

# *Hope Chest Society*



# *Handbook*

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## History

Several years ago, I was coordinating a girls' club in a church we were attending. We ordered uniforms and sashes for the girls. When they arrived, the skirts needed to be hemmed and the club emblem patch needed to be sewn on the sash. I was surprised to find that many of the girls and their mothers did not have basic sewing skills to accomplish this, so I spent a couple of weeks hemming skirts and sewing on badges.

Subsequent to that event, I incorporated sewing skills into the curriculum already established for the church club and taught the girls some of the basics.

Then, in the past several years, I've become aware of a similar lack of basic homemaking skills in many young ladies and young mothers all around me.

So in an attempt to be a part of the solution, I started conducting sewing classes in my home, demonstrating and teaching young ladies basic skills they can use when they start their own homes.

One day, it suddenly occurred to me that this idea didn't have to be confined to my home or my area, but could be organized as a club to get young ladies together to socialize and to learn some very important life skills.

I asked the girls who were currently in my class what they thought of the idea and if they could come up with a name for this unique club. They thought about it and came up with the Hope Chest Society. I loved the name and that's what it remains today.

The Hope Chest Society was established as a Christian club, but is open to everyone who wants to learn these skills and prepare for the future. You just need to be aware that it will continue to be operated as a Christ-honoring organization.

# The Hope Chest Society

## *Statement of Purpose*

The purpose of The Hope Chest Society is to: (1) teach basic skills to young ladies in an effort to prepare them to start a home of their own at some point in the future, and (2) to provide an opportunity to work on handmade items that will be placed in the young ladies' hope chests, to be used when they set up housekeeping.

While working on various projects, the young ladies have an opportunity to socialize and it is in their best interests that they approach this preparation time with a Christ-honoring attitude. Conversation topics will inevitably cover a broad spectrum, but the end result should be a pointing of young ladies to God's Word for the answers they're looking for.

We welcome any mothers who wish to attend with their daughters, and if they have skills they can share with the young ladies, it would be a great blessing to all.

It is our hope that these young ladies will pass on the skills they've learned to the next generation, and continue this God-honoring tradition.

## **Slogan**

Developing skills while preparing for the future

## **Theme Verse**

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you HOPE and a FUTURE. (emphasis added)*

*Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)*

## *How to start your own club*

When you decide to begin your own club, you'll need to start spreading the word to young ladies and their moms about what you want to do. Find out what would be the most convenient day and time for the majority of them to meet. I meet with my clubs every other week, for two hours. I also find that my home is the easiest place to meet because I have all my materials there. I try to limit the size of my groups to six, but I would say that unless you have extra help, don't accept more than 10 at a time. If you have more than 10, you'll need to start a new chapter of the club and either teach it, yourself, on a different day, or enlist the help of another coordinator, who will oversee the new club.

This handbook will give you the basic information on skills I consider essential and then other skills that will enhance anything else the girls want to do. Tier I is usually considered the essential skills list. You can get more information from the websites in the resource section of this handbook, or contact me, personally.

You'll need to start with the essential skills. If you have the necessary skills, teach them to the girls. If you don't feel confident in this area, ask another mom or an older lady if she'd be willing to come and teach those skills to your club. As some of the girls develop advanced skills, you can invite other women in your area, who may have unique skills, to come to your club meetings and teach those skills to your young ladies. This could be as varied as quilting, smocking, pouring ceramics, gourmet cooking; use your imagination.

I have several chapters in my area and we bring all the clubs together at least once a year to socialize and display some of the things we've been working on.

When we get together, I do allow the girls to visit and discuss what they'd like, but I am nearby and try to keep the conversation positive and Christ-honoring.

As each club is started, you'll need to register with Mrs. Ruth Sundeen. Call or write to Mrs. Ruth and your club will be assigned a Greek letter to identify your newly formed chapter. Your club is then issued a charter certificate, and membership cards to distribute to your club members.

I have recently started a group for moms and daughters (as young as five years old). My only requirement is that ages 5-8 must have an adult attending club meetings with them.

I am requesting that each chapter purchase at least one copy of The Hope Chest by Rebekah Wilson (see Resource section). Ideally, each young lady would have a copy; it's full of ideas for stocking a hope chest, and I refer to it often.

Mrs. Ruth Sundeen is the founder and contact person for the Hope Chest Society. She can be reached at (985)893-8119, or [hopechestsociety@bellsouth.net](mailto:hopechestsociety@bellsouth.net). Her address is: 70507 Western Sands Street, Abita Springs, LA 70420.

*May God bless your efforts as you take these young ladies under your care and mentor and encourage them to be the young women God created them to be.*

# Tier I – Beginner

## Basic Skills

Teach basic hand stitches ([hopechestlegacy.com](http://hopechestlegacy.com) reminds you how to do these stitches)

- \*Long basting stitch
- \*Short running stitch
- \*Backstitch (for mending)
- \*Blanket stitch (for binding edges and making buttonholes)
- \*Blind hem stitch
- \*Tuck

\* Teach how to sew on buttons (two-hole, four-hole, shank), and how to cover a button

*\*essential skills*

Teach basic embroidery stitches

- Outline stitch
- Backstitch
- Leaf stitch
- Cross-stitch
- French knot
- Satin stitch

Do a simple embroidery project such as a dresser scarf, tea towel or pillowcase (preferably with a combination of embroidery and cross-stitch)

Teach darning (using light bulb and rubber band, or darning egg)

Teach crocheting (chain, single crochet, turning work, how to end)

Do a simple crochet project, such as a dishcloth. The pattern can be extended and made into a nice scarf.

