

South Dakota State University  
**Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional  
Repository and Information Exchange**

---

Extension Circulars

SDSU Extension

---

2-1927

## Care of Clothing

May Kiethline

Loretta McElmurry

Follow this and additional works at: [http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_circ](http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_circ)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kiethline, May and McElmurry, Loretta, "Care of Clothing" (1927). *Extension Circulars*. Paper 259.  
[http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_circ/259](http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_circ/259)

This Circular is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Extension Circulars by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [michael.biondo@sdstate.edu](mailto:michael.biondo@sdstate.edu).



# Care of Clothing



Extension Service  
South Dakota State College of  
Agriculture and Mechanic Arts  
Brookings, S. D.

# Care of Clothing

May Keithline and Loretta McElmurry

THE ideal appearance of clothing cannot long be maintained without a systematic management of clothing in storage and the reconditioning of garments for wear. These are the secrets of a well controlled wardrobe. Different occupations require specific types of garments. The selection of clothing is then a problem of choosing values in materials suited to the demand of different activities. An ideal wardrobe contains combinations for different costumes planned for the intensive service and the varied purposes which we find our environment requires. The costume should be becoming and appropriate to the occasion. It need not be expensive or new but it must be neat, clean, fresh and orderly.

As the appearance of clothing in wear tells a great deal about the ideals and habits of the person, self-control is needed to protect clothing. When eating, serviettes are provided in well appointed table service. Aprons or coveralls may be worn if emergencies arise that may ruin clothing. Garments not intended for extreme athletic action should not be given unfair strain. The body must be held erect while standing or sitting, to keep garments straight, free from wrinkles and orderly.

## Upkeep of Clothing

The secret of an efficient wardrobe is the sympathetic, periodic care given to garments while off duty. This is especially true of washable clothes. Plain tailored garments made of substantial materials require the least attention and maintain the best appearance. Mending may precede laundering if additional damage to the garment is certain to result; but most clothing can be examined during the ironing and repaired before placing in dresser drawers or on coat hangers. All uniforms and dresses should be given sufficient space to keep them unwrinkled and well shaped.

The business woman has learned that a few minutes spent upon reconditioning wearing apparel at night before retiring is a great advantage as articles are fresh and ready for wear in the morning. The homekeeper can usually find time during the day for controlling the clothing or can give a special time during the week for airing and pressing the family clothing. A plan of alternating garments in wear and storage allows time for cleaning and repairing. An ideal rule to maintain in household practice is "Be ready", not "Get ready".

Clothing which requires dry cleaning can be kept in fairly good condition if it is brushed immediately after wearing and hung away properly. Emergency cleaning, mending and pressing lessens the frequency of dry cleaning while a rest in a dark closet revives colors and freshens the appearance. Baggy garments can be spread flat, weighted with books or boxes during the night and worn in the morning. Furs, heavy coats and woolen dresses can be cleaned with the vacuum cleaner attachment to remove dust and lint. When pressing follows, these garments appear as if freshly dry cleaned. A good brushing and shaping

daily, and airing before hanging away for a rest, prolongs the newness of all such garments. Spots should be treated after dust has been removed. There are many reliable spot removers which should be used

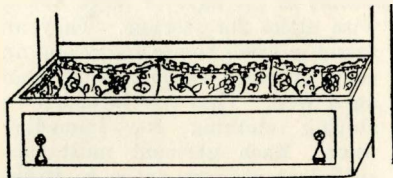


Fig. I.—Lining for a Dresser Drawer

according to directions. Silk garments should be repaired as soon as possible and pins should be avoided at all times. A small sewing kit is a very necessary equipment in the traveling bag or purse. A needle and thread can fasten unsightly tears until they can be mended properly.

Fabric gloves can be washed on the hands at night and hung to dry with the wrists hooked and the fingers round. Silk and rayon stockings last longer when washed after every time of wear. These should be spread out flat like woolen sweaters. Night drying is best because the fibre is weakened by quick drying with heat. A very handy darning tape and needle can now be purchased which contains all the seasonal hoisery colors. It is easy to find and draw the correct shade from the tape. This is an economy in the home and a great help to the school girl, business or professional woman, as it can be carried in an envelope. Drop stitches can usually be checked as soon as discovered.

Hats should be dusted when taken off for the day. The shape of a hat is preserved by avoiding weight on its brim. Hang a hat or place it on a magazine roll or standard when removed from the head. Damp or wet clothing should have as much moisture as possible removed by shaking. Absorbant toweling can be used to take up moisture in hats, furs and coats. Damp clothing should not be hung away in closets with other clothing. Garments can be hung to dry into correct shape by hooking the hanger over the edge of an open door. This brief consideration of the upkeep of clothing has been given here because it relates to clothing storage.

