

TEACH YOUR WIFE TO KEEP HOUSE SCIENTIFICALLY

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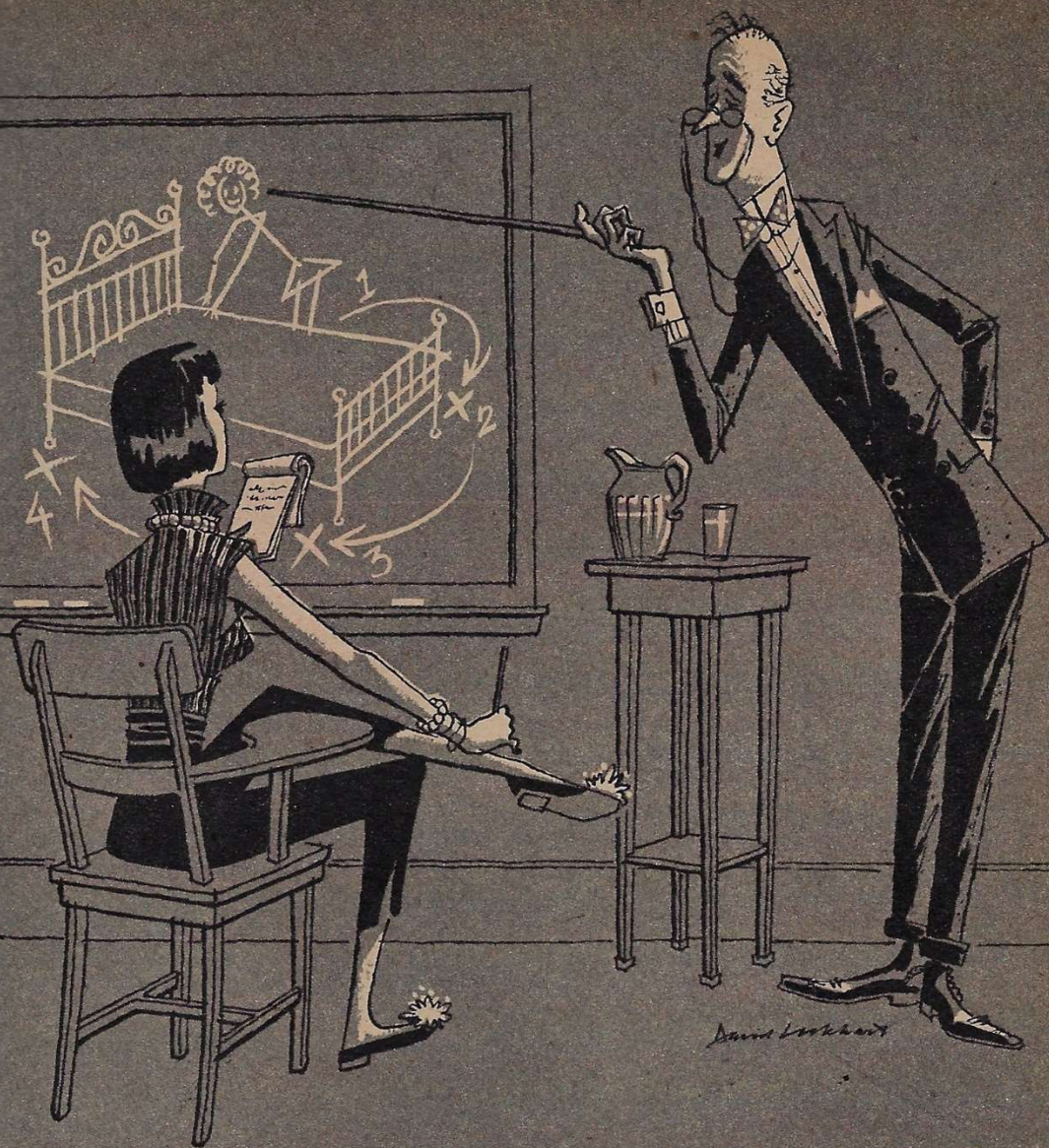
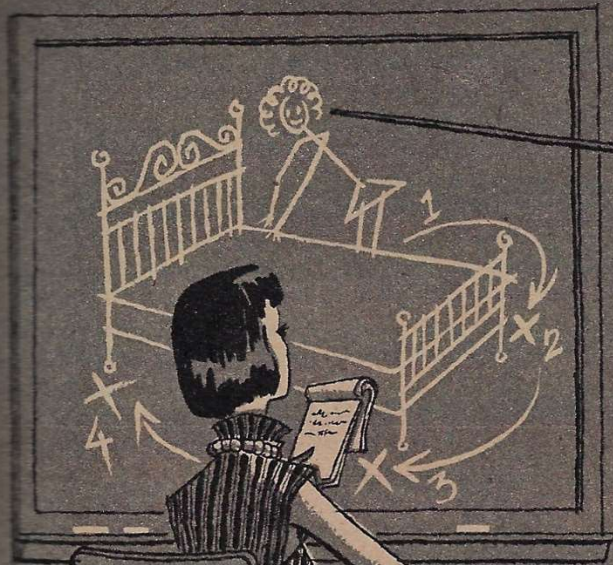
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SCIENTIFIC BEDMAKING is something the scientist can teach the housewife.

“Women Are Lousy Housekeepers!”

*They can be taught to
do their work faster—
this brave man states.*

By Lester David

YOUR wife may be interested to know that you have been right all along—she’s inefficient. Scientific studies have turned up ways to slash household drudgery 50 to 75 per cent—and these little tricks may interest the little

woman even more. By passing the news along in a helpful spirit you have a lot to gain. First, you'll be helping without actually getting out the vacuum cleaner yourself, and second your wife will be less tired at the end of the day and have more time to think of little ways of making you happy.

