

# ROOM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT For 4-H Clubs

Arrangement Unit

UNIT II

## Arrangement of Furniture



Circular 450

**UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY**  
College of Agriculture and Home Economics  
Agricultural Extension Division

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## ROOM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR 4-H CLUBS

Have you often wished for a room of your own in which to express your particular likes in furnishings, colors, and accessories? You may have this wish—though more will be needed, of course, than wishing. The 4-H Room Improvement Project gives you an opportunity to make your room attractive so that you will be proud to show it to your friends, and so that you will enjoy working and playing in it. Whether you have a room of your own or share it with another, and whether your family owns the house or rents, may make some difference in the approach, but the final result can be the same.

Attractive rooms are not obtained with money alone. If the finished room is to be satisfactory, you must do intelligent planning before buying the furnishings. Many times a girl will find that with careful planning and her own skill she can create an attractive room at very little cost.

The first step in beginning the Room Improvement Project is to make a study of the room, considering the following 5 units in the Room Improvement Project:

1. Planning Unit
2. Arrangement Unit
3. Dressing Unit
4. Reading, Sewing, or Study Unit
5. Sleeping Unit

Each of these units includes enough study and work to comprise a 4-H Club Project. Older girls may complete more than 1 project in a year if they have time to carry out the requirements satisfactorily.

Furniture arrangement is a project that any girl can do and one in which usually many improvements can be made. This should precede the dressing, reading and sleeping projects as one needs to arrange furniture before attempting to work on individual units.

# Arrangement of Furniture

## Room Improvement Project for 4-H Clubs

By EDITH LACY, DOROTHY GENTRY, and LYDA SUTHERLAND

Whether your room has a "hit or miss" appearance or is well arranged and harmonious depends on you. By right arrangement of the furniture and accessories you may be able to work marvelous changes in your room with what is already on hand. First you must realize that the bedroom is for the definite purposes of dressing, study, relaxation, and sleep. Your task is to arrange the furniture so that these needs will be taken care of comfortably and conveniently.

An orderly, comfortable room does much toward the happiness of the person or persons who live there. Mental as well as physical comfort is affected. Rugs and furniture placed across the corners of the room, for example, may produce a confused mental state. Therefore, arrange for happiness and serenity as well as comfort and convenience.

### WHAT TO DO IN THIS PROJECT

#### Head H or Study Group

1. Learn the meaning of grouping, proportion, balance, harmony, and center of interest, in terms of furniture arrangement.
2. Study magazine pictures and actual arrangements of accessories for mantels, dressers, and such.
3. Learn to appreciate pictures and to frame and hang them.
4. Learn to arrange flowers.

#### Hand H or Work Group

1. Fill out enclosed check sheet.
2. Draw floor plan to scale and use cut-outs of furniture to try different arrangements on the floor plan.
3. Arrange and group your furniture for comfort, convenience, and artistic attractiveness.
4. Rearrange accessories on mantel, dresser, bedside table, and other pieces of furniture.
5. Remove unneeded bric-a-brac and pictures.
6. Hang pictures correctly.
7. Plan and arrange the furnishings around the center of interest in your room.
8. Make some accessory for your room, as a chair cushion or lamp shade, or frame a picture.

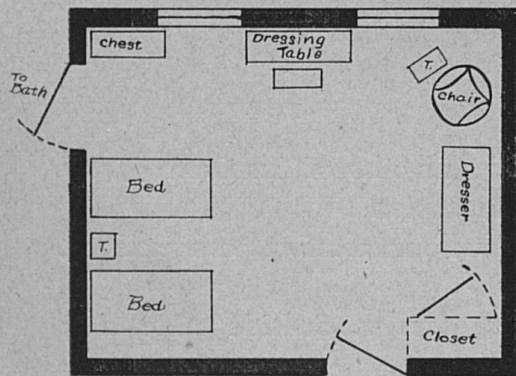
9. Arrange flowers for your room.
10. Finish anything left over from the Planning Unit.
11. Make a booklet for this unit of work, or add a chapter if the Room Improvement Booklet is already started. For suggestions on the booklet see Room Improvement Project "Planning Unit."