#### Equipment Required for Storing Clothing

Lines of hooks are seen in public places and old houses. These are often placed too high and out of reach for children who must be educated to care for their clothing. Garments hung here for a short time lose their shape and accumulate dust. Hooks used by several members of the family often become overloaded and present an unsightly appearance in an otherwise orderly home. No line of hooks is ever adequate for the accumulation which gathers there. A narrow board with clothes

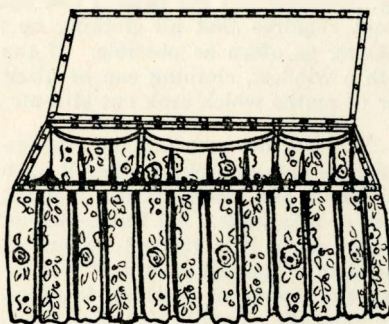


Fig. II.—A "Do It Now" Box

hooks swung by cords from the higher hooks above aids a mother in teaching children the first rule of clothing care: "Hang up your wraps when you come into the house." Definite ownership and delegated re-



sponsibility can also be taught here if coat hangers extending from cords are in readiness for hanging garments.

High wardrobes were used in bedrooms in the days of large houses with attics for storage. They are found in some homes today and are very efficient equipment if managed well. They are intended for storing clothing for immediate wear. Each garment must have sufficient storage space to insure its unwrinkled surface and general shape. A definite order and place for each article must be maintained or clothing is not worn with the proper controls. The wardrobe drawer is an excellent place for shoes.



Fig. III—Chest and Window Seat

hooks can give ample storage in an orderly way by placing a broomstick or pole across the space between opposite walls. A surprising number of garments can be placed on hangers hooked over this pole. Shelves should be provided for shoes, hats or labeled boxes containing out-of-season clothing. Nothing should be allowed to rest on the floor so that the closet is neglected during the weekly cleaning. A wall space or the inside of the closet door can be used for a set of pockets. Various things can be given convenient arrangement here such as shoes, stockings and gloves but they must be orderly. The door space is often reserved for night clothes and the door is left open for ventilation at night. Such a closet requires that all clothing be removed for an outside airing and sunning as often as possible. If the closets in new houses are planned with a window, clothing can be aired while hanging. There is less danger of moths which seek out still-air places in which to lay their eggs.

Dresser drawers are the storage places for toilet articles, dress accessories and underwear. Small pasteboard boxes can be fitted into compartments for small articles and aid in keeping neat, orderly arrangement of essentials. All flat folded clothing should be stored in the drawer only when it is ready to wear. All articles needing attention should be put in a "special attention" box to be mentioned later. It is important that the owner of clothing keep order in dressers, chiffoniers, chests and cabinets. Familiarity with the order of personal effects aids one in saving time and appearing at her best.

Linings for dresser drawers are often seen with pockets for small articles on the side. These may prove of great help in storing the clothing of several members of a young family in a few pieces of furniture.

Where one persons cares for the clothing of others, this utilizing of the side spaces may prove a convenience.

Long chests with trays for dresses are a convenience for evening clothes and other light colored articles. These can be laid between layers of tissue paper and the cover closed tightly to keep out dust, light or smoke. Delicate fabrics must be carefully guarded against signs of wear. A daylight examination should be made before articles are put away in such manner.

A dainty little clothes tree for children's clothing at night is a great help to a busy mother. The child cares for the clothing and puts it on and off without help. Wee hangers are attached for Sonny's coat, blouse and "longies", while Daughter's gown and underwear hang in precise order. These trees are simple to make and soon pay for their initial cost.

#### Equipment Required for Special Articles

A special receptacle for soiled clothes should be established. This may be a closed hamper, a chest with a hinged cover or merely a laundry bag. In family life, the clothes chute eliminates these articles. People living in rented rooms find a laundry bag hung on the back of a large piece of furniture a means of meeting the objection of storing soiled and clean clothes in a closet. Bags and pasteboard boxes are a boon to small-space living but careful housekeeping or a general move is necessary to keep up their satisfactory use.

A "Repair Box", large enough to accommodate mending equipment and clothing out of use, is a splendid device for controlling care of the clothing. It must itself be orderly and complete to live up to its motto: "Do it now." This "Special attention box" can be the center of clothing control.

Garment covers for a whole line of hooks, a pole row or individual garments are an excellent provision for saving the appearance of clothes and also the time to brush away dust which will settle on the hanging garments.

Old sheets, cheap print material or old nightgowns can be made into covers. These should be six inches larger every way than the hanging garment and should be closed with snaps.

