

AUSTRALIAN

May 2013
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DIY MADE EASY

CIRCULAR
SAWS
BASICS & BUYING GUIDE



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* Under average suburban water pressure of 4.5 bar, a typical hose uses 3500 litres per hour. A Kärcher high pressure cleaner with spray lance uses 400 to 600 litres per hour.

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS L JONES
STYLING TINA HUTTON

Cross Cushion, Lush Fur Throw, aurahome.com.au; Log Stool, workshoped.com.au; Zoe Hessian Ottoman, canalside.com.au; Mongolian Lambswool Cushion, xavierandme.com; Timber Backgammon Game, theinspiredpaddock.com; Handprinted Linen Cushions, palomalesage.com; Drift Weave Rug, armadillo-co.com; French Etched Wine Glasses, The Store Next Door; Cream Wavy Throw, Burnt Orange Ripple Throw, kasaaustralia.com.au.

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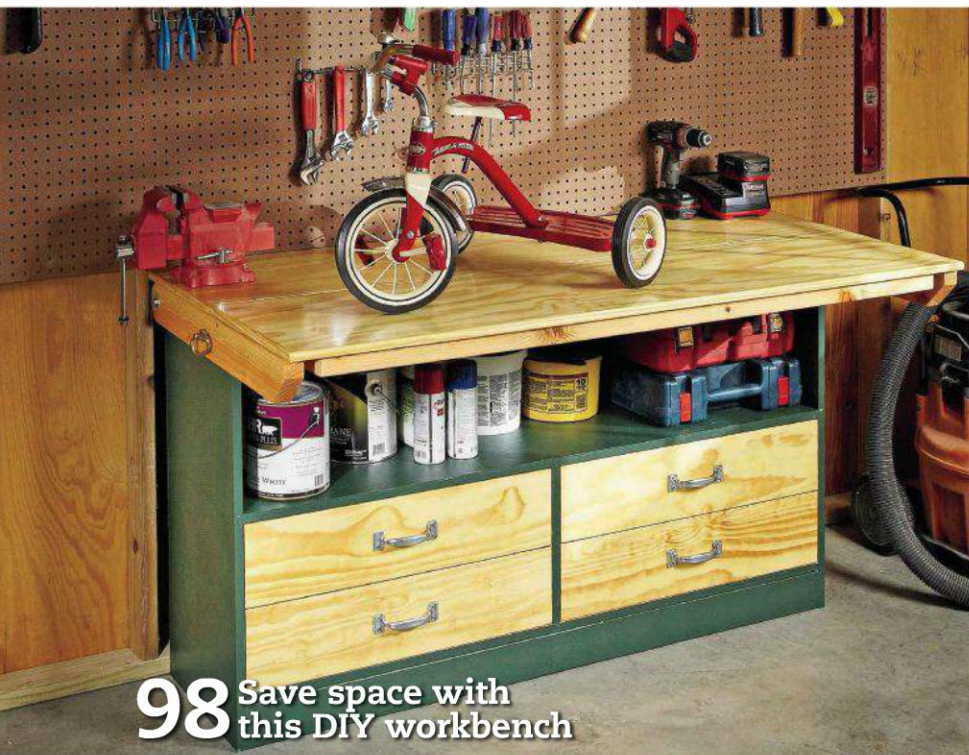
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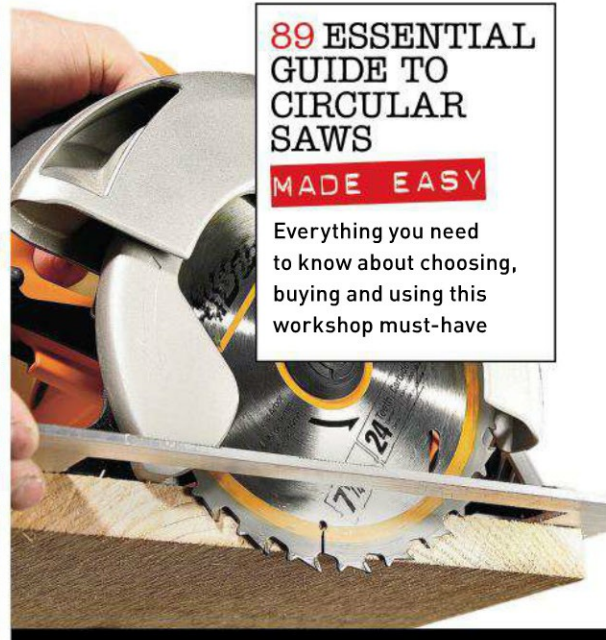
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Bunnings

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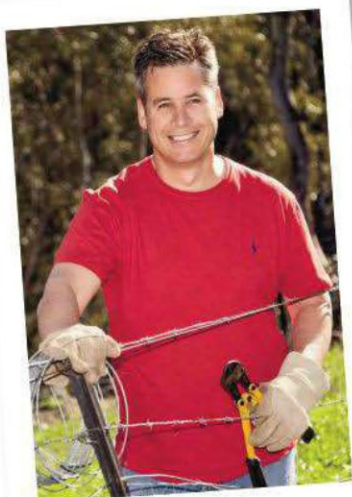


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We at *Handyman* work up to three months in advance, so a topic like 'how to care for your garden in the heat' is often being written about in winter.

That means that this month's cover story on extending outdoor living in the cooler months was produced in summer.

Yes, it was touch and go as to whether we would be able to light a fire but, luckily, there was no fire ban on at the time.

I love to be outdoors in all seasons and there's nothing better at the end of an autumn day than to cook a feast in the pizza oven.

Once the food is ready, I open the doors of the oven so the family can bask in the warmth as we eat.

There are lots of ways to heat up outdoor spaces, so we have put together a range of ideas you can use, starting on page 16.

ADD VALUE TO YOUR HOME

The real estate market has its peaks and troughs, but there are some reliable ways to increase your home's value.

Check out the complete reno on page 48 for inspiration, but remember that first impressions are key.

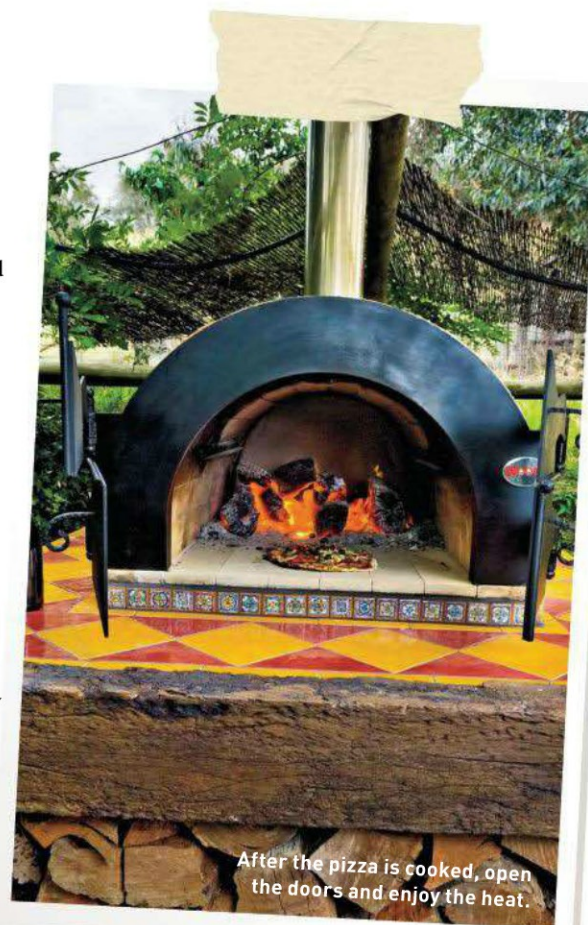
Our kerb appeal story on page 58 has six easy front-of-house DIY makeover inspirations you can use to transform the look of your place.

SOMETHING FOR MUM

Sunday 12 May is Mother's Day, and what better way to show her your appreciation than with a fantastic DIY gift? We've done the hard work and found over 65 ideas to make Mum feel special. Check out Handy Stuff on page 9, project ideas from page 30 and the gift guide on page 136.

Lee

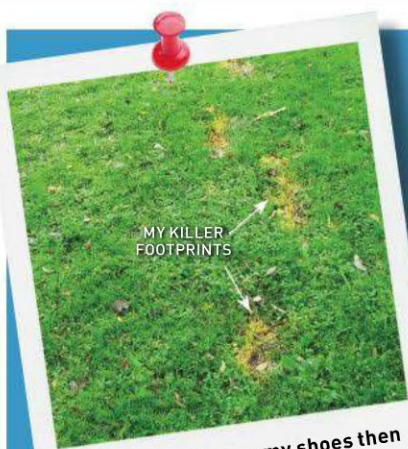
MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL



After the pizza is cooked, open the doors and enjoy the heat.

Winner!

Congratulations to Alysia Hatherly who won our Karcher competition from the February 2013 issue of *Handyman*. Alysia takes home a Karcher Eco Pressure Cleaner, valued at \$999.



I got weedkiller on my shoes then tracked it across the grass.

Don't try this at home

Okay, so I can tell you that working on a DIY magazine doesn't ensure you never make mistakes.

I was busily spraying Roundup on various weeds around the garden one weekend when I got some on the soles of my shoes. I then walked across the lawn.

Two weeks later, the evidence shows that I really should take more care. Learn from my mistake and save your lawn!

Handyman

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HANDYSTUFF

Spoil your mum this Mother's Day and put together one of these ultimate gift packs for gardening, DIY and craft

WORDS **ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT** PICTURES **STUART SCOTT**

Mother Nature

You'll be the apple of your mum's eye if you give her this basket of gardening goodies that's designed to make her green thumbs itch with excitement.



1 Grow Bag

2 Bulb Transplanter

10 Watering Can

5 Seed Tin

3 5 in 1 Hand Tool

8 Gloves

4 Knee Guard

9 Pruner

6 Cultivator

7 Plant Labels

- 1 The Jute Shop Vegetable Grow Bag, \$2. thejuteshop.com.au
- 2 Fiskars Bulb Transplanter, about \$6. fiskars.com
- 3 Cyclone 5 in 1 Stainless Steel Hand Tool, \$10. cyclone.com.au

- 4 Knee Guard, \$4, from Bunnings.
- 5 Yates Commemorative Seed Tin, \$20. yates.com.au
- 6 Fiskars Nyglass Cultivator, Lilac, \$6.
- 7 Gardman Terracotta Plant Labels, about \$3 each. brunnings.com.au

- 8 Ansell Garden Green Thumb Gloves, \$5. ansell.com.au
- 9 Hortex Deluxe Foam Grip Pruner, \$17, from Bunnings.
- 10 Sontax Vision 1.8L Yellow Watering Can, \$10. sontax.com.au

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MOTHER'S DAY

Mrs Fix It

If your mum is the handiest person in the house, this toolbox of treasures will have her rolling up her sleeves to get stuck into her next home improvement project or fix.



- 1 Romak 2 in 1 Tool Box Chair, \$30. romak.com.au
- 2 Arlec 3 LED Tuff Torch, about \$7. arlec.com.au
- 3 Ryobi ONE+ Radio, \$49. ryobi.com.au
- 4 Crafright 10 Piece Screwdriver Set, about \$9, from Bunnings.

- 5 Trojan Claw Hammer, 225g, \$9. trojantools.com.au
- 6 Trojan Turbo Knife X, about \$13.
- 7 Uni-Pro Cork Sanding Block, \$3. unipro.com.au
- 8 Trojan 120 Grit Abrasive Paper, Garnet, 47c, and Painter's, 75c.

- 9 Stanley 5m Measuring Tape, \$7. stanleytools.com
- 10 Selleys Aquadhere PVA Exterior, about \$10. selleys.com.au
- 11 Crafright Adjustable Wrench, \$16, from Bunnings.
- 12 Trojan 450mm Box Level, \$19.

MOTHER'S DAY

Crafty Lady

Ignite your mum's creative flair by kitting her out with the best decorating and craft tools around and she'll think you're cute as a button.



- 1 Boyle Craft Glue, \$6.
boyleindustries.com.au
- 2 Crafright 3 in 1 Staple Gun, about \$16, from Bunnings.
- 3 Excel Hobby Knife, \$8, from Bunnings.
- 4 Uni-Pro Mini Tray & Roller Set, about \$3. unipro.com.au
- 5 Lufkin 15cm Metal Ruler, \$4.
lufkintool.com
- 6 Mandala Art Mosaic Glass Cutters, \$25. mandalaart.com.au
- 7 Ozito Mini Glue Gun, \$9. ozito.com.au
- 8 Renoir Craft Paint Brushes, from \$2 each, from Bunnings.
- 9 Syneco Self Adhesive Hook & Loop Tape, 20mm x 1m, \$2, from Bunnings.
- 10 Grunt 35m Sisal Twine in Natural, three for \$3. usegrunt.com

All for Mum

If you're still not sure what to buy, give her a Bunnings Gift Card and let her choose exactly what she wants. Gift Cards are available in values of \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100, and can be used in any Bunnings store nationally.



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BUYER'S GUIDE

SPRAY PAINT

NIGHT MOVES

If you've stubbed your toe in the dark yet again, brighten your life, or at least your hallway, with White Knight GlowSafe, \$30. Illuminate stairs, halls or kids' rooms with spray-on safety that is touch dry in just 15 minutes. It glows for up to eight hours on most surfaces, including metal and timber.

COOL LOOKS

If the fridge is looking a little worn and rusty, and there's no money in the kitty for a new model, give it a thorough clean and a surface makeover for a fraction of the cost. White Knight Fridge & Appliance, \$20, will restore your fridge to showroom condition with a durable gloss finish available in four colours.

GET A GRIP

Sliding across your floors like Tom Cruise in *Risky Business*? Try applying Dy-Mark TreadRite Slip Resistant Coating, \$10, to floors, walkways and stairs. This long lasting, textured acrylic comes in matt clear, yellow and black, and is resistant to petrol, oil and mild chemicals.

UNDERCOVER

Just the thing for those hard-to-paint jobs inside and out, Zinsser Cover Stain, \$18, is a protective all-rounder that works as an undercoat and stain blocker. Simply shake and spray to prep glossy finishes for painting, seal porous surfaces and cover patched-up areas. Use it on timber, metal, masonry, glass and more.



Finish it right with special-effect paints that save you time and cash on creative or fiddly DIY jobs

QUICK FIX

Got peeling, rusting or lacklustre gutters? Get a streak-free finish on fences, gutters, fascias, downpipes and garage roller doors with Dulux Metalshield Finish Gutter and Fascia Touch-up Paint, \$13. Available in 25 colours, it dries in half an hour with a semi gloss finish, perfect for a quick weekend project.

ON THE LINE

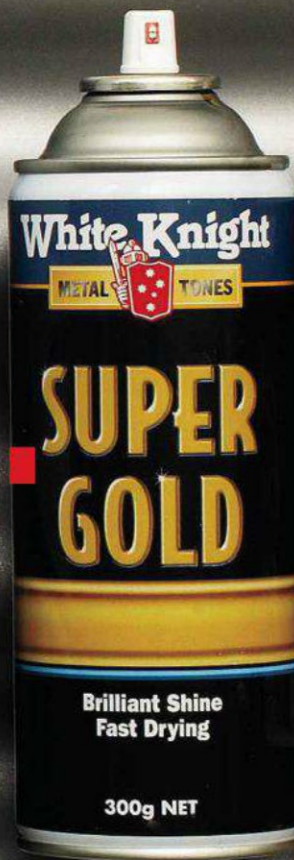
Don't sacrifice the lawn while marking out landscaping plans or drawing boundaries for the kids to play. Dy-Mark Turf Master, \$9, won't kill the grass thanks to its low-toxicity formula, no matter how often you change your mind about where the fire pit will go.

GLITTERATI

For a gold-plated finish without the hefty price tag, White Knight Super Gold, \$22, can give any interior or exterior timber or metal project a precious-metal sheen. The handy adjustable nozzle allows for greater control over the spray pattern and the brilliant gold shine sets in just 10 minutes.

CHALK IT UP

Does your kitchen wall look like one of Picasso's less famous artworks thanks to the kids' last play date? Simplify your life with White Knight Chalk Board Paint, \$14. Quick aerosol application provides an easy-clean surface for the kids to draw on and it's available in either black or green to suit your decor.





DESIGNER
LIVING

WARM *living*

Make the outdoor room cosy and inviting this winter, with modern heating options to keep you toasty

WORDS SITA SIMONS PICTURES CHRIS L JONES STYLING TINA HUTTON

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OUTDOOR STYLE is all about creating a space that is comfortable but still put together. The look should complement the rest of the home, like the furniture and accessories on this country cottage deck.

Mimosa Cape Cod Adirondack, \$149 each, **Jumbuck Steel Fire Pit**, \$79, **Garden Lantern Trax**, \$10, **Gardman Jam Jar Tealight Holder**, \$3, **Click Together Paver Slates**, about \$3 each, all from Bunnings.

Aussies love making the most of outdoor living spaces, with many homeowners putting a lot of time and design dollars into the verandah, deck or pergola to be able to use it year round.

If winter weather keeps you inside for a few months or more, let yourself be tempted back outdoors.

Modern inclusions mean you can enjoy cosy evenings and alfresco lunches with just a few tweaks around heating and decorating.

Landscape designer Dean Herald of Rolling Stone Landscapes (rollingstonelandscapes.com) in Sydney says that the past five years have seen an increase in demand for outdoor winter living solutions.

'It all comes down to enjoyment and feeling comfortable,' says Dean.

'If you re-create that outdoors, then you are really extending the usability of the space.

'People tend to understand the appeal of evening entertaining but they overlook the pleasure of long lunches on crisp winter days with the sun on your back. Being well prepared for it is the key.'

TURN UP THE HEAT

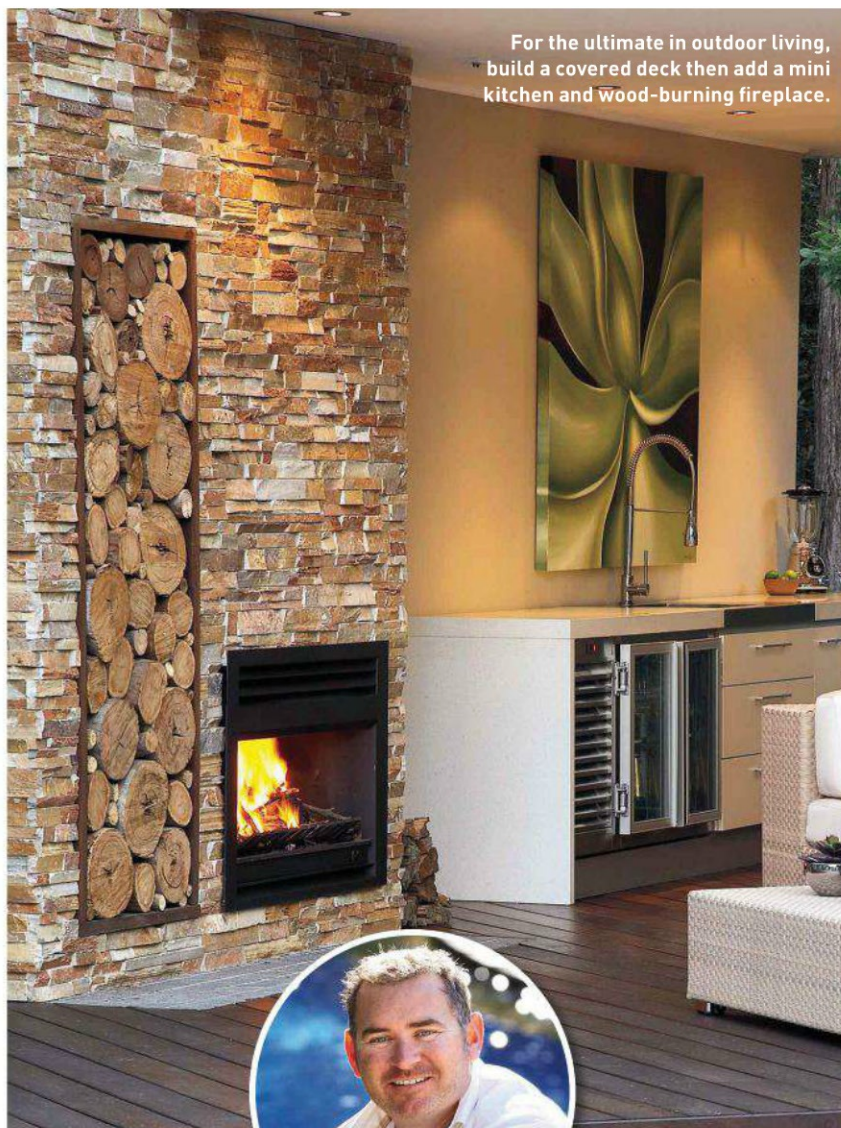
Outdoor heating solutions have come a long way since the occasional gathering around the backyard bonfire or the call to put an extra jumper on. These days it's all about replicating the comfort of the indoors.

'Technology always catches up to trends, and in the last five or six years there's been a real increase in the products available for heating the external space,' says Dean.

'Personally, I think you can't beat the traditional fireplace. The look, the crackle and the smell of the timber, and the radiance of the heat.

'It's like formalising the campfire, and connecting emotions to the solution is always a winner.

'Evoking childhood memories is a surprisingly important factor in any design process,' he adds.



For the ultimate in outdoor living, build a covered deck then add a mini kitchen and wood-burning fireplace.

'For many people, an open fire has special memories attached to it.'

BEST HOME SOLUTION

The design of the home, the available space and the needs of the people who live there will all influence the decision to have an open fireplace.

'There may be council regulations and neighbours to consider. A small urban backyard may not be the best location and overhanging trees, fire bans, young families and body corporate issues all need to be taken into consideration,' says Dean.

If a fireplace is out of the question, there are plenty of other heating options on the market.

Chimineas are a very popular alternative. Decorative and portable, a chiminea is a small fireplace shaped like a lightbulb, with the tall top acting as a chimney.

Often made from terracotta, they burn wood effectively and the design makes them ideal for small areas as they don't take up much room.

Chimineas do get very hot to touch, so this option is not ideal if you have young children or pets.

Choosing an outdoor heater

Select a heater to suit your space and entertaining style. Gas heaters are good for small, modern yards, while fire pits or chimineas work well in more open-plan areas. ➤



Chapala Large Tibor
Clay Chiminea, \$229.
chimineaschapala.com.au



Jumbuck Outdoor Steel Fire Pit, \$69,
from Bunnings. bunnings.com.au



Stainless Steel
Gas Outdoor Heater,
\$189, from Bunnings.

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Fire pits and braziers are portable and constructed from steel. Designed to contain small fires both offer the enjoyment of real flames without the elaborate set-up or maintenance.

High-end fire pits can be gas powered but most are wood burning, featuring lids to contain ash and limit the danger of open flames.

Braziers are fuelled with briquettes. They are small, making them easy to store, but you need to be standing close to feel the heat.

Radiant heaters are cost effective and, depending on the model and air temperature, can heat an area with a radius of up to five metres.

Some models can be connected to the home gas supply and there are electric versions, too. This type of heater does not function well in windy conditions and needs to be in a large space for safety reasons.

Small electric units can be wall mounted, improving safety, but heat radiance is limited.

LIGHTING FOR AMBIENCE

Days are shorter in winter and while the sun can be high and bright for part of the day, the conditions can limit the use of the outdoor space.

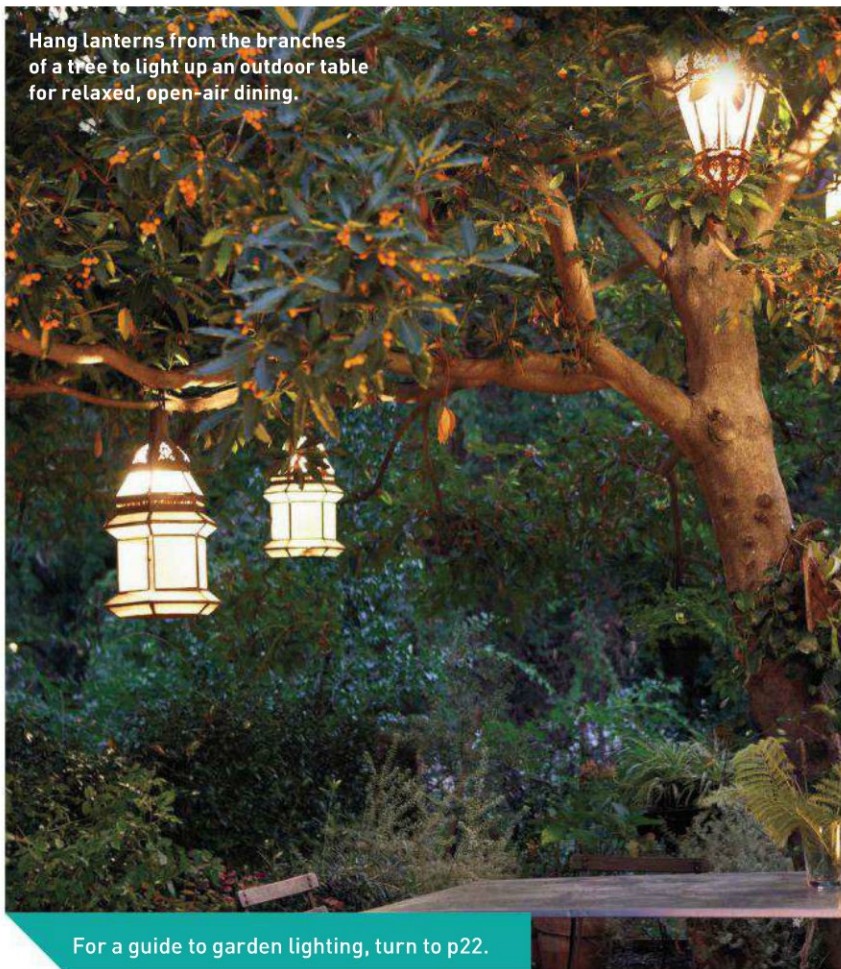
'Good lighting is critical to any outdoor space. Daylight can be beautiful in winter but getting the lights right can add to the feeling of warmth in the evenings,' says Dean.

The trick is to mirror the rules that apply indoors. Having a couple of options for how the space looks and feels is always a good idea.

You might have overhead lighting for when everyone needs visibility, like during a meal, then perhaps a dimmer to create that lovely lounge-like atmosphere.

If the space is large enough, you may want to switch off overhead lights and instead create illumination with lamps around the perimeter, using candles in the centre.
TIP Use uplighting to make a feature of any plants or trees in the space.

Hang lanterns from the branches of a tree to light up an outdoor table for relaxed, open-air dining.



For a guide to garden lighting, turn to p22.

Preparing for winter

To extend the life span of your outdoor furniture and accessories, take steps to protect them from the weather even if you have cover.

Timber can rot or warp in the wet while standing water causes mould, mildew and stains. Angle chairs so water runs off and give timber a sand and oil every two years.

Metal furniture can go rusty in the rain and should be treated with a rust-inhibiting paint or sealer.

If the outdoor space is going to be unused for an extended period, cover clean and dry furniture and equipment with plastic sheeting, so it's good as new when it comes time to get back out there again.



Mimosa Timber Outdoor Storage Chest, \$179, from Bunnings.

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REMOTE CONTROL For Any Power Point



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**EASY
SET UP**



1 Switch power point on & insert adaptor



2 Press & hold learning button for 5 seconds



3 Press remote control button you want to control adaptor



4 Plug device into adaptor – Done!

LIGHT UP THE YARD

LANDSCAPE
SOLUTIONS

Install outdoor lights to highlight features, taking the garden from dark to designer with the flick of a switch.

Enjoy the garden year-round by installing DIY lighting to create mood, highlight features and improve access

WORDS **LEE DASHIELL**

There are so many different types of garden lighting that all it takes to create ambience after dark is a little imagination.

A typical house has a spotlight attached to the fascia to light the yard. While this is ideal for getting clothes off the line after dark, it does little to create atmosphere when entertaining.

To make the most of your outdoor spaces first devise a lighting plan, considering options such as where you need illumination for cooking and eating, as well as which garden features you'd like to highlight.

There are multiple ways to create a dramatic and effective lighting

scheme, and most don't require the services of a tradie as they can be done completely DIY.

DRAW UP A PLAN

First do a sketch of your garden and work out where you'd like the seating.

Is there a particular area or piece of equipment that needs extra lighting such as a barbecue or pizza oven? Are there steps that can be a bit tricky to navigate after the sun goes down?

When deciding on feature lighting, look for trees that can be uplit, or attractive areas of lush green or colourful foliage. If there is a sculpture, pond or garden bed that

would add atmosphere if illuminated, include it in your plan.

TIP Add sensor-activated lights near access doors for home security. ➤



Arlec Stainless Steel Spotlight, \$99 for a four pack and transformer. arlec.com.au

Installing low-voltage cable and lights

Add a spotlight connected to a transformer to the garden to uplight a tree, creating a feature.

TIP It's safe to have the light on while you work to check the connections, as the voltage is very low.



1 INSTALL THE TRANSFORMER and attach the cable, turning the power on to check connections as you go. Choose the position for the light and open the cable connector.



2 MAKE THE CONNECTION by pressing the cable onto the spiked pins so they show through the top. If the light isn't working you haven't made a strong connection, so spike the cables again.



3 SET UP THE LIGHT by securing the connector lid over the spiked cable. Position the spotlight in the garden, checking it at night to ensure the beam is aimed at the right spot.



Underwater lights can give ponds an enchanted garden feel at night.

TYPES OF LIGHTS

Know your space and budget before selecting lights for outdoor zones and garden features.

ENERGY-EFFICIENT LED lights use a transformer to convert 240 volt household power to a safer 12 volts, and are great for highlighting garden beds and sculptures.

LOW-VOLTAGE HALOGEN lights also use a transformer. They are brighter than LEDs but consume more electricity and are ideal for accent lighting around a deck.

SOLAR LIGHTS contain rechargeable batteries that are powered by solar panels. They are not as bright as regular lights but are cheap to run and free of wires, so they are very easy to install. Solar lights are often used for lighting pathways.

SENSOR-ACTIVATED LIGHTS are for areas where you only need light when you're in the vicinity. Consider a solar sensor activated light, which turns on when it detects movement. These are good for security, driveways or even near the chook shed.

240-VOLT HALOGEN LIGHTS are the most powerful and send light the furthest distance, but consume the most electricity of the lot.

They also require the expense of a tradesman as they must be installed by an electrician. Halogens are often used for uplighting trees.

EASY SOLAR LIGHTS

Many solar lights come with an on/off switch and batteries already in position. Some have the solar panels attached to the unit, while others have a solar panel unit that is mounted separately.

Once spiked in the ground or installed, the light must remain off for more than 36 hours to give the batteries an initial strong charge.

The output of solar lights may vary and be less bright after cloudy days, but if the battery loses all charge, replacements are available to extend the life of the unit.

Dealing with moisture

Factor in the elements when working with lights outside.

■ **OUTDOOR BULBS** sometimes burst because of moisture or changes in temperature. Turn off power at the main switchboard, using a circuit tester to check. **TO REMOVE** the bulb, press a cut potato firmly into the remains. Turn it to unscrew the bulb then clean the socket with 0000 steel wool.

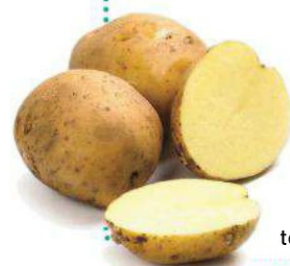
Another method is to reach into the metal base with needle-nose pliers and open them as fully as possible, twisting to remove the bulb.

■ **EXTENSION CORDS** for outdoor use are well-insulated and waterproof but the socket is not. It is essential to waterproof the connection between the plug and socket for safety.

TO WATERPROOF where the two lines connect, the easiest option is to encase the plug and socket in a box designed to house and safely insulate the connection.

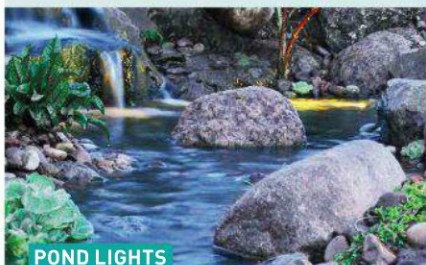


Excalibur Lead Safety Box, \$10. merlindistribution.com.au



BRIGHT LIGHTING IDEAS

Look around the yard for the most effective areas to highlight for day-to-day atmosphere and illumination, and extend your general lighting plan to easily and economically cater for parties and special occasions.



POND LIGHTS

These low-voltage lights can be DIY installed and submerged to highlight water features. Use them to uplight aquatic plants.



Aquapro 72 LED Pond Light Kit,
\$80, from Bunnings.



PARTY LIGHTS

Multicoloured solar party lights and lantern designs can be strung up in a tree or along a balcony rail to create a festive atmosphere.



Arlec 250 LED Solar Party
Lights, \$35. arlec.com.au



TABLE DECORATIONS

Get the romantic look of flickering tea-light candles with rechargeable LED lights that can last up to 10 hours per charge.



FLC Flicker Rechargeable Candles,
\$20 for four, from Bunnings.

Walls that can be wiped clean time and again? Sure can!

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ADD BISTRO BLINDS

Screen the deck and shut out the weather for year-round outdoor living

PROJECT **FRANK GARDNER** MAIN PICTURE **STUART SCOTT**

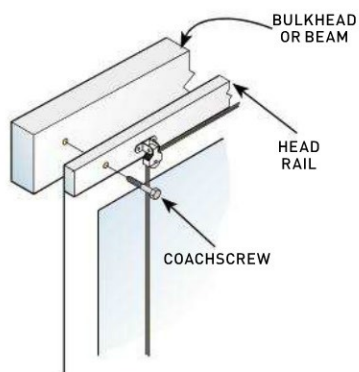
As autumn moves closer to winter, outdoor entertaining at home becomes less of an option unless you can provide protection from wind and rain.

Constructing a roof over your deck creates shelter and protects it from the elements. Enclosing the sides of the deck is the solution to making it a comfortable area that can be used even when the weather turns nasty.

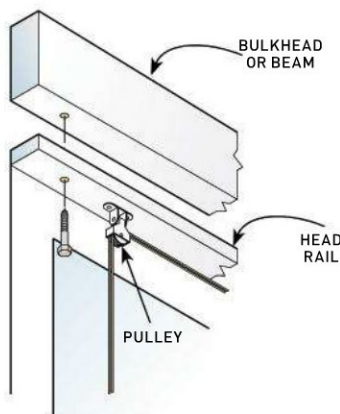
To screen his outdoor room from the weather, *Handyman* deputy editor Frank Gardner used Smart Bistro Blinds, from Bunnings, to enclose his elevated 4800 x 5600mm deck.

'The front two were stand-alone blinds fitted between posts. The 4800mm long sides were enclosed with pairs of zip-joined blinds to span the distance between the house wall and corner posts,' says Frank. ➤

ATTACHING THE HEAD RAIL



Position the head rail against a beam or bulkhead, securing with coachscrews.



The head rail can also be tilted 90° and attached to the underside of the beam.



AFTER
The deck stays cosy and comfortable all year round, no matter what the weather.



Add a bulkhead

To install Bistro Blinds, the head rails must be attached to level beams, walls or ceiling joists so the blinds drop squarely to the floor, and zip open and shut smoothly.

This deck had side perimeter beams that sloped to create the skillion roof, making level head rail attachment impossible.

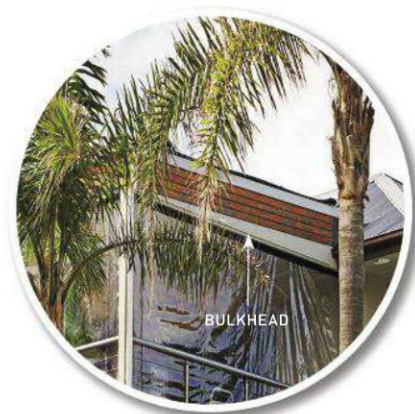
As a solution, a DIY bulkhead was attached below the sloping perimeter beams, providing a level surface for the head rails.

To make the bulkhead, U-shaped 25 x 25 x 3mm aluminium channel was secured with screws to the beams.

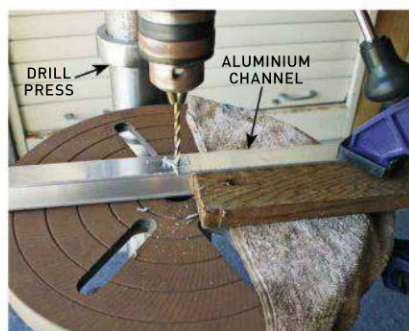
Lengths of 230 x 19mm primed H3 timber boards were cut on an angle to match the sloping beams then slotted into the channel.

The boards were reinforced on the outside with 42 x 30mm primed H3 pine then covered in cladding.

The total cost for 15 metres of bulkhead, including the timber, channel and fasteners, was \$420.



A triangular bulkhead allows head rails to be attached level under sloping beams.



1 Prepare the channel

Cut the aluminium channel to length using a hacksaw. Mark hole positions on the channel base and sides at 500mm centres. Clamp the channel to a drill press baseplate and drill 5mm clearance holes.



2 Set the bulkhead level

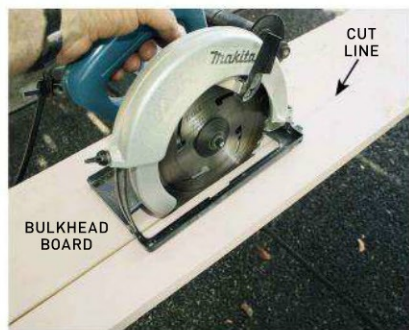
Use a spirit level to set level stringlines beneath the perimeter beams of the deck roof.

