

PERFECT HOME

SEPTEMBER 1952

MAGAZINE



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Telephones: 300 J-1 — 300 J-2

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the home

stability in the midst of change



AS ONE WHO HAS BEEN, for thirty years, a student of the American past, I have often been impressed with the extent to which the mental picture of home has changed. The first homes in what is now the United States were the primitive cabins of the settlers, as were those which the western pioneers were building two centuries or more after Jamestown and Plymouth. But these cabins, like the great plantation houses of the South, the red brick town houses in the young cities, or the farmhouses of white clapboards in New England, were the central and most stable elements in the lives of their owners. Those cabins stood for protection, for a chance to start a new life, to build a country.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, while the country lived through the agony of a desperate Civil War, and then through industrial movements which led not only to radical changes in ways of earning a living but also to the transfer of millions of people from country to city, the conception of home was often altered, but home remained tangible and stable. Throughout this period generations lived in the same house, its value lying in its permanence. Home stood for security, for something that father could pass on to son.

As the result of two world wars and their influence upon industrial expansion and upon further movements of population, the idea of home varied yet again. It is often no longer possible to live in the old family house. The most common dream of today is not so much the house in which generations have lived, as it is the picture of a peaceful farmhouse, or of a perfect white cottage shaded by trees and surrounded by green lawns and beds of flowers. In either case it is a place where the family may live together. Many families do attain such a home. For others it is possible only temporarily. Businesses, as well as the Army and Navy, require their employees to move frequently, and on relatively little notice. Thus as a tangible object, home for many can no longer be relied upon as permanent, yet it remains central to the lives of everyone.

It does not lose its value because of its size or appearance, or because of the brief duration of the family's life in it. It is here that a few treasures are kept — books, a picture, a radio, a comfortable chair. Home is where the family gathers, where character is developed, where life is shared. Because it embodies the people as well as the things one loves, it is home, the place where one finds rest and encouragement, to which one returns because it is the center of his affections.

B. F. Wright

BENJAMIN F. WRIGHT
PRESIDENT OF SMITH COLLEGE

BY BILL TURNER

Design for *P*rivacy

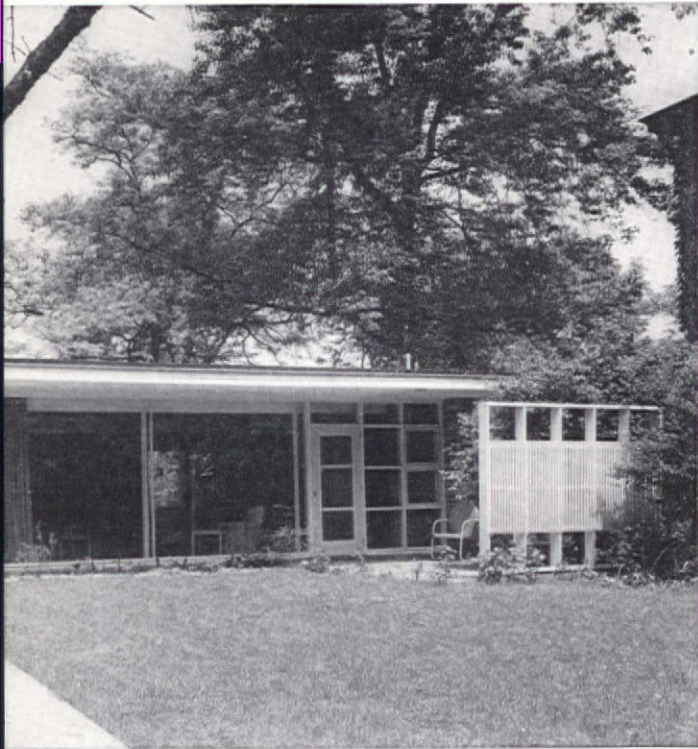
If you are prone to sigh for a house that will allow you plenty of free time, take a look at this small but very comfortable plan



Sheltered entrance features skylight and louvered screen that provide privacy and also admit sunshine to flower bed at left of the door

MITCHELL AND RITCHEY ARCHITECTS

Handy catch-all counter separates kitchen from dining area. Bar panel at far end lets down into counter. "Cook" can eat on kitchen side



Window-wall forms entire front end of the house, which is set well back on a lot that's above street level. Louvered screen shields terrace



Compact kitchen is separated from dining area only by convenient cabinet. That's a mirror on back of cabinet — you don't see through



