

8. HOUSEHOLD ACCESSORIES

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Introduction :

Accessories play an important role in the furnishing of room and add functional and aesthetic appeal to any room in the house. They are purchased gradually for the purpose of decoration of a house or because they are felt necessary for carrying out certain activities. A house without accessories would be unattractive and uninteresting.

Can you tell the meaning of accessories ?

8.1 Meaning and definition :

In every design, there are certain elements that are of primary importance. There are certain items that support such primary elements and are of secondary importance. However, these items are necessary from the point of view of aesthetics and functionality of that design. These support items are called accessories. For example, items like wall clock, a flower vase, a painting put up on the wall etc. are the supporting secondary items which are termed as accessories.

Definition :

- Accessories are defined as: ‘The elements that bring charm, individuality and vitality to a room’.
- Accessories can be defined as: ‘The objects used to decorate and define the purpose of the room, which also exhibits the taste, individuality and personality of the inmates’.

- ‘Interior design accessories are decorative or functional items that add the finishing touches to a chosen home style’.

Accessories have functional as well as aesthetic value and thus are acquired by the families carefully. These are things, which are acquired by collection or bought for the need of it.

8.2 Classification of accessories :

Accessories are classified into two types: functional accessories and decorative accessories.

1. Functional accessories : As the name suggests, these accessories are the items or objects that are meant for carrying out some function. The process of manufacture of these accessories emphasizes the structural aspects rather than the appearance. This is because the function that they serve is far more important than their appearance. Though the aesthetical appearance is considered as secondary, it should be pleasing and attractive. Such functional accessories should meet certain requirements.

These accessories are used in residential as well as commercial places. The interiors of offices for example, require more functional accessories, than other places. In a typical office, on a desk accessories like a file tray, pen and pencil holder, calendar, telephone etc. are commonly

found. Along with these, a waste basket, a clock, calendar, an umbrella stand etc. are also found necessary. These same accessories may be needed in a number of rooms in a residence also. In residences, the number of functional accessories increases to help in the flow of work. Living rooms and bedrooms need to have accessories such as clocks, flower vases, lamps and trays for holding smaller objects etc.

Use your brain :

Make a list of functional accessories for the following rooms.

Sr. No.	Room	List of accessories
1.	Kitchen	
2.	Dining Room	
3.	Children's Room	
4.	Bathroom	

2. Decorative accessories : The objects, in an interior that cannot be described as having a "real" function and are exclusively used to enhance the beauty of a space are called as decorative accessories. These accessories are used for the purpose of decoration in a room. Some examples of decorative accessories are paintings, wall hangings, flower arrangements, artificial flowers, indoor plants, sculptures etc. Such decorative accessories should have pleasing appearance for enhancing the aesthetic value of interiors. Their decorative as well as structural design should be good. Their selection should be done very carefully so that they harmonize with the furnishings and the theme of the room. That means their number, size, shape and colour should blend with the rest of the furnishing materials used in a room.

Always remember :

Accessories may be decorative only or decorative cum functional : Almost all accessories have some functional as well as aesthetic value. But usually a few articles are selected for their beauty and for the purpose of enhancing the aesthetical value of interior. A decorative accessory may also serve to be a functional accessory for example, a clock in a living room or a decorative lamp on the bed side table. Some accessories can either be purely decorative like art objects, antique implements, paintings and so on, or be functional like lamps, pillows, flower vases and room dividers.

8.3 Some important accessories and their care

• Some Important Accessories :

Can you make a list of household accessories ?

There are number of accessories which can be used in a house. The choice depends on individual likes, dislikes and interest. Following are some important accessories that are commonly found in houses.

- **Pictures :** In home decoration, pictures are considered as important decorative accessories. They should be selected carefully by considering their aesthetic appeal and theme of their subject matter. They should be placed at the eye level of a standing person. Pictures should be placed flat against the wall with no strings showing. For hanging pictures and creating attractive design in a room, one requires to use the knowledge of a few art principles. Pictures should harmonize in colour and style with the colour of the room and other furnishing. Along with the room, their size and shape should relate to the wall area and furniture against which they are placed. The outline of the pictures will produce a division of

wall space that should establish pleasing proportions. It is frequently more interesting to group several related pictures rather than have them distributed. Symmetrical or asymmetrical balance may be created in their placement in a group.

