

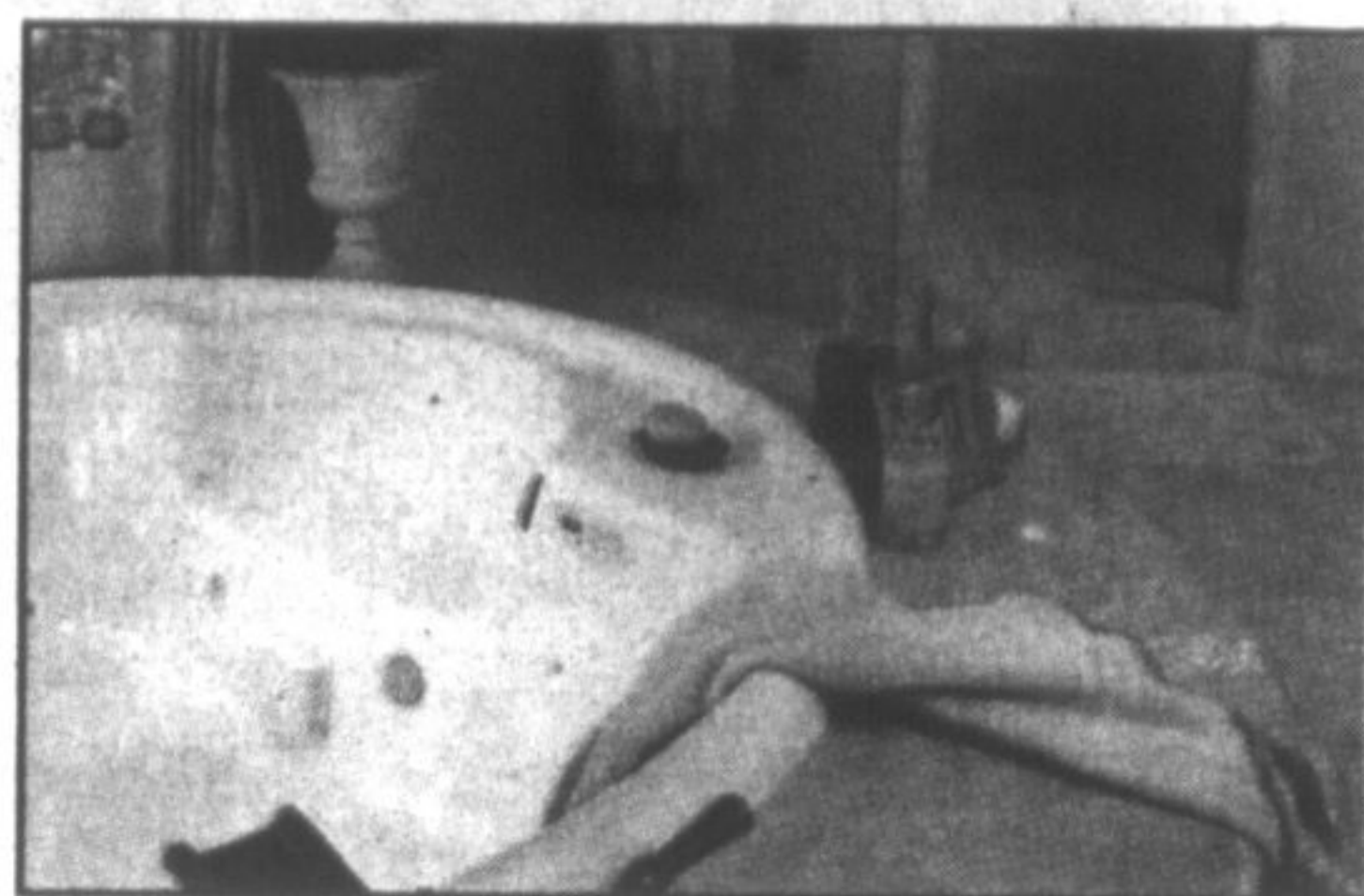
## Create a spa experience at home

People looking to escape stress often turn to spa treatments for rest and relaxation. However, if trips to the spa for massages and facials aren't in the budget, create a spa experience at home.

