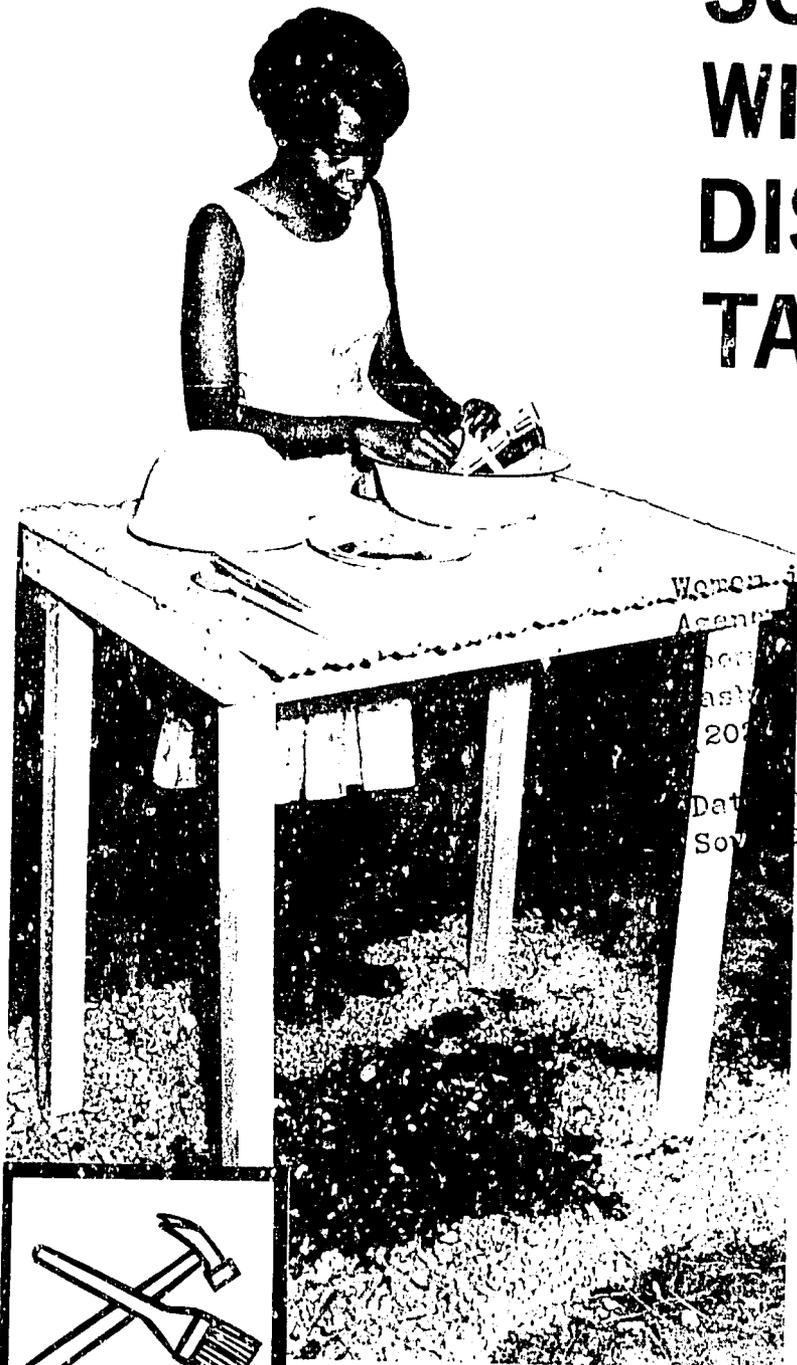


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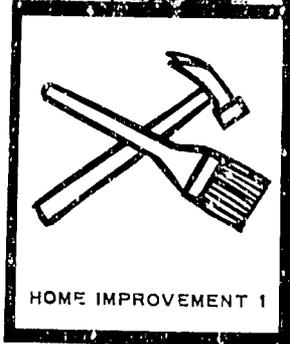
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# SOAK PIT WITH DISHWASHING TABLE



Women in Development  
 Agency for International Development  
 20th Street, N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20543  
 632-3992  
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*An Aid to Extension and Village Workers  
 in Many Countries*

FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE • UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT  
 OF AGRICULTURE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE AGENCY FOR  
 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT  
 OF STATE

**This is for  
YOU  
The Home Economics Extension Worker  
or  
Village Worker**

Village women around the world are learning to improve their homes by making simple and inexpensive home furnishings and equipment.