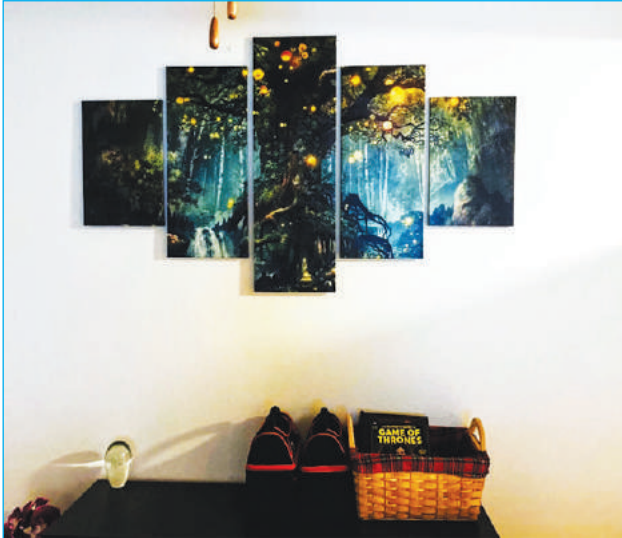


Fig. 8.1 (a) Pictures as Accessories



Fig. 8.1 (b) Picture as an Accessories

- **Flowers and foliage :** The fresh flowers and foliage as accessories add liveliness to a room. They can be placed on a center table in the living room, on dining table etc. Such flower arrangements should be large enough to attract attention but not too large to dominate the room. They should be proportionate to the size of the

table and the room. They should be low in height when placed on dining table so that people can see each other and do not interfere in the communication. The colours should harmonize with the colour of the room and other items placed on the table. The arrangement should be balanced in itself. The flower arrangement should be proportionate to the flower vase used.



Fig. 8.2 (a) Flowers and Foliage as Accessory



Fig. 8.2 (b) Flowers and Foliage as Accessory

- **Flower Vases :** Its main function is to hold the flowers and the foliage. It should have capacity to hold sufficient quantity of water so that the flower arrangement done in it remains fresh for hours together. Flower vase should not have too dominant design otherwise the attention of the viewers may be attracted towards it rather than the beautiful arrangement done in it. The size, shape and colour of the vase should harmonize with the room or the place where it is to be placed.



Fig. 8.3 (a) Flower Vases as Accessory

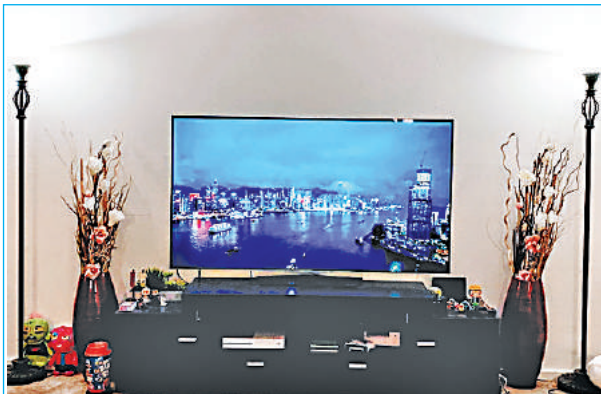


Fig. 8.3 (b) Flower Vases as Accessory

At times vases without flowers are used as accessory in a room. Their graceful lines can themselves add to the beauty of a room. They should harmonize with the colour, size, shape of the room and also be proportionate to the room.

- **Indoor Plants :** Green plants placed in the room become a very attractive decorative accessory and add life and interest to a room. They are not very expensive and are commonly used by many families. Placement of plants depends upon the size of the overall plant, the size, colour and texture of the leaves. Large plants should stand on the floor in the corners of the room, hanging or drooping plants should be placed high on hanging baskets. Plants with small leaves and lot of foliage can be kept at the table level for all round viewing.



Fig. 8.4 (a) Indoor Plant as an Accessory



Fig. 8.4 (b) Indoor Plant as an Accessory

- **Artificial Flowers :** These turn out to be an attractive decorative accessory. They are not very expensive and do not require much attention. They should harmonize with the colour of the room, colour of the other furnishings and the other accessories placed in the room. They should also be

proportionate with the place where it is to be kept. Now days running flower libraries is being taken up as a career by a number of women. It is an asset for working women.



