

Handyman

58 Simple ideas
to slash your
power bills

STEP-BY-STEP
skylight

CHOOSING

paint

BRING YOUR HOME TO LIFE!

- Go for bold, bright colour
 - Paint faster & neater
- Experts share their secrets

HOW TO USE
MULTI-TOOLS & JIGSAWS



BEST EVER
ROSES

+ Top pruning tips

PEST CONTROL
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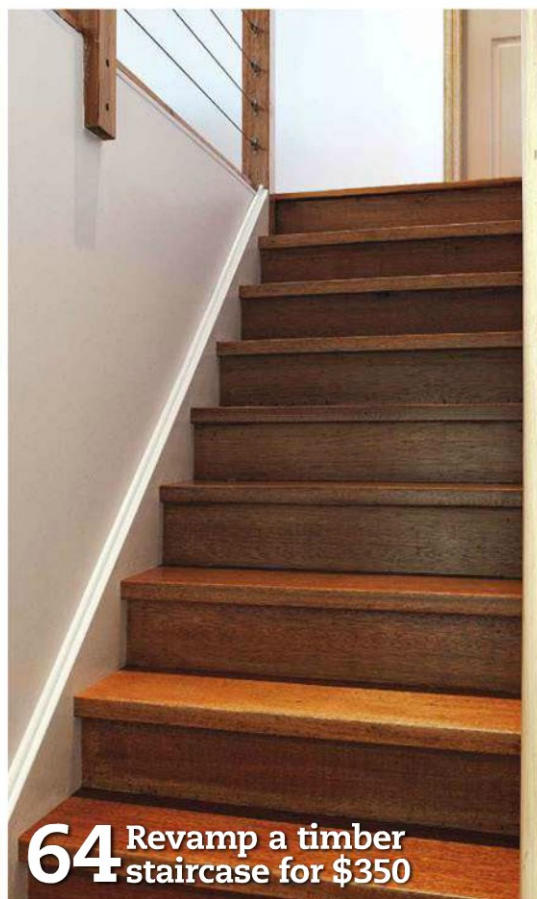


BOSCH
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The fully integrated Surface Water Drainage Solution

Installing an effective, fully integrated surface water drainage system is

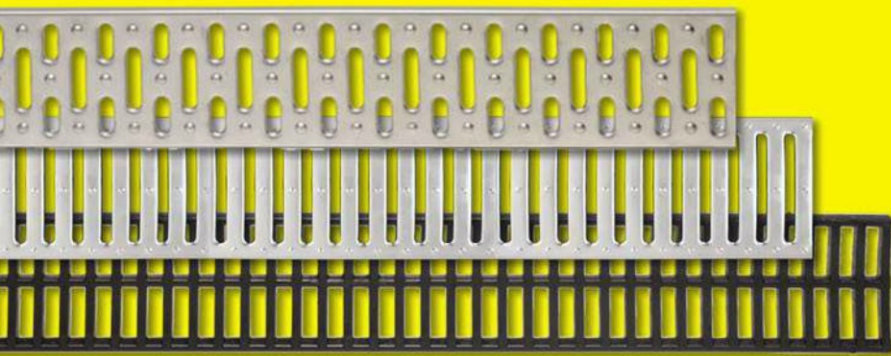
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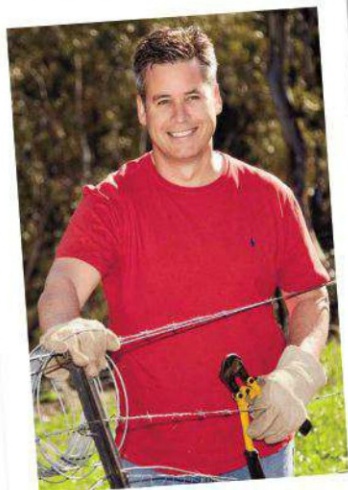
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WINTER SAVERS

To beat the winter blues, cosy up your house. From page 96 we show you how to stop draughts and retain heat plus ways to increase light. These ideas will save you money as well.

Other ways to save include installing new guttering, adding leaf barriers and creating paths for the water to flow away from the house.

These preventative measures protect the structure of your house and are easier and cheaper to do than repairing damage, see page 114.

BLOOMIN' ROSES

My wife, Lisa, wanted a rose garden so she could enjoy the sweet-smelling blooms and have them as cut flowers.

We chose a spot but for two years we admired the foliage and got few flowers. So we moved all 20 bushes to a new position in perfect conditions and now have more than we can cut.

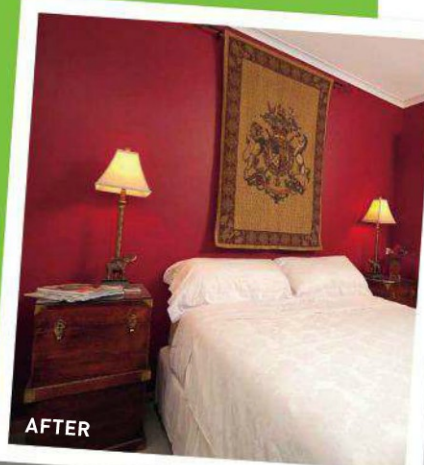
Handyman garden guru Jecca Blake shows you how to grow your best-ever roses, on page 124, as now is the right time buy them as bare-root plants and put them in the ground.

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL

Give colour a go

When it comes to colour I'm all for going bold. Our spare room needed some pizzazz, so I gave the walls two coats of Dulux Red Box and transformed the space in an afternoon for about \$80.

I left the wall opposite the window white to bounce light back into the room and hung a tapestry we bought on holiday.



Every renovating story about selling property says that when painting the interior, you should stick to neutrals. This way, potential buyers won't be put off by a strong colour that doesn't suit their taste.

But what if you're not selling? *Handyman* spoke to celebrity interior designer Shaynna Blaze who says, 'Your home should reflect who you are, not look like everyone else's. And colour is the way to do it.'

And really, what is there to lose? Painting is the quickest way to get instant visual impact. Plus, if you don't like it, you can just paint over it.

If this sounds like a lot of work, it's not. Check out our story on fast and neat painting techniques, on page 34.

More inspiration

Looking for inspiration for your next paint makeover? Pinterest lets you create and organise boards of your favourite pictures. It's a great way to find and share ideas. Check out projects from *Handyman* at pinterest.com/diyhandyman or scan the code to the right with your phone.



Be inspired to choose and use bold colour on your walls.



Pinterest



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Travertine Stone



Char-Brown Slate

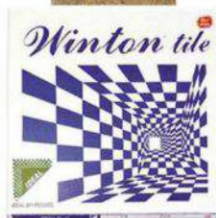
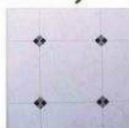


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White Marble

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TAUBMANS

HANDYSTUFF



Make your garden inviting to colourful, feathered friends or scare them off for good with a few simple tricks

WORDS **ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT**



**GREVILLEA
'FIRE CRACKER'**

Nature's nectar

Draw a colourful crowd of birds with *Grevillea* 'Fire Cracker', \$18 for a 200mm plant, from PMA. Birds love this bright native as the dense, prickly foliage helps keep them safe from the clutches of predators, making grevilleas a popular nesting place. Easy to grow, Fire Cracker tolerates heat and frost, so its blooms are a great source of food for nectar-feeding birds during the cold months.

pma.com.au



Noisy Miner

Rainbow Lorikeet

Give out some grub

Tempt birds to take lunch in your yard with a Garden Trend Metal Ground Feeder, \$30, with an open design that can feed a flock (gardentrend.com.au). Or go for the Gardman Egg Bird Feeder, \$15, that can be hung in a tree or on a balcony (brunnings.com.au).



Ground Feeder

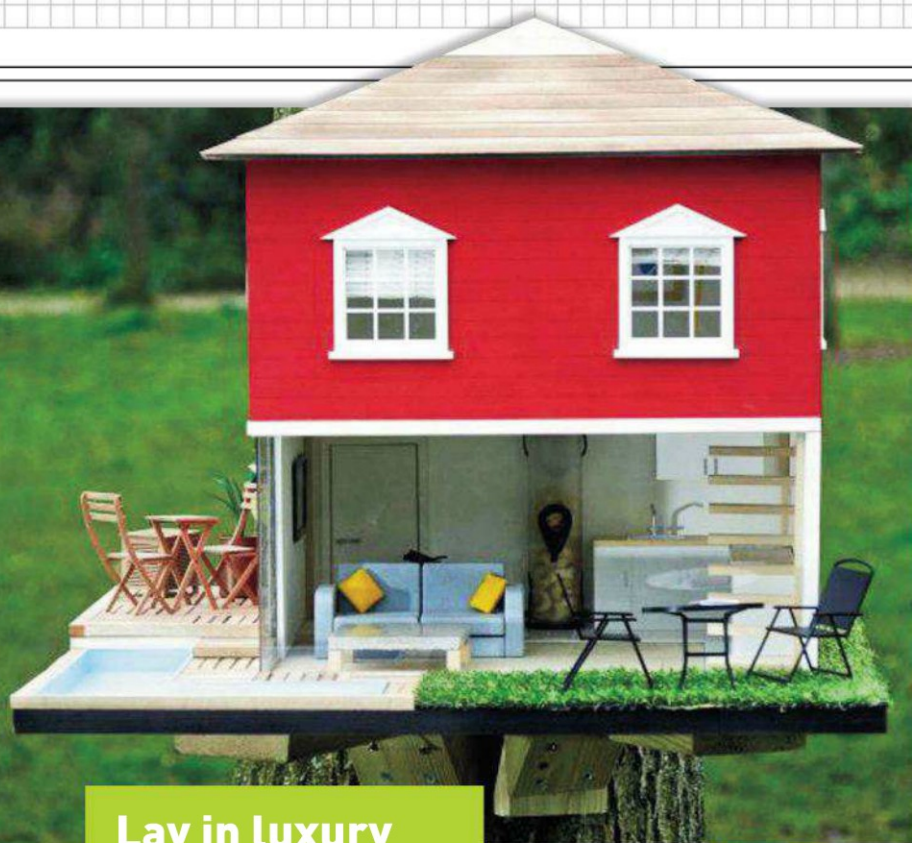


Egg Feeder

Did you know?

Aussie researchers have cracked the colour code on why many native flowers are red. Birds are better pollinators than insects, so native plants evolved to have red flowers to attract birds. The switch meant the plants were more frequently pollinated than when their colour scheme appealed to insects.

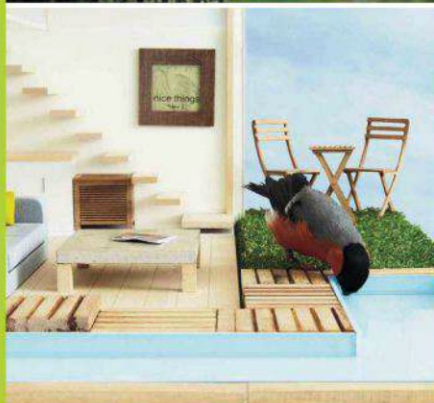
Source: Monash University, Victoria



Lay in luxury

Check out this amazing bird house designed by Swedish chain store Clas Ohlson. It's the last word in avian luxury with everything from an open-plan kitchen and living room to a gym, deck and swing perch. The highlight is a birdbath designed to mimic a resort-style infinity pool. To build it, download the plans from the company's British Facebook page.

facebook.com/clasohlsonuk



● **Bird House**

View from the top

Don't have time to make a luxury bird house? No worries, just hang up the Garden Trend Papyrus Roosting Pocket, \$10. Made from natural materials it's designed to attract native birds, so you can enjoy watching their babies grow up, too.

gardentrend.com.au



● **Hanging Bath**

● **Pedestal Bath**

High but not dry

Set up an elevated bath so birds can take a sip safely. They'll be shaking their tail feathers for you in no time if you put these water sources out of the reach of predators. The Gardman Ceramic Hanging Bird Bath, \$13, is compact and portable while the Pedestal Bird Bath, \$20, is durable and easy to set up.

brunnings.com.au

PICTURES (RIGHT) THINKSTOCK (TOP) AUSTRAL



● **G'Day Mate**

828

The number of bird species in Australia, half of which are found nowhere else in the world.



Getting cagey

Keep your harvests to yourself with the Garden Crop Cage Kit, \$40. With a lightweight steel frame and knitted netting it's easy to set up. Just assemble and position over a vegie patch, raised garden bed or fruit trees to keep birds from cleaning out your crops.

gardentrend.com.au



Spray away

To keep birds at bay, deter them with Multicrop Scat Bird and Animal Repellent, \$10 for 750ml. It's safe and simple to use, just spray and relax as its low-hazard formula keeps rats, birds, possums and rabbits away from your garden for up to 10 weeks.

multicrop.com.au



Hoo, hoo's there?

Sick of birds swooping you in your own garden and making a mess of your deck? They'll steer clear when you put a Lotus Brown Owl Bird Scarer in the garden, \$10, from Bunnings. The life-sized model will convince the birds a predator is lurking, but move it every two days as they're crafty and will notice it's not alive if it remains in the same area of the yard.

bunnings.com.au



Tech tree

Hang unwanted CDs, mobiles or plastic bags from trees to keep birds away from your fruit trees or deck. The reflection and movement will scare the birds away quick smart.

Source: BirdLife Australia

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BUYER'S GUIDE

PEST REMOVAL

END GAME

Infiltrate ant headquarters with the Trojan horse of pest control. Mortein Nest Kill Ant Baits, \$4 for three, attract ants who then carry the poison back to their colony. Place the bait in the path of ant trails inside your home and wait for the problem to go away. Baits last up to a month and work best without the aid of other sprays. mortein.com.au



BORN FREE

Are rodents running rampant at your place but you're too much of a softie to kill them? Big Cheese Live Catch Mouse Traps, \$6 for two, will fix the problem. Pre-baited and poison-free, they attract then catch mice in an easy-to-transport container. Set the traps back-to-back against the wall and check back later for tenants. the-bigcheese.com.au



LAST SUPPER

Nix your roach problem in next to no time with Mortein Lure 'N' Kill Cockroach Baits, 12 for \$4. Specially formulated with honey, malt and soya to tempt the critters to taste it, the fast-killing formula will ensure it is their final meal. Each bait lasts for three months, making it easy to keep indoor spaces roach-free. mortein.com.au

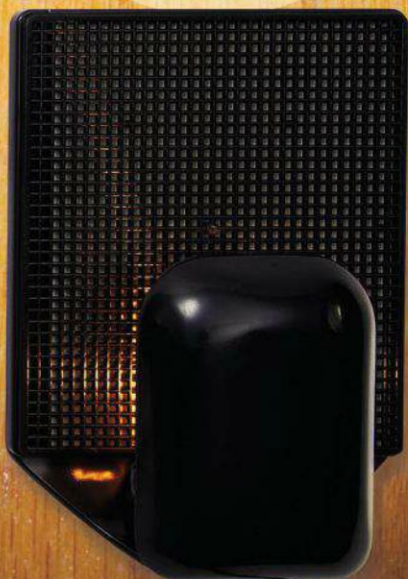


If creepy-crawlies and little critters are taking over, stop them in their tracks with the right traps and baits

TRAPPED IN PARADISE

Get a jump on fleas to keep your family and pets itch-free without the use of toxic insecticides. The Hovex Flea Trap, about \$40, lures fleas with light, heat and infrared rays that mimic their ideal environment. Once inside, fleas become stuck to the replaceable capture pad and are easy to dispose of.

hovex.com.au



NO MORE MR MICE GUY

Get serious about rodent removal with the fast and pet-safe Nooski Mouse Trap, \$10, also available in a rat-sized option. Free of poison, the trap releases a rubber latex ring onto the mouse's neck as it enters the trap. The end is environmentally friendly, fast and mess-free.

nooski.com



SUPER SONIC

Make mice run for the hills with The Big Cheese Complete Home Protection Kit, \$17. A Sonic Pest Repeller is complemented by two traditional mouse traps, providing round-the-clock protection against infestations. Ultrasonic sound waves out of human, dog and cat hearing means mice keep their distance.

the-bigcheese.com.au



+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for more ways to keep invading pests at bay.



PAINT
WORKSHOP

Colour CONFIDENCE

Forget what you've always believed about paint and start bringing your home to life

WORDS SITA SIMONS MAIN PICTURE SUE FERRIS PROJECT GEMA BENEITEZ



Throw tradition out the window and treat your walls like a blank canvas for your imagination, creating a feature like this giant paint swatch wall.

Shayna says: This turquoise blue is great for a dining area or any space that you want to bring people together.

