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Anna D. Walker

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CLOTHING PROBLEMS in Wartime

ANNA D. WALKER
Extension Clothing Specialist

1944 may be the hardest year of the war in which to buy new clothing for the family. Much of the clothing needs of our armed forces have been met. However, this clothing will have to be replaced and added to as time goes on. Material which in peace time is used just for clothes is used in many other ways in war-time.

Those of us who are here at home are doing many things to hasten victory. We produce and conserve more food, buy war bonds, work for the Red Cross. We have made-over and mended clothing to make it last longer. Wartime demands that every aspect of saving clothing be considered. Every one of us should ask ourselves “What else can I do to help save clothing?”

**You Can Prevent Unnecessary Wear**

Sharp pointed or heavy things and hands should be left out of pockets. Trousers and skirts should be fastened well at the waist line to keep knees and seats from bagging.

Avoid rubbing wear.

Here’s how to save clothes from rubbing wear.

1. Get in a car on the side where you are going to sit. Don’t scrape along the whole seat.

2. Don’t sit in your coat any more than you need to, but if you do, unbutton it to relieve the strain on buttonholes and cloth.

3. Packages, books or handbags should never be carried in the same arm, at the same place.

4. A scarf will keep necklines from rubbing and getting soiled.

5. Don’t pull and jerk clothes in taking them off. Slip dresses and skirts off over the hips when you can. This will be easier on the seams than taking them off over the head.

6. Use a cloth cover or a firm pad on a hard seated chair.

7. Don’t sit on the bed. It will stretch wool skirts or trousers through the seat.

**You Can Freshen Fabrics at Home**

Use all old dependable methods of home care of clothes. Mild soap and soft water, non-explosive cleaning fluids, the right iron temperature for pressing—all should be considered.

Have you ever tried the glue method for cleaning washable woolens?

This is a good method to use when cleaning woolen garments which are generally soiled (not spotted much). Before using the glue method it is well to take out grease.
spots. Use carbon tetrachloride or a cleaning fluid which will not explode.

Then do the following:
1. Measure the garment to be washed so you will know the size. You might trace around it on a piece of clean wrapping paper.
2. Mix three teaspoonsful of glue (any good strong liquid glue will do) with each quart of soft water. The water should be a little warmer than luke warm, about 100 degrees F. Test it on your wrist.
3. Fold the garment without wrinkling it and put it in the glue and water solution. Let it soak 20 minutes. Keep the solution a little warmer than luke warm. Set the pan in another pan of hot water or add warm water or mixture if it cools off.
4. Brush soiled creases from collar, cuffs, etc., with a soft brush while the garment is in the solution. Brush one way, don't scrub back and forth.
5. Take garment out of solution and press out water without wrinkling garment much.
6. Put into a second soft water and glue mixture. This time use one teaspoonful of glue to three quarts of warm water (100 degrees F.). Let soak 20 minutes.
7. Rinse twice in clear soft water (100 degrees F.). Try not wrinkle anymore than you can help.

Remember these points on glue method
1. Use soft water, a little warmer than luke warm (100 degrees F.).
2. Use any good liquid glue.
3. Do not wrinkle more than necessary.
4. Use a brush to take out soiled spots, but do not scrub back and forth.
5. Rinse twice in soft water at same temperature of wash water.
6. Dry in towels, finish at room temperature.

You Can Keep on Mending

The Mend and Save leaflet which home extension club members used last year is still a good source of reference. Here are some mending suggestions not included in Mend and Save.

To Mend A Worn Hem Edge
Often the lower edge of a hem is worn thin from much washing. If the dress needs lengthening, this worn place would show above the new hem. You can fix this so it will not show by stitching a narrow tuck near the first hem turn to hide the worn edge. Apply a facing and catch the upper edge of it just below the tuck, stitch as in A. This stitching is not through the tuck, but under it as at B.
Pulled Seams

Often when a garment is tight or when the cloth is loosely woven, the threads in the cloth separate along the seams as in A. This seldom can be repaired by taking a deeper seam because it is already too tight. Here is the way to mend it.

