Fix It Yourself—

Simple Arithmetic Needed to Estimate Amount of Paint for House

Electric Air Filters Operate on Simple Process; Little Skill Needed to Patch Plaster Walls

By HUBBARD COBB, Your Handy Man

There are few things more distressing to the week-end painter than to get the house half-painted, run down to the paint store for more paint and then hear, "Sorry, we're fresh out of that shade and color but we expect to have a few gallons in next month or maybe early next year." This can be avoided by buying all the paint you will need for a job before you start work.

Estimating the paint requirements for the outside of a house is a simple matter providing you can multiply, add and divide.

To get the area in square feet for the side walls, multiply the width in feet by the height in feet. Now multiply this sum by two so that you have the total area of both walls and write this down on a clean piece of paper.

Don't subtract openings in the walls like windows and doors as these will provide a little margin for error. Now go over to the end wall and multiply the width by the height up to the roof eaves.

Multiply this sum by two and write it down. Now we have to figure in the gable ends and as

this is a triangle we get the total area by multiplying the width by one-half the height.

Multiply this by two, put it on your list and add the three sets of figures together. The total is the number of square feet that must be covered. Divide this figure by 500, which is about the average number of square feet one gallon of paint will cover and the result will be the number of gallons you'll need for the entire job.

Don't run off yet because we have not figured in the trim around doors and windows. The best way to do this is to figure that the trim will take about one-sixth the amount of paint required for the entire outside walls.

Vinegar Softens Glue On Furniture Joints

Here is another conglomeration of those little ones that seem to slip through our fingers and get away now and then. Maybe we should toss them all back and give 'em another year or so to grow.

You can often soften up the glue holding furniture joints together with a little plain vinegar. Just work it into the joint.

If you want to drill a hole in glass use a very hard steel twist drill and be sure that the glass is

properly supported in the back to prevent cracking. A little kerosene will help the drill to cut better.

It's hardly worth trying to patch cracked putty in a window sash. The best thing is to remove all the putty and the glass, scrape the wood recess clean and apply a thin coat of paint or linseed oil.

The paint or oil will prevent the oil in the new putty from being absorbed by the wood and the putty cracking at some future date.

By the way, you can get fire alarms and burglar alarms that don't need any wiring or other elaborate installation.

You can usually take the curl out of the corner of a rug or the dent in the nap caused by a leg of a heavy piece of furniture by placing a piece of damp cloth over the area and then running a hot iron over it. After this, give the nap a gentle brushing.

Electric Air Filters Work on Simple Plan

According to my records the one thing in this world that no one has found a way to charge you for is the air you breathe. You can breathe all you want and it won't cost you a cent. The hitch is that a lot of the air floating around these days is so full of dust and dirt that it isn't worth breathing—even for free. Well, if it's the air inside your house that is giving you a bad time you might be interested in one of these electric air filters.

These cleaners work on a very simple process and we wonder why we didn't think of them first. The idea is that air containing the dirt is made to pass through a special gadget that gives each

and every little particle of dust a positive electrical charge.

The dust goes along with the air now until it comes to a plate with a negative electrical charge. The plate attracts the dust with the positive charge and holds it while the clean air goes on its way until someone takes a breath.

The filter is provided with a device so that the dust and dirt on the plate can be removed when necessary.

These filters are a great help to anyone living in a neighborhood not famous for its clean fresh air.

The filters can be installed on the windows and will see to it that only clean air gets into the house.

They are even more of a boon to anyone owning one of those old fashion gravity type warm air furnaces that usually send up a few tons of dirt during the course of a winter.

Here the filter is installed on the furnace and the next thing you know you breathe without coughing and stop dusting the place every hour on the hour.

If you have a home repair problem, write a letter to Mr. Cobb, care of The Indianapolis Times. If your question is of general interest, an answer to it will appear in a forthcoming column of The Times Home Page.

Tips Given on How To Build With Bricks

Here is some information on the subject of bricks. After you have read it you may not be qualified to build a brick house or even a 120-foot brick chimney, but you

probably can build a brick garden wall or terrace and it should hold together.