It's a happy and uplifting colour and most people respond well to this shade.

It sidesteps the very restful qualities of some blues and instead has a strength that stimulates conversation and upbeat engagement.





Combining a warm timber floor and table with bright white skirting and chairs makes the wall colour pop.

When it comes to buying paint for the interior of our homes, most of us look longingly at the bright swatches yet leave with a few tins of off-white. Neutrals work with everything, right?

Interior designer and Taubmans ambassador Shaynna Blaze says no.

'Neutrals have their place, but on every wall and in every house, the only effect is boring,' says Shaynna.

'Creams, beiges and off-whites homogenise the decor and don't make the most of the beautiful things you have, be it furniture, art or textiles.'

'For a really liveable, comfortable home that makes you feel good every time you open the door, integrating colour is essential.'

We are all naturally attracted to certain colours but fear of making a mistake often stops us applying the shades we love to our walls.

Shaynna says that to create a colourful interior you just need to understand a few simple rules. >

Being Shaynna Blaze

Shaynna Blaze has over 20 years of interior design experience. Her skills landed her a co-presenting role on the LifeStyle Channel's *Selling Houses Australia*, now in its sixth season, and she was nominated for a Silver Logie for her talents. Shaynna is also a regular guest judge on Channel Nine's *The Block*.

As well as expanding her role as Taubmans brand ambassador to include creative direction, Shaynna released her first book, *Design Your Home* (Penguin, \$40), this year and is hosting a new TV series called *Blank Canvas* on the LifeStyle Channel.



I think that the colour of this room is really working around the furniture.

The timber and shapes have a colonial feel, and this green works with the period and also the narrative, one of adventure and safaris.

To stop it looking staid and old-fashioned, the green is yellow-based rather than blue, making it sunnier and more vibrant, and there's a sense of fun in the art.

THINK LIKE A DESIGNER

Take the time to learn these three principles of design and you'll be well on your way to understanding the basics of colour coordination for a fearless approach to trying it at home.

1 MOOD AND FEELING 'Mood is the number one consideration when choosing colour,' says Shaynna.

'The mood of the room includes the function, the location, where the natural light comes from and where it goes. And also the effect certain colours have on the way the room feels, and how you feel in it.

'Start with these elements and note how you want the room to feel. Then work with your natural inclination towards certain colours to pick two or three tones of a shade you like.'

2 STYLE OF THE HOME Both the architecture of the home and the style of your furnishings come into play during the paint selection process.

Shaynna says, 'Working against a strong architectural style takes confidence and practice. Work in harmony with it for a pleasing result.'

'Looking to established colour schemes from past eras always works.



Pick up the yellow undertone of a green wall like this one with a few small accessories.

Bring it all together and up to date with pops of a contrasting colour.'

3 FLOW BETWEEN ROOMS The way the room connects to other rooms and light sources has to be considered.

'Any room with a door that closes can take an independent colour scheme. But open-plan living spaces, arches, hallways and interlinking spaces need a connection through colour,' says Shaynna.

What's outside also impacts on the tone a scheme should take. If your windows look onto greenery, choose a shade with a green undertone. ➤



For me, the light mint green that's used here is a great example of matching the colour to the architecture.

This beautiful room with the high ceilings and decorative plasterwork harks back to another era and the effect is well resolved by the colour choice.

It also works because the room opens out onto a garden area that casts a green hue.

Combining mint green with lots of white and a touch of pink is a classic colour palette for a vintage look.



White nursery furniture really stands out against a backdrop of navy walls and adding a dark rug brings the look together.

I know that dark blue may be the last colour most people would choose for a nursery, but it works in this room for a number of reasons.

This shade is very restful and helps create a dark environment both day and night for baby to sleep.

And a small room like a nursery can be made to look bigger by making the walls disappear with a dark shade.

Red is not a colour that's usually recommended for bedrooms as it's too forceful and energetic, but it works here because the red, which is really more of a raspberry, has a grey undertone.

The grey base means it can be matched with neutrals and even pastels, so the whole effect is calmed down while retaining the romantic and passionate qualities of red.

FROM SWATCH TO WALL

Worrying that what's in the tin will look different on the wall is a realistic concern, but advances in colour technology have taken much of the guesswork out of the selection process.

When colours were made of natural pigments, choice was limited. Now, the base colour can be altered and adjusted by fractional margins to create an exact tone.

'It's the undertones that have left people undone in the past. A colour changes dramatically depending on the underlying tint,' says Shaynna.

'The new colour cards from Taubmans were designed with exactly this in mind and are grouped in base tones, so each shade with the same base will blend harmoniously.'

BRING IT TO LIGHT

The colour of the paint will look different again under overhead or lamp light. Incandescent and halogen lights will warm up reds and yellows while muting blues and greens.

Fluorescent and cool-toned energy saving bulbs enhance blues and green tones but flatten reds and yellows.

Keep in mind this also applies to the undertone, not just the surface colour. Test your colour in artificial light by painting a large canvas. ➤



Layering patterned textiles in a boldly coloured room brings depth and texture to the space.

Tools of the trade

You might not have seen one since school, but a basic colour wheel is invaluable for a beginner to understand the interplay of colour.

CONTRASTING COLOURS sit on opposite sides of the wheel and while these colours complement each other, like the purple and yellow of an iris flower, they also make a dramatic statement.

Used on large areas, the effect is energising and stimulating.



TONAL COLOURS sit next to and near each other on the colour wheel, making them harmonious.

Working within a tonal scheme creates a look and feel that enhances tranquillity and restfulness.

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*Use Selley's Plastics Glue for polyethylene and polypropylene items.

SELLEYS
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WALL COLOUR COMPARISON

Experimenting with the colour on the wall is no longer necessary, as so many online tools give you the ability to see how different treatments work. Most paint companies also have colour specialists who are available to advise and inspire.



LIGHT GREY

Shaynna advises taking the furnishings into account when picking out an accent colour from an artwork.

'If you have an amazing piece of art, the wall colour should be a tone of a dominant colour in the art.'

'In both photos, the art stands out as the main feature, but the way the furniture works with it makes



PURPLE

the difference. A bold wall would force distinctive and bright furniture like the sofa forward, making it compete with the art and both would end up losing.

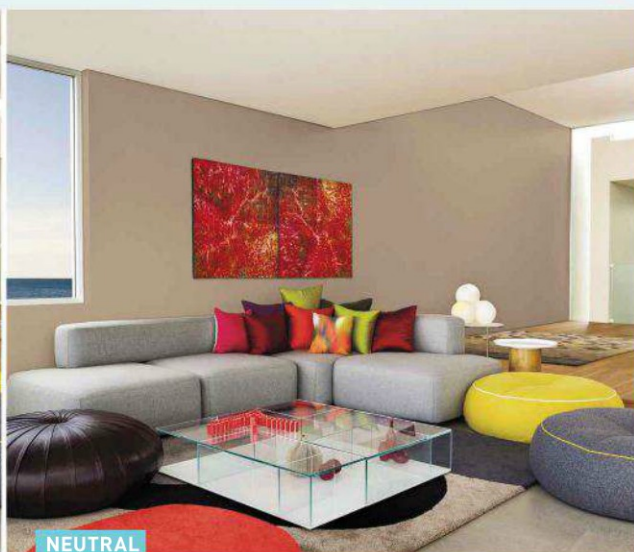
'If what is paired with the artwork is neutral, like the timber table and white accents, the wall can be strong because the furniture isn't competing.'



DARK GREY

Even with exactly the same setting, the colour of the wall can make a dramatic difference, according to Shaynna.

'The strong grey wall works to bring all the bright elements together without any overwhelming the other. The art stands out, the room looks coordinated without being too overdone and the bold colours are calmed.'



NEUTRAL

With a neutral background, the effect is lost and confused and the eye can't identify where to rest.

'It doesn't look unified and the reds and yellows take on too much strength and dominate, when the intention of these bright additions is to highlight and make a point of contrast,' says Shaynna. ➤

Paint swatch wall

Experimenting with colour to create a wall of paint swatches can give great results. You can transform a room in just a weekend with a feature wall that catches the eye and the imagination.

Planning is key, so get everything ready and have a practice run before committing the paint to the wall.

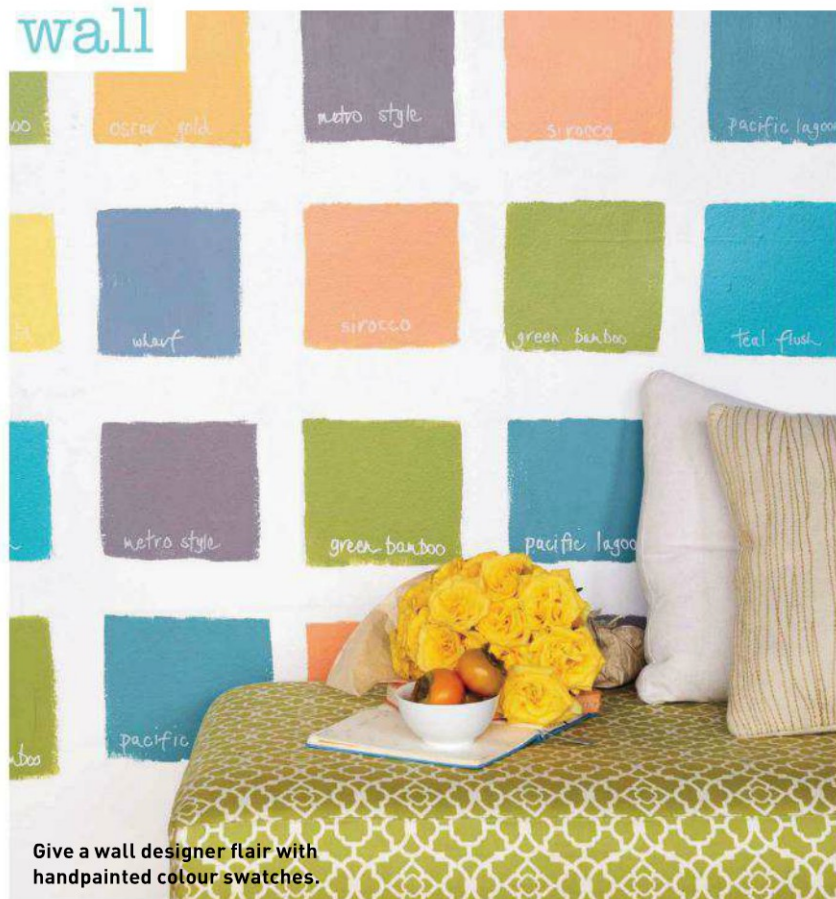
Look at paint charts and a colour wheel to work out the palette you like. Stick to one tonal family for less drama, or mix complementary colours as here so the wall pops with colour.

Measure the wall and mark a grid, leaving an even border between rows and at the edges. A busy design like this needs enough neutral space to stop it overwhelming the room.

Use sample pots of each colour to prevent wastage. These cost between \$5 and \$10, from hardware stores.



Sharpie White Oil Based Paint Pen, \$6, from Bunnings.



Give a wall designer flair with handpainted colour swatches.



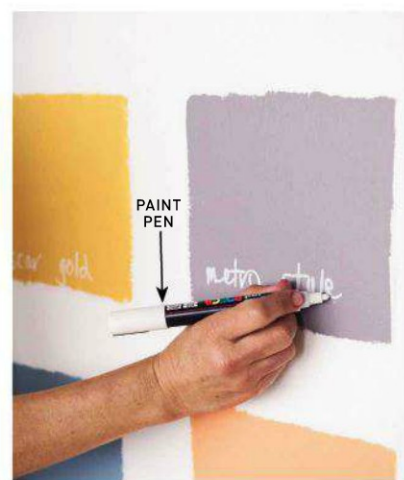
1 Lay out the grid

Mark the outline of the grid with a steel rule and pencil. Use a chalkline to mark the horizontal and vertical columns, pulling and gently flicking it onto the wall. Use a steel rule to mark the space between the columns.



2 Paint the swatches

Load a good quality brush with paint, wiping excess on the tin to prevent drips. Apply one coat in even strokes, using the outside edge of the brush to mark the edges, creating a hand-finished look. Leave to dry.



3 Name the colours

When the paint is dry, use a paint marker pen to name the colours. To avoid having to paint over mistakes, practice writing the names on paper first. Use the names on the tin or personalise by making up your own.

“Painting can be hard enough
without your tape letting you down!”

When it comes to painting, at the end of the day all you want is the best result. Researching new styles, carefully selecting paint colours, then preparing your walls, sanding and washing them down, all take time and effort. You want all these elements to work together to ensure that you get a professional result. So, it makes sense that you use a reliable painters tape to help you achieve clean, sharp paint lines that even a pro would be proud of. ScotchBlue™ Painter's Tape is the perfect painters tape to mask up walls, glass, trim or skirting to ensure crisp clean results, and you can be sure when unmasking that it won't leave residue or pull up your paint.

Interior Specialist Tara Dennis regularly uses ScotchBlue™ Painter's Tape to mask up surfaces when she's decorating. *"I use ScotchBlue™ Painter's Tape because I trust it will give me a sharp paint line and will come off cleanly and easily,"* she says.

New Edge-Lock™ Paint Line Protector.

Our patented Edge-Lock™ Paint Line Protector is a special compound applied to the edge of ScotchBlue™ Painter's Tape that forms an extra protective barrier to keep paint out, giving you super sharp paint lines.

For masking tips and more information, visit
www.scotchblue.com.au



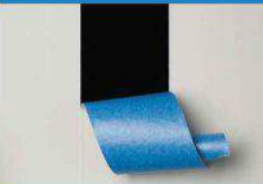
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WITH
Edge-Lock™
PAINT LINE PROTECTOR

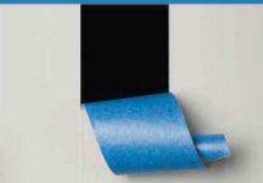
ScotchBlue™ Painter's Tape with Edge-Lock™ Paint Line Protector



☒ Sharp



☒ Smart



☒ Safe

VS

What you don't want to happen



☒ Poor Paint Line

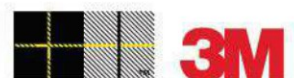


☒ Adhesive Residue



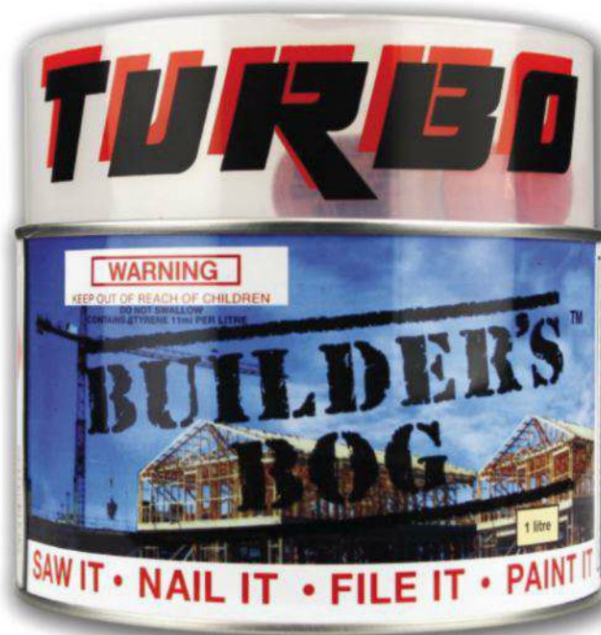
☒ Tearing

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Transform a room in a weekend using DIY glazing techniques to give the walls a designer makeover

Easy paint EFFECTS

For less than \$100, you can make over a room in a weekend. Here are three decorative finishes that look unique but were created using the same inexpensive method of masking a wall and applying a glaze finish.

Masking and glazing are easy techniques to DIY but you need patience as each finish requires multiple layers of paint and careful applications of tape.

You can complete the revamp in a day, but it's better to set aside an entire weekend to leave plenty of drying time between coats of glaze.

The first step for each look is to paint the wall with the base coat colour. For this you'll need typical supplies like a stepladder, drop sheet, brush and roller.

Next you mask off the wall with tape then mix up glazes in the colours of your choice and paint the design.

Making a glaze is as simple as mixing paint with an extender, varying the ratios to change the opacity. ➤





For more on mixing glaze, turn to p33.

Geometric shapes with a metallic glaze complement a contemporary space featuring warm colours.

Random rectangles

Four layers of glazed boxes overlap to create this contemporary design. We chose shades of gold, but you can use any colour to get the look.

For the first layer of glaze, use a darker colour than the base coat, lightening the shade and decreasing the opacity for each of the next three. Where layers overlap, new shades and colours will appear.

