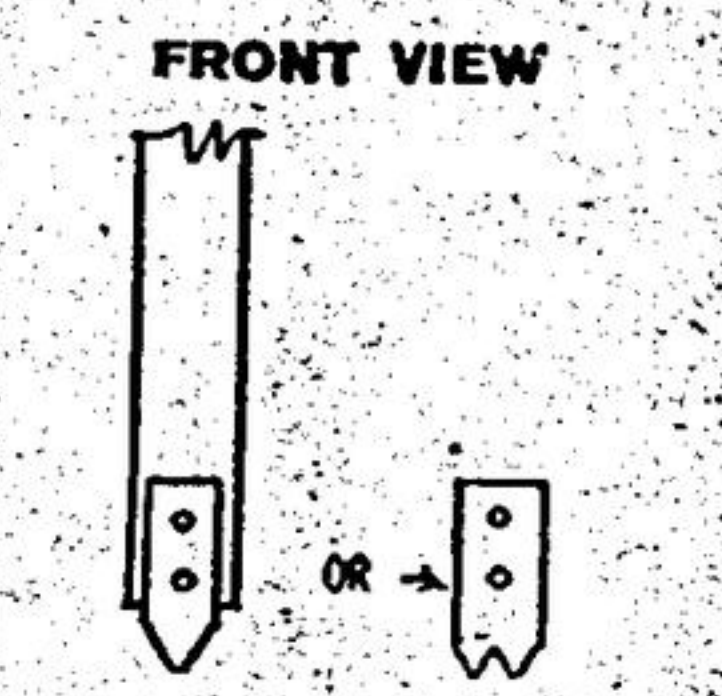
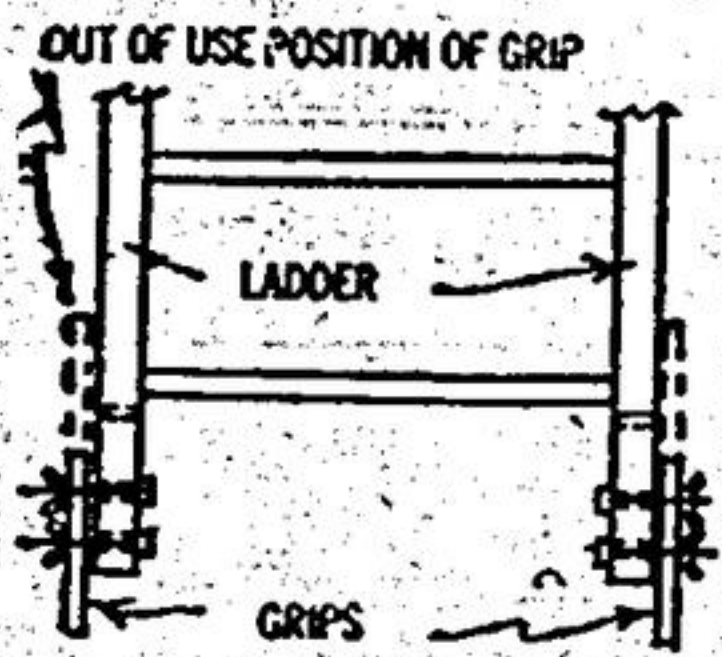


Questions and Answers for Householders

Q — How can you make an extension ladder stay in place at the bottom?

A — Fashion a pair of grips from heavy strap steel and attach them to the lower outside faces of the ladder legs — with heavy bolts and wing nuts, as shown in the



sketch. At times when the grips are not needed, loosen the top nuts and remove the lower nuts and bolts. The grips then are turned up on the ladder legs and bolted out of the way.

Q — Can a broken ladder rung be repaired?

A — Cut the run off flush with the inside of the rails. Make two blocks inside of the rails. Make two blocks of hardwood, drilling holes in them the same diameter as the new rung. Fit the rung tightly into the two blocks and then bolt or nail the whole assembly securely to the inside of the rails.

Q — We'd like to paint our concrete patio but it's pitted and rough. Can it be smoothed?

A — Mix a paste of glycerine and yellow lead oxide and apply with a trowel, smoothing it carefully. You can paint the patio after the mixture dries thoroughly.

Q — What is the proper way to use a paint brush and to take care of it?

A — Never force a brush into corners or narrow spaces (fig. 1), never use a brush edgewise (2), and never dip the entire bristle length into paint. (3). The wrong way to paint a length of pipe of similar



round surface is shown (fig. 4) and the correct way is shown (fig. 5). The correct way to suspend brushes in cleaner is shown (fig. 6). A removable rod, which holds brushes, keeps the bristles off the bottom of the container.

