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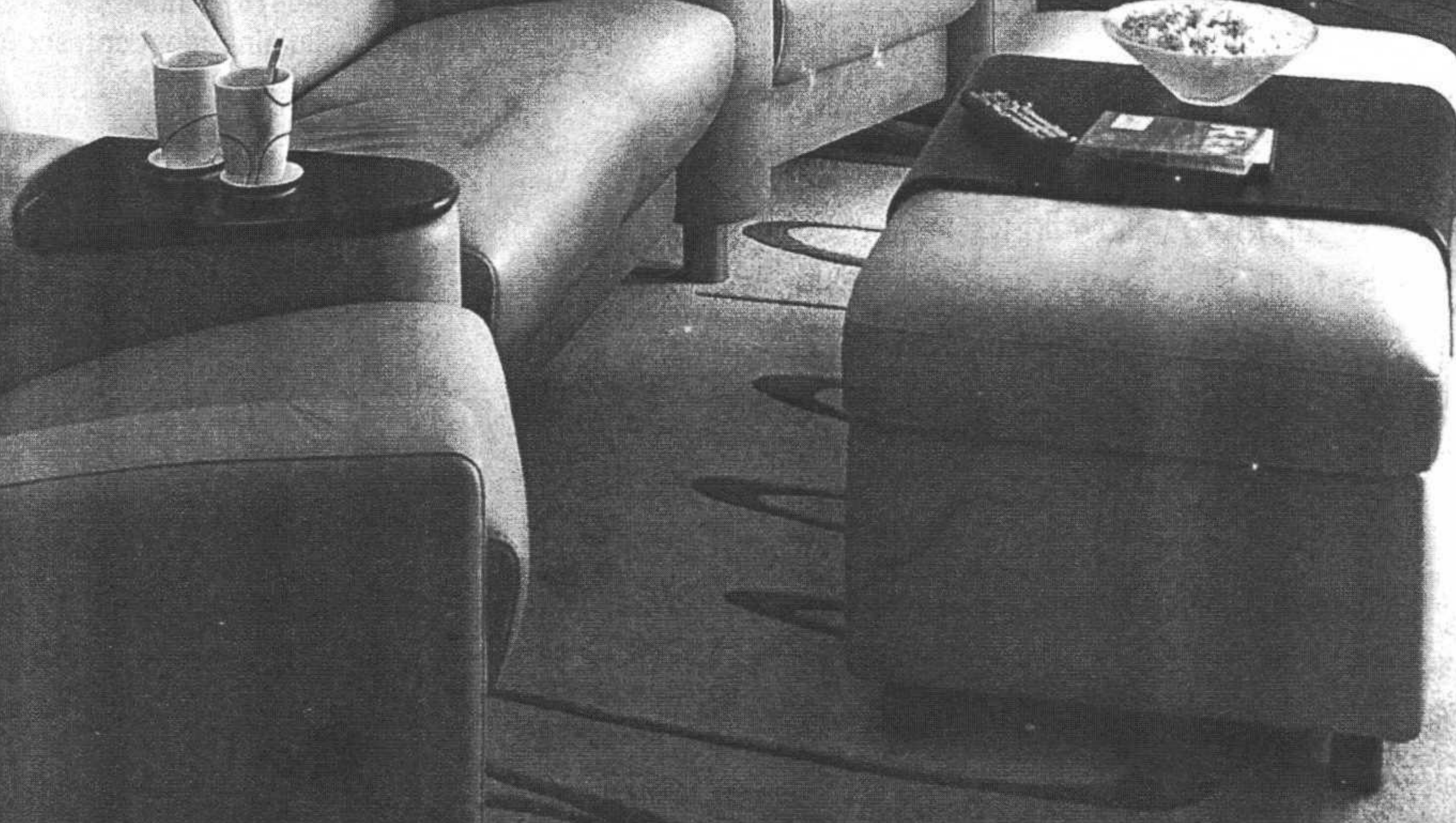
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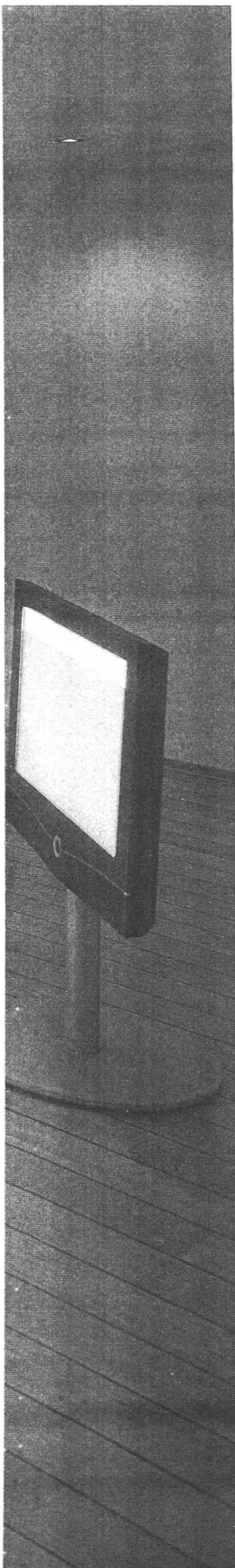
# entertain you