We used a semi gloss acrylic to make the more opaque glaze for the first layer then metallic paints for the next three. Try Dulux Design Metallic, which can be tinted to 14 colours (dulux.com.au).

Choose the size and position of the boxes, drawing the design to scale on paper. Transfer it to the wall and mask off the lines with painter's tape.

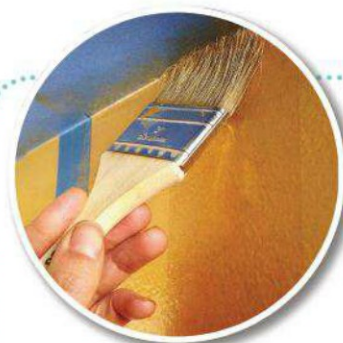
Buy a watercolour pencil from an art supply store in a colour to match your scheme and use it to mark the walls. The pencil lines will disappear as you apply the glaze to the boxes.

We drew square and rectangular boxes, ranging from an 850 x 350mm rectangle to a 1200mm square.

TIP Draw the fourth layer of boxes to cover any unglazed base coat.



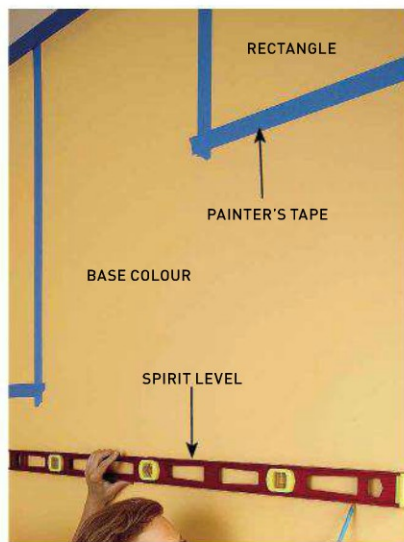
British Paints Clean & Protect Low Sheen, \$55 for 4L. britishpaints.com.au



Corner techniques

Finishing right up to an inside corner with a sponge is difficult. You'll get uneven coverage or a sloppy build-up of glaze.

A better technique is to finish within 10mm of the corner with the sponge. While the finish is still wet, use a dry brush in a pouncing motion to work the glaze into the corner.



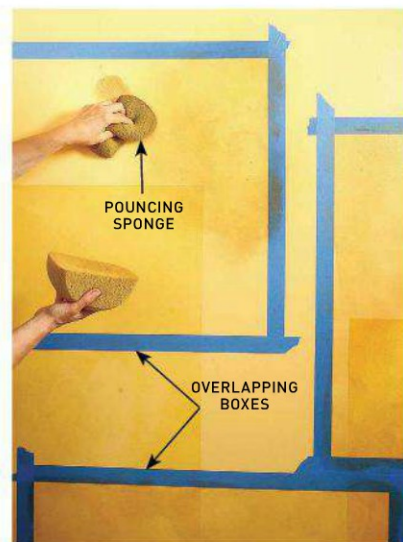
1 Mask off the wall

Mark the rectangles on the wall using a spirit level and a watercolour pencil. Mask off the marked rectangles with painter's tape to create a series of boxes. Mix the glaze for the first layer then wet two sponges and wring them out so they are damp.



2 Apply the glaze

Use a damp sponge to apply the glaze to the boxes then pounce it with the edge of a second sponge to spread the glaze. Work quickly and don't overlap any areas of glaze, rinsing the sponge in clean water as you go. Leave the first layer to dry for a few hours.



3 Finish the wall

Mark and mask a second and third layer of overlapping boxes, applying a thinner glaze to each. Let the glaze dry for at least two hours between coats. To finish, cover any unglazed base coat with a fourth layer of glazed rectangles and squares. ➤

Shimmery stripes

To create the effect of wavy metallic bands on a feature wall, overlapping layers of glaze in three colours were applied to a base coat of light blue.

To make the glazes, mix acrylic metallic paints with an extender. Thin a dark blue colour with three parts extender, white with two parts and copper with one part to get the same effect as on this wall.

Or you can pick colours to create a scheme that suits the base colour of the wall and your interior decorating.

This wall was masked off with strips of tape that were torn down the middle to create a wavy edge, in a pattern that repeats every 300mm.

Glaze was applied to areas between the strips of tape using a sponge.

We used 50mm wide painter's tape, choosing it over masking tape. The tearing characteristics are similar but painter's tape has better paint blocking capabilities for cleaner edges.

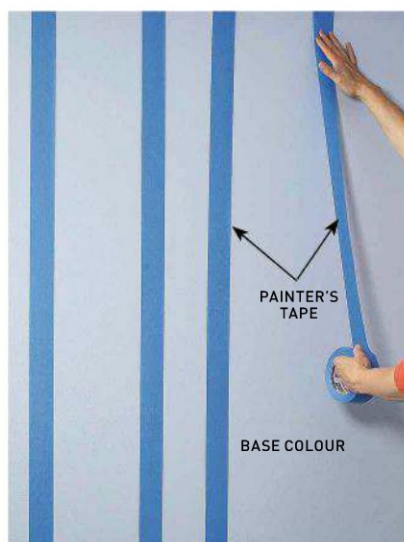
TIP You'll need three rolls of tape for a three metre wide wall.



Scotch Blue 50mm Edge-Lock Painter's Tape, \$20. scotchblue.com.au

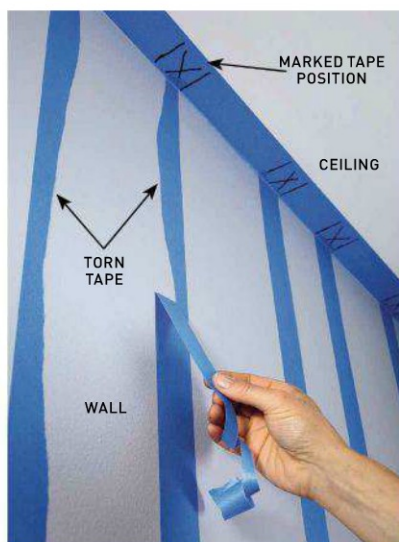


A feature wall of curvy stripes with a shimmery finish is a good backdrop for shapely furniture and metallic pieces.



1 Mask off the wall

Secure painter's tape to the wall in vertical strips, working from the top down. Position the tape at the top of the wall then stretch out a piece long enough to reach the base, pressing it firmly with your hand to secure it to the surface.



2 Tear the tape

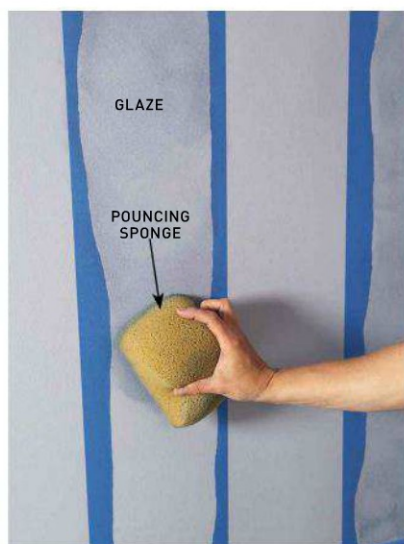
Starting from the top of the wall, tear one edge of each piece of tape to create a wavy edge. The wavy edges of the tape should face each other.

TIP Apply painter's tape to the edge of the ceiling where it meets the wall and mark all the tape strip positions.



3 Apply the glaze

Mix the dark blue paint to make the first glaze. Dip a sponge into clean water and wring it out, then dip it into the glaze. Apply the glaze to the wall in broad strokes between two strips of painter's tape, leaving about 40mm in between sections.



4 Pounce the glaze

Wet and wring out another sponge and use the flat side of it to pounce the glaze, spreading it to cover the entire surface area between the vertical strips of painter's tape. Remove the two strips of tape and leave the glaze to dry.



5 Finish the wall

Apply masking tape for the next set of strips. Tear the tape edges then apply and pounce the second glaze colour, overlapping the first. Remove the tape and leave the glaze to dry. Repeat the masking, tearing and glazing steps for the third colour. ➤

Using a sponge

Decorative paint finishes often call for specialised sponges but we found that the inexpensive humpbacked sponges from hardware stores work best.

These sponges leave a soft, subtle texture that works for the pouncing technique used here.

■ **APPLY THE GLAZE** to the wall with a sponge or a brush, then spread it out in a thin, even layer with a second sponge.

■ **PRACTICE THE GLAZE** technique first, using the sponge to create layers of glaze.

TIP A painted piece of plasterboard is ideal but you can also use MDF or thick cardboard.

Morgan Jumbo Sponge, \$5, from Bunnings.



Diamond dados

Get the look of textured wallpaper by painting a wall then applying glaze to the base with cheesecloth.

Working from the dado rail to the skirting, mark and mask off diagonal lines with painter's tape, pressing the edges with a putty knife to seal.

To make the glaze, mix one part paint to three parts extender. Apply a coat of glaze using a paintbrush, pouncing it with cheesecloth. Let it dry then apply a second coat with the cheesecloth to get a mottled effect.

Cheesecloth is cotton fabric with a loose weave available from fabric stores. Used with paint it creates a finish like paper or fabric. You can also use any lint-free material, like an old T-shirt twisted up for texture.

Cut a 750mm piece of cheesecloth and dampen it with water then lightly bunch it up to use for painting.

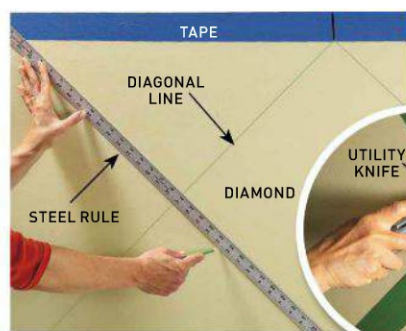
TIP To add a dado rail, secure trim to the wall at a height of about 900mm.



Trojan Turbo Knife X, about \$12.
trojantools.com.au



Create a classic look in a timber-floored room by combining architectural trim with a textured wall finish.



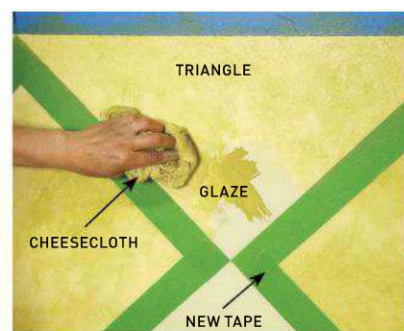
1 Mask off the wall

Apply tape across the top and base of the dado, marking it every 600mm. Use a steel rule and pencil to connect the marks with diagonal lines to form a diamond pattern. Mask off the lines, then use a utility knife to lightly slice through the excess tape and remove.



2 Apply the glaze

Use a small paintbrush to apply a glaze to a diamond, pouncing it quickly with bunched-up cheesecloth. Work in small sections, let the glaze dry then apply a second layer of glaze with cheesecloth in a random pattern to create darker and lighter areas.



3 Finish the wall

Remove the painter's tape and leave the glaze to dry completely then mask off the edges of the glazed diamonds. Apply glaze to the triangles with a brush, pouncing it with cheesecloth then applying a second layer to finish.

Working with glaze

Glaze is a thin layer of transparent colour spread over a painted surface to change the tone. To make it, mix water-based paint with an extender like Floetrol Acrylic Paint Conditioner, \$52 for 4L (floodaustralia.net).



Depending on the ratio of paint to extender used, glaze varies from transparent to nearly opaque.

For these designs we used acrylic paint, including metallics.

To help avoid the lap marks that can show up when you pounce over dried glaze, we chose a low-sheen base coat for the walls.

This helps because the glaze won't soak in and is easier to move around.

■ **MIX THE GLAZE** in a paint bucket, using a measuring cup to get the ratios right but don't worry about being exact, as you can add water to thin the glaze for more workability.

Don't thin the paint so much that the glaze runs down the wall.

■ **LAYER THE COATS** of glaze on top of one another, leaving at least a few hours between coats so the glaze is dry to touch.

■ **TEST THE GLAZE** to see if it's ready for another coat by applying and removing masking tape in an inconspicuous place to make sure it won't pull glaze off the wall.

■ **APPLY THE GLAZE** with a sponge or paintbrush in small sections, working fast to prevent the leading edge from drying out.

It's a good idea to work in pairs, with one person applying the glaze and the second person pouncing it to get the desired finish.

TIP When working with glaze, err on the side of applying too little, as you can always add another coat.

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

British Paints Clean & Protect creates a beautiful, resilient, interior finish that can be wiped clean time and time again. Trust British Paints Clean & Protect to help keep that freshly painted look for longer.



Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

Trust British Paints
Sure can!



26

FASTER & NEATER PAINTING TIPS

No matter how many times you've picked up a brush, this easy-to-follow guide will teach you to paint like a pro

You can always tell a good paint job because the new finish is only on the wall, and not on the doors, windows, ceiling, carpet or trim.

Painting is a messy operation, and keeping the paint where it belongs requires good preparation, including solid taping techniques, and well-planned surface protection.

Maintaining your tools for the next job is also an important part of painting, so we asked the professionals how they go about keeping it all neat and clean when they get to work.



PICTURE (LEFT) THINKSTOCK

All taped up

When you apply masking tape to trim, run a putty knife or a 5-in-1 tool over it to set the tape. This bonds the tape to the surface and helps prevent paint from seeping under it and onto the trim.



TAPE THE TRIM

Skirt the edges

When painting skirting, cover 5mm of the base edge with tape, pushing down hard on the carpet so it stays down while you paint.

Add a strip of wider tape to create a shield over the carpet then spread a drop sheet over the top. When you remove the tape, the carpet will spring up to cover the unpainted edge.



Change the sheets

Large drop sheets are great if you're painting a ceiling, but they're overkill for walls and trim.

Drop sheet runners are usually about a metre wide and are much easier and safer to work with because you don't have to fold them several times. Folded drop sheets are easy to trip on, and nothing good

results from tripping with an open paint can in your hand.

Choose heavy-duty cotton canvas drop sheets for painting, as they can absorb drips and you won't slip on them if you do have a spill.

And when they get dirty, you can wash them at a laundromat that has oversize washers and dryers.



DUST THE TRIM

Dust it off

Even though you diligently clean your brushes, they will eventually wear out over time. Instead of throwing them out, save a couple of different sizes to repurpose as cleaning brushes.

An old paintbrush is an excellent tool for dusting off window trim or whatever else needs a light touch. ➤

Cover all bases

Applying masking tape to protect the trim won't necessarily protect windows or doors so it's important to cover them, especially if you're painting the ceiling.

The easiest way to do this is by hanging plastic using a hand-masker



tool. If you don't have one, first tape off the top of the trim and attach a folded section of plastic sheeting.

When the sheeting is secure, unfold the plastic so it drops down to cover the door or window then attach it to the trim with tape.



SCRAPE THE SURFACE

Smooth the way

It's hard to create a straight line when you're painting the wall adjacent to a textured ceiling. As you move the paintbrush along, the bristles get hung up on the texture, which creates noticeable paint globs.

Use a 5-in-1 tool or screwdriver to remove a few millimetres of texture, creating a clear path for the brush.



CUT THE PAINT

Cutting loose

When you remove masking tape that has been left on for too long, the tape can pull chunks of paint off with it.

Ideally, you should remove it while the paint is relatively wet and never leave it on overnight.

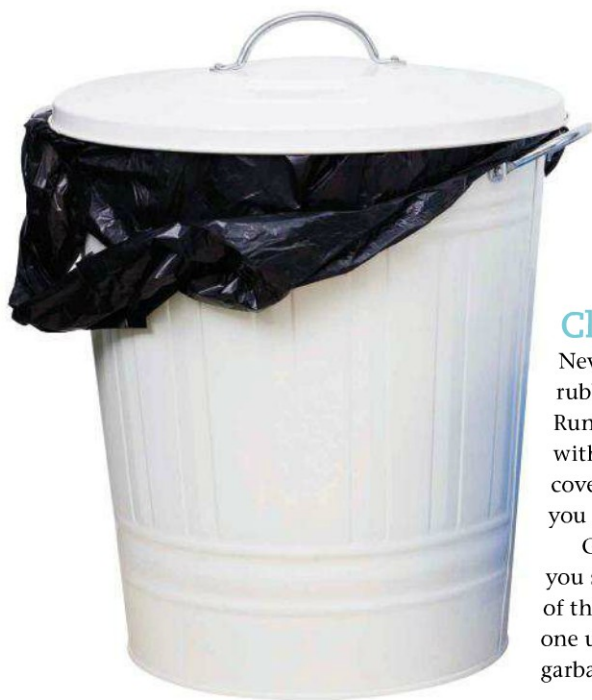
But when it has stayed on too long, it's best to gently cut the tape along the line where it meets the trim. This prevents the paint from sticking to the tape and coming off the wall.