TIP We set a minimum drop of 50mm to match the head rail width, increasing to 230mm at the wall.



3 Secure the channel

Clamp the channel at the inside edges of the deck roof perimeter beams. Drill 3mm pilot holes through the channel clearance holes into the beams then secure using 40mm x 10g stainless steel screws.



4 Cut the bulkhead angle

Mark the dimensions at both ends of the bulkhead boards to match the stringline setout. Set a taut stringline between the end heights and mark the angled cut line. Clamp the boards on sawhorses and cut with a circular saw.



5 Attach the bulkhead

Position the bulkhead boards between the posts and wall, sliding them up into the channel so they are flush with the channel base. Secure with 25mm x 10g stainless steel screws through the side holes.



6 Reinforce the bulkhead

Secure 42 x 30mm primed timber to the bulkhead using 40mm x 8g treated pine screws, providing solid attachment for the head rail. Add vertical studs every 1000mm then clad with primed 230 x 19mm boards.

Install the blinds

To enclose this deck on three sides, we installed six Smart Bistro Blinds.

Bistro Blinds come in clear or charcoal heavy-duty PVC and feature white or black trim.

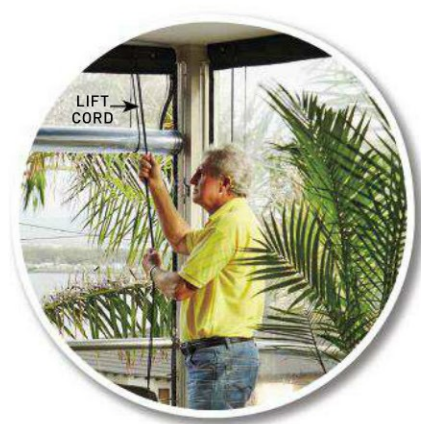
Standard 2400 x 2400mm blinds cost \$148, and 2700 x 2400mm cost \$185, with wall anchors about \$15 each and zip joiners about \$16.

The blinds can also be cut to size for \$115 each, but only one measurement, either the height or the width, can be adjusted.

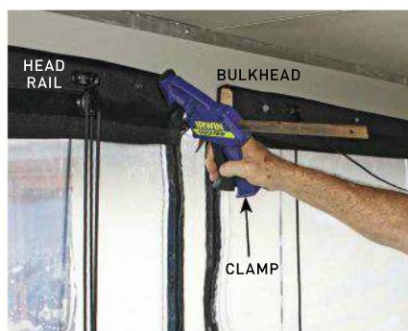
Standard blind widths start from 900mm up to 3000mm in increments of 300mm, with a drop of 2400mm that includes the base flap. The width measurement includes 50mm side strips on both sides.

To enclose this deck, the width measurements were taken between the insides of the posts and from the edge of a wall to the inside of a corner post using a metal tape for accuracy.

TIP Bunnings also has a wide range of bistro blind options available.

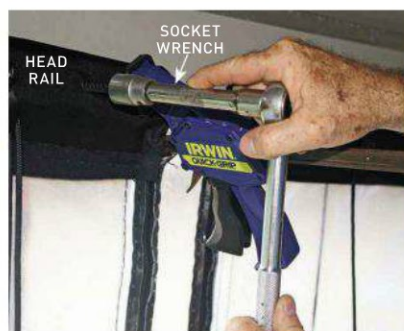


To roll up, release the anchor straps and unzip both sides, then pull the lift cords.



1 Clamp the blinds

Attach the blinds to a structure such as a beam, wall or bulkhead. If securing to a crossbeam, the head rail can be attached to the inside, outside or base edge. Clamp the blind in position ready for drilling.



2 Secure the head rail

Through the predrilled holes in the head rail, drill 30mm deep holes into the bulkhead with an 8mm twist bit. Secure the blinds by tightening the coachscrews with a socket wrench.

TIP Use Dynabolts in masonry.



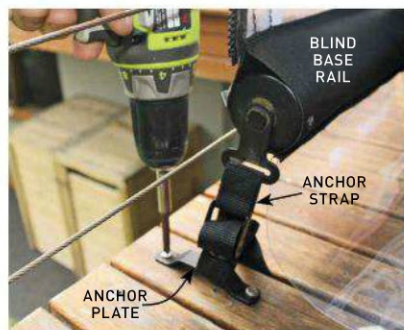
3 Join additional blinds

To join two or more blinds, zip off the roped edges and attach a zip joiner. Align the adjoining blind so the teeth line up, zip them together and tension slightly, then clamp the head rail and secure as before.



4 Attach the wall anchors

To seal against the weather, insert the roped edge of the blind into the anchor channel and slide it to the end. Drill 5mm clearance holes through the flat section of the anchor channel and secure to the post or wall with screws.



5 Anchor the blinds

Use screws to secure anchor plates to flooring or decking. To hold the blind steady and prevent movement in light wind, adjust the length of the anchor strap on the base rail.

TIP Roll up the blinds in high wind.



6 Add a cord cleat

To keep the blinds in position when rolled up, use screws to secure a cord cleat to a post or wall at an accessible height. Tie off the lift cord in a figure-eight pattern to prevent tangling and ensure smooth operation.

ENTERTAIN
OUTDOORS

Alfresco DRINKS TRAY



AFTER
Decorative trim and a paint job transform the old tabletop into a bright serving tray for outdoors.



BEFORE

A timber outdoor table had lost its legs but the top was too good to discard.

Upcycle an old timber tabletop into a handy accessory for serving cocktails and canapes outdoors

PROJECT **GEMA BENEITEZ** PICTURES **SUE FERRIS**

A homemade gift is a budget-friendly labour of love that can be customised to suit Mum's taste and gift wish-list.

This drinks tray was made from the top of a small outdoor table but you could just as easily use any scrap timber like part of a discarded pallet.

To make a gift like this tray for just the cost of the decorative trim, use salvaged timber and paint left over from other projects.

Recycled timber can be rough in texture, so take time to sand it back thoroughly. After filling any cracks or nail holes, apply a primer then two coats of semi gloss acrylic.

To personalise the tray, paint it Mum's favourite colour or stick to white with a contrasting outline.

BUYING THE ACCESSORIES

Avoid the stress of using breakable tableware for casual outdoor dining and instead invest in durable pieces that can be washed and re-used.

Wine glasses that are made from materials such as acrylic or polycarbonate look just like the real thing but won't shatter if dropped, while sealable plastic jugs can keep cold drinks fresher for longer.

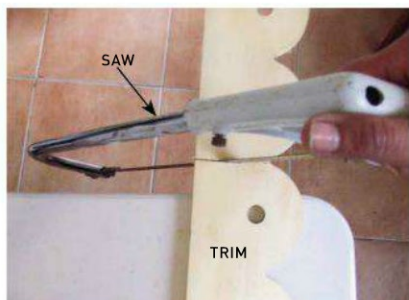
For a bright and festive feel, choose coloured options and create a rainbow array of glassware, or go for a colour scheme that complements the tray.



The bonus of rainbow coloured glassware is that everyone can track their drink.



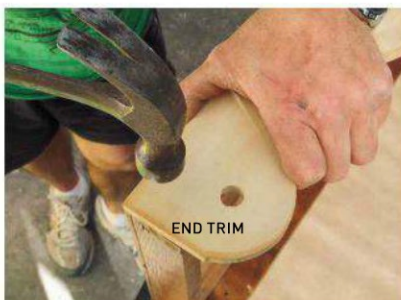
External Fascia Barge Trim, 1200 x 95 x 12mm, about \$19, from Bunnings.



1 Cut the trim

Measure the ends of the tray and cut the fascia trim to length using a saw. Measure the sides and cut the trim to length plus 24mm.

TIP The trim side pieces are butt joined to the end pieces.



2 Attach the trim

Apply PVA adhesive to the end pieces of trim, position on the tray and secure by hammering in 25 x 1.6mm panel pins. Position the side trim against the end pieces, securing with adhesive and nails.



3 Paint the tray

Fill all nail holes with timber filler and sand with 180 grit abrasive paper. Apply primer and two coats of white acrylic with a roller and brush, sanding between coats with 220 grit paper. Use a small flat brush to outline in yellow.

Verdigris pots

Handyman stylist Gema Beneitez created a rustic flowering display using plastic pots and new plants.

To turn pots into antique-look planters for Mum, all you need is a few days and several types of paint.

The bluish-green coating that develops on copper, giving the surface a weathered patina, is called verdigris.

To get the effect without the chemical reaction, use paint to create an aged copper look.

TIP The best type of pots for this finish are those with ridges and lips, not smooth, featureless containers.



Zinsser Smart Prime Undercoat, \$84 for 3.75L. rustoleum.com.au

Painting the pot

It takes several coats of different finishes to achieve the look of verdigris, and each layer needs time to dry thoroughly.

APPLY A PRIMER to the pot then a coat each of gold enamel paint and amber shellac, leaving it to dry between coats.

COAT THE POT with a mixture of white and aqua-green acrylic paint, watering it down to apply with a sponge and cloth to get the aged effect.

FINISH THE VERDIGRIS by dipping a small brush in a very small quantity of white paint and lightly touching the most protuberant areas of the pot.

SEAL THE FINISH with a coat of clear polyurethane.

TIP A dry bristle brush can also be used to stipple the paint.



AFTER

The faux copper finish turns the pots into rustic planters for snapdragon and verbena.

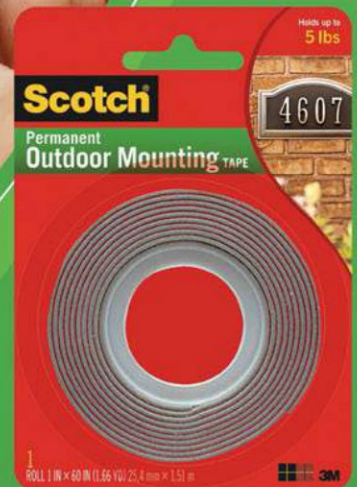
BEFORE

These lightweight plastic pots were a good size but not very visually exciting.

PICTURES SUE FERRIS

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3M

Thrifty artwork

Lots of people scour charity shops for old paintings purely for the frames, but according to *Handyman* stylist Gema Beneitez they're not the only bit worth salvaging.

'Pictures are easy to change with a little creativity and a few paint tubes. The trick is to keep your favourite parts and change the rest,' says Gema.

The first painting was updated in the style of Aussie artist Margaret Preston. Gema used black outlines and blocks of colour to give it a 2D effect. The frame was painted white and black to suit the modernist theme.

Inspired by Van Gogh's *Starry Night*, Gema kept the eucalyptus tree in the second painting, added a new sky and painted the frame white.

Many of us have a hand-me-down picture gathering dust somewhere. If Mum has a painting she doesn't want to hang but can't throw away, then this project gives her two gifts in one.



Crafty Colour Paint in Royal Blue, \$3 for 75ml, from Bunnings.



BEFORE

This dull painting in an old-fashioned frame was in need of a colour boost.

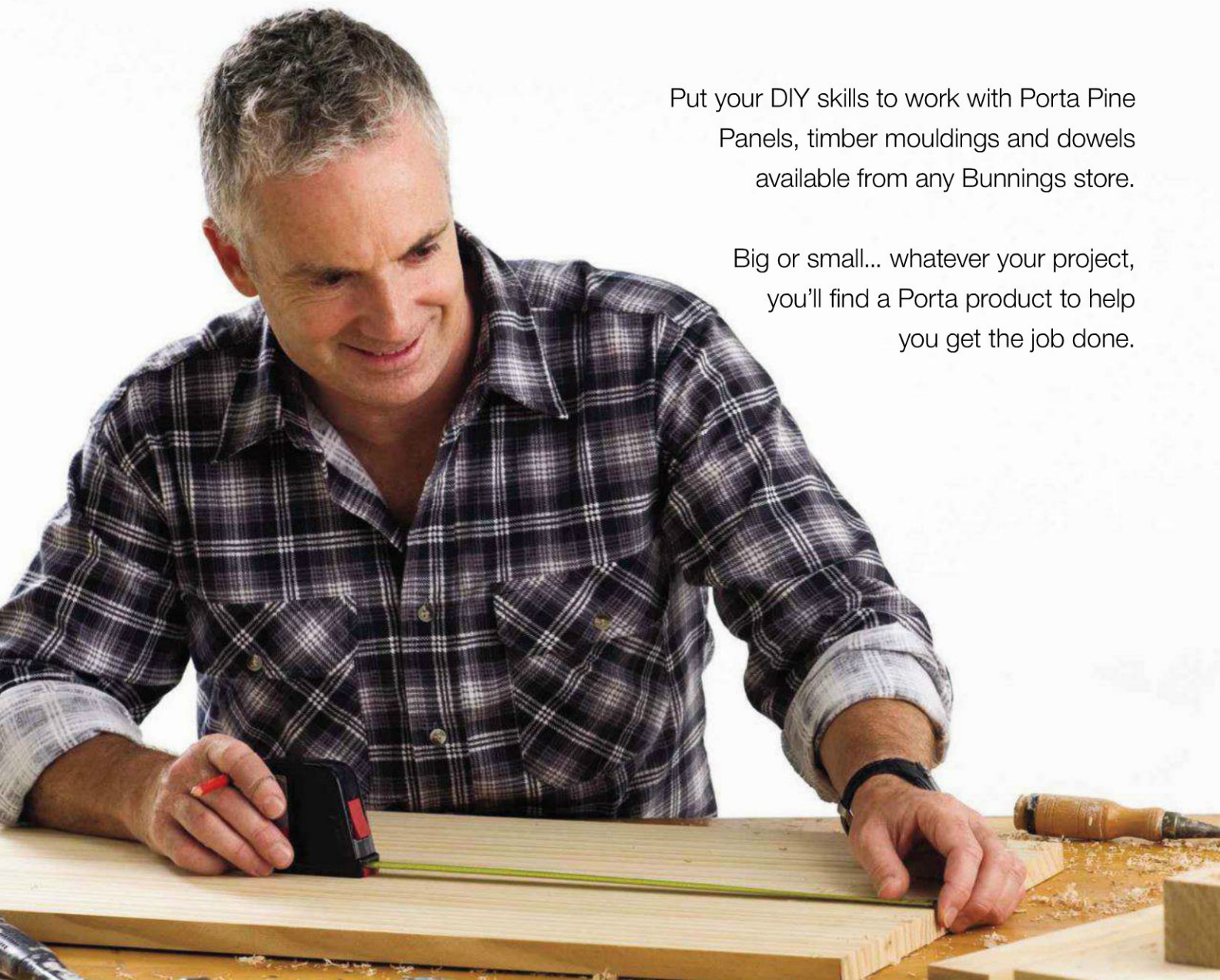
BEFORE

Outdated but with a solid frame this picture was ideal for a modernist revamp.

AFTER

Pick a style then use acrylic paint to turn op-shop finds into one-of-a-kind artworks.

PICTURES SUE FERRIS



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BUILDING
INNOVATION

Live outside **THE SQUARE**

From a clever micro apartment to a mobile cottage on rails, the homes of today are a lot more than just bricks and mortar



Are you in the market for a new home? Why not downsize to an apartment that transforms into layers at the touch of a button, or invest in a modular pod to get away without leaving your postcode?

Today's home can be whatever you want, whether it's mobile, round, has disappearing rooms or is hidden below ground level. The only thing that hasn't changed is that home is still defined as being a place to sleep, eat, store your belongings and seek refuge from the world.

Handyman scoured the globe and found six of the world's most unusual places that people call home.

DOWNSIZED CITY LIVING

A little bit of space doesn't have to mean a little bit of living.

Former set designer and founder of the Yo! Sushi chain in the UK Simon Woodroffe has devised a TARDIS-like urban home of the future.

With the press of a button or the push of a wall, his Yo! Home creates four times the amount of living space within its compact floorplan.

At almost 80sqm, it lacks dimension but not depth with banks of hidden storage and clever dividers borrowed from the principles of Japanese design.

'What I've tried to do is use the mechanics of stage scenery, because I was originally a set designer for rock shows,' says Simon. ➤

Simon Woodroffe reveals the mechanics of his prototype Yo! Home.



The sunken dining area can be tucked away for more living space.

Setting the scene

By day, the apartment space is used mainly for living with a sunken sitting area. At night, press a button and the master bedroom floor descends.

'In the morning, you press the button again and the bedroom rises into the false ceiling,' says Simon.

The sitting room coffee table can be raised into a small dinner table for one. For a larger group there's a sunken dining area for four that retracts below floor level to create more space when not in use.

'Press another button and a screen comes down, pull the curtain and you have a home cinema that works when you're in the bedroom as well.'

HIDDEN STORAGE

'When you're in bedroom mode there's the lady's dressing room which I call the Barbie wall. You just swivel

the living room display wall around and you have a place to store and display shoes,' says Simon.

Even the red gloss galley-style kitchen hides away behind a retractable panelled feature wall.

A problem in most homes, especially smaller ones, is a lack of storage. But the Yo! Home has a wide range of options.

'We also have a cellar,' Simon says. 'Here it's a wine cellar but there's no reason why it can't be a different shape and used for different storage.'

CUSTOMISING THE SPACE

'When you have somebody to stay, the mockoffice, or mock office, slides out and turns into a bunk bed.

'If you have kids, you can make it double bunk beds. You can have any number of bunks built into the wall.



And if you want privacy, there's a pull-out sliding wall,' says Simon.

The prototype home is fairly upmarket, but Simon says it can be customised according to the owner's budget and needs. He's confident Yo! Homes will feature in the global urban landscapes of the future.

'This is what you can do when you use mechanics within a home. What we're hoping to do is build skyscrapers all over the world full of these.' ➤



Tucked up boudoir

A retractable bed is the ideal solution for tight spaces, studio apartments and extra accommodation when guests stay. It runs rings around a foldaway sofa by freeing up the floor area when not in use.

This type of bed usually folds out from a wall cavity but Chinese inventor Wang Xianquan has designed a model that's stored up high.

It's camouflaged as an orb-like light fitting by day, then released from its hiding place at night.

The touch of a button causes the structure to descend, spacecraft style, revealing a circular bed with canopy.

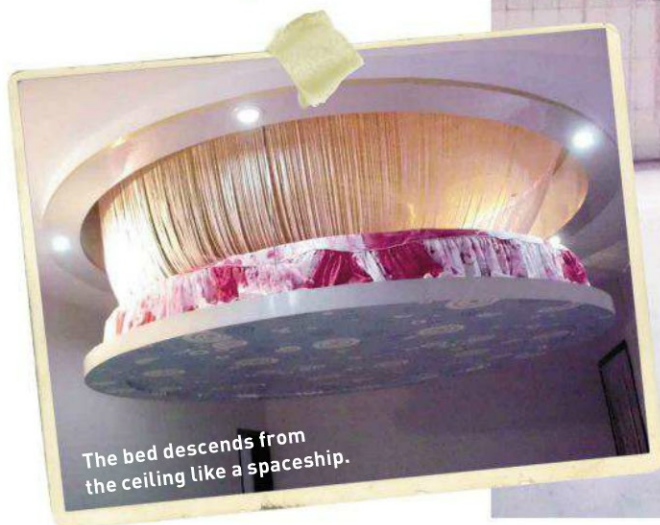
DOUBLE DUTY CUBBY

Wang created this bed for when his daughter stays in his tiny 48sqm apartment consisting of a kitchen, bathroom and living/bedroom.

When lowered, it hovers about a metre off the floor, in line with the window. It's the right height for capturing breezes, while the gentle rocking motion enhances sleep.

Hundreds of sheer but heavy-duty suspension threads support the bed's weight while the hanging system creates a cubbyhouse effect.

Not only is it a space-saving bed that provides quality sleep, it's a fun place to play, too. ➤

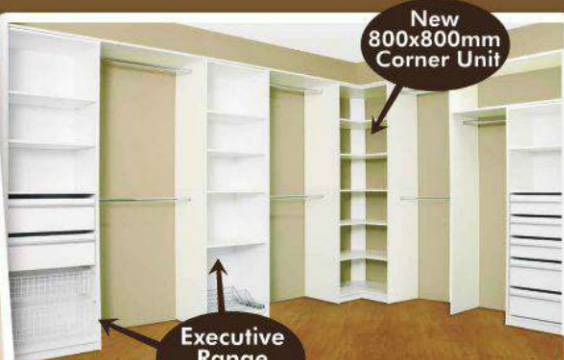
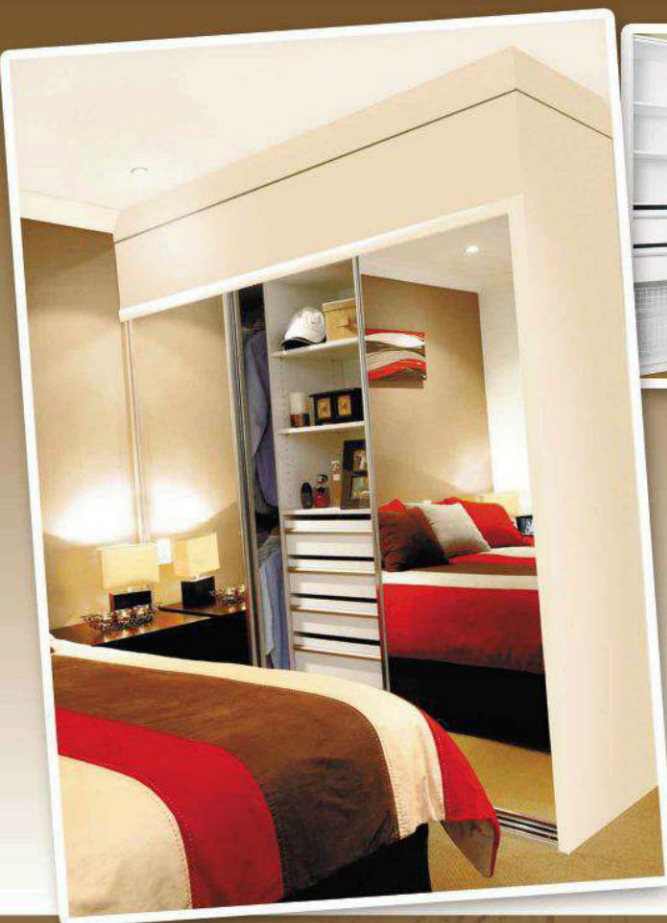


The bed descends from the ceiling like a spaceship.

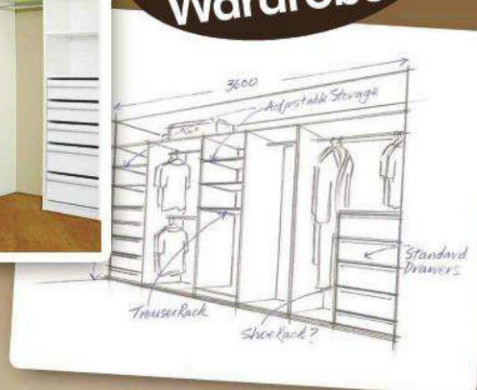
In hanging mode, the circular bed doubles as a cubbyhouse.

PICTURES AUSTRAL

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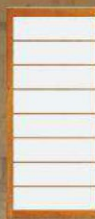


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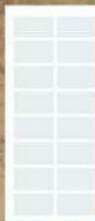
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HOW-TO GUIDE

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Ensure surface is flat and clean.

2

Spray adhesive onto surface in a wide mist.

3

Allow adhesive to dry for 30 minutes until there is no adhesive transfer when lightly touched.

4

Once tacky, tiles can be laid for up to 1.5 hours.

DUNLOP

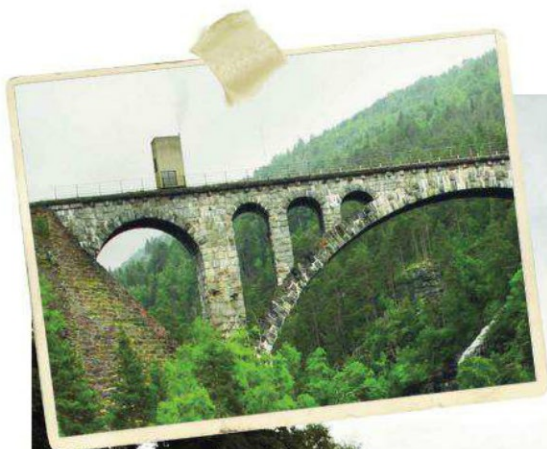
For further details and full installation details visit www.dunlopdry.com

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City on rails

Compact and multipurpose, the buildings are light for easy transport.

Say goodbye to cabin fever with modular buildings on tracks that can take you practically anywhere you want to go when you need a change of scenery, from skyscrapers one day to a mountain lakeside the next.

The brainchild of Swedish architecture firm Jagnefalt Milton, the Rolling Masterplan is an urban extension concept for the Norwegian city of Andalsnes.

MAKING TRACKS

The plan, if implemented, will transform Andalsnes into a city that's really going places, with buildings constantly shifting position using old industrial train tracks.

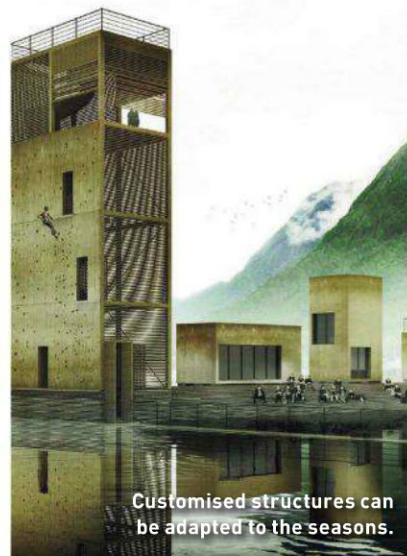
The small, flexible buildings can be switched and rearranged according to different needs and seasons.

Among other options, the firm has proposed a rolling hotel, public baths and concert hall, transforming the host city into a unique and more user-friendly place.

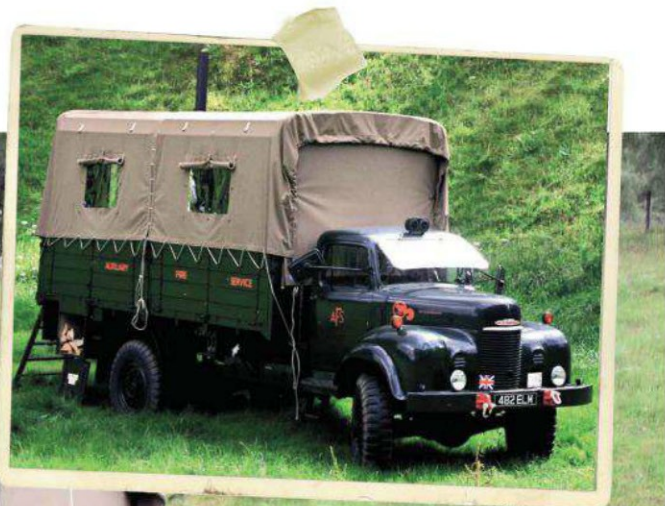
'In the current proposal there are 23 different types of rolling buildings, including a hydrorail building that can also float.

'Fully implemented in the city there would be over 100 rolling buildings,' say the architects.

If the urban concept's given the go ahead, Andalsnes will become a pioneering city in motion. ➤



Customised structures can be adapted to the seasons.



Canvas and plastic walls shelter the accommodation from the elements.

Army truck retreat

When Scottish landowner Walter Micklethwait wanted to venture into the holiday accommodation market he took a most unusual route.

As well as opening up his house to guests and renting out a yurt on his property, he bought a decommissioned 1954 army fire truck for about \$4600 and kitted it out as a rural retreat.

It took four days to drive it home to his remote Highlands estate because the truck only clocks an average speed of 35km an hour.

CUSTOMISING THE INTERIOR

Walter fitted out the truck, now named Beer Moth, with unused items from his home including a Victorian

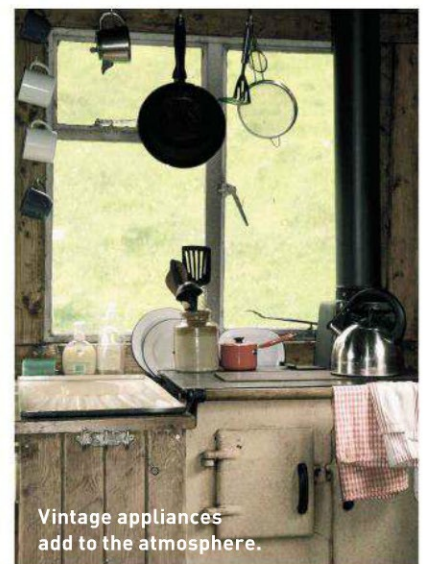
bed, stove, table, chairs, cupboards and even parquet flooring.

His biggest expense was enclosing the rear of the truck to protect guests from the unpredictable weather.

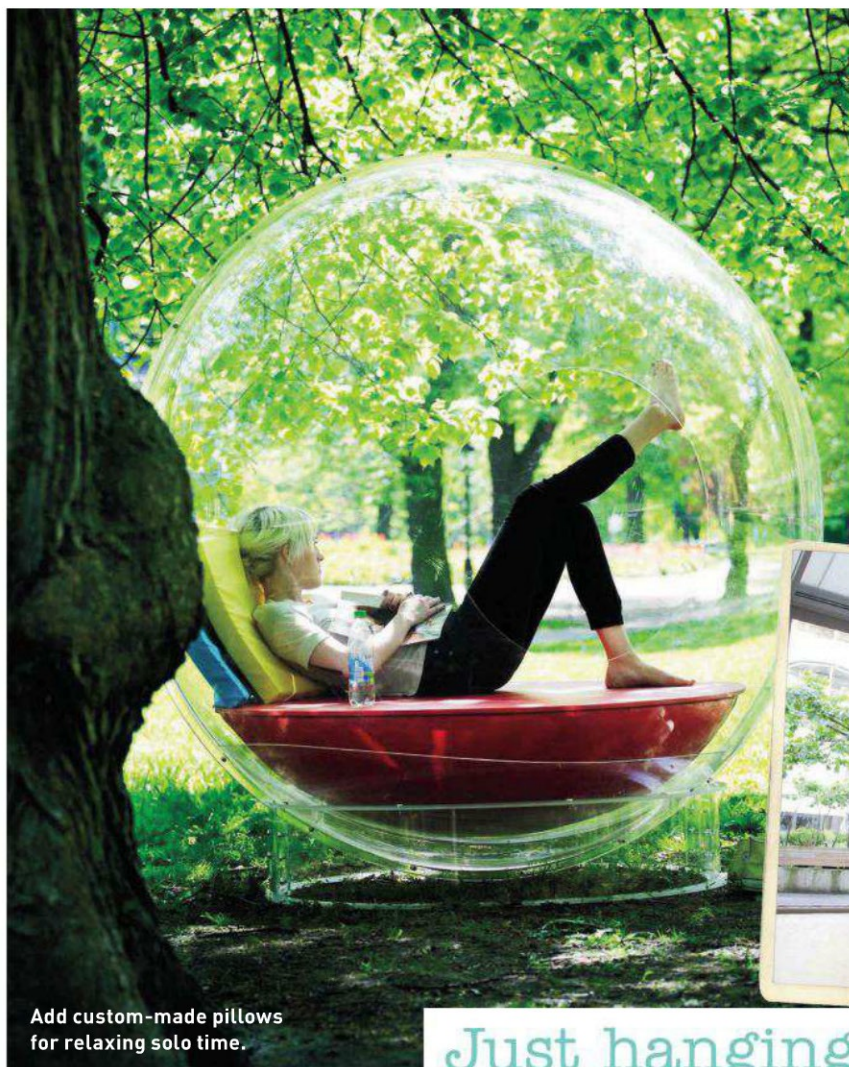
The canvas walls with plastic windows set him back \$2145, almost half the total price of the truck.

Although there's no running water or toilet and solar panels power the lighting, Walter says he has no problem attracting guests willing to pay \$690 a week for the privilege of staying in his jazzed-up truck.

Perhaps it's because what Beer Moth lacks in mod cons it more than makes up for with privacy and priceless views of the Scottish Highlands.



Vintage appliances add to the atmosphere.

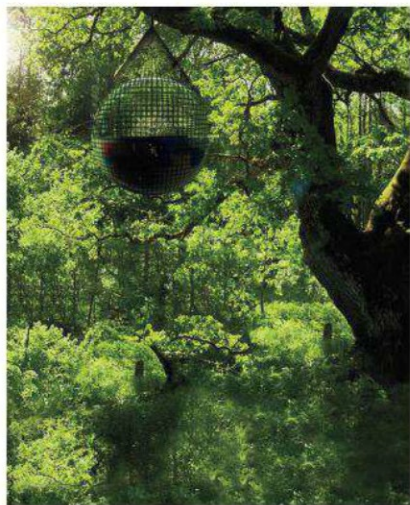


Add custom-made pillows for relaxing solo time.

Beat a retreat to this transparent sphere that transports you to a happier place



Just hanging around



Attach the pod to a tree for a nature retreat in your very own backyard.

Kids driving you crazy, partner too messy or do you have houseguests that won't go home?

Beat a retreat to the comforting Cocoon 1 from Switzerland's Micasa Lab. This transparent sphere is designed for solo use and transports you to a happier place for a getaway when you just can't get away.

Hang it from a tree, a deck beam, or even over water. Best of all, you can still watch the outside world but the outside world can't reach you.

PLANNING YOUR COCOON

Scheduled for imminent release, Cocoon 1 has a 180cm diameter and weighs 97kg when empty. A standard

model is expected to cost about \$3000. Accessories include a hanging net and hooks as well as a sturdy base to stop it rolling away.

Micasa Lab has even made add-on modules to enhance the orb lifestyle with storage, cooking, plumbing, wi-fi and sleep options complete with custom-made pillows.

An optional power pack provides either 40 hours or 20 hours of light and 30 minutes of cooking time.

In addition to the standard Foundation 360 base, Micasa Lab has also created a Foundation Pb base that adds a lead weight underneath so that Cocoon 1 can float on water while remaining upright. ➤

What lies beneath

Underground living is not new but this property in upstate New York has taken the concept to greater depths.

On the surface the home looks like a simple cabin but the site once played a pivotal role in Cold War relations, with the quaint country retreat concealing the entrance to both a missile launch base and underground survival bolt-hole.

At the height of 1950s nuclear tensions between the West and the USSR, hundreds of defence missile silos were built by the US government to be activated in the event of nuclear war. Once this threat passed the bases were abandoned.

Today, long after Cold War relations have thawed, the site's been painstakingly renovated into a unique luxurious residence.

No easy feat when most of the living space is metres underground and shaped like a giant silo for storing intercontinental ballistic missiles.

CONVERTING THE PROPERTY

The site was bought in 1991 by business partners and cousins Gregory Gibbons and Bruce Francisco.

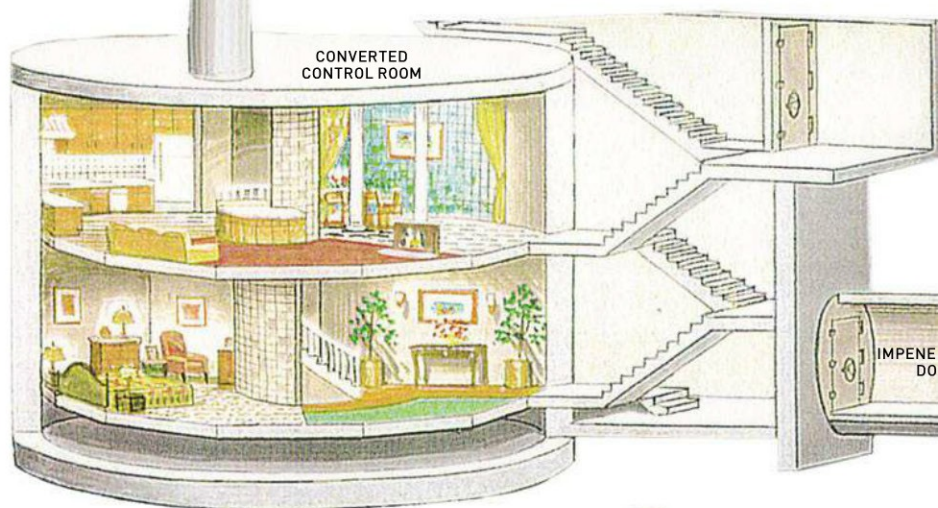
Bruce says when he first inspected the property, it was just a stairwell coming out of the ground.

He told the *New York Daily News*, 'I saw that the missile base here was in raw condition and I thought we should do something amazing with it. I wanted to build a surface home as a covert entrance.'

The first three years of work saw a group of students hand-dredge the underground two-level circular launch control room that had been submerged for 30 years and was covered in sludge.

These levels now feature high-end interiors with windows streaming simulated daylight.

Rooms in the underground levels include living areas, plus a bathroom and also a kitchen.



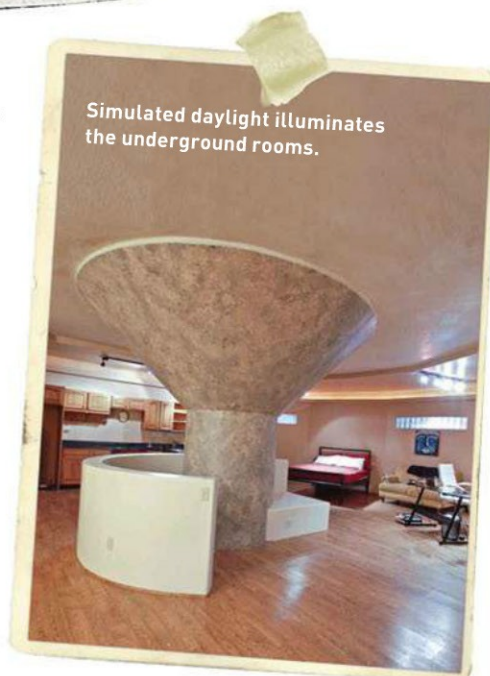
On the bottom level, 12 metres underground, is a 907kg impenetrable door leading to a 15 metre tunnel.