### PLAN FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT ON PAPER

Before arranging the furniture in your room, work out the arrangement on a paper floor plan. Using paper cut-outs, try out different arrangements on the floor plan as follows:

1. Measure length and width of your own room.
2. Make two drawings of the floor plan to scale, using  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to represent 1 foot. Draw this on paper  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11", or the size of your Room Improvement Booklet paper. Graph paper is good for this purpose.
3. Measure the base of each piece of furniture in your room and record the measurements.
4. Make 2 cut-outs of each piece of furniture, to scale. Paste on floor plan one set as your furniture is now arranged. Then try the other set in different arrangements to see if you can place furniture in better locations.
5. When both plans are completed, put them in the Room Improvement Booklet.

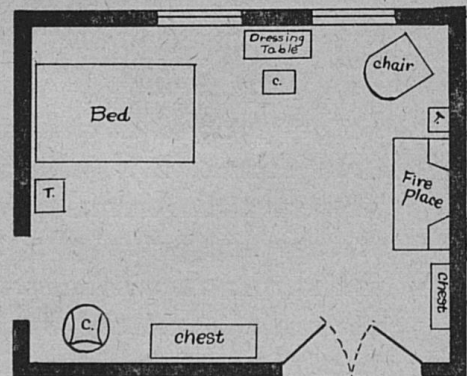
### Convenient Arrangements of Furniture



A.

The beds are arranged so the occupants do not have to face the light. To save steps, the dresser is placed near the closet. The dressing table between the windows has good lighting. A comfortable chair and table make a pleasing reading or sewing unit. Either twin or double beds can be used.

(Illustration 1)



B. Closet

The dressing table is located between the two windows for ideal light. A comfortable chair for reading or sewing is by the fire place. A small chest for storage near the double closet makes a convenient arrangement. The chest is close to the closet, with a chair convenient to it and to the bed.

(Illustration 2)

## THE HOW OF FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT

Before starting this project, remove any furniture not in actual use in the room, and substitute needed pieces from attic or store-room if you have them there. It is well also to take out all accessories until you have decided where the large pieces of furniture are to be placed. Arrange the furniture so that it will be convenient to use and will look right. To do this you will have to know and follow the artistic principles of grouping, balance, harmony, proportion, and center of interest.

### Grouping

Furniture that is used for a specific purpose should be grouped together. For example, a desk or work table should have with it a chair, book shelves, and light. Consider the groups in relation to other groups—the dressing table or dresser in relation to clothes closet, for example. This makes for convenience. Consider also how many persons will live in the room. If there are two girls rooming together, two chairs will probably be needed at the study table, and two mirrors, one over the dressing table and one over the chest of drawers. Ease of cleaning should also be considered in arranging the furniture.

### Balance

Balance is that quality in a room which produces the feeling of rest and stability. You may produce this effect by placing the large pieces of furniture on opposite sides of the room. Or several small pieces of furniture grouped together along one wall may balance a large piece on the opposite side. For example, a small table, book-



A feeling of balance is given by this arrangement of furniture.

(Illustration 3)

shelves, reading light, and chair as a group might be placed opposite a bed or dresser. Windows, doors, and coarse hangings help to balance heavy pieces of furniture. Don't put all low pieces of furniture on one side of the room with all tall pieces opposite.

### **Harmony or unity**

The entire room should give the impression of harmony and unity. One of the main ways of securing this effect in a room is to place large pieces of furniture and rugs parallel to the lines of the room. Furniture set diagonally across corners, rugs scattered over the floor, and table covers placed in opposition to lines of the table, do not give an impression of harmony. Chairs, end tables, footstools, and other small pieces need not be placed parallel to the lines of the room. When placed differently, they help to prevent monotony.

In general, a room is harmonious when—

The furniture belongs in the room: neither too much nor too little of it.

The pieces of furniture belong together and are well grouped.

The furniture is correctly placed in relation to the lines of the room.

The color and color combinations are pleasing and appropriate. The pattern on walls, on floor, or in hangings is used in right amounts.

The right textures of materials are used.

Simplicity in a girl's room cannot be overemphasized. Restfulness and beauty of the room depend on this quality. Overcrowding with furniture and cluttering with ornaments are mistakes often made.