A light touch

Masking tape is a precaution, not a guarantee. No matter how careful you are, there may still be a void or two left between the tape and the trim. If you expose the tape to an excessive amount of paint, some is bound to get through.

The trick is to pretend the tape isn't there. Don't force a lot of paint into the corner at an angle. Instead, lightly load the paintbrush and run it down parallel to the trim.



Clean as you go

Never underestimate how much rubbish a painting job can create. Running around the house armed with big wads of plastic and tape covered in wet paint will not make you popular, so be prepared.

Get out the garbage bags before you start, either hanging one out of the way on a doorknob or setting one up in a rubbish bin or portable garbage bag holder.



CLOTHES
PROTECTOR

Dress in rags

Before the first tin of paint is opened, attach a cloth to your belt. That way, your trousers are protected when you wipe your hand on them absentmindedly.

Use a large cloth and unfold it a little, so that the messy side always stays facing out.



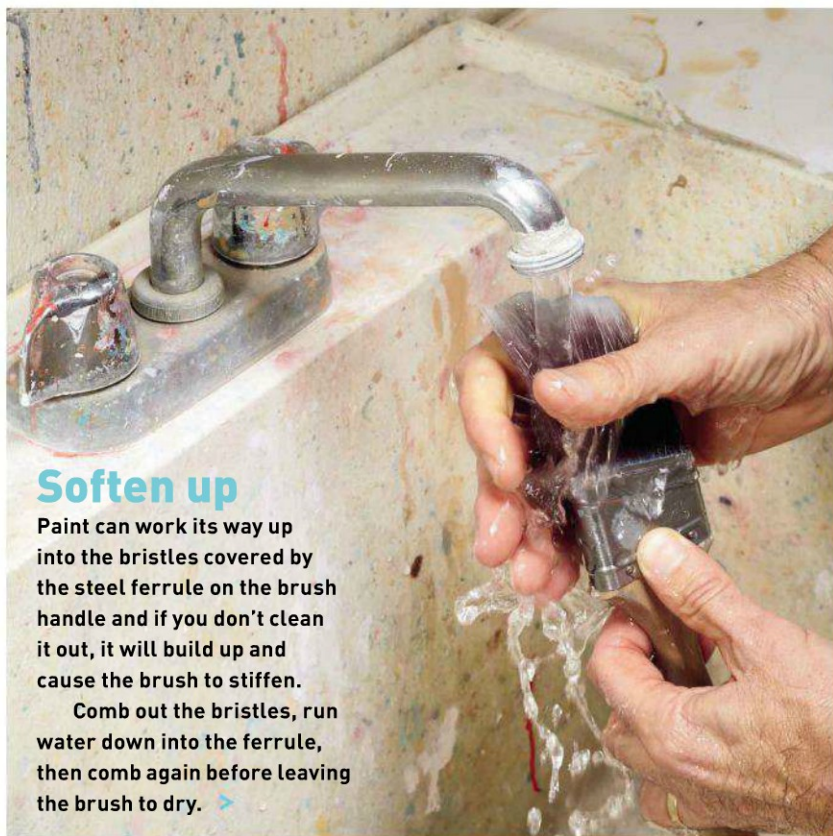
WASH
BRUSHES

Comb it out

A proper paintbrush comb is the best tool for cleaning a brush instead of just running it under water.

Unlike other brush-cleaning tools, a comb penetrates and cleans deep between the bristles.

Rinsing the brush and using the comb at the same time also prevents the bristles from sticking together, which helps your paintbrush stay soft and retain its shape for longer.



Soften up

Paint can work its way up into the bristles covered by the steel ferrule on the brush handle and if you don't clean it out, it will build up and cause the brush to stiffen.

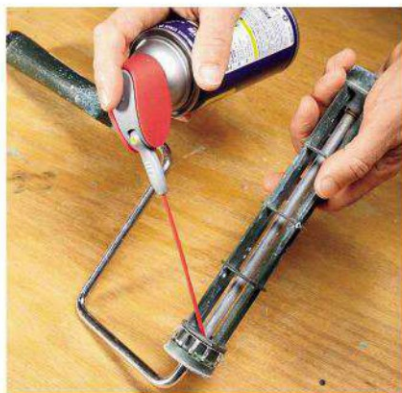
Comb out the bristles, run water down into the ferrule, then comb again before leaving the brush to dry. ➤



Scrub up well

Don't neglect your roller. If you don't rinse it off, you'll end up with hardened paint inside the bushings or bearings, resulting in a paint roller that ultimately doesn't roll.

Keeping your painting tools clean doesn't have to be expensive. A good trick is to use a \$2 pot scrubber from the supermarket.



Oil it up

Metal rusts, and the metal bushings or bearings in your paint roller are no exception.

Do yourself a favour and spray a little lubricant on your roller before you store it.

A rusty roller can also squeak and pushing a roller back and forth for several hours is monotonous enough without adding a few thousand squeaks.



Fight the fuzz

Some new roller covers, usually the cheaper ones, have a layer of fuzz that comes off the cover. The first time you load one up, the paint mixes with the fuzz and creates bumps on the wall.

Remove the fuzz by wrapping masking or painter's tape around the roller cover. When you pull the tape off, the excess fuzz will come too.

Take the air

Good ventilation is essential when painting, for your health and to speed up the drying time of the finish. In summer, keeping the air flowing will also ensure that you can finish the job without getting overheated.



Ryobi ONE+ 18V Portable Fan,
\$49. ryobi.com.au

Coming clean

No matter how careful you are, you're bound to get paint on something you didn't mean to, so keep a can of paint remover on hand for those little goofs.

Formulated paint remover is great for removing dried paint from trim, benchtops, door hinges, vinyl floors or whatever it is you spilled on.

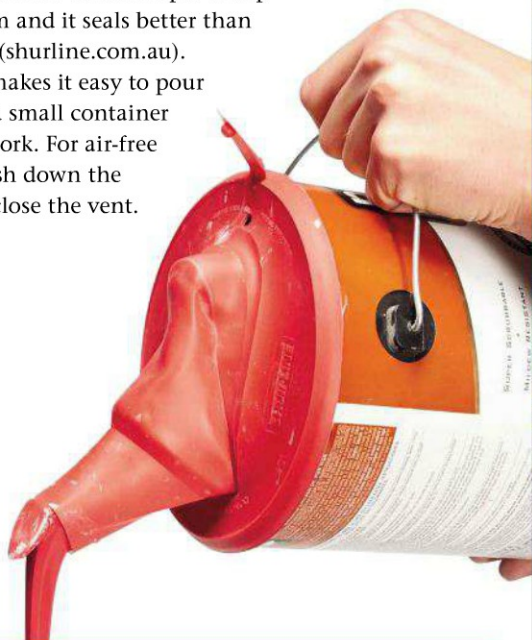


Goof Off Professional Strength, \$10 for
133ml. gooffstainremover.com

Put a lid on it

Make life easier by investing in an easy-pour lid for paint tins. This Shur-Line Pour & Store Paint Can Lid, \$4, is flexible so it's simple to slip over the rim and it seals better than a metal lid (shurline.com.au).

It also makes it easy to pour paint into a small container for brush work. For air-free storage, push down the spout and close the vent.



It's in the bag

When you're doing a job that requires the application of several colours, simplify the painting process and also save on cleaning time by decanting the paint into resealable plastic bags.

When it's time to change colours, all you have to do is swap the bag that's in the paint bucket. ➤



Dulux Design Rust™

Dulux Design Rust™ is an interior/exterior effect paint that creates an authentic rusted iron finish on any paintable surface.

It is ideal to use on feature walls, to make a design statement indoors or transform your garden.

To see the how to video and for more product information, visit dulux.com.au



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Worth doing, worth Dulux.

Save the leftovers

When you paint a room, always save the leftover paint for touch-ups.

Water-based paint keeps for 10 years and oil-based paint for up to 15.

■ **WRITE THE NAME** of the paint colour, reference number, purchase date and the room where it was used on the lid. On the outside of the tin, mark the paint level so you know how much is left without opening the lid.

■ **STORE PARTLY USED TINS** upside down so the skin that forms will be on the base when you turn the tin over.

Or cut a disc of aluminium foil, using the lid as a template, and press it gently onto the surface of the paint.

If you have more than half a tin of paint remaining, position a piece of plastic wrap over the top and replace the lid securely for an extra-tight seal.

■ **USE SCREW-TOP JARS** to store small amounts of paint as it will keep better in a small container.

Decant the paint into a clean and dry jam jar, rubbing petroleum jelly around the rim first so the paint doesn't make the lid stick.

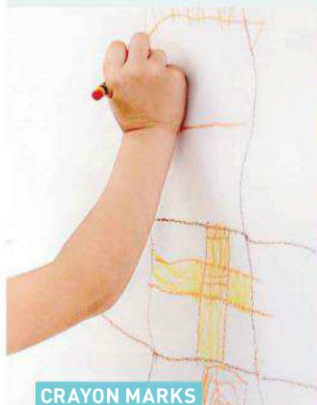
You can also pour the paint into a plastic food bag. Make sure you squeeze out the extra air as you seal the bag, then replace it in the original paint tin and seal it tightly.



Keep small amounts of paint in old jam jars to reduce exposure to air.

REMOVING STAINS

Use cleaning products readily available from the supermarket and hardware store to rid your painted surfaces of common stains and marks caused by children, pets, cooking and general wear and tear.



CRAYON MARKS

Spray the area with WD-40 then wipe with a soft cloth.



WD-40 Smart Straw, about \$7. wd40.com.au



SPOTS AND SMUDGES

Make a paste of bicarb soda and water, and rub with a soft cloth.



McKenzie's Bi-Carb Soda, \$4 for 1kg. mckenziefoods.com.au



INK AND MARKER STAINS

Wipe with a cloth dampened with methylated spirits.



Coles Smart Buy Methylated Spirits, \$5 for 1L. coles.com.au



GREASE MARKS

Wipe with a cloth dampened with degreasing fluid.



Diggers Degreasing Fluid, \$10 for 1L. recochem.com.au



**DON'T LET YOUR
WALL TURN UGLY**

**POLYFILLA® LARGE CRACKS
FAST DRY. EASY TO SAND.**

*POLYFILLA and the TRIANGLE DEVICE are registered trade marks.



Spray-paint a wall

The quickest way to paint a wall is using a spray gun. A high-volume low-pressure (HVLP) gun is ideal for interior walls as it produces less over-spray, so it doesn't waste paint.

A light, portable turbine carried on a shoulder strap supplies the air pressure for spraying and is connected to the gun by a flexible hose.

Paint coverage

A standard gun has various settings for accurate targeting or broad application and usually comes with a 1.8L container that can cover 12 square metres.

Before starting, cover windows and doors with newspaper and the floors with drop sheets. Use painter's tape to mask skirtings and architraves.

Wear disposable coveralls, from Bunnings, use an appropriate respirator and ensure adequate ventilation.

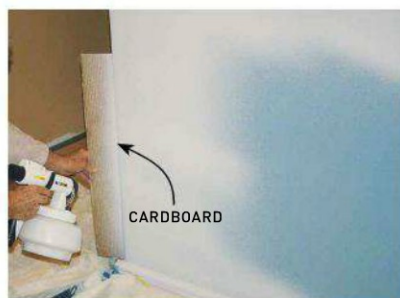


Wagner Wall Perfect W665 Paint Sprayer, \$253.

» Spray-paint a wall



1 PREPARE THE WALL by sanding with 180 grit abrasive paper then wash with sugar soap and rinse. Mask the trim, windows and light switches with tape and newspaper. Secure the gun's spray attachment.



2 APPLY THE PAINT by diluting it first according to the manufacturer's instructions then filling the tank. Start from a corner, holding the gun about 250mm from the wall and using a piece of cardboard to catch over-spray.



3 COVER THE WALL by sweeping the gun in long, smooth passes, moving your arm not wrist for even coverage. Don't squeeze the trigger until the gun is in motion and follow through after releasing the trigger.

»Reinvent a room by using a spray gun to dramatically cut down on the time it takes to paint a wall



BEFORE

This room had different coloured walls in dark shades that made the space feel cramped.

AFTER

Once the trim and floor were protected it took less than an hour to paint the walls in a fresh white and transform the space.



Working with trim

Decorative trim or moulding adds architectural detail to walls and comes in a range of profiles, such as skirting, dado rails and panel moulding. Buy trim from hardware stores, timber yards and suppliers like Porta Mouldings (porta.com.au).



PANEL MOULDING

Painting the wall, skirting board and dado rail in one colour creates a rich backdrop for framed panels of wallpaper.

STYLE ON
A BUDGET

WALLS IN PROFILE

Use inexpensive timber mouldings to turn a plain wall into a designer feature with texture, colour and dimension

Give your home designer flair without paying a fortune for professional wall treatments by using paint and mouldings to update your surfaces DIY.

Moulding, also called trim, is more than an architectural feature and can be used on walls to decorative effect.

Plain walls can be transformed by using lengths of trim in a variety of profiles as frames and shelves instead of the traditional skirting or rails.

FRAMED PAPER PANELS

Framing panels of luxury wallpaper with lengths of painted moulding under a dado rail creates a stunning wall feature for an affordable outlay.

Choose the paper to suit the colour scheme, period of the home and style of furnishings. Finish the moulding in a highlight shade using metallic paint.

TIP The proportions are important to get right. In the average 2400mm high room, 850 x 600mm panels work well.



Graham & Brown Wallpaper
Majestic Damask Blue, \$50 for 10m.
grahambrown.com.au



1 Attach the wallpaper
Mark the panel setout on the wall in pencil then cut the wallpaper to size. Apply paste to the marked panel setout on the wall with a brush, then position the wallpaper, smoothing it using a roller. Wipe off excess paste with a damp sponge.



2 Paint the moulding
Use a mitresaw or mitre box and tenon saw to cut moulding to length for the panels with opposing mitred ends at 45° angles. Seal the timber with primer then apply two coats of acrylic in a colour to complement the wallpaper pattern using a paintbrush.



3 Secure the frame
Apply construction adhesive to the back of the trim, positioning the pieces to create a frame around the wallpaper panels. Use low-tack tape to hold the trim to the wall and around the frame corners to keep the joints tight until the adhesive dries. ➤

Photo gallery ledge

Instead of hanging pictures on the wall or paying to have photos blown up to poster size, keep it flexible and group family portraits or small artworks on a dado ledge.

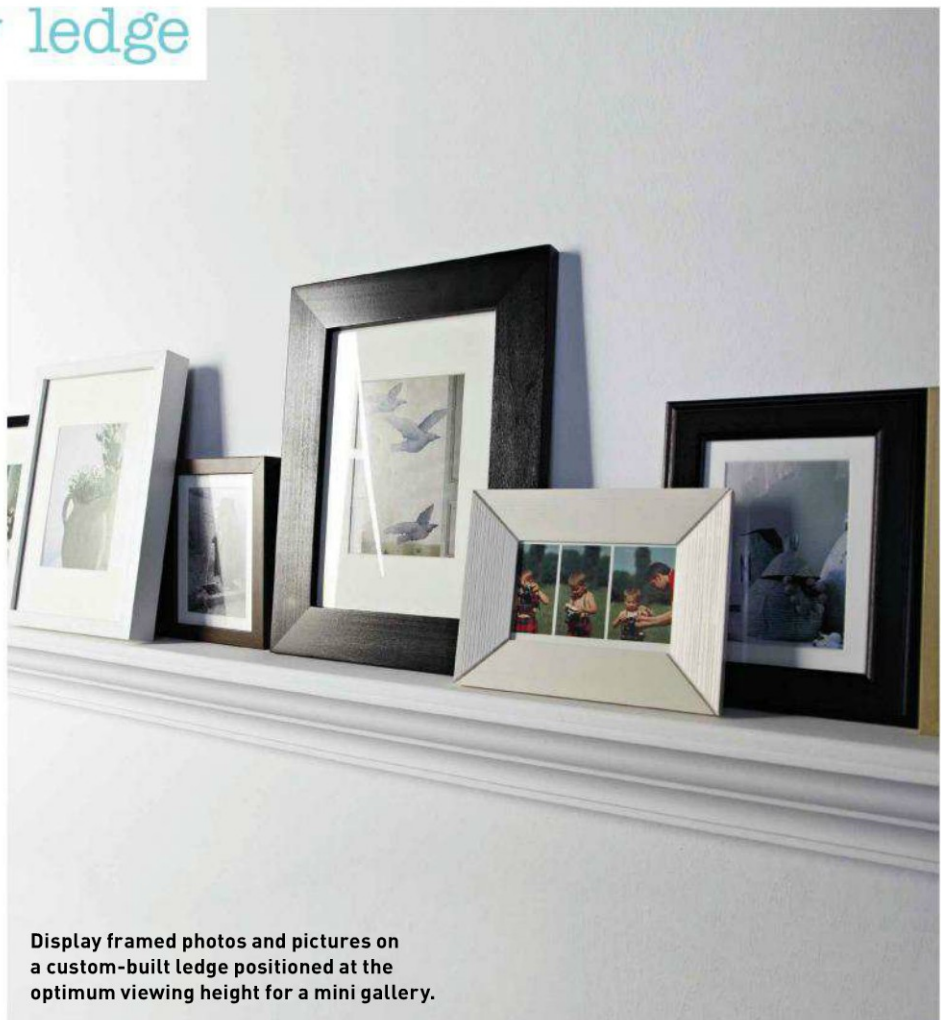
A common feature in period homes, a dado rail is a decorative moulding at waist height, much lower than traditional picture rails.