This tunnel ends in a 56 metre deep cylindrical missile storage room still in original condition.

The steel structure casing held the missiles intact. Stored vertically, they were rigged to rise then lift off via the nearby control centre.

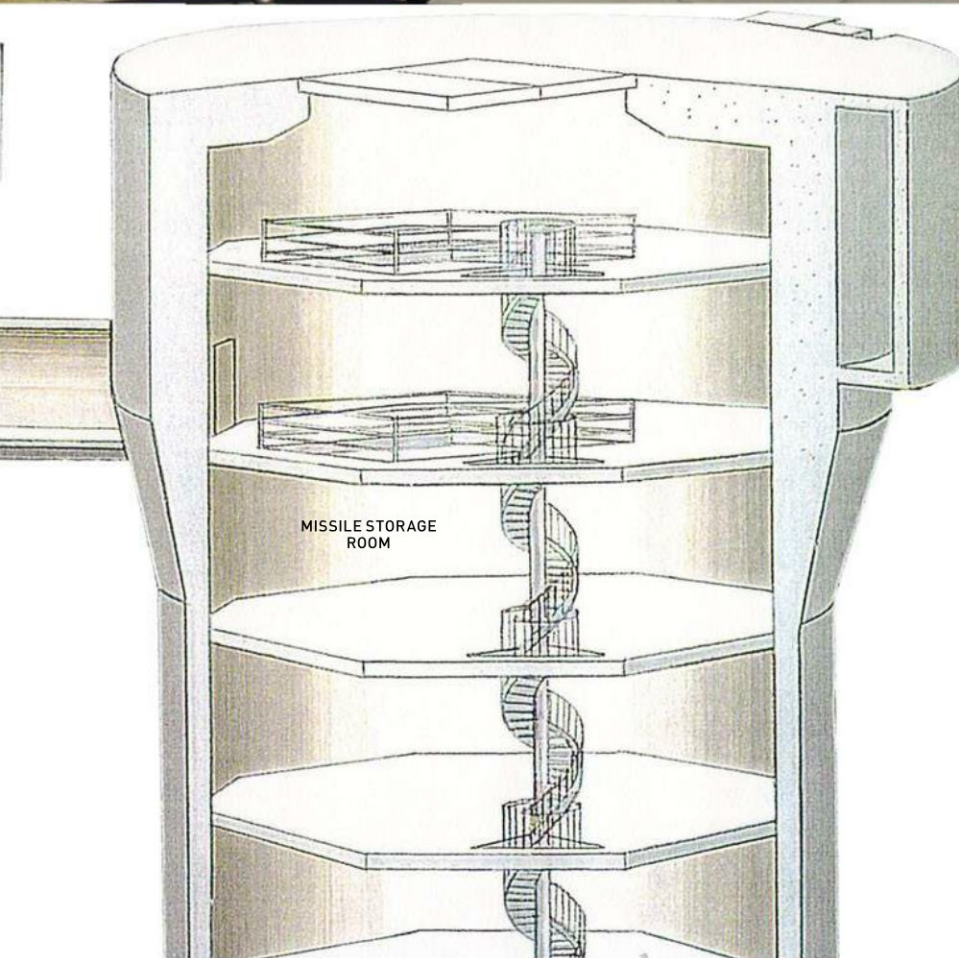
The 73 hectare estate also has a private runway, aircraft hangar, tunnels and impenetrable walls designed for top class global security.

The silo originally cost around \$18.23 million to build in 1958. In today's money, this equates to about \$143 million.





On the surface, the site looks like a high-end country retreat.



PICTURES AUSTRAL

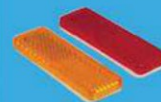
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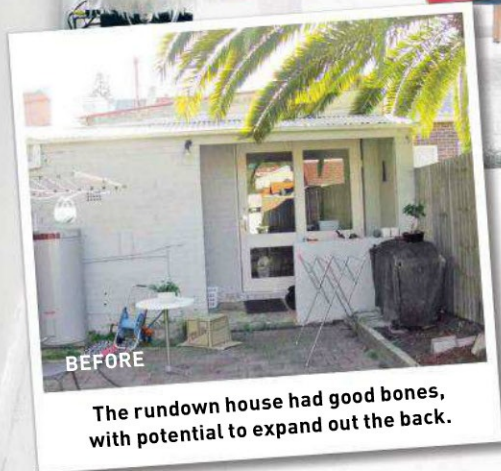
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HOUSE FLIPPING

A DIYer shares her tips for turning around a fixer-upper for profit in just 10 weeks

WORDS **SITA SIMONS** PICTURES **SUE FERRIS**



BUY AND
SELL

Everyone knows someone who's made a motza flipping houses or bought their home for a song.

Thanks to all the home reno shows, buying and making over a house in need of TLC might look like a no-fail money-spinner.

Part-time property dabbler Claudine Novak knows the temptation well.

'I bought my first house and made a bit of money when I sold it five years later. It gave me the confidence to think about renovating for profit.'

FIND THE PROPERTY

If you're planning on buying into an area not known to you, spend time researching and make contact with local real estate agents.

Check out the sales of similar homes over a period of time and be certain of your target demographic.

'I buy in the area in which I live because it's the market I know. I also don't want to travel far, as variables eat into your profit,' says Claudine.

'Some of the best advice I received was to make a detailed projection of costs before making an offer,' she says.

Costs include purchase price, holding the property, loans, taxes, reno costs, and selling expenses.

Being thorough and realistic prevents the bottom line coming as a nasty surprise. Set a minimum return then anything on top is a bonus.

Once the property is yours and finance is settled, work can begin.

'For your first project, aim for three months and don't exceed six. The goal is to buy and sell in the same market.'

MAXIMISE THE INVESTMENT

Claudine found her property after a lot of looking around. 'It was good value for the area, so I jumped at it.'

The Victorian bungalow was in good structural condition with intact period features, including original tessellated tiles, a bullnose verandah and intricate iron lacework.

'The lounge room was small but I could see that opening the kitchen into the living space would transform the look and feel,' says Claudine.

Another clever improvement for minimal cost was to raise the ceiling, adding to the expansive and bright feel of the primary living space.

The old spotted gum floors had to be replaced, an expense Claudine wished she could have avoided, and the bedrooms were carpeted to add a luxurious feel. ➤



AFTER

Opening up the living space and letting in light transforms the room and appeals to potential buyers.



AFTER

Rear lane access leads to off-street parking that doubles as an outdoor living area, adding value to the property.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Kerb appeal was improved with inexpensive fixes. The tiles were cleaned up and patched, the window trim and fence painted, and a bright new paved path led the eye to the front door, now painted sea blue.

The rear of the house had a lot of potential due to the size of the yard, so Claudine installed new sliding glass doors and added a deck.

In line with the deck, an external laundry and housing for a water tank immediately improved the look and function of the home.

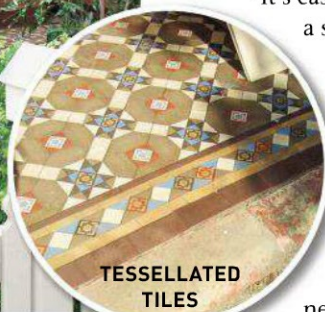
The old pavers were lifted and replaced with turf to better suit the needs of a family, while some separate space for grown-ups was incorporated into the design.

'The eye went straight to the garage door, so I decided to keep a paved section at the end of the garden and painted everything fresh white.'

Adding smart furniture and a pergola created a sophisticated entertaining area and highlighted the garden's multifunctional appeal.



A new path and paint give the home a neat, well cared for look.



TESSELLATED
TILES

INCREASE THE LIGHT

Many buyers are put off properties that lack good sources of natural light, whether because of small windows, an unfavourable aspect, overgrown trees or poor room configuration.

Artificial lighting goes a long way to improving livability, but nothing beats natural light.

Installing skylights or sun tubes can be the best money you'll spend.

'Adding light where I can is something I always do,' says Claudine.

'It's easy and effective to put in a skylight, and the small cost is far outweighed by the great result.'

'In this bathroom, installing a skylight allowed me to block off the existing window that looked right into the house next door,' she says. ➤



AFTER

A new skylight and modern fixtures turn the room into a luxury retreat.

BEFORE

Despite the space, the old bathroom had a poor layout with little room for storage.

Skylight solutions

With prices ranging from a few hundred dollars up to \$2000, it's best to consider the size of the room and what it's used for before choosing a new skylight.

A good rule of thumb is to choose a skylight equivalent to 10% of the floor area in size. Installation by a supplier should cost about \$60 per hour.

Roof windows are both a window and a skylight, making them ideal for attic conversions, extensions and for creating an airy glass-ceiling effect.

If you don't have the space or budget for a skylight, dome lights are an affordable option. Some models also incorporate ventilation and fans, making them ideal for bathrooms.

Tubular lights are often called sun tubes or sky tubes and are good for getting light into small spaces such as hallways.

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430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	450mm 600mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	430mm 580mm	480mm 610mm	1200mm	1200mm
BASIC energy saving for the budget conscious home owner	SUPERIOR energy saving and acoustic performance	ULTRA energy saving and high density sound blocking performance		BASIC sound absorbing performance	ULTRA sound absorbing performance	BASIC energy saving performance	SUPERIOR energy saving performance		ULTRA energy saving performance		SUPERIOR energy saving performance	SUPERIOR anti-condensation and energy saving performance	ULTRA anti-condensation and energy saving performance
75mm	90mm	90mm		50mm OR 75mm		145mm	175mm	195mm	210mm	275mm	75mm	55mm	75mm

For guidance on installation – watch the videos. Scan the QR codes or go to www.knaufinsulation.com.au

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WALL



UNDERFLOOR

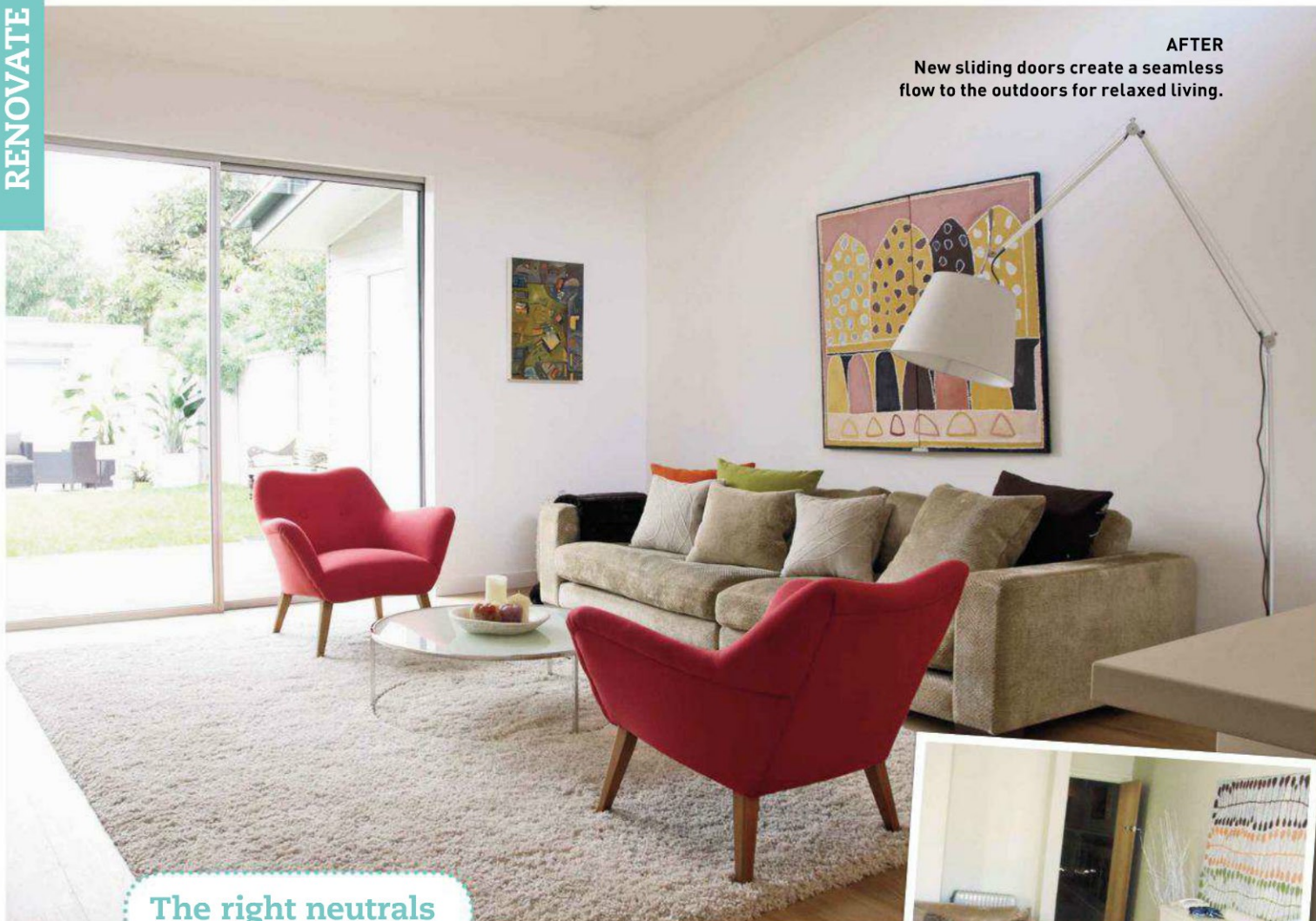


CEILING

Find out more at www.knaufinsulation.com.au

AFTER

New sliding doors create a seamless flow to the outdoors for relaxed living.



The right neutrals

Decorate to present a classic canvas with a fresh, liveable feel. **INDOOR PAINT** colour choices depend on the amount of natural light. Use warm whites in darker rooms and cooler whites in rooms that receive lots of bright light.

For a neutral scheme using Dulux paints, use Bright White flat ceiling paint, Wash & Wear in Linseed half strength on walls, and High-Gloss Enamel in Natural White on doors and trim. **OUTDOOR PAINT** colours must tone in with neighbouring houses. Dulux Weathershield in Lanyard is a safe but modern colour that works well with Colorbond roofing in Deep Ocean or Monument. **FLOORING** materials are subject to trends and the style of the home but most buyers prefer timber boards and light-coloured carpet in bedrooms is popular.

DECORATE AND PAINT

Neutrals are the colours to use when renovating a house to sell because they're easy to match, inexpensive and let a buyer add their own style. They also make a space feel bigger.

In Claudine's house, a retro tile motif dominated the long hallway from the entrance.

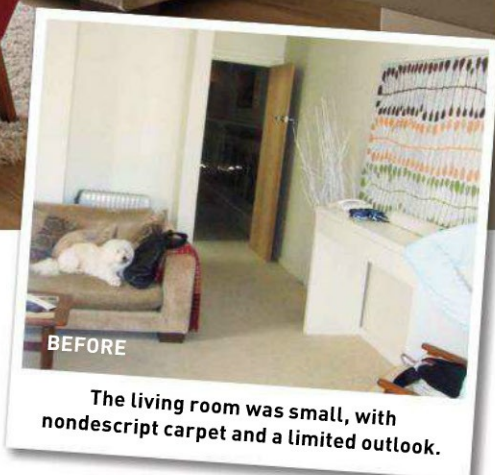
While unique, it had the potential to put off buyers so Claudine covered it with particleboard, referencing the period with embossed wallpaper beneath the dado rail.

Avoid bland walls by adding colour and texture with accessories and art.

'Whatever your taste, what is on the walls should inform decorating choices. Large, colourful pieces are great for staging for sale,' says Claudine.

But don't be tempted to use too much of your own style in the home.

'Keep it fresh, simple and unfussy to appeal to potential buyers.'



The living room was small, with nondescript carpet and a limited outlook.

SELLING SUCCESS

Thoughtfully renovated and ready to go, Claudine's property sold quickly.

The work took 10 weeks to do and cost \$185 000. The after-sale profit was more than \$200 000 but was split with a joint investor.

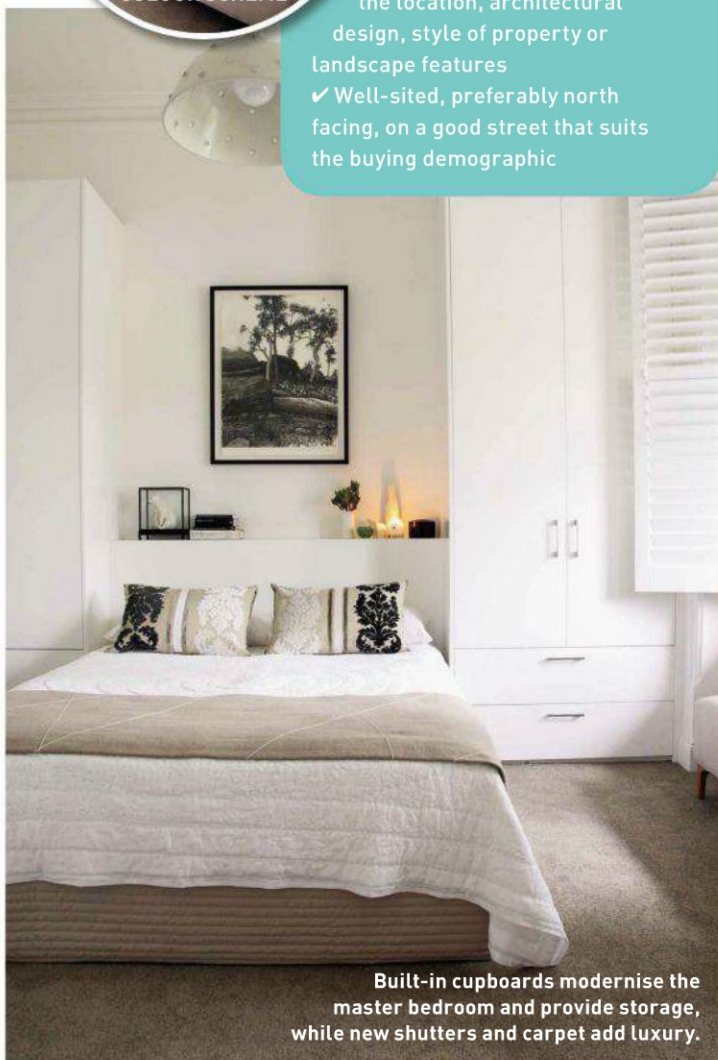
'The market was a bit flat when we sold but holding on is always a gamble. All in all, this one was pretty straightforward but there are things I learn every time,' says Claudine.

'I think an important point to remember is that no renovation will go entirely to plan and part of the process of doing this is learning to let go of mistakes and move on.'

Weighing the odds

In the market for a money-making renovation project? Make sure your property ticks as many of these boxes as possible for the best return on your cash and labour.

- ✓ Structurally sound and in good workable condition
- ✓ Good basic layout that will suit conversion to modern living
- ✓ Solid timber floors and/or period features
- ✓ The potential to create pleasant views
- ✓ Space to extend without incurring opposition and delays from neighbours
- ✓ Rarity value such as the location, architectural design, style of property or landscape features
- ✓ Well-sited, preferably north facing, on a good street that suits the buying demographic



Built-in cupboards modernise the master bedroom and provide storage, while new shutters and carpet add luxury.

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BEFORE

Two separate toilets and a kitchenette were slated to become a bathroom and laundry.



BEFORE

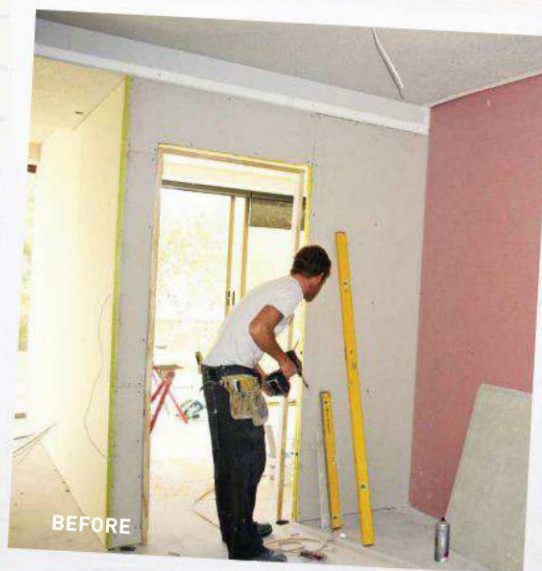
With a large area opening onto a balcony, the unit had plenty of space for a kitchen.

CONVERT
AN OFFICE

REVAMP TO RENT OUT

Make money as a landlord by turning a commercial unit into a residential space

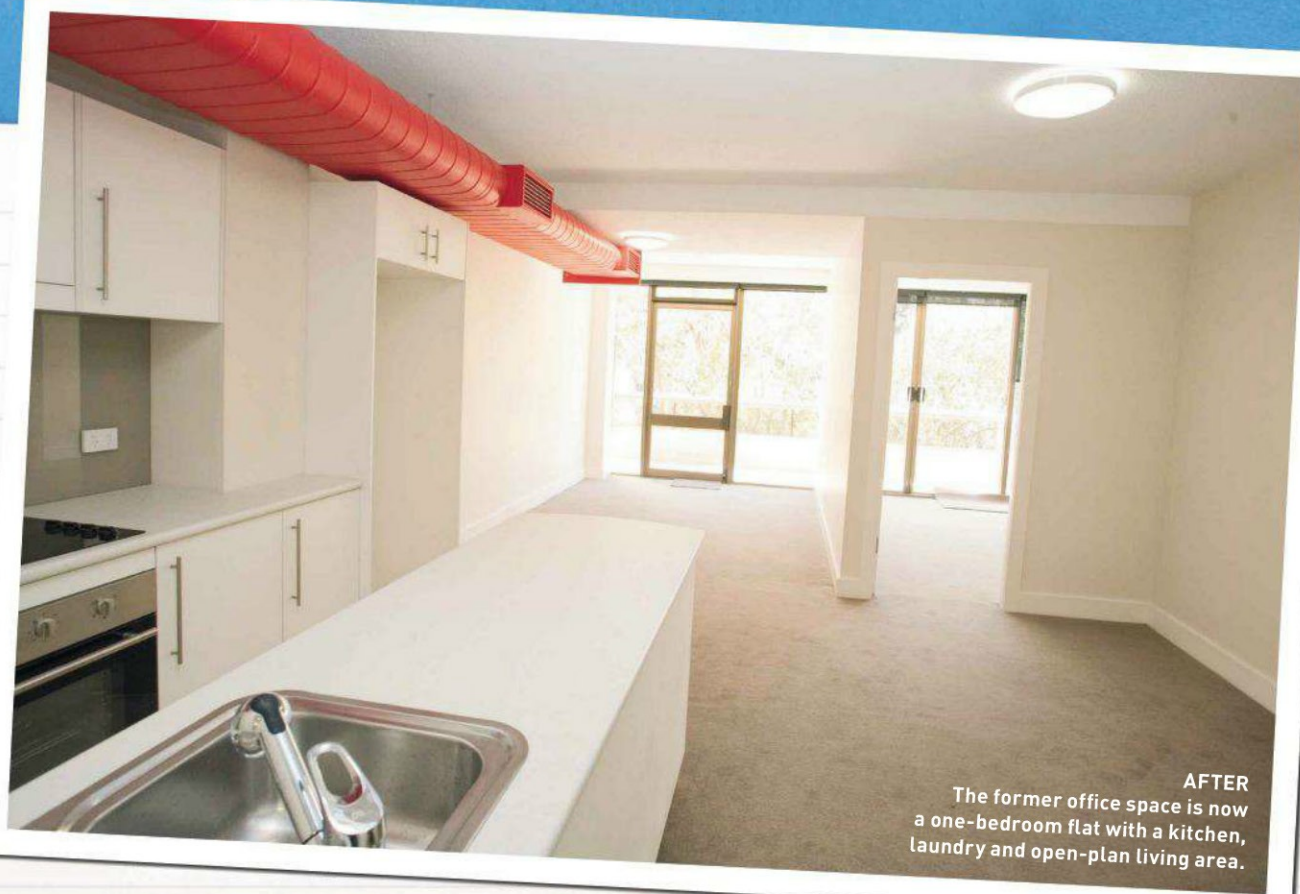
WORDS **MONICA NYE** MAIN PICTURE **ARUNAS KLUPSAS**



BEFORE

Jan had two new walls built to create a separate bedroom with balcony access.

PICTURES (LEFT) JAN NEWLAND



AFTER
The former office space is now a one-bedroom flat with a kitchen, laundry and open-plan living area.

Jan Newland's two-storey blue-chip commercial space in the Sydney business hub of North Sydney was starting to feel a little too spacious.

After 13 years there running her communications company, Eden Media, Jan planned to scale back her work commitments, so she no longer required the entire space.

She devised a plan to turn her investment into two money-making enterprises, a residential unit yielding more than \$25 000 a year and a tax-effective working office.

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

Although the space had not been previously used for accommodation, it was close to the city, transport and cafes, and offered secure off-street parking and intercom access.

It also had great bones with a coveted north-facing leafy aspect downstairs, a generous balcony and

large windows. Upstairs featured a large terrace ideal for entertaining.

With a bit of a floorplan rejig and council approval, Jan planned to rework the original foyer into two separate entrances. The idea was to shift her workspace upstairs and renovate the downstairs area into a one-bedroom apartment.

'I was a novice so I had a lot of hurdles to jump. The development application took me about 10 months to get through council,' says Jan.

'The biggest obstacle was getting approval for a mixed-use development, so I could convert my commercial suite to residential. Once I had jumped over that, I just had compliance issues to deal with.'

A neighbour with a similar property was renovating at the same time, so they shared their knowledge, doubled up on tradies and swapped tips on dealing with red tape.

THE RENO PLAN

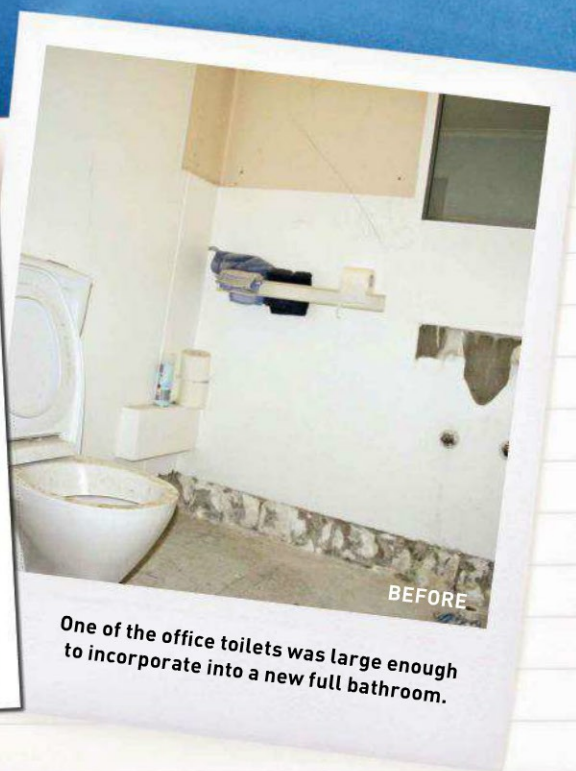
'The downstairs area was gutted then I had new walls put in and the plumbing and electrics done.

'The second toilet room was turned into a compact laundry and linen press area, and a tiny kitchenette was knocked out to make the bathroom bigger.

'A brand new kitchen was then installed in the living area,' Jan says.

The renovation began in August 2012 and was finished by mid October, taking just two and a half months. The only major hiccup was the privacy screening on the balcony, separating Jan's unit from next door.

'I ordered the screens back in September but they didn't come until the start of December and they're not finished. There were a few tears there but delays come with the territory and that's really the worst problem I've had,' Jan says. ➤



COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Jan says the usual trade compliance certification and council bureaucracy didn't faze her, as she was organised.

'Going in as a novice I didn't know at first you have to prove you've done it right by getting approval certificates from all the trades.

'The man who puts up the wall has to give a certificate saying the wall is BCA (Building Code of Australia) compliant,' says Jan.

'The plumber who puts in the taps has to give a certificate to say they have the right flow rate, and on it goes.'

She now considers the whole certification process to have been a valuable learning curve.

'Knowing all that's involved, I'm happy to do it all again upstairs. I'll just remember not to let any tradie leave until they give me a certificate!'

THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Jan's modest budget of \$60 000 plus appliances resulted in a total transformation of the property and created a modern unit commanding more than \$500 a week in rent.

'I naively thought I could've got away with paying less for the reno

but am actually very happy with the final cost as I know my neighbour spent about 20% more,' she says.

Although Jan has permission to strata the upstairs unit and turn that into a potential second source of income, she's biding her time to see how the local real estate market moves.

'There are a huge number of commercial leases available around here at the moment but it's filling up instead with residential.

'I'm guessing that's because a lot of the former businesses that were here have gone to trendy inner-city places.'



Maximising the reno

Here are Jan's top tips, learnt on the steep curve of her first reno.

CUT YOUR LOSSES 'If you have a tradie who's slow, doesn't turn up or doesn't do a good job, get rid of them fast. It's your valuable time and money that's being wasted,' says Jan. **SHARE COSTS** If you're able to share costs and tips with anyone else, then do so. 'I was lucky a neighbour was renovating at the same time so we helped each other.'

MAKE SAVINGS Jan used existing downstairs plumbing when redoing the bathroom and converting the second toilet into a laundry. For the upstairs, she'll use her neighbour's existing sewage pipe connection to make installing a toilet cheaper.

FIND GOOD TENANTS 'The sooner you can get the certification, approvals and renovation done the better, then you can start recouping costs by renting out the property,' says Jan.



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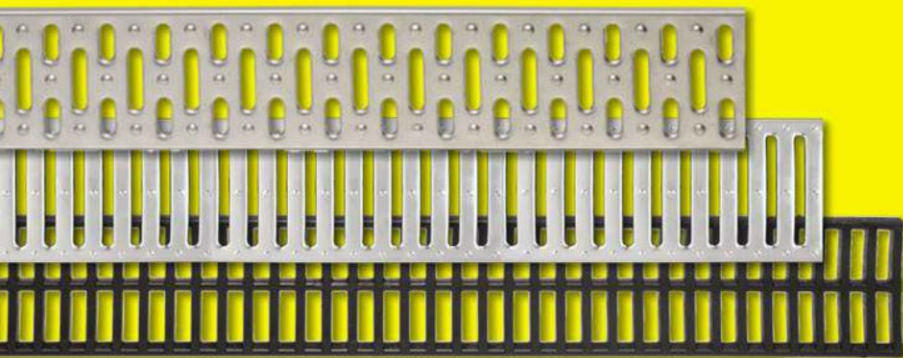
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LAY PAVING for less maintenance and more entertaining options. Use recycled 450 x 450mm pavers, about \$10 each, and haunch the edges with concrete, adding a drainage channel along the lowest edge.

BUILD ARBOURS to define the entrance. Add a trellis here or to an exterior wall as a decorative backdrop or frame for climbing plants. Build freestanding arbours for \$300 each, and make a trellis for \$150.

CREATE ZONES and provide a terraced planting area by building a dry-stone wall. The cost depends on size, but as a guide, a pallet of rough-cut 300 x 300 x 150mm sandstone blocks is \$125 plus delivery.

PLANT UP flat or uninteresting areas by using topsoil to create a mound. Topsoil costs about \$45 a cubic metre plus delivery. Hardy foliage plants like cordyline and agave cost about \$20 for a 200mm pot.

WEEKEND
PROJECTS

BRING IT TO THE KERB

Add easy, eye-catching DIY features to glam up the front of your house

ADD SHAPE to the landscape with a boulder, digging a shallow hole for it so the boulder looks like a natural feature. Buy boulders from a landscape supplier for about \$50, depending on the size, plus delivery.

First impressions are just as important for your enjoyment of your home as they are to its kerb appeal for resale value.

An inviting front yard doesn't have to cost thousands of dollars, it can be as simple as landscaping a flat, bare patch of ground and adding a stone wall and arbours.

Best of all, you can give your home the look of an established residence in just a weekend by speeding up

construction using primed treated pine for the arbour gateway and stone blocks instead of bricks for the walls.

Finish the look by adding a paved patio and path to the gateway, plus a few landscape features, including new plants for colour and greenery.

To save research time, take a photo of the area you're planning to plant up to your local nursery.

The staff will advise you on plants that will look good and grow well. ➤



CORDYLINE



AGAVE AND YUCCA

MAKE THE ARBOURS

Define the access to the front door with arbours built from primed exterior finger-jointed pine.

The decorative arbours are built using pairs of posts, clad on all sides and supporting a lintel on either side. The trellis arbour is made by adding an integrated lattice panel.

Adapt the size of the arbours to make the gateway proportional to the home and apply an exterior acrylic for a weatherproof finish.

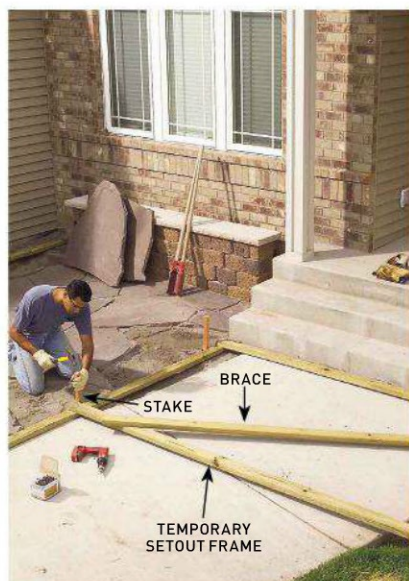
TIP Use H4 treated pine for the posts and concrete directly into the ground, priming the posts and any cut edges.



Dulux Weathershield in Vivid White, \$67 for four litres. dulux.com.au

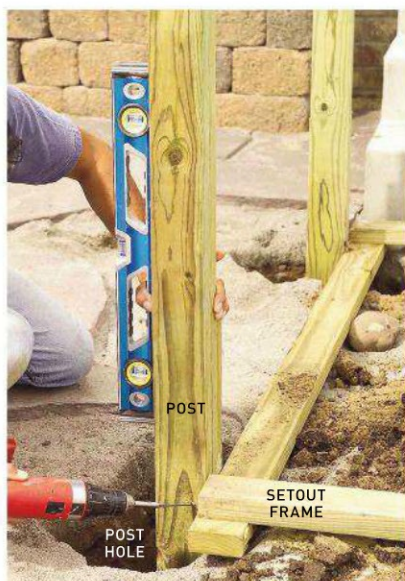


Add a trellis to the arbour gateway, or build a trellised arbour against a wall.



1 Lay out the frame

Set out the arbour positions using a temporary 90 x 45mm timber frame, measuring the diagonals for square then bracing it. Mark post locations with stakes at the corners then dig 900 x 300 x 300mm post holes.



2 Sink the posts

Add 100mm gravel then the posts to the holes. Check for plumb then skew-screw the posts to the frame. Clamp temporary braces between the posts and frame then mix water and fast-set concrete in the holes.



3 Attach the lintels

Use offcuts to support the lintel then secure with 120mm x 14g bugle screws. Continue the height mark around the post using a speed square then secure the second lintel and cut the post to length with a handsaw.

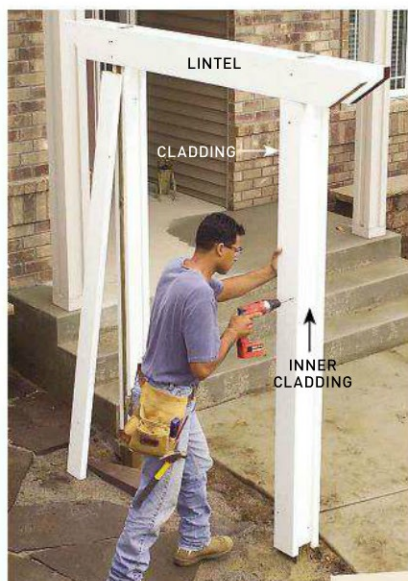
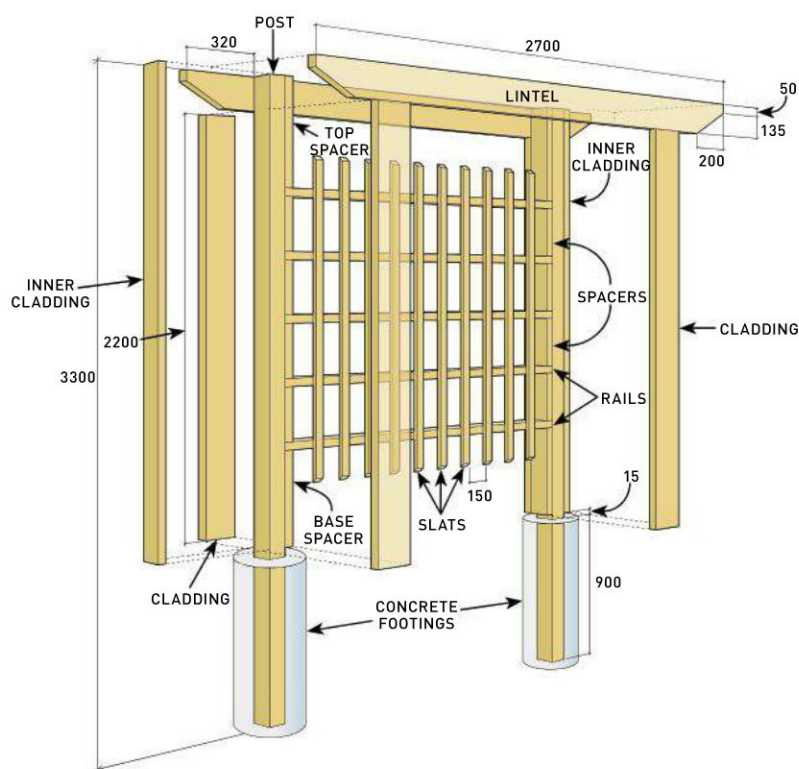
ARBOUR GATEWAY

measurements in mm

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
TREATED PINE		
Posts	3300 x 90 x 90	4
PRIMED FJ PINE		
Lintels	2700 x 185 x 42	4
Cladding	2200 x 138 x 42	8
Inner cladding	2385 x 90 x 19	6
Rails	1800 x 90 x 42	5
Base spacers	525 x 90 x 19	2
Spacers	300 x 90 x 19	8
Top spacers	450 x 90 x 19	2
Slats	1800 x 42 x 18	10

TIP This cutting list makes two arbours, one with a trellis.