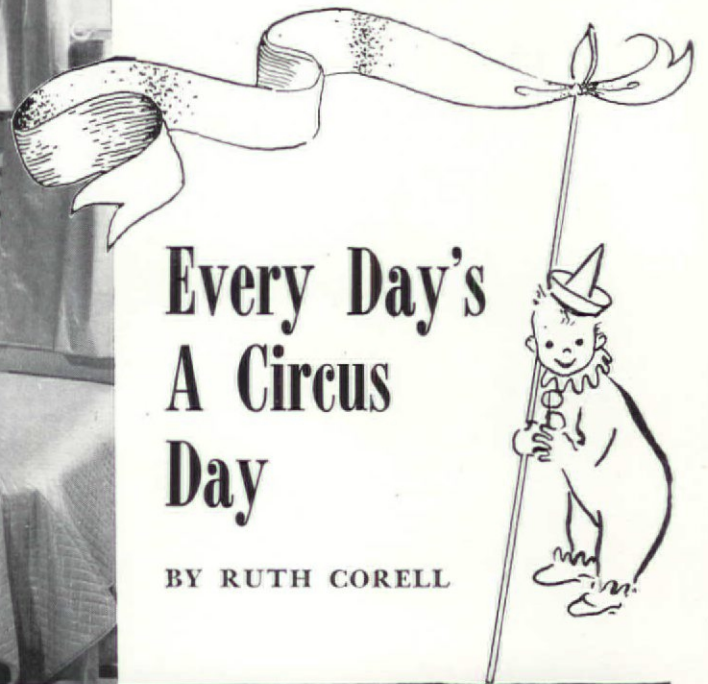
Panel in cabinet lets down to form gate-leg counter. The sink is just a step away at end of cabinet, making table-clearing an easy matter



This engaging modern home was designed for a working couple who cherished their leisure, wanted it marred by only the lightest of household duties. They requested compact, easy-to-maintain quarters, plenty of storage space, and a kitchen plan that would save time and steps.

Conforming to a deep and narrow lot, the house is in the shape of a rectangle. The entire front is a window-wall, but privacy is fostered by a hedge at the front of the lot and by the fact that the house is set 55 feet back from the street. By snuggling bedrooms into the back end of the rectangle, the architects made possible a floor plan that's a paragon of efficiency. Living-dining room, entrance, kitchen, utility room, and bath are all within a step of one another.

The kitchen arrangement is typical of the easy-does-it spirit of this house. The big open cabinet (don't let that mirror on the back confuse you!) is the only separation between cooking and dining areas. Refrigerator, range, and wall cabinets form a unit with the cabinet, and the sink is at its far end — where it is marvelously convenient to the gate-leg counter that lets down into the dining area. This super-compact plan makes table-setting a very simple bit of business indeed; and when dish-washing time comes, there is only the briefest of shuttle between table and sink.



CIRCUS day is the shortest day of the year. The wail of the caliope, the prickly sweetness of spun-sugar candy, the colors of breeze-born balloons, the hysterical antics of the clowns — all disappear until another year as soon as the huge tents come fluttering down. They are gone, that is, unless their mood can be captured as it has been in this gay room. There's all the excitement of a three-ring circus on the walls, bright balloons on the bed and ferocious animals and floppy clowns on the toy shelves. Unpainted chests and shelves were painted white and lined with turquoise to match the cottage curtains, the bedspread, and dust ruffles. Floor, ceiling, and wainscoting are the most brilliant yellow. The straddle-legged little table repeats the bright red of the boldly striped big-top and floating balloons.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOWELL WARD AND ASSOCIATES AND CAROL REED

PERIMETER HEATING

IT SEEMS that in all the years we've been using centrally heated air to warm our homes we haven't been using it with anything like maximum efficiency.

Long ago, back in the early days of furnaces, somebody laid down the rule that registers should never be placed in the walls that form the perimeter of a house; they should always be placed in the inner walls — the partitions. This dictum seemed reasonable and nobody questioned it. After all, why place your registers in your coldest walls? Won't that cool off the warm air as soon as it arrives and make the house almost impossible to heat? Well, it seems that it won't. But for years the rule about registers on inner walls was followed scrupulously. Drafts, hard-to-heat rooms, and high fuel bills were accepted as our natural lot.