Each row of bricks is called a course. When bricks are set lengthwise it is called a stretcher course and when they go crosswise it is known as a header course. The arrangement of these courses is called a bond.

For example, there is the common bond consisting of five stretcher courses one on top of the other and then one header course, 5 stretchers and so on.

The English bond has one header course, one stretcher, one header and so on. As the average brick is about eight inches long each header course will give the wall a thickness of eight inches. This is the minimum thickness for a wall, by the way.

If this just confuses you, go study a brick wall for a few minutes and you'll see what we mean.

The strength of a brick wall depends on staggering the vertical mortar joints in such a fashion that the joints in the course above do not come directly over the ones below.

Bricks should be set on a firm, level, sound foundation the same width as the wall is to be. The thickness or the vertical mortar joint should be about ½ inch, but this can be changed a little one way or the other so that the bricks will come out even at each end of the wall.

Wet the bricks before laying and see that the side with the trademark faces down. The mortar used with bricks is made with one part Portland cement, and three parts clean fine sand.

Add enough water to get a nice plastic mortar and don't mix more than you can use in 30 minutes or so.

Patching Plaster Walls Needs But Little Skill

If you have ever been called on the carpet by the Internal Revenue Bureau for failing to list a few items of income on your tax form you probably know that there are an awful lot of things in this world that you have to

remember. Now when it comes to patching plaster walls and ceilings there are a few very important items that you've just got to keep in mind.

For example, when you patch a crack the opening must be cut out so that the inside is deeper than the outside. This makes a little key that will keep the patch from falling out.

Another thing to keep in mind is that when you put in a large patch, the old plaster must be removed from between the laths so that the new stuff can get behind them and get a good strong mechanical grip.

And the edge of the old plaster around the area to be filled should be cut back down at an angle to form a key. An important item is to wet down the edges of the old plaster so that it won't absorb all the water from the patch before the patch has set hard.

If the water is absorbed then the patch will not harden properly. Something else you might as well keep in mind is that plaster will shrink a little when it hardens, so if you want the patch to be flush with the old plaster it must be applied in two coats.

The first coat goes on until you are about ⅛ inch below the old surface. Leave this coat rather rough and then when it is hard and has done all the shrinking it plans to do, apply the final finish coat.

Corrosion Inside Pipes Slows Flow of Water

Just about the time you make the last payment on the mortgage and the place is yours, all yours, things start happening and you have to run back to the bank for another small loan. One of these "things" that happens is a gradual slowing down of the water system until that morning shave becomes an all day affair.

This slowing down of the water works is usually caused by a heavy accumulation of corrosion inside the pipes and it's nothing to laugh about when it happens in your house.

There are a couple of things you can do to get things working again. One remedy is to have a

concern that does this sort of work come in and clean out the inside of the pipes.

This will get the water flowing again but it's only a temporary cure as corrosion is going to get started again the minute the pipe has been cleaned.

The other disadvantage to this treatment is that if things are pretty far gone the removal of the corrosion may expose weak points in the pipe and you end up with a leaky plumbing system.

The best thing you can do is to have the pipes replaced. This will run into a little money but you do get a new plumbing system out of it.

The best pipe for this job in most cases is copper tubing. The reason is that aside from its resistance to the corrosive effects of most water it can be threaded up between walls and through floors without having to rip the whole house apart.

This saving on installation costs will go a long way to off-set the higher price of the copper tubing over rigid pipe.

Here Are Some Tricks On Minor Repairs

Here we have that catch-all column again. A collection of miscellaneous items too small to take up a full column and too important to forget or toss away.

For example, a scratch in shellac can often be removed by wip-

ing with denatured alcohol. If that doesn't work, try brushing a thin coat of shellac into the scratch.

Squeaky stair treads in a flight of stairs with the underside exposed can be taken care of by driving in the wood wedge that is supposed to hold the edge of the tread into the groove that is cut in the side of the stringer.