If you, the village worker, develop simple skills in carpentry and using various materials, you can teach women to make useful equipment and household conveniences, then they can make their homes more healthful and comfortable at little cost.

Boxes, barrels, scrap lumber, bamboo, tin cans, and other materials that are available locally can be used.

Items shown in this bulletin were made in a Home Improvement Workshop. The ideas for them came from many countries.

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*Issued December 1965*



## MAKING A SOAK PIT

### *What is a Soak Pit?*

A soak pit is a place to pour waste water. A hole is dug in the ground and filled with loose stones and gravel. It is made so water will seep quickly through the stones and run into the earth.

When water is scarce, you may wish to use waste water for the garden, instead of pouring it into the soak pit.

### *Why Make a Soak Pit?*

When waste water is thrown out on the hard ground, it collects in little puddles. It may stand for days before it dries up or soaks in. This makes a muddy place where mosquitoes like to lay their eggs. Mosquitoes cause sickness.

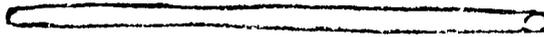
You can place a dishwashing table or a laundry bench over a soak pit. Or you may build a soak pit under the shower.

***Where Should Soak Pits be Located?***

Place soak pits near where you wash dishes, take baths, and wash clothes. This will make it easier for you to pour waste water in them. Do not place soak pits near a spring or well.

***What You Need to Make a Soak Pit***

1. Tools to dig a hole



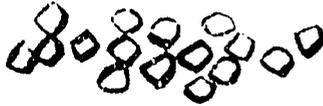
2. A stick for measuring



3. Charcoal



4. Coarse gravel



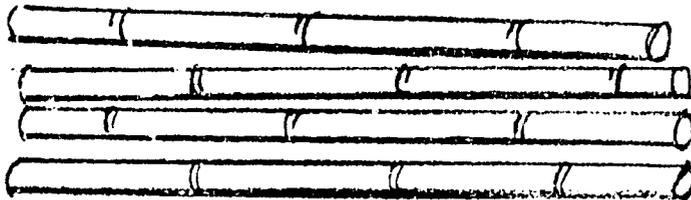
5. Small stones



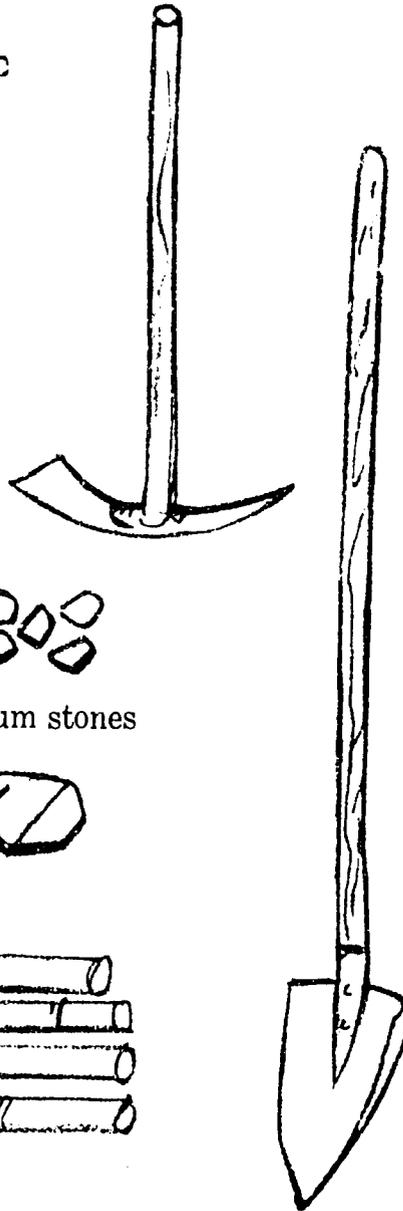
6. Medium stones



7. Large stones



8. Four small poles, 3 feet long.



### *How to Make a Soak Pit*

STEP 1: Dig a hole 3 feet deep, 3 feet long, and 3 feet wide. If you strike a big rock that you cannot move before you reach 3 feet deep, fill up the hole and choose another place.