Create a suitable ledge by adding a cornice to an MDF frame, securing it 1200mm up the wall. The frame reinforces the moulding so it can take the weight of the photo frames.

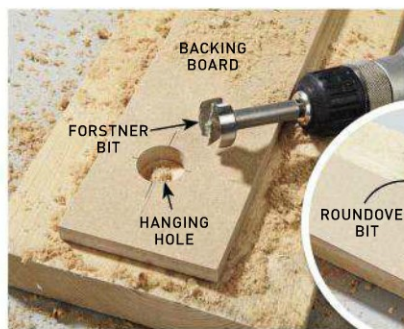
Personalise the gallery by painting unfinished frames in a tonal range to suit the colour scheme of the room.



Craft Wood Picture Frame, 225 x 175mm, about \$8. boyleindustries.com.au

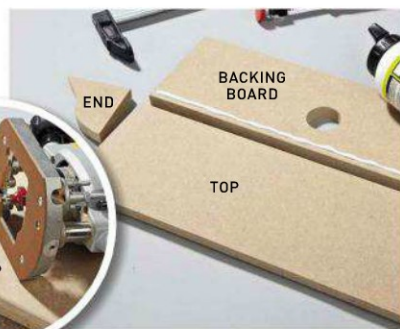


Display framed photos and pictures on a custom-built ledge positioned at the optimum viewing height for a mini gallery.



1 Drill the hanging holes

Use a stud finder to locate and mark stud positions on the wall, measuring the spacing between every second stud. Transfer the spacings to a 16mm MDF backing board then drill 30mm holes using a Forstner bit to hang the ledges on square hooks.



2 Make the frame

Use a mitresaw to cut the frame top and back to length, using a jigsaw to cut the end pieces so they match the cornice profile. Use a router and 6mm roundover bit to chamfer the top edge then assemble the frame using adhesive and 40mm x 8g screws.



3 Hang the ledge

Apply construction or cornice adhesive to the inside edges of the frame then position timber or plaster cornice, taping it in position until the adhesive cures. Paint the ledge and hang on square hooks set in the wall at 1200mm high to a level stringline.

Ceiling cornice lights



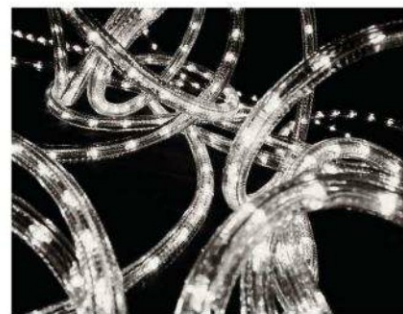
Bright yellow walls and rope lights concealed in ceiling cornice give this living room a mellow glow.

Add ambient lighting to a living space without the expense of rewiring by hiding rope lights in ceiling cornice.

Teamed with brightly coloured walls, this method of uplighting gives a room a soft glow when the overhead lights are switched off.

Get the look by attaching a dropped cornice below a square-set ceiling. Line the cornice with foil to maximise the spread of reflected light on a white ceiling.

Calculate the length of rope light you will need, including enough to reach a power source. Run the cord along a door architrave to reach a plug or have an electrician install a conveniently located powerpoint.



White LED Rope Light, about \$30 for 10m, from bargain and hardware stores.



1 Paint the walls

Mark a line 200mm below the ceiling on the walls using a pencil and a spirit level then apply masking tape above the line. Apply two coats of yellow paint to the walls up to the taped line using a roller, leaving the top of the walls white.



2 Line the cornice

Use a mitre box and tenon saw to cut the timber cornice to length with mitred ends. Test-fit the cornice then apply two strips of double-sided tape to the back. Peel off the tape backing and attach aluminium foil over the cornice back.



3 Add the rope light

Position the cornice and drill pilot holes through the base at each wall stud, securing with 50mm x 8g screws. Apply construction adhesive to the mitred corners to secure. Position the light rope behind the cornice, running it along the walls. ➤

Hallway mirrors

A simple but effective way to open up and brighten a hallway is to hang a row of full-length mirrors on the wall.

Framed mirrors can be very expensive, so save cash by mounting rebated picture rail or panel moulding around ordinary bevelled mirrors.

Check out hardware stores and glaziers for good deals, then choose moulding to suit the size of the mirror. A thin profile will look unbalanced on a long, narrow mirror and a wide profile too heavy for a small one.

Mount the mirrors quickly and easily using heavy-duty double-sided tape like Scotch 110 Foam Mounting Tape, about \$6 for a 12.7mm x 1.9m roll (scotchbrand.com.au).



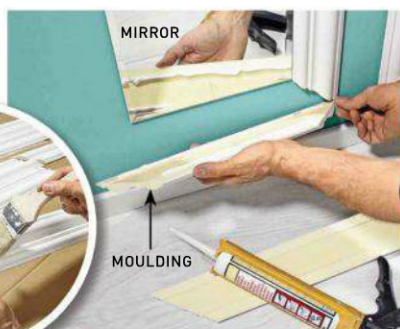
Award Diamond Edge Mirror Panel, 600 x 450mm, \$19. awardbrands.com.au



Line a wall with framed mirrors to create the illusion of more space and depth in a narrow hallway.



1 Prepare the mirrors
Position the mirrors face down on a soft surface and cut strips of double-sided tape to length to fit around the perimeter. Peel away the backing on one side of the tape in small stages while applying the tape to the back then mount the mirrors.



2 Secure the moulding
Cut the moulding to length with a mitresaw then apply a primer and two coats of acrylic paint using a brush. Apply a bead of construction adhesive to the mouldings and position around the mirrors, securing the frames with masking tape until the adhesive dries.



3 Finish the frames
Remove the masking tape and use a gap sealant or timber filler to fill any spaces in the mitred corners of the frames then touch up with paint.
TIP Horizontal moulding pieces can be secured to wall studs with panel pins for extra support.

SANDING? YOU NEED **TRUE GRIT**

SandBlaster High Performance Abrasives sand 3 times faster, last 3 times longer, and they're made by 3M. Yes, good things do come in threes.

Sanding wood, plasterboard, metal, painted and varnished surfaces can become pretty tedious if your abrasives quickly clog up and wear out.

Whether you're stripping paint, sanding between coats, or preparing a bare surface, choose high performance **SandBlaster** abrasives from 3M for better results.

SandBlaster abrasives incorporate premium minerals that stay significantly sharper to cut 3 times faster and last 3 times longer*. They're clog resistant too, to help save you time and energy.

SandBlaster sanding products are easy to select for any project, with sandpaper sheets, sponges and pads in multiple grits. The bright colour-coded packaging – Green, Maroon or Gold – with the grit number printed front and back, takes the guesswork out of choosing the right grit for the job.

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3M™ SandBlaster™ Sanding Sponge is perfect for sanding curved edges, uneven surfaces, and tight, hard-to-reach corners. It's easy to hold and manoeuvre around corners and surface contours to give you a smooth, even result.



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SEQUENCE OF GRITS FOR THE BEST FINISH

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COARSE GRITS

Choose the green coarse grade products if you are stripping or removing a coating.

Bare Surfaces

MEDIUM GRITS

Next, use the maroon medium grade products if you are doing bare surface prep work prior to laying down the first new coat of paint/finish.

Between Coats

FINE GRITS

Finally, use the gold fine grade products if you are doing between coats sanding.

ASK AN EXPERT!

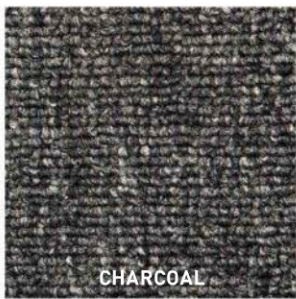
For sanding tips, techniques or product information ask the sanding professionals at 3M. Call 136 136 option 2.

*Compared to 3M conventional abrasives.





Enhance Broadloom carpet,
about \$40 a square metre.



CHARCOAL



ESPRESSO



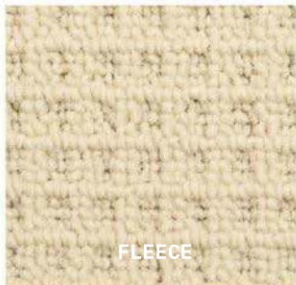
SILVERADO



GREEN



HARVEST



FLEECE



ALL SPICE



NAVY



BEIGE



DRIFTWOOD

A range of carpets by Four Seasons, Enhance Broadloom and Riverdale Broadloom, from \$10 to about \$40 a square metre.



THE BEST OF *new floors*

Choose between natural, eco, luxe and cool finishes when selecting the right type of flooring for your home

WORDS SITA SIMONS

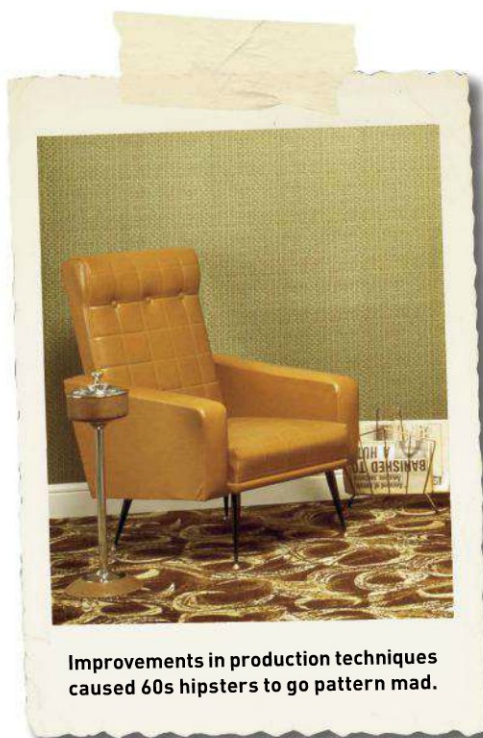
Flooring plays a big part in determining the design direction of a home.

When choosing what to lay, the main considerations are budget and aesthetic. But it's important to remember that what works in one space may not suit another, so take time to make the right choices.

The style of the house and existing furniture as well as how the room will be used are important elements.

Lifestyle factors such as age of children, whether you have pets and regular activities will also help steer your choices.

There is a wide range of possibilities for flooring, with something to suit every room and taste. And technological advancements improve quality and durability year on year.



Carpet

Though carpet making has been practiced in nomadic and ancient cultures for centuries, carpets as we know them today are the result of mechanical advancements during the Industrial Revolution.

Traditional loom weaving steadily declined over time and machine-made tufted carpets took over. By the 1950s, patterning technology began to improve.

Carpet is one of the best flooring options for bedrooms and other low-traffic areas. It's soft underfoot, available in a wide range of colours and textures, and helps keep a room warm and comfortable.

Increased resistance to wear and staining means there is a carpet for every room, from acrylics to natural fibres such as wool. Installing DIY is best done with two people. ➤



Tiles

Tiles are well suited to Australia's mostly temperate climate and the cool, smooth finish feels pleasant underfoot during the hot months.

Ideal for wet areas like the bathroom and laundry, large-format ceramic tiles have also made a comeback in living spaces.

Use luxurious rugs to soften and delineate zones, as well as add warmth during winter.



Cotto Thaicera Terracotta
330mm Ceramic Floor
Tile, about \$3 each.

PICTURES (LEFT) THINKSTOCK (INSET) GETTY IMAGES

Old-style tiles could wear quickly but modern finishes mean more durability.

With fewer lines to break up the space large-format tiles make a room appear bigger.

Rugs

A rug can be an essential part of a decorating scheme, particularly for open-plan living areas.

Without one or more rugs to break up the space, an expanse of floor can look cold and uninviting.

Selecting the right size and style can be a challenge, as the rug should be large enough to unify an area.

Some interior decorators swear by the rule of designing from the floor up and letting a rug dictate the direction.

If you have a collection of items and furniture you don't want to replace, go for a good neutral rug to tie in the existing colour theme.

When choosing neutrals over bold patterns, look for interesting texture and subtle colour variation.

Like carpet, lifestyle factors need to be considered when selecting the material of the rug. ➤



Designer Flat Weave Rug, \$99.



Montreal Shag Pile Rug, \$109.



Vista Banner Rug, \$109.

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Bamboo is actually a grass but it has many similarities to hardwoods.

Bamboo

Timber floors are still the number one choice in Australian homes due to their durability and timeless style.

But as hardwoods become increasingly expensive due to slow-growth species, and reclaimed boards become harder to source, alternatives such as hard, fast-growing bamboo have boomed in popularity.

Environmentally sustainable, bamboo has a pleasing look and colour which suits most modern homes. Available as a pre-finished product,

bamboo flooring is easy and quick to install, requiring no sanding, sealing or polishing.

Once installed, you can walk on your bamboo floor almost immediately with minimal mess and no nasty chemicals or fumes to deal with.

As bamboo floorboards are installed as a floating floor without being adhered to the substrate, a good quality underlay adds to the warmth and acoustic insulation of the room. ➤



Strand Woven Bamboo, from \$44 a square metre.

Sustainable choice



Hardwoods take many years to reach maturity, which means plantations have to be big to be economical and take longer to replenish once harvested.

Bamboo grows very rapidly, about 300mm a day, so it's easily managed and harvested in comparatively small plantations with a high production rate.

This has the added bonus of increasing the availability of bamboo, so there are no pesky delays at the consumer end.



In the 90s, raffia was the original take on eco flooring but it was hard on the feet.



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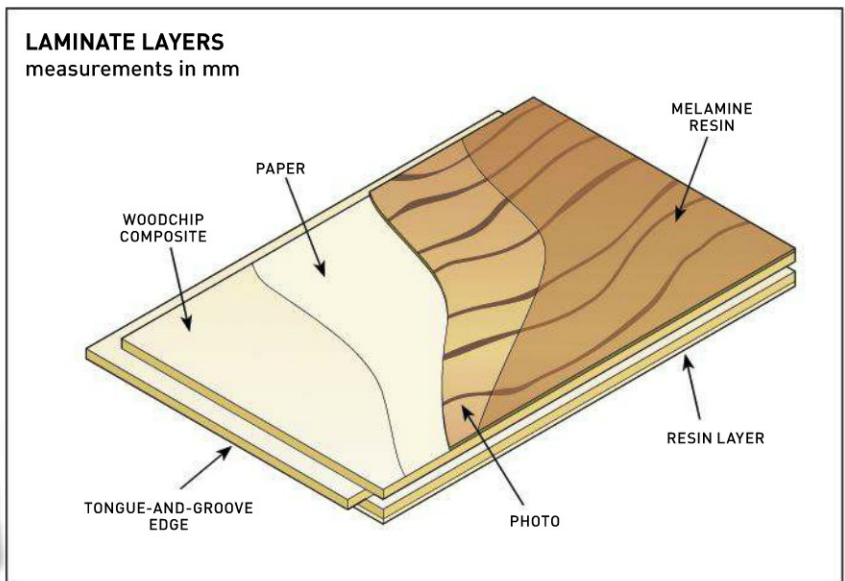
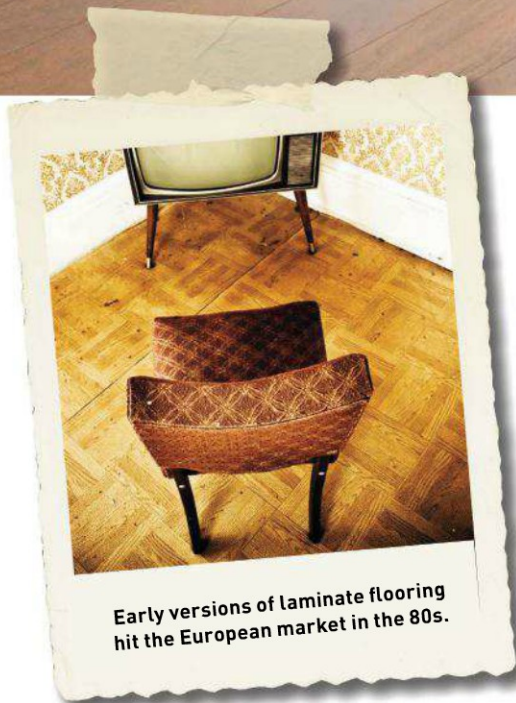


Fibre Cement

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WWW.BGCINNOVADESIGN.COM.AU



For a neat finish, remove the skirting before installing laminate flooring then replace it.