It was the house built on a concrete slab that brought the matter to a head and made heating engineers see the light. As this type of house grew into wide popularity after World War II more and more owners complained of cold floors. Engineers began to set aside old precepts and take an experimental approach. They developed several new techniques — panel heating (radiant), new duct systems, and the new placement of registers that has led to the several types of *perimeter* heating.

Strictly speaking, warm-air perimeter heating is not a new *system*; it's merely a new *application* of forced air heating — but an extremely important application. It's based on a small change that makes the difference between wasteful operation and efficiency. You wonder why nobody thought of it before.

Here's what happened: Heating engineers discovered that the old rule about placing registers was completely wrong. A register on an inner wall pours warm air into a room and this air immediately rises to the ceiling, crosses the room, cools on contact with the outer wall, sinks to the floor, and — icy now — finds its way to a cold-air intake. The result is an ankle-chilling draft, and, especially in a no-basement house, floor temperature approaches that of an igloo.

In perimeter heating, the registers are placed in the outer walls, under windows whenever possible. Engineers define the principle as "replacing heat where it is lost, as fast as it is lost." In other words, the upward current of warm air from the register counteracts the waterfall of cold air and stops drafts at their source. First tried in homes built on concrete slabs, this perimeter placement of registers was found to result in noticeably warmer floors and also in more even temperature throughout the room. Many builders hail it as the most practical heating system for the on-a-slab house. Variations of the plan have also worked out successfully in houses with basements and houses built over crawl spaces.

The next step in the development of perimeter heating was a natural, almost automatic one. Since the ducts ran through (or under) the floor to the outer walls of the house, it wasn't long before architects and engineers were combining the system with the principle of panel heating. They simply placed the ducts close enough to the surface so that they conveyed a certain amount of the heat to the floor itself. The plan proved highly efficient, adding to comfort and cutting costs.

In the main, there are five different types of perimeter heating:

1) *The Loop System.* This is used in houses built on a concrete slab. The warm-air duct extends completely around the perimeter of the building in a continuous loop. This duct is embedded in the slab two inches beneath the surface. It delivers heat into the room from registers placed beneath

the windows. These registers may be in either floor or wall. Since the ducts are close enough to the surface of the floor to warm it, a considerable amount of heat is also provided by the radiant panel system.

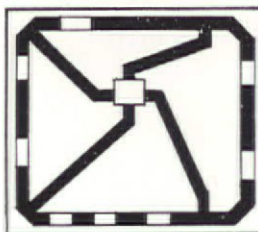
2) *Radial System.* In this system, individual ducts radiate spokewise from the furnace to registers under the windows. It performs well in either the on-a-slab or the crawl-space house. In a crawl-space building the ducts are suspended under the floor and there are also outlets that deliver heated air directly into the crawl space in order to assure warm floors.

3) *Lateral System.* This system is used only in houses built on slabs. Distribution of heat begins with a warm-air supply trench built into the slab and extending the entire length of the building. Lateral ducts lead from this trench to collecting ducts along the outside walls. This amounts to a network of ducts that heat the floor on the panel principle, and warm air is also discharged into the rooms through registers placed beneath the windows, a continuous baseboard register, or a continuous slot beneath the baseboard. This plan is now widely used in slab houses and has proved its practicality.

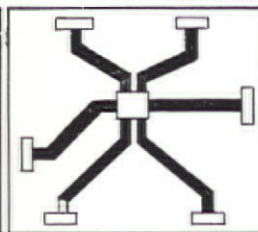
4) *Crawl-Space Plenum System.* This technique is a simple and effective one for crawl-space houses in not-too-cold climates. The entire crawl-space is used as a warm-air chamber (or, as the engineers say, *plenum*). Stub ducts distribute the heated air evenly throughout the space. Warm air enters the rooms through registers placed beneath the windows. With this system, a substantial part of the required heat is supplied by the warm floors. The crawl space must be tightly sealed and insulated, of course.

5) *Connected-Duct System.* This is a shotgun term that covers several different duct arrangements that can be used either in a crawl-space house or a house with a basement. The commonest duct system is the trunk-and-branch arrangement where a large duct runs the length of the house and smaller ducts branch off to carry the warm air to registers under windows.