Fig. 8.5 (a) Artificial Flowers as an Accessory



Fig. 8.5 (b) Artificial Flowers as an Accessory

- **Lamps :** A lamp is functional only when it turns out to be a source of good lighting arrangement. Its height, the spread of light, dispersion of light through the lamp shade is of prime importance. Lamps should be 28 to 30 inches tall if they are to be used on low or medium height tables. They should harmonize in colour, size and shape, texture with the rest of objects in the room. The lamp itself should have balanced design so that it stands erect.



Fig. 8.6 (a) Lamps as an Accessory



Fig. 8.6 (b) Lamp as an Accessory

- **Wall Clocks :** As a functional accessory, the first and the foremost important requirement is that it must keep time. The numbers and hands should be bold and clear. As an accessory though it must be beautiful and should harmonize with the colour of the room. Also its size and shape should harmonize with the size and shape of the room.



Fig. 8.7 (a) Wall Clock as an Accessory



Fig. 8.7 (b) Wall Clock as an Accessory

- **Mirrors** : Mirrors are considered as functional as well as decorative accessory. Mirrors are essential in the dressing area of the bedrooms. As a functional accessory it should reflect the image clearly and should be free from distortions. Large mirrors produce a feeling of spaciousness in the area where they are placed. As decorative accessory, mirrors are obtained with beautifully designed frames. In general, they should harmonize with the room space.



Fig. 8.8 (a) Mirrors as an Accessory



Fig. 8.8 (b) Mirrors as an Accessory

- **Wastepaper Basket** : It is an important functional accessory as it is required in every room. Being a functional accessory, it should be large, made of durable material and should be placed at convenient place. It is also considered as a decorative accessory and from that point of view its colour should blend with the room and the shape should harmonize with the other shapes.



Fig. 8.9 (a) Wastepaper Basket as an Accessory



Fig. 8.9 (b) Wastepaper Basket as an Accessory

- **Accessories in the form of Handicrafts of India :** Number of beautiful Handicraft materials are manufactured in various states of India, which can be used in a house for increasing the aesthetical appeal. These include metalwork, wood carving, pottery, basketry and Indian Textiles etc. Following table depicts various handcrafted and traditional accessories from various states:

Sr. No.	States/ Region	Accessories
1.	Maharashtra, South India and Bengal	Fine Terracotta work articles. Examples: pots in various shapes, lamps, bells, animals figures etc.
2.	Uttar Pradesh (Varanasi, Moradabad), Rajasthan (Jaipur)	Engraved brassware with or without enamel covering. Examples- flower vases, fruit bowls, table tops, bells, candle stands etc.
3.	Karnataka (Bidar), Telangana (Hyderabad)	Bidri work : lustrous silver and gold inlay on striking jet-black oxidized background. Examples : Wall plaques, paper cutters, fruit dishes etc.
4.	South India (Madras, Madurai and Bangalore)	Metal sculptures in fine Chola tradition representing gods and goddesses made in brass, bell metal or oxidised metal.
5.	Punjab, Kashmir and Gujarat	Wood work- Wood carving, new designs in wooden furniture, variegated designs in raised or engraved

Sr. No.	States/ Region	Accessories
		patterns in walnut wood, inlay work in wood, sankheda style furniture from Gujarat, rose wood and sandal wood work for decorative articles etc.
6.	Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh (Khurja, Azamgarh, Aligarh),	Pottery in blue and turquoise glazes (Rajasthan), black pottery (U.P.)
7.	Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Tamilnadu	Varied basketry accessories as a folk craft from bamboo, cane, grasses, reeds, leaves of coconut and date palms. Examples- baskets, mats, boxes, trays, toys, dolls, costume jewellery, wall hangings etc.
8.	Uttar Pradesh (Banaras), Gujarat (Saurashtra), Rajasthan (Jaipur), Tamilnadu (Madurai)	Indian Textiles- varied articles and silks like brokades, patolas, kanjivaram, chanderi, kota materials etc. are used for making beautiful and fine accessories along with tie and dye technique articles.
9.	Chhattisgarh	Tribal art of Bastar. Examples- Bamboo art, bell metal (Dhokra), Tatoo motifs on textiles (Gonda), Wrought Iron (Loha Shilpa), Terracotta Tumba, wood carving etc.