Even if your wife is a great cook and keeps the place in apple pie order she may still be doing the chores the hard way. Recently, a series of intensive studies conducted at Wayne University in Detroit revealed that many accepted procedures used by most housewives were actually all wrong.

These experiments, sponsored by the Michigan Heart Association, showed that women were working more than twice as hard as they should because: (1) they don't arrange household equipment properly; (2) they don't plan working methods carefully; (3) they squander energy through waste motion and unneeded steps; (4) they are the victims of habit and tradition.

Let's get down to specifics. Here are a number of new work-easing, time-compressing rules you can pass along to the lady who runs your household:

1. *Tell her to avoid reaching up and stooping.* Where are the pots and pans in *your* kitchen? In nine out of ten homes they're in cabinets at floor level. Wayne tests revealed that a person uses almost 20 times more energy picking up

an object from close to the floor than he does standing up.

The answer: Do a job of rearranging so that the equipment and supplies most often needed can be obtained and replaced without stooping or stretching. This may involve you in a bit of wall cabinet shifting or shelf building.

2. **Use both hands wherever possible.** Dr. Lillian Gilbreth, one of the country's foremost authorities on biomechanics, reports that considerable time and energy can be saved by learning the trick of using both hands effectively. Here's the rule: Let both hands do useful work. Dust with both hands by using two cloths or a pair of dusting mittens. Iron with one hand, smooth with the other. Use both hands when clearing the table. Put dishes and silver away with both hands.

3. *Always use smooth, rhythmic movements.* This applies to virtually every household chore. Rhythm is a big help in any kind of repetitive work. Dr. Gilbreth adds:

"The person who is motion-minded does things in patterns. Each time she repeats a job her hands move in the same curve and with the same rhythm. A ballet dancer, a baseball player, in fact any expert does his job with grace and rhythm and economy of motion."

Try it in ironing, dusting, window washing, floor polishing, Venetian blind cleaning.

4. *Sit whenever possible.* Amazingly,



FOOTSORE HAUSFRAUS have themselves to blame if they use their heels instead of their head. Planning each job saves unnecessary steps.

CAREFREE and sensible—that's the girl who throws her dirty wash downstairs instead of lugging it.

the average American housewife resists sitting down on the job.

Wayne University investigators have found that exactly half the energy is needed to do a job sitting as standing. So sit the missis down as she irons, washes dishes, mixes cake batter, prepares vegetables. And have her sit properly, too—well back on the seat, trunk in a straight line and feet flat on the floor.

5. *Pre-position all materials before beginning a job.* A San Diego woman observed by Dr. Ralph M. Barnes was studied as she vacuumed her living room. The investigator noted that she kept the attachments for the cleaner scattered in various places around the house. By actual count she made a total of 15 trips to round up parts each time she cleaned the room.

The answer: Use a cart or tray which carries all the needed attachments so that there's no need to return constantly to a drawer or closet. When a cart was put into use the San Diego woman's cleaning time was sliced in half. The prepositioning principle works in other jobs as well: Gather all materials together at the start before cooking, laundering, bathing the baby.

6. *Make beds in one or two round trips.* When bedmakers were studied at the University of Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, investigators found that women kept tracking back and forth endlessly. One walked 262 feet, another 188 feet.

Teach her the right way: Place everything needed on a chair at the side of the bed—sheets, blankets, pillows, bedspread. Stand at the bedside and throw the bottom sheet across the mattress. Follow it with the top sheet, blanket and spread. (She still hasn't moved more than a step.) Now start walking around the bed, tucking in the bottom sheet first, then the top sheet and blankets. Smooth the spread as you go. The entire [Continued on page 180]

STOOPING, stretching and racing about add up to needless work. Tools and materials in the right spots make jobs easy.



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Lousy Housekeepers

[Continued from page 63]

operation should be done in one, at most two round trips.

7. *Take the fullest advantage of momentum and gravity as you work.* Dr. Gilbreth declares: "Make the weight of the tool do part of the work." When ironing, for example, the iron should do the real job while the hand guides it. Dr. Gilbreth also suggests more use of the wheel in housework. So put casters under heavy furniture your wife must move frequently.

8. *Store all household equipment and food at the point of first use.* If an item is first used with heat, store it at or near the stove. Examples—canned goods, can openers, seasoning, platters, lids of pots, pot holders.

If an item is first used with water, store it at or near the sink. Examples—vegetables that don't require refrigeration, dried fruits, saucepans, knives, strainers.

9. *Make sure work surfaces are at the proper height.* One of the commonest causes of fatigue is working at tables or counters that are too high or too low. They should be just high enough so that while the housewife is standing comfortably she can work without stooping or raising her hands above elbow level. And the work chair should be just high enough so that as she sits in it her elbows are the same distance from the floor as they would be if she were standing hands at sides.

10. *Cut down psychological fatigue.* Fatigue can be reduced by following the advice given by Dr. William Sherman recently in The Journal Of The Student Medical Association.

Avoid clutter as much as possible. When a job is done, put away and clean up.

Avoid glare. Major sources of direct glare generally are corrected right away but how about the more subtle sources? Metal surfaces and glass which throw glare into the eyes are often overlooked.

Avoid tiring colors. White is especially tiring, and purple, brown, orange and the harsher shades of blue are hard to live with. The most restful colors are medium shades of green and yellow.

Well, that's the latest on cutting the horse work out of house work. Put it into effect over at your house.

Lots of luck! •