

YOUR HOME

Surroundings given your plants add green thumb ease and fun

by LIS KING

The plant boom is on! Wherever you go, people are discussing the ways of their blooming and/or non-blooming "friends," and even novices have hints to offer on such subjects as the light requirements of ferns and the pruning of potted trees.

Caring for all that greenery is a labor of love, of course. But who wants to put up with window sills and trim peeling from constant plant misting or ugly water damage to fine floors?

To this end, the Tile Council of America offers some advice to green thumbs buff:

• Since water is the inevitable companion of all greenery, including the frugal cacti, plant lovers should consider ceramic tile a natural part of their green thumbs lifestyle. Ceramic tile is, after all, entirely water-proof.

• Those planning a new home should, for example consider some variation on the conservatory so popular in Victorian days. Today, it's called an atrium, and it's often found in the center of the house, with skylights one or two stories up. Tile that atrium floor, and you can pot, re-pot, water, hose down and mist to your heart's content.

• Atriums are also popular extensions to super baths. Pave that atrium floor with terra cotta quarry tile. If you want a rustic mood, however, quarry tile can be elegant, too. These days, it comes in hues and shapes that create floors much like luxurious parquet.

• Square, glazed tile, now available in every color from white and yellow to red and black, will add a definite contemporary flair.

• Or think about ceramic mosaics to create patterns underfoot. With these tiny tiles, which can be ordered in easy-to-install sheets in color combinations to suit your specifications, you can have plaids, stripes, and unprintable geometric effects.

• If you're a true plant buff,



THE ATRIUM IS ENJOYING A REVIVAL, and ceramic tile, impervious to moisture and so fuss-free, is the natural flooring medium. Here, Summitville's Strata tile, VERY reminiscent of elegant parquet, but without the cumbersome maintenance aspects of its look-alike, paves the floor beautifully.

you've already discovered that greenery thrives in the bath. So why not surround your tub with a tiled enclosure that'll give you extra-wide ledges on which to place the plants?

• Tile the window sill to avoid constant water damage. Do it yourself with easy-to-handle ceramic mosaics. Or pick a tile that'll fit the exact width of your sill without cutting. Or, if you're an apartment dweller with a landlord, who takes a dim view of permanent improvements, tile trays to hold your green friends.

• If you're enclosing a porch, think of tiling the floor, of course. It'll be a very handsome background for your informal furniture. But also think of built-in tiled planters. You can have them run wall to wall or spot them strategically. If the sub-

construction allows, you might even include a lily pond!

• Build some terrific planters. Simple boxes—tiled to suit your decor, of course—not only look great. They're efficient, too. Dirt will wipe right off, excessive moisture won't discolor them.

• If you want to learn how to set tile yourself—with an eye towards creating plant-loving environments send 25¢ to the Tile Council of America.

Dept. DIYW, P. O. Box 2222, Princeton, N. J. 08540. Creating the planters or whatever will be strictly up to your own ingenuity, but the leaflet WILL teach you the basic tiling techniques. You'll marvel how easy it really sounds—and is. Here's to happy greenery!

Pretty and practical patios with grass that never needs mowing!

The grass will certainly be greener on your side of the fence when you discover the year-round beauty, easy-to-install and easy-care attributes of grass carpeting for outdoor living. An ordinary concrete slab patio becomes a green oasis, creating a cool ambience for relaxing and entertaining.

The ho-hum of gardening vanishes with the hum of the lawn mower when grass carpeting is extended into the garden area to surround flowers and plantings. The surfacing tends to inhibit the growth of weeds, eliminates hoeing and provides some extra leisure hours.

Made of "Polyloom" II olefin fiber, Playfield Industries' carpeting is insect free, mildew, rot and stain resistant. Best of all, it carries a five-year warranty against failure or fading in sunlight—a nice guarantee that the beauty of your patio will be intact for the future.

