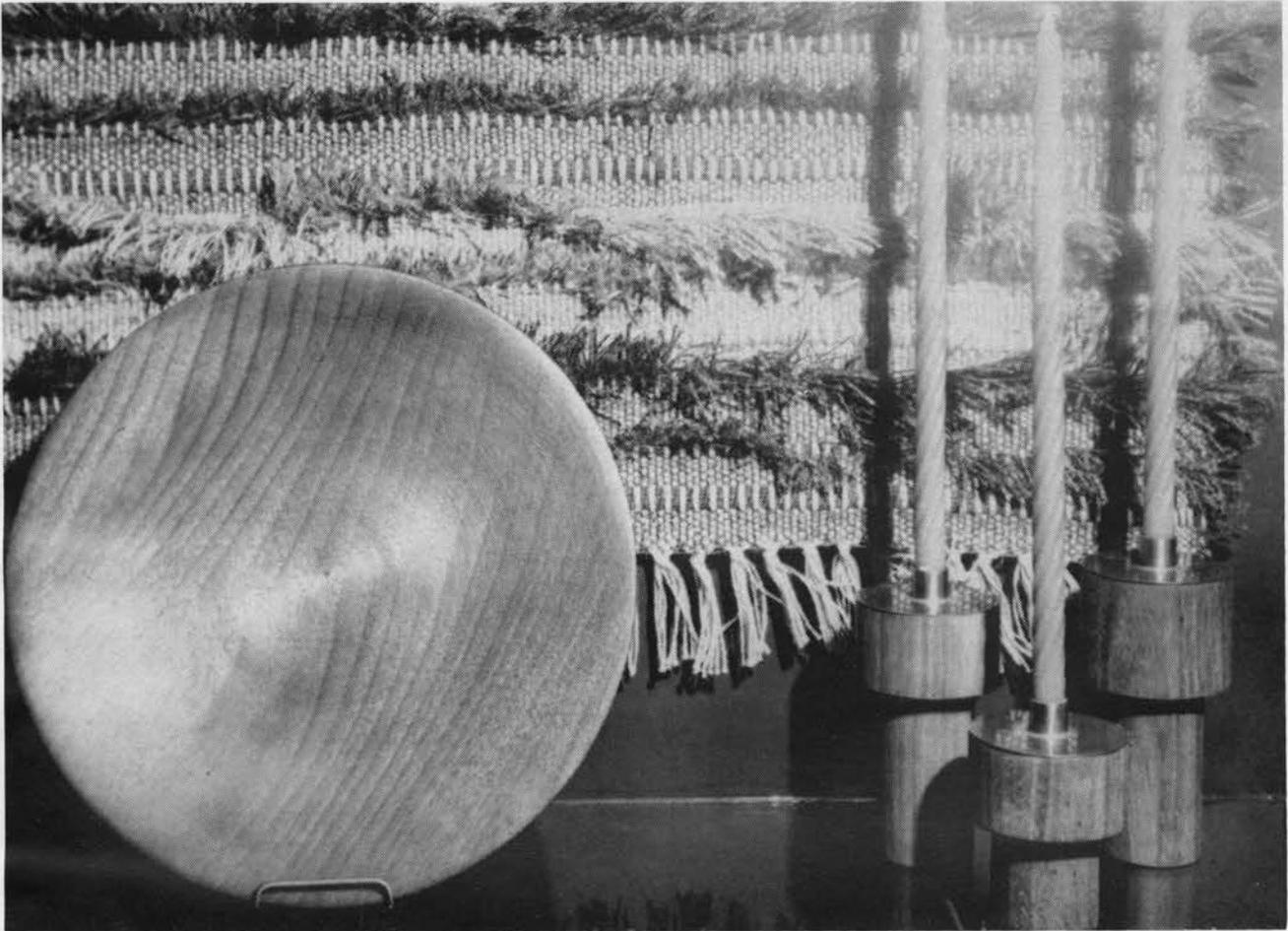
Folding screens, particularly those with Oriental motifs, have proved most useful as camouflage for an unsightly corner, as dividers for too-long rooms or for bedrooms that must be shared by people with diverse personalities. They can hide or give a new function to an alcove or a poorly-planned hallway, or provide a kitchen bulletin board. Versatility and portability have made the screen an important figure in the decorating world.

Folding louvered shutters used inside on windows will aid an early-American theme if they are simply made and naturally finished, or will lend a provincial taste if done more elaborately and painted with perhaps a gold detail. Louvered doors — double, single, or folding — can add interest where quiet and privacy are not vital.

## **Latest Furniture Style? A Combination**

Since good major pieces of furniture are not as easily replaced as paint, paper, curtains, or rugs, trends in furniture styles don't change as rapidly. Renewal of past modes has been very evident in recent years as early-American furniture and provincial pieces have enjoyed a steady rise in popularity. Although less adventurous souls feel safe in using just one type throughout their homes, many people have combined successfully these styles and others, mixing types of wood as well. In doing this, the decorator can also utilize family treasures more attractively or incorporate souvenir pieces from other lands (and perhaps include exciting finds from auctions or antique shops).

Fabrics for furniture have been much improved and, like the carpets, have been treated so that they are soil and wrinkle resistant. Bright colors, rich fabrics, and unusual materials bring news to this area of decorating. Corduroy, velvet, and burlap provide interesting textures, although the burlap can be uncomfortable; and satin brocades are now more usable because of new processes in protective finishes. Pettipoint and cane for occasional or dining room chairs have returned as charming finishing touches.



Intended for use either as accessories or as additions to table settings, these products of Iowa State craft classes can be seen on the second floor of MacKay Hall.

#### Accessories Show Personality

Accessories are an important but often neglected factor in decorating. Too often people feel that these items come under the heading of luxuries and should, for the most part, be acquired through gifts; but in order for the home to be well-planned and tastefully arranged, this is not a good thing to depend on. It is hardly reasonable to expect friends or relatives in some far-off state to know just what your home looks like and what colors and ideas have been used and to send a vase or lamp, or even an ash-tray, that will go well with the main theme. Many times the gifts are just the wrong item and will do more harm than good in the setting that has been planned.

On the contrary, the good decorator works to develop a flair for choosing the right accessories to make her house a delight to live in. She is aware that a shell here, an alabaster vase there, a basket-hammer here, or an Oriental lacquered box over there might be just the thing to complete her scheme; she knows the value of texture and color and the beauty of natural finishes. She does not discard a lovely old jar because it is cracked or a Wedgwood pitcher because it is chipped, but

recognizes the charm in these things as they are and uses them to good advantage.

New items in the world of accessories are old objects, such as antique jars and vases or good reproductions of articles that were once functional but have become so obsolete that they are now decorative. Elegance in accessories has also become popular, as can be seen in the golden finishes of elaborate wall hooks, door knockers, towel rods, switchplates and doorknobs. Other recent items brought to the front include embroidered pillows, baskets as wall-decorations, vases or magazine holders, carved wooden boxes and lacquered boxes for cigarettes, and colored glass jars and bottles.

Because they pull a room together and give a look of warmth and living to a home, accessories are vital. They are the things which will bring comment from visitors and will be remembered by children as they grow and leave for faraway places. They are just the touches that reflect the mood and personality of the home and of the homemaker who selects them. They are most effective when chosen with thought and care and treated with subtle importance in the decorating scheme.