

HOW TO REPAIR INNERSPRING CUSHIONS



MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
EAST LANSING

How To Repair Innerspring Cushions

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Ordinary wear, in time, causes the separate cushions in davenport and chairs to become unsightly, misshapen and uncomfortable. When the cushion bulges in the center and sags at the edges it should be opened and the innerspring unit removed and remade. The spring coils have worn through the muslin or burlap covering, sometimes to the extent that only a tangled mass of loose springs, muslin or burlap, and string is found when the cotton padding is opened.

Cushions may be rebuilt by a professional upholsterer, or they may be rebuilt at home. The process is so simple that the homemaker can easily learn to repair cushions at home. Usually, the old springs and the cotton padding can be used again, however new pockets must always be made for the springs. The repair of innerspring cushions costs very little and takes only about a day of the homemaker's time.

Feed sacks, firm unbleached muslin, osnaburg or 6-ounce ticking may be used for making the new pockets for the springs. New upholsterer's cotton is usually needed to build up the edges and to make the top, bottom, and sides of the cushion smooth.

The original cover may be cleaned and used again, if it is in good condition, or a boxed muslin cover may be used if the cushion is to be slip covered later.

MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

For the Innerspring Unit:

1. 3 to 4 feed sacks — (for cushions with 36 to 42 springs) or 3 to 4 yards of 36 inch material.
2. No. 50 white cotton thread for stitching pockets.
3. Mattress twine, carpet warp, or strong smooth string for sewing the springs together.
4. Darning needle or curved needle to use with sewing twine.
5. Tape measure, pins, scissors, needle, thimble.
6. Ruler and pencil.
7. Large suit box of flexible cardboard.
8. Sewing machine.

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For the Cushion:

1. 2 yards of upholsterer's cotton (or a 2-lb. roll of cotton batting) for repairing cushions if some of old cotton is used, or 5 to 6 yards of upholsterer's cotton for rebuilding the cushion if all cotton is used.

MEASURE AND

For each cushion repaired:

Measure and record the length in inches, the depth _____

To open the cushion, rip a _____ inch seam, or 6 inches down on each side.

Note: For T-shaped cushions, rip the seam _____ on one side, and the _____ on the other.

To remove the cover, turn the cushion inside out, keeping the inside padding in place. Wash the cover with brush and dry clean, or wash _____

MAKE THE

A boxed cover of muslin, with the cording, is sometimes used. The outside cover which is made of _____ material can then be easily re-

To make the muslin cover:

Use the measurements of the cushion and add _____ seams.

Cut a muslin cover for the cushion, leaving _____ the boxing.

Pin the boxing to the top _____

1. Start pinning the boxing _____ back corner.

2. Turn the corners with _____

For the Cushion:

1. 2 yards of upholsterer's cotton (or a 2-lb. roll of cotton batting) for repairing cushions if some of the old cotton is used, or 5 to 6 yards of upholsterer's cotton for rebuilding the cushion if all new cotton is used.
2. 2 feed sacks or 1½ yards of unbleached muslin if a boxed muslin cover is to be made.
3. Colored carpet or button thread to sew the outside cover closed.

MEASURE AND REMOVE THE OLD COVER

For each cushion repaired:

Measure and record the length _____ inches, the width _____ inches, the depth _____ inches.

To open the cushion, rip across the lower edge at the back and 5 or 6 inches down on each side.

Note: For T-shaped cushion rip across the back, 4 inches down on one side, and the full length of the other side.

To remove the cover, turn it back and roll it off very carefully, keeping the inside padding intact. If the cover is to be used again, brush and dry clean, or wash.

MAKE THE MUSLIN COVER

A boxed cover of muslin, made like the original cover except for the cording, is sometimes used to encase the cotton covered spring unit. The outside cover which may be of upholstery or slip cover material can then be easily removed and cleaned.

To make the muslin cover:

Use the measurements of the original cover, adding ½ inch for seams.

Cut a muslin cover for the top, one for the bottom, and a strip for the boxing.

Pin the boxing to the top cover.

1. Start pinning the boxing on a side, 4 or 5 inches from the back corner.
2. Turn the corners without pleats or gathers in the boxing.

Baste and stitch the boxing to the top with a 1/2 inch seam. Snip the boxing at the corners to within 1/8 inch of the stitching.

Crease the boxing sharply at each corner.

Pin the creases to the corners of the bottom cover.

Pin, baste and stitch the boxing to the bottom cover, leaving an opening across the back and 5 to 6 inches down each side.

REMOVE THE SPRING UNIT FROM THE COTTON PADDING

Split the cotton padding at the back and the sides. Keep the front intact.

Lay the top layer of cotton back to expose the spring unit.

Count and record: Number of rows of springs.....

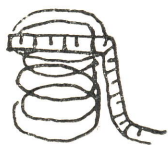
Number of springs per row.....

Springs are usually arranged in rows 6 x 6, 6 x 7, 7 x 7, etc.

Remove **one** spring coil. Leave the others in place until the new pockets are made.

MEASURE THE MATERIAL FOR THE POCKETS

1. **Width** of strip for each row of pockets.