Perimeter Loop System



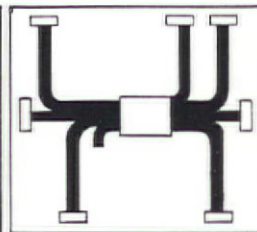
Perimeter Radial System



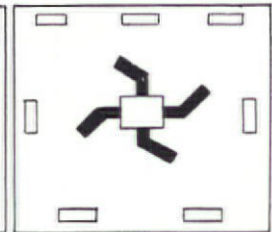
Perimeter Lateral System



Perimeter Crawl Space Duct System



Crawl Space Plenum System



Summer Stays Late in the Breezeway

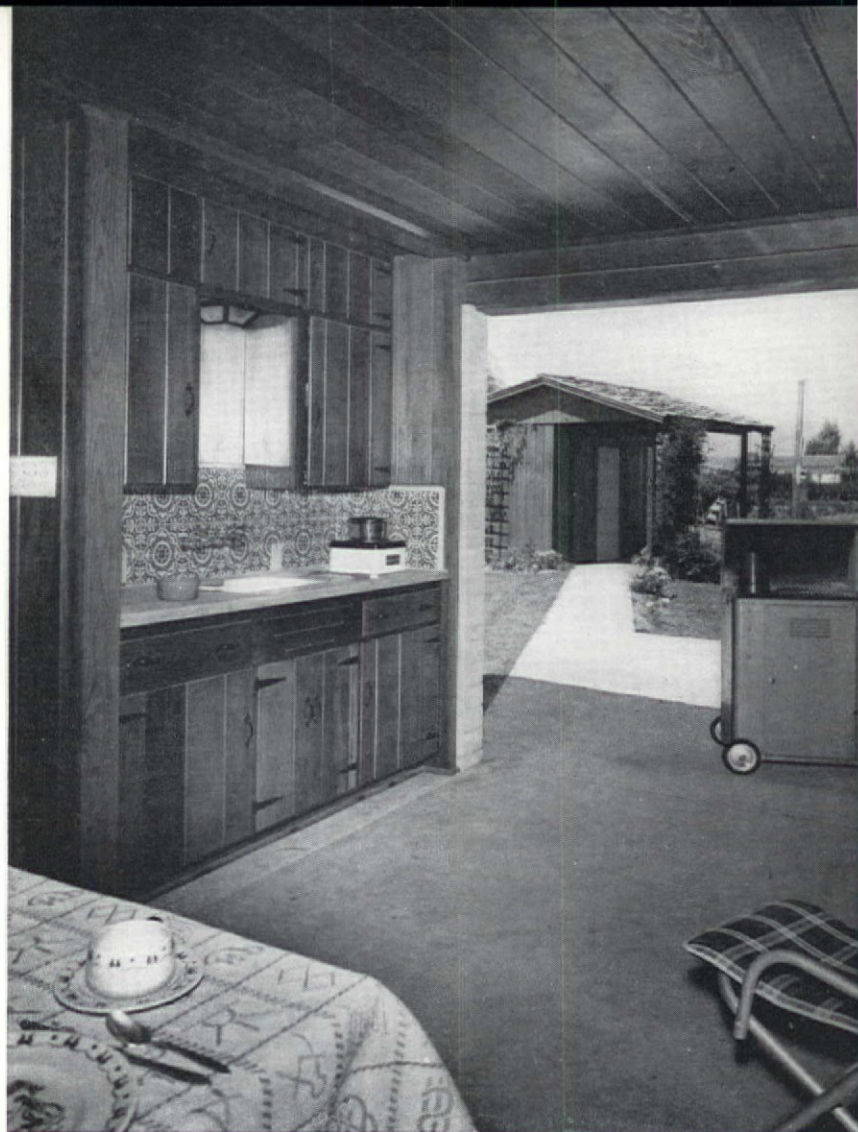
THE breezeway can be far more than a convenient dog-trot linking house and garage. This inside-outside area can mean double delight to the entire family. It can be cool as pine-scented woods on a torrid day, snug and comfortable when frost starts to flex its fingers.

We're picturing a deluxe example but it has been planned simply enough to be used as a model for a much smaller breezeway.

The view, lower left, shows how this away-from-it-all retreat combines house and garage. On the street side, sun-sifting louvers and a Dutch door block the view and temper the breezes. The opposite wall opens on a lawn bordered by autumn leaves. Along the side are storage cabinets and sink. A hot plate, toaster and percolator are always ready for breezeway meals.

Barbecues never tasted so good as they do here. The simplest of meals becomes a picnic. Appetites are keen. Living is relaxed. Entertaining is easy and rain never dampens your fun.