Use your brain : Examples of accessories from various categories are given in the table below. Can you state some more examples ?

Sr. No.	Type of Indian Handicraft	Examples
1.	Metal	Sculptures, candle stands,
2.	Wood Carvings	Low stools, flower vases,
3.	Pottery (Terracotta Work)	Lamps, pots,
4.	Basketry	Baskets, wall hangings,
5.	Indian Textiles	Frames, Wall hangings,

- **Care of accessories :** Proper care and maintenance of accessories is an essential aspect in the effective use of both the functional and decorative accessories. The care and maintenance of accessories totally depends on the material used for manufacturing the accessories.

Always remember :

Following are some useful tips for care and maintenance based on material :

- **Brass :** Some families have a love for brass accessories. When brass comes in contact with air, oxidation takes place. Traditional method for cleaning such accessories is using tamarind and salt. After cleaning, brass is generally polished by using a polish available in the market.

- **Wood :** Wood is used extensively in interior design for making furniture as well as accessories. For maintenance of the wooden accessories processes like repairing, polishing, varnishing, painting are useful. These processes give a new appearance to the articles and also increase their durability.
- **Glass :** Recently glass has become a very popular material for accessories used in residential as well as commercial interiors. Glass can be cleaned with warm soapy water or a tissue paper or simple newspaper which is dipped in soap water.
- **Ceramic :** Number of accessories made from ceramic may find place in interiors. Cleaning and maintaining them is very easy. These objects can be cleaned by using water and any mild detergents using soft fabrics or microfiber dusters.
- **Aluminium :** This is not a very common material used for accessories. But since it is light in weight and is available in bright colours it may be used in interiors. It can be cleaned with mild detergent.
- **Porcelain :** Porcelain again is not a very popular material for accessories. But if used, they can be cleaned easily with soap solution.
- **Plastic :** Use of plastic is common for making various objects used in interiors. They can be cleaned with soap solution.
- **Cast Iron :** Few years back use of cast iron for manufacturing various objects was very common. However, now days its use for manufacturing objects has reduced. Such objects rust due to humidity in the air. For maintaining them, first the rust needs to be removed and then painting can be done with synthetic enamel.
- **Fabric :** Fabric is commonly used for making various accessories. These can

be cleaned and maintained by periodical dusting, washing and ironing. However, this process depends on the nature of the objects. If required dry cleaning can be done.

- **Mirrors** : Mirrors can be effectively cleaned by using a tissue paper or a newspaper by dipping it in soap water. The decorative frames of the mirrors can be polished or varnished to give a fresh look.
- **Small Rugs** : Normally, these are cleaned by using a vacuum cleaner. Drying in sun after removing the dust or soil is also suggested. If they are washable, they can be washed and dried in sun.

8.4 Importance of accessories :

Can you tell the importance of accessories ?

- Accessories define the purpose of the room, complete and highlight an aspect of the decoration.
- Accessories create a visual center of interest in a room. For example, by arranging a group of pictures or an antique rug.
- Without accessories, a room is sterile. An interior needs to be more than just walls, floor and ceiling. The accessories, in addition to their basic function make the interior finished and liveable.
- Accessories make the interior spaces come alive as they add texture, colour, pattern and form.
- Accessories pull the design scheme of a room together and increase the aesthetic value of a room.
- Accessories are aesthetically pleasing and bring in a stimulating or restful environment.
- A good collection and arrangement of accessories adds status, a personal character and reflects the personality of the individual or that of the family members.
- Accessories can be used to create a focal point or it can be the center of emphasis.

8.5 Guidelines for selection and placement of accessories :

The selection of accessories totally depends on personal likes, dislikes and interests because of which the selection of accessories varies from individual to individual. Thus, it is difficult to formulate rules about them. Everyone is entitled to his or her own views on aesthetics but there are certain accepted standards, which have been put forth by people with trained eyes. The object should be aesthetically beautiful. It should have a good structural and decorative design.