Laminate

One of the most cost effective of all timber-look options laminate flooring does not use any solid timber.

It consists of a base layer of moisture-resistant resins topped by a woodchip composite layer then a high definition image of timber, ceramic or stone that's covered in tough melamine resin.

This type of flooring is commonly installed floating on top of an existing floor without adhering to the substrate.

The boards are joined with a tongue-and-groove system that clicks into position.

To install DIY you'll need to buy a floor laying installation kit, underlay, duct tape and the laminate boards.

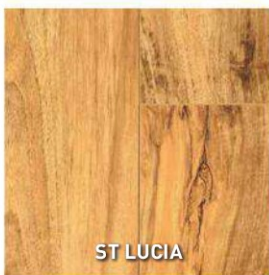
If laying over a new concrete slab, leave it to cure for one month per 25mm thickness to ensure that the concrete is completely set. >



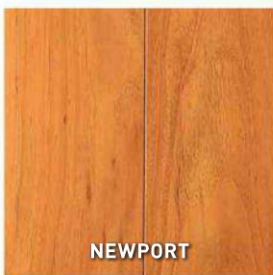
Laminae St Lucia 12mm
High Gloss Laminate, from
\$29 a square metre.



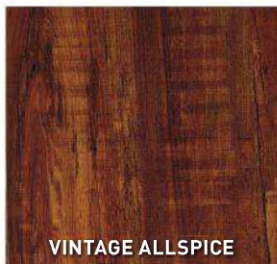
CAPPUCCINO



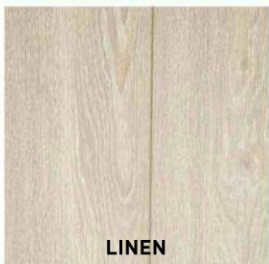
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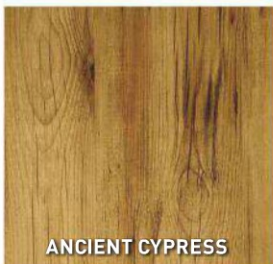
NEWPORT



VINTAGE ALLSPICE



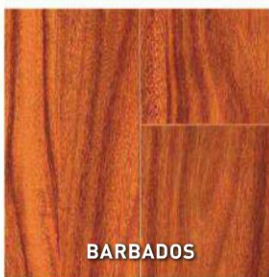
LINEN



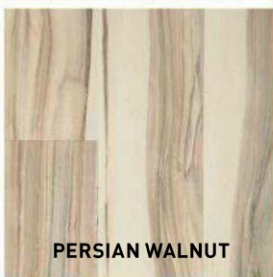
ANCIENT CYPRESS



SACRAMENTO PINE



BARBADOS

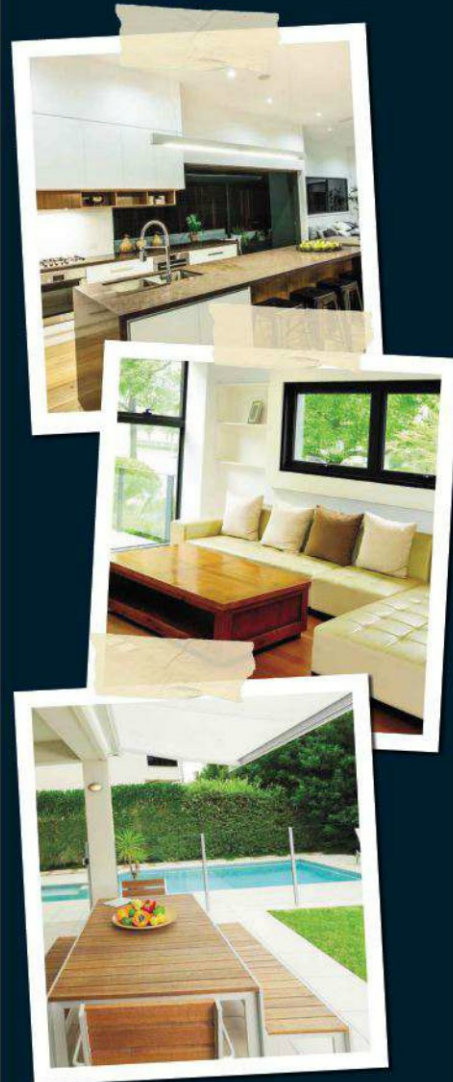


PERSIAN WALNUT

Laminate prices vary according to thickness and finish, from \$29 to \$35 a square metre.

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handyman.net.au/mag

Vinyl

The earliest flexible floor coverings were made of linoleum, invented in the 1860s, but modern vinyl products are even more versatile as well as being economical to install.

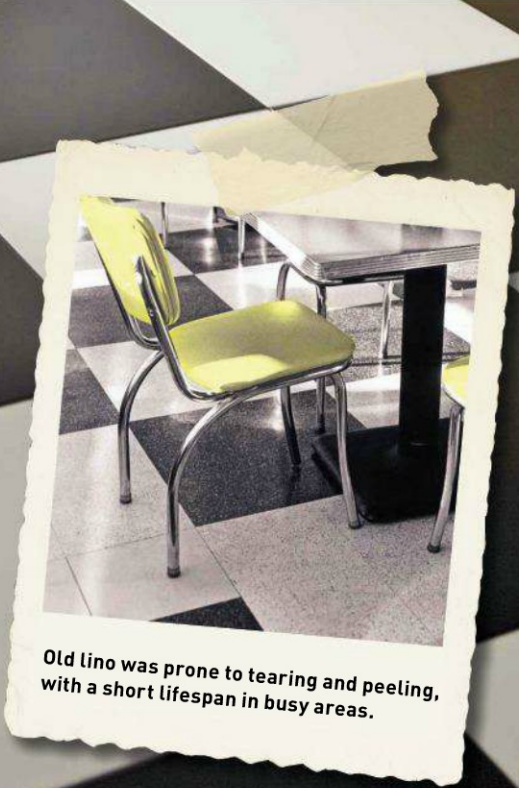
Vinyl is soft underfoot, highly durable, easy to maintain and very affordable. The advent of high definition imaging means the look of natural materials can be realistically replicated, while colours and patterns appear fresh and bright.

Additional layers improve comfort and special compounds inhibit the growth of bacteria, mould and mildew, making it an excellent choice for wet areas such as the bathroom, kitchen and laundry.

Available in many different styles, colours and prints, vinyl is designed to last for up to 20 years and requires no maintenance other than regular sweeping and mopping.



A classic black and white vinyl floor looks like tile but is easier to install.



Old lino was prone to tearing and peeling, with a short lifespan in busy areas.

SHEET OR TILES

Although it's also available as boards or tiles that give a particularly realistic look to natural material finishes, vinyl sheeting is still the most popular way to buy the product. It's also the most cost effective and easy to clean.

Vinyl sheeting is easy to lay DIY with installation taking just a few hours. The only tools required are a utility knife, sealant and floor roller.

Some vinyl can be laid directly over tiles or other floors without the need for an underlay. ➤



Vinyl sheeting adds a stone-look finish to a kitchen for a fraction of the cost.



PICTURE (BELOW LEFT) GETTY IMAGES



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AFTER

New flooring, wall paint and trim turn a neglected room into a relaxed and comfortable family space.

MY \$1300 RUMPUS ROOM REVAMP

A fresh coat of paint and carpet tiles turn a junk room into a family space

WORDS **FRANK GARDNER** MAIN PICTURE **STUART SCOTT**

The original rumpus room in *Handyman* deputy editor Frank Gardner's home had been revamped in the mid-90s when his children were still teenagers.

'Back then we needed a living area that would withstand two kids, a dog and a cat,' says Frank.

Over the years the room became less a family area and more a storage space for unused bits and pieces.

'The idea for a makeover developed as things went wrong,' says Frank.

A leaking water heater that created a welcoming environment for termites was the first catalyst.

This led to the removal of timber framework, leaving unsightly gaps in the original floor tiles.

Next, the adjacent bathroom underwent a major modernisation complete with new tiling.

'The new tiles made the original area look very shabby, so it was time to finish the job,' says Frank.

MAKE IT CHILD-FRIENDLY

Frank's five-year-old grandkids visit on a regular basis so the rumpus room needed to be kid-friendly.

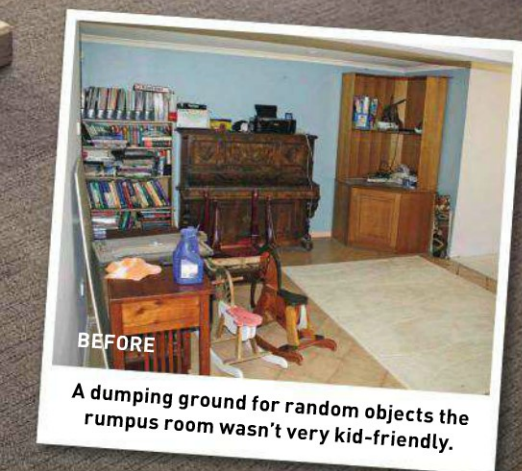
The old apricot tiles were broken and cold underfoot, so needed to be replaced. Lots of wear and tear was certain, so carpet tiles were chosen.

'With carpet tiles you can always move any damaged ones to a less noticeable area,' says Frank.

Many of the spring-loaded clips for the downlights had broken, allowing them to work loose and pose a hazard, so new recessed downlights featuring energy-saving CFLs were installed. ➤



Nelson 13W CFL Downlight Lamp, about \$8. nelsonlamps.com.au



BEFORE

A dumping ground for random objects the rumpus room wasn't very kid-friendly.

THE MAKEOVER PLAN

'We needed to make the room warm, light and neutral without spending too much money,' says Frank.

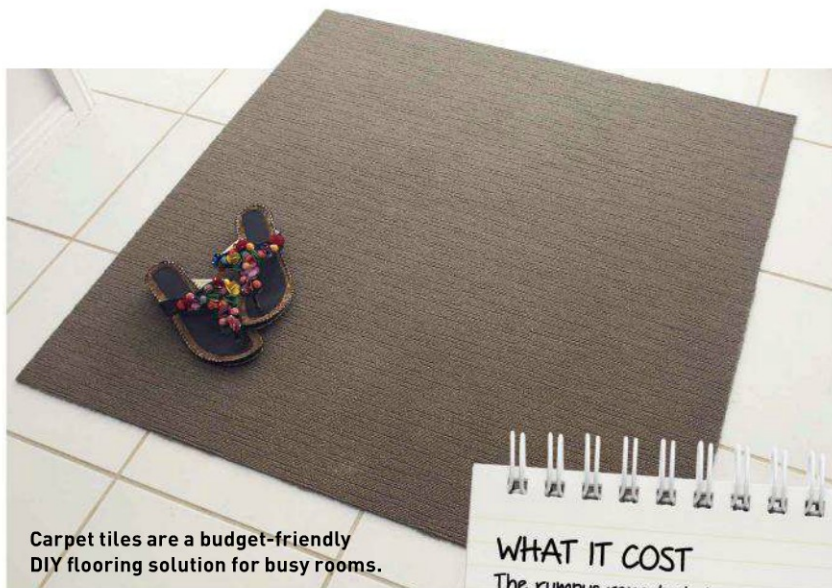
The floors, walls and lighting all needed attention. To save time and money, Frank patched the holes in the floor instead of pulling up all the tiles.

When the repairs were finished the room was repainted in a neutral palette, with the promise of tasty refreshments luring friends and family to lend a hand.

Says Frank, 'After two coats of Dulux White Pepper on the walls and gloss acrylic in the same colour on the timber trim the room appears much lighter. We also freshened up with two coats of Ceiling White.'

Frank chose 1000mm square polypropylene carpet tiles, about \$24 each, from Bunnings, as they can be cut using a utility knife and laid DIY.

'We only messed up one tile while cutting because we forgot to check the laying arrow on the back,' he says.



Carpet tiles are a budget-friendly DIY flooring solution for busy rooms.

To finish, an electrician was hired to fit new low-wattage downlights then the room was furnished with comfy seating, bookshelves and custom-made low line cabinetry.

'The Tassie oak cabinets were made by my brother-in-law and give the room a classy look,' Frank says.

WHAT IT COST

The rumpus reno took two weeks for the DIY labour plus electrical work.

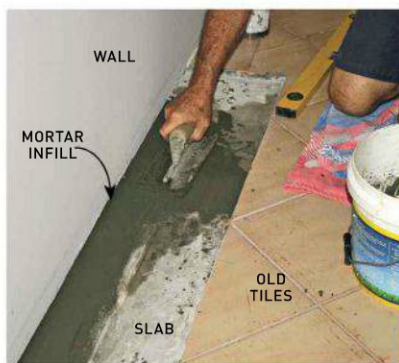
Floor and wall repairs	\$160
Paint	\$210
Skirting	\$70
Carpet tiles	\$611
Lights	\$104
Electrician	\$110
Total	\$1265

Preparing for the reno

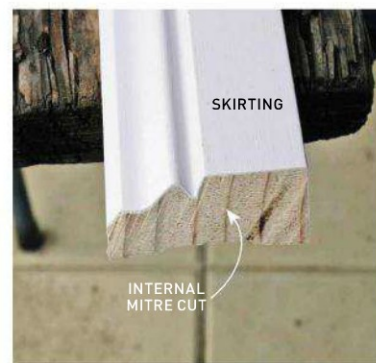
Before painting the walls and putting down the flooring, it was important to get the surfaces ready for a professional result. **TIP** Badly damaged sections of plasterboard are best cut back to stud centres and replacements attached.



REPAIR THE PLASTERBOARD by filling minor scratches or dents, and cutting away more serious damage. Secure a plasterboard patch using adhesive. Apply two layers of base coat and a top coat over the taped joints, leave to dry and feather the edges with 180 grit abrasive paper.

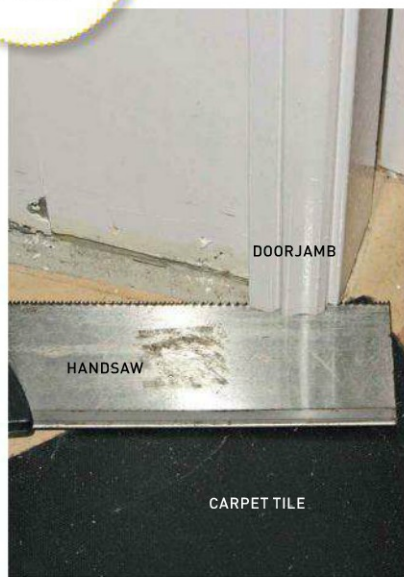


PATCH THE TILES by using a mortar mix to bring the gaps up to slab level. Cut and lay tiles of the same thickness as the originals to provide a consistent, flat substrate for the carpet tiles. **TIP** If the old tiles will be completely covered, it doesn't matter whether the patches follow the original pattern.



PREPARE THE SKIRTING if the old trim has been damaged. Paint new lengths of primed skirting boards and cut mitres for the external corners and trim the mitre profiles of internal corners with a coping saw. If the old skirting is in good condition, just sand and repaint it.

LAY CARPET TILES



1 Cut the doorjamb

Use a pry bar and timber block to remove all skirting boards. Lay a carpet tile offcut on the floor and use a sharp handsaw to undercut the architrave and doorjamb, creating a recess for the carpet to slip under.