1. Turn to the wrong side (See B.)
2. Stitch on the seam side of the pulled out part. (See C.)

3. Take a needle and use the point to pull all the fabric threads back toward the seam.
4. Open the seam and catch it down over the frayed part with uneven basting stitches in matching thread. Press the seam from the wrong side as in D.

If more room is needed in the seams, let them out and cover the pulled part with a strip of cloth, braid, ribbon or bias tape. If done well, this can be made to look like trimming.

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You Can Use Old Material

Many men's suits are not being worn today because the boys are in the armed forces. Some of these suits are already too small for the boys. Some of these suits will not be worn because they are worn out in spots.

The United States Department of Agriculture has prepared a leaflet called "Make-Overs from Men's Suits." This circular tells of the preparation of the material and shows cutting charts for making various garments from men's suits. Specialists in the Bureau of Home Economics have designed patterns best suited for using men's old suit material. Women's suits, boys' coats and suits and girls' coats are among the garments suggested in the circular. The clothing project leader in your club can give you pattern sources and can show you this circular if you are interested.

The good parts of men's worn out shirts also provide some material for making small garments such as little girls' dresses, rompers, and aprons. This source of cloth should not be overlooked.
Recut Old Sweaters

Such garments as sweaters with sleeves worn out can be recut to make them still useful in the wardrobe.

Before cutting knitted sweaters mark cutting line, one-half width of seam allowance on pattern and machine stitch closely on each side of this cutting line to prevent raveling. The raw edge can be crocheted, overcast or bound to give a finished appearance.

Don't discard that sweater when the sleeves are worn out! Cut out the sleeves, make a V neckline if you are tired of the original line, and have a sleeveless pullover.

When You Shop For New You Can Buy Wisely

Buy only what you need and buy with great care. New mixtures of new wool with old wool, wool with rayon and wool with cotton are appearing every day. Everyone needs to read labels more carefully. If you do, you will have more of an idea as to how this material should be handled in cleaning and general care. You will also know more about what to expect of the material in the way of wear.

There are some kinds of cloth which look alike, but are quite different in wearing quality. For example we have a large assortment of rayon jerseys for sale in our stores today. These jerseys are different from other materials in many ways. Methods of cutting, fitting and finishing these jerseys differ from crepes, etc. They fit into patterns with soft feminine lines better than into tailored styles. They lend themselves to draping and bows better than some materials.

There are generally two kinds of so-called jerseys for sale. There is the tricot or milanese which is knitted flat and is generally 40 or 52 inches wide. This does not curl on the edges. There is also the circular knit jersey. You will notice that the circular knits curl on the edges of the piece, because they are cut down the center before printing. These circular knits are lower priced than the tricots.

The circular knit jersey stretches on the width and it is apt to sag, while the tricot (knit flat) holds its shape well and is not inclined to stretch or sag. This is just one example of the need for careful shopping and reading labels in order to have the satisfaction you expect from your purchases.

You Can Exchange Clothes With Neighbors

Good garments which your children may have out-grown might be exchanged with neighbors who have garments your family can use. Clothing exchanges have been successfully carried on by neighborhood groups. Some groups have a clothing exchange every month at the community club, P.T.A. or home extension club meeting.

The plan is that everyone who has a garment for exchange takes it to the meeting. Some groups have everyone put a cash value on the garment. This is so that it may be bought if someone wants it and has nothing to exchange for it. Everyone is careful to have the clothes they take for exchange mended, cleaned and pressed.

Your home extension club might want to try this clothing exchange idea. A committee can be appointed to take care of the details and to work out a plan best suited to your neighborhood. Homemakers who are not enrolled in your club may want to take part in the exchange. Your club should make plans to include them in the exchange if possible.