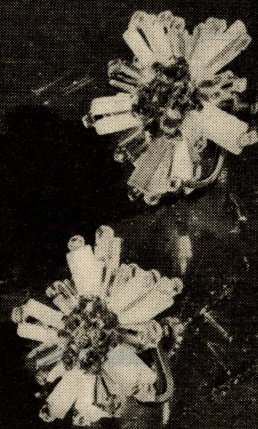
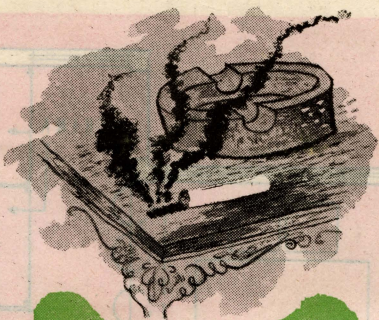


Those scratches and mars on your furniture



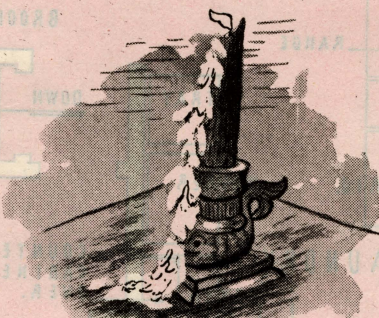
Do you, week after week, merely dust your furniture? Or do you apply the finest insurance of all—faithful polishing and speedy attention to accidental mars? Good care is easy with modern furniture polishes and waxes

BY HELEN W. KENDALL



CIGARETTE BURNS

Cigarette burns, like other unintentional damage that happens to wood furniture, can be met only with good grace and specific measures of correction. Just how successful these measures will be depends on the amount of marring of the original finish. Severe damage of the finish or, worse still, penetration of the wood itself cannot be overcome by home treatment. An expert wood finisher has to take over the job. *Light* burns on the surface can be concealed to some degree with a scratch-concealing polish. You can get these polishes at houseware departments and hardware stores. Such products contain a dye that helps blend the spot with the wood; but when the burn is quite noticeable, more drastic steps must be taken. Mix a fine abrasive, like rottenstone or powdered pumice, into a creamy paste with a little linseed oil, and apply it with a soft cloth. Rub the burn with the abrasive, rubbing with the grain of the wood. *Do not get it into surrounding areas.* Wipe dry with a clean, soft cloth, and polish the entire surface. If this does not give satisfactory results, refinishing by an expert is necessary. By the way, if you have too few or too small ashtrays, you're inviting cigarette burns.

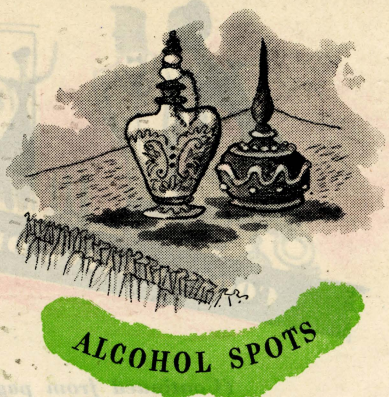


CANDLE WAX

Watch those Thanksgiving-dinner candles! If they drip on your table, you'll have a job, particularly if you use a lace tablecloth or doilies. To remove candle wax from wood, first crumble off all you can, then scrape gently with the dull edge of a table knife. An ice cube held on the wax will make it hard and easy to remove. But don't complicate the situation with a water spot; wipe up any melted ice immediately.

To remove candle wax from the tablecloth, scrape off as much as you can. Then sponge with cleaning fluid or let soak in the solvent. If stains from colored candles remain, make a solution of 1 cupful of denatured alcohol and 2 cupfuls of water. Sponge with this solution; wash in warm suds, and rinse. As a general rule, this treatment is better suited to removing candle wax than the well-known method of placing blotters over and under a wax stain and pressing with a warm iron. While this helps to melt the wax for the blotters to absorb, it should be used only for wax from *white* candles. Heat from an iron sometimes turns the dye from colored candles into a difficult-to-remove stain.