4 Secure the cladding

Remove the lintel supports then prop the base of the cladding above the post footing using a timber offcut. Secure the cladding, butting against the lintel with equal overhang both sides then add the inner cladding.



5 Make the lattice panel

Leave off two sides of cladding. Position the rails side by side and square lines across the edges 223mm from one end then at 150mm centres. Secure the spacers with 40mm x 8g screws, adding the rails as you go.



6 Finish the trellis

Attach a straightedge 140mm above the top rail as a guide, position the slats centred on the markings and butted against the guide, then secure with 60 x 2.8mm galvanised nails. Add the remaining cladding. ➤

BUILD RETAINING WALLS

If your front garden has a gentle slope, create zones with level terraces that can be planted up to create contrast with the contoured raised area closer to the house.

Here, the gradually curving wall butts against a paved driveway and retains a 700mm high garden bed making garden maintenance easy.

Each wall is built on a 50mm thick bed of concrete poured into a 100mm deep trench, ensuring the base of the first row stays below ground level.

The large base stones are about 300mm long and the intermediate stones are about 250mm long.

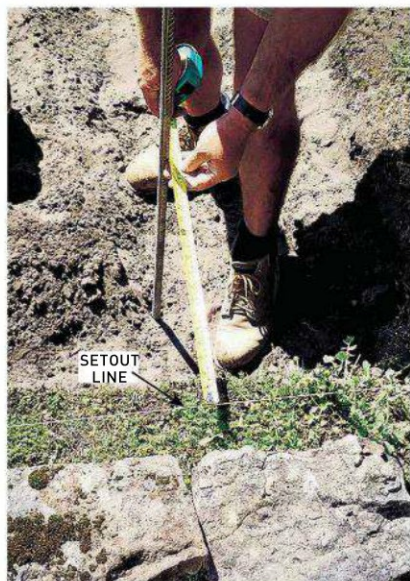
For the top, we used smaller cap stones but you can also use pavers, cut with a bolster and lump hammer.

Set out a curved wall using a hose and line marking paint, then excavate and fill to create a vertical face, digging a 400 x 100mm deep footing trench.

TIP To speed up the excavation process, hire a bobcat for the day.



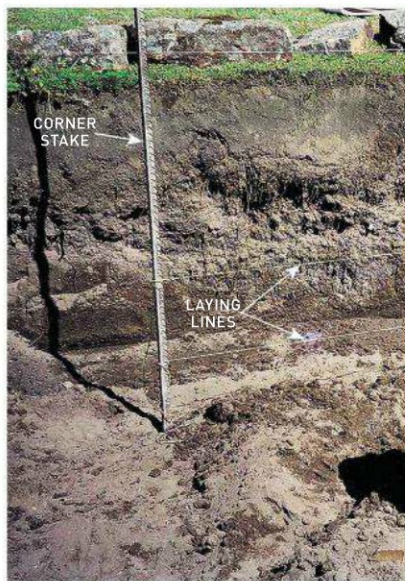
Dress up retaining walls with colourful edging plants and pots.



1 Establish the angle

Keep the face of the wall 500mm from the setout line, hammering in long stakes at the ends and at suitable points in between to follow the curve.

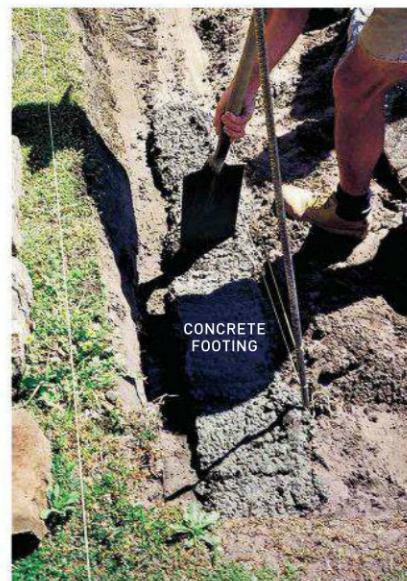
TIP Angle the stakes back 100mm per metre of wall height for stability.



2 Set stringlines

Secure stringlines to the stakes as a guide to maintain the face angle of the stone as the wall is built.

TIP Move the stringlines up the stakes as each course of stones is laid, just as you would to build a plumb brick wall.

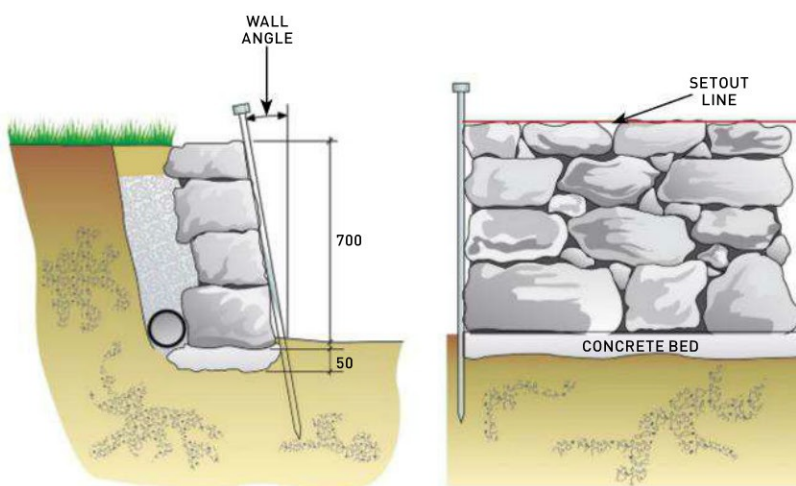


3 Spread the footing

Mix four parts gravel, two parts sand and one part cement then spread a 50mm thick concrete footing along the whole trench, working in sections.

TIP If the soil is dry, make the concrete mix a little wetter to keep it workable.

STACKED RETAINING WALL measurements in mm



Concrete edging

If the wall meets grass at the top or base, add a 100mm wide strip of concrete for mowing.

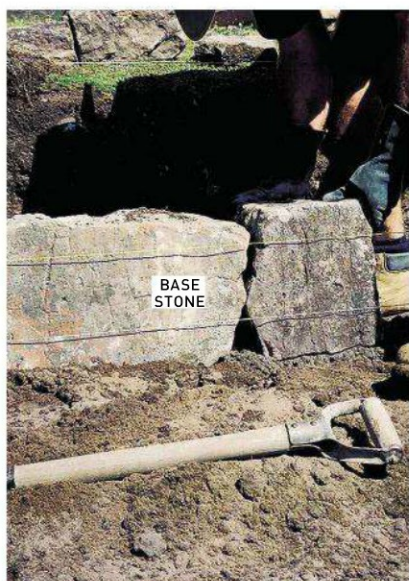
Excavate a 100mm deep trench that's about 150mm wide and position 90 x 45mm timber formwork, secured with pegs.

Fill behind the formwork with concrete, levelling the surface with a steel float, and finish by rounding the front edge of the concrete with a concrete edger.

When the concrete has cured, remove the formwork and backfill the gap with soil.

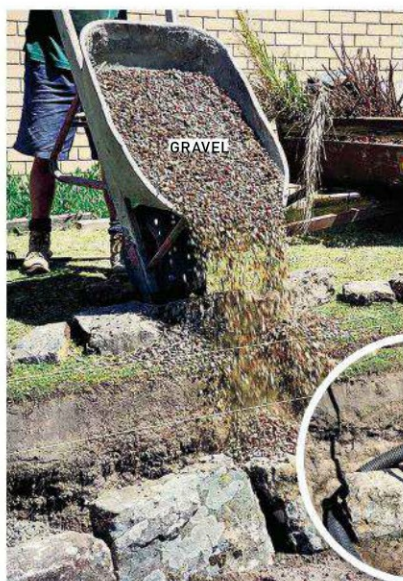


Trojan Concrete Edger, \$10.
trojantools.com.au



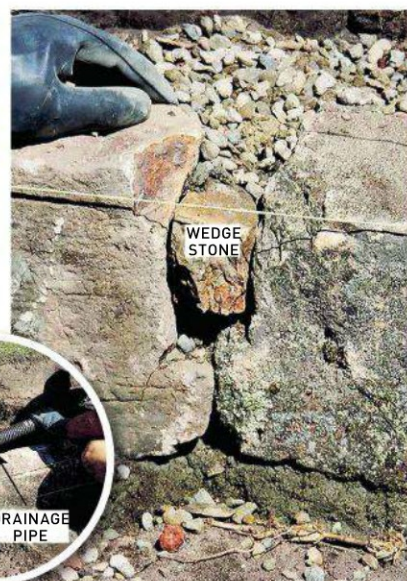
4 Lay the base course

Position the base stones in a random arrangement of size, following the stringlines to ensure a consistent angle for the face. Butt the stones tightly against each other, keeping a flat edge on top for the next course.



5 Add the fill

To assist drainage, wrap geotextile fabric around agricultural pipe and butt it against the base stones. Moving the stringlines, lay the courses in one direction, staggering the joints. Fill behind the wall with gravel.



6 Finish the wall

Split off wedges from larger stones using a lump hammer and bolster and use them to fill gaps. Set a stringline at the finished wall height, apply a thin bed of concrete and lay the capping stones, tapping them down.

FIND A PAIN-FREE MORTGAGE

Choose wisely and save smart to avoid the traps and secure the best home loan possible for your future

WORDS **RACHEL SMITH**

Buying property can be daunting as well as exciting. After all, it's probably the biggest investment you'll ever make and paying off a mortgage is a responsibility you're likely to be tied to for many years.

On the plus side, home ownership has been steady at about 70% in Australia for decades, so most of us are taking the plunge. And although interest rates may rise, competition between lenders remains heated, making it a good time to get a foothold on the property ladder.

'It's a great time to be applying for a loan. There are offers out there that I haven't seen in all my years of being a broker,' says Melbourne-based Mortgage Choice broker Neil Gorman.

'It's no harder to get a loan than it was pre-GFC. In fact, because we're now seeing some big lenders returning to lending 95% of the value of the property, it's become a lot easier for first homebuyers than it was previously.'

AVOID CREDIT RISK

We've all missed a payment deadline for a utility bill or credit card, but if late payments are a regular thing or you've got a default recorded on your credit file, look out.

'One late payment won't be such an issue but if you're regularly making late payments, it may reflect on your ability to repay your mortgage,' says Neil.

Lodging too many credit applications, whether for a loan or a new credit card, can also work against you, he warns.

'The more applications you've lodged, the lower your credit score is.

As a result your loan application may never see the light of day.'

It can take just four to six credit applications within the past six months to leave you tarred with the 'bad credit risk' brush.





Broker or bank?

According to the Mortgage Choice 2011 Recent First Homeowner Survey, 40% of respondents preferred to see a mortgage broker for loan advice, while 19% opted for a lender.

USING A BROKER minimises research time because brokers have access to

hundreds of loans, can suggest ones that suit your needs and budget, and will secure the loan on your behalf.

Most brokers don't charge fees and although some may get paid different commissions depending on which lender you choose, many receive the

same commission regardless of who you sign up with.

STICKING WITH THE BANK is easier if you have an existing relationship with them, already hold a mortgage there, or want to release equity in one property in order to buy another. ➤



PURCHASE FOR INVESTMENT

Scott, a senior analyst, lives in Sydney and bought his second property, an investment flat in Queensland, five years ago. He obtained the mortgage through his bank.

'Getting the mortgage was relatively easy but I needed quick approval, as I'd already found the property and wanted to use the equity in another property I had,' says Scott.

'I wanted the flexibility of several smaller loans that could be paid off at different periods, without the need to refinance or pay early discharge fees. I also wanted a fixed interest rate and the option to repay more.

'I'd been with this bank for a few years and had built up a relationship with my personal banker. Their solution gave me confidence that I didn't need to research other options.

'The initial approval was verbally provided in the first meeting and I signed the mortgage papers a week later,' says Scott.

The mortgage toolkit

Arm yourself with as much information as possible before you hit the For Sale ads.

DO THE SUMS You'll find a dizzying array of mortgage calculators online, which can help you work out everything from your borrowing limit down to what your basic loan repayments might be.

Visit mortgagechoice.com.au or yourmortgage.com.au/calculators.

CHECK YOUR RATING Head online to My Credit File (mycreditfile.com.au) to request a copy of your credit file, which is used by lenders to determine your credit worthiness.

The report costs \$50 and will outline loans you've previously applied for, bad credit or defaults that may be lodged against you.

GET A GRANT The First Home Owner's Grant (firsthome.gov.au) is a one-off payment of up to \$7000

available to first homebuyers who satisfy the criteria.

There is also a range of different concessions depending on which Australian state you live in.

BOOST YOUR SAVINGS A First Home Saver Account (FHSA) makes saving for a deposit easier for eligible applicants because the government will pay up to 17% of your personal contributions for the financial year, up to a yearly maximum.

Parents and other family members can also contribute to your FHSA. Visit ato.gov.au for more info.

CHOOSE THE LOAN Should you go with fixed to protect against interest rate rises, or would you be better off with a part fixed, part variable loan?

The Fixed vs Variable Interest Rates factsheet from Mortgage Choice (mortgagechoice.com.au) can help you understand the difference.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Securing a mortgage is dependent on a number of factors and when you apply for a loan you give a lender approval to dig into your finances and credit history. Generally, lenders tend to focus on what are known as the four Cs of lending.

CHARACTER is a measure of your stability, so if you bounce from job to job you may be viewed as high risk.

If you're thinking of changing jobs, it's best to apply for a loan before you leave the old one.

'The lender looks at whether the applicant has been with the same employer for 6 to 12 months and in the same occupation for a couple of years,' says Neil.

'And you'll need to have been self-employed for two years before a lender will consider your income.'

CREDIT is the 'big black box' between you and the potential lender.

It's an automatic system that scores you before an actual physical assessor even looks at your application, according to Neil.

'The black box has a load of equations and predictable questions in it which are asked.

'These questions include the number of credit enquiries or loan applications you've made, as well as the loan to value ratio, your income and so on,' says Neil.

CAPACITY refers to whether you have the means to make the repayments and your lender will make sure of it before they give you the mortgage nod.

'Lenders look at your income and expenses and work out if there's enough left over to repay the debt,' says Neil.

The number of kids is taken into account as well as high credit card limits.

COLLATERAL refers to a measure of the value, condition and marketability of the property you're intending to buy.

'Banks only lend 90 to 95% of the value of the property so you need a deposit plus extra money to cover costs,' says Neil.



The Tradies' Best-Kept Secret. LITTLE RIPPER MINI-ROLLERS.

The Uni-Pro Mini-Rollers will help take the hassle out of painting, and you'll find out why they're top favourites with the pro's for these important reasons...

- › Easier to use than a brush, these lightweight mini-rollers are perfect for all those awkward hard to get-at spots, and they're perfect for touchups
- › Brilliantly versatile, the range of roller naps will handle just about every kind of surface, and the widest range of paints and stains
- › So amazingly economical, you can forget about messy clean-ups. Just discard the used roller and click in a new one from the convenient 10 Pack.

The Uni-Pro "Little-Ripper" Mini-Rollers come in two sizes 100mm (4") and 160 mm (6.5"), and are available from Bunnings and all other leading hardware and paint retailers.

UNI-PRO
PAINTING EQUIPMENT
www.unipro.com.au

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse





STORAGE SOLUTION

Knock out a hole in the wall to install space-saving storage in any room in the house.

Fasteners

Use PVA adhesive on all joints and 40mm x 8g timber screws to build the box then secure it to the pine noggin.

Add the plywood back to the box with 20 x 1.25mm panel pins.

Assemble the face frame with 75mm x 8g screws then use 40mm x 8g timber screws to attach it to the box.

Hole in the WALL SHELVES

Cut out a piece of plasterboard and install a timber frame for recessed shelving you can build in a day for just \$105

DIY> \$105

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$505

SKILL> 1 2 3 4 5

TIME> 1 DAY

Storage in a small home can be hard to come by but in a room with plasterboard walls, you have extra space at your disposal.

Easy to build, this shelving is a box measuring 1800mm high and 395mm wide that fits between wall studs spaced 405mm apart. If your studs are at 600mm, simply adjust the dimensions of the box.

Before you buy the materials, choose the position, locate the wall studs and cut a hole in the plasterboard using a compass saw.

To get the box width, measure between the studs at the top and base of the opening, checking for plumb with a spirit level, and subtract 10mm.

For the depth, measure from the wall surface to the back of the hole and subtract 6mm, cutting the shelves to fit with a 1.5mm gap either side.

TIP Walls contain pipes, wires and more, so you need to find a clear spot.

CUT THE COMPONENTS

For standard 90 x 45mm wall studs and 10mm plasterboard, build the box using raw or primed pine.

Cut two noggins from 90 x 45mm timber to fit between the studs at the top and base of the box, securing with screws skewed through the ends into the studs.

The box sides, top and base are cut from 90 x 19mm pine with two rows of 5mm holes drilled on the sides for the shelf support pins.

Secure a strip of pegboard with 5mm holes to an offset of 42 x 19mm timber with adhesive, using the template to drill the shelf pin holes 20mm from the edges of the sides.

TIP Paint the box after the face frame is attached, let it dry then secure it in the wall cavity, adding the shelves. ➤



Trojan 350mm Compass Saw,
\$8. trojantools.com.au



Cavity inspection

To check the space between studs is usable, cut a 75 x 50mm hole in the wall with a compass saw.

Use the mirror of a compact and a torch to look inside. Inspect the space for pipes, wires and other obstructions. If the cavity is clear then cut the hole but if not, repair the plasterboard.

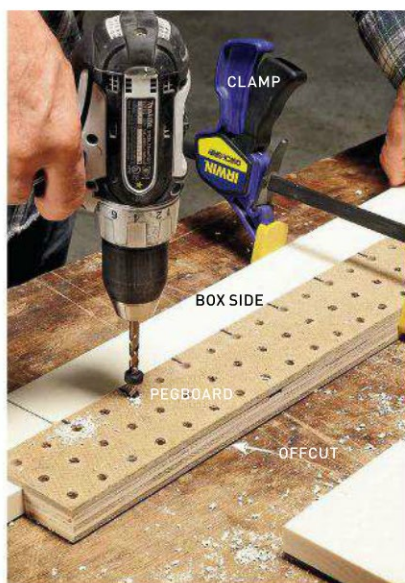
TIP Switch plates and outlets indicate wiring in that stud space.

INSTALL THE SHELVES



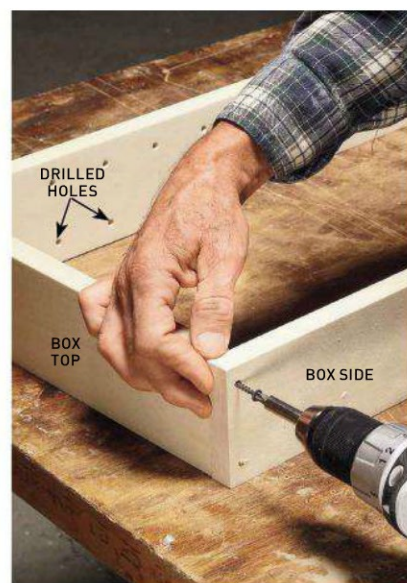
1 Cut the hole

Use a stud finder to find the studs, marking level lines at the top and base between them and plumb lines down the inside edges. Use a compass saw to cut the plasterboard, letting the blade follow the sides of the studs.



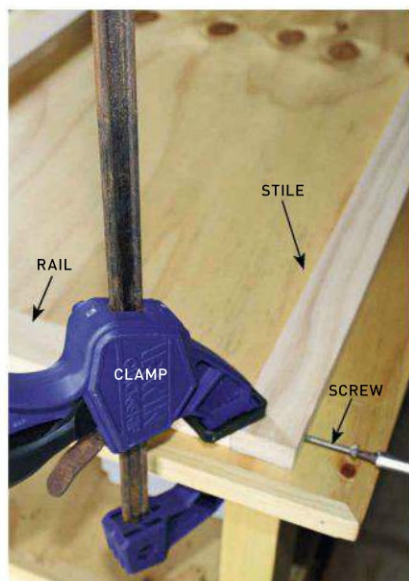
2 Drill shelf support holes

Secure a strip of pegboard to a 19mm thick offcut then clamp it to the box sides as a template. Use a stop collar on a 5mm drill bit to make 10mm deep shelf support holes 20mm from the edges, spaced 50mm apart.



3 Assemble the box

Position the top and base between the sides and drill 2mm pilot holes, securing with screws. Position the ply back and secure with nails on one side, square up the box using a builder's square, securing the other three sides.



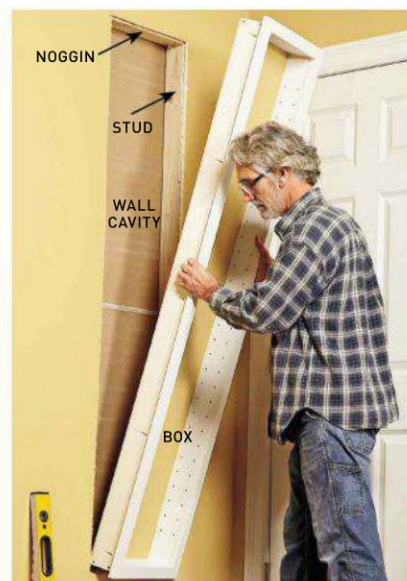
4 Make the face frame

Position the face frame rails between the stiles and clamp. Drill 2mm pilot holes and secure with screws through the outside of the stiles into the rails, covering the screw heads with timber filler.



5 Attach the face frame

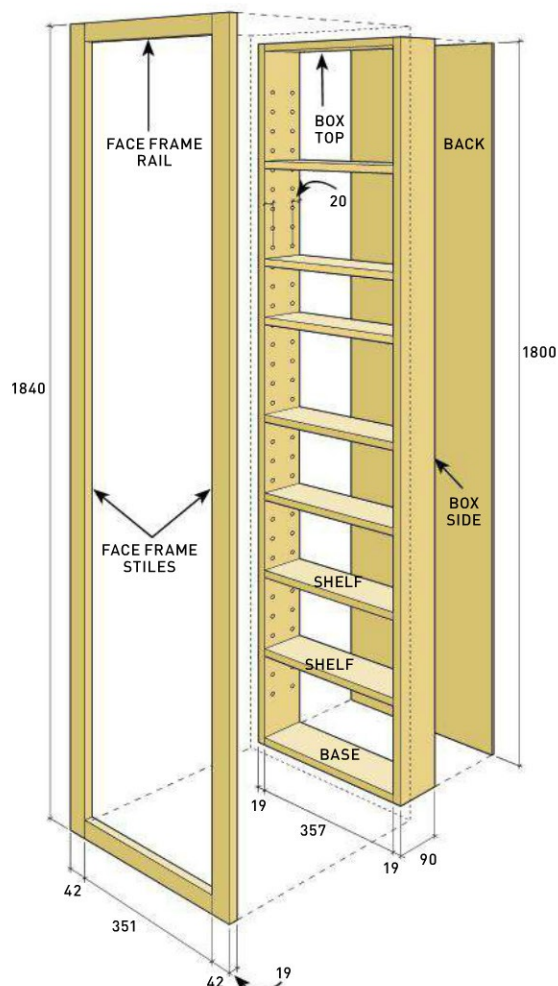
Position the face frame on the box with 20mm overhang on the outside and drill 2mm angled pilot holes at 300mm centres, securing with screws. **TIP** Or use 30 x 2mm bullethead nails to secure the face frame from the front.



6 Install the shelves

Position the box in the wall cavity and secure to the noggins with screws. Secure one screw through the centre of the sides but don't over-tighten and pull them out of plumb. Insert the shelf pins and position the shelves.

HOLE IN THE WALL SHELVES measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
PINE		
Box sides	1800 x 90 x 19	2
Box top and base	357 x 90 x 19	2
Shelves	354 x 90 x 19	7
Face frame stiles	1840 x 42 x 19	2
Face frame rails	351 x 42 x 19	2
Noggins	405 x 90 x 45	2
PLYWOOD		
Back	1800 x 395 x 3	1

+ Handyman.net.au

Go online to download the tools, materials and costs to make these recessed wall shelves.



**New Dulux Wash & Wear®
+Plus** protects from what
you can and cannot see.

New Dulux Wash & Wear® +Plus is designed to withstand all that young families and pets can throw at it. Plus it has built in technology to protect against bacteria, and offers a 5 year guarantee* against mould growth.

*Please see product can label or www.dulux.com.au for more guarantee information.



Dulux®
Worth doing, worth Dulux.

RUNG HUNG CLOTHES RACK

Paint an old timber ladder and mount it on the wall to create vertical storage for clothes and accessories

Floor space is often at a premium in a small bedroom and without enough wardrobe storage, clutter can become hard to avoid.

This clothes rack made from an old timber ladder provides valuable storage without dominating a space.

To revamp a ladder, prepare the timber for painting using a belt sander, then drill holes in the rungs for coathangers. Secure the ladder to timber brackets painted to match.

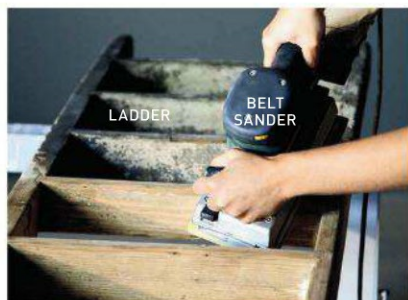
Clothes are hung from the rungs and storage boxes stacked on top, with bags, hats, scarves and wraps draped over the ladder ends and brackets.

To hang the rack, calculate the weight of the ladder, your clothes and any other items, then choose the appropriate fasteners.

For over 10kg, use sleeve anchors like Dynabolts in masonry walls. In plasterboard use metal toggle bolts or secure 65mm x 8g screws to the studs.



Ryobi 800W Belt Sander, \$79.
ryobi.com.au



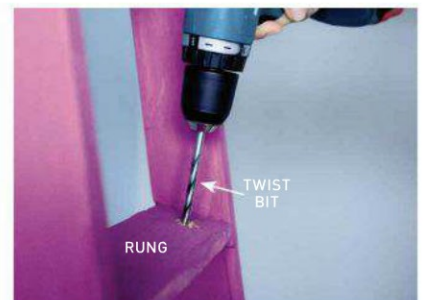
1 Sand the timber

Use a belt sander to remove any old paint or other finishes, wearing eye, ear and breathing protection. Smooth the raw timber by hand with a sanding block and 180 grit abrasive paper.



2 Paint the ladder

Fill any holes or cracks in the ladder with timber filler and sand smooth. Apply two coats of purple acrylic using a paintbrush, sanding lightly between coats with 180 grit abrasive paper.



3 Hang the rack

Mark the positions of the hangers on the rungs and drill the holes using a 6mm twist bit. Secure the brackets to the end rungs using 25mm x 8g timber screws then secure to the wall with screws, toggle bolts or Dynabolts.



Add streamlined storage to the bedroom with a timber ladder you can turn into a clothes rack in a day.



Bring a bit of nature indoors by using branches as brackets for a floating shelf.

Hanging the shelf

Since branches don't have the same kind of structural strength as steel brackets, only use the shelf for lightweight objects.

To mount the shelf on a plasterboard wall, secure it using Wall-Mates, about \$5 for a pack of four with screws, from Buildex (buildex.com.au).

In a masonry wall, make holes using a hammer drill and masonry bit then tap in wall plugs. Secure the brackets with 8g screws long enough to go through the branches and penetrate 25mm into the wall.

STYLE ON
A BUDGET

BRANCH-BRACKET WALL SHELF

Install a floating shelf with supports sourced from the garden for a simple yet eye-catching display

Turn a melamine board left over from a piece of flat-packed furniture into a distinctive display shelf by securing it to the wall with forked branches.

We used crabapple tree branches but any other smooth-barked tree such as eucalyptus will work.

Source branches from an arborist or the next time you prune, save ones 30mm thick with a straight main branch and a second forking off at 45°.

Irregular and organic shapes like tree branches need to be adapted to be used with a board in place of geometric shelf brackets.

Trim the branches to fit into a right-angled space using a simple clamping technique, then secure them to the shelf with 40mm x 8g countersunk timber screws.

TIP If you don't have a melamine board, use 800 x 300 x 18mm plywood, MDF or particleboard.



Irwin Evo Universal Handsaw, about \$20. irwin.com.au



1 Trim the branches

Temporarily secure a length of 90 x 45mm timber at right angles to a scrap piece of plywood, then clamp the straight side of the branch to it. Use the edge of the ply as a guide to cut the fork with a handsaw.



2 Attach the brackets

Clamp the shelf upright, position the branches against and trace around the ends. Drill clearance holes in the shelf and pilot holes in the fork ends.

TIP Drill near the base of the branch marks so the screws penetrate enough.



3 Hang the shelf

Use a spirit level to mark the shelf position then drill clearance holes through the branches and secure to plasterboard with Wall-Mates or to masonry with wall plugs and screws.

TIP Support the shelf on a ladder.

CORNER
DISPLAY

For the ultimate decorative storage make floating corner shelves for just \$70.

KNICK-KNACK SHELVES

Make the most of an empty corner and install floating shelves to put books and bric-a-brac on show

DIY> \$70

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$470

SKILL> 1 2 3 4 5

TIME> 1 DAY

Remember Grandma's corner cabinet filled with a lifetime of treasures? Here's a modern take on that old-fashioned display method.

Floating shelves like these are simple, cheap, quick to make and free up valuable floorspace.

Installed in a corner they also have the bonus of using wasted space and can be put up in any room, as the size and number are easily adjusted.

These shelves are just triangles cut from 16mm thick MDF using a jigsaw.

They sit on supports with mitred ends to fit in the corners, cut from pine moulding using a handsaw.

The shelf supports are secured into the wall studs while the shelves are attached with adhesive and nails.

TIP Try Colonial Pine Moulding Architrave, 42 x 18mm, about \$6 for 2700mm, from Porta (porta.com.au).

SECURE TO THE WALL

We used a stud finder to locate the wall studs then installed four shelves, starting 600mm from the floor with a spacing of 400mm in between to maintain an open, uncluttered look.

For extra storage, five shelves positioned at 300mm spacings can also be installed.



For a neat flush fit it's important to check the adjacent walls are square to one another using a builder's square before cutting out the shelves.

If the walls are out of square, mark and cut out a cardboard template for the shelves, then check the fit is correct. To cut out the shelves transfer the template to the MDF. ➤

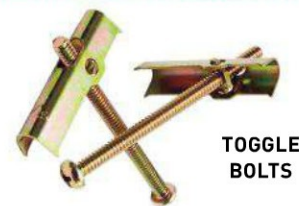
Finding wall studs

Corner studs are easy to find so attaching at that point will be easy, but the next stud may be a little too far away to suit the supports.

If that's the case, secure the shelf support at the outer end using a plasterboard gravity toggle.

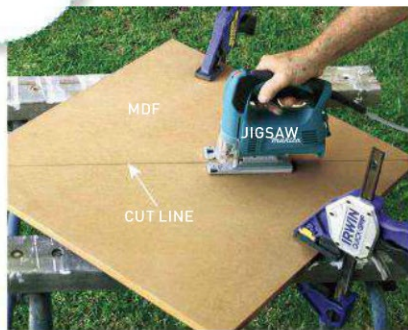
Drill a 10mm hole through the plasterboard then pass the machine screw through the batten and wind it into the toggle head.

Insert the toggle through the plasterboard, pull back and tighten the screw with a screwdriver.

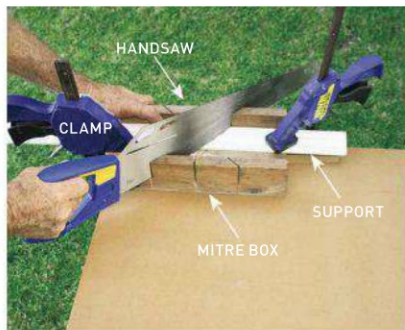


50mm Ramset Gravity Toggles, \$4 for a four pack. ramset.com.au

MAKE THE SHELVES



1 Cut the shelves
Mark a diagonal cut line across two 600mm squares of MDF and cut triangles using a jigsaw and a sharp timber blade. Round over all cut edges with 180 grit abrasive paper.



2 Prepare the supports
Use a mitre box and handsaw to cut eight 500mm shelf supports with a 45° angle on one end and a 45° mitre on the other. Sand all cut edges and apply two coats of acrylic paint.



3 Paint the shelves
Apply at least two coats of semi gloss acrylic to the shelves using a small roller, leaving it to dry between coats. Paint the underside of the shelves and the front edges.



4 Mark the shelf positions
In the corner, mark the support positions, starting 600mm off the floor then spaced at 400mm for three more. Use a spirit level to extend 500mm long lines across the walls.

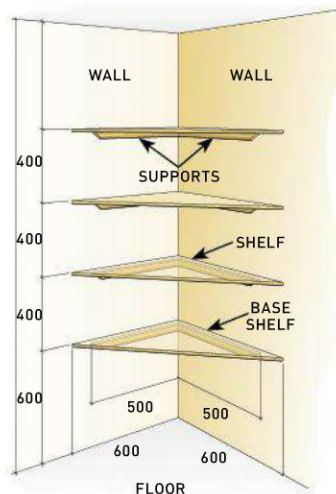


5 Secure the supports
Check the mitre joints, use a spirit level to position the supports, securing to the wall studs with 50mm x 2.0mm bullethead nails. Punch in the nail heads and cover with timber filler.



6 Position the shelves
Run a bead of PVA adhesive along the top of the supports. Starting at the base, position each shelf and secure with 30 x 1.6mm bullethead nails on both sides spaced at 150mm centres.

KNICK-KNACK SHELVES measurements in mm

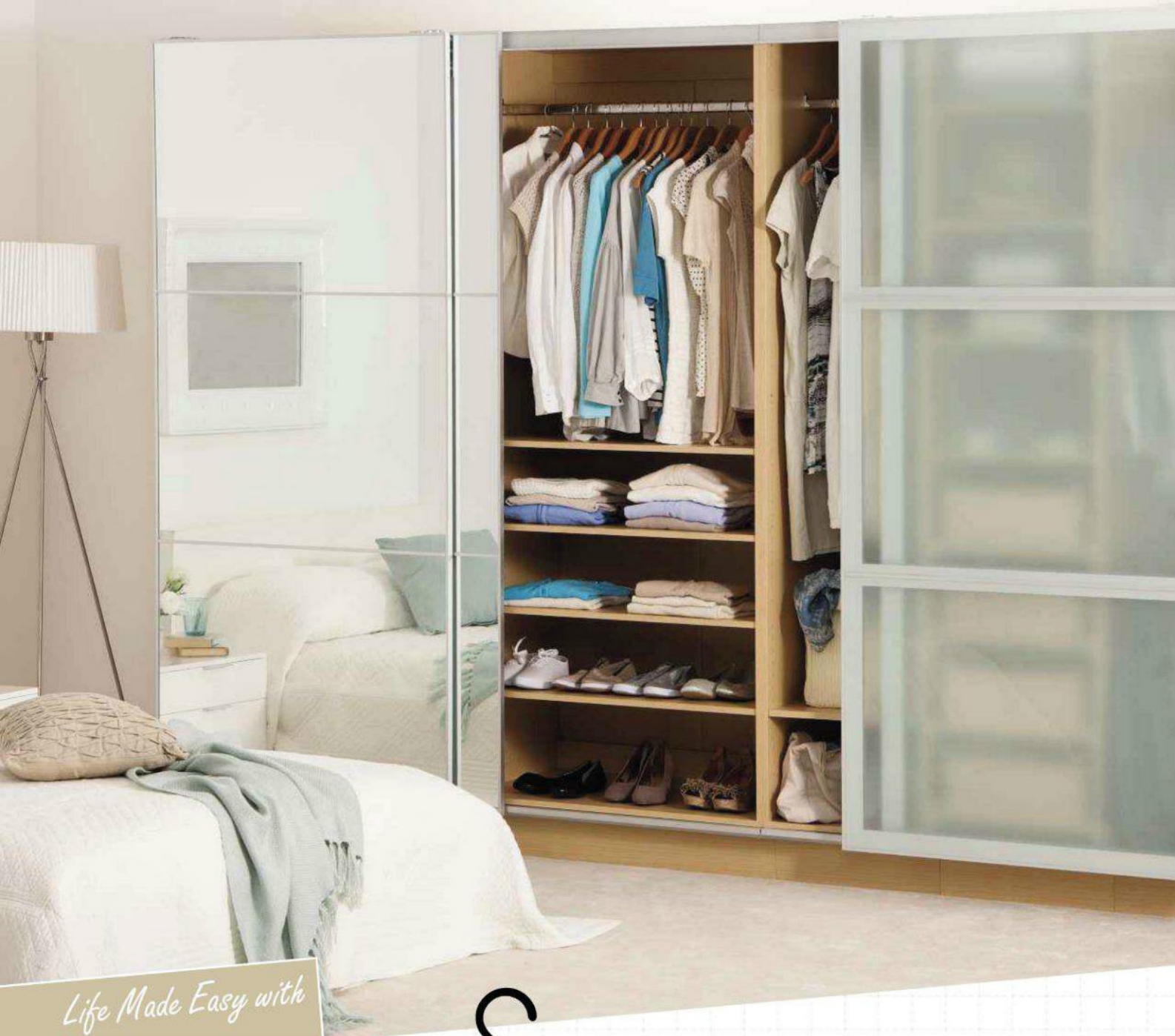


CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
MDF		
Shelf squares	600 x 600 x 16	2
MOULDING		
Shelf supports	500 x 42 x 18	8

Handyman.net.au

Go online to download the tools, costs and materials to make knick-knack shelves.