### **Proportion**

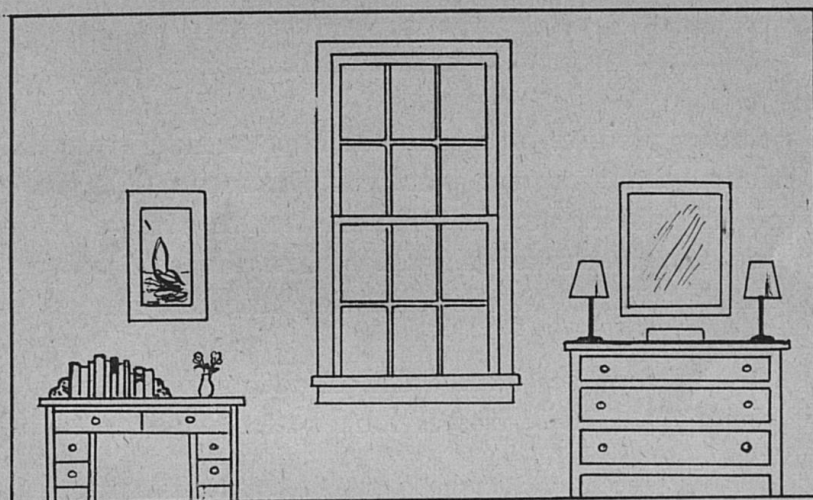
Proportion in a room means that the large pieces of furniture correspond in size to the size of the room and to the spaces they occupy. Many large pieces of furniture crowd a small room. On the other hand, low, delicate, fragile furnishings look out of place in a spacious room with a high ceiling. Place the larger pieces along the large wall spaces, and group pieces of somewhat the same scale together. Arrange small articles in groups. In grouping the furniture, work out pleasing proportions in the wall spaces. Too many equal divisions seen at one time tend toward monotony, while many unequal divisions seen at one time give the effect of confusion. Dividing a wall space into two parts is pleasing if the object is placed a little less than two-thirds the distance from one end. If more than two divisions are made, a variation of some of the spaces and a repetition of others is pleasing.

### Center of interest

A room should be so arranged and planned that some one part attracts the eye more than any other. This center of interest may be the bed, fireplace, a desk, a couch, a window grouping, or some other unit. It may be emphasized by the furniture arrangement, and it should be the most attractive part of the room.

### ARRANGEMENT OF ACCESSORIES

After the larger pieces of furniture have been placed so that the room appears right, bring in the small furniture and objects to fill in the bare places and to add interest. Such accessories as lamps, boxes, pictures, pillows, candlesticks, flowers, growing plants, or other decorative objects add the finishing touches for comfort and beauty. They



Informal balance on desk obtained by unlike objects. Formal balance on dresser by like objects. (Illustration 4)

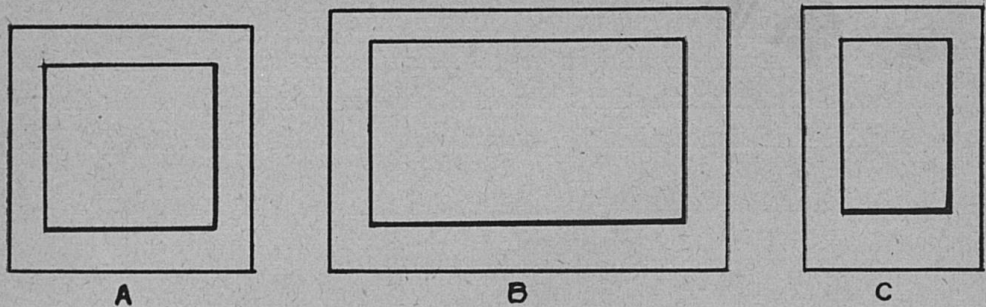
should be arranged on the same artistic principles as the furniture. You will enjoy planning the placing of accessories on your bureau, dressing table, mantle, and desk. Illustration 4 shows how balance is attained by like and unlike objects.

### PICTURES

Be especially critical in considering the pictures for your room. Ask yourselves these questions: Are there too many pictures on the walls? Are any pictures needed on the figured paper? Do the pictures in use fit into the room scheme? Are they appropriately framed and correctly hung?

### Framing pictures

The purpose of the frame is to set off and give finish to the picture. The frame should be simple so as not to attract attention away from the picture itself. It should be of correct width for the picture. Usually the color of the frame should repeat the deepest color tone of the picture. Most pictures are framed without mats. However, small prints, etchings, water colors, and wood blocks are mounted, usually with mats that harmonize with the picture, and are framed with a narrow molding.



In mounting pictures on a mat, the bottom margin should always be the widest. On a square picture (Illustration A), the top and side margins should be equal. On a horizontal picture (Illustration B), the side margin should be wider than the top margin. On a vertical picture (Illustration C), the side margins are less than the top margin.

Wood frames may be tinted with oil paints to match the deepest tones of the picture. Gilt frames look better if antiqued or dulled in some way.

