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**Picture Hanging in Interior Decoration**

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PICTURE HANGING
IN INTERIOR DECORATION
1a. Diagonal wires are out of harmony with the lines of the frame and the structural lines of the room.

1b. Pictures should be hung flat against the wall. Use two parallel wires down from the picture molding to give adequate support to heavy pictures and mirrors. To hide wires, paint them the exact color of the wall.

1c. A flat picture hook attached to the wall with a tiny nail will catch the wire on the back of the frame and hold it securely. Be sure the nail and hook do not show. Before driving the nail in the wall drill a small hole to lessen the likelihood of chipping the plaster. Screw eyes for picture wires should be placed 1/4 the way down on the back of the frame so that the picture will hang flat against the wall.
2a. This picture appears to be unsupported. It is isolated and seems to dangle in mid-air. This arrangement should be avoided. Remember that one should feel that a space appears empty before a decision is made to fill it.

2b. Here the large picture forms a unit with a heavy piece of furniture beneath it. Relate wall treatment in size, in shape, and in character to the furniture over which it is hung and to the wall space it will occupy. Place pictures no higher than needed for full enjoyment. Small pictures look best when hung at eye level. Large paintings that must be viewed from a distance may be hung higher.

In a living room, hang pictures low enough to be enjoyed from a sitting position. In children’s rooms lower picture to a level a child can enjoy. In a hall where one stands more frequently than sits, hang pictures to meet eye level when standing.
3a. Picture is too high. It is isolated. This arrangement creates two units of interest whereas it should create one.

3b. Place a picture down close to a group of furniture so that the table will appear to support the picture. Space between the furniture and the picture should be less than the length of the picture. The eye should take-in the furniture and the picture in one glance.
**DON'T**

4a. Overwhelms your personality and that of the sitting room with art that suffers from elephantiasis. Pictures like that illustrated at the left are of no use except as atmosphere in a haunted house. Don't let the frame compete with the subject matter or the picture for attention.

**DO**

4b. Scrap those awful monstrosities even if they are family heirlooms and replace them with other pieces that are easier to live with and more in keeping with the size and spirit of their surroundings. Note: Andirons should be about half the height of the fireplace opening. Simple designs are best.
5a. The picture is too large and heavy for a light table. However, it is hung low enough to form a unit with the table. Frame is too ornate for the picture.

5b. This picture is too small for the wall space and table, and is hung too high even if the picture were larger.

5c. Picture is in good scale with the table. It is hung close enough to the table to look as though it really belongs with it. Too heavy and elaborate frame will compete with the subject matter of the picture.
6a. Articles of similar height and shape are grouped together. Size-places belong in the army—in decoration they’re a bore. Even if you are a militarist at heart, don’t let the arrangement of your living room show it.

6b. Select accessories for table, mantel, hanging shelf or whatnot with an eye to variety. For every tall item find a short one, for every stout piece, a lean one. Make sure that the manner in which your accessories are hung does not interfere with their use or appreciation.
7a. In this grouping of large and small pictures, the weight of the large picture is in the wrong position.

7b. Good design places the large picture at the top. The small pictures should give the effect of hanging from a large one (like pendants on a piece of jewelry). Lower pictures should be easily seen.
Although these pictures are in proportion to the furniture and are well spaced, the arrangement itself is uninteresting. This is a formal arrangement or symmetrical balance.

The grouping of three pictures and a lamp makes a more unusual unit than the four pictures. An informal arrangement or an asymmetrical balance. Sometimes an accessory, such as a lamp, helps to unite the furniture with the wall treatment.
9a. Watch the background against which pictures will hang. They should be sufficiently important in size and effect not to be lost in the background.

9b. The wide mat allows picture to be seen. The mat serves as a "rest" space between picture and wall. Plain or nearly plain walls make excellent backgrounds for pictures.
10a. A longer story is made of the very long wall by punctuating its length with a series of dashes. A row of furniture with horizontal lines merely emphasizes the long wall.

10b. Try using a few periods and commas to keep the long wall from running away with itself. Shorten it with vertical pieces such as the secretary and build up arrangements such as a table with pictures.
DON'T

11a. In hanging pictures of different sizes the larger picture cannot be put on the end and balanced by two smaller ones at the other end. Such an arrangement is not successful.

11b. The larger picture has been shifted to the center and the space between pictures made narrow. Groups of three should usually be balanced with the largest picture in the center or two pictures should be of equal size. Grouped pictures are best if similar in character and color value.

DO

Usually the bottom line of a grouping is kept straight or follows the line of the furniture underneath. The space between individual pictures within a group may vary, however, the width of the space should never be greater than the width or depth of the pictures. Usually a grouping over a sofa should be approximately 6-8 inches above the top of it so that a person sitting on the sofa will not have his head in front of some of the accessories.
12a. Width is better than height over a sofa, or any piece of furniture that is considerably longer than high.