STEP 2: Place a layer of the largest stones in the bottom of the hole, so they touch each other but do not overlap.

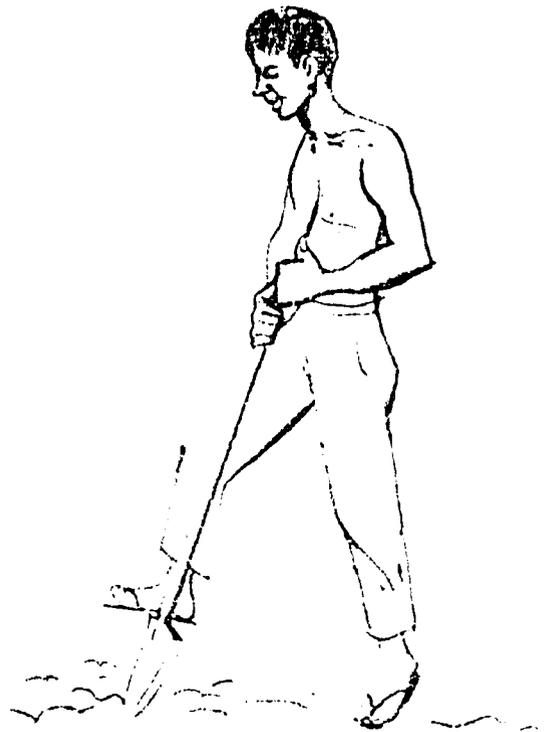
STEP 3: Then place two or three layers of the medium stones on top of the large stones.

STEP 4: Add smaller stones to almost fill the pit.

STEP 5: Spread a layer of the smallest stones or coarse gravel on top. If you have charcoal, a last layer of charcoal will help to make the top smooth.

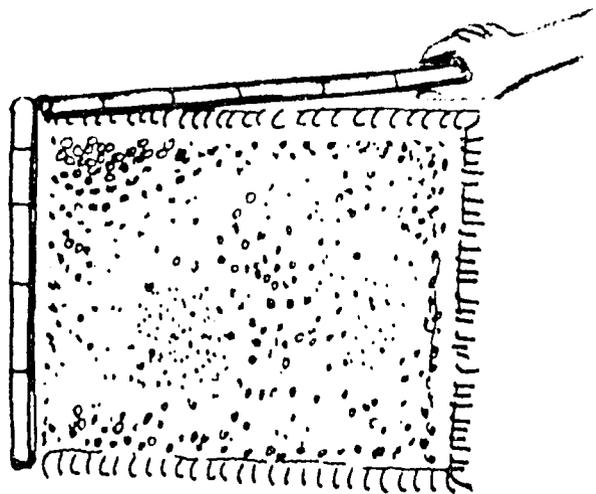
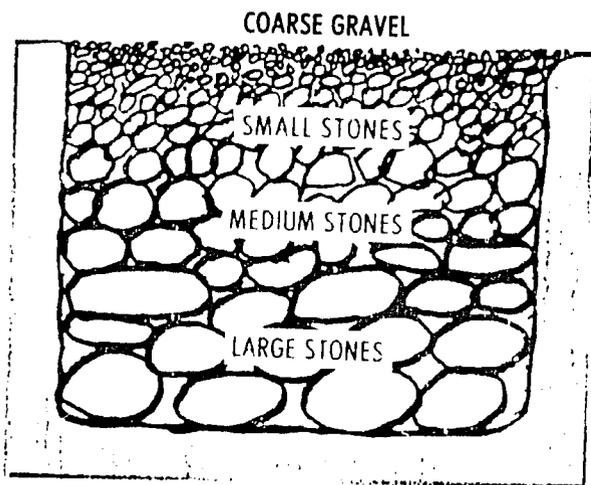
Smooth the top so the center is a little lower than the edges.

STEP 6: Dig a small, shallow trench on all four sides of the pit, for the poles.



STEP 7: Lay the poles in the trench and pack the dirt around to make them firm. Leave the poles a little above the dirt to make a rim around the pit.

This rim will help to keep water from running off.



