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## INFORMAL WAYS OF DISPLAYING CHOICE ITEMS

A room that has no personalized accessories looks institutional and lacks character. A room that is overloaded with accessories, no matter how fine they are, looks cluttered and too busy.

Good planning is one of the most important steps in furnishing your home. You need to be prepared with the facts and figures about your room, size of furnishings and the mood created by accessories. Simple, useful, attractive, furnishings can enrich your home and your life but it is important to realize it takes time, planning, and thought to furnish a home.

If you have a plan and have given it thought, you can eliminate many problems and you can reflect on best ways of displaying choice items. Remember, we must constantly study our furnishing plan.

It is important to take note of furnishings for today's life styles. Mixing the old with the new is often an expression of what pleases the owner. Today's furnishings have freshness and individuality, a sleek look unhampered by dressy things, and a look that depends for its effectiveness upon a disciplined selectivity. Every single element is made to count; thus, choices must be made not only on the basis of what to accumulate, but also what to discard.

Objects of art were rarely used during the beginning of the contemporary era. But now we are again adding enough of the personal objects of art to make a room pleasingly interesting and individual. However, to keep from adding too much, it is necessary to remind ourselves that the mere process of living involves equipment or "things."

Many people accumulate beautiful things as an investment, while others acquire them because they cannot resist their beauty. Both types of people are making collections which may give them much joy and satisfaction.

In creating display areas, you will need to have a sensitivity to each design element and principle. You will find uses for your ingenuity and imagination.

As you plan for each display of items remember:

- Appropriateness to setting is important.
- Too many objects can make a room visually cluttered.
- Items need not be rare or expensive, but they add little if they are both commonplace and arranged unimaginatively.
- Harmony and unity are important, but so are surprise and variety.
- Careful thought should be given to size and shape, character and environment of space.

*Virginia Cooperative Extension Service  
Extension Division  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061*

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Katherine Habel,  
Extension Specialist

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Give special attention to:

- The diversity of size and shape, color and material, especially when arranging those objects that are to be seen together.
- The prominence of one object when grouping accessories.

This object can be one large, or unusual piece, either standing alone or reinforced with smaller objects.

It is undoubtedly easier to display objects of art more freely when very small children are not a part of the household.

Take time in planning location and background of accessories.

Some Types of Locations:

- Those places where persons normally look; the space over a desk, on the wall opposite a bed.
- Those places where we want them to look with interest and pleasure; uninteresting corners or small wall spaces that must be used.

The effectiveness of the setting is important. Some items need a contrasting setting. Some items need a harmonious setting. This can strengthen the items, lines, or color and give emphasis to the item.

Whatever your plan, the secret of best using your choice items lies in composition, grouping, mixing old and new, and in creating display areas.

Ideas to Stimulate Your Thinking:

Nothing brings interest into a room so effectively as a fascinating display of craft work or an unusual arrangement of paintings. An unused corner can become a complex network of cinder blocks or bricks topped with pottery and sculpture. A border of white marble chips around the carpet can become a place on which to set paintings and ceramics. The top of a radiator can be used for displaying various craft items.

Like fabric panels, paintings can be used to cover undesirable aspects of a room or to give an illusion of additional space to a room. A window that is not needed can be covered by a painting.

Objects can be arranged on table surfaces or on the floor in corners. In order to avoid a rigid setting, you should refrain from excessive displays of art objects in lines on shelves.

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Keeping similar types of work together contributes a consistency throughout groups. Too much variety adds confusion--one should aim for organization. Picture frames with similar characteristics can be used to help unify a grouping of pictures; however, these frames should not be identical. Small pictures are best in groups because by themselves they tend to look spotty and lonely.

Many books have interesting bindings or jackets which look well on the shelf. Your books can be covered in colored paper jackets to give them a visual sense of togetherness.

The practice of mixing ornaments with books adds interest to your shelves. Books can be combined with china ornaments, pewter mugs, silver trophies, or small paintings. Tanks of tropical fish or small shadow boxes can be set among books. These are especially effective when illuminated at night.

To make your shelves as adjustable as possible, use ready-made metal strips which have slots into which you fit pins to hold the shelves.

For collections you can add interest if you arrange them chronologically, by country of origin, or by size, shape, or color. The clever collector learns the history of his collection and thus is able to make it more interesting to his friends.

If you have a collection of tiny figurines, table bells, or toothpick holders, buy an old-fashioned picture frame and make a shadow box out of them. Line the box with an appropriate color, install shelves, arrange the items and hang the box on the wall.

A desk should always have one thing on it that is so beautiful that it will take your mind to distant places. It may be a carved wooden figure that reminds you of a wonderful vacation day, or a beautiful shell that takes your mind to a remote seashore. A glimpse of one of these will give instant joy.

In the same way, the coffee table, the top of the chest, and the shelf in the bookcase, all should have their mind-stretching objects that take you to far away places.

Mirrors increase the size of a small room. Hang them low enough to be used comfortably so they will reflect interesting objects in the room, and frame them to blend with the room furnishings.

Pillows should harmonize in color and texture with the sofa, the bed, or the chair they rest on, and they should be grouped carefully as a part of the total composition.

A passport to fewer problems and more successful experiences in displaying choice items:

- Change accessories for variety, for the seasons, holidays, and other special occasions.
- Plan convenient storage for those objects not always used.
- Weed out and upgrade the collection from time-to-time.
- Have courage to try something different, to express your individuality.

The beauty of form is timeless and you should strive for it rather than the current fads.

Note magazines and clip those suggestions appropriate for your space and the choice items you have. The materials used are not as important as how they are used. The amount of space is not as important as how it is arranged and limited.