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WINDOW WARMERS

Shirley H. Nilsson, Extension Housing and Equipment Specialist

"Window Warmers" are an interior design idea to reduce window heat loss in cold weather.

Glass is a poor insulator. When the weather is cold, heat loss through glass surfaces can be significant. If you use two or three layers of glass, as with double or triple glazing and storm windows, the dead air space created partially reduces heat loss. To prevent more heat loss, you should keep warm air from the cold glass surface. Accomplish this by making a window cover that you can place over the glass at night and on cold, sunless days. Remove the cover when the sun is shining to allow passive solar energy to warm the interior living spaces.

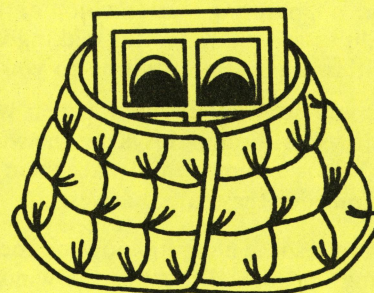
Window covers or "warmers" can be quite decorative, adding to the interior design of the home. The concept is simple — cut a piece of rigid material the exact size of the window opening and place there when needed. This material can be a piece of corrugated cardboard, rigid sheet styrofoam, poster board, fiberboard or even plywood. Styrofoam, a good insulator, can be purchased in sheet form in various thicknesses where insulation and building materials are sold. It is light weight and easy to shape and work with.

Window covers can be as simple or as elaborate as you like, both in construction and in decorative finish. If cut the exact size of the opening, they will stay in place by friction. Make some type of handle, tab or finger hole to use for removing them from the window. Examples are:

1. A round finger-sized hole (some air will leak).
2. Cabinet door handles or spools bolted on.
3. Glued or sewn on fabric or leather pull tabs
4. Cord or rope loops through the material, knotted to hold.

Decorating Ideas

1. Cover the base board with wallpaper or adhesive backed vinyl. Many interesting designs are available. Some of the shiny mylar finishes may help reflect the heat and add



a sparkle to the room. Use the same wallpaper as the room, or a compatible pattern. If using the styrofoam, be sure the adhesive will work on foam. A special paint or adhesive coating may be needed first.

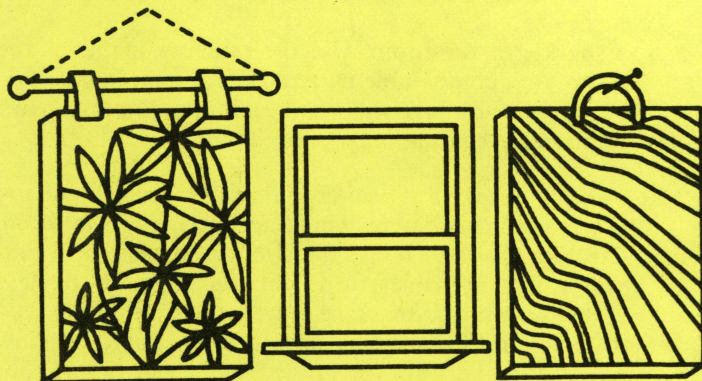
2. Fabric — make a slipcover (pillow case style) — of any fabric that matches or would add design to the room. Cut two pieces of fabric the size of the base form plus seams, sew three sides, turn right side out, insert the rigid form and hand or machine sew the fourth side. Use two different fabrics, one each side, for a reversible "window warmer" and change the inward facing side to suit your mood.
3. Create a work of art. What is your favorite fabric — handwork or craft? Needlework, needlepoint, applique, patchwork, knitting, crochet, weaving, macrame, batik, tie-dye — whatever it is, this is an opportunity to create a decorative element that is an expression of you as an individual. Do the artwork, then cover the base form, pillow case style, or glue on the craft and edge it with cloth tape.
4. Collage and or Decopage. Glue on favorite pictures or papers or even fabric pieces — pictures from wrapping paper or magazines, labels from bottles or jars, torn decorative papers such as tissue or metal foil — all could be glued on to the base material with appropriate adhesive. Overlap the pieces crazy quilt style or create a mosaic picture or use a single picture and burn or feather the edges. Cover with several coats of varnish or clear acrylic or use decopage or deco-pour materials. Finish the edges with cloth or vinyl tape.
5. Use a poster or art print or fabric picture or a photograph. For a large window, mural type wall papers and fabrics can be found in furnishing and fabric shops, or consider some of the new bed sheet patterns. Photographic murals are also available, or a favorite photograph can be enlarged to fit the space.

