

How to keep collectibles looking their very best

If you use a toothbrush and hair blow dryer to clean your collectible plates and figurines, you're not alone. Experts at The Norman Rockwell Museum say that everyday household items can help keep valuable collectibles looking their best.

- Collectibles seldom need a "bath" if they're dusted regularly. When you dust, say our experts, use a soft, small paintbrush or toothbrush with flexible, soft bristles; either object should, of course, be clean. A cloth or feather-duster could get caught in a figurine and snap off a finger!
- To wash figurines and non-decal plates, line a sink with a dish towel, so the porcelain won't bang or break. Fill the sink with warm water and a mild soap like Ivory. (Abrasive cleansers could damage the collectible's surface.) Most plates can simply be soaked, without scrubbing. The Norman Rockwell Museum suggests using a soft bristle toothbrush to gently clean figurine nooks and cran- nies if necessary.

An alternative to sink washing is to mix lukewarm water and soap in a spray bottle, and spritz each sculpture until

clean. To rinse, spray with warm, clear water. Dry the pieces gently with a clean, soft towel, let them "air dry," or use a blow dryer.

Do not wash fine collectibles in a dishwasher; your collectibles were never meant to withstand the washer's heat.

For special problems, the experts give this advice:

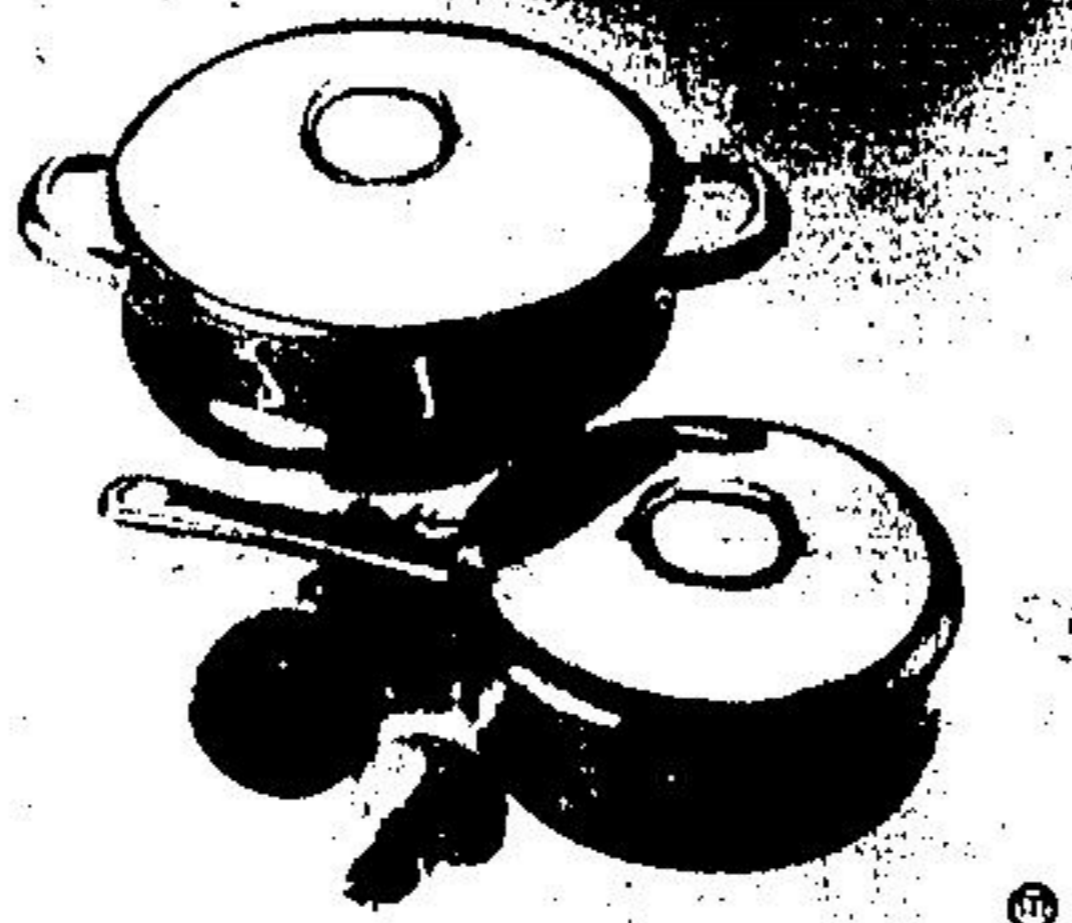
- If there's an attached wooden base on the sculpture, prevent warping by wrapping the base in a plastic bag, then wrapping a towel around the bag before you clean.

- If you happen to get an ink spot or other stain on your collectible, wash the stain out fresh, before it sets.

- Be careful with felt bottoms or felt pads. Green felt, especially, will bleed when wet. If the felt does get wet, it should be allowed to dry overnight, otherwise the wet felt will cause a permanent stain on your table or other surface.