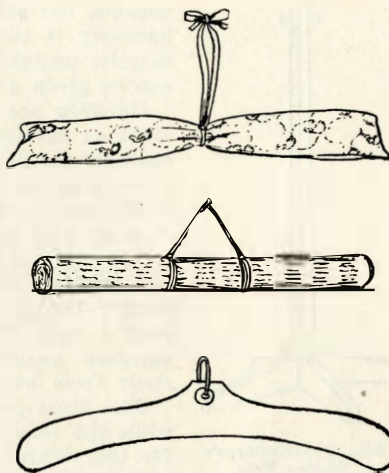


Fig. IV.—Garment Hangers

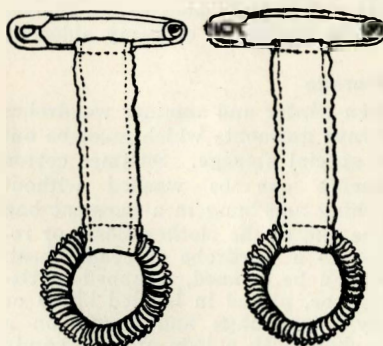


Fig. V.—Skirt Hangers

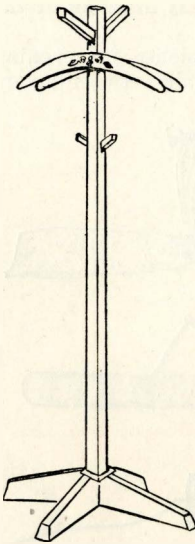


Fig. VI.—Children's  
Clothes Tree

during the night is just a matter of routine. The leather is cooled and revived to resist the heat and friction in daily wear. Novelty shoes are built to last about three months but proper care can extend this time. Shoes for comfort and service which also express quality and good workmanship respond to daily care by staying in correct shape. Such shoes seem expensive when purchased but with proper care, prove the most economical when general up-keep, appearance and foot health are considered. Shoes in storage can be kept away from the floor dust by hanging them by the heels on a rack, placing them in pockets, on shelves or in drawers. Alternation of footwear is additional economy aided by the use of shoe trees.

#### Seasonal Storage

There is less of a division line between winter and summer wardrobes than formerly. However, there are always garments which must be out of use several months. These require special storage. Summer cotton

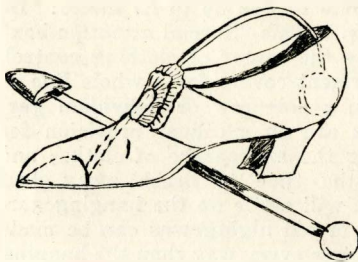


Fig. VII.—Shoe Trees

garments can be washed without starching and hung in a garment bag at one end of the clothes closet or removed to a wardrobe or cedar chest. Hats can be cleaned, wrapped in tissue paper, placed in labeled boxes or heavy paper bags and stored on a high shelf with a loop of cord handy to insert a yard-stick for bringing them down. Trunks are excellent storage places if they are accessible and kept in dry places. Mice seldom find homes in well closed trunks.

The vogue of using attractive, colorful window draperies, pillows and furniture covers in a room can well be extended to include fabric equipment for caring for clothing. The same material or color scheme can be used for clothes covers, bags, wall pockets, hat boxes, dresser drawer linings, etc. As harmony is the key note in room furnishings, all homely, unsightly but necessary and useful articles can be given a dignified place in the scheme.

Hangers are absolutely necessary for each garment as materials have very pliable weaves to accentuate the draping effects and the shape of a garment must at all times be maintained. Coat or dress, suit, skirt and trousers hangers made of wire or wood with hooks are inexpensive. Folding hangers are needed by travelers. The padded and covered hangers can be made from odds and ends in a home. Barrel hoops cut in three parts, provided with a wire loop can be padded. Hangers for starched garments and children's clothes can be made from heavy cardboard.

Shoe trees prolong the average time of shoe wear while the shape is preserved and comfort is assured for the wearer. Cleaning and polishing shoes, inserting the shoe trees and placing the shoes to air



Furs should be carefully dusted, cleaned and hung in sealed tar-paper bags. Expensive furs are best sent to the furrier, who places the furs in cold storage and gives them frequent electric treatments to revive the hair. This is economy if insurance is necessary and home care is inadequate.

Woolen garments are best stored after dry cleaning as no food spots are present to attract moths. Brushing and airing should always precede early storage in any case. Hang garments in sealed paper bags and label. Only specially stored woollens are safe in suddenly closed houses during seasons of travel. Overshoes, heavy mittens and gloves should be carefully cleaned and put away dry in sealed newspapers. Gummed paper tape is excellent for sealing packages.