Teach knitting

How to:

- Cast on stitches
- Knit
- Purl
- Knit 2 stitches together (to decrease stitches on K row)
- Purl 2 stitches together (to decrease stitches on P row)
- Yarn over (to make an open weave look)
- Knit 2 stitches in same stitch (to increase stitches on K row)
- Purl 2 stitches in same stitch (to increase stitches on P row)
- Cast off and finish project

## Tier I (continued)

Teach basic cooking

- Terms and abbreviations

- Emergency substitutes

- Basic everyday recipes

  - How to handle raw meat

  - How to handle raw eggs

  - How to boil eggs

  - How to devil (stuff) eggs

  - How to make a basic white sauce/gravy

  - How to make spaghetti sauce

  - How to make a whole wheat pie crust

  - How to cut up and fry a whole chicken

Create personalized recipe books (using scrapbook paper or decorative recipe cards)

Teach basic everyday table setting (napkin, knife, fork, spoon)



## Tier II – Intermediate

### Increase basic skills

There is flexibility at this level, but they should do the following:

#### Increase crochet skills

Double crochet, treble crochet, how to follow a word pattern, how to follow a drawing pattern.

Crochet small doily or snowflake with thread

Show how to filet crochet and crochet a bookmark with their own name

Show how to starch and pin crochet project

#### Increase knitting skills

More complex project, such as a knitted scarf and/or beanie

Do a more complex embroidery or cross-stitch project, such as a Christmas ornament

#### Learn how to entertain

Plan menu, shop for, prepare, set table for and serve formal 4-course dinner

Learn how to make homemade whole wheat bread and rolls

*You can add ideas specific to your club's wishes and needs*

## Tier III – Advanced

### Complex projects

Heirloom sewing

- Teach French seam
- Hand-smocking (without a pleater)
- Simple smocking stitches

Hand make baby bonnet (using Swiss batiste fabric)

Crochet thread lace for bonnet

Crochet baby booties from baby yarn

Knit or crochet baby sacque (jacket)

Crochet baby afghan

Possibly crochet afghan to pack away in hope chest

Cooking

- How to make candy (e.g., pecan pralines, fudge)
- How to use Dutch oven over hot coals
- How to clean up after cooking

How to set up housekeeping without a large expense

How to pass on your new skills to others

*Again, you can be flexible with what your club wants to do and add to this list*

# Appendix I

## Resources

The Hope Chest, by Rebekah Wilson ([hopechestlegacy.com](http://hopechestlegacy.com))

Sue Gregg Cookbooks (can order from [urbanhomemaker.com](http://urbanhomemaker.com))

All recipes use whole wheat flour, honey, fructose, etc. I use these books all the time and all the recipes I've used have been delicious.

Urbanhomemaker.com

This is where I purchase my whole wheat grain, whole wheat flour, pastry flour, gluten, yeast, vitamin C for bread, bread pans, herbal remedies, etc.

Training Our Daughters to be Keepers At Home

Can be purchased from Smiling Heart Press, P.O. Box 208, Fossil, OR 97830. It has 601 pages.

## Appendix II

### Minimum list of hope chest contents (linens)

*(This is by no means a comprehensive list. I have found it very enlightening and fun to have the girls make out their own list of what they'd like to start out with in their new home when they marry. That then becomes their working list for what goes in the hope chest.)*

4 dish towels  
4 dishcloths  
4 assorted potholders  
1 oven mitt  
1 apron (bib apron protects clothing better)  
4 towels  
4 washcloths  
2 small guest towels  
2 sets pillowcases  
2 sheet sets  
1 quilt  
Dresser scarves (1 oblong, 2 round)

## Appendix III

### List of Current Chapters

<b>á</b>	Alpha – Abita Springs, LA (Ruth Sundeen)
<b>â</b>	Beta – Mandeville, LA (Debbie Paille)
<b>ã</b>	Gamma – Davenport, FL (Rachel Harvey)
<b>ä</b>	Delta – Clay City, IN (Ruby Wisehart)
<b>å</b>	Epsilon – Abita Springs, LA (Ruth Sundeen)
<b>æ</b>	Zeta -
<b>ç</b>	Eta -
<b>è</b>	Theta -
<b>é</b>	Iota -
<b>ê</b>	Kappa -
<b>ë</b>	Lambda -
<b>ì</b>	Mu -
<b>í</b>	Nu -
<b>î</b>	Xi -
<b>ï</b>	Omicron -
<b>ð</b>	Pi -
<b>ñ</b>	Rho -
<b>ó</b>	Sigma -
<b>ô</b>	Tau -
<b>õ</b>	Upsilon -
<b>ö</b>	Phi -
<b>÷</b>	Chi -
<b>Ø</b>	Psi -
<b>ù</b>	Omega -

Appendix IV

Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

**Hope Chest Society  
Membership Questionnaire**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your birthdate? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about this club? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some of your favorite hobbies? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to learn in this class? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your mother have a skill she'd be willing to teach other members of the club? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, what skill would she be willing to teach? \_\_\_\_\_

## **Supplement to Hope Chest Society Handbook**

### **March 27, 2005**

When I start a new class, I prepare a start-up kit for each participant and charge \$5.00 for the material. It includes everything needed to learn the essential stitches and the embroidery stitches. By putting the kit together ahead of time, it's easier to teach because everyone has the same equipment.

### **Contents of Start-Up Kit**

One 12-inch square of white cotton or cotton blend

One needle

(I use an embroidery needle because I like the more flattened eye and you can use it for both essential stitches and embroidery)

One small spool of dark thread (red, blue or black) or wind a small embroidery thread card with 140 wraps

One 2-hole button

One 4-hole button

One shank button

One button to cover (Be sure you have several button-makers on hand to make them)

One 5-inch wooden embroidery hoop