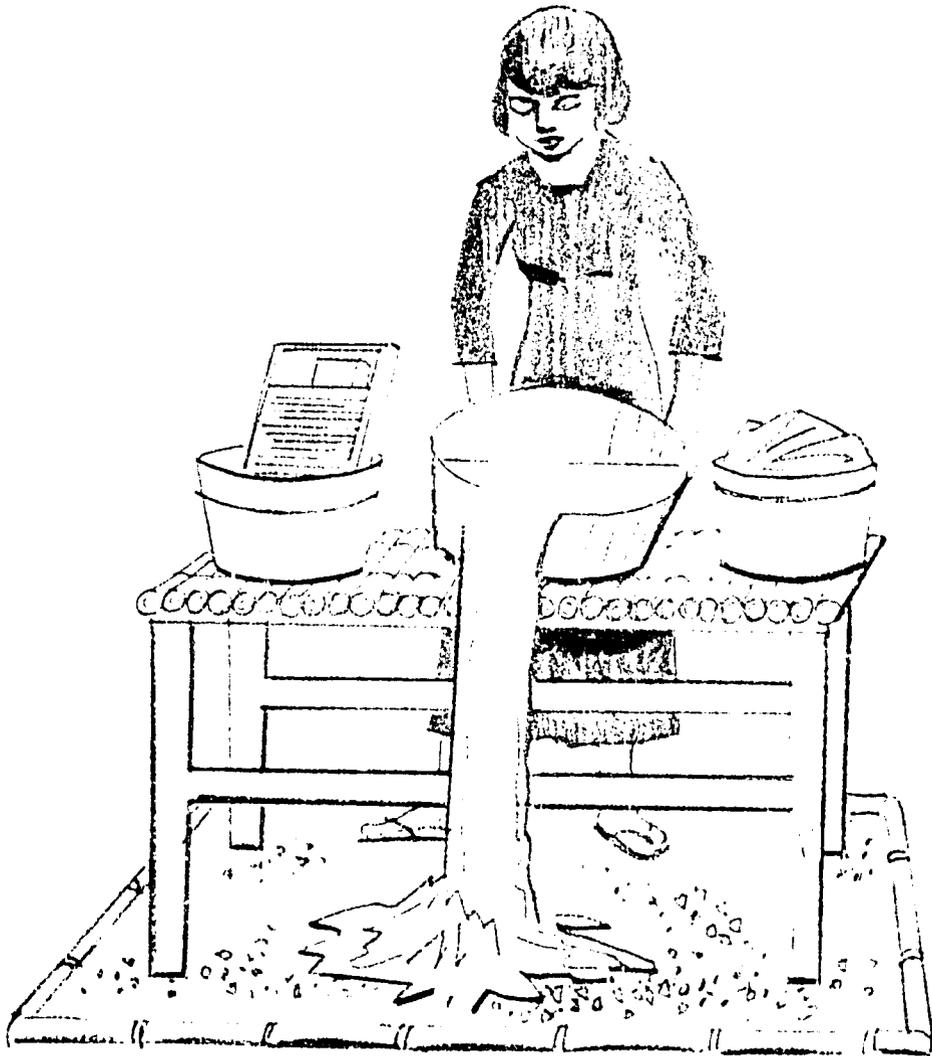
### *Is One Soak Pit Enough?*

Some families may need more than one soak pit.

Most of the waste water around the house comes from washing dishes, cleaning and scrubbing, washing hands, taking baths and washing clothes.

How many soak pits will you need to catch all this waste water? This will depend on how close together the places where you do these jobs are.

You may need two or more—one away from the house for the bath house and where you wash clothes, and one near the house to catch the waste water from dishwashing and cleaning.



### *How to Keep a Soak Pit Clean*

Do not throw peelings, waste food, or anything but water on top of the pit. These things will block it up so the water will not soak in. When grease collects on top, lightly scrape it off. Keep the top of the soak pit clean.

### *How to Get People to Make Soak Pits*

To get families to make soak pits:

1. Find places where stones and gravel are available.
2. Get village families interested by talking to them about waste water—what they do with it and why waste water should not be poured out on the ground around the house.
3. Pick a suitable place for a demonstration on how to make a soak pit. The home of a family that is willing to cooperate would make a good place.
4. Get equipment and materials needed for making the pit.
5. Demonstrate how to make a soak pit. Get both men and women to come to see the demonstration. Show each step.
6. Let those who come to the demonstration “learn by doing.” Ask different ones to help you in each step of the demonstration.
7. When the pit is completed, pour water into it to show how it works. When people see a new idea work, they are more interested in trying it.
8. Visit the families again soon to see if they are making soak pits.