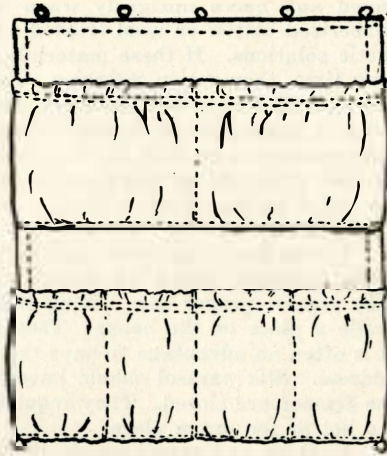


Fig. VIII.—Shoe Pockets

#### Packing For Travel

The amount and type of clothing depends upon the kind of trip and its duration. Not too much clothing should be taken on any trip as it may prove a burden. A short trip calls for suitcase packing which will present clothing ready to wear at once. Flat folded articles with heavy toilet articles sandwiched in between layers of clothing and tied to place give ample room for loose packing of outside clothing with tissue paper rolls between folds and layers. Shoes stuffed with stockings and bottles wrapped in heavy paper can be placed along the hinged side length of the case where they will be on the bottom when the case is carried.

The same general treatment of clothing is necessary in packing trunks which have trays. Plenty of newspapers in sheets and rolls or better still, tissue paper should be used. Cardboard suit boxes may be used for delicate silk dresses or other outside clothing. A careful inventory should be made of the trunk's contents as many states require a stated value on checked baggage. In case of loss in transit, this is of great value to the traveler. Clothing should be unpacked as soon as possible, shaken out, pressed if necessary, and hung in order.

#### Care of Protective Clothing

Water proof clothing is necessary for the protection of ordinary clothing. Raincoats are often neg-

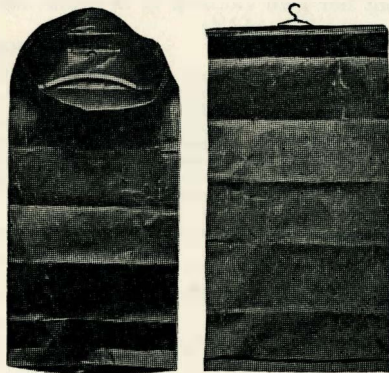


Fig. IX.—Tar Bags



lected and hence unsightly when needed. Water proof materials are rubberized cotton or wool treated with boiled oil or one of the new synthetic solutions. If these materials are hung in the same position for a long time, they set in wrinkles. Heat dries them and they crack when moved. All rubberized garments should be kept free from oil or grease, hung on hangers with the sleeves stuffed and placed in a cool, dry place. All repairs can be done at local shops at small expense or stitching can be done on the home machines by using newspaper strips under the fabric and a strong machine needle. Adhesive tape may be used to mend torn places.

Umbrellas often show neglect when out of use. If they are dried while open and closed by folding carefully without twisting the frame, they receive proper care. Ring handles or loops aid in giving the umbrella a place on the hooks. They are easily lost, mislaid or forgotten. It is often an advantage to have them marked with the owner's name and address. Silk parasol should have tissue paper between the folds when the frames are closed. They require hanging away from the dust in not too hot or too dry a place.

Rubbers and overshoes should be marked with the owner's name as exchanges often cause misfits. Keep rubbers and overshoes clean. Brush the cloth and lining and treat the surface to a light coat of shellac once during the season. Cardboard or sole leather forms placed in the heels of overshoes keep shoe heels from cutting holes in the heel base. The zipper closing will remain efficient if the thumb hold is pressed inward while fastening or removing the overshoe. Do not allow rubbers to stand in the sun as the heat dries and cracks them. Any shoe shop will repair buckles, heels or torn places very reasonably.

Rubber hat covers which fold into compact form can be purchased reasonably and save dress hats in time of snow or smoke-laden rain. These are replacing umbrellas in city public travel.

Good judgment in control of a wardrobe is learned only by first hand experience with textiles and art principles of selection and construction of clothing. A few well-chosen garments of good textile values, which are constructed on simple becoming lines, respond to personal care and give the ideal appearance so desired. The person who knows that her own clothing is in order and ready for wear, is mistress of the emergencies of life.

#### —BIBLIOGRAPHY—

- Woolman and McGowan: "Textiles"—Macmillan Company, Chicago, 1925.  
 Mary Schenck Woolman: "Clothing, Choice, Care, Cost"—J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1920.  
 Bulletins: "Stain Removal from Fabrics by Home Methods"—U. S. Department of Agriculture, Farmers' Bulletin No. 1474.  
 "Clothes Closets"—Extension Service, Bozeman, Montana.  
 "Clothing: Care, Repair and Renovation"—Extension Service, Bozeman, Mont.  
 "Care of Clothing"—Extension Service, East Lansing, Mich., No. 21, 1918.

#### Extension Service

**South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts**  
 Brookings, South Dakota

Published and distributed under Act of Congress, May 8, 1914, by the Agricultural Extension Service of the South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, Brookings, A. E. Anderson, director, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture co-operating.