Consider this :

There are certain well-accepted norms that should be followed in the selection and arrangement of accessories. They are as follows :

- The accessories should be kept to the minimum. Placement of too many accessories may create confusion of the eye.
- Accessories need to be placed with space between individual items, so that they can be enjoyed separately while still forming part of a unit.
- The accessories should be placed at important points in the room and should create focal point in the room. By choosing the same colours or shapes, the decorator can use the accessories to create unity in a room.
- The accessories should follow the theme of the room and should be related to the furniture and furniture groupings.
- Accessories should have some personal significance and importance for the family members.
- Accessories should be related to the function and the use of the room. The living room accessories should be of general interest and appeal.
- All accessories should have decorative or functional values or they should have both the values.

- Accessories should have variety in colour, texture, size, shape etc.
- Accessories should be rotated or changed frequently for variety and freshness.
- The functional accessories should first of all be suitable for the purpose it should serve rather than just being beautiful.
- Both functional and decorative accessories should be well proportioned, harmonious and balanced in appearance.
- Groups of accessories are more interesting if the shapes and the heights are varied. Too many items of one shape may seem monotonous. However, if accessories are grouped together, each must have something in common with the next. It may be the size, shape, material or colour.
- Accessories that are figured or decorated can be enjoyed best if they are placed against a plain background.

Can you recall ?

- Accessories play an important role in the furnishing of a room and add functional and aesthetic appeal to any room in the house.
- Accessories are defined as: 'The elements that bring charm, individuality and vitality to a room'.
- Accessories can be defined as: 'The objects used to decorate and define the purpose of the room, which also exhibits the taste, individuality and personality of the inmates'.
- 'Interior design accessories are decorative or functional items that add the finishing touches to a chosen home style'.
- Accessories are classified as functional and decorative.
- Functional accessories are required for carrying out some function and decorative accessories are required for increasing the aesthetic value of a design or house.
- Some accessories can be purely decorative. But sometimes a decorative accessory may also serve to be a functional accessory.
- There are number of accessories which can be used in a house. The choice depends on individual likes, dislikes and interest.
- The care and maintenance of accessories depends on the material used for manufacturing the accessories.
- Accessories are important in a house for various reasons.
- There are no rules for the selection and placements of accessories, but there are certain well accepted norms that should be followed in the selection and arrangement of accessories.

Exercises

• Objective questions :

1) Multiple choice questions :

- The accessories meant for carrying out some function are called as _____ accessories.
 - decorative
 - useful
 - functional
 - aesthetic
- A wall hanging is a _____ type of accessory.
 - decorative
 - useful
 - functional
 - utilitarian
- The height of the lamps to be used on low or medium height tables should be _____ to _____ inches.
 - 20" to 25"
 - 30" to 32"
 - 28" to 30"
 - 18" to 20"

2) Identify whether the following statements are true or false :

1. Flower arrangements are functional accessories.
2. A decorative accessory may also serve to be a functional accessory.
3. Pictures should be placed at the eye level of a standing person.
4. Plants with small leaves and lot of foliage can be used as hanging plants.
5. Accessories help to create focal point in a room.

• **Short answer Questions :**

1) Define the following terms :

- a) Accessories
- b) Functional accessories
- c) Decorative accessories

2) Answer the following questions :

- a) Describe the classification of accessories.
- b) How will you take care of brass, glass and fabric accessories?

3) Write short notes on the following :

- a) Pictures and flower vases as accessories.
- b) Lamps, wall clocks and mirrors as accessories.
- c) Care to be taken of wooden, cast iron and ceramic accessories.

• **Long answer questions :**

- a) Why is use of accessories considered important in interior design?
- b) What points should be kept in mind in selection and arrangement of accessories in a room ?

Projects / Assignment :

1. List out the accessories used in any one of the rooms in your house and identify the same as functional, decorative or functional cum decorative accessory.
2. Collect pictures of various accessories from newspapers, magazines or pamphlets and prepare a scrap book.
3. Collect pictures of handicraft accessories from various sources available, stick them in a scrap book.

Practical / Related Activities :

1. Click pictures of any five accessories used in the living room of your house, take printouts, stick them on blank paper and explain the points considered in their selection and arrangement by your family.
2. Prepare an accessory using the technique of best out of waste.