Q — What is meant by "furring"?

A — To provide a

nailing surface for vertical paneling, it usually is necessary to affix strips of lumber to the wall. These are called "furring" strips. In using wood paneling horizontally in an ordinary room, such strips are not needed, however, because the paneling can be nailed directly onto the wall studs.

Q — What's the best way to sand wood paneling?

A — Use a coarse sandpaper at first if necessary to iron out the "dressing skips" which occasionally occur in paneling. Then rub carefully with a very fine grade of sandpaper. Always sand with the grain when hand sanding or when using a belt sander. A vibrator-type sander can be used freely.

Q — How does insulation save heating fuel?

A — By blocking the escape of heat through walls and ceilings. Mineral wool insulation, for example, is composed of mineral fibers surrounding millions of dead air spaces. Heat does not readily pass through this dead air and therefore does not escape to the outside.

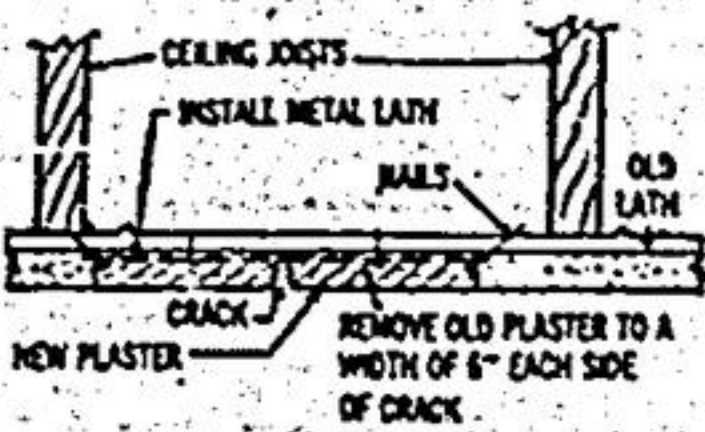
Q — Are flat-roof houses hotter in summer?

A — Generally, yes. A house with a pitched roof has an attic or an air space above the living quarters. Air passing through louvers in the gabled ends of the roof ventilates this space, and much of the heat from the

sun on the roof is carried away. Heat can also be reflected away from the roof by light-colour shingles or other light-colour roofing material.

Q — How can I repair large cracks in a plaster ceiling?

A — It's not practical to attempt to fill the cracks because the new plaster will need more support. As shown in the sketch, remove the plaster on each side of the



crack to a distance of about 6 inches. Then place a strip of metal lath in the clearing, nail it to the old lath, and fill the opening with new plaster. Do this in thin layers, permitting each layer to dry slightly before adding the next one.

Q — How high should the working surface of a home desk be?

A — The standard desk height is 30 inches. For a desk for a growing child, however, either



pick a design with a working surface that can be adjusted up or down, or use an adjustable chair or stool.

Q — In coloring pine paneling, how can you tell in advance how the finished job will look?

A — Test your finish first on a piece of waste lumber. Keep in mind two principles as you experiment to find the effect that pleases you most — (1) the broad expanse of finished wall will always appear slightly darker than the same finish on a small sample, and (2) paneling will darken some with time. In other words, keep your test sample a bit on the light side of what you really want.

Q — How long does it take shellac to dry on a floor?

A — The first coat, which should be generously thinned with alcohol, generally is dry enough to walk on in about one hour. No less than three hours should elapse, however, between the first and second coats — and an overnight

drying period is recommended before the third coat is applied. Shellac should never be used full strength. It should always be thinned with alcohol.

Q — The space in the rear of our kitchen base cabinets is awkward to reach and most of the time is wasted. Is there any way to put this space to use?

A — One method is shown by the sketch. A carpenter made a "pull-up" shelf unit which sits



flush with the cabinet top when not in use. Such units can be made in any size. They can be lifted easily.

Q — How can I whiten yellow-stained piano keys?

A — Mix a paste of alcohol and powdered chalk. Rub the paste on the keys, then remove it with a clean, soft cloth.

Q — Is there an inexpensive way to make a mortar box?

You can make a practical mortar box by cutting an ordinary oil drum in two, as shown in the sketch. The sloping sides make mixing and cleaning easy — and the sides may be pounded safely to break old mortar loose.

Q — How can plastic tile be cut to fit around fixtures?

A — A coping saw works the best for intricate cuts in plastic tile.

Q — Is there a remedy for chalking plaster walls? We can't get the wallpaper to stick.

A — Coat the wall with a half and half mixture of shellac and alcohol. This will seal the plaster with a waterproof surface, and the wallpaper then will stay in place.

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