In summer it's a shaded retreat from heat, a channel for breezes. On cooler days it is still comfortable — protected from sharp winds.



Burgers browned on the mobile barbecue grill that may be rolled out onto the lawn up to the table side. Plenty of electrical outlets speed the preparation of informal meals.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANK L. GAYNOR



Look closely to see the breezeway just to the right of the double car-port. The ruddy redwood louvers give a particularly pleasing effect when played against light-toned brick. Car-port wall is lined with storage spaces



Questions and answers

QUESTION:

The walls of my new home have just been plastered and the contractor is ready to paint them. I have read many times that plaster should be allowed to stand several months before painting since the chemical action of the lime will almost certainly ruin the finish. The painter assures me that rubber base paint can be used without danger from alkali. Should I allow him to proceed with the painting?

ANSWER:

Latex paints are easy to use, easy to apply and have a remarkable range of uses. They are quick drying, may be applied to damp masonry surfaces where few other paints would hold, and they make a fine finish for either woodwork or plaster walls. They can be safely used on your new plaster within a week or two.

QUESTION:

I would like to dull the very high luster finish on a newly varnished chest of drawers. Is there anything that will make the gloss less harsh?

ANSWER:

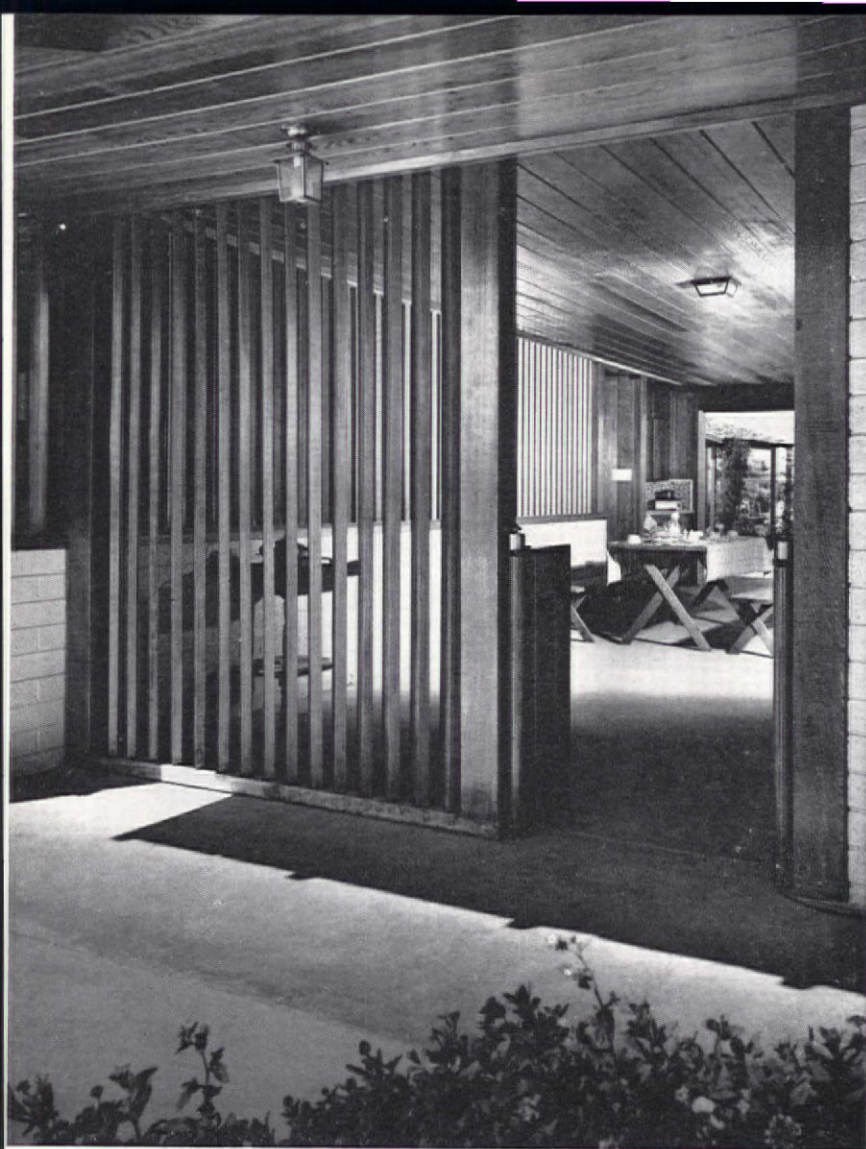
Any fine furniture shop would rub the surface with a mixture of pumice and oil or water. If oil is used it should be light grade motor oil, raw linseed oil and benzine, or paraffin oil. A heavy piece of felt or a felt covered block should be dipped in oil or water then in fine ground pumice. Strokes should be light so they will not rub through the varnish. A stiff brush should be used on carvings or moldings, and pumice should be washed off with clear water and the chest polished.