Easy to install, artificial grass carpeting is widely available in 6- and 12-foot widths. A utility knife and appropriate adhesive—one recommended by your local carpet or hardware dealer—will get the project under way. Once the adhesive has been applied to the concrete and the grass is evenly in

place, a lawn roller helps to make a good bond between the adhesive and carpet backing.

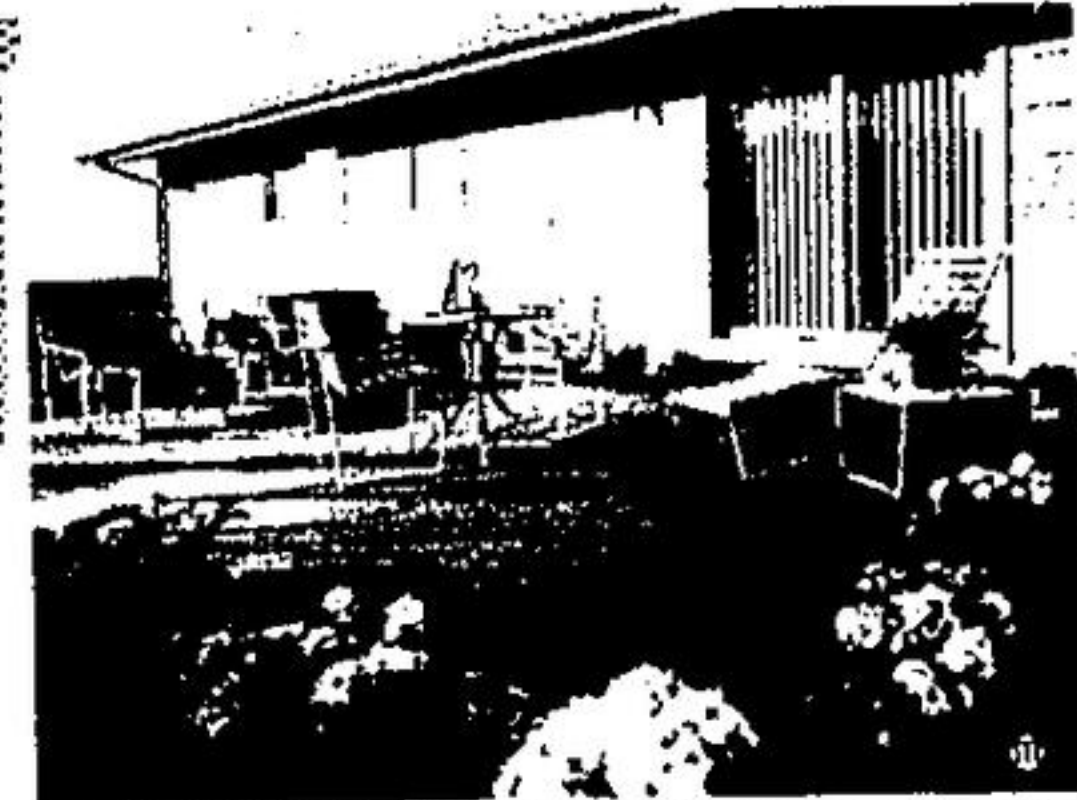
Keeping the surface clean and fresh-looking is simple—wash it down with the garden hose! Vacuum it to pick up small particles, or rake it when the leaves start to fall.

Grasslike carpeting is ideal for desert areas where grass is hard to grow. The carpeting adds a patch of greenery which creates a cool mood and remains cool under foot when the sun is hot. In cold climates, grass-covered patios can be swept free of snow easily. Envision a green vista from the family room fireside in mid-winter!

Left-over pieces of grass carpeting can be used for many do-it-yourself projects. Wooden cubes can be covered to provide extra, inexpensive patio seating. The covered cubes can also be used for elevating plants for decorative effects. An all-weather dartboard can be crafted with a can of spray paint and a little patience.

For the pet in your life, a placemat for his eating station, a pad for the kitty litter pan or a home-made scratching post turns a tiger into a pussycat every time.