Spaces that bring family  
and friends together

by Ashley M. Wilborn

Photo courtesy of Stressless and Leather Gallery and Bedding Center





The last few months of the year are full of wonderful reasons to be together with family and friends. You might be hanging out at a friend's house to watch college football, hoping that if your favorite team wins it bodes well for the coming year. And there are plenty of holiday get-togethers this time of year. What do they all have in common? At some point, there's going to be food—and drinks, most of them bubbly, frothy or fruity.

Whether you prefer to entertain in a theater room, a finished basement or a dining room, your guests are sure to have a good time.

## At-Home Theater

Home theaters are great for entertaining or just enjoying an evening in with your family. If you're thinking of setting up your own home theater, or having one installed by a professional, here are few tips to keep in mind during installation.

### 1. Account for power requirements

Before you plug in and run all of those audio/video components, find out how much power you have running to your home theater room, as well as the total amount of power that will be drawn by the electronics. If the load is too heavy, reconfigure your equipment so that you don't blow the circuit!

### 2. Go easy on your cables

If your cabling is bent or crushed, the signal will be impeded and the audio/video quality won't live up to its full potential. If you need to work cable into or around a corner, don't force it to form a sharp 90° angle. Also, to avoid cutting off circulation, either use staples that are specifically designed for use with coaxial cables to attach them to the wall, or go with an even better option, surface raceway, which routes cables without squeezing or harshly bending them.

### 3. Don't forget the surge protectors

Don't connect all those long-awaited audio/video components until you've invested in one more thing: surge protection. One good power surge can be all it takes to fry audio/video components beyond use. By plugging everything into surge-protected power distribution units, you help ensure that it won't be wiped out in one fell swoop.


### 4. Give your equipment some room to breathe

Remember that correct spacing and thermal management are two key elements for a smooth-running viewing room. Be sure to consult the manufacturers' specifications to see how much clearance is recommended for each piece of equipment. Rack mount fans are also a terrific option for home theater thermal management.

### 5. Keep the dust in check

Dust interferes with the functions of home theater components, and left to build up, it can drastically shorten the life span of your equipment. If your home theater components are housed in an open entertainment console, be sure to dust them thoroughly and often.

### 6. Hang onto warranty documents

Be sure to find and keep the paperwork for manufacturers' warranties. Register your equipment with the manufacturers as soon as possible, then store all the documents together in a safe place for quick and easy reference; this will save you a ton of time and frustration in the event that one of your components malfunctions. 

Source: Paul Holstein, COO of CableOrganizer.com