QUESTION:

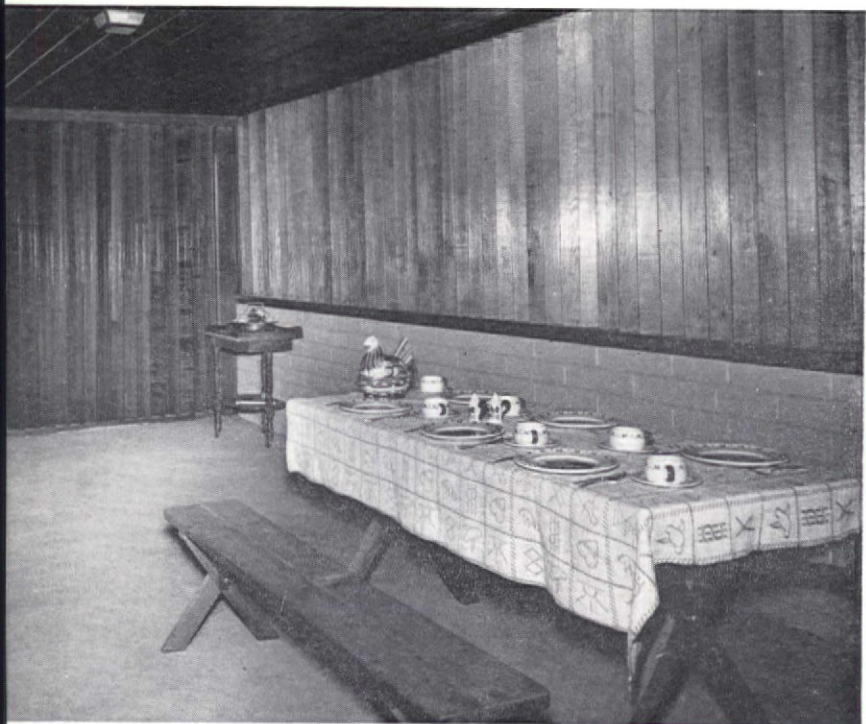
We planted lawn seed around our new home only to discover that we should have had topsoil brought in. The house is placed on the peak of a sandy hill. How much topsoil will we need?

ANSWER:

Though the grass growing properties of your soil can be improved with mulches and cover crops, the quickest way to get the lawn you want is by covering it with a five- or six-inch layer of topsoil, then sodding. If you do not want to use sod, sow a seed recommended by your nurseryman. You'll find that in a surprisingly short time it will show its first green



Close-up of the front wall shows Dutch door and louvered panel. The brick-based partition topped with louvers separates the breezeway from the double car-port



Louvers give the effect of a solid wall yet allow breezes to pass freely through the space. The concrete floor is waxed for dancing. If a pop bottle fizzes over — no damage done



◆ This view of the front door shows how the patio has been made an integral part of the house. Living room is to the right as you enter. Dining room and kitchen are in left wing.



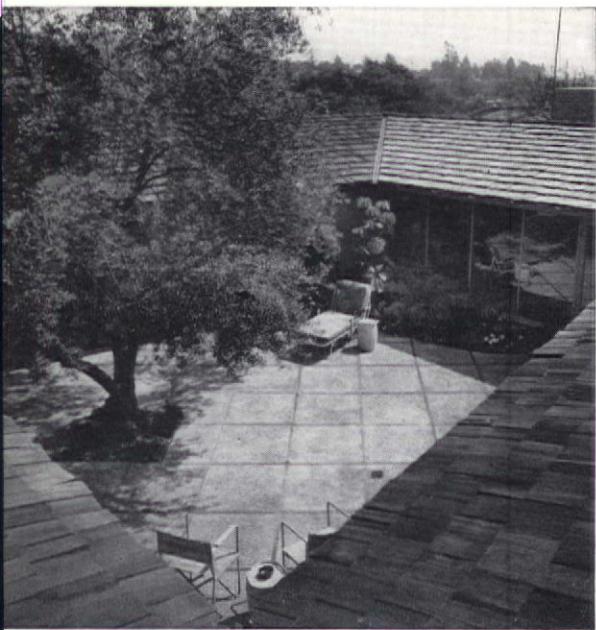
Built around

SOMETIMES it's a problem. You love sun and sky and growing things; you want to live as close to these as you can. But you want seclusion too — or at least the sort of privacy that is often incompatible with window-wall and on-the-terrace dining.

