



AN INSTANT HEIRLOOM is yours for the making. This delicate country-style window curtain wasn't found in great-grandmother's attic — it's made from dime store cotton handkerchiefs dyed with RIT Dye.

Decorating with dime store hankies is easy and enjoyable

It's spring, time to remove heavy draperies, open the windows and let the fresh breezes blow!

Looking for decorating ideas with a lighter touch? By using the dime store cotton hankies dyed with Rit Dye, you can add a sweet country accent to any room in the house. Curtains, bed covers, dust ruffles, pillow shams and more can be yours for far less than ready-made items.

Let's begin with the bedroom. Want to see your windows take on that expensive country look seen in glossy magazines? Select a variety of white eyelet handkerchiefs and satin ribbons, and plunge them into dyebaths of romantic hues such as Rit Rose Pink, Ecru and Soft Yellow.

Stitch the squares together. Cut strips of satin ribbon to make curtain rings and hang your 'instant heirloom' from a polished brass curtain rod.

Materials needed

Assemble the following list of supplies and you're ready to begin:

- Rit Dye, powder or liquid;
- Cotton handkerchiefs;
- Iron;
- Plastic drop cloth;
- Satin ribbon;
- Straight pins;
- Hot water;
- Rubber gloves;
- Mixing spoon;
- Medium-sized containers (use stainless steel, porcelain, enamelware or glass only), one for each dye bath.

Getting started

New fabrics need to be prewashed to get rid of sizing. Do not dry.

Choose your dyeing method

In the sink: The sink method is quick and easy for small items.

Follow package directions and prepare the dyebath. Use adequate water to cover the handkerchiefs so they are not crowded. Use 2 teaspoons powder dye or 2½ tablespoons of liquid dye for each gallon of hot

water; double the amount of dye for a dark color.

Pour RIT solution into hottest tap water in pan or sink. Stir to mix. Place all hankies to be dyed Rose Pink into the mixture, then stir gently with the spoon until the fabric looks darker than you want your finished product to appear (fabric looks darker wet).

Keep fabric moving, but avoid twisting or crowding. Rinse with warm water, then gradually cooler water, rinsing until water runs clear. Drip dry.

Iron while still damp. Set aside. Clean sink with bleach or cleanser before preparing next dyebath color.

On the stove top: Place a large pot on the stove top. Fill with enough hot water (160°-180°F) to give the hankies plenty of room and add dye. Use a kitchen thermometer to maintain steady reading. Stir in the hankies and heat dyebath to simmering (just under boiling), continue to stir for 20 minutes. Follow the same rinse instructions as for the sink method.

Planning your design

Lay out your dyed handkerchiefs on a flat work surface. Have fun! Arrange the squares until you find the pattern that pleases you most. Try alternating rows of color or a checkerboard effect. Maybe a rainbow pattern is more your style.

Pin hankies in place and sew together. Next, take a strip of ribbon and form a curtain ring by sewing its ends together. Make enough rings to hang the curtain.

Sew and space the rings across the 'top' of the curtain. Run a brass curtain rod through the rings and slip the rod into place at your window.

After you have mastered the basic dyeing technique, you'll be ready to create some of the lovely companion accessories suggested earlier.

Rit Dye for spring. It's the quickest and prettiest way to bring a color change into your life!

For more imaginative ideas, color recipes, write to RIT3/MET, P.O. 307, Coventry, CT 06238.

REDECORATE WITH WALLCOVERINGS

If you're one of the millions of consumers interested in redecorating with wallcoverings, the Wallcovering Information Bureau says you can purchase them through decorating centers, department stores, furniture outlets, home centers, specialty stores or interior designers.

Sample books help you make your choice. Some outlets have the wallcoverings in stock. Most can get your choice quickly from a wallcovering distributor.

SOLID VINYL SIDING ELIMINATES PAINTING

The look of clapboard siding is as popular as it ever was, but today's homeowner isn't too wild about the kind that has to be repainted every few years.

One way to get clapboard siding without the bother is to re-side with solid vinyl.

Not only does vinyl siding simulate the textured look of the original clapboards, but it all but eliminates the need for maintenance and never requires painting.

SAVE SPACE WITH WOODEN FOLDING DOORS

Wood folding doors which fold back upon themselves to save space are a good bet for closets near stairways, at the end of hallways and other areas where swing-out doors could interfere with household traffic.

A free pamphlet, "Decorate Your Home With Folding Wood Doors," is available from the National Wood Window and Door Association, c/o SR&A, 355 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

HINTS ON LAMINATING

If you are laminating over a counter top or other previously finished surface, remove all paint, varnish and cement, and then sand smooth.

Important preparation

Fill all voids with Elmer's Wood Filler, allow to dry, and sand to a smooth even surface. Dust both the core structure and the laminated surface with a damp cloth.

Using a clean brush, apply the new Elmer's Saf-T Contact Cement, which contains no solvents, to core material and the back side of the laminate as directed. Use long even strokes and apply in one direction only.

The adhesive is ready for bonding when it turns crystal clear — in about 20-40 minutes; depending on temperature, humidity, surface porosity and thickness. After drying, if area remains dull-looking, surface has absorbed adhesive and should be re-coated entirely and allowed to dry again.

The final steps

Cut laminate so ¼-inch extends over all edges. Place laminate carefully over structure. Roll down entire surface beginning from the middle and working out. Trim overlapping edges. For appearance and safety, bevel all corners 45°.