- Dust decal plates when they need it, but avoid cleaning them with water.

High-fashion cookware



NEW BELLED SHAPE COOKWARE with rounded covers has been introduced to permit waterless, low fat or even fat-free cooking. Steam rolls back into the food for self-basting so all the vitamins and flavor stay where they belong—in the food. Cast in stainless steel, it has a full 1/4 inch thick aluminum base to spread heat evenly over the entire pan—so there's no burning or hot spots. You get the benefits of aluminum heat distribution plus purity of cooking and ease of cleaning with stainless steel. Metal handles are hollowed, professional style, to stay cool. Pictured are "Bell Bottom Pots" by Magefesa, available at fine stores.

Space efficiency

Skyhigh mortgages, ever-increasing rents. What's a budget-conscious person to do? As the unfortunate housing industry knows well, most of us are delaying the dream of bigger home or more deluxe apartment for that brighter day in our economic futures.

The present need not mean "making do," however. We can redecorate and improve even in space-limited accommodations. In fact, that's exactly what the National Association of Home Builders reports most U.S. consumers are doing today.

NAHB estimates that close to \$50 billion was spent by do-it-yourselfers and professionals on remodeling in 1982. Americans are just not sacrificing style for space.

If you're one of those economic-minded refurbishers, long on imagination, but short on room, consider including space-saving entertainment centers in your redecorating schemes. Sharp Electronics Corporation of Paramus, N.J., is one company that has designed such centers with your floor space needs in mind.

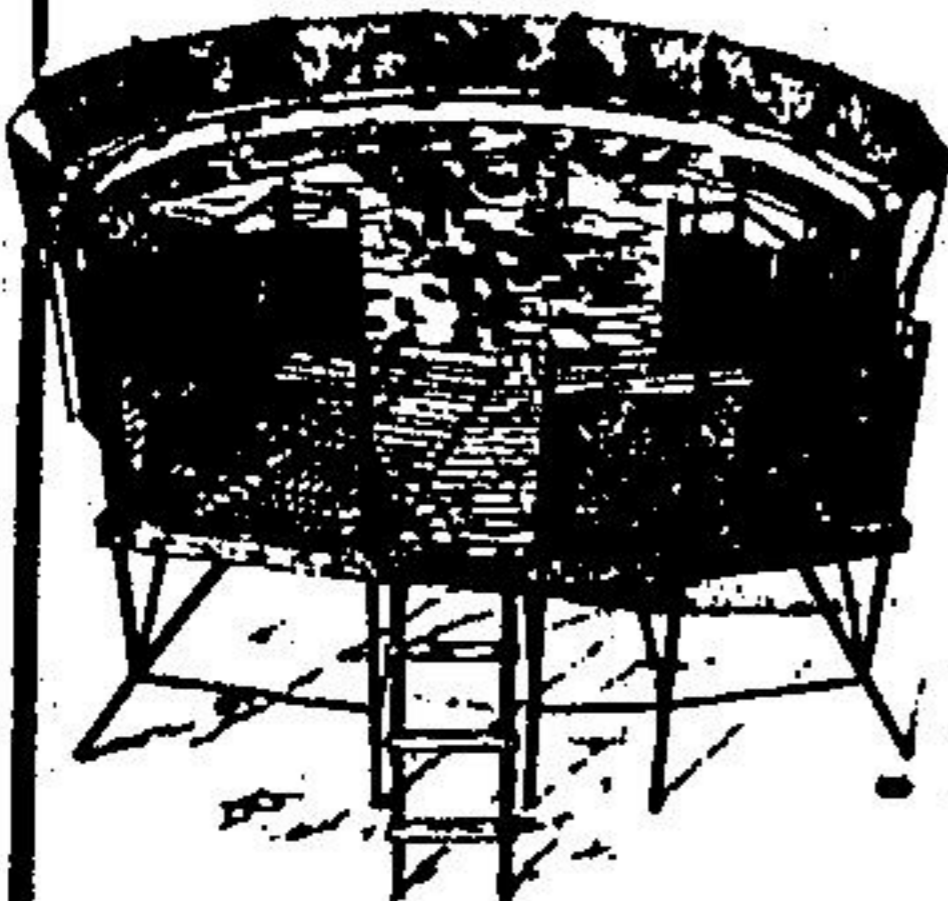
Consider Sharp's line of 30" wide console TV's with 25" (diagonal) screens. Models 25G100, 25G200 and 25G300, though they vary in special features offered, are all noteworthy for their space saving design.

These models require only 2.9 sq. ft. of floor space while conventional consoles need 5.1 sq. ft. The result: a 43 percent savings in floor space used!

In addition, they all provide an elevated picture tube, which at 38" off the floor is directly at eye-level for more comfortable viewing. A viewer can relax, watch a favorite show, and never have to crane or twist his neck in a downward position.

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