### Hanging pictures

Hang the pictures flat against the wall. Placing the small screw eyes for the wire near the top of the frame makes the picture hang flat. For most pictures an invisible hanging arrangement is best. An inexpensive hook which is held by a strong small nail put in on the slant, can be bought. Such a hook will support quite a large picture. Very large pictures should be hung with two parallel wires running from the picture to the picture molding. Pictures should be hung over furniture and at a height to make the picture part of the furniture group. A picture hung above a piece of furniture must be related to it in scale. Small pictures are often hung in groups. All these should be related in color and subject matter. If you have more pictures than you can use at one time, you may wish to change them occasionally.

If a picture stands the test of suitability to the room and to the space in which it is placed, it probably is well selected.

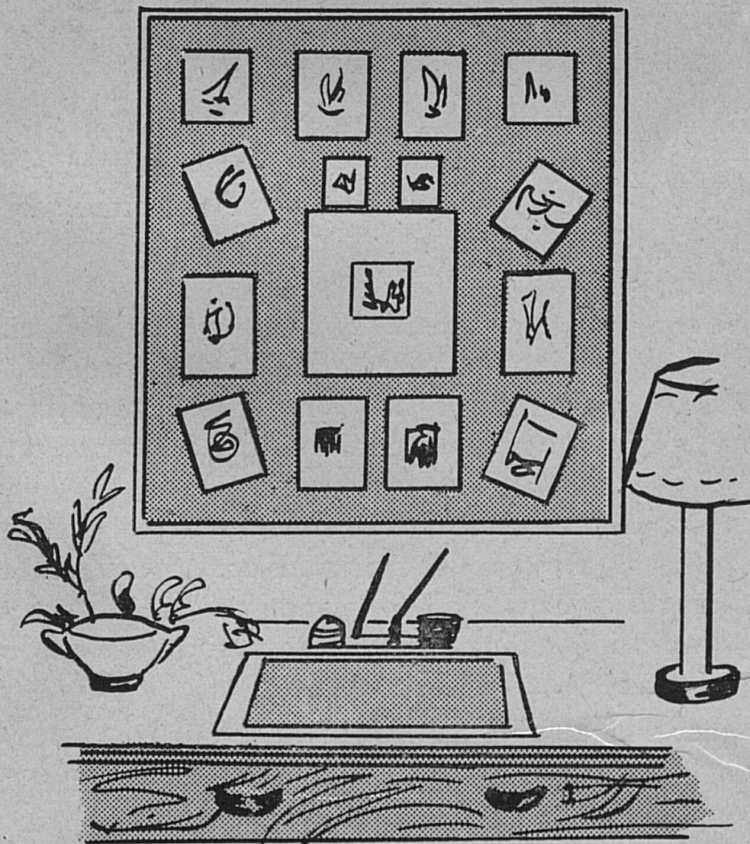


### Scarfs and Table Covers

Most girls have learned that dresser scarfs and table covers are in good taste if they come just to the edges of the furniture, or if they leave an interesting border around the top. Covers for the table or dresser should be simple in design and made of washable, practical materials. Such fabrics as unbleached muslin, linen, Indian head, broadcloth, gingham, crash, and scrim are appropriate for scarfs. Colored borders, machine stitched or applied by hand to cream or white scarfs are most attractive. Rickrack braid and bias bindings also make interesting finishes for the edges. Decorative finishes, as Italian hemstitching, colored threads drawn or woven along the inner edges of the hem, and shaped hems applied with featherstitching or chainstitching are all dainty finishes for covers to be used in a bedroom. However, in most rooms, scarfs are not needed. Well finished furniture may look better if no covering is used.

### Use of Flowers

Flowers and growing plants, when carefully chosen and arranged, add much to the freshness and charm of a room. Artificial flowers generally add nothing to the attractiveness of a room.



A bulletin board may be used for small pictures, Christmas cards, or penants.

(Illustration 6)

### Sources of flowers

Through late spring, summer, and early fall, blossoms from the flower garden are available. Many times the woods and fields offer opportunities, too. Care should be taken in picking wild flowers. Pick only those that are plentiful and use care not to injure the plant.

In late winter and early spring, branches from shrubs may be forced into early bloom by placing them in water in the house. Forsythia, pussy willow, plum, cherry, and apple are types satisfactory for this.

Bulbs may be planted at intervals so that blossoms may be had throughout the winter. Ivy, sweet potato vine, grapefruit plants all may be used.

