

New Uses For Old Household Items

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Each month, [Real Simple](#) magazine offers creative problem-solving solutions in its popular section, "New Uses for Old Things."

Kris Connell visits *The Early Show* to share some of her favorite ideas.

Problem: Dusty lamp shades

Solution: Lint roller

This is a simple way to get all unwanted gunk off your lamp shades. A dust cloth can leave ugly clumps or streaks behind, and blowing on the lamp shade can leave you out of breath, and dust floating onto other surfaces. The lint rollers that have disposable, sticky surfaces work best. Run the roller up and down the outside of the shade.

Problem: Pills on your sweater

Solution: Pumice stone

Even the best wool sweaters develop pills eventually. You can make your sweater look like new by turning to a tool that's in your shower - a pumice stone. This rough block is typically used to scrub callused heels and feet. But if you firmly brush the stone over your sweater, it will remove unsightly pills.

Problem: Hard-to-reach candles

Solution: Spaghetti

What? Yes! A piece of dried spaghetti will burn, just like a long match. If you're lighting a candle that's sitting down inside a tall hurricane vase, or lighting multiple candles along a mantle or on a birthday cake, using a regular match can result in singed fingers. If you don't have any long matches on hand, a spaghetti strand works just as well. (To clear up any confusion -- you can't strike spaghetti like you do a match -- you have to use another match to light the pasta on fire.)

Problem: Ragged fingernail

Solution: Matchbook

Ever notice that you don't always have a nail file when you need one? If you're out and about and break a nail, a simple matchbook can help you out. The scratchy strip on the matchbook cover can smooth out your nail until you get home - or to the manicurist!

Problem: Hard-to-arrange flowers

Solution: Tooth Brush Holder

If you have just a few stems of flowers that get lost in your big vases but don't look quite right in your bud vases, you can turn to your bathroom for a solution. A pretty silver toothbrush holder does double-duty as an adorable flower vase. Simply stick the stems through the holes in the top and you have a perfectly-arranged and contained bouquet.

Problem: Photos bent in the mail

Solution: Lightbulb container

Not everyone sends pictures online; sometimes it's nice to drop a print in the mail. But often they wind up at their destination bent, wrinkled or crumpled. Real Simple came up with a brilliant solution: Take the corrugated cardboard box that once protected your lightbulbs, flatten it out and slide your photos inside. The makeshift, padded envelope still mails easily once placed inside a larger envelope, and it's sure to protect your precious photographs.

Problem: Paint drips

Solution: Coffee can lid

When you're reaching to paint a high surface such as a crown molding or a ceiling, it's much more likely that your paintbrush may drip on you or the floor. To prevent such a mess, take the plastic lid from a large can of coffee and cut a slit in the lid's middle. Pull the brush handle through the plastic so the brush

portion is on one side of the lid and the handle is on the other. You've effectively created a shield that will protect you and your stuff from dripping paint.