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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Tuesday, November 14, 1944

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QUESTION BOX

How cut garments?  
How remove spots on felt?  
How re-liquify honey?

ANSWERS from home economists of the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Question box today. Time to go over some of the problems that have come up for busy homemakers. And for our answers, we turn to specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

First, here's one from a homemaker who's doing a lot of Christmas sewing. And by the way, that's a hint to those of us who haven't started our Christmas sewing. Only 40 more days, you know. But to get back to the question, this homemaker wants to know what is meant by the factory method of cutting. She says, "I've heard it saves a great deal of time."

Yes, the factory method of cutting does save time. This is what it means. In a factory, many garments are cut at the same time. They use a mechanical cutter to cut all the garments made by the same pattern. But you don't need a mechanical cutter to adapt factory cutting to home sewing. You can use factory cutting if you're making two or more garments from the same pattern.

See, now well this lends itself to your Christmas sewing - to the aprons and nightgowns and slips and bedjackets you plan to make. Get a good pattern for each of these. And then cut several garments at the same time.

The trick is to be sure the layers of cloth are straight. One way you can be sure they'll stay this way while you're cutting is to pin the selvages together before you place the pattern on the cloth. Then be sure the pattern is true with the grain of the goods. You'll get best results if you can leave your pattern flat.

When you fold your material there's apt to be a shift. So keep the material flat, if possible.



As I said, factory cutting lends itself to Christmas sewing. It's a valuable timesaver when you're doing sewing for the children too. Use it when you're making their dresses and shirts and pajamas and slippers. You'll find it saves you time. So when you have a good pattern, plan to use it several times. Cut more than one garment at once as they do in the factory. As for variety in the garments and articles you make, you can always get that by using different materials and by using different trims.

Our next question is about a hat, or rather the water spots on a felt hat. A homemaker wants to know if there's any way she can take these spots out.

Textile specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say that sometimes it's possible to remove water spots from felt hats simply by scratching the spots with your fingernail. Or you may get them out by using a stiff brush.

Seems like a simple treatment doesn't it? There's one thing you do have to watch, and that's the grain of the felt. Be sure that you brush the felt the right way of the grain. That's very important.

In case, scratching or brushing won't get the water spots out, you may be able to get rid of them by wiping them gently with a damp cloth. Use a cloth that's been wrung nearly dry. Then let the hat dry quickly at room temperature and brush lightly with a good hat brush. And remember to take care to brush the felt the right way of the grain.

There are times when your felt hat may get not only water spotted but entirely soaked. Clothing specialists say the thing to do when this happens is to let the hat dry as quickly as possible at normal room temperature.

To protect the shape of your hat, let it dry on a well-padded hat stand. Then when the hat's thoroughly dry, brush it with a soft bristled brush or a rubber sponge.

Brushing has a lot to do with the appearance of felt hats. Most of us usually take time to brush our hats before we put them on. Clothing specialists say it's



a good idea to brush them carefully when we take them off...before we put them back in the closet.

And now for our final question. A homemaker writes, "Some honey I bought last year has crystalized. Is there anything I can do with it?"

Yes, you may bring it back to liquid again by putting the container in a pan of warm water until the crystals have melted. Store your honey in a dry place at room temperature. Otherwise it absorbs moisture and will ferment as any other sugar sirup.

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