### Cutting of flowers

Flowers should be cut early in the morning or late in the evening. A sharp knife or flower shears should be used. Cut on a slant rather than straight across. This exposes a larger cut surface, thus allowing better opportunity for absorption of water. Never break the stems. Most blossoms should be cut before the blossoms are in full bloom. They then last longer. Some foliage left with the blossoms adds to the attractiveness of the bouquet. Cut all long stems. As soon as the blossoms are cut, set them in cool water and leave them there for 3 hours. The water should be deep enough to reach well up on the stems.

### Containers

The container should add to the attractiveness of the bouquet. Plain, simple, well-proportioned containers are better than elaborate, odd-shaped ones. The height and size of the container should be in proportion to the surface on which it is to be placed, and to the bouquet itself.

Small, low-growing blossoms like violets appear at their best in low bowls, while tall shrubs such as pussy willow are best in taller containers. However, low bowls may sometimes be used for the latter if the diameter of the bowl is large enough to appear to support the flowers.

The texture of the container and the blossoms should correspond. That is, large heavy blossoms like marigolds or forsythia are best shown in pottery; fine delicate-stemmed flowers in glass. Glass or metal flower holders are useful in keeping the stems in position, or sand or coarse wire netting may be used for this purpose.

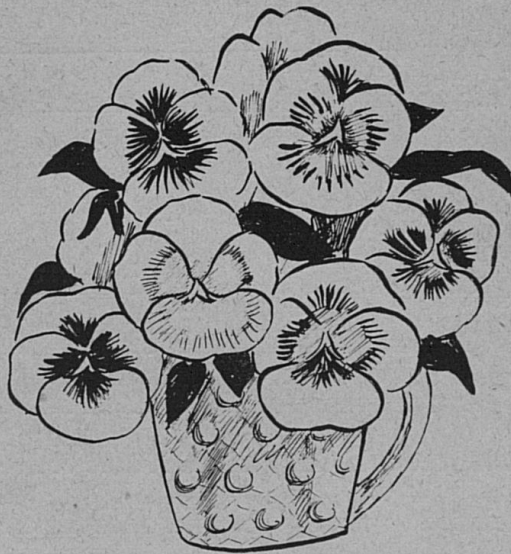
### Arrangement

Flowers should be arranged to resemble their natural growing form. Never crowd flowers in a vase. Often a few blossoms are more



**LINE**—a few sprays of buds or branches arranged to show the beauty of their individual line.

(Illustration 7)



**MASS**—blossoms massed together emphasizing color. One variety or two or more kinds may be used in this arrangement.

(Illustration 8)

pleasing than many, though there are really two types of flower arrangement, line and mass, as shown in the illustrations.

The bouquet should be balanced, neither top-heavy nor lopsided. Arrange the larger, darker blossoms at the base, the lighter ones at the top. Place the long stems near the center, shorter ones (about two-thirds the height of the first) next, and the still shorter (about one-half height of the second) last.

Bouquets for dining tables should be low enough not to obstruct vision across the table. Flowers show to best advantage when placed against a plain background. They should harmonize with the color of the room.

Cut flowers should not be placed in the sun or draft. If they are taken out of the containers and placed in water well up on the stems each night, their beauty will be prolonged. Cutting a little off the end of the stems each day also causes them to last longer.

### REFERENCES

Read articles in homemaking magazines, and study books from the school or public library, such as *Art in Everyday Life*, by H. I. and V. Goldstein, *Home Furnishings*, by A. H. Rutt.

### CHECK SHEET FOR ARRANGEMENT UNIT

Name of girl \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of first check \_\_\_\_\_ Date of final check \_\_\_\_\_

	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Will improve as follows
<i>Furniture Arrangement</i>			
Grouped for			
Convenience .....	_____	_____	_____
Comfort .....	_____	_____	_____
Attractiveness .....	_____	_____	_____
Balanced placing .....	_____	_____	_____
Related to wall space and openings..	_____	_____	_____
Built around center of interest .....	_____	_____	_____
Suited to purpose .....	_____	_____	_____
<i>Accessories</i>			
Amount			
Enough .....	_____	_____	_____
Something needed .....	_____	_____	_____
Appropriate .....	_____	_____	_____
Pictures			
Style .....	_____	_____	_____
Number .....	_____	_____	_____
Framing .....	_____	_____	_____
Hanging .....	_____	_____	_____
Grouped with furniture .....	_____	_____	_____
Arrangement of accessories on dresser, mantle, table, etc.			
Scarfs .....	_____	_____	_____
Lamps .....	_____	_____	_____
Other accessories .....	_____	_____	_____