Life Made Easy with

FLATPAX 

Wardrobe

www.flatpax.com.au

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

A Weekend Renovation. **A New Wardrobe Sensation.**

Space. You desperately need it. But you're scared a wardrobe renovation will take forever. Well, what if you could take care of it in just one weekend? That's right, planning, purchasing and installing all in just a couple of days!

With Flatpax Wardrobe you can choose a range of products to suit your personal style. From hinged or sliding doors, to shelves or drawers and even accessories that add a unique touch to your design.

Get inspired about your space and visit your nearest Bunnings Warehouse today, or go to flatpax.com.au.

EASY
ASSEMBLY

DIY BUILT-IN WARDROBE

Combine a pair of flat-packed units with hanging rods for practical storage

PROJECT **FRANK GARDNER** MAIN PICTURE **STUART SCOTT**

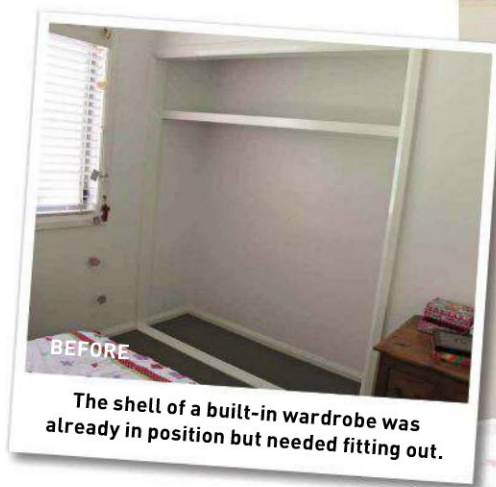
Most bedrooms in newly built homes have a dedicated area for a built-in robe included in one or all of the bedrooms.

There are a number of ways to make use of this space, from a simple shelf and single hanging rod to stacked shelves, drawers, trouser rack pull-outs, shoe racks and more.

Readymade flat-packed kits in a wide variety of combinations are available at a fraction of the cost of custom-built designs. They are easy to assemble and install DIY and can be configured to suit any space.

In this bedroom the wardrobe space was 2060 high x 1800mm wide and had already been fitted with a top shelf 1650mm above the floor. All it needed was some units to fit neatly into the space beneath the shelf.

As they were for a young girl's room, the units were configured to maximise drawer space with open shelving to display treasures and provide easy access. Two hanging rods were added between the units and spaced to suit smaller clothes sizes.



The shell of a built-in wardrobe was already in position but needed fitting out.

FLAT-PACK KITS

We used two flat-packed wardrobe kits in the Multi-store Premia Organiser series, from Bunnings.

The MAXI 16J3, \$328, has three drawers and shelves, and the MAXI C16, \$347, has five drawers and two shelves. Both units are 1650mm high, 608mm wide and 450mm deep, ideal for a neat, tight fit under the top shelf.

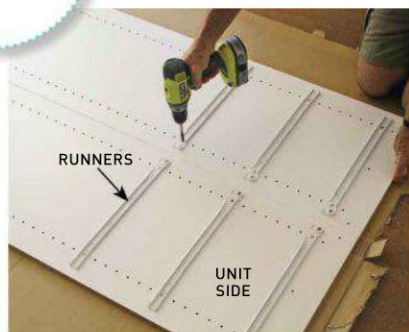
TIP Not all products are in-store, go to bunnings.com.au and search Multi-store for the complete range.



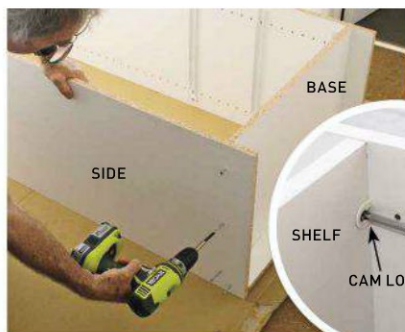
AFTER
Featuring a double hanging space, shelves and drawers this wardrobe provides lots of handy storage.



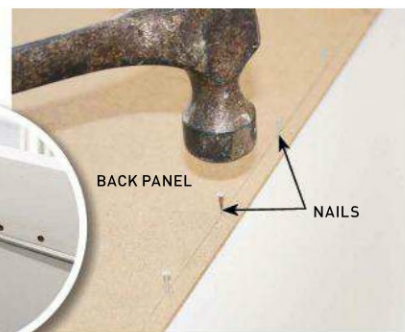
BUILD A WARDROBE



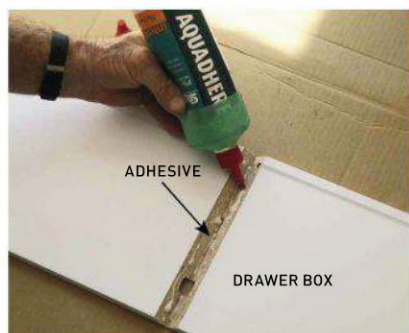
1 Attach the side runners
Position the unit sides face down. Position the outer runners with the wheel at the front and base on the specified holes, securing with screws. Secure the centre shelf cam-lock pins.



2 Assemble the units
Stand a pair of sides on their front edges and secure the top, base and kickboard to one side only using screws, attaching the centre shelf with cam locks. Secure the other side.



3 Secure the back panel
Position the back panel, using it to ensure the unit corners are square. Mark a line 8mm in from all edges as a guide and secure with nails spaced at 100mm centres.



4 Glue the V joints
Lay the drawer boxes flat with the V joints face up. Apply a bead of PVA adhesive to the joints, spread it with a spatula, then add a few drops of adhesive to the dowel holes.



5 Build the drawer boxes
Position the base in the groove on the inside edge of the drawer and fold the sides around it. Align the dowels and holes, pushing down firmly to lock the dowels in position.



6 Add the drawer runners
Turn the drawer box upside down, position the runners with the wheels on top and push the runner tab into the 5mm holes in the back of the box, securing the runners with screws.



7 Attach the battens
Locate the studs on the side walls of the wardrobe space using a stud finder. Cut 42 x 19mm pine battens to fit, securing to the studs below the built-in top shelf with 65mm x 8g screws.



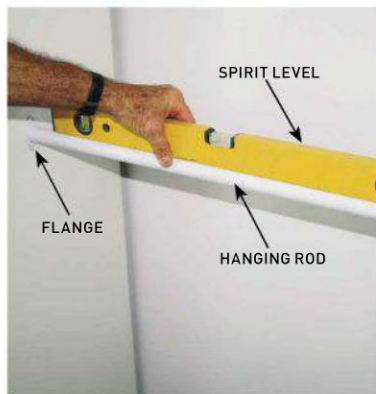
8 Secure the units
Position the wardrobe units, check for plumb and drill 2mm pilot holes into the battens through the sides, securing with 40mm x 8g screws. If you can, secure to the top shelf too.



9 Install the drawers
Position the U shaped channel in the groove on each drawer front and secure the handles with screws using the predrilled holes. Slide the drawers into position, engaging the runners.

Install hanging rods

Two hanging rods were secured between the wardrobe units, one positioned 50mm from the top and the other aligned with the shelves either side. Measure the space between the units, clamp the rods in a vice and cut to length using a hacksaw. **TIP** We used Award 900 x 25mm rods, about \$6 each, and flanges, about \$3 a pair. awardbrands.com.au



1 MARK THE WARDROBE UNITS by sliding the oval flanges over the rod ends, position between the robes, check for level and mark the screw hole locations.



2 SECURE THE RODS by drilling 1.5mm pilot holes to 10mm deep at the marked positions. Secure the rods through the flanges with the supplied screws.

ADDING DOORS

To finish the Multi-store wardrobe, install sliding doors. Choose 2010 x 910mm white melamine doors, costing \$206 each, mirror doors, \$245 each, or a combination. Running on 1800 x 76mm white aluminium double tracks, \$65, they're secured at the top and base of the opening. For more door options, go to multi-store.com.au/brochures.php.



+ Handyman.net.au

Go online for instructions on converting a built-in wardrobe into an office nook.

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New to the Bedford storage range.

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1032 High Base Unit



516 High Base Unit



632 Wide Tower Unit



Universal Corner Tower Unit

Plus Accessories



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STORAGE SOLUTION

Customise a flat-pack wardrobe to suit your needs then install it DIY

PICTURES **GEOFF BECK** PROJECT **DAVID RYAN**

Space is at a premium in most homes so effective, affordable storage systems can provide a welcome solution.

Wardrobes are one area where clever planning can easily create additional storage. It's like solving a puzzle to determine the best configuration for your needs.

Flatpax Wardrobes has an easy to assemble selection of storage options that you can design and tailor to suit your home (flatpax.com.au).

DESIGN YOUR WARDROBE

There are four easy steps to select the ultimate wardrobe for your room.

■ **MEASURE** the space from wall to wall and floor to ceiling to determine how many cabinets you can install.

■ **CHOOSE** the style of doors that suit your decor in hinged or sliding.

■ **CONFIGURE** the ideal cabinet layout to fit the available space.

■ **ADD** your combination of fittings and accessories. Choose from the range of drawers, long and double hanging options, and shelves.

MEASURE THE SPACE

Measure the length and width of the room wall to wall. If working from wall to doorway, measure to the outside of the architrave.

Check the height of the room from the floor to the ceiling as Flatpax wardrobe cabinets are 2200mm high.

Note the location of any light switches or power points and any windows, plus any other permanent fixtures like a balustrade or column.

When you have recorded these measurements accurately, you can start designing your wardrobe.

CHOOSE THE DOORS

There are nine door designs in the Flatpax range and each are available as sliding or hinged options.

Sliding doors are space efficient, but don't allow complete access to the wardrobe. Hinged doors are suitable for larger rooms, as they need a certain amount of clearance to open, so they can't be obstructed by furniture.

TIP To make small areas appear larger, install mirror-finish doors. ➤

Get organised and install a Flatpax wardrobe with space for hanging, drawers, shelves and storage baskets.

Space maximiser

It was hard to see inside in this dark old closet crammed full of clothes on hangers.

Shoes were stuffed into baskets on the floor and a chest of drawers was also needed in the bedroom for extra storage.

With a wall space of 2700mm, two 900mm and two 450mm Flatpax cabinets were installed.

The new wardrobe was configured to have double and long hanging, drawers, shelves, a pull-out mirror and a belt rack.

It cost \$2200 and took three days. Sensor lights and sliding doors make the storage system user-friendly, and drawer dividers help keep things tidy.

The bedroom also looks much more modern without the old closet and chest of drawers.



BEFORE

Overcrowded and dark, this old and tiny cupboard offered minimal storage.



Get organised and stay that way with drawer dividers and lots of shelving.

CONFIGURE THE CABINETS

Flatpax cabinets come in two widths of 450 and 900mm, that can be combined in any configuration to get the maximum storage for your room.

A room with a wall width of 2700mm can have three 900mm wide cabinets, or two 900mm and two 450mm cabinets, and so on.

Cabinets are available in two finishes, modern white and light oak.

ADD THE ACCESSORIES

Now for the fun part, designing the interior. Assess the clothes you have. Are there a lot of dresses or coats that require long hanging, or mostly tops that need double hanging?

Do you have lots of shoes, and would you prefer them on sliding out or fixed racks, or displayed on shelves?

Look at shelving and drawer options and consider wire baskets that let air circulate around your clothes. All of these options are available to fit the 450mm and 900mm cabinets.

Extras include a pull-out trouser rack, drawer dividers, slide-out tie and belt racks, LED motion-sensor lights and a pull-out mirror.

ASSEMBLE THE WARDROBES

Each part of the wardrobe comes in its own box with instructions and all the hardware required for DIY assembly, including screws, screw covers, nails, adjustable legs, cams and pins, and kickboards and attachment clips.

The cabinets have predrilled holes, which takes the guesswork out of the process. Always work on a flat surface so the wardrobe will be square.



■ **CABINETS** are installed one at a time then joined together. Position the first cabinet, check for level then set the adjustable legs to 145mm high, the maximum kickboard height.

Position the next cabinet, adjust the legs so it sits at the same height as the first, check for level then clamp and secure the cabinets together.

Secure the cabinets to the wall using the appropriate fasteners.

■ **DRAWERS** come with panels, screws, screw covers and heavy-duty ball bearing drawer runners. Install drawers from the base and work up.

■ **HINGED DOORS** can be installed on either side of the opening, so select a side and insert the plastic lugs.

Remove the hinge plate from the hinge and fix into the lugs. Insert the hinge into the bore hole on the door and secure using small screws then click the door into place.

Adjust the doors when all of them have been installed. The hinges have both lateral and horizontal adjustment to assist in this process.

■ **SLIDING DOORS** are supplied in two boxes, except the 1350mm Light Oak sliding door, which comes in a single box with all the hardware.

The first box has the door in your choice of finish. The second has the hardware, including aluminium frame brackets, sliding tracks, door runner brackets, door stoppers and screws.

TIP If using multiple sliding doors, remove the middle stoppers for easier access to the cabinets.



A wardrobe that has a place for everything and a handy pull-out mirror makes getting dressed in the morning an absolute cinch.

ON SALE
22 May

**DON'T MISS THE
NEXT ISSUE OF**

Handyman

Kitchens

How to design a kitchen and choose the best finishes.

PLUS The \$2000 kitchen makeover with new surface treatments.

Sanders

Belt, orbital, random orbital and detail sanders explained. Tips, techniques and buyer's guide.

Gardens

Plant beautifully scented Daphne, establish a bare root orchard and renew hand tool handles.



ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

CIRCULAR SAWS

This powerful tool is great for making long, clean, straight cuts in a range of materials



CORDLESS



ELECTRIC

CORDLESS OR ELECTRIC?

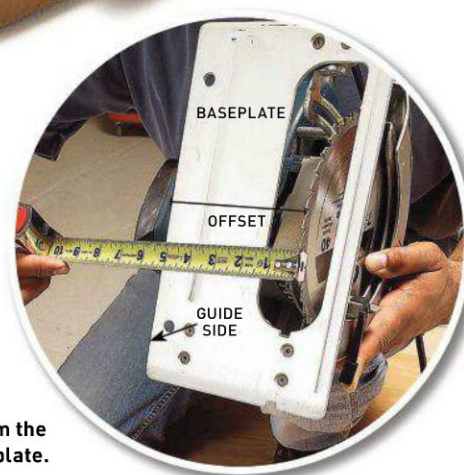
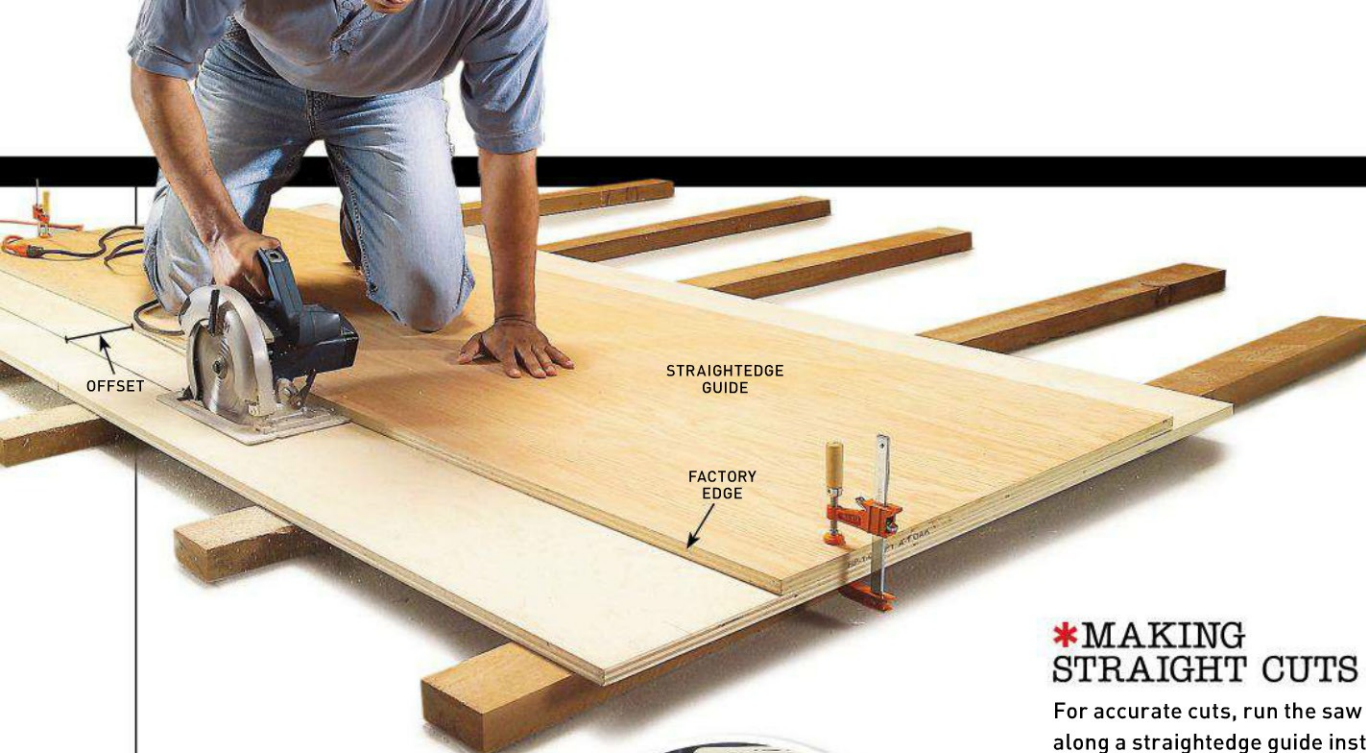
Any job that requires repetitive straight cutting calls for a circular saw, which uses a selection of disc-shaped blades to cut materials like timber, plastic and metal.

Buying cordless or electric depends on the intended use and your budget, as cordless saws cost more.

Electric models have better repetitive performance, making them the superior option in most cases.

When portability is an issue or it's problematic to get mains power, cordless is the way to go.

For the DIYer an 185mm electric circular saw is a good size for general purpose use and not too heavy. ➤



The offset is the distance from the blade to the edge of the baseplate.

*MAKING STRAIGHT CUTS

For accurate cuts, run the saw along a straightedge guide instead of trying to follow a cut line by hand.

Use a spirit level for short cuts and the factory edge of 19mm thick plywood for long cuts.

Measure the offset from the baseplate edge to the blade, adding the blade thickness if the piece being cut off is the one you need.

Add the offset to the cut width and mark the timber at both ends to clamp the straightedge in position. **TIP** Make the cut with the offset side of the baseplate on the same side as the guide for saw stability.

WHICH BLADE?

The more teeth on a blade, the smoother the cut. Use blades with 16 teeth for fast cutting along the grain, 24 teeth for general purpose cutting, and 40 teeth for sheet material or fine cuts in timber. Use specialty blades for material other than timber.



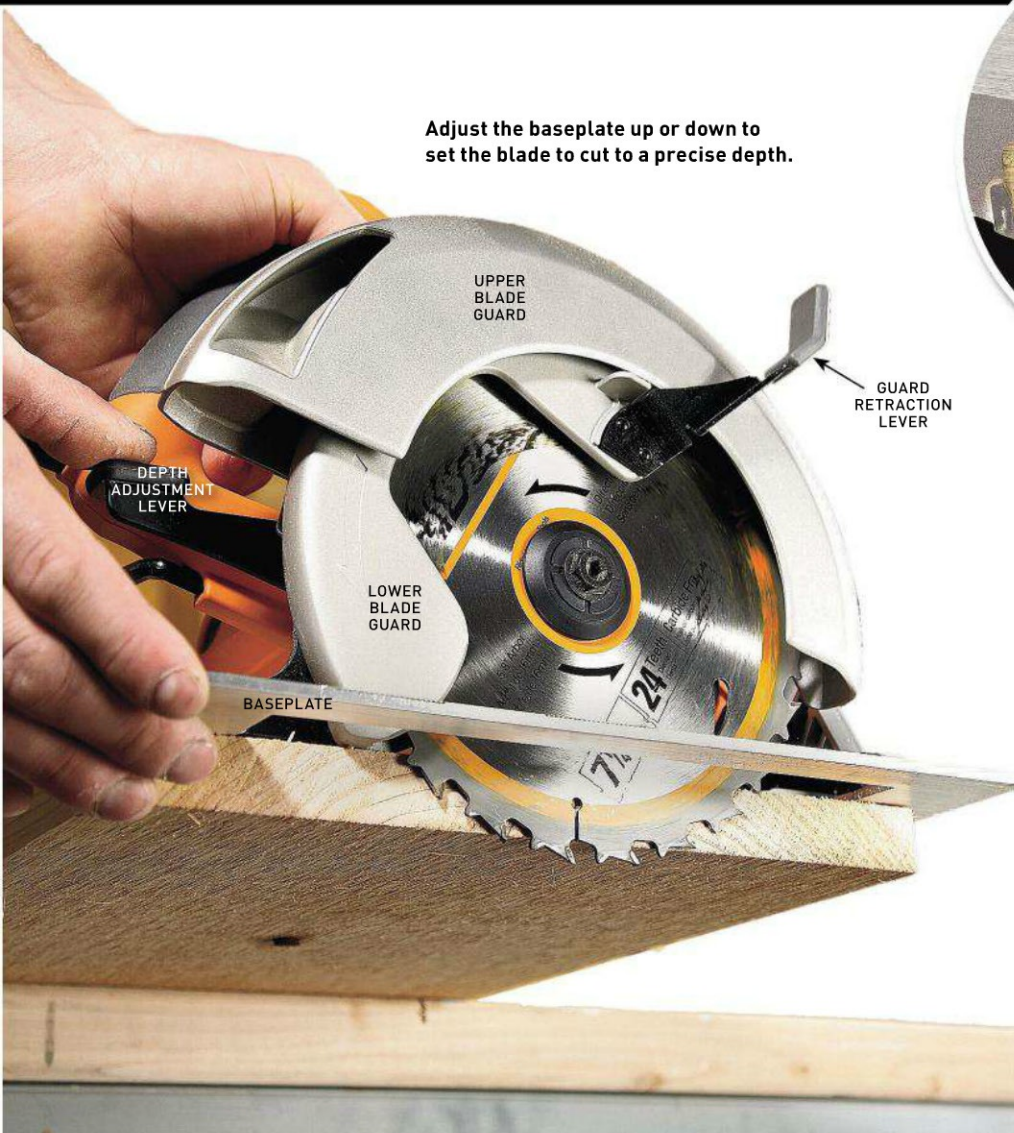
Ozito 180mm three-pack, \$10. Comprises 16, 24 and 40 tooth blades for hardwoods, softwoods and various plastics.



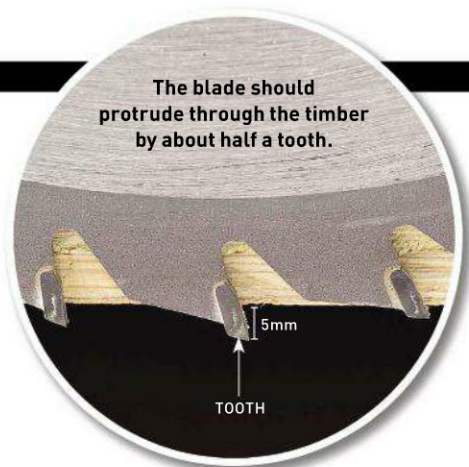
Irwin Marathon 184mm, 24 teeth, \$20. Welded tungsten carbide teeth for a 30% stronger bond and 50% longer life.



Makita BluMak 185mm, 40 teeth, \$27. Anti-friction coating for clean, smooth cutting with tungsten carbide teeth.



Adjust the baseplate up or down to set the blade to cut to a precise depth.



*SETTING THE DEPTH

Having too much of the blade exposed while cutting makes the saw more likely to kick back.

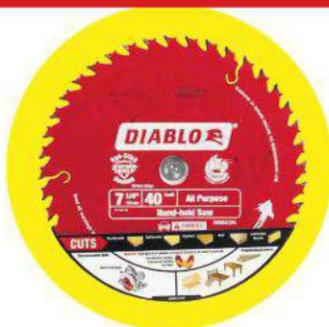
To set the blade, determine the required depth by unplugging the saw and holding it against the timber with the blade guard retracted.

Loosen the depth adjustment lever and pivot the baseplate until the blade extends about 5mm lower than the timber, tightening the lever before cutting.

TIP The blade can also be set to cut less than the full thickness for making grooves or housings. ➤



Diablo Demo Demon 184mm, 24 teeth, \$38. Lock-tooth technology for framing and demolition of timber, nails and all.



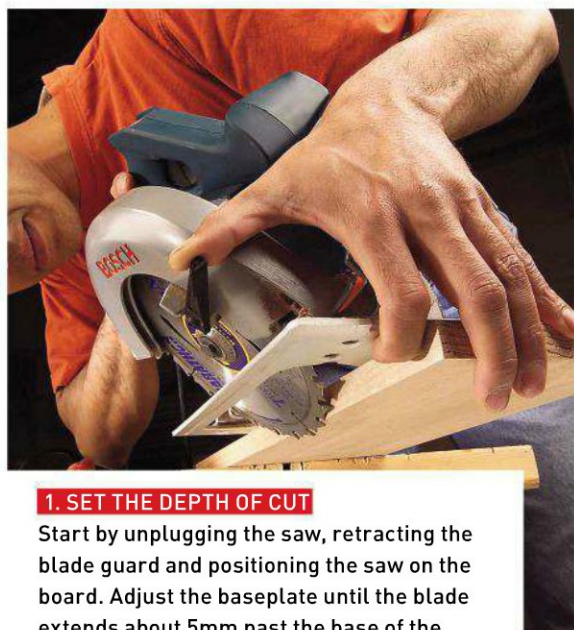
Diablo All Purpose 184mm, 40 teeth, \$40. Tungsten carbide teeth for extreme impact resistance in timber and plywood.



Irwin Professional 184mm, 60 teeth, \$43. Precision diamond-ground teeth for fine trim cutting and finish work.

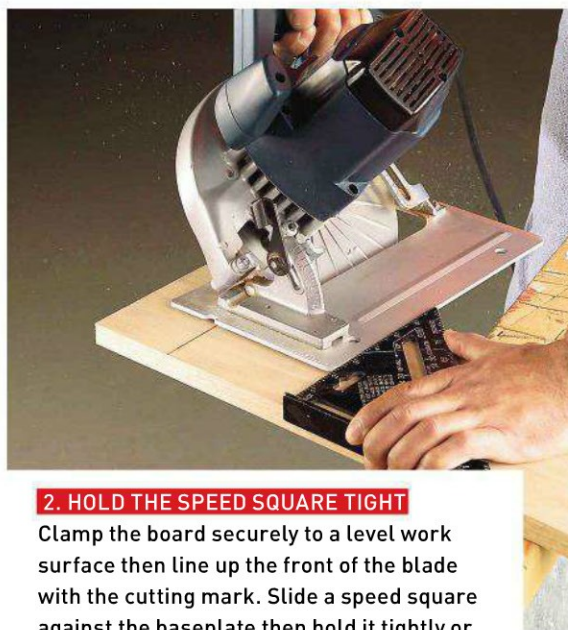
BEVEL CUTS

For tight mitred corner joints on eaves, deck surrounds or cabinetry you need to make perfectly square and straight bevel cuts. Use the blade angle indicator to set the required angle before tightening the tilt control on the saw.



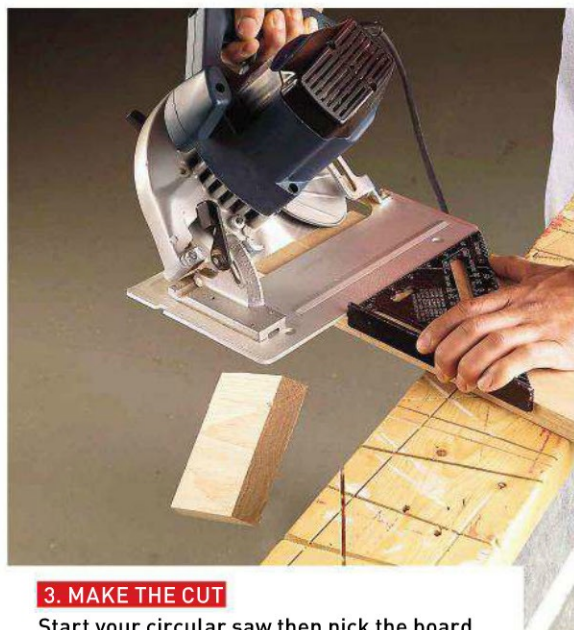
1. SET THE DEPTH OF CUT

Start by unplugging the saw, retracting the blade guard and positioning the saw on the board. Adjust the baseplate until the blade extends about 5mm past the base of the board. Tighten the depth control lever.



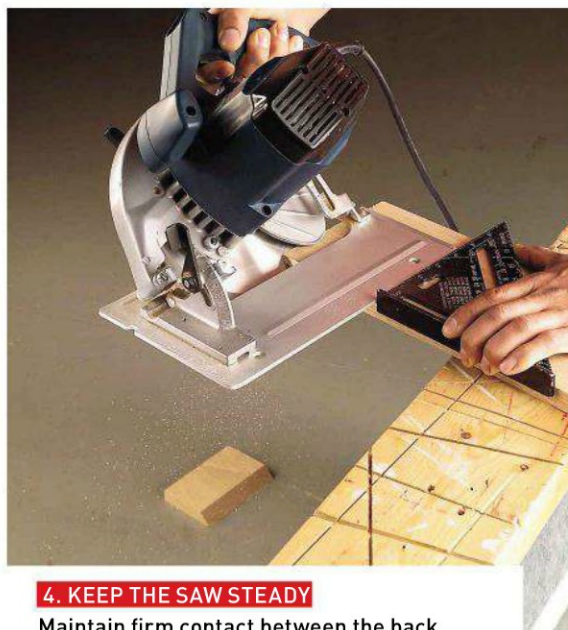
2. HOLD THE SPEED SQUARE TIGHT

Clamp the board securely to a level work surface then line up the front of the blade with the cutting mark. Slide a speed square against the baseplate then hold it tightly or preferably clamp it against the board.



3. MAKE THE CUT

Start your circular saw then nick the board with the blade to make sure it's aligned, keeping the saw's baseplate tight against the edge and sliding the saw through the cut. Let the short piece drop free.

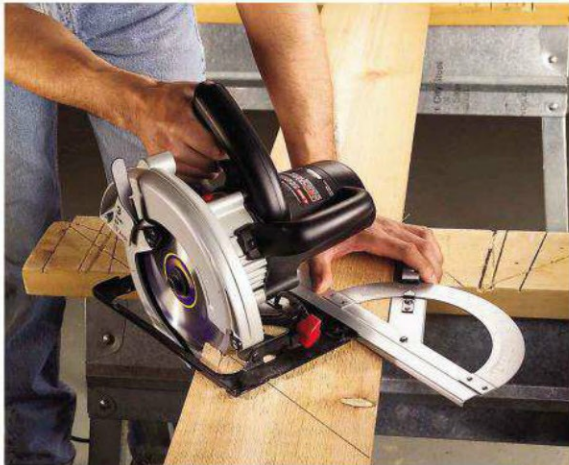


4. KEEP THE SAW STEADY

Maintain firm contact between the back of the saw baseplate and the square until the saw blade completely clears the board. Allow the blade guard to close before releasing the trigger.

SMOOTH ANGLE CUTS

Decks, pergolas and timber frames often require angled cuts to be made. The key is to use a guide with an adjustable arm that allows you to set the angle, or to clamp a straightedge at the desired angle to guide the saw baseplate.



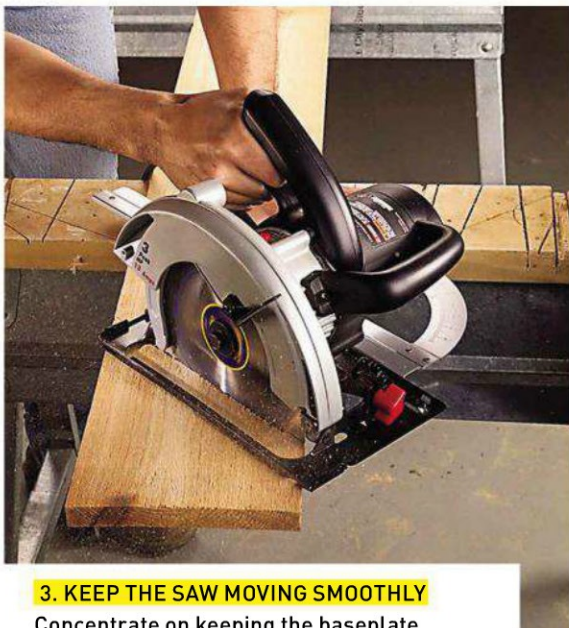
1. LINE UP THE SAW AND GUIDE

Align the blade with the cut line and slide the square up to the saw's baseplate. Grip the guide firmly against the board.
TIP Retract the blade guard to prevent the lip catching on the timber.



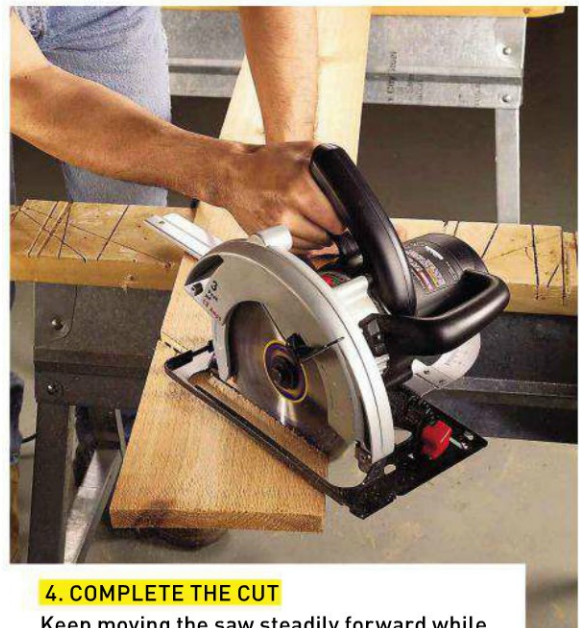
2. PUSH INTO THE CUT

Start the saw and slide the baseplate against the guide, pushing the saw firmly and steadily into the cut. If the guard has been retracted release it about 30mm into the cut.
TIP To retract the guard, clamp the guide.



3. KEEP THE SAW MOVING SMOOTHLY

Concentrate on keeping the baseplate tight to the guide and the saw moving at a constant speed throughout the cut. Avoid stopping and starting, and be mindful to keep the cord free from getting snagged.



4. COMPLETE THE CUT

Keep moving the saw steadily forward while keeping the back of the baseplate in contact with the guide. Let the blade fully exit the timber and allow the blade guard to close before releasing the trigger. ➤

PLUNGE CUTS

When you can't start a cut from an edge, like when making a window opening in sheet material, plunge cuts are very useful. Excellent technique is required for this potentially dangerous cut, as it presents a high risk of kickback.



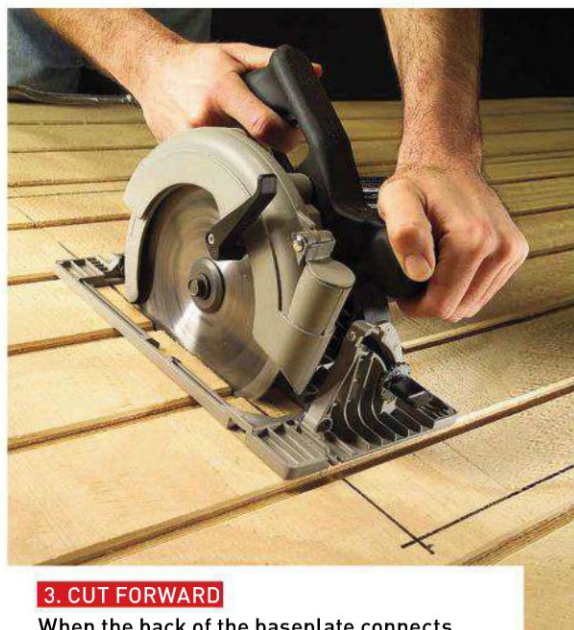
1. POSITION THE SAW

Hold the front edge of the baseplate down firmly, aligning the 90° notch on the front of the saw with the cut line. Retract the blade guard with one hand and sight down the blade to align it with the cut line.



2. LOWER THE BLADE INTO THE TIMBER

Start the saw and allow it to spool up to full speed. Gradually pivot the saw down to start the cut without moving it forward. Hold the saw firmly while making the cut to make sure it doesn't kick back.



3. CUT FORWARD

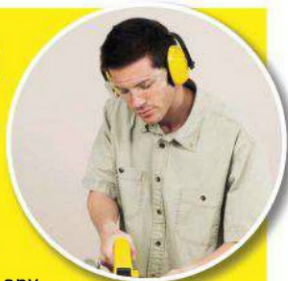
When the back of the baseplate connects with the workpiece, release the blade guard and cut forward. Watch the front of the blade carefully to stop the cut at the corner. Let the blade fully stop before lifting it from the cut.