# MAKING A DISHWASHING TABLE

## *What is a Dishwashing Table?*

A dishwashing table has the top made of bamboo or branches. This allows water to run through the table top to the ground below.

It is not hard to make a dishwashing table at home. Place it over a soak pit when you use it so the water will sink in and not stand on the ground in a puddle.

The top of the table should be made of material you can scrub clean.

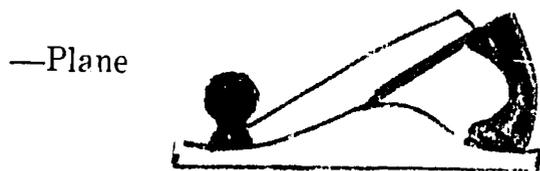
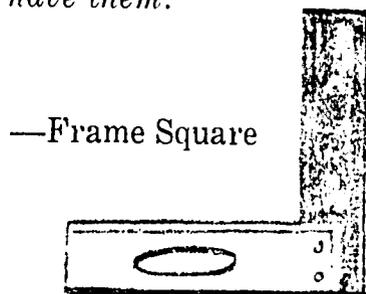
## *Why Make a Dishwashing Table?*

- You will find it is easy to wash dishes while you stand at a table.
- Air can move around the wet dishes. They dry quickly this way.
- A table also keeps dirt and animals away from your clean dishes.

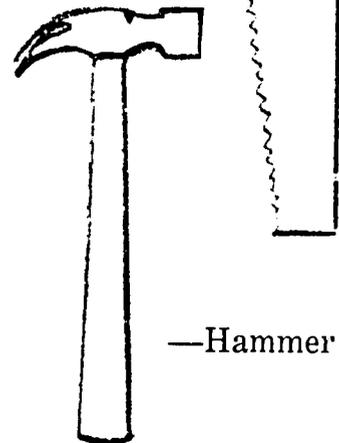
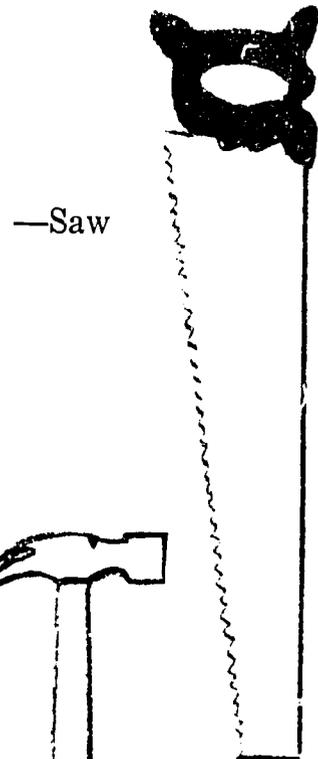
## *What You Need to Make a Table*

The dishwashing table on the cover is made of lumber and bamboo. Tables can also be made of other materials. To make this table you will need:

*These tools will also be useful if you have them:*



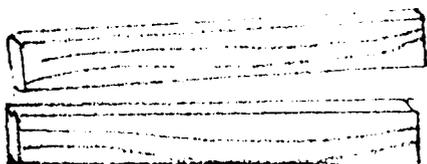
## *These Tools:*



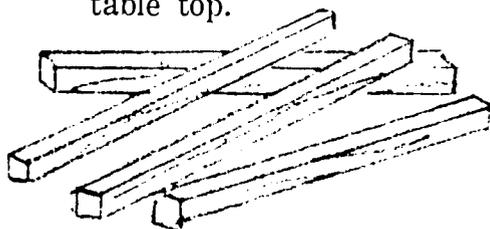
*These Materials:*



—Two pieces of lumber 24 inches by 3 inches by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch for the ends of the table top.



—Two pieces of lumber 36 inches by 3 inches by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch for the sides of the table top.



—Four pieces of lumber 34 inches by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches for the legs.



—Thirty to forty pieces of bamboo  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch thick and 28 inches long.