Height for the compressed spring	..... 3 1/2	inches
Add distance across top of a spring	.....	inches
Add allowance for seam	..... 1/2	inch
Total	.....	inches
Multiply the total by 2 for width of strip	.....	inches

2. **Length** of strip for each row of pockets

Measure distance around top of spring (.....)	
Divide by 2 for the width of one pocket	..... inches
Multiply by number of springs per row (.....)	..... inches
Add allowance for seams	..... 1 inch
Length of strip for each row totals	..... inches

Cut or tear as many strips of the correct length and width as there are rows of springs.

MAKE

Fold each strip in half lengthwise.

Stitch a 1/2 inch seam at one end (1AA').

The measurement for the pocket is 1/2 the distance around the spring (.....).

Starting from the seam (1AA'), mark off the width of one pocket (1BB') parallel to the first seam.

Stitch along this line.

Use the first pocket in each strip.

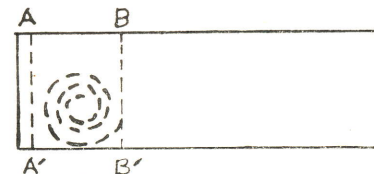


Fig. 2.

Insert the spring into the pocket easily—not tightly or loosely. If the spring does not fit as it stands in the pocket, it does not, repin the top seam. The spring measures 3 1/2 inches. Place a mark where the pin is. This will be the depth of the pocket from the seam.

Remove the pins and the spring from the pocket.

Use the measurement from Fig. 2. Measure, mark and stitch the pocket strip. The marking and stitching should be done at least 1/2 inch below a thread of the material.

Insert a spring in the pocket to the depth of seam necessary to hold it.

Measure and mark with a pencil the top of each strip.

MAKE THE POCKETS

Fold each strip in half lengthwise.

Stitch a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam at one end (Fig. 1 AA').

The measurement for the width of a pocket is $\frac{1}{2}$ the distance around the spring (.....).

Starting from the seam (Fig. 1 AA'), mark off the width of one pocket (Fig. 1 BB') parallel to the first seam.

Stitch along this line.

Use the first pocket in each strip as a pattern for the pockets in that strip.

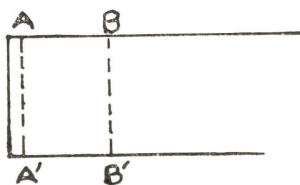


Fig. 1.

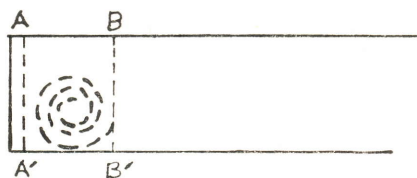


Fig. 2.

Compress the spring and slip it to the bottom of the pocket (Fig. 2).

Pin the pocket closed with a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam at the top. Check the size of the pocket by turning the spring to an upright position (Fig. 3). The spring should fit

easily—not tightly or loosely. The height of the compressed spring as it stands in the pocket should measure $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches (Fig. 3). If it does not, repin the top seam until the spring measures $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Place a mark where the pins are. This will be the depth of the top seam.

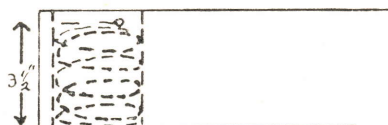


Fig. 3.

Remove the pins and the spring from the pocket.

Use the measurement from AA' to BB' as the width for the pockets. Measure, mark and stitch the number of pockets needed in each strip. The marking and stitching between the pockets should follow a thread of the material.

Insert a spring in the first pocket of each strip and check the depth of seam necessary to hold the spring to a height of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Measure and mark with a pencil the depth of the seam along the top of each strip.

PUT THE SPRINGS INTO THE POCKETS

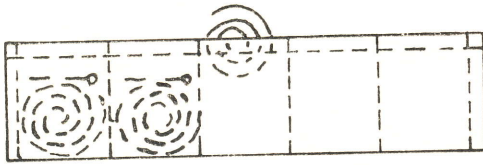


Fig. 4.

Compress each spring and insert it sidewise into a pocket. Push it to the bottom of the pocket and pin the pocket closed just above the spring (Fig. 4).

Fill and pin each pocket in each strip. Stitch along the marked seam line across the top of the strip. Remove the pins. Turn the springs upright in the pockets with the seam running through the middle of the tops of the springs.

TIE THE SPRINGS TOGETHER

Tie the springs in each row, then tie the rows together by stitching and tying the tops and bottoms of the springs through the cloth. Thread a curved or straight needle with string, carpet warp or mattress twine.

Place one row of springs with the seam side up. Insert the needle through the cloth, under the top coil of the first spring and tie a slip knot (Fig. 5).

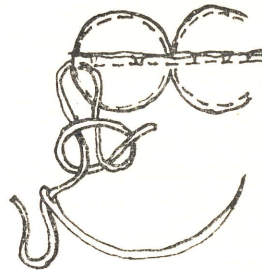


Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

Carry the thread across the top of the first spring, tie the top coils of the first and second springs at the point where the coils touch. Use the knot shown in Fig. 6a.

Continue tying the top coils together to the end of the row. Fasten the thread at the end of the row with a square knot (Fig. 7a).

