

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⊗ **FLUORESCENT DROP LIGHT** burns cooler, brighter and more safely than incandescent drop lights. Consisting of a standard eight-watt, low-voltage lamp sealed in a plastic tube, the drop light is handy for highway or repair shop use, reaching places that cannot be reached by even a small flashlight. When electrical outlets are unavailable, it can be used with a 12-volt inverter for truck or car batteries.

• Science News Letter, 85:288 May 2, 1964

⊗ **ALL-PURPOSE FOLDING LEGS** useful for making portable or knock-down ping pong tables, benches, low scaffolding and sawhorses support up to 1,000 pounds per set. Designed to fold flat for quick easy storage in car or home, the legs are made of steel and U-formed for greatest strength. Available in 24- and 30-inch heights, the legs are capped with white plastic to prevent slipping or marring.

• Science News Letter, 85:288 May 2, 1964

⊗ **AUTOMATIC RECORD BRUSH** that sweeps the entire tracking surface with each revolution, protects records and stylus from dust damage. Adhesive on the bottom of its aluminum support permits secure mounting to any phonograph equipment. The brush, factory set at the most efficient angle, can be turned out of the way when not in use.

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⊗ **POLYSTYRENE BALLS**, shown in photograph, are designed as an inexpensive demonstration aid for science classes studying atomic and molecular structures. Easily assembled with toothpicks, skewers, pipe cleaners or other connectors into the desired structures, the balls can be colored with a color kit available separately. The reusable balls come in various sizes and types and can be obtained in different quantities.

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⊗ **PATIO BELL** of solid brass for home, lodge, cottage or boat gives a clear, resonant tone with a pull on the clapper cord. Supported by a sturdy black metal bracket fashioned like a ship's pilot wheel, the bell measures 4½ inches across. It can be mounted by screws on any convenient wall, gate or door. At the end of the clapper cord is a small brass decorative anchor.

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⊗ **BUNK COTS** stack one above the other doubling sleeping capacity in tent, trailer or cabin. The all-aluminum cots have strong heavy duck covers which can be easily removed for washing. Weighing less than four pounds each, the cots, six feet three inches long and 28 inches wide, fold flat to 3 x 6 x 24 inches for storage in a carrying carton. They can also be used singly.

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⊗ **MAGNETIC NAIL DRIVER** starts and drives nails or brads that are too small to hold and drive with a hammer. Especially useful in tight corners and hard-to-reach places where hammers cannot be used, the device has a permanent magnet in its varnished wood handle that holds the brad or nail in driving position. The tool will drive finished nails up to 1½ inches long.

• Science News Letter, 85:288 May 2, 1964

• Doctors Are Reading •

Ulcers Linked to Body Build

➤ **SLENDER PERSONS** may be more "ulcer prone" than fat persons, a team of Yale University doctors believes.

A four-year study of 931 Yale freshmen showed that slender persons had higher blood levels of pepsin, a stomach enzyme used to break down the proteins in food. Fatter persons had low pepsin levels.

Earlier investigations suggested that measurements of pepsin in the blood may be a useful indicator of a person's susceptibility to ulcer disease. The doctors found ulcers in 14 of the freshmen, of whom 11 had high blood levels of pepsin. The other three had normal levels.

Drs. James C. Niederman, Howard M. Spiro and William H. Sheldon of Yale's School of Medicine, New Haven, Conn., reported their findings in the *Archives of Environmental Health*, 8:540, 1964.

Screening Babies for Phenylketonuria

Physicians have found a quicker way to tell if newborn infants have phenylketonuria, a hereditary disease leading to mental retardation.

Drs. David Yi-Yung Hsia, Julian L. Berman and Herman M. Slatis of Chicago reported a blood test program used on 4,000 newborn infants from five Chicago hospitals.

After taking a sample of blood from the heel of an infant, the blood was analyzed to find the level of phenylalanine present.

Only eight of the 4,000 infants showed higher than normal levels, they said in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 188:203, 1964.

Mental retardation caused by this disease can be prevented with a corrective diet if started early enough. Under current tests, however, the disease does not show up until children are four to six weeks old.

Phenylketonuria is a metabolic disorder that occurs when the enzyme, phenylalanine hydroxylase, is lacking. Because of this lack, phenylalanine, an amino acid essential to normal development, accumulates in the blood instead of being oxidized for body use.

Identical Diseases in Twins

A unique case of identical twins simultaneously developing not only breast cancer but five other diseases as well was reported in *JAMA*, 188:217, 1964.

Drs. William D. Heizer and Edward F. Lewison of Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, said the other diseases were diabetes, thyroid disease, gallbladder disease, myomata uteri and hypertension.

The twins grew up together until they were 17 years old and later lived in similar environments. Nevertheless, the physicians said, it seems feasible to assume heredity played a part in determining the development of the diseases.

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