Wax, by the way, makes a very nice finish for concrete basement floors. If the concrete tends to be a little dusty the wax will take care of that, too. And holes drilled or left at the base of garden retaining walls will prevent water pressure building up in back of the wall and cracking it.

A space of ⅛th inch should be left between sections of wallboard when they are installed. This will prevent the material from bulging out should it absorb any moisture.

Spackle is great stuff for filling in rough spots on plaster before repainting. When it is dry it can be sandpapered down to a smooth surface. You can get it at paint and hardware stores.

Septic Tanks Go Bad When Most Needed

It's an established fact that the only time a septic tank or cesspool will go out of order is when you have a house full of guests,

or are just about to sell the place to some sucker for five times its real value.

Now when one of these private sewage systems goes out of whack your best friend is someone who has made a study and a career out of the care and feeding of these gimmicks.

And the best of these specialists is the character who did the original installation of the system. If he doesn't understand how it works probably no one will.

So while there is not much you yourself can do to get the system back in working order there are several things you can do to prevent it getting that way in the first place. To begin with, don't overload the system and this is especially true of a septic tank. Don't connect the roof gutters into it and don't install an extra bathroom into the system unless you are sure that it can stand it.

Keep insoluble solids from going down drain fixtures and be careful what type and the amount of chemical drain cleaners you pour into the system. Some of these chemicals will stop the action of a septic tank quicker than you can say "Operator. Get me a good plumber—fast."

And don't treat a septic tank like an orphan—it should get a cleaning out every few years to keep it happy and contented. Grease is still putting cesspools out of operation and the only real solution here is to have a grease trap installed at some point in the line.

Why Not Try This?

THE FAMILY SCRAPBOOK

By DR. ERNEST G. OSBORNE

Boys and Household Tasks

A number of modern mothers have decided it is worthwhile teaching their boys simple domestic tasks. In most American families in the past, the sewing on of a button, the pressing of clothes, the cooking, sweeping and making beds have been considered to be entirely feminine occupations.

But boys often are on their own—in camps, away at school, or in the armed forces. Then the ability to do such domestic jobs is very helpful.

These same skills can be very handy in later years, too, when the boy marries. The young husband who can turn a competent hand to the preparation of an attractive meal for his sick wife or give a lift with some other household task brings to marriage a very real contribution. Even though such help is not frequent, the fact that a man can and does step in when it is greatly needed can do a lot to build up good relationships.

Attends ROTC Camp

Louis F. Ellison of Indianapolis is attending the summer camp for infantry students of the advanced course for reserve officers from universities at Camp Campbell, Ky. Two hundred and twenty-five are enrolled.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

U. S. Representative

HORIZONTAL
1,9 Pictured U.S. representative
14 Art of flying
15 Odd
16 Finest
17 Killer (suffix)
19 Expensive
20 Anger
21 Individual
23 Demure (coll.)
24 While
25 Either
26 Pronoun
28 Note of scale
29 Depart
31 Visitor
33 He is from —— (ab.)
34 Aeriform fluid
35 Velvety fabric
37 Occurrence
40 Exist
41 Half an em
42 Tellurium (symbol)
43 Chaldean city
44 Place
46 Honor examination
51 Sheep's cry
52 Dash
54 Pack
55 Repair
56 Contradict
58 Refinement
60 Pricked
61 Took offense

VERTICAL
1 Pertaining to the lips
2 Opposed
3 Sage
4 Rodent
5 Diminutive suffix
6 Pleasant
7 Coconut fiber
8 Finishes
9 Thus
10 Mire
11 Entry
12 Characteristics
13 Recluse
18 Dawn (prefix)
21 Gift
22 Gold lumps
25 Sheep-like
27 Smooth
30 Rye beard
32 Compass point
35 Documents
36 Charm
38 Shade of difference
39 Exchanged
45 Forbidden
47 Rupees (ab.)
48 Brain passage
49 Rod
50 Is indebted
51 Twisted
53 Convent worker
55 Male
57 Type genus (ab.)
59 Earth goddess

Answer to Previous Puzzle