6. Foil tooling would make an interesting treatment for the window warmer. The base material can be covered with metal foil and incised with a tool, or the design could be raised by glueing string on the base material then working the metal foil over it. With either method the design can be accented by brushing with a dark stain (shoe polish works well) and wiping off again.

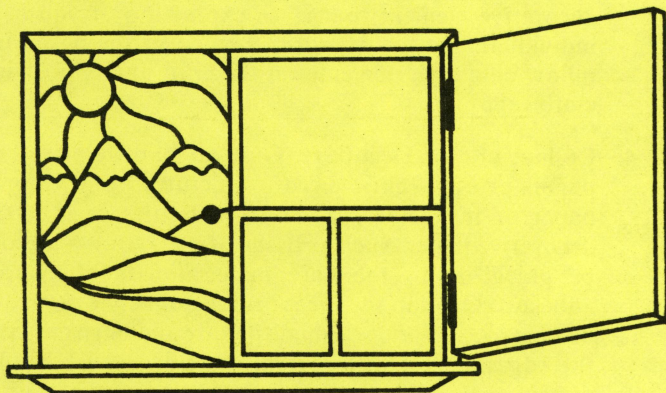
7. Whatever your favorite art or craft media is, consider using it to decorate the panels. Examples are wood carving, leather tooling, tole painting, enameling, pottery, oil painting, water color or print work. The possibilities are unlimited for making window warmers an exciting decorative addition to your home interior.

What do you do with window warmers when they are not in the windows? Although this is not the way to treat a work of art, one idea is to remove and place them behind a door or the sofa. Consider these alternatives:

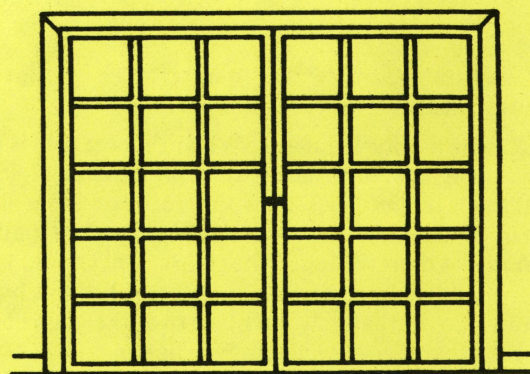
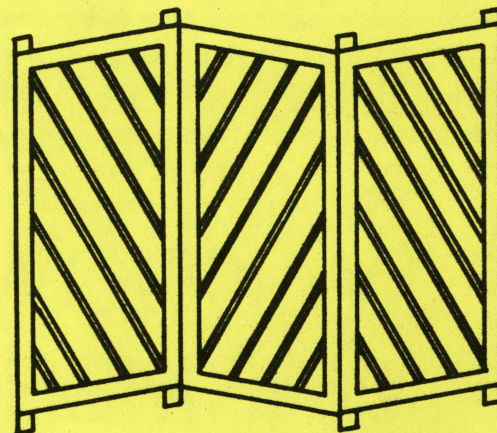
1. Incorporate some hanging loops on the top of the panel and hang on the wall next to the window.



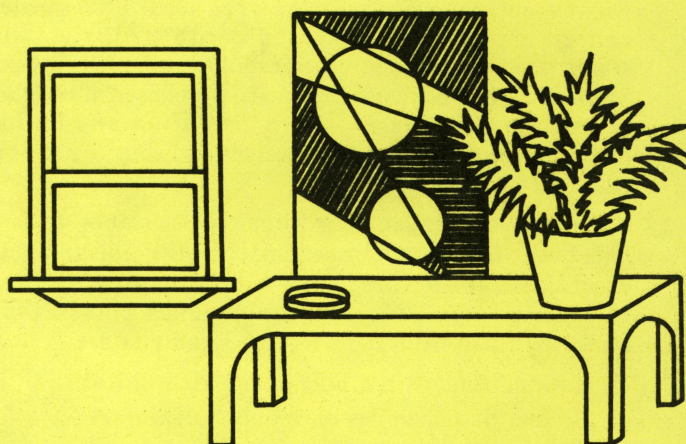
2. Attach with a hinge and open and close as a shutter (or two shutters). Remember that the back will show when opened if this method is used.



3. For a large floor length window, use a folding screen construction that can rest on the floor in a corner when not in the window.



4. Use as a backdrop for a furniture grouping or table top display. Just lean it against the wall.



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