

Yellow Knife Handles

Dear Aunt Daisy,

We are regular readers of *The Listener* in this corner of the world so far from New Zealand and have found many of your recipes and suggestions most useful. I am wondering if you can tell me of any way to whiten knife handles that have gone very yellow. Since mine have been entrusted to folk who forget that they shouldn't be put into hot water, they have become very discoloured.

"M.A.W.," Tanganyika.

What a far-away Link in our Daisy Chain you are. Try whitening your knife-handles by making a paste or plaster of lemon-juice and whitening—or cream of tartar and peroxide. Leave the paste on for some hours, then wipe off, and polish with a silk handkerchief or a chamois leather. Sometimes just rubbing with a cut lemon dipped in salt will do the trick or even rubbing with plain peroxide. I have also heard of people plastering tooth-paste on the handles, and leaving it on a few hours before wiping off.

Smocking on Velvet

Dear Aunt Daisy,

You seem to have lots of hints up your sleeve, so I wonder if you can solve my problem. I want to smock a velvet frock for my little girl but do not know how to go about transferring the dots on to the back of the material. If I use an iron I presume it would ruin the pile and if I passed the transfer and the material over the upright iron the transfer is bound to shift, so what am I to do? I am sure there are others besides myself who would like to know.

"J.A."

I asked the never-failing Daisy Chain for suggestions, and here are some of the replies:

"Ngairi" says: "I heard you read a letter asking about smocking dots on velvet. I have done hundreds of smocked garments, and never press on the dots. I pin the dots in position on the back of the material and tack as instructed, because on most materials the transfers show on both sides and hence spoil many a garment. It does not take long to pull off the paper, after you have done the smocking."

"St. Martin's" says: "I think if your listener tacks the transfer firmly on to the back of the velvet, and gets someone to hold one end while she holds the other end and presses, she should find it quite successful (the velvet will be suspended in mid-air, of course). We used to press the seams of velvet frocks open like this when I was dressmaking. There is not any pressure under the velvet—

therefore it should not mark the pile. I made myself a ring-velvet house coat and pressed all seams open in that way, and there is not a mark."

"Susannah" says: "About smocking on velvet. This is easily done by using a ruler and chalk. Chalk in the spots the distance apart needed, using a ruler. Then tack in the usual way. I never use a transfer, always a ruler."

"Kelburn" says: "If you tack on the transfer taking the stitches where the dots come, and using one long cotton for each row, you can then pull off the paper before smocking (much easier) and pull up the threads tightly as for gathering."



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