Your College Home

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Dressing Up—

Your College Home

by Margaret Mattison

Home Economics Junior

Why hasn’t a college girl ever written an ode to unfinished furniture and the versatile orange crate? Someone should, for either can do a lot to make a college room a haven rather than a hole.

After a coat or two of paint or stain, a readymade book shelf, table or chest adds the finishing touch to a room. Causing less strain on the budget, the orange crate is a perfect book case just as it comes from the grocer. To change it into a chest of drawers, beg three shirt boxes and keep eight small boards from the lid of the crate. Simply nail the boards so the drawers will slide on them, and there's the chest. A U-shaped cut in the end of the boxes makes a good hand grip.

To decorate the crate, cover it entirely with cloth; or make a curtain and gather it on a string at the upper edge. Put another crate in the closet for shoe-polishing supplies, sewing equipment and roller skates. A nice characteristic of this type of interior decorating is that when your library calls for another book case, you can pick one up without cutting down spending money.

In planning your room and its crate accessories, color is important. Since the walls are plain, picking a material that will go well with them is easy. Any figure or plaid will do, for the rooms are generally large. Choose your colors carefully and plan to carry those colors throughout your room. The curtains, the ruffle on the bed and slip cover for the chair could be plaid. The bedspread, ruffles around the mirror and the bulletin board could be a plain color. Don't forget to match your lampshade and your wastebasket. Adding several colored pillows of different shapes makes your room look like a professional magazine advertisement. When you are decorating, remember your animals. Oswald feels much better in a room when he knows that his bow matches the ruffles on the bed.

The bed you share with Oswald will also be your chaise lounge, your buffet table for those midnight snacks and probably the biggest piece of furniture in the room. With this in mind, pick a bedspread that will stand shoe polish, ink and blue cheese. Even the plainest bed looks nice if the spread is dressed in a ruffle, which can be gathered or pleated. The plaid of the above room or a dark color won't show the soiling of hard everyday use. Remember that fuzzy spreads leave lint on your dark skirts.

If you discover that college life is too hard on Mother's dresser scarf, substitute it with two place mats. Braided or woven mats dress up the dressers which are inclined to show wear. Plastic mats are colorful and practical, too. Or, you could have a scarf of the material of the ruffle on your bed.

Bare walls make a room look like it belongs in a hotel; but since the dormitory rules that nails can't be driven into the walls, everything must be hung from the molding. Each room has at least one bulletin board. Some rooms have as many as three. Since your bulletin boards will overflow, pin snapshots and post cards to ribbons and hang them from the molding. As the year goes on, your collection of dance programs, pennants and straw hats will find their places there, too. Remember how the pilgrims made wall hangings to cover the rough timbers and the cracks between the logs? You could make your own wall hanging by tacking a sample of colorful wallpaper to a piece of bulletin board.

Other articles that make a room fun to live in are a little chest, a hall tree, a hassock, a letter file and a floor lamp. Big waste baskets, shoe racks, colorful laundry bags and magazine racks lighten the housekeeping load. Also handy at cleaning time, orlon curtains are quick-drying, sun resistant and need little ironing.

With the help of color ideas and orange crates, you can make your room the center of dorm interest from the spreads to discussions of the men on the bulletin board.

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