For yourself, your grass-covered patio presents you with the nicest practice putting green in town!



GRASS CAN BE "PLANTED" where it never planned to grow. Carpeting a concrete slab patio with "Polyloom" II grasslike surfacing creates an attractive, ever-green, and easy-care area for year-round pleasure. The Playfield carpet comes in Lawn green, a bright, spring green, or Verde green, a deeper shade.

Color know-how is the beginning of beautiful moods in your room decor

Did you ever stop to think how often we use color to express our feelings? We talk about being green with envy, in a black rage, or in true blue. And then there's the proverbial "scarlet woman," and all those people with "green thumbs."

We've talked about color this way for centuries, and now psychologists are confirming what every woman has always known: the emotional impact of colors is serious business.

Color can make us see or overlook, for example. And lift our spirits, ease our tensions, evoke whatever mood we want.

The problem is figuring out what color—or combination of colors—will do what. And oddly enough even the woman who'll pick the right color dress without a moment's hesitation finds color scheming for her home an awesome task.

So here, from the Wall-covering Industry Bureau, are some helpful hints:

• Get to know the room you're decorating. Note architectural oddities. Be armed with swatches of carpeting, upholstery, etc., when you go shopping. And if you don't have swatches, at least bring along some paint chips or even some magazine pictures that'll give you a handle on the colors you'll be working with. For few people have as good a

color memory as they may think. And the lighting difference between home and store may fool you, too.

• Since the walls represent the largest area of any room, and most of it at eye level, your choice of wall-covering becomes very important.

• Light-colored wallcoverings will brighten a dark room, and warm colors will benefit a too-cold room. Strong wall colors will minimize the size of a room. Pale ones will enlarge it. Vivid colors can bring order to an architectural mish-mash or unrelated furniture, and they'll also give a sparse room a more furnished look.

• Build your scheme around your favorite color(s), and don't be swayed by fads or other people's schemes, unless, of course, they strike an instant response in you.

• GREEN is easy to live with. Don't be afraid to use

many greens in one room. After all, nature mixes all sorts of greens, and the result is always perfect harmony.

• BLUE is another of nature's dependable colors, and like sea and sky it has a cooling effect. Light blue has a tendency to make a room look larger. Soft blues are serene.

• YELLOW is the least demanding of all the major colors. Clear yellow brings sunshine to any room. But

• RED is not to be trifled with unless one understands its dynamics completely. It's easiest to use in small strokes, but if you decide to use it as one of your major colors its ardor can be balanced with white and/or black. Dark wood will also soften its intensity.

• ORANGE can sizzle or glow depending on its intensity. It's great for accents. Temper it with neutrals, dark hues, black or white, if you use it as a major color.

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Make most of existing structures when converting attic or cellar

Faced with the need for more room, the average family can move or add to their existing space. The latter course of action is recommended by the National Home Improvement Council.

It recommends converting existing space, such as an attic or a basement, or adding to your present house with a room addition.

Converting an attic or basement into living space can be a highly satisfactory experience and it can save the homeowner money, since he will be utilizing existing space and structures.

An attic project can be approached in a number of ways. The homeowner can simply insulate the roof and then finish off the existing area with flooring and wall partitions.

This will probably involve window dormers which will suggest ventilating louvers in the peak of the roof prior to insulating.

A need for greater space with less sloping ceilings will recommend shed-type dormers at the rear or front of the roof. Another technique is to literally raise the roof.

When you decide to add a room, plan the addition so that it adds to, rather than detracts from, the usable space in the present house.

Remember storage space. Plan it carefully to accommodate the room's purpose, or you may wind up with your existing closets crowding you out of your pleasure in the new addition.

And make the most of your existing water and heat sources. This will save money—and time!

A final thought on room additions: think about the addition in relationship to other homes in your neighborhood.

Its appearance can affect your property values either favorably or adversely. And this is important for both you and your neighbor—and the neighborhood, as well.