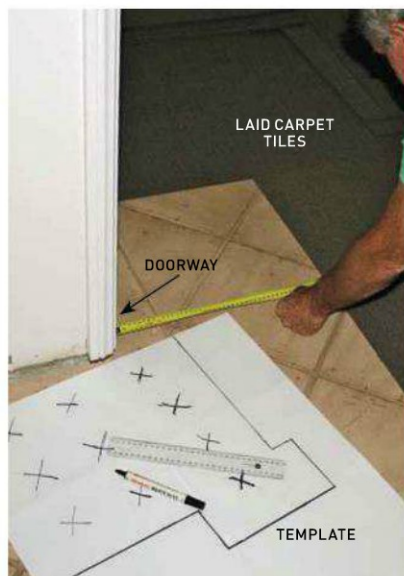
2 Check the starting corner

Choose a starting corner for laying the carpet tiles using the 3-4-5 method to check for square. Measure and mark 900 and 1200mm along adjacent walls from the corner. The distance between the two marks should be 1500mm.



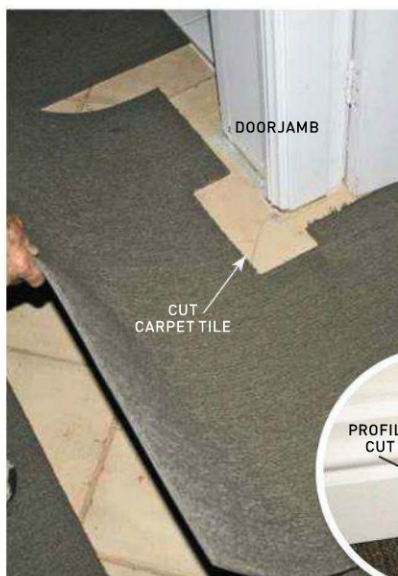
3 Lay the carpet tiles

Position the first row of carpet tiles along the selected wall butted tightly together, then continue laying rows, keeping the carpet grain consistent. **TIP** Check the laying arrow under each tile points in the same direction.



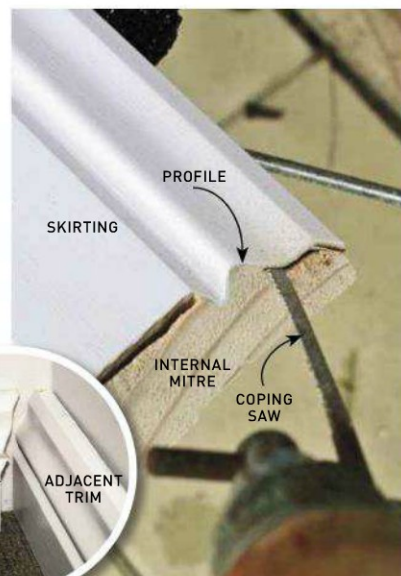
4 Cut the carpet tiles

Sketch full-size templates of doors and other tiling obstacles on thin cardboard, marking the cutout from the carpet tiles already laid. Position the carpet tile and template, cutting using a straightedge and utility knife.



5 Finish the carpet tiling

Work the cut carpet tile carefully into position around the obstacle, checking all edges are butted neatly with the surrounding tiles. Trim where necessary then finish laying any remaining carpet tiles.



6 Secure the skirting

Clamp the skirting and mitre one side of each internal corner at 45° with a compound mitresaw. Cut along the profile with a coping saw, removing the internal mitre so the skirting butts against the face of the adjacent trim.

DIY STAIRCASE MAKEOVER

After years of neglect a dark and dangerous flight of steps gets a facelift and safety upgrade for just \$350

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

Handyman deputy editor Frank Gardner is a self-confessed compulsive renovator, but even he admits there are some projects at home that have been neglected.

One of the jobs on the DIY to-do list was a steep and narrow staircase that led to a downstairs rumpus area.

'I pulled up the old worn carpet on the staircase to find lovely maple treads I wanted to keep,' says Frank.

'The walls had been painted after the stairs were carpeted, leaving a border showing at the sides.

'Not only was the timber patchy but the handrail had been removed while the walls were painted and never replaced, making the stairs dangerous too. The family started calling them the Death Stairs and avoided using them,' he says.

When Frank decided to renovate the rumpus room for his grandkids he knew he had to fix the staircase.

'After the rumpus reno I tackled the stairs right away. I refinished the timber, painted the walls and added a handrail. The family can't believe the difference. I don't think they'll call them the Death Stairs anymore.' >

Refinishing the treads and risers



The stairs had been finished with polyurethane before being carpeted so Frank applied two coats of Cabot's CFP Floor to the treads and risers.

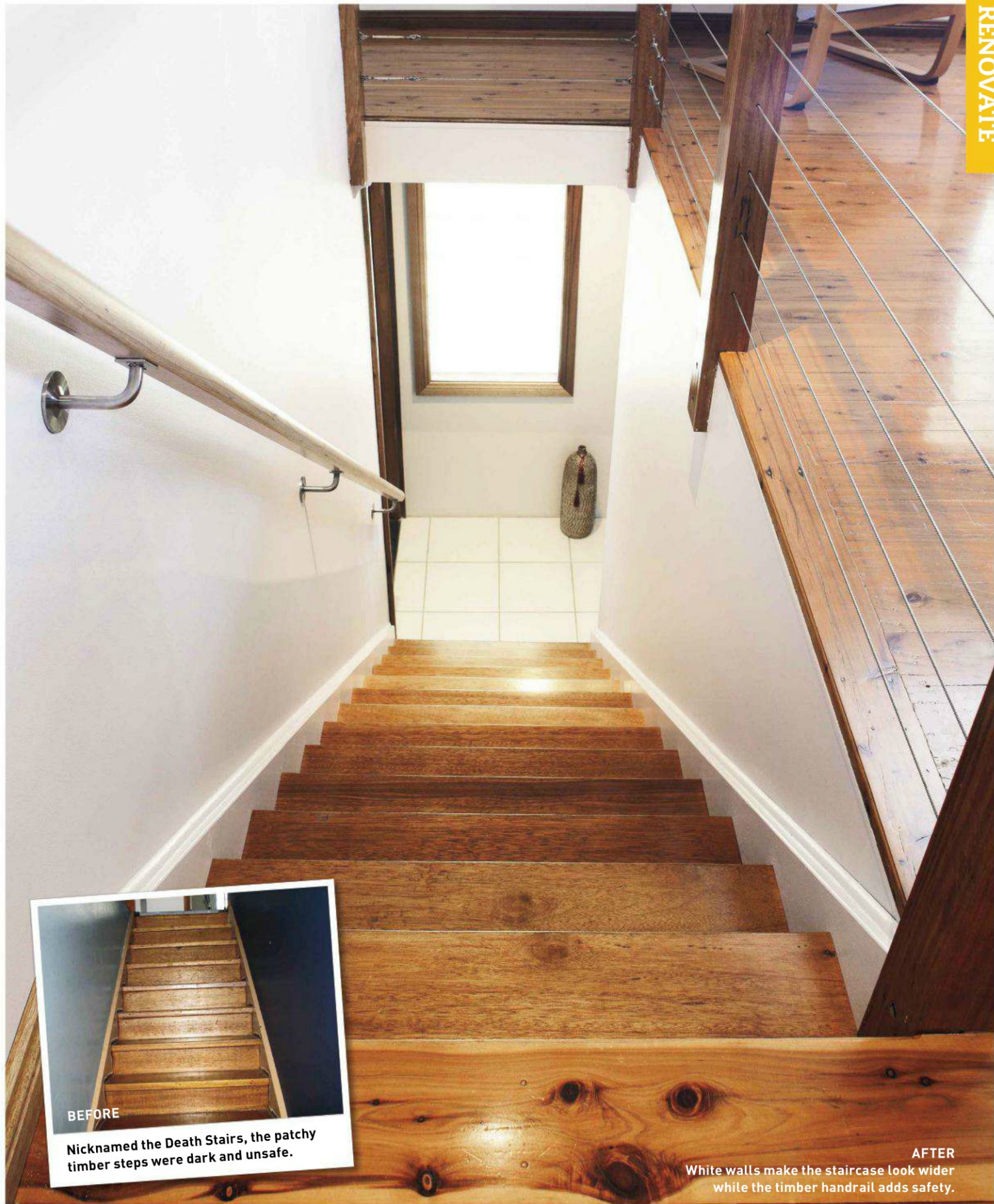
'It's a water-based polyurethane finish with a primer that refreshes previously coated timber flooring. The low odour of this product made working in the confined space easier.

'No sanding is required but I had to fix the patchy bits and fill nail holes from the carpet,' says Frank.

TIP If any part of the finish has worn through to bare timber then the entire surface must be sanded right back.



Cabot's CFP Floor Water Based,
\$31 for 1L. cabots.com.au



BEFORE

Nicknamed the Death Stairs, the patchy timber steps were dark and unsafe.

AFTER

White walls make the staircase look wider while the timber handrail adds safety.

SAND THE TIMBER

The first job on the makeover agenda was to remove the unsightly patches of paint left on the stringers when Frank removed the old carpet.

The paint was rough and lumpy, requiring a fair bit of sanding with a detail sander using both 60 and 120 grit abrasive paper.

The maple treads showed damage from the nails that secured the carpet, plus general wear and tear.

'I repaired and patched as much as I could then sanded each tread and riser using a random orbital sander and detail sander,' says Frank.

The best results were obtained using 120 and 180 grit abrasive paper.

SECURE THE TRIM

For a neat finish against the walls, the stringers were topped with lengths of 12mm pine quad trim that had been painted to match.

They were measured and cut to fit with mitred corners at the base then attached using 30 x 2mm panel pins spaced every 300mm.

The nail holes were filled using Polyfilla interior timber filler then sanded before the trim was given a final coat of paint.

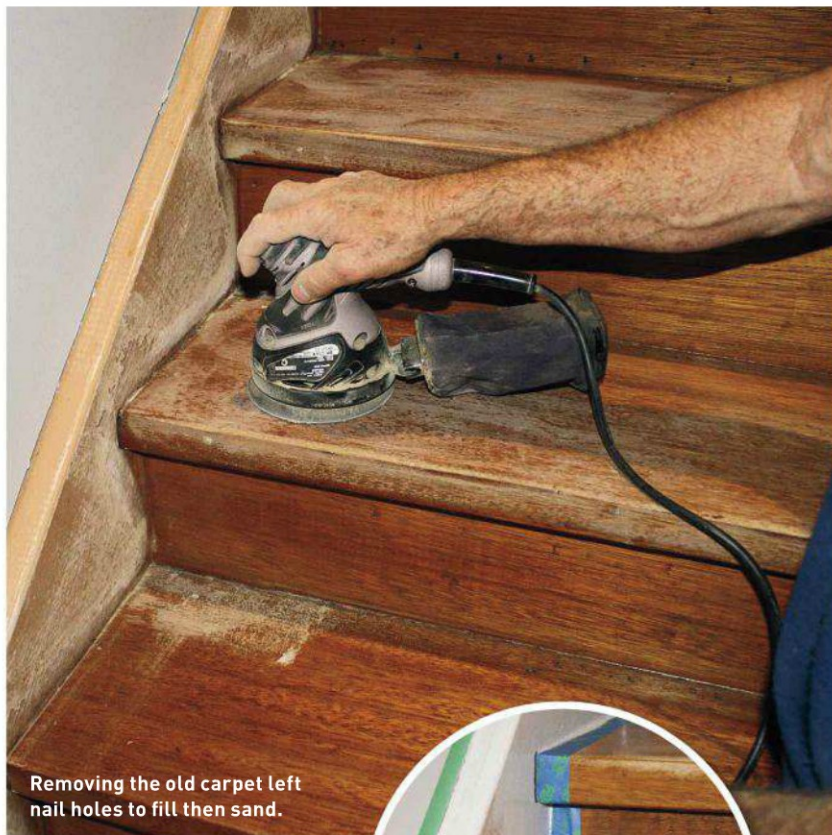
PAINT THE WALLS

Frank repainted the staircase walls in Dulux Wash & Wear White Pepper to brighten the area.

The most important part of the paint job was setting up scaffolding



The new timber handrail was given three coats of water-based polyurethane.



Removing the old carpet left nail holes to fill then sand.



PAINTING THE STRINGERS

over the stairs to create a safe and stable working platform.

'The lower wall was a pale blue and required two coats but the dark blue feature wall needed four coats before I was happy with the result,' says Frank.

After masking up the newly painted walls, the stringers were given two coats of Dulux Aquanamel.

MAKE THE HANDRAIL

A new handrail was cut from a length of Tasmanian oak with a semi-round profile and sanded twice using 120 and 180 grit abrasive paper.

'It's the preparation that is the most important to get a really smooth finish,' says Frank.

After sanding, three coats of CFP Floor were applied with a brush using even strokes and following the grain.

TIP This flooring product is ideal for a timber handrail as it provides a tough, abrasion-resistant finish.

WHAT IT COST

The staircase revamp took about a weekend to complete and there were no labour costs as all the work was done DIY.

Dulux Paint	\$65
Dulux Aquanamel	\$43
Cabot's CFP Floor	\$31
Handrail	\$90
Handrail brackets	\$102
General materials	\$25
TOTAL	\$356



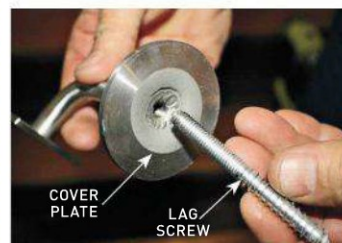
A new timber handrail attached to the wall makes the steep timber staircase safer to use.

Adding a handrail

To increase safety a handrail was attached to one wall. To meet Australian Building Standards the top of the rail has to be at least 865mm above the tread nosings.



1 MARK THE STUD POSITIONS on the wall with a pencil using a stud finder to locate them, then mark the positions of the handrail brackets on the wall at the correct height.



2 SECURE THE BRACKETS by winding in lag screws then drill pilot holes in the wall, attaching the brackets to the studs.
TIP Lag screws are hidden behind the cover plate for a neat finish.



3 ATTACH THE HANDRAIL by orientating the three brackets correctly, securing the new handrail to the brackets from beneath using the supplied screws and a cordless drill.



EASY
DIY FIXES

WATCH YOUR STEP

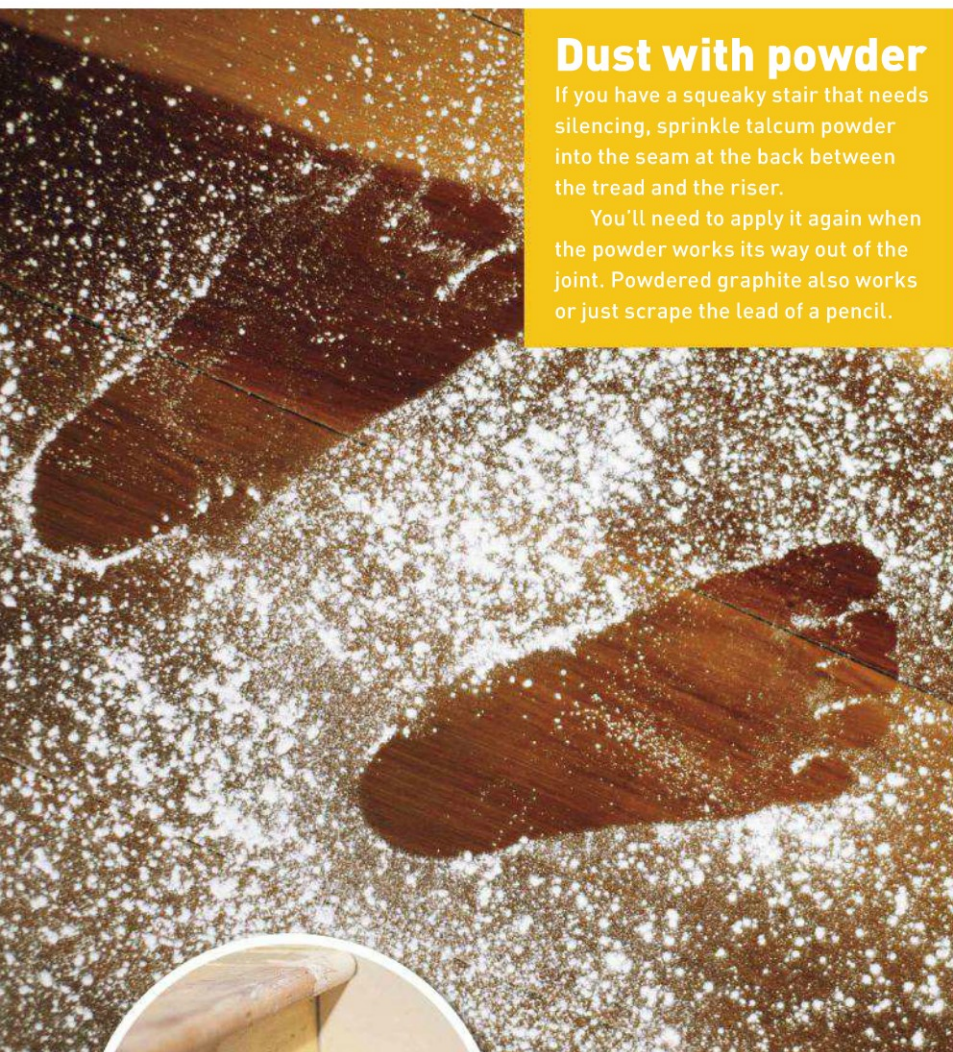
Pull out the toolbox and get to work on the staircase to stop creaks, squeaks and wobbles

The staircase is often the grand centrepiece of a home and it's certainly the most complicated piece of carpentry.