Well, here's a house that has the answer. It's built around a patio in the Spanish manner — all the way around, if you consider the rear portico a wing of the house. Built as a hollow square, it frames a portion of outdoors, captures fresh air, sunlight, and even a climbing-size tree at the very center of its living space. But, passing on the street side, you'd never guess the patio even exists.

The front entrance is at a corner between dining and living rooms. As soon as you step into the small hall, you're delighted by the wa





Quilt like a picture frame, the house makes its courtyard the center of its living area. Wing to the left is an open portico



The completely private patio, above, even includes a shade tree. The comfortable living room below, boasts a fireplace to delight open-hearth addicts. Ankle-deep carpet covers floor

a Patio

Interior and exterior blend. The living room window-wall is a major element in this effect; but there's also a floor-level planter set into the room like a whimsical extension of the fern clump just outside the glass. This is all on the patio side, of course; the opposite wall is solid except for a pair of long, well-draped windows, and it's blessed with a Bunyan-size fireplace that makes a cozy refuge of the room on a raw evening or a wet afternoon. Oversize chairs are smart and comfortable but, we suspect, the uninhibited guest is often tempted to forego them in favor of full-length lounging on the airlike carpet.

The third wing of this picture-frame house is occupied by bedrooms. The fourth is the portico, ideal for outdoor meals — or as a lounging spot for those who prefer shade to sun.



You'd never guess from this street view that this house embraces a patio offering all the pleasures of outdoor living



The kitchen is compact, step-saving, and presents the cook with an enviable view. The accordion screen can be easily folded to convert shelf above sink into a serving counter







DINING DUETS

A quartet of matched china and wallpaper patterns to compose a mealtime lyric for your table

MATCHED WALLPAPER and dinnerware? Sounds sun-struck we admit, but glance just once at these double-lovelies and we bet you'll go running to your paper dealer for a new set of dinnerware.

You'll have to admit that this is a fabulous idea — correlated wallpaper and dinnerware for homemakers who know that mealtime harmony is a subtle combination of good cooking and a pleasant setting.

Maybe you're the modern type who covets space sculptures and svelte furniture. Maybe your eyes light up at the sight of patterns with a country flair or designs rich in blossoms. Take your choice. You'll find it in these matched patterns. There's a stylized tree design (top right) for the modern house, a non-directional leaf pattern (upper left) for the provincial or informal room, a wild strawberry print (bottom right) for either contemporary or traditional setting and a light-hearted paper combining blossoms, leaves and cherries (bottom left) for the walls of the traditional dining room.