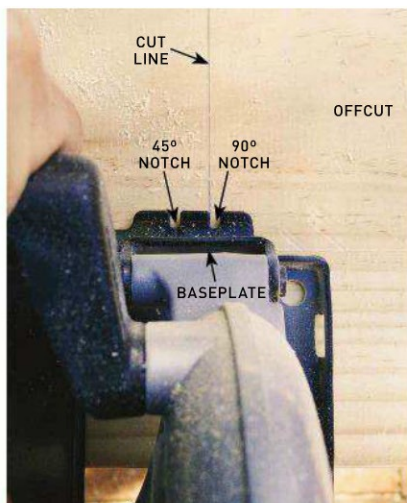
MINIMISING RISK

Suitable for experienced DIYers only, plunge cutting can be a dangerous way of using a circular saw.

Wayne Beckwith, National Training Manager for Ryobi says, 'If you have any doubts in your ability, then enlist the help of someone capable and experienced.' Follow Wayne's tips for safe plunge cutting.

- * Plan and prepare each cut.
- * Ensure the blade is sharp and in good condition.
- * Keep the cord clear of the work area, making sure it will travel unhindered with the saw.
- * Make sure you can perform the cut without the saw being obstructed from above or below.
- * Have secure footing and tuck in loose clothing, hair and jewellery.
- * Take your time and let the saw do the work.
- * Ensure that you are wearing all of the appropriate safety equipment.



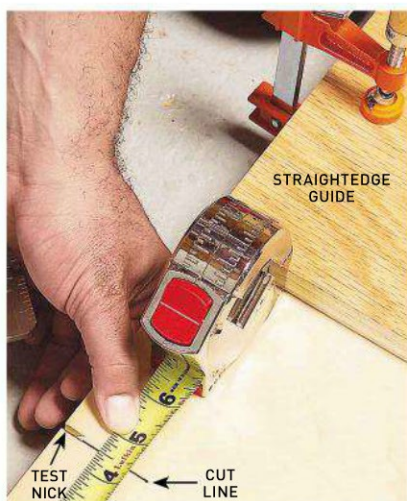


*TESTING THE ACCURACY

The two notches at the front of the baseplate indicate the position of the blade when making cuts, when it's either at 90° or tilted to 45°. Position the edge of the notch on the line, with the blade on the waste side.

If using a straightedge guide to cut large pieces of sheet material such as plywood, check the guide is accurately positioned by starting the saw and pushing it forward to just barely nick the edge.

Check the width of the cut stays on the waste side of the line and if it's slightly over, adjust both ends of the guide to correct it.

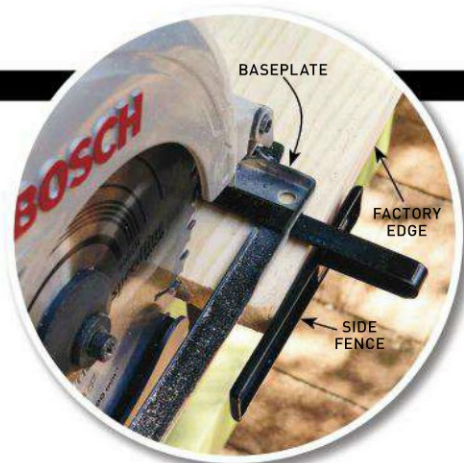


*USING THE CUTTING GUIDE

To use the factory edge of a piece of timber for accurate cuts along the grain, use the T shape cutting guide called a ripping or side fence that normally comes with the saw.

The fence is secured using a bolt that can be tightened with a shifter, screwdriver or by hand if a wingnut.

Slide the fence through the slots in the baseplate, adjusting it so that the distance from the outside of the blade to the inside of the fence is the width of the desired cut.



TIP Add an extra 1mm to allow for the fact the teeth splay out slightly wider than the blade thickness.

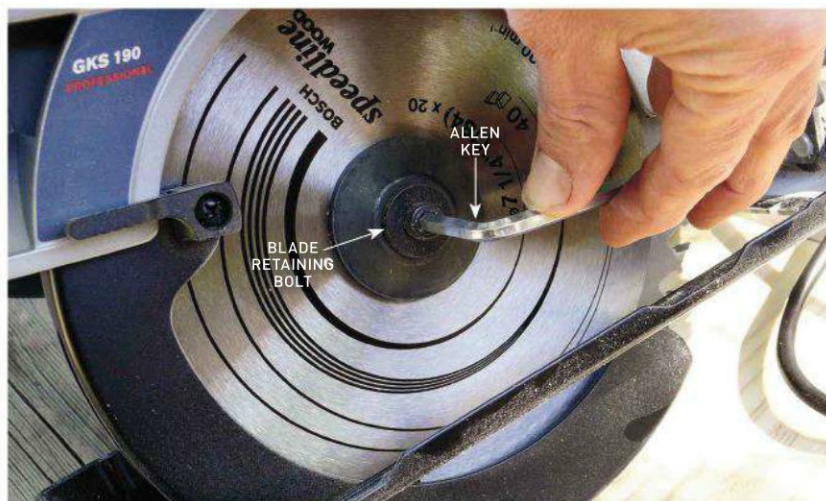
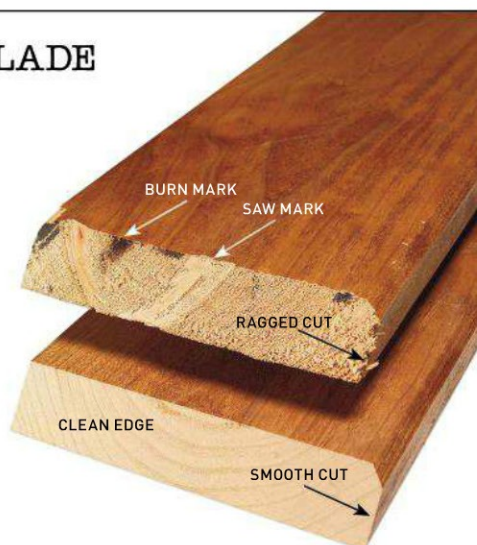
*REPLACING THE BLADE

To change a blade, first disconnect the power then loosen the bolt that keeps it secure, turning it in the same direction as the rotation of the blade, which is anticlockwise.

Most saws feature a spindle lock button that locks the blade so the bolt can be loosened and a new blade secured.

If yours doesn't, use a clamp or pair of locking pliers to immobilise the blade before loosening the bolt, usually with an Allen key.

CHANGE THE BLADE if it's blunt or worn, especially if you are planning to cut hardwood and the tungsten carbide teeth are chipped. ➤



CIRCULAR SAW BUYING GUIDE

Circular saws are categorised by the diameter of their blade. The most common and best size for the DIYer in the corded range is an 185mm blade. The amount you spend on a saw should depend on what you'll use it for and how often.

CORDLESS

Cordless circular saws are smaller, quieter and can be less intimidating for a novice DIYer than electric saws, but they are also generally more expensive. Be aware that the battery is often sold separately at extra cost, as with the three saws below, so choose a model compatible with a cordless tool you already have and use the same battery for both.

OCCASIONAL USE



Features a powerful motor and a compact, lightweight design that allows the 150mm blade to cut to a depth of 45mm at 90°.

Ryobi 18V Li-ion 150mm Cordless Circular Saw, \$99. ryobi.com.au

REGULAR USE



Great cutting performance and electronic protection that prevents the battery from overloading or overheating, and excessive discharge.

Bosch 18V Li-ion 165mm Cordless Circular Saw, \$229. bosch-do-it.com.au

HEAVY USE



Powerful saw with a 360W output and electric brake to stop potentially dangerous blade run-on. The 165mm blade cuts to 57mm at 90°.

Makita 18V Li-ion 165mm Cordless Circular Saw \$259. makita.com.au

ELECTRIC

Corded circular saws provide reliability and the best overall performance if used hour after hour. There is no recharging to worry about, but you need to be mindful when trailing a 20m extension cord around a worksite. They can be used for cutting all types of timber and sheet material, with specialist blades available for tile, aluminium, concrete and plastic.

OCCASIONAL USE



A handy tool at the right price for many cutting jobs around the home with 1200W of power and a soft grip for comfort.

Ozito 1200W 185mm Corded Circular Saw, \$48. ozito.com.au

REGULAR USE



Comfortable ergonomic handle for optimum control and a 1500W motor that delivers sufficient power to handle any DIY job.

Bosch 1500W 184mm Corded Circular Saw, \$99.

HEAVY USE



Features a built-in light and blower function for improved accuracy, with a powerful 1800W motor and a blade that cuts to 63.5mm at 90°.

Makita 1800W 185mm Corded Circular Saw, \$199.



Australian made sheds for Australian made backyards.

Colours available:



Zincalume



Classic Cream



Pale Eucalypt



GARDENPRO STEEL SHEDS

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse



Fasteners

Use PVA adhesive on all joints and assemble the frames with 75mm x 8g timber screws. Build the drawers and attach the fixed benchtop, base, shelf, sides and divider with 40mm x 8g timber screws. Add the support arms with coachscrews.

Secure the hinges to the folding top with 15mm x 8g screws and into the frame with 30mm x 8g screws. Attach the drawer bases, cabinet back and drawer guides with 30mm x 8g screws, using 25mm x 8g screws for the drawer faces and handles. Secure the brace with 45mm x 8g screws.

GARAGE
STORAGE

Space saving WORKBENCH

Build a storage cabinet with a fold-down top to squeeze a complete workshop into a small garage

DIY > \$290

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$1090

SKILL > 1 2 3 4 5

TIME > 2 DAYS

Most of us have a single car garage which means our workspace has to double as a parking area. If that's the case at your place then this is the bench for you.

At 400mm wide this bench can be positioned against a wall and when the car is out of the way it opens up to a generous 1540 x 800mm worktop.

The front half of the benchtop is hinged and simply lifts up, with pivoting support arms that are held in position by removable ring bolts.

It has an underbench shelf that's handy for keeping power tools and also large enough for paint tins, plus four drawers for storing DIY materials.

Made from plywood with a pine frame, the benchtop and drawer faces are finished with clear polyurethane and the rest with green acrylic paint.

TIP Hang a pegboard over the bench to keep hand tools within easy reach.

CUT THE COMPONENTS

The bench is cut from two sheets of 15mm thick CD plywood with the bench back and drawer bases cut from 6mm plywood.

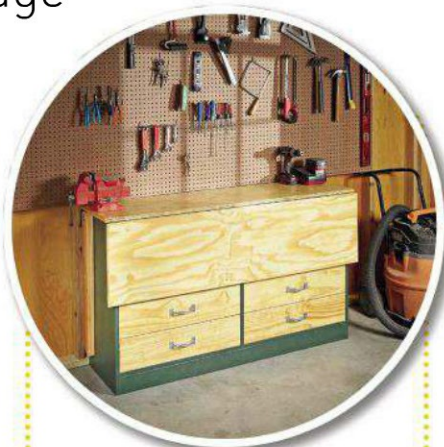
Have the components cut to size by your supplier or use a circular saw and straightedge guide.

The bench frames are cut from 90 x 45mm pine with the 20 x 19mm drawer guides cut along the grain from an offcut of 90 x 19mm pine.

Make sure you select the sheets of CD plywood carefully, as it is not an appearance-grade product. The knots and any defects are filled on the C side, so use it facing out. >



Zenith 110 x 9.3mm Ring Bolt,
\$5. itwproline.com.au



Folding benchtop

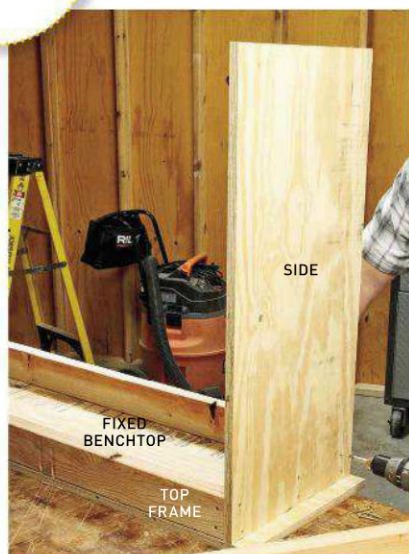
The drop-down top means that when the bench isn't in use it's only 400mm wide and doesn't encroach on valuable floorspace.

Butt hinges allow the top to swing up and down with support arms on the sides rotating to carry the weight of the top.

The arms are locked in position with ring bolts pushed through clearance holes.

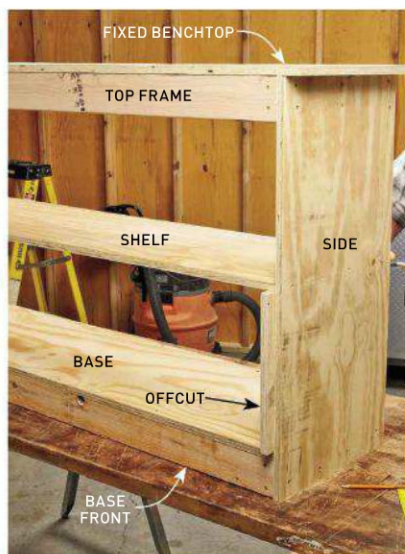
TIP To secure the arms more positively, tap T nuts into the clearance holes and wind the ring bolts into them.

MAKE THE BENCH



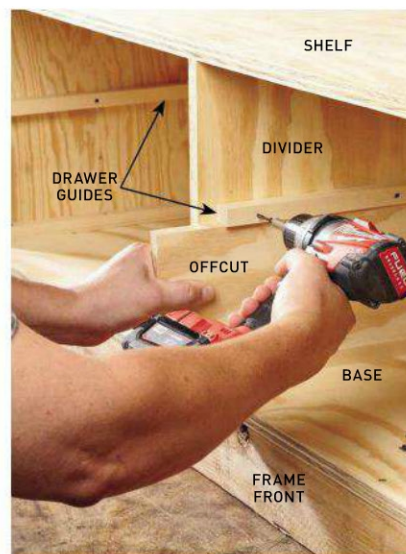
1 Assemble the carcass

Position the frame sides between the fronts and backs, securing with screws. Secure the frames to the fixed benchtop and base, turn the benchtop upside down and position the sides, securing with screws into the top frame then attach the base frame.



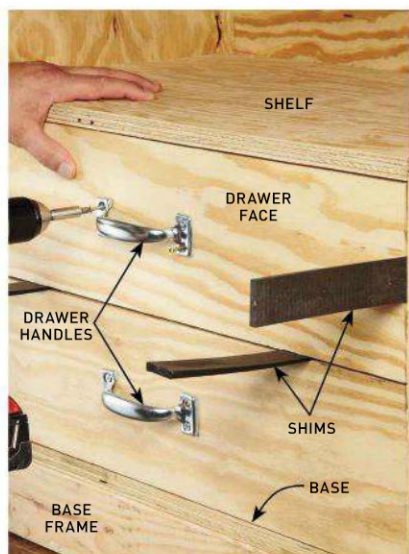
2 Attach the shelf

Position the shelf using the divider and offcuts as supports. Mark the shelf position on the sides then drill pilot holes between the marked lines and secure with screws. Position the bench face down and secure the back panel with screws at 300mm centres.



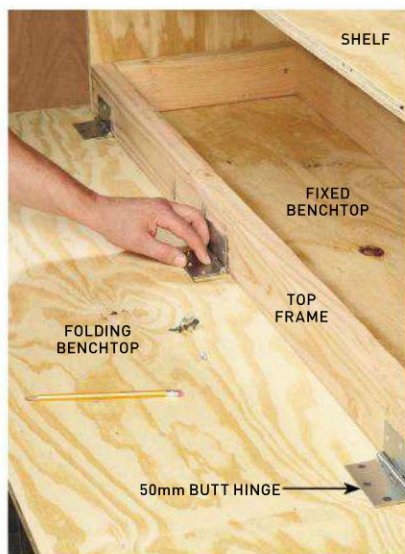
3 Install the drawer guides

Position the divider, checking for a neat fit so the shelf is not bowed. Mark the divider location on the base and shelf then drill pilot holes and secure with screws. Secure the base drawer guides first then measure up 165mm to secure the top guides.



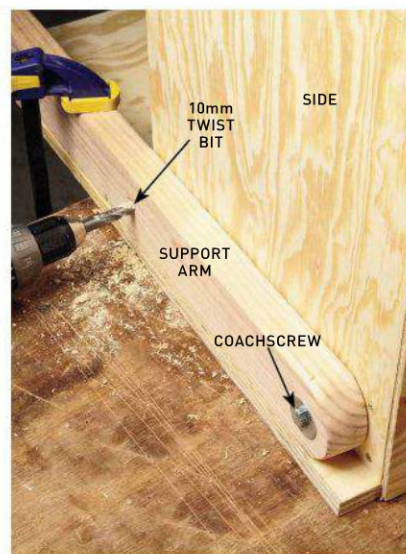
4 Build the drawers

Position the drawer sides between the fronts and backs, securing with screws at each corner. Add the bases, slide in the drawers and shim the faces with even gaps, attaching the handles first so the drawers can be removed to secure the faces from the inside.



5 Secure the folding top

Turn the bench upside down and butt the folding benchtop against the fixed top. Position hinges 75mm from the sides and in the centre, securing with screws to the folding top and the frame. Centre the brace on the folding benchtop and secure with screws.

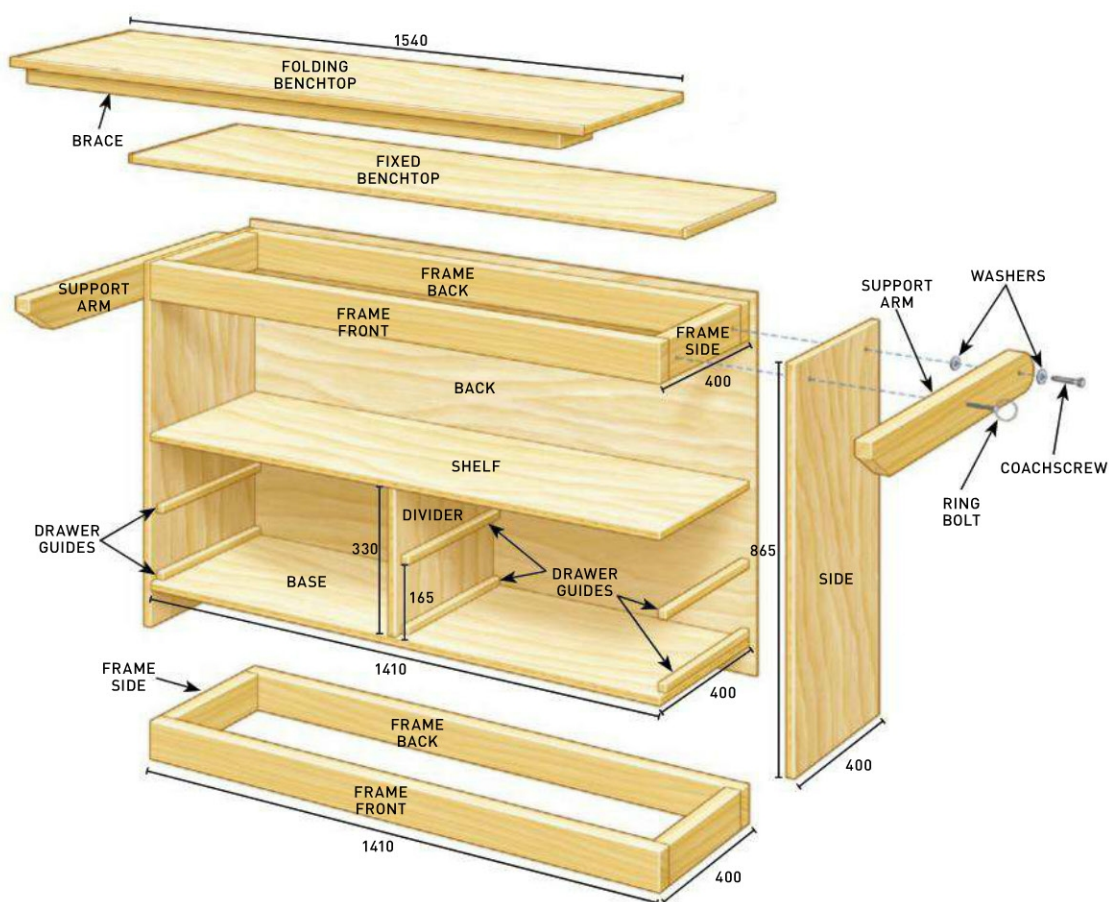


6 Add the support arms

Cut a half-circle on one end of the support arms using a jigsaw, and a 45° angle on the other. Position the arms against the sides, drill 6mm pilot holes and secure with coachscrews. Drill 10mm diameter holes for the ring bolts through the arms and frame sides.

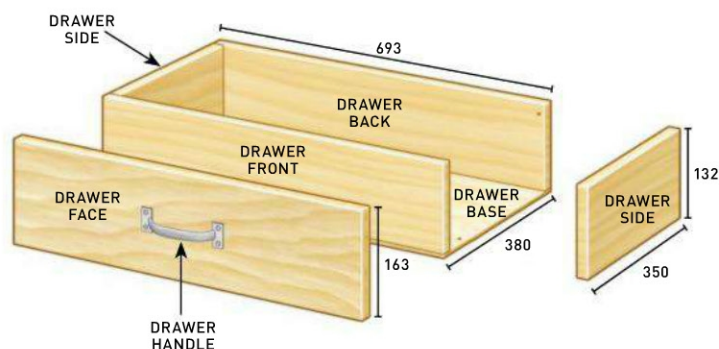
SPACE SAVING WORKBENCH

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
PLYWOOD		
Benchtops	1540 x 400 x 15	2
Sides	865 x 400 x 15	2
Base and shelf	1410 x 400 x 15	2
Back	1440 x 835 x 6	1
Divider	330 x 400 x 15	1
Drawer bases	693 x 380 x 6	4
Drawer front and back	693 x 132 x 15	8
Drawer sides	350 x 132 x 15	8
Drawer faces	693 x 163 x 15	4
PINE		
Frame front and back	1410 x 90 x 45	4
Frame sides	310 x 90 x 45	4
Support arms	775 x 90 x 45	2
Brace	1406 x 70 x 35	1
Drawer guides	380 x 20 x 19	8



Handyman.net.au

Download the tools, materials and costs to make a space saving workbench.

A man in a red and black plaid shirt and blue jeans stands with his arms crossed in a cluttered garage. The foreground is filled with various items: a large bicycle wheel on the left, a green watering can, a yellow toy truck, a red basketball, and a red plastic crate labeled 'DAIRY FREE'. The background shows shelves with various items, a red wheelbarrow, and a ladder.

CLEAR THE
CLUTTER

With dedicated storage, the garage can go from a pigsty to an ordered space with room for the car and a workshop.

GET THE GARAGE SORTED

Turn a disaster area into an organised DIY haven in no time with these five quick and easy storage ideas



Smart shelf system

One clever way to gain space is to use areas like the gap between the garage door and the ceiling for shelving.

We used 90 x 45mm timber for the supports and 9mm thick plywood for the shelves, but the design can be adapted to store lengths of timber or sheet materials instead of plastic bins.

PLAN THE SHELVING by determining which way the joists run, spreading the weight of the shelf supports over three adjacent joists. ➤



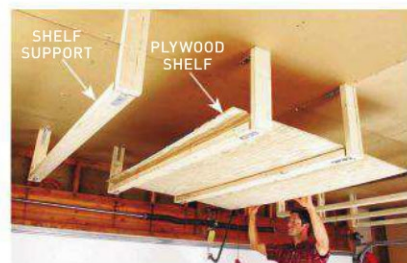
1 Measure the space

To find the height of the support sides, measure from the ceiling to the top of the garage door and subtract 25mm. Build three shelf supports with angle brackets at the corners and tops.



2 Attach the shelf supports

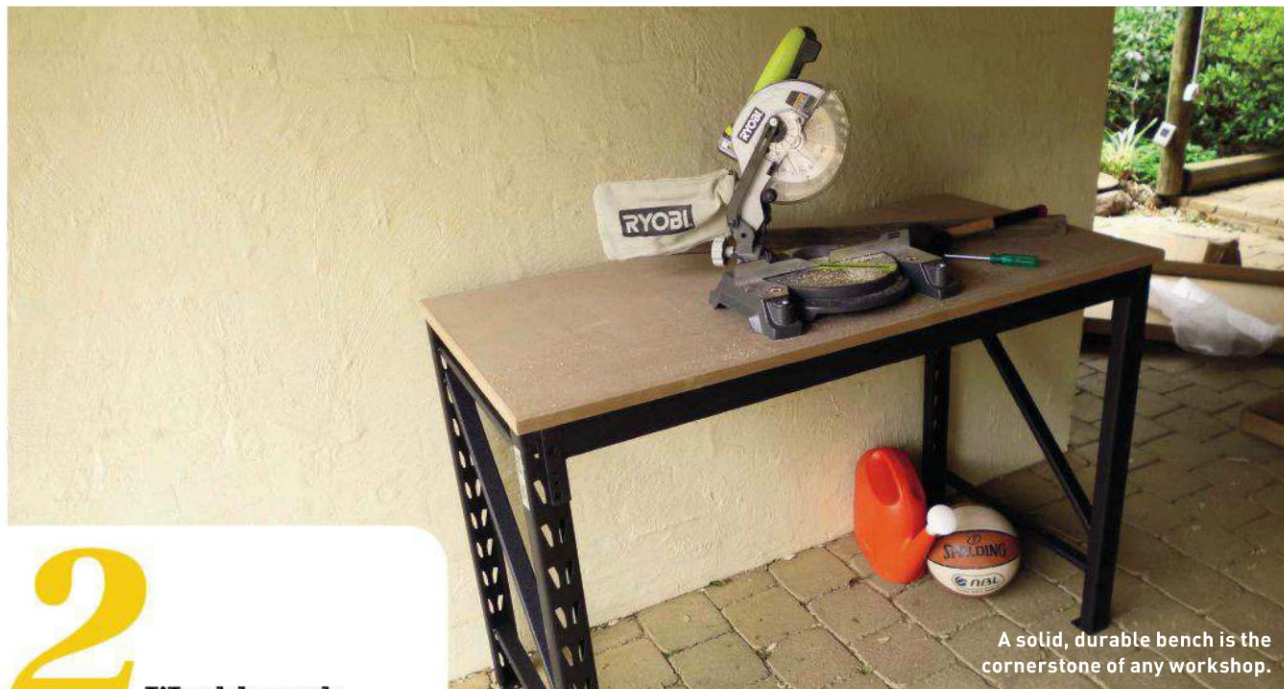
Use a stud finder to find the joist centres. Position the shelf supports, drill pilot holes and secure to the joists through the angle brackets with M6 x 50mm coachscrews.



3 Install the shelves

Cut 9mm ply into 1800 x 1200mm pieces, position on the shelf supports and secure with 30mm x 8g screws.

TIP These shelf supports are spaced 600mm apart with 400mm clearance.



A solid, durable bench is the cornerstone of any workshop.

2 Workbench

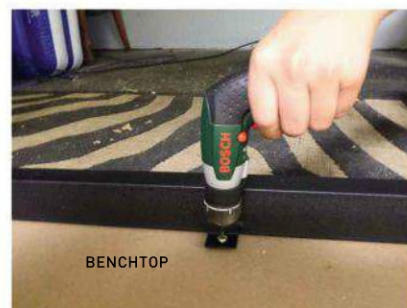
A must for any keen DIYer, a solid workbench offers a sturdy surface for building as well as a place to keep power tools when not in use.

You can build a bench yourself but if you don't need to customise it to suit the space a readymade option can be a real time saver.

The Rack It Work Bench, \$189, from Handy Storage, is a good size at 1280 x 920 x 450mm, and takes only 10 minutes to build using just two tools. handy-storage.com.au



1 ASSEMBLE THE FRAME by slotting the beams into the end uprights. Tap with a mallet to seat the beams.



2 ATTACH THE BENCHTOP by positioning it upside down with the frame on top, securing with screws.



3 Garden shed

The great Aussie shed is something of a cultural icon, and if the garage is a dumping ground for unfinished DIY projects, then a dedicated storage space might be the answer.

Gardenpro sheds feature the Snaptite assembly system and are Australian made and owned. They are sold in kit form with fasteners

and anchors included and come with a 15-year warranty.

Available in a range of sizes and colours, the sheds are built so tough they are rated to withstand cyclonic conditions. gardenprosheds.com.au



Gardenpro Tidymaster Shed, 3000 x 3000 x 2060mm, \$547.

4

Wall-mounted storage

Reclaim floorspace by using the walls for storage. The Rubbermaid FastTrack range of hooks, baskets and shelving can stow almost any item you can think of. rubbermaid.com.au

FASTTRACK RAILS are quick and easy to install, working with standard 450 or 600mm stud spacing. With the starter kit, everything you need to get stuck

into organising the garage is in one box. Simply attach the rail to a wall and add the multipurpose hooks that come with the pack.

THE HOOKS can be attached directly to the wall or snapped into place on the rails using a lever-operated lock-on system, with the large hooks holding up to 22kg.



5

Tough hooks

Capable of hanging everything from lawnmowers to power tools, these heavy-duty hooks keep all the garage essentials to hand, and off the floor and workbench.

The Zenith SureHook Storage Hook Kit, about \$22, comes with three double hooks and all the fasteners you need to secure them to plasterboard, wall studs or masonry. itwproline.com.au



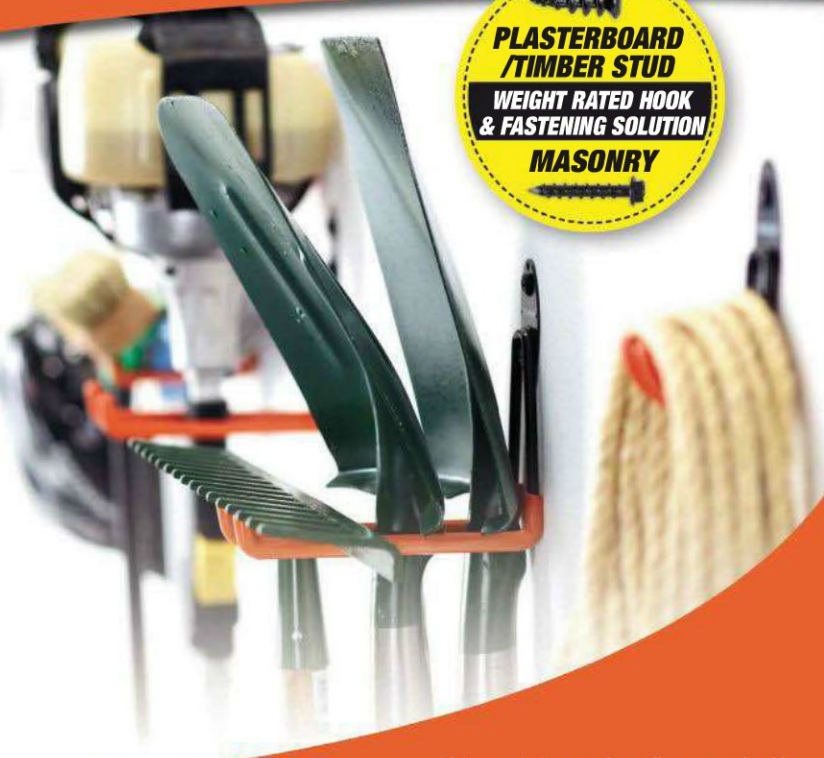
SureHook™

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WORKSHOP
SAFETY

IT'S TOOL TIME

Get into good storage habits and do regular maintenance to extend the life of your tools and avoid accidents

Working with hand and power tools can be dangerous, especially if the equipment is not properly maintained.

If a saw is dull or a drill bit is blunted, you have to use more force to get the job done, which can cause tools to wander off course and lead to nasty cuts or other injuries.

DIY safely by keeping tools in good nick and following a few commonsense safety rules. Ban kids and pets from work areas, avoid any distractions, don't over-exert yourself and always work at a steady pace.

STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE

Look after your tools and store them carefully for many years of service.

■ **GIVE EVERY TOOL A HOME** by keeping them in assigned places where they won't be damaged by other items.

Store cutting tools where their sharp edges won't be blunted, and

where they won't damage other tools or your fingers. Many tools should also be kept out of reach of children.

To prevent rust, store your kit in a dry place and spray a rust-inhibiting coating on steel tools or put a few packets of clay or silicone desiccant in the toolbox or cabinet.

Packets of desiccant come with most new tools and with many other household purchases, including new shoes and furniture.

■ **PROTECT SAWS AND CHISELS** by storing them in blade covers. This prevents the tools from being damaged or from causing you damage when you're rummaging in your toolbox looking for something else.

If the tools don't come with blade protectors, make your own. Buy plastic report cover spines from a stationery shop and slide them over the teeth of your saws, or cut slits into tennis balls and slip them over chisel blades.

■ **KEEP TOOLS DRY** because moisture can rust a blade or warp a timber handle. If a tool gets wet, wipe it with a soft, dry cloth before storing it.

If it's sweaty or greasy, clean the tool with a damp cloth then wipe it with a clean, dry cloth.

Avoid oiling hand tools. If oil gets on the handle, your grip might slip and you could be injured. If you have a number of chisels to store, it's worth investing in a roll-up leather case.

■ **KEEP CUTTING TOOLS SHARP** and clean to help prevent accidents. Never let them get damaged or dull and if they're past repair, replace them.

To tell whether a handsaw needs attention, examine its blade under a magnifying glass. If the teeth are rounded, look online for a saw and blade sharpening service near you.

For a saw clogged with resin from cutting soft timber, use oven cleaner then spray the blade with silicone. ➤

Minimising risks

Before working with flammable or toxic substances like paint or PVC cement, turn off any gas pilot lights in the room, open windows and use a fan to ensure proper ventilation. Don't smoke and have a fire extinguisher at hand.

Only buy as much flammable or toxic material as you need for the job in hand, no matter how great the saving might be for buying in bulk. Dispose of leftovers as recommended by the manufacturer, or contact your local council for advice on how to get rid of excess product.



POWER TOOL SAFETY

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintaining and operating power tools.

If you have lost the owner's manual, check the manufacturer's website as they usually have the manuals for all products.

Follow this general advice for working safely with most power tools.

■ **KEEP THEM UNPLUGGED** whenever they aren't in use and disconnect the batteries of cordless tools. Many accidents happen by brushing against the on/off switch of a tool and accidentally turning it on.

■ **AVOID CLOGGED AIR VENTS** which can cause the tool to overheat. If vents do become blocked, clear them with compressed air or a vacuum cleaner.

■ **MINIMISE DUST** or sawdust when working by attaching the dust collection bag that is usually provided with the tool. This will not only help with the clean up but also reduces the chances of a fire.

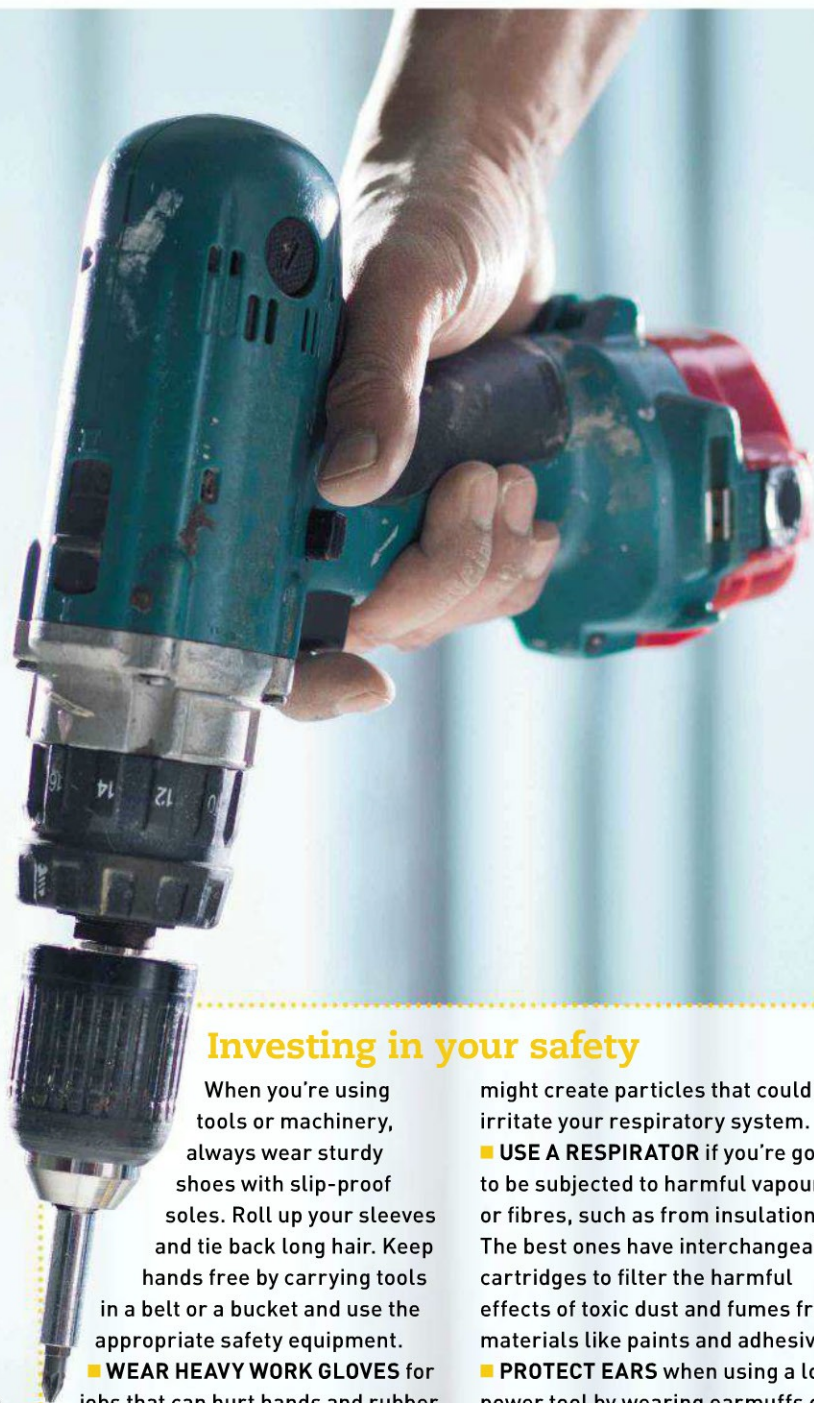
■ **TREAT CORDLESS TOOLS WELL** by using only batteries and chargers designed for the unit.