Stress is a big health problem. Stress can exacerbate existing health conditions and lead to new ones. Individuals may feel fatigued, irritable, depressed, overeat, under-eat and suffer other consequences if overstressed. Doctors often suggest therapies to combat stress in people's lives.

One such therapy can be massage or spa treatments popular in many salons. But these services can be expensive and might be an indulgence better left as an occasional splurge. Those interested in reaping some of the benefits of spa treatments at home can try the following ideas.

- Invest in the right equipment. Purchase an ultra-soft and thick robe and slippers. Stock up on loofah sponges, long-handled bath brushes, wash cloths, bath salts, and moisturizing creams. Simply using professional products can seem indulgent.



- Homeowners with a spa bathtub can indulge in soothing jet-propelled massage whenever they desire. If installing a new tub is not in the cards, purchase a spa mat that can be suction-cupped to the bottom of a traditional bathtub. An external pump blows air bubbles through the mat, creating the same effect as a spa tub.
- Rely on aromatherapy. There are many essential oils that can be added to bath water or applied to the body. Depending on the aroma, a person can induce calm and contentment simply by inhaling a few scents.
- Ask a spouse to provide a massage. He or she can use unscented mineral or olive oil to rub down achy parts of the body. It is much more cost-effective than a spa massage.

## Hang pictures the professional way

Dressing up rooms is easily achieved by hanging artwork on the walls. However, hanging them at the right height, ensuring they're straight and avoiding errant holes in the walls can prove more challenging than many would like to admit.

Some people hang pictures at the wrong height. Others miss the stud in the wall and have to keep trying over and over to get the picture to stay vertical. There are some tips to follow that cut down on needless work and make the process a bit easier.

Using templates is one of the easiest ways to hang pictures. Simply trace the outside of the frame onto a piece of paper or cardboard for each picture that will be hung. Then use a tape that isn't very tacky to temporarily hang the templates on the wall. Play with placement so that an idea of layout and the finished product can be realized. This is particularly helpful if multiple framed photos or artwork will be displayed.

This method enables homeowners to step back and view the entire picture, instead of having one hand on the picture frame while eyeballing placement. Plus, it eliminates the need to punch holes into the wall only to find the frame is not placed where one desires.

Another key tip to remember is that it isn't essential that a wall beam is tapped into when hanging a picture on the wall. While homeown-

ers should certainly attempt to locate a beam when hanging heavy items, sometimes the stud doesn't fall where it will be aesthetically pleasing to hang the frame. In such instances, expandable wall anchors can provide more stability. There are different anchors available depending on need. Some are plastic and can be pushed into a hole in the drywall. Once a screw is used in the anchor, the anchor will fan out and grab onto the backside of the drywall.

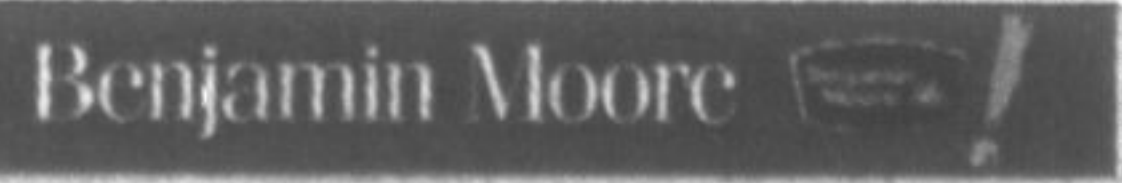
Here are some other pointers to keep in mind.

- Try grouping four pictures together in a square or rectangle to create the illusion of one larger picture.
- Always hang pictures at eye-level.
- When hanging a picture or artwork over the sofa, only leave a few inches so the picture is the focal point.
- Keep scale in mind. Don't place one small picture on a large wall. Conversely, don't put a large picture on a small wall.
- Consider the use of similarly hued picture frames or ones all of the same style to lend a cohesive look to the photo arrangements.
- When hanging art over a piece of furniture, it should not be longer than the width of the furniture.
- Think about illuminating the artwork. An upward or downward facing spotlight can make the picture pop in the room.



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