SUN-
MINDED
for
ALL THE
YEAR



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOWELL WARD AND ASSOCIATES

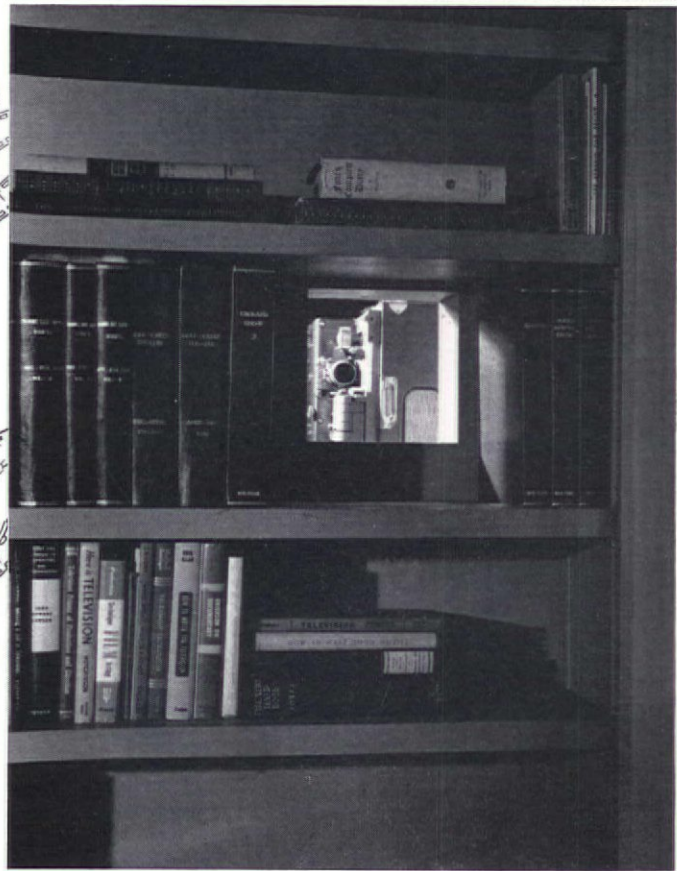


IT'S NO USE wishing summer weren't such a short season. The day when frost will drive us in from the terrace is much nearer than we like to admit. This year, though, we are going to make the move much more pleasant. We are going to take a part of that opulent summer charm right along with us when we move indoors. This tiny porch gave us the idea and we're going to copy as many of its ideas as we can tie into our own home. It has all the charm of a sunlit summer garden.

Grillwork like frozen lace frames the greenery banked windows. The fireplace wears a giddy green hood, and the wrought iron furniture, slender as a pencil line, makes 5x12 look just about twice as spacious. The wide wall opening lets the dining room share in this live-in-a-garden mood.

Whim and fancy it may be, but we certainly would like to take just such a picture of the genial month of June right along with us into the less gentle season.

ALL SEATS RESERVED



THE bookcase pictured above stretches across one end of the living room described on page 10. Behind it, off the front hall, is a tiny projection room with projector all set up and ready to go. Remove a half dozen ponderous volumes, pull down the screen from its ceiling recess at the opposite end of the room and switch off the lights. Presto! Without shifting of furniture or awkward setting up of equipment, the living room has suddenly become a quiet movie theater.

NEWS OF THE MONTH . . .

Heating units can be built into furniture. Convector heating units will fit into window seats, lounges, bookcases or kitchen cabinets. When wall space is at a premium or when a regular wall register would seriously disorganize your room arrangement plans, discuss a built-in fixture with your builder or heating contractor. When the heater is treated in this manner it is important to have the enclosure fit snugly to prevent air from by-passing the unit. The unit must be designed so that heated air will be directed out into the room where it is needed. Plywood, metal, pressed

wood, or insulation board may be used to construct your built-in heating unit.

You can save fuel with a kitchen thermostat. Kitchens quite often throw the heating balance between rooms completely out of order. A separate thermostat should maintain a comfortable working temperature regardless of the amount of activity in the kitchen. The thermostat will automatically supply only the amount of heat necessary to supplement that given off by the cooking processes.

You'll get more economical lighting from higher wattage bulbs. Lighting experts inform us that a 150 watt bulb produces ten times more light than a 25 watt bulb yet uses only six times as much electricity. The gain in efficiency in bulb sizes between these two is proportionate.

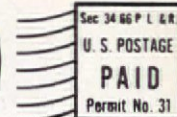
Homes of the future will probably have movable walls that will enable homeowners to change their floor plans by relocating walls to create new rooms or increase or decrease the size or areas.

Doors are being glamorized. Most of us give little thought to the matter of doors when we are planning our homes. Chances are that we just specify "doors" and leave it up to our builder to decide what kind.

A group of manufacturers was none too happy about the luke warm attitude toward their wares and decided to add enough eye appeal to their products to insure more interest. They have assembled dozens of ideas for decorating and color styling simple paneled doors giving us another way to add interest and personality to modern, traditional or ranch-type homes.

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STAFFORD SPRINGS, CONN



More people start on the road to financial independence through home ownership than in any other way. It's a convenient, pleasant road because the home owner puts money into property that adds to his comfort and happiness as he pays for it.

The same is true when you repair or remodel. While enjoying the benefits of the improvements at once, you know that the money is *invested*, that it has gone to protect and increase the value of your house.

Obviously, either kind of investment must be made with an eye to long-range value. To deal with the firms listed below is to assure yourself of this value. Each is a community leader whose reputation and experience is your protection.

The Blue Ribbon Panel sending you this magazine will serve you and your friends thoughtfully and carefully.

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