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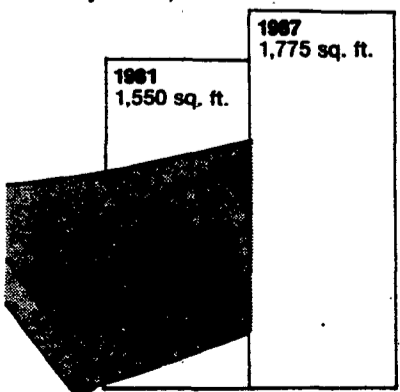


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HOMEFACTS

■ Single-family home size is growing.
(Median size of a new single-family home)



SOURCE: National Association of Home Builders

Copley News Service

Come back to the five-and-dime

By Lisa Lebowitz
Copley News Service

Five-and-dimes, the Woolworth's, Kresge's and Lamston's in your town, are often overlooked as decorating resources. As proof-positive that home design doesn't have to be expensive, here's a compilation of household treasures found recently in a local Woolworth's. Stock and prices may vary in your area.

What kitchen is complete without a clock to watch pots by? Sleek wall clocks with a deep blue face, white numerals and a white exterior retail. They are quartz, require on AA battery and come with a one-year warranty.

For country kitchens, try an antique-look clock with dark wood frames, white faces and elegant black numerals.

And look for kitchen chair cushions covered in cheery calicos that are 50 percent cotton, 50 percent polyester. They are 1 inch thick and come four cushions to a pack.

Placemats and tablecloths make a well-dressed table. Solid geometric vinyl placemats for a high-tech feel and vinyl mats printed with country patterns are less than \$2 each.

Flannel-backed vinyl tablecloths that protect your table start at \$5.99. Add a final touch to make a kitchen cozy: a whistling tea kettle in designer colors such as dusty blue, clay and beige. They are made of rustproof aluminum.

Bathrooms strike it rich at dime stores, with towels that are particularly well-priced. Many top deco-

rators use towels and washcloths to introduce color and create accents.

Also on hand are bath accessory sets containing a streamlined plastic tissue-box cover, toothbrush holder, drinking glass and soap dish. Match the set to your new bath towels and refresh the

REFINISHING TREASURES

Wood furniture is among the most appealing and enduring thrift-store and garage-sale buys.

Even the most tired-looking pieces come to life with refinishing or even just a good cleaning.

Woman's Day offers some helpful wood fix-up and budget decorating tips:

■ Concentrate funds where they'll have the most impact. Save your pennies for a quality dining table, sofa or bed to "carry" a room.

■ Refinish furniture to give it new life.

■ Look at wood furniture carefully to decide what to refinish, recycle or reject.

■ Some wood furniture doesn't even need refinishing — just minor repair work. Simply gluing joints and applying paste wax can bring it up to snuff.

Copley News Service

look of your room without painting or repapering.

Wicker items inspire a bright summerhouse feel in bath, sewing and laundry rooms. Check your five-and-dime for covered clothes hampers and wicker hanging shelves in a variety of sizes, prices and pastel colors.

A comforter and sheets can be the centerpiece of a bedroom. Look for no-iron cotton/poly sheets in florals, solids and geometrics.

English print or floral comforters are machine washable with a poly filling. Accent pillowcases can complement comforters in prints or solids.

Don't overlook the option to

make curtains or cover a headboard with inexpensive bed sheets. Find the appropriate curtain hardware (rings, rod, thread) at the same store.

If you prefer ready-made curtains and drapes, there is usually a broad selection. Sheers in assorted colors, 60-by-81 inches, go for less than \$10. Lace panel curtains and an assortment of "silk" cording ties can accent a room inexpensively.

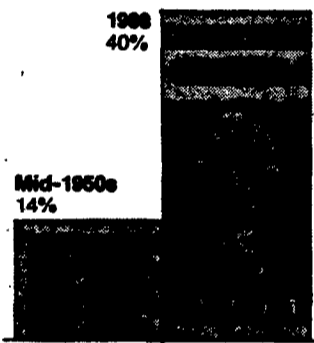
For the student's room, try a sturdy, laminated, pressed-wood desk with an underhanging storage cabinet. You put it together with a Phillips screwdriver. Both pieces of furniture are white but treated to be stain-resistant. Five-and-dimes are a steady source for stackable plastic parson's tables, too. They come in white or cream.

Recovering a living room couch requires a substantial investment. Instead, do a couch makeover using pillows and a durable throw.

The biggest problem with putting a single piece of fabric over a tired couch or chair is that the unshaped material tends to move around.

HOMEFACTS

■ A higher percentage of the average family's income goes toward making a home purchase today.



SOURCE: Census Bureau

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