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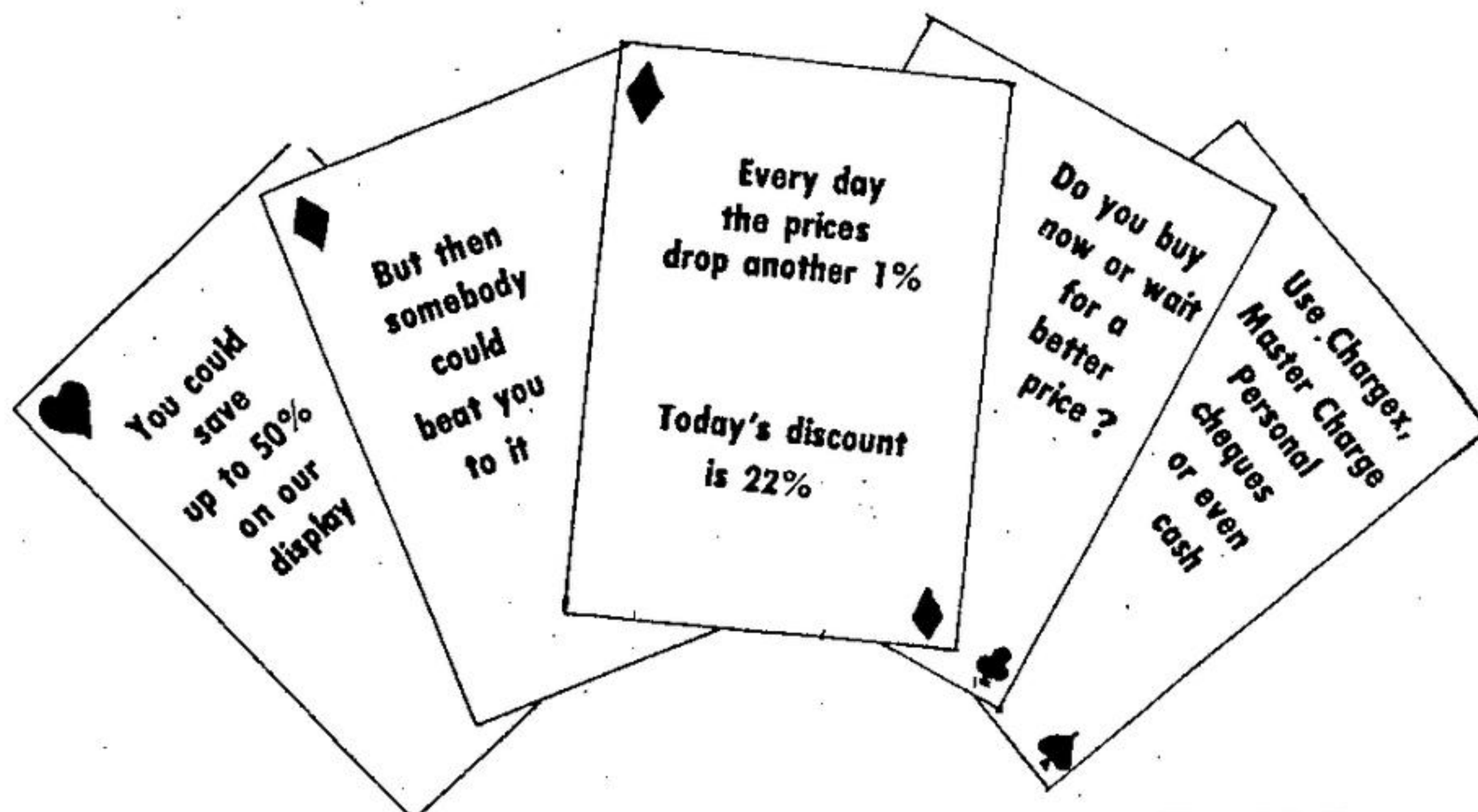
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