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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT  
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Thursday, March 23, 1933.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Bedding Hints." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, and the Bureau of Entomology, U.S.D.A.

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Home comfort without cost. There's something most of us are looking for in these frugal times. Many of the comforts of home don't require money. Take that homely art of good bed-making, for example. Any woman can be an expert bed maker. And a well-made bed can provide lots of comfort and contentment for the family. Human beings spend nearly a third of their lives in bed. Scientists declare that restful sleep aids dispositions and efficiency.

The opposite is quite true also. A badly made bed may disturb your sleep just as much as a New England conscience. Life doesn't look too pleasant after a night spent between an upper sheet that pulls up from the bottom of the bed, and a lower sheet that wrinkles down from the top. The world doesn't look very rosy the morning after a chilly night with the breezes whistling around your neck and shoulders because the covers were too short to protect them.

The expert bed-maker insists on having bedding of the right size. For the sake of comfort and protection to mattresses, blankets and sleepers, a sheet should be long enough to tuck in snugly on all sides. The lower sheet should stay smoothly in position, once it's tucked in. The upper sheet should be long enough to tuck in securely at the foot of the bed as well as to fold down over the blankets at the head. When you are buying new sheets, remember to buy those that are a hundred and eight inches in length. This is the length of the sheet when it is torn off, not the length after the hems are in. Considering the shortening due to the hems and the shrinking, this will make the sheet just the right length to fit your bed and stay smoothly in position.

Blankets also need to be long enough, if beds are to be comfortable and well made. Ordinarily you want to tuck in from twelve to eighteen inches at the foot of the bed and have the blanket reach well up over the shoulders. Check the width of your bed also, when you are buying blankets. Purchase your blankets eighteen inches wider than the bed so they will tuck in at the sides. If your blankets are too short, you can lengthen them by sewing a strip of unbleached muslin at one end. This added length tucks under the mattress and makes the blanket convenient and comfortable.

Have you ever watched a trained nurse make a bed? Have you noticed how carefully she folds the sheets and blankets at the corners before she tucks them in? Those squared or mitred corners not only look neat, but they also hold securely. Have you noticed also that she is careful to tuck in the lower sheet



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most securely at the top of the bed, while the upper sheet she tucks in fast at the bottom? These few bed-making tricks are important for the comfort of the patient. Most good housekeepers use them in their homes.

Before long we'll be putting away much of the heavy winter bedding. Perhaps this would be a good time to mention a few economy points about storing your bedding. Blankets will last many years longer, if you care for them properly before you store them. This means laundering or cleaning, repairing and wrapping.

Blankets need frequent airings even when in use, but before storing them for the summer -- if you don't launder them, be sure to let them hang outdoors until the air has had a chance to penetrate every fibre. A sunny windy day is best for either airing or drying blankets. When you launder blankets, here are the main points to keep in mind. First, keep the washing and rinsing water at the same temperature throughout the process to avoid shrinking. Lukewarm temperature is best. Second, use mild neutral soaps. Make a suds before you put the blankets in. Third, squeeze the soap suds through the blankets but never scrub, rub or twist them. Avoid harsh alkali soaps. Avoid hot water. Avoid rough handling. Hang the blankets across two lines if possible to avoid strain on the center of the blanket. If the blanket happens to have stripes that are likely to run, be sure to hang the stripes straight so the moisture will drip in a straight line to the ground. When the blankets are dry, brush them with a stiff brush to restore their fluffy nap.

Now about repairing worn or damaged blankets. When the blankets are dry, give them a careful inspection. Do you find any edges that are frayed or worn? If so, this is the time to repair them. A binding will take care of damaged edges. For your fine best blankets, you may use a satin binding. A sateen binding will do for other blankets. You can put the binding on with a hand or machine-turned hem or with blanket stitch in a contrasting color. Inspect the rest of the blanket, too. Do you find any worn, thin spots that may soon be holes? Do you find any places where the threads are split or broken? If so, you can reinforce or mend them by darning with mending wool.

When you have cleaned and mended the blankets, put them away in storage before the moths have a chance to lay any eggs in them. Moth-proof preparations aren't necessary when you pack away your blankets, if the blankets are entirely free of moths and moth eggs when you store them and if you pack them away in air-tight containers. You can wrap clean blankets in sturdy brown paper or even in good newspaper, if you seal every opening with gum paper. If you want added protection, sprinkle your blanket with paradichlorobenzene or naphthalene, before you wrap it up.

Tomorrow we're going to reply to a friend of ours who wants to know how to broil or grill steaks and other foods. And we'll plan a steak dinner for Sunday.

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