

Real Simple

New Uses for Old Things You May Have Around the House

GARLIC PRESS

Original Purpose: Crushing cloves.

Aha! Use: Cracking coriander seeds, cumin seeds and peppercorns. Don't have a mortar and pestle? When a recipe calls for "freshly cracked" or "coarsely ground" seeds, fill the chamber of a garlic press and squeeze to crush.

Real Simple Reward: Fresh spices, hot off the press.

SMALL JAR

Original Purpose: Containing PB or J.

Aha! Use: Cleaning a food processor. The hole in the center makes it nearly impossible to let a crusty bowl soak. Pop a small jar on top of the hole, then fill the bowl to the rim with sudsy water.

Real Simple Reward: A thorough soaking means less scrubbing.

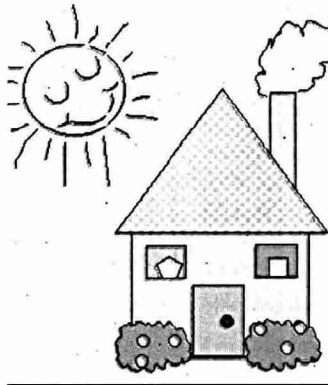
BOBBY PINS

Original Purpose: Holding up your updo.

Aha! Use: Prepping a pleated skirt for ironing. Slide a bobby pin onto each pleat at the hem to hold them all in place while you press. (Be sure to remove them afterward!)

Real Simple Reward: Pleats that are as neat as a pin.

Simple continued on B4 ■



RealSimple



Bobby pins can be used to prepare a pleated skirt for ironing.

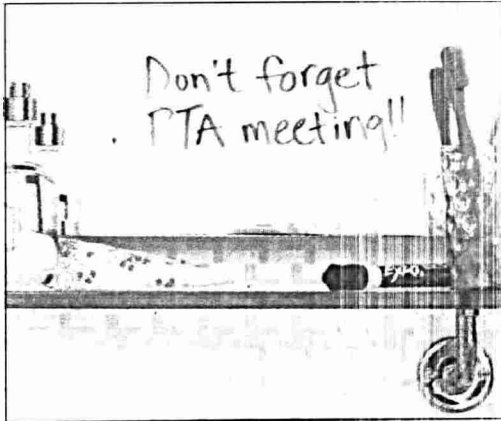
COURTESY REAL SIMPLE
CAR WAX



Original Purpose: Shining the family sedan.

Aha! Use: Making stovetop cleaning easier. Before you cook, apply a layer of wax to the enamel surface with a soft rag, then wipe off. The thin layer that remains will prevent greasy splatters and spills from sticking.

Real Simple Reward: Cleaning up after a stir-fry is a cinch.



PHOTOS COURTESY REAL SIMPLE

BATHROOM MIRROR

Original Purpose: Reflecting the fairest of them all.

Aha! Use: Reminding you to pay that bill or get milk. Use a dry-erase marker to write a "must not forget" errand or event on the mirror. After your final hair check, the erasable message will be at the top of your mind as you walk out the door.

Real Simple Reward: A paperless to-do list.



COMPUTER SHORTHAND

If it's been a while since you last spoke a secret language, then chances are, the ever-multiplying acronyms popping up in e-mails, instant messages and text messages seem like dispatches from Mars. Navigating Net-speak or texting with a teenager can make the average person feel UCWAP (up a creek without a paddle). To translate a specific phrase, go to www.netlingo.com. Meanwhile, start improving your cybervocabulary with this list.

BRB: Be right back

CWYL: Chat with you later

CYT or SYT: See you tomorrow

GR8: Great

ILU: I love you

IMHO: In my humble opinion

J/C: Just checking

JTOU: Just thinking of you

LMK: Let me know

N-A-Y-L: In a while

NM: Never mind

NOYB: None of your business

ROFL: Rolling on the floor laughing

WTH: What the heck



FOUR PROBLEM-SOLVERS FROM \$4

NYLON BAG, \$5

Problem: Plastic or paper? They both create trash.

Solution: Use the ChicoBag as a grab-and-go tote for groceries, takeout or other small items. Each bag holds up to 20 pounds and folds easily into an attached pouch. Stash one in the glove compartment and another in your purse.

To Buy: www.chicobag.com for locations.

CANTALOUPE, \$4

Problem: You sliced too soon and got a mouthful of unripe melon.

Solution: Choose Dulcinea Extra Sweet Tuscan Style cantaloupes, which are bred so the rind's grooves change from dark green to gold when they are ripe. Tasty melon, any way you slice it.

To Buy: www.dulcinea.com for locations.

SCREWDRIVER, \$25

Problem: Every DIY project calls for a different screwdriver.

Solution: Reach for the Loggerhead Tools Bit Dr. screwdriver. The tool has 21 driver heads that store in the handle, while the shaft can bend into six different angled positions.

To Buy: www.loggerheadtools.com.

WALLET ORGANIZER, \$45

Problem: Carrying around a wallet and a date book weighs you down.

Solution: Lighten your load with Filofax's Mini Finsbury, which combines an organizer with a wallet and includes space

for credit cards, bills and change.

To Buy: www.filofaxusa.com.

SHOE REFRESHERS, \$6

Problem: Your shoes stink.

Solution: Click open Dr. Scholl's Odor Destroyers and say goodbye to smelly shoes. Place an odor-neutralizing sphere inside each shoe every evening and wake up to a freshly scented pair.

To Buy: At drugstores.