■ **CHECK THE FORECAST** before charging batteries and unplug in temperatures below 4°C or over 40°C. Batteries rely on chemical reactions that slow down in cold weather and cease altogether when it's very hot. High temperatures cause battery packs to degrade much faster than normal.



DIY SAVERS

Learn hundreds of tricks and keep more cash in your pocket by stocking the bookcase with the DIY bible *Save \$20,000 With a Nail* (\$60, readersdigestdirect.com.au).



Investing in your safety

When you're using tools or machinery, always wear sturdy shoes with slip-proof soles. Roll up your sleeves and tie back long hair. Keep hands free by carrying tools in a belt or a bucket and use the appropriate safety equipment.

■ **WEAR HEAVY WORK GLOVES** for jobs that can hurt hands and rubber gloves for handling toxic materials. Don't wear gloves for cutting or drilling as the tool could slip.

■ **PROTECT EYES** with goggles when filing, grinding, or doing any work involving dust or flying chips.

■ **USE A DUST MASK** when sanding or doing other work that

might create particles that could irritate your respiratory system.

■ **USE A RESPIRATOR** if you're going to be subjected to harmful vapours or fibres, such as from insulation. The best ones have interchangeable cartridges to filter the harmful effects of toxic dust and fumes from materials like paints and adhesives.

■ **PROTECT EARS** when using a loud power tool by wearing earmuffs or using foam earplugs.



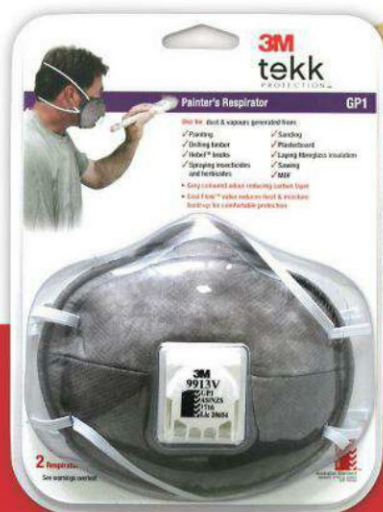


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Do now

■ **START** planting onions but keep them weed free for a good harvest and store them correctly for a long shelf-life, from page 116.

■ **IDENTIFY** and fix nutrient deficiencies in soil for healthy plants, on page 120.

■ **USE** the fallen leaves of deciduous trees to make nutrient-rich leaf mould, see page 122.



THIS MONTH

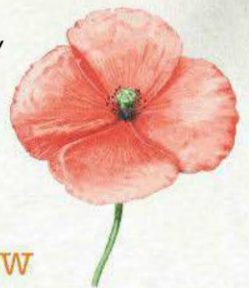
Enjoy setting the garden to rights before the cold of winter sets in and discourages regular visits outdoors



Sow now

For garden colour and fragrance over winter and into spring, sow these ornamentals in May.

- CORNFLOWER
- ENGLISH DAISY
- COLUMBINE
- GYPSOPHILA
- POPPY



Plant now

To harvest fresh food this winter and summer, plant these vegies and herbs.

- GARLIC
- ENGLISH SPINACH
- SNOW PEAS
- LEMONGRASS
- PARSLEY



Prune now

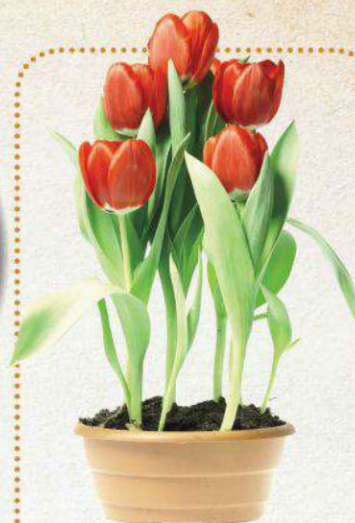
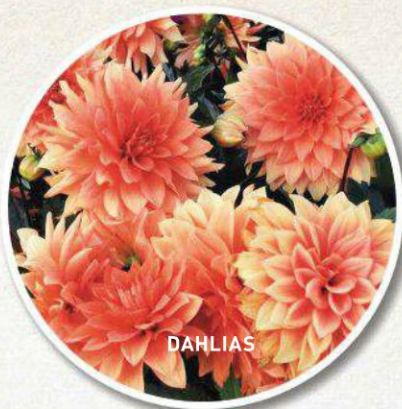
Give plants a trim for healthy new growth in spring.

- **CUT** ginger and cannas down to ground level.
- **TRIM** climbing plants and train as necessary.
- **SNIP** 100mm long westringia sprigs, remove the lower leaves, dip into hormone powder then plant into pots for new plants.



Top pick

With a dazzling array of shades to choose from, dahlias add an explosion of colour to the autumn garden. Keep them well fertilised, watered and mulched as well as providing support for the heavy stems so they don't fall over.



Revive pots

Hunt around the garden for last season's discarded cyclamen pot. Immerse it in a bucket of water for 20 minutes then apply a half-strength dose of liquid fertiliser. Pop it in a spot with light shade where the cyclamen should shortly come back to life.



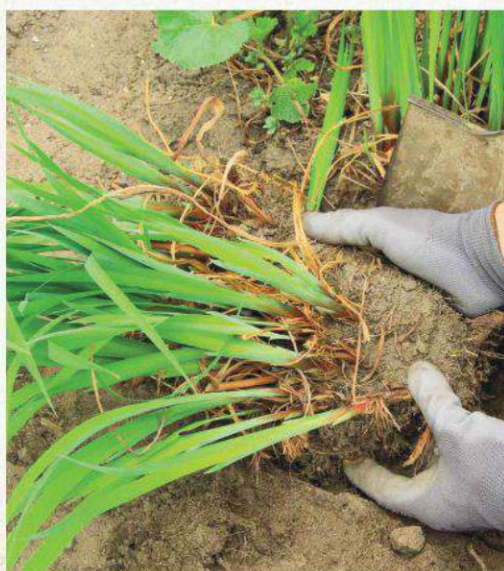
Buy bulbs

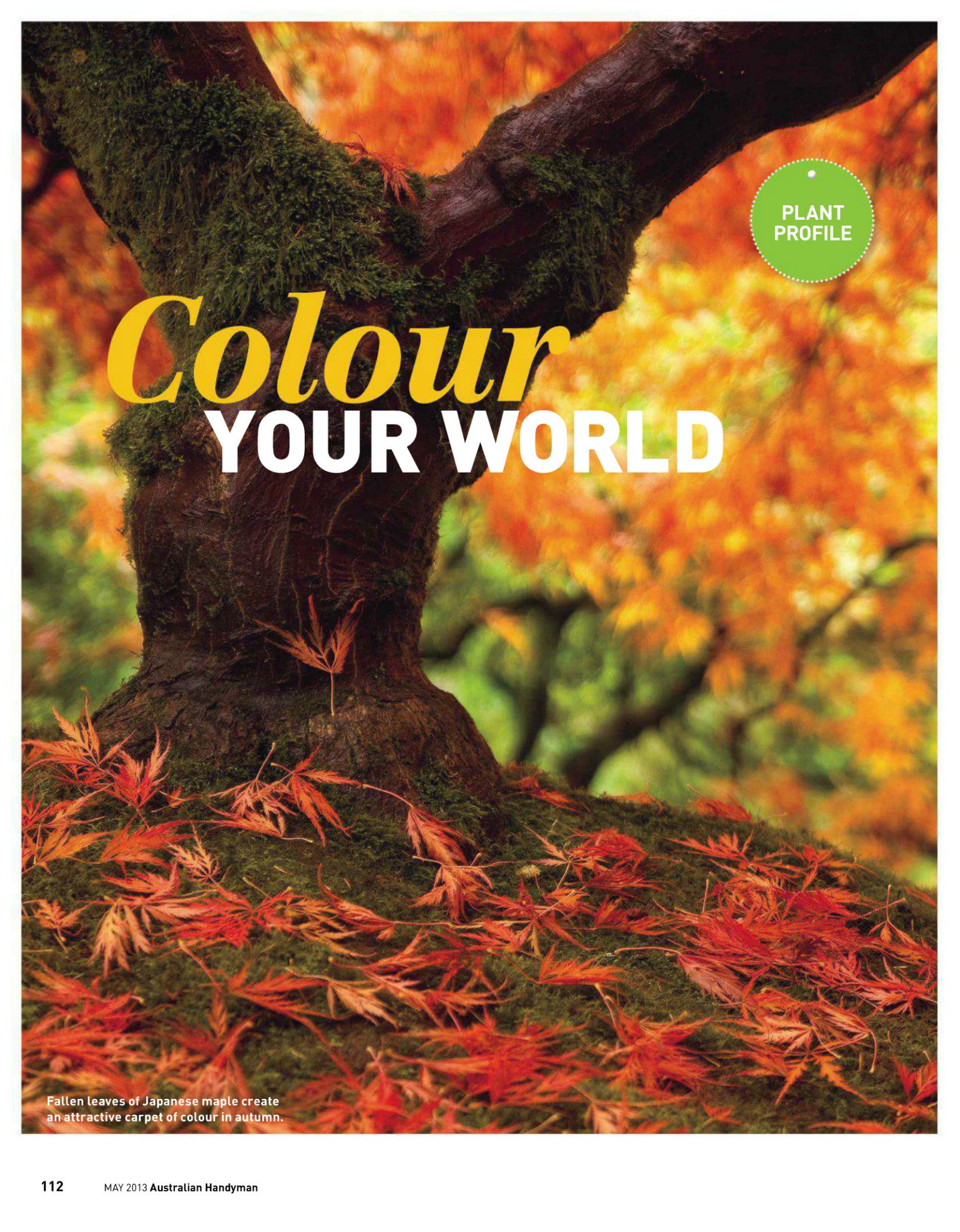
Hyacinth and tulip bulbs love the cold, so buy them now and keep them in a paper bag in the fridge crisper until planting in July. Pre-chilling simulates the dormancy bulbs need for flowering. In warmer areas of Australia the temperatures don't get low enough for this essential stage of the life cycle.



Divide lilies

Lift old clumps of daylilies every three years or so to improve flowering. Dig up the clumps and remove any old or dead roots then separate into sections using a sharp spade or secateurs. Plant the sections, leaving 800mm in between, or put them into separate pots.





PLANT
PROFILE

Colour **YOUR WORLD**

Fallen leaves of Japanese maple create
an attractive carpet of colour in autumn.



For a blaze of autumn colour in even the smallest garden, go for the bright and bold foliage of a Japanese maple

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

As the name suggests, these maples are native to Japan, growing as understorey trees in forests and the edges of woodlands.

Treasured for their dazzling autumn foliage display, they have been cultivated in Japan for centuries and in the West since the 1800s.

Deciduous small trees or large shrubs, Japanese maples are all slow-growing plants.

They are happy in full to part sun, as long as they have protection from harsh conditions. Most grow to about four metres, though under ideal conditions some can reach 10m high.

Autumn colour can be red, green, yellow or purple in a variety of leaf shapes and sizes. The best seasonal colour is shown in climates with clearly defined seasons.

Japanese maples must go dormant over winter, so they have a hard time surviving in climates where it doesn't get cold enough.

The leaves have five, seven or nine lobes and are usually from 40 to 120mm long.

They range from the broad classic maple form to fine or cut leaves, which are heavily lobed, to filigree or dissected lace-like foliage, and even variegated.



**BONSAI
MAPLE**

The names of maples give a clue about the foliage. *Atropurpureum* means purple or red leaves and is used as a generic name as well as a particular cultivar.

These types prefer afternoon shade as their leaves discolour with too much sun or too much shade.

Dissectum varieties have finely cut leaves that can be barely thicker than the skeleton of the leaf veins. These plants need protection from wind and hot sun, as they scorch easily.

TIP Small-leaved Japanese maples are particularly popular as bonsai plants.

WEeping MAPLES

A popular type of dwarf maple is formed by grafting a fine-leaved Japanese maple with a weeping habit onto an upright understock.

The tree will generally grow only as tall as the understock, usually one or two metres.

Most commonly grown as a feature tree, they also take on starring roles in rockeries and in large pots.

Some have lollipop-like, straight forms,

while others fall in rippling waves that would look at home in a Japanese watercolour. ➤

Pruning a maple

Trim weeping varieties in winter when branches are visible or in summer when thinning is easier.

TIP Pruning in very hot weather can burn newly exposed bark.



1 REMOVE ANY STEMS that stick up from the weeping shape. Trim the outer branches at the base to the preferred length, removing growth from beneath the graft.



2 TAKE A LOOK at the tree's shape from a few steps back, then prune any branches that don't fit the natural flow. It should look like a symmetrical waterfall.



Plant a Japanese maple on its own as a landscape feature.

IN THE GARDEN

Position maples in a protected spot, away from strong winds.

In all but the coolest areas they do better in semi-shade. Morning sun or dappled sunlight are the best options.

They like moisture in their shallow root run, so rich, friable, free-draining soil is best but any that isn't heavy clay or very alkaline will do.

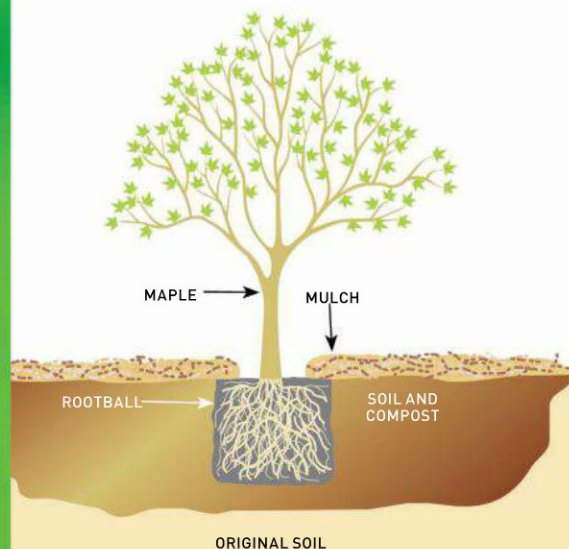
PLANT by digging a hole four times the width of the rootball and a little deeper. Mix rich compost into the dug-out soil and fill the base of the hole.

Remove the plant from its pot and gently tease out any circling roots, then position it in the hole and backfill with enriched soil.

MULCH with 70mm of well-rotted organic mulch, keeping it at least 100mm clear of the trunk.

CARE for Japanese maples by watering regularly for the first three years. They don't need a lot of water but do need it in consistent amounts.

PLANTING A JAPANESE MAPLE



In heavy clay soil, plant into a mound of new friable soil well above the original level to create a zone of good drainage.

Check that there is sufficient moisture after rain, as shallow falls may evaporate quickly.

PRUNE in winter or summer, removing branches that spoil the shape of the tree and any that are diseased or crossing.

Summer pruning stimulates less plant growth than winter pruning, so you can get away with cutting back a little more and the tree will stay thinned out for longer.

WATCH FOR sucking insects, as scale and mealy bug sometimes feast on young shoots. They can be easily removed with a toothbrush or thumbnail, or sprayed with pest oil.

Aphids can also be a problem, use a soap-based spray or blast with a jet of water from the hose.

Caterpillars are a common problem, but just remove, drop and squash them. Curl grubs are especially dangerous, chewing through the tree's shallow root system, especially in a

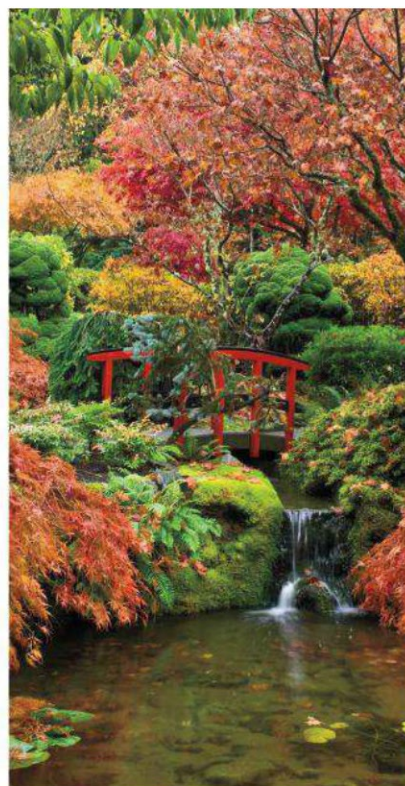
pot. Treat them with a spinosad-based insecticide like Yates Success.

Fungal problems can be an issue, especially in young plants and bonsai, so don't overwater, plant too deeply or grow in heavy soil. Repot a tree with fungal issues into a disinfected pot filled with fresh potting mix.

Leaf tips turning brown can be a sign of overwatering or of leaf scorch. Adjust watering if needed, or consider moving the tree to a more protected part of the garden, or planting screening trees nearby.

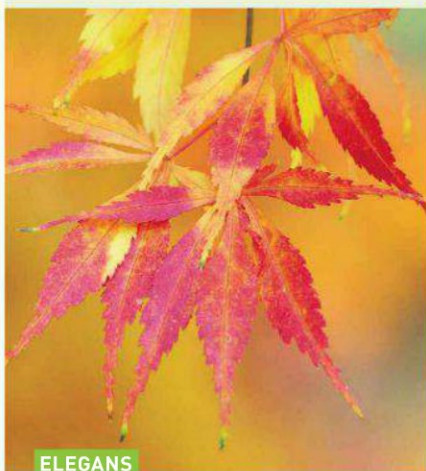


Multicrop EcoPest Oil, \$17 for 3L.
multicrop.com.au



CHOOSING A VARIETY

There are a huge number of Japanese maple cultivars available from nurseries. Look for a potted plant with a style of leaf and autumn colour to suit your garden, checking the mature size to make sure you have the space.



ELEGANS

This small tree has beautiful golden-orange and red autumn foliage. Slow-growing to 4m high and 3m wide, it is ideal for small gardens and can be grown in a large pot. Avoid positioning it in strong winds or scorching sun.



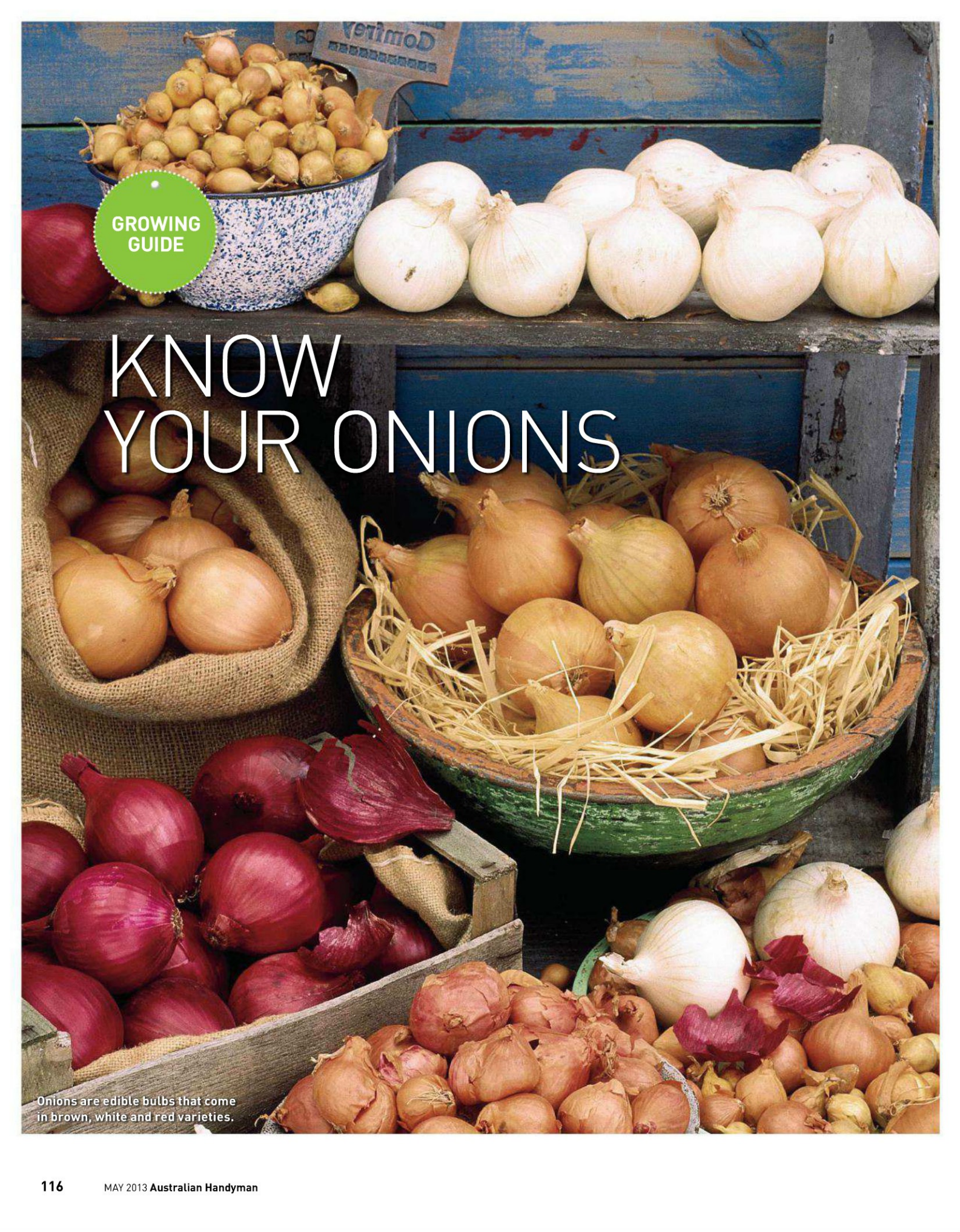
SANGO KAKU

The young coral-pink stems of this maple stand out brilliantly against the bare older bark in winter. Growing to 6m tall and 5m wide, it suits a larger garden and prefers a protected spot. Autumn foliage is yellow to apricot.



ATROPURPUREUM

A small tree for year-round colour with purple-green leaves that blaze into bright crimson every autumn, it grows to about 3m tall and wide, with a dense canopy. Grow as a specimen tree in front of hedging or near larger deciduous trees.



GROWING
GUIDE

KNOW YOUR ONIONS

Onions are edible bulbs that come in brown, white and red varieties.

Sweet or savoury, fresh or fried, this versatile veg is easy to grow, harvest, store and cook

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Onions are a kitchen staple and despite taking a long time to grow compared to many fast-cropping vegies, they are very easy to add to the home harvest.

They need a sunny spot in rich, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.5 to 7 that is not high in nitrogen. A bed that grew tomatoes or zucchini over summer is ideal.

Biennial plants, they grow leaves and bulbs in the first year and usually flower in the second, though they can form flowers early and bolt to seed.

They can take six to eight months to mature, but you can harvest as you grow and properly stored mature onions will last a long time.

Varieties are often described as early, mid or late season, referring to the planting time. Early go in over autumn, mid in early winter and late in late winter and spring. Plant one of each for months of successive crops.

Red, white and brown onions are all available in varieties suitable for different climates, so make sure you choose the right type for you.

Brown onions are best for cooking. White onions have a milder flavour and can be cooked or used raw. Red onions have the sweetest flavour and are the best to eat raw.

All onions are part of the allium family, which also includes leeks, shallots, garlic and chives.

Alliums produce ball-shaped purple, blue or white flowerheads on a long stem. These add a beautiful feature to the garden if you're keeping the onion for seed, but you should lift mature onions if flower stems start forming, or cut off the flowers.

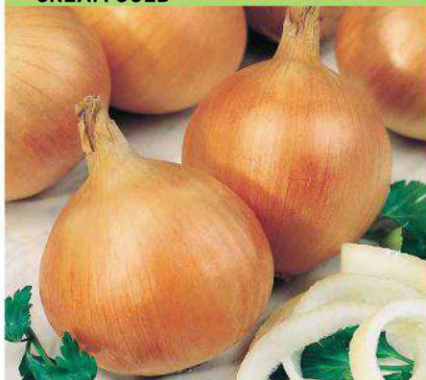
Growing varieties suited to your area and sowing at the right time will help to prevent onions bolting to seed.

TIP Fence off alliums from pets, as they're poisonous to dogs and cats. ➤



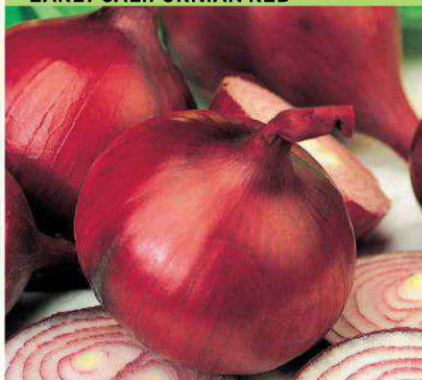
CHOOSING A VARIETY

CREAM GOLD



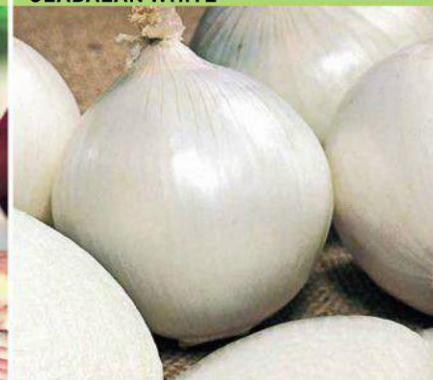
- Mid-season variety
- Full-flavoured flesh
- Excellent keeping onion
- Great for cooler regions

EARLY CALIFORNIAN RED



- Early variety
- Sweet, firm flesh
- Slow to bolt to seed
- Reliable grower for first-timers

GLADALAN WHITE



- Mid-season variety
- Stores well
- Can also be grown as a bunching spring onion

IN THE VEGIE PATCH

Rake in a fistful of sulphate of potash per square metre for all soils, adding dolomite for non-alkaline soils.

SOW SEEDS about 5mm deep in rows 300mm apart. Thin seedlings as per the spacing listed on the pack.

WATER REGULARLY at soil level so the onions don't dry out. As they reach maturity, water only in dry conditions.

Don't mulch, as onions can rot if covered, and feed every three months with low-nitrogen fertiliser. Weed by hand without disturbing the onions.

HARVEST CROPS as needed once bulbs form or snip the leafy tops for greens at any time. Pull up immature bulbs as spring or green onions for salads.

Dig up onions when the tops die back, leave them in the sun until the outer skins are dry then wipe off any soil, removing the dead tops and roots. Store in a cool, dry place or mesh bag.

Brown onions keep for six months, white onions for three and red for one.

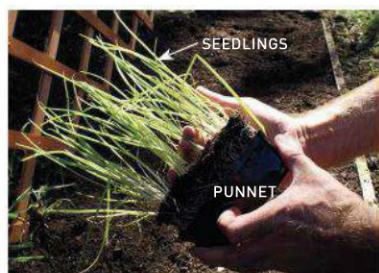
WATCH FOR thrips, tiny insects that feed on new leaves, damaging growth. To prevent infestations, keep the area weed free and water at the roots. Remove onions showing mould or rot.



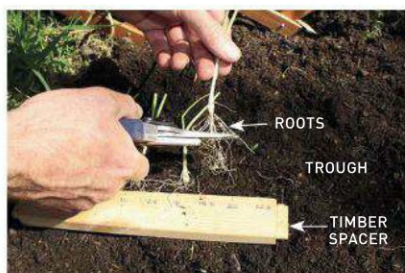
Pull up onions when ready to harvest and leave in the sun to dry.

Planting onion seedlings

If your previous crop is still in, or the soil is cold or wet, start onions as seedlings. Sow seeds into punnets at the correct time for the variety, leave to grow into strong seedlings, then plant them out into the garden.



1 SOW THE SEEDS 5mm deep in punnets of seed-raising mix. Keep just damp in a sunny spot and when big enough to handle, empty the punnets and separate the seedlings.
TIP Don't sow early for the variety or the onion may bolt to seed.



2 MAKE A SHALLOW TROUGH in the soil of the garden bed. If your seedlings are tall, trim the roots and tops by half. Use a marked-up piece of timber or a knotted rope to ensure the correct spacing between seedlings, usually 50 to 100mm in rows 300mm apart.



3 POSITION THE SEEDLINGS in the trough, backfilling to bury the roots and not the bulbs. They will stand up in a few days if flat at first. Give them a good watering the first week.
TIP Grow with silverbeet, carrots and lettuce but not peas or beans.



Double-onion pizza

PREPARATION TIME 25 mins

COOKING TIME 30 mins

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 shop-bought 30cm pizza base
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 red onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 brown onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- ½ tsp sugar
- 3 Tbsp tomato pasta sauce
- ⅓ cup sliced bocconcini
- 10 sage leaves

- 1 **PREHEAT THE OVEN** to 240°C. Spray a baking tray with cooking spray. Position the pizza base on the prepared tray.
- 2 **MEANWHILE** heat 2 teaspoons of the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and sprinkle with the sugar. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for 7 minutes or until the onions are soft. Uncover and cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes or until golden brown. Stir in pepper to taste.
- 3 **COMBINE THE PASTA SAUCE** and the remaining oil in a small bowl. Brush the mixture over the pizza base and spread the onion mixture over the top. Add the bocconcini and the sage leaves. Bake for 10 minutes or until the dough is crisp and the onions are hot.

CHOP ONIONS WITHOUT TEARS

Onions are essential for lots of dishes but chopping them does have the side effect of making eyes water. Some cooks recommend chilling onions first but the only real way to stop the tears is to wear goggles.



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Problem solver

NUTRIENT
DEFICIENCIES

Yellowed leaves, poor fruit set or a failure to thrive?
It could be something your plants didn't eat

When you have followed all the rules on the label for your plant but it's still in poor health it could have a nutrient deficiency.

These occur when the soil is lacking one or more of the nutrients the plant requires to thrive.

Deficiencies often show up in the leaves, which may be discoloured, distorted or dropping off.

The oldest leaves can show problems best where deficiencies have built up, though certain problems, like calcium deficiency, show first in young leaves.

A plant nutrient is any element required for normal growth. The air supplies the essential elements of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen but others are supplied by the soil.

Synthetic or organic fertilisers can prevent or treat deficiencies.

Some sap-sucking insects, fungi and diseases can cause similar problems, so look out for them, too.

And check that you haven't over or under-watered, which can also cause foliage problems.

GROW HEALTHY PLANTS

Improve your soil by adding well-rotted manure or compost, and spreading organic mulches or leaf mould around existing plants.

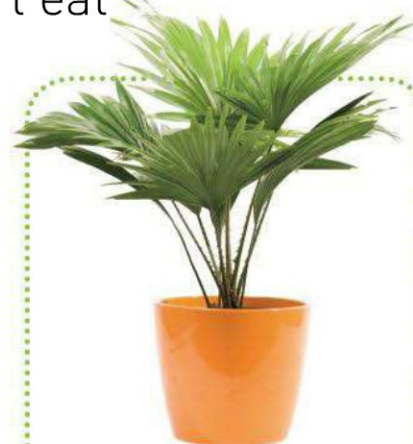
Digging it into the soil to a depth of 50mm can help to keep any nutritional problems at bay.

For gross feeders such as citrus, bananas, hibiscus, zucchini and tomato, just use a good quality complete fertiliser designed for that plant. Or target the problem and treat specifically.

TIP Always water plants well before and after feeding.



Yates Dynamic Lifter
Organic Plant Food, \$14 for 7kg.

**Feeding pot plants**

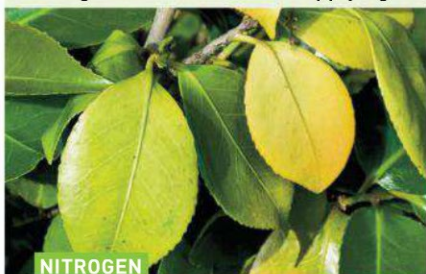
Plants growing in pots rely on us to keep them healthy. Nitrogen is often lacking, as decomposing potting mix can use it up, keeping it from hungry roots.

Fertilise container-grown plants regularly when they're actively producing new growth, generally from spring to autumn.

Use a gentle liquid fertiliser or a pelletised organic variety, as salt-based fertilisers can burn confined roots and leave excess salt crust on the pot and mix.

DETECTING AND TREATING DEFICIENCIES

Look for these symptoms in your plants to identify nutrient deficiencies in the soil. Confirm your diagnosis using a soil test kit before applying the remedy, then treat at the recommended rates.



NITROGEN

Older leaves yellow at the bottom of the plant with others pale green. Slow, spindly growth may appear.
TREATMENT Blood and bone, manure and fertilisers containing nitrate, ammonium or urea



Hortico All Purpose Soluble Fertiliser, \$9 for 1kg. hortico.com.au

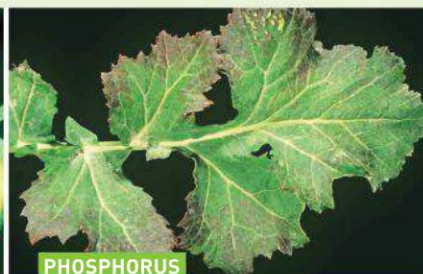


MAGNESIUM

Leaves turn yellow between the veins and the plant suffers from slow growth.
TREATMENT Epsom salts and dolomite



Manutec Epsom Salt, \$7 for 1kg. manutec.com.au

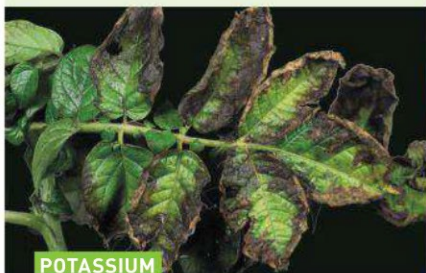


PHOSPHORUS

Dark red-purple leaves with older leaves looking burnt at the tips and poor fruit set.
TREATMENT Phosphate, manure and bone meal



Yates Blood and Bone, \$13 for 5kg. yates.com.au

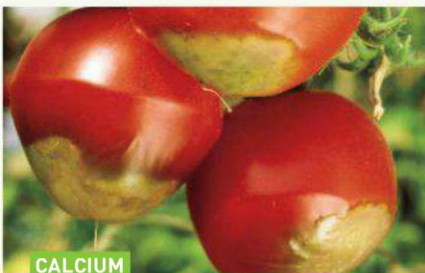


POTASSIUM

Yellowing between leaf veins, plus scorched and curling leaf edges and pulpy fruit.
TREATMENT Manure, seaweed extracts and sulphate of potash



Scotts Miracle-Gro Seafeed 3in1, \$14 for 1L. scottsaustralia.com.au

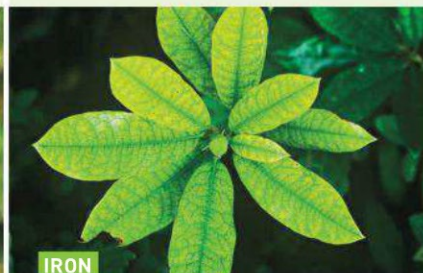


CALCIUM

New growth is distorted and can yellow and die, and fruit is afflicted with blossom end rot.
TREATMENT Lime, gypsum, dolomite and crushed eggshells



Richgro Garden Lime, \$4 for 2.5kg. richgro.com.au



IRON

New leaves pale between veins to light green, yellow or white.
TREATMENT Seaweed extract, iron chelates, and ammonium sulphate and compost to lower pH



Manutec Iron Chelate, \$11 for 300g.



FEED AND
MULCH

MAKE THE MOULD THAT'S GOLD

Rich, nutrient-filled leaf mould adds body to your soil and needs only fallen leaves, moisture and time to make.

Collect fallen autumn leaves then pile them up, wet and forget to make a free mulch and soil improver

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Autumn leaves aren't just pretty, they're full of essential minerals for your garden.

The problem is they fall in such numbers that they can overwhelm the compost bin or form an impenetrable layer if left on the ground.

They are best composted separately in a leaf mould heap, where they break down via a special type of slow, cool decomposition driven mostly by fungi, rather than the warm, fast action of bacteria in a standard heap.

Leaf mould produces a wonderful end product that can be dug in to improve any soil, used as mulch or incorporated into potting mix.

And forget the balancing and turning of traditional compost, just pile up the leaves, wet and forget.

For the best leaf mould, use leaves from deciduous trees, leaving out any with fungal or viral infections.

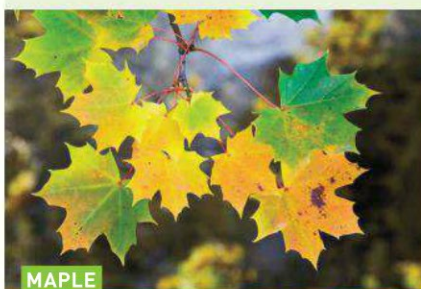
If you don't have enough in your own garden, collect them from footpaths and nature strips in the neighbourhood. Leaves from evergreen trees break down more slowly, so keep them to a minimum.

In six to 12 months you'll have a rich mulch to use on pots and garden beds and within a year or two, a nutritious soil conditioner that also makes a brilliant addition to homemade potting mixes.