12b. Shape of pictures should relate to areas of wall space being filled. Place a group of pictures or a large picture over a large piece of furniture. Instead of hanging four square pictures in a vertical grouping, hang four pictures that will form a long and wide shape. If a pair of pictures are used they should be in identical frames, be of similar subject matter and of similar color. Spaces between pairs should be narrow and even. Pictures having wide mats or wide frames may be hung close together.
13a. A picture should fit the wall space in which it is to be hung. A vertical picture looks best in a vertical space just as a horizontal one is more pleasing to the eye when it is related in shape to a horizontal wall area.

13b. A tall picture should be placed in a vertical space and broad ones in horizontal spaces such as over davenports and mantels. A square space may be filled with a vertical, a horizontal, or a square picture.

(A space taller than it is wide is a vertical space. It is best filled with a vertical picture or a group having a vertical shape. A space wider than it is tall is a horizontal rectangle and is well filled with a single picture of a similar shape. Examples are over davenports, mantels, and double beds. Occasionally two or three vertical pictures may be hung in a group in a horizontal space and treated as though they were one wide picture.)
14a. Don't be "dinky" with your overmantel treatment. Picture at left is too small to be effective.

14b. Area indicated at right is better size. If your picture is too small, use a wide frame or try a larger mat. The color and value of the mat is the transition point between the picture and the wall background; therefore, choose an off-white or pastel color mat which will blend.
15a. A step-like arrangement gives a feeling of movement and unrest—always true when pictures are placed in a diagonal line. A diagonal line is a busy line and tends to lead the eye back and forth or up into the ceiling rather than let it rest on and enjoy each picture.

15b. Keep the outer edges of a grouping regular. Hung close together these small pictures form one well-proportioned rectangle. The group is nicely balanced with the mantel. Pictures so arranged must be similar in subject matter and be framed alike, in a series the space between should be less than the width of the individual pictures.
16a. All of these accessories are lovely and usable somewhere, but together the arrangement is not pleasing. The sconces and candles are too prominent for the space, therefore detract from the clock. The rectangular, loose arrangement of the group is uninteresting and top-heavy. The plants are unrelated in shape and placement to the rest of the group. The figure shows poorly in this spot; the birds are too small in scale, carelessly placed.

16b. Start with a key accessory (the clock). The small pictures complement the clock shape and the triangular shape of the whole arrangement makes the clock important. Each side of this arrangement is identical, making a formal or symmetrical balance. The same plant containers have been used, but moved together for unity and a massed effect of leaves.
17a. One small picture is lost over a double bed or twin beds pushed together. Here again you need a feeling of width more than height.

17b. Try four costume prints or flower subjects in a composition nearly as wide as the headboard. Hang them fairly close together, making a horizontal grouping of the pictures with the horizontal line of the headboard. Pictures will seem well supported by the headboard. When the space is big or the objects small, hang several together. Group the pictures to fill the space and give emphasis.
NO TWO ARE EXACTLY ALIKE in this grouping. You can combine any number of pictures as long as the outside area composes into a rectangular or square shape. Try for variety in shapes and textures of frames: rounds, ovals, rectangles. A miscellany like this calls for good individual pictures; don’t try it with dime store prints.

Interesting Arrangements

A variation:
FAR MORE INTERESTING than just two rows of three pictures each is the group at left. Centered around an antique plate the shape is roughly hexagonal, higher than it is wide.

A group of small pictures may be arranged to have the same general outlines and to balance one larger picture.

RECTANGLES AND OVALS make up this interesting checkerboard group much more imaginative than just a couple of rows. Botanical prints are alternated with heavy-framed miniatures. Don’t “sky” your pictures; hang them close enough to top edge of furniture so they seem to “belong”. Six to twelve inches is about right; over a sofa or other seating, 6-8 inches.
1. Tear or cut a big sheet of paper. (From the grocer or butcher) to about the size and shape of the wall space you have for your picture group. Try out different picture arrangements on the paper. When you find one that balances well, sketch around each picture and mark the spot where your nails should be placed.

2. Tape the arrangement sheet on wall. Be sure to hang it straight. Move furniture back in place and check to see that your arrangement is low enough to be apart of the furniture grouping. Drive nails right through your arrangement sheet. (A piece of masking tape placed where the hook will be driven into the wall on a plaster surface will prevent plaster from crumbling.) Then remove sheet.

3. Hang pictures in place - and your arrangement is complete. If your pictures are different sizes, number each and put same number in square that represents the picture on arrangement sheet. Then you're sure to get each picture where you want it.