Tie each row in the same way.

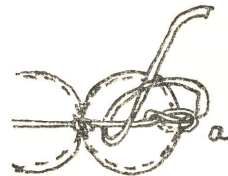


Fig. 7.

Place the rows of springs side by side, with the seams up.

Start with a slip knot as in Fig. 8a.

Tie the first spring in row 1 to the first spring in row 2 (Fig. 8b). Continue, tying rows 2 and 3, 3 and 4, etc., across the unit.

Tie each row in the same way from side to side.

Turn the unit over and tie the other side in the same manner.

REPLACE THE SPRING

Open the padding, keeping cotton across the front of the

Replace the spring unit in

Bring the top padding in

Work the torn edges through the cotton at the side if it is necessary to hold the

Add one or two layers of padded unit is smaller than

A thin layer of new cotton unit is desirable as it gives

REBUILD THE C UPHOLS

It is advisable to use all condition. Tear off 4 pieces spring unit, and place 2 layers the unit.

Tear off 2 more pieces of to extend over the four sides

Place one large piece on the sides overlap. Lay the estimate if sufficient cotton. Add one or more layers of the sides.

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Tie each row in the same way from side to side.

Turn the unit over and tie the other side in the same manner.

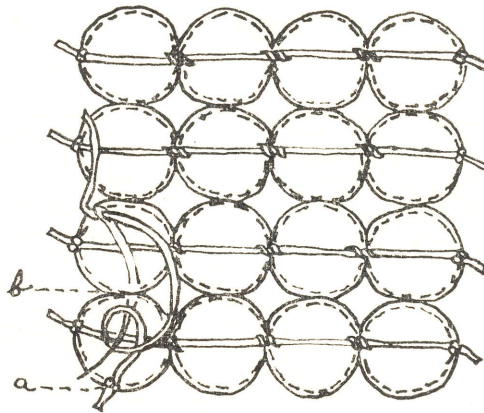


Fig. 8.

REPLACE THE SPRING UNIT IN THE COTTON PADDING

Open the padding, keeping the front intact. Straighten out the cotton across the front of the cushion.

Replace the spring unit in the cotton where it had been.

Bring the top padding into place over the spring unit.

Work the torn edges together as smoothly as possible. Sew through the cotton at the sides and back with long, diagonal stitches if it is necessary to hold the cotton together or flatten the sides.

Add one or two layers of cotton to the sides and the back if the padded unit is smaller than the cushion cover.

A thin layer of new cotton over the top and bottom of the padded unit is desirable as it gives a smooth, clean layer next to the cover.

REBUILD THE CUSHION USING ALL NEW UPHOLSTERER'S COTTON

It is advisable to use all new cotton if the old padding is in bad condition. Tear off 4 pieces of upholsterer's cotton the size of the spring unit, and place 2 layers on the bottom and 2 on the top of the unit.

Tear off 2 more pieces of cotton large enough to cover the unit and to extend over the four sides.

Place one large piece on the bottom and one on the top, and let the sides overlap. Lay the cover on the top of the padded unit and estimate if sufficient cotton has been used to fill the cover tightly. Add one or more layers of cotton if it is needed in the front or on the sides.

PUT THE PADDED UNIT INTO THE COVER

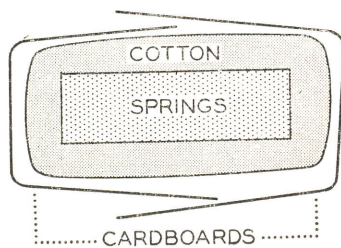


Fig. 9.

Slightly overlap the ends of a suit box which has been spread out flat. Place the padded unit, with the front edge away from you, on the overlapped cardboards. Fold the cardboards around the sides, and overlap them on the top of the padded unit (Fig. 9). Hold, or tie the overlapping cardboards with string. Roll the muslin or original cover back and slip it over the front of the

padded unit. Unroll the cover, letting it come up over the cardboards. Untie the string and carefully remove one cardboard at a time.

Square the front corners and the edges as follows:

Use a piece of smooth cardboard (approximately 12" x 22") to slip between the padded unit and the cover.

Make the front corners firm.

Take a piece of cotton 3 inches by 8 or 10 inches. Roll it into a firm roll 3 inches wide and 3 to 4 inches in diameter.

Holding one of these rolls in the hand and slipping it between the cardboard and the cover, place a roll in each of the front corners.

Square the front edges:

Tear off a 3-inch strip of cotton, wide enough to go across the front of the cushion. Gather the strip of cotton into the hand and slip it to the left front corner of the cushion, keeping the hand next to the cover and the cotton next to the cardboard. Gradually release the gathered cotton from under the hand and put it in place across the front edge.

Turn the cushion over and square the front edge on this side in the same manner. Square the edges at each side in the same way, if necessary.

COMPLETE THE CUSHION

Draw the open edges together at the back and turn under the seam allowance on the boxing.

Pin the edges together at the corners, at the center and at 2-inch intervals.

Sew the seam in the muslin cover with a slip stitch or whipstitch; sew the upholstery cover with a blind-stitch, using strong button or carpet thread of matching color.