—Thirty nails— $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long.



—Raffia

—Sandpaper

*How to Make a Table*

1. Cut all four legs the same length. Make them long enough so the table will be the right height for you to stand and wash dishes comfortably.
2. Smooth the legs and the four pieces of wood for the frame of the table top. A plane is a good smoothing tool. Use sandpaper to finish smoothing.
3. Nail one 24-inch board to two legs. Be sure the edges are even. This forms one end of the table.

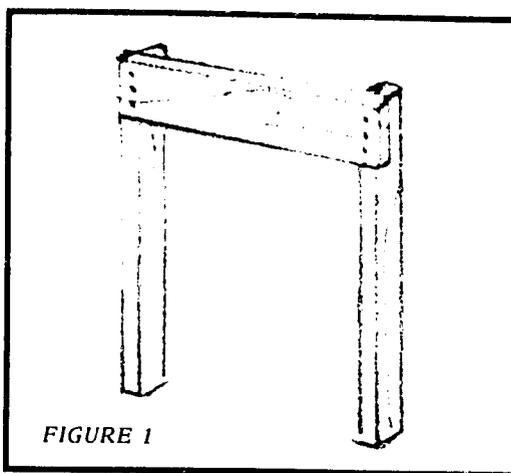


FIGURE 1

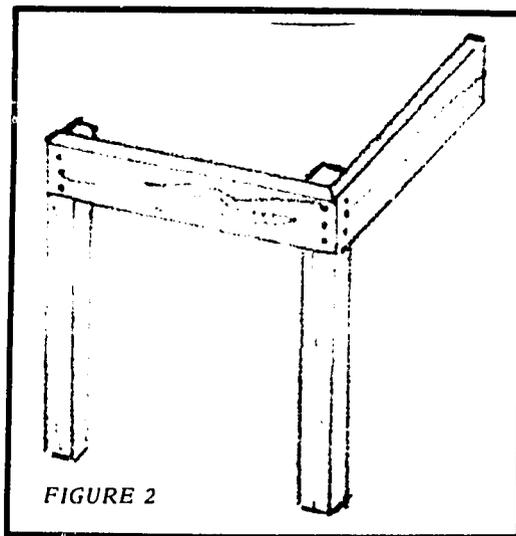


FIGURE 2

4. Do the same with the other two legs and the remaining end board.
5. Nail the two 33-inch boards to the ends you just made to complete the table frame.

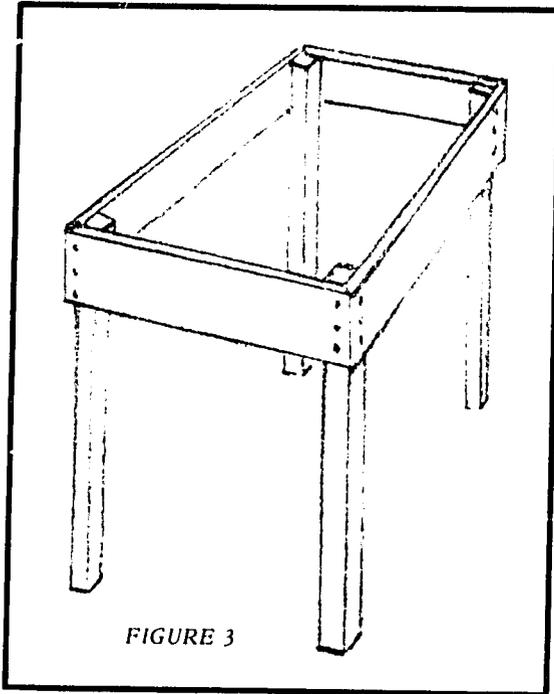


FIGURE 3

6. Make the table top of bamboo. The top should stick out 2 inches beyond the frame on the long sides of the table.
  - a. Lay the bamboo pieces across the table frame the short way. They should cover the opening completely.



- b. Fasten the pieces of bamboo by weaving them together in three places:
    - In the center
    - Three inches from each end

### To Weave

Take a length of raffia and loop it over the first piece of bamboo. This gives you two weaving strands.

The strand coming over the top will be called weaver number 1 and the one underneath, weaver number 2.