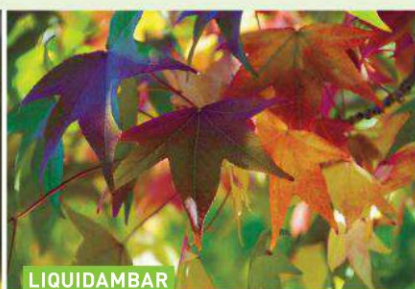
TIP Large leaves left on the lawn block sunlight, which can weaken turf. Run the mower over the lawn with the catcher off and the shredded leaves will soon disappear into the grass. ➤

LEAVES TO USE

These trees have mineral-rich foliage that breaks down slowly to make a rich soil conditioner. Small leaves rot faster, so shred large or thick leaves.



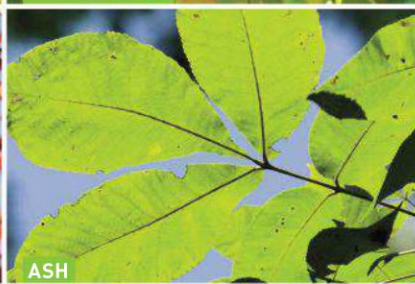
MAPLE



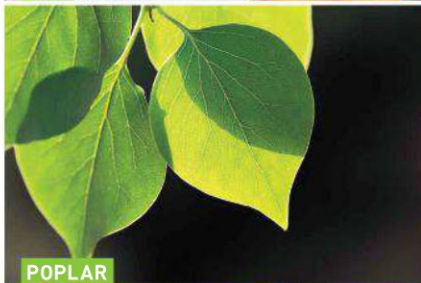
LIQUIDAMBAR



OAK



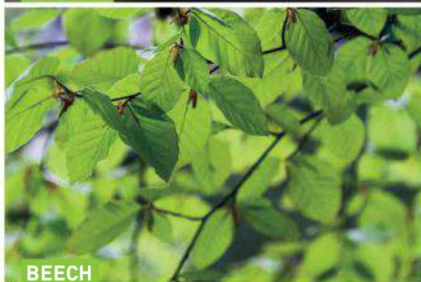
ASH



POPLAR



ELM



BEECH



BIRCH

Building a bin

To make leaf mould, build a bin in a sheltered part of the garden where rain can still get to the leaves, like next to a shed, as they decompose faster if kept damp.



1 MEASURE OUT a square or rectangle to fit your space. Position a garden stake at least 1000mm high at each corner and hammer firmly into the ground.



2 SECURE CHICKEN WIRE to the stakes with galvanised staples to enclose the bin on three sides. **TIP** The front is left open so you can add the leaves to the bin.



3 PILE UP LEAVES to the top, wetting them down with a hose. When the bin is full, add a mesh front with tie wire so you can remove it to access the leaf mould.



MAKE LEAF MOULD

Although you can make leaf mould with just a heaped-up pile of leaves, the process is easier to manage with some sort of container.

In a small garden, use the bin bag method. Collect fallen leaves and save them in a garbage bag, hosing with water to soak the whole lot.

Make a depression in the top of the tied-off bag and punch a few holes to let in rain. Punch more holes at the base to let excess moisture drain out and keep the bag in a shady area.

If you have space, build a leaf bin, which will allow you to pile your leaves as high as possible. They'll rot down, so don't worry if your pile is tall to begin with.

Leaf mould can take two years to rot, so have more than one bin if you want to use it fully rotted.

TIP Plane and sycamore leaves can take three years to rot. Shred them finely or run over the pile several times with a lawnmower to speed things up.

FEED THE GARDEN

Depending on how long you leave it to break down, leaf mould has many uses in the garden.

It is ideal for use around trees, shrubs, perennials, woodland plants and ferns, while annuals and vegetables prefer the higher nitrogen available in normal compost.

YOUNG LEAF MOULD is usable after six to 12 months when the leaves start breaking up and crumble easily.

Use this young product to mulch garden beds and around trees and shrubs, dig it into the soil to add organic matter before planting, or use it as topdressing for lawns.

WELL-ROTTED LEAF MOULD is a dark brown crumbly material that's produced after one to two years, with no real sign of the original leaves.

This material can be used the same way as young leaf mould but also as seed-raising mix. Or combine it with equal parts washed sand, loam and garden compost to make potting mix.

FERN



Use leaf mould to protect plants like ferns that have roots near the soil surface.

+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for tips on Autumn Garden Pests And Weeds.

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BEGINNER'S
PROJECT

MINI POTTING SHED

Build a wall cabinet to do double duty as a workbench and storage

DIY > \$120

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$320

SKILL > 1 2 3 4 5

TIME > 4 HOURS

A traditional potting shed features shelves to keep gardening tools and a bench for working with pots and plants.

This scaled-down version is a timber wall-hung cabinet that's designed to keep equipment close at hand but tucked out of sight.

An ideal solution when outdoor space is limited, the slatted door is hinged to fold down for use as a potting bench and is held shut with simple flat barrel bolts. Plus, it has plenty of storage room for hand tools. **TIP** Try a Zenith 75mm Surface Bolt, about \$10. itwproline.com.au

BUILD THE CABINET

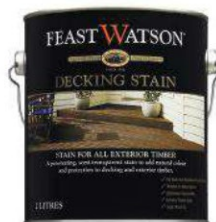
Made entirely from DAR (dressed all round) pine, the timber pieces are cut with a handsaw.

To build the cabinet it's fastest to use a cordless drill for the pilot holes and to secure the screws, but you could also make it with a hand drill and a manual screwdriver.

Weatherproof the cabinet by simply applying a few coats of leftover decking stain to all interior and exterior surfaces with a brush.

To mount the cabinet, drill clearance holes in the back rails and mark the hole positions on the wall.

Use a hammer drill and masonry bit to make holes for Dynabolts in masonry, or secure to wall studs using 75mm x 10g screws. >



Feast Watson Decking Stain in Peacock Blue, \$50 for 2L. feastwatson.com.au



Fasteners

Build the frame and secure the dividers and shelves with exterior PVA adhesive and 40mm x 8g exterior timber screws. Attach the door rails to the slats with adhesive and 30mm x 8g screws.

The door is secured using 38mm brass butt hinges. To keep the surface level and stable when the door is in the folded down position, lengths of galvanised chain are attached to screw eyes on the door and cabinet.



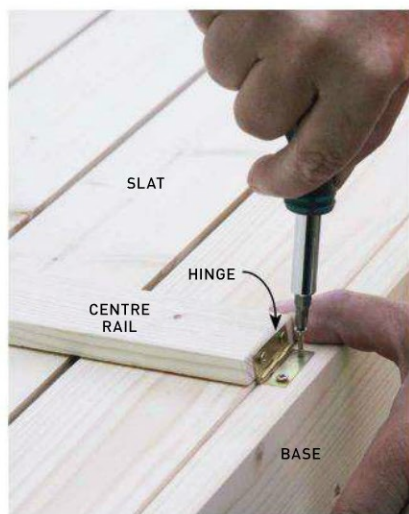
It only takes a morning to make this mini potting shed to store pots, seeds and small hand tools for container gardening.

MAKE A POTTING SHED



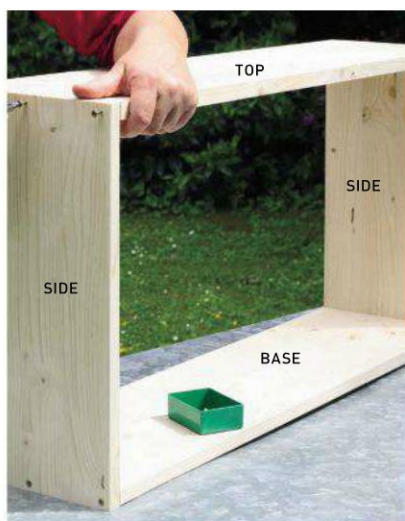
1 Build the door

On a flat surface, position the two side rails 800mm apart with the third rail centred between them. Position the slats on top flush with the outer edge of the side rails and with 3mm gaps between, then check the assembly for square, securing using adhesive and screws.



4 Attach the hinges

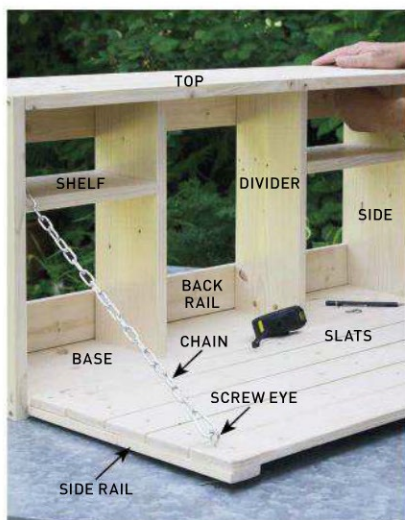
On the end of each door rail, position a hinge and mark the screw locations. Drill pilot holes and attach the hinges to the rails with the supplied screws, then mark screw locations and secure the hinges to the frame base. **TIP** Secure the screws by hand to avoid damaging the soft brass.



2 Assemble the frame

Position the top and base between the sides and check for square using a builder's square. Drill countersunk 2mm pilot holes with a twist bit and secure the butt joints with PVA adhesive and screws.

TIP Use corner clamps to hold the pieces square, making assembly easier.



5 Secure the chains

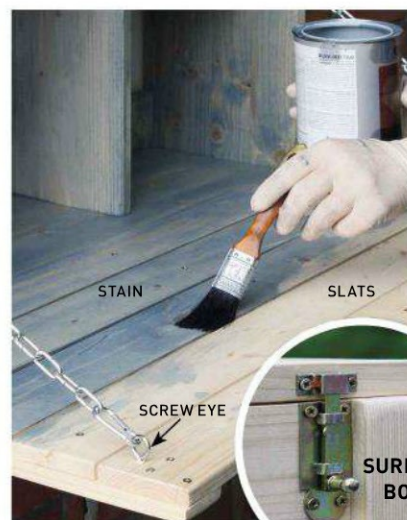
Wind screw eyes into the door 25mm in from the sides and 60mm from the front edge. Attach snap hooks to the ends of 600mm lengths of chain then attach to the door. Wind the screw eyes on the other end to the underside of the top 25mm from the sides so the chains hold the door level.



3 Add the shelves

Secure a shelf 280mm up on each divider, position in the frame and attach 19mm from the back with adhesive and screws. Position the back rails flush with the top and base, securing with adhesive and screws.

TIP You can attach 19mm thick cutouts to the divider tops as door bumpers.



6 Apply the finish

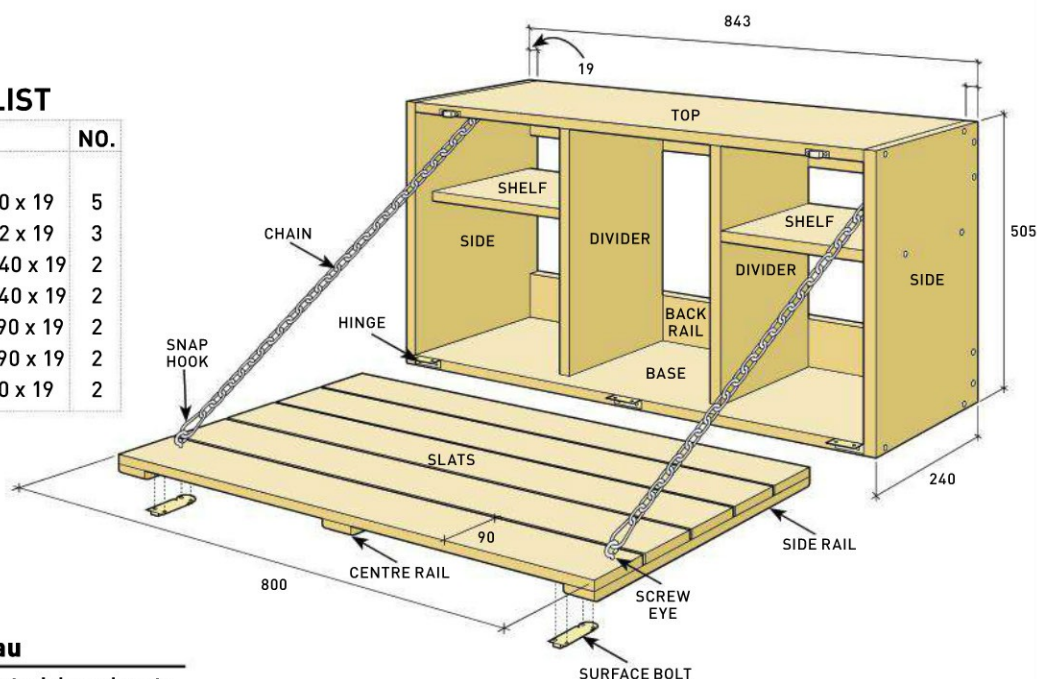
Attach the surface bolts flush with the top of the door and the catches to the front edge of the top using the supplied screws. Round over all corners and the rail ends with 120 grit abrasive paper then sand the cabinet with 180 grit paper, applying three coats of tinted decking stain.

MINI POTTING SHED

measurements in mm

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
PINE		
Slats	800 x 90 x 19	5
Rails	460 x 42 x 19	3
Top and base	805 x 240 x 19	2
Sides	505 x 240 x 19	2
Dividers	467 x 190 x 19	2
Shelves	250 x 190 x 19	2
Back rails	805 x 90 x 19	2



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Download the tools, materials and costs needed to build a mini potting shed.

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**JOB
OF THE
MONTH**

Laying the pavers

Choose a paver that is a little larger in size than the pot used for the camellias. For the best visual effect, the paver should have the same finish as the pot or provide a contrast in colour or texture.



1 LIFT OUT the agapanthus and cut through the roots with a sharp spade to divide into smaller clumps, making sure roots are attached. Put aside.



2 ADD FRESH SOIL to the holes left by the agapanthus removal, then remove a layer of soil the same size but half the depth of the pavers and screed to level.



3 POSITION THE PAVER on a 30mm layer of river sand, compacted and screeded level. Tap the paver with a rubber mallet, checking for level.

MAKING AN ENTRANCE

Potted camellias mark the start of the path leading to the front door

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

The agapanthus at *Handyman* features editor Jecca Blake's house had started growing across the path to the front door, making access tricky.

Says Jecca, 'I decided to dig out and divide some of the agapanthus plus pot up a couple of camellias to create a neater entrance.'

Jecca positioned the new pots on leftover pavers to prevent roots growing into the ground.

The agapanthus were lifted out of the ground and divided into smaller clumps then replanted into fresh soil around the potted camellias.

For added stability, Jecca spread mortar halfway up the outer edge of each paver at 45° using a steel trowel.

GROWING AGAPANTHUS

Hardy plants that survive well during extended dry periods, agapanthus flower better with a bit of moisture and more prolifically if they are divided every three or four years.

Says Jecca, 'They do best in full sun or part-shade in free-draining soil. Cut spent flowerheads for more blooms and to stop seeds spreading.'

TIP Protect them from slugs and snails with bran-based baits.

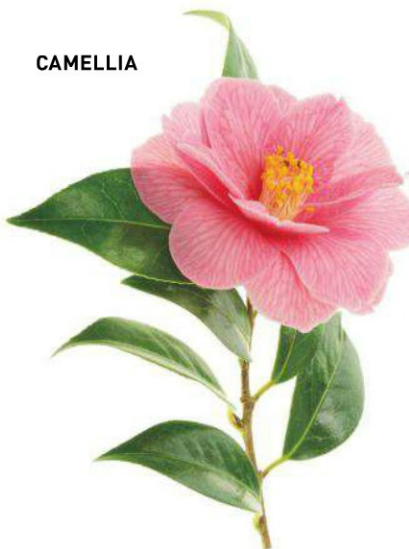
To define the entrance point, potted camellias stand on either side of the small, agapanthus-lined pathway.



4 PLANT THE AREA with the divided agapanthus, water in well and position a potted camellia on each paver.

TIP Use pot feet to assist drainage.

CAMELLIA

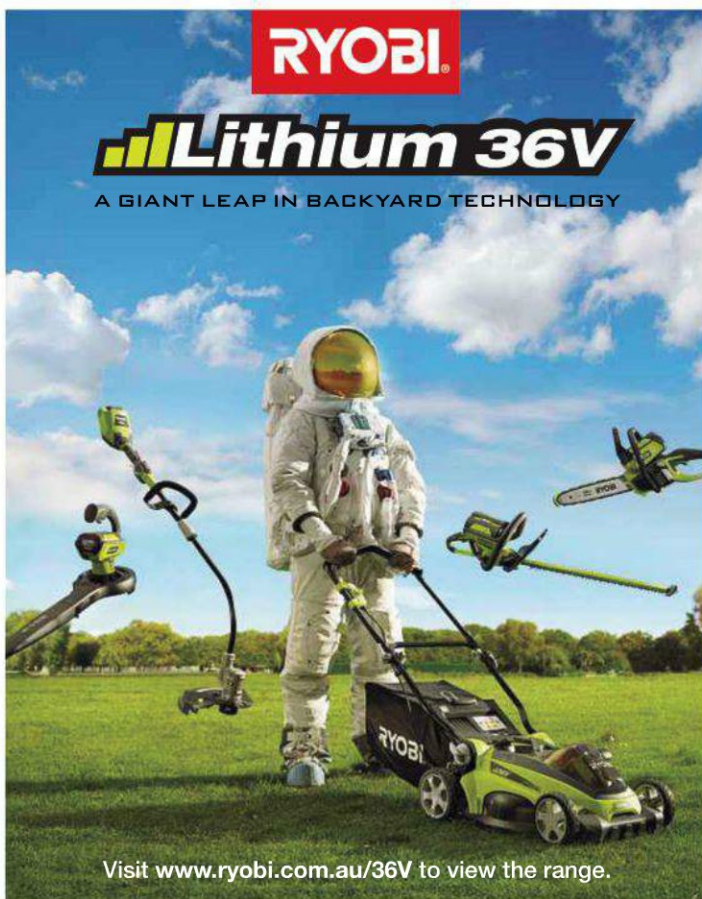


AGAPANTHUS



Handyman BUYER'S GUIDE

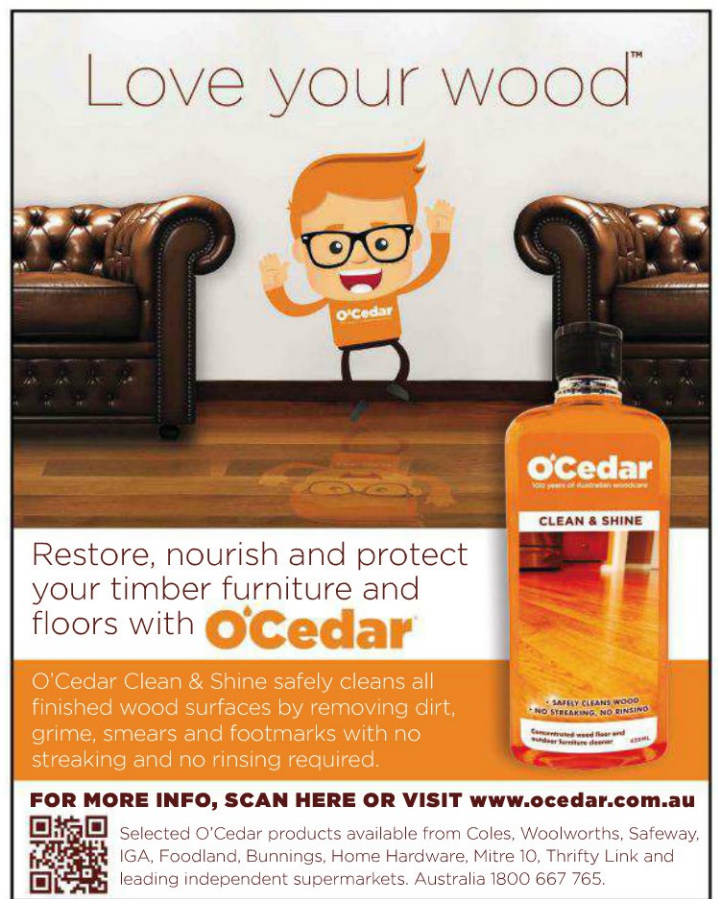
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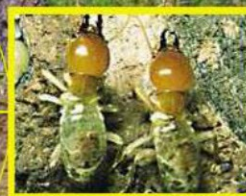
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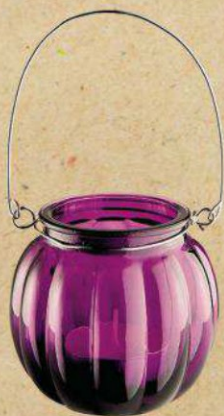
Handyman

BUYER'S GUIDE

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ADD A GLOW to the garden and light up the night with the Gardman Jam Jar Tealight Holder, available in an array of colours, \$2.98. **BEAT BITES** and keep mozzies at bay with Haven Ceramic Candle Holders and citronella tealights, \$6.95.



DRESS UP this MDF Jewellery Tree with paint or mosaic tiles then use it to display necklaces, bracelets and more, \$5.

MOTHER'S DAY GIFT GUIDE

Head to Bunnings to get a present for a mum who loves to garden or DIY



CREATE A SCENE in the yard with a collection of Tuscan Path Glazed Garden Gnomes, available in assorted designs and sizes, \$9.98 each.



A GOOD CHOICE for general work, the Pope Flexi Grip General Purpose Gloves fit close for extra flexibility, \$6.98.



TREAT YOUR GREEN THUMBS with the soft and flexible Pope Surefit Gloves, with leather palms and fingers, \$7.69.



PROTECT YOUR HANDS in the garden with the hardwearing, full leather Pope Extra Protection Gloves, \$5.48.



PICTURE PERFECT frames are just a paint job away with Boyle Vintage MDF Photo Frames, 17 x 21cm, \$12.95.



LET IT FLOW with precision using the Pope Deluxe Multi-Function Hand Spray with seven watering patterns, \$22.97.



LIGHT THE WAY with a touch of Moorish style with the Gardman Zanibar Garden Lantern, \$19.98.

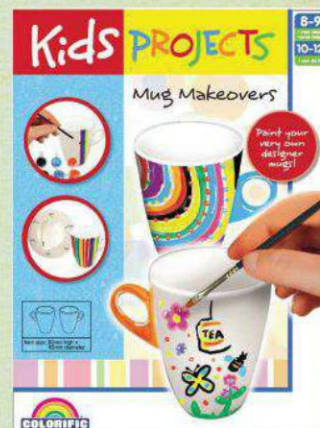


UNDER
\$25

RACK 'EM UP with the sleek TidyUp stackable wine rack that clicks together to store 12 bottles of wine, \$24.98.



TREAT THE BIRDS with the Garden Trend Bird Feeder with wicker basket and tin dish, \$17.70.

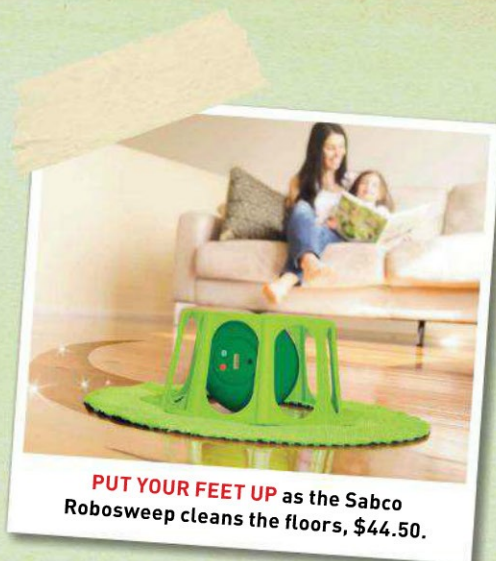


KIT OUT THE KIDS with a mug makeover pack by Colorific, featuring all they need to customise two cups, \$14.99.



**UNDER
\$50**

MIMIC NATURE and add personality to the yard with Northcote Pottery Bordeaux Butterfly Garden Wall Art, \$24.98.



PUT YOUR FEET UP as the Sabco Robosweep cleans the floors, \$44.50.



A STYLISH STOPOVER for feathered friends, the Tuscan Path Glazed Bird Bath comes in an array of colours, \$40.98.



CHECK THE TIME and temperature with the Garth Garden Clock and Thermometer, \$29.68.



BOTTLE IT UP in the easy-to-assemble hardwood and steel Super Barley Wine Rack, \$29.98.



TACKLE TOUGH STUFF with the Ironclad Women's Evolution Gloves, designed for female hands, \$29.97.



AIM AND SHOOT with the ergonomic TacMate Arrow Staple Gun, compatible with four staple sizes, \$49.98.



SUCK UP SPILLS of any kind with the Dirt Devil Wet and Dry Hand Vacuum, featuring cordless convenience, \$29.



CREATE A PEACEFUL PLACE just for Mum with the Northcote Pottery Water Magic Water Feature, \$398.



KEEP TOASTY WARM this winter while enjoying your garden with an Enclosed Fire Pit, \$129.



TURN THE SCREW with a Bosch PSR Select Screwdriver, featuring 12 standard bits to suit any job, \$89.



REEL IT IN with the Pope 20m capacity Automatic Hose Reel, \$129.



WRAP IT UP using a wall-mounted Nylex Auto Wind Hose Reel, \$159.



INVITE THE BIRDS to stay awhile with the Gardman Cast Iron Classic Bird Bath, \$69.



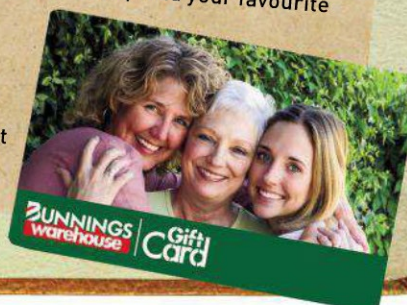
JUST LIKE HOME the easy-care Self-Assembly Bird House comes complete with roof tiles, \$99.99.

Give Mum the gift of choice

Spoil Mum this Mother's Day with a Bunnings Gift Card, giving her the whole warehouse in a card. Gift Cards are available in values of \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 and can be used in any Bunnings location across Australia.

To personalise your gift for Mum, upload your favourite photo at bunnings.com.au to have the gift cards delivered to your door (postage fees apply).

Bunnings also has e-gift cards that can be delivered straight to Mum's inbox.



MAKE A *rustic frame*

Buy or build a simple pine frame for a plywood chalkboard then use a clever DIY paint technique to age it instantly

All you need to make a new frame that looks like a vintage piece is a few lengths of timber and basic painting supplies.

For a 600 x 400mm frame, cut lengths of 70 x 19mm pine with mitred corners using a mitresaw.

Join the pine pieces with PVA adhesive and 50 x 2.8mm galvanised nails, then fill any holes with timber filler and sand the frame.

Apply two coats of a mahogany stain to seal the timber and darken the colour then paint it with acrylic.

To create the distressed finish, just scrape and sand the new paint job.

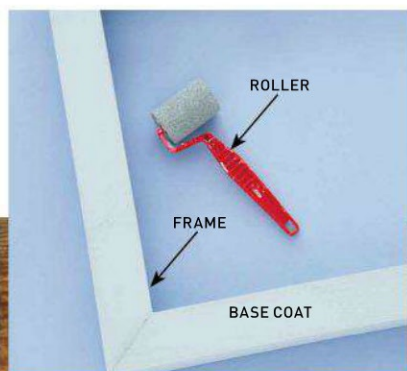
What to use



Uni-Pro Sanding
Cork Block, \$2.88.



Uni-Pro 25mm Paint
Scraper, \$2.90.



1 PAINT THE FRAME after staining it, using a roller to apply a water based acrylic in blue or grey as a base coat. **TIP** The distressed finish shows the base, so use a colour to suit your decor.



2 RUB A CANDLE over the areas you want the base coat to show, focusing on corners and edges as this is where paint usually wears first. Apply two coats of white paint to the frame.

3 SCRAPE OFF PAINT from the waxed areas using a putty knife, going back to bare timber and the base coat, using coarse grit abrasive paper to sand other areas for a distressed finish.



FOR THE CHALKBOARD cut a piece of 9mm plywood to size with a jigsaw and apply Dulux Design Chalkboard paint, \$23.37 for 500ml. Attach the chalkboard to the frame through the back of the plywood with construction adhesive and 20mm x 8g treated pine screws.

Customise a chalkboard with a weathered timber frame for double duty as a shopping list and decoration.



HANGING HERBS

Create a miniature indoor kitchen garden using paint, pine and pots to make a living rack

Give your kitchen designer flair on a D.I.Y. budget with an easy timber rack for growing herbs indoors. You can build it in just a few hours and hang it on any wall.

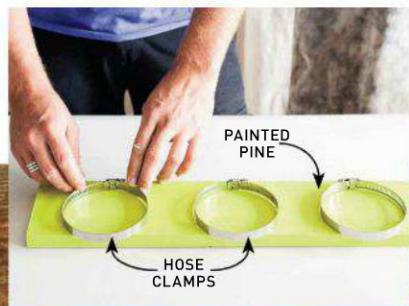
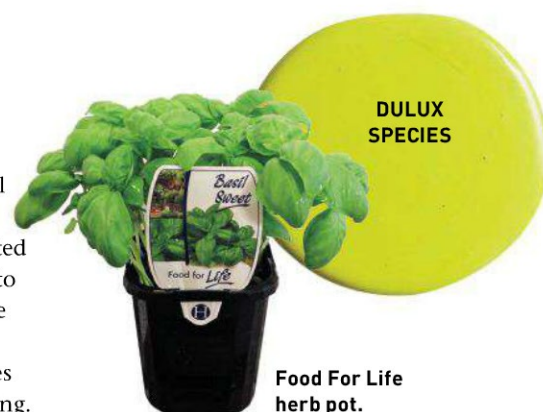
We used a 500 x 116 x 18mm piece of pine that was cut to size in-store, but you can use a timber board of a width and length to suit your available wall space.

MAKE THE HANGER

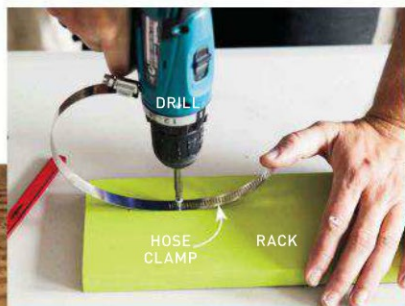
Paint the timber using a Dulux sample pot, attaching stainless steel hose clamps to hold jars of herbs.

Three types of herbs were repotted into glass jars. Remove the lids, fill to one-third with potting mix, add the plant and more mix, then water in.

TIP Glass jars without drainage holes are not suitable for long-term growing.



1 POSITION THE HOSE CLAMPS on the pine spaced evenly to mark pilot hole positions through two of the slots in each clamp, spaced about 25mm apart. Drill the holes with a 1.5mm twist bit.



2 SECURE THE CLAMPS to the rack with 12mm x 6g self tapping screws through the slots. Turn the rack over and attach screw eyes 100mm from the ends, adding picture wire for hanging.



3 ATTACH THE JARS by positioning each one on the rack then tighten the hose clamp around the neck using a flathead screwdriver, holding the clamp ends together with one hand.

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SUNDAY 5 MAY
GARDEN PROJECTS
KIDS' WORKSHOP MOTHER'S DAY

SATURDAY 25 MAY
FLOORING
FENCING in QLD and NT
KIDS' WORKSHOP ANIMAL CRAFT

SATURDAY 11 MAY
HOME STORAGE SOLUTIONS
D.I.Y. WORKSHOP SKILLS
in FNQ and NT
KIDS' WORKSHOP MOTHER'S DAY

SUNDAY 26 MAY
FLOORING
FENCING in QLD and NT
KIDS' WORKSHOP DRESS-UPS

SUNDAY 12 MAY
HOME STORAGE SOLUTIONS
GARDEN PROJECTS in FNQ and NT
KIDS' WORKSHOP MOTHER'S DAY

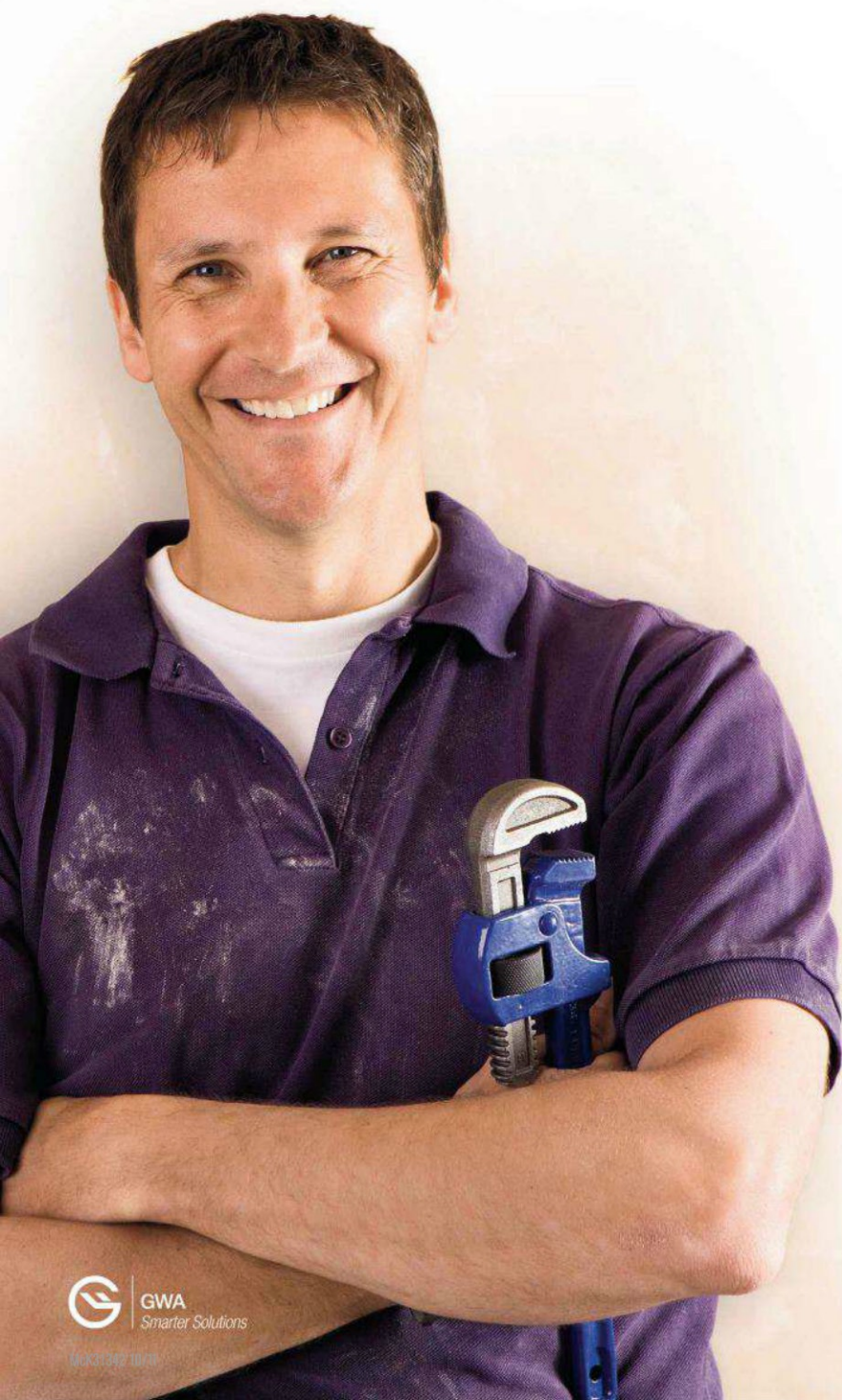
Our workshops are held every weekend at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm. For specific topics, ask in-store or go to bunnings.com.au. If you live in South Australia, speak to a team member about one-on-one sessions.

SATURDAY 18 MAY
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KIDS' WORKSHOP NATURE

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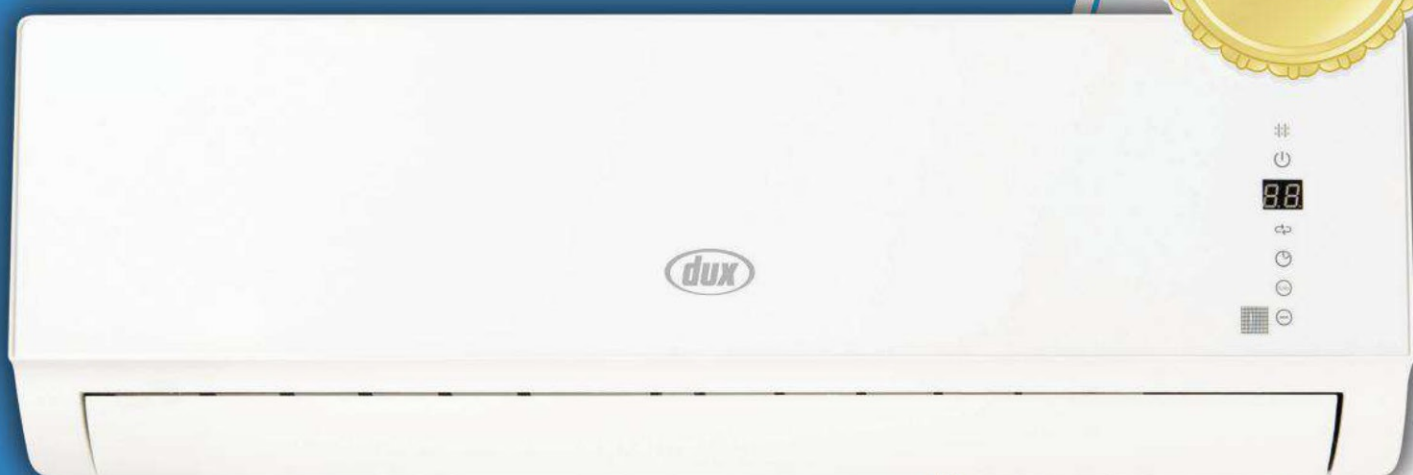
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