Perfumes, medicines, and beverages containing alcohol can quickly cause irreparable damage, because alcohol dissolves varnish and shellac. Wipe up such spots immediately, and try to repair the damage as well as you can. Just as with cigarette burns, scratch-concealing polishes are the safest and easiest thing to try first. More often than not, they'll improve the appearance of the stains greatly. Be sure to use the product exactly as the manufacturer directs. After a brisk rubbing, you'll see how the spot will seem to blend with the rest of the wood. Remember, though, these polishes are made for use on dark woods only, not for bleached or other light-color woods. If this is not effective, you'll have to try the rottenstone-and-oil treatment. You probably can find rottenstone and linseed oil at a hardware and paint store. When you have the paste ready, rub it over the stain with the grain of the wood. Then polish with a clean cloth. Repeat if necessary. When an alcohol stain has penetrated to the wood, don't expect to repair it yourself. The spot will have to be refinished by an expert. Soon again we'll have finishes that resist such troublesome stains.



There is not much excuse for heat marks on dining-room tables, with so many protective table mats available. Often, though, we're inclined to take a chance. White blemishes from heat are very difficult to remove and often need refinishing. If the spot has not penetrated too deeply, camphorated oil will help obliterate it. Sparingly moisten a clean, soft cloth with the oil; go over the blemish with light strokes. At once vigorously rub with another clean cloth. If a tablecloth or felt pad has stuck to the wood, leaving fuzz in the finish, the finish has been badly damaged and refinishing is the only solution.

"Bloom" or fog, which usually comes from atmospheric dampness, often resembles heat marks. The simplest method for treating such disfiguration is to wash with light suds, using mild soap. Rinse with clear, warm water; wipe with a clean, soft cloth. Follow with furniture wax or polish. Another method is to mix one tablespoonful of vinegar with one quart of lukewarm water. Wring a cloth tightly out of this mixture, and go over the surface lightly. Finish by polishing with a dry cloth.



Water rings from wet glasses or vases are a common disfiguration of end tables, coffee tables, etc., especially pieces that have not had the benefit of a good protective coating of wax, built up over a period of time. If you notice a wet glass just after it has been put down and wipe up the moisture immediately, usually you can prevent a ring. When you're less fortunate and find white rings on your furniture, tackle them first with a special furniture cleaner. Use either a paste or a liquid, whichever is more convenient. Another method of preliminary treatment is to place a clean, thick blotter over the rings and press the blotter with a warm, not hot, iron. Repeat until the rings are removed. There are times when neither of these treatments works. Then you'll need either camphorated oil or a scratch-concealing polish. Moisten a cloth with a little of the oil or polish, and rub with the grain of the wood. Don't hesitate to make several applications if the water rings do not respond, for frequently they must be gone over several times before they lighten and eventually disappear. Don't be obnoxious about it, but DO supply plenty of coasters and avoid rings.



Tiny scratches on the surface often can be covered completely by polishing with colored wax that matches the furniture finish. If polishing alone does not hide the scratches, you may have to rub them well with your scratch-concealing polish. Sometimes satisfactory results can be obtained by brisk rubbing with a paste made of linseed oil and a paint coloring. These colorings come ready-to-use in tubes and in several shades. Blend the color to match the wood as well as possible; buff the surface, and then rub with a clean, dry cloth.

Sometimes furniture that has been allowed to stand near a radiator or in the strong sunlight becomes "checked" (tiny cracks). There is no complete cure for this except refinishing; but the furniture will look better if it has been polished well with colored wax to match its finish. The wax will rub into the checks and make the surface look less unsightly. Avoid the use of special furniture cleaners on surfaces with many tiny scratches, as the cleaner has a tendency to collect in the cracks, and ugly little white lines will form when it dries.