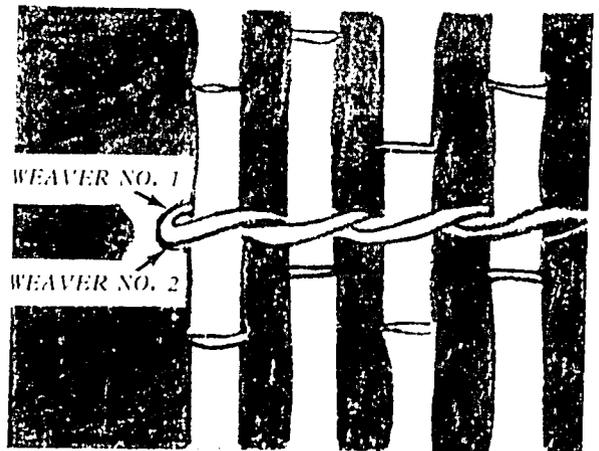
Weaver number 1 comes across the first piece of bamboo, over weaver number 2, and under the second piece of bamboo.

Weaver number 2 comes from under the first piece of bamboo and weaver number 1, crosses over the second piece of bamboo, over weaver number 1, and under the third piece of bamboo.

Repeat until completed.

Tie the weavers together when the bamboo top is as long as you need it.

Nail the bamboo table top to the frame in three places on each long side.



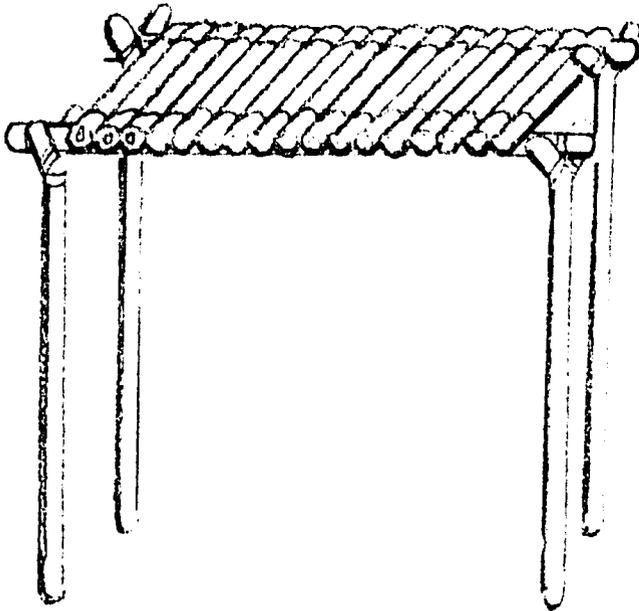
### Different Kinds of Dishwashing Tables

If you can't get the materials listed, you can still make a very good dishwashing table. Here are some changes you can make:

1. If you have wooden boxes, you can use them in place of lumber.

Get a box as near the size table you want as you can find.

2. You can use strong reeds in place of bamboo for the table top.
3. You can use bamboo or trimmed tree branches for the entire table.



*A Table of Bamboo or Sticks*

For this table you will need these materials:

- a. Bamboo or Sticks
  - Four pieces 34 inches long by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick for legs. If you use sticks, try to find them with forks in the top like this:
  - Two pieces 36 inches long by 1 inch thick for the sides.
  - Thirty pieces 30 inches long by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick (or enough to cover the top of the table).
- b. Raffia to tie the bamboo together.

### *To Make a Table of Bamboo or Sticks*

- Step 1: Lay two leg pieces and one side piece flat on the floor. Use raffia to tie the legs and side piece firmly at the corners to form one side of the table frame.
- Step 2: Repeat this with the other two legs and side piece.
- Step 3: Place these two frames firmly in the ground facing each other, 28 inches apart.
- Step 4: Place one top piece across the frames to begin forming the table. Using two long pieces of raffia, tie it securely at each of the corners.
- Step 5: Place a second 30-inch piece beside the first one, tie it securely and continue adding pieces until the entire top of the frame has been covered.

### *Using a Dishwashing Table*

- Place it over a soak pit.
- Scrub it clean.
- Wash the dishes. You can set your water basin down on the table top. Waste water will fall through into the soak pit.
- Turn the dishes down on the table to drain.
- Leave dishes to drain and dry on the table in the sun.
- Drying dishes in the sun kills germs.