Stairs see a lot of heavy traffic and keeping them looking good requires

little more than regular dusting, cleaning and vacuuming.

To keep them in good repair, here are a few easy carpentry techniques for balustrades and steps that can save you the cost of calling a tradie.



Dust with powder

If you have a squeaky stair that needs silencing, sprinkle talcum powder into the seam at the back between the tread and the riser.

You'll need to apply it again when the powder works its way out of the joint. Powdered graphite also works or just scrape the lead of a pencil.



Stop the creaks

To stop steps creaking, secure an angle bracket to the riser, leaving a gap between the bracket and tread.

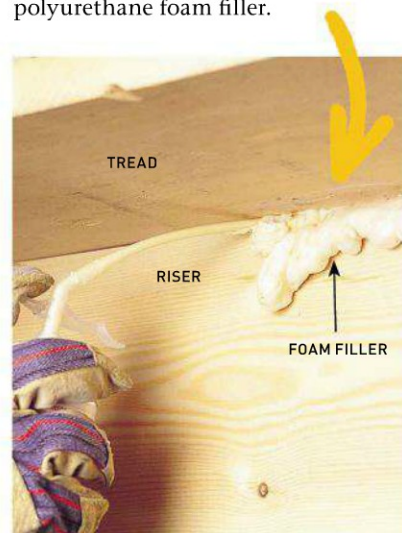
Run a bead of adhesive between the tread and riser, then screw the bracket to the tread, closing the joint tightly in the process. Cover the steps with carpet to hide the angle bracket.

Seal the squeaks

An easy way to quiet a squeak is to apply a thin bead of sealant under the step nosing, to cushion the joint where the tread meets the riser. Do this from the top on uncarpeted stairs.

After applying the sealant, run a plastic spoon or your finger, wearing a rubber glove, along it to remove the excess and push the sealant into the squeaky joint. Clean up any excess as directed on the packet before it dries.

If you can get to the steps from the underside, seal the joints of the squeaky step from there as well using sealant or polyurethane foam filler.



Replace a baluster

If a baluster is so damaged that you can't fix it, you need to replace it.

Some balusters are held in place by a moulding that runs along the side of the stairs. Prise off the moulding with a chisel to pull out the baluster.

If the baluster is nailed in place, drive the nails all the way through the baluster and into the tread or railing with a hammer and nail punch then slowly ease it out.

When there's no visible way to remove a baluster, there's no way you'll be able to put it back in either and it's time to call a carpenter. ➤





Smart idea

You can often order replacement balusters for a relatively new staircase at a timber yard. But if you can't locate a replacement, try this trick. Find a good baluster in a less visible part of the stairs and substitute it with the damaged one or put in a new mismatched one. That way the odd one will be out of sight and the good one visible.

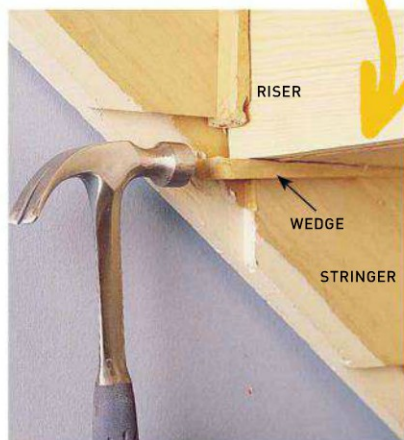
If you can get under the staircase, ask someone to walk up and down the steps so you can pinpoint the squeaky spots from below.

Wedge it in

Some staircases have timber wedges or shims underneath, which hold the treads and risers tight in the stringers.

If the shims work loose over time, the steps can start to flex and will creak as you walk up and down them.

To fix loose wedges or shims, squeeze a little PVA adhesive onto the tips and tap back into place.



Block it out

To reinforce steps to stop them creaking and moving you can secure timber blocks beneath the stairs where tread meets riser.

Drill pilot holes for the screws in each block. Apply adhesive to the adjacent faces of the block.

Position the glued faces of the block against the tread and riser, then secure it with screws.

TIP Make sure the screws are short enough to not protrude through the steps themselves.

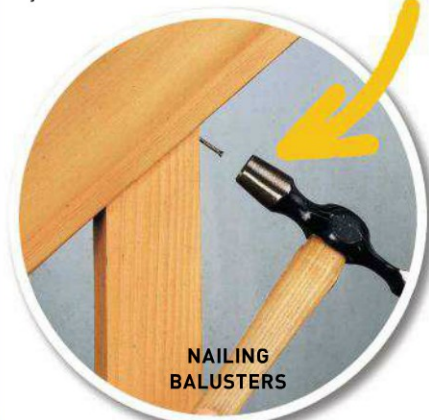
Nail it down

Most balusters are fixed to the handrail with nails, hammered in at an angle to go through the baluster and into the underside of the rail.

When a nail is loose the baluster feels freer. Pull out the nail with pincers, replacing it with a longer and thicker nail. If you can't remove the nail, hammer in a new one next to it.

Fillets of timber are also used between balusters to hold them in place. The balusters sit in a groove in the underside of the handrail and the fillets fill the gaps between each one.

If a fillet drops out, nail it back in position or use a replacement that's cut to fit. Don't use adhesive, in case you need to remove the balusters later.



Love your wood™



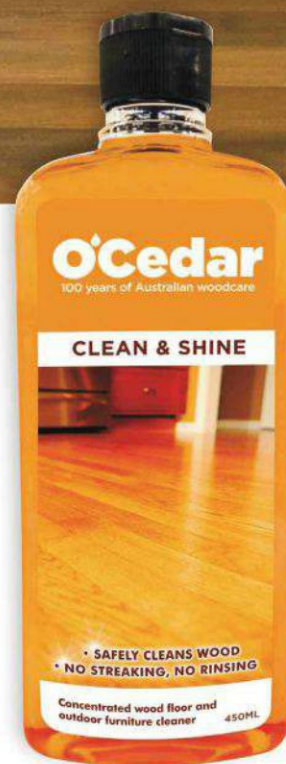
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Hardwood balustrade repair

»Use timber infill pieces and filler to seamlessly patch a handrail with a very visible grain pattern

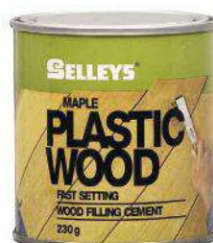
The maple balustrade for the stairs in this home had received a nasty gouge from a falling object.

As the surface of the timber was rough-milled to offer better grip, the grain pattern was highly visible through the clear varnish.

Using plain timber filler to repair the gouge would have left a conspicuous patch without grain, even if the colour could be closely matched.

To mimic the look of the timber, we cut small infill pieces from a paler timber, glued them into the hole then trimmed them back and used timber putty to emulate the grain pattern.

Since the infills were a little too pale, we darkened them using timber stain that was diluted to about 10% of its original intensity.



Selley's Plastic Wood, about \$18.74 for a 230g tin.



AFTER
The area was sanded and a gloss finish applied.

»How to repair the handrail

Glue the infill pieces in position then trim using a utility knife or sharp chisel until almost flush with the surface.

TIP Darken the infills if needed using a cotton bud to apply diluted stain, following the surrounding grain pattern.



1 CUT INFILL PIECES from slivers of timber such as bamboo skewers or matches using a utility knife then use PVA adhesive to glue them into the hole, following the grain direction as much as possible.



2 APPLY TIMBER FILLER using a putty knife, working it into all the crevices and overfilling slightly. Once dry, sand using 180 grit abrasive paper.
TIP Take care not to sand off too much of the surrounding varnish.



3 APPLY THE FINISH by using an artist's paintbrush to coat the patch with up to three layers of clear finish in a similar sheen to the original.
TIP We used clear nail polish to match the surrounding gloss varnish.

D.I.Y. Workshops

»Brush up your knowledge and gain new skills with workshops for everyone, including the kids

Planet Ark Schools Tree Day

This year Planet Ark Schools Tree Day is on Friday 26 July. As part of its support of Schools Tree Day this year, Bunnings stores will be running How to Plant a Tree D.I.Y. Workshops on Saturday 27 July and Sunday 28 July at 12:30pm (excluding SA). Come along to learn how to successfully plant and maintain trees in your garden.

SATURDAY 22 JUNE
PAINTING & PLASTERING
KIDS' WORKSHOP WALL ART

SUNDAY 7 JULY
FLOORING
KIDS' WORKSHOP DRESS-UPS

SUNDAY 23 JUNE
PAINTING & PLASTERING
KIDS' WORKSHOP WOODWORK

SATURDAY 13 JULY
STORAGE SOLUTIONS
KIDS' WORKSHOP NAIDOC WEEK

SATURDAY 29 JUNE
WINDOW & DOORS
TILING in QLD and NT
KIDS' WORKSHOP ART CLASS

SUNDAY 14 JULY
STORAGE SOLUTIONS
KIDS' WORKSHOP NAIDOC WEEK

SATURDAY 30 JUNE
WINDOW & DOORS
TILING in QLD and NT
KIDS' WORKSHOP HOLIDAY FUN

SATURDAY 20 JULY
INDOOR PROJECTS
KIDS' WORKSHOP FUN WITH PAINT

SATURDAY 6 JULY
FLOORING
KIDS' WORKSHOP ART CLASS

SUNDAY 21 JULY
INDOOR PROJECTS
KIDS' WORKSHOP DECORATOR

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OSCILLATING TOOLS

With the right attachments this workshop wonder can replace half your toolbox

CORDLESS



ELECTRIC



AN ALL ROUNDER

'Oscillating tools are relatively new but have already become incredibly popular. They offer the versatility and smart design you'd expect from a 21st century tool,' says *Handyman* technical subeditor Gun Arvidssen.

Oscillating tools, also called multi-tools, are a one-stop DIY shop. They're useful for an incredible variety of tasks including flush cutting, scraping and sanding.

Here's how to make the most of this tool for specific applications and what to look for when buying one.

*HOW IT WORKS

An oscillating tool works by moving the blade from side to side in a small arc at very high speed. The blade only moves about 3°, at a rate equivalent to about 20,000 rpm. It is compatible with a wide range of attachments, from flush-cut saw blades to sanding pads to scrapers. ➤



OSCILLATING ACTION

8 WAYS TO USE OSCILLATING TOOLS

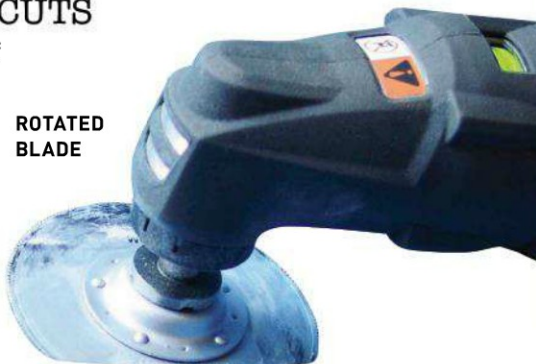
* MAKE PLUNGE CUTS

One of the handiest applications of an oscillating tool is its ability to make plunge cuts in materials ranging from plasterboard to plywood and weatherboard.

It's ideal for cutting away a damaged section of a wall as well as making cutouts for switch plates or multimedia cables.

TIP Rotate the blade to cut neat, perpendicular corners.

ROTATED
BLADE



* UNDERCUT A DOORJAMB

When installing a new laminate floor, or tiling over an existing surface, it is often necessary to trim the base of the doorjamb.

Instead of using a handsaw, make the cuts using an oscillating tool with a segment blade.

Position an offcut of flooring under the blade to use as a guide that will instantly align the blade at the precise height required.



SEGMENT BLADES



* REMOVE GROUT WITH EASE

Fitted with a carbide grit segment blade, an oscillating tool is great for chewing through old grout.

It's faster than using a handheld grout saw and it won't damage tiles or whip up a dust storm.

TIP It's best to use a corded tool for this job as removing grout can be quite time consuming.



CARBIDE BLADE

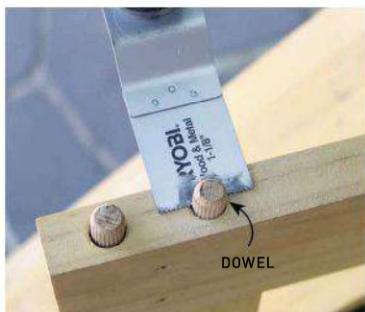
SLICE THROUGH FASTENERS

When replacing weatherboards or wall trim, you may be faced with screws that have seized or corroded, or nails that split the timber when you try to pry it off.

The simple solution is to lever the board just enough to slip the blade of an oscillating tool in, then use a timber and metal blade to cut through the stubborn fasteners.

TIP Protect the adjacent surface with an offcut of sheet metal.





*GIVE YOUR CHISELS A BREAK

Making flush cuts in small pieces of timber, such as when trimming dowels or cutting packers around a new doorjamb, has traditionally been a job for a sharp chisel.

An oscillating tool with a flush cut blade can do the job with equal precision but without the shock of a hammer blow, which can jar a key component out of alignment.



ACCESS AWKWARD AREAS



One of the great things about oscillating tools is that they have a very compact working envelope. In other words, the cutting or grinding is highly localised, and situated at the very front of the tool.

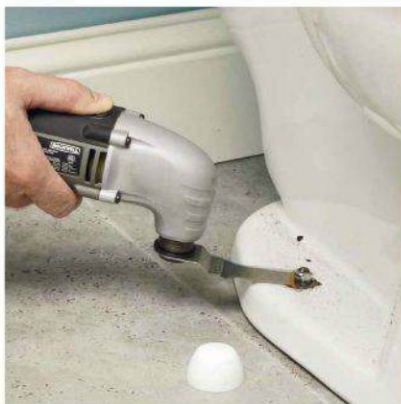
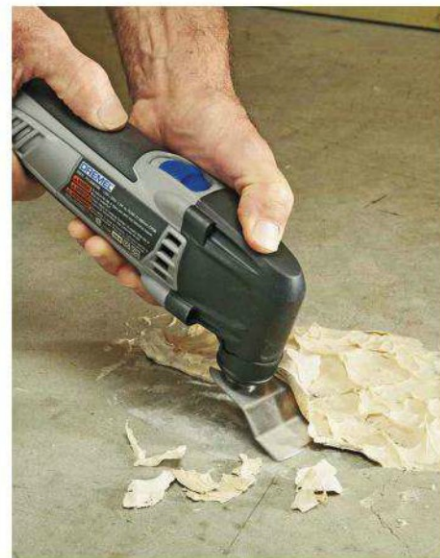
Unlike circular saws, reciprocating saws or jigsaws, which all need quite a lot of clearance around the actual cutting edge of the blade, oscillating tools can be used unimpeded in a tight spot.



*SCRAPE AWAY DRIED-ON GUNK

Another invaluable use for this tool is to mount a scraper attachment and scrape away dried adhesive, peel up vinyl tiles or strip old silicone.

With a chisel accessory, it can even chip off small splashes of concrete after a masonry job.



*BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING

Oscillating tools bridge the gap between the functions of other tools. They can save the day when you least expect it, especially if you're armed with a good range of accessories.

Instead of trying to remove badly corroded nuts with a shifter or vice grips, you can just cut straight through the bolts.

An oscillating tool can also slice through adhesive with minimal damage to the joining surfaces. ➤



ACCESSORY KIT

OSCILLATING TOOL BUYING GUIDE

Multi-tools are all similar in shape but vary in balance and how they are held. Comfort can be a major factor due to the vibration associated with using this tool, so ask to try one out with the power cord or battery connected before buying.

ELECTRIC

Choose a corded oscillating tool if you plan to regularly use it for time-consuming jobs such as grout removal, or if you want to avoid the hassle of recharging the battery after use. The same attachments can be used with both power options, often across brands, as most are mounted using the popular Bosch OIS (Oscillating Interface System) format.

OCCASIONAL USE



Six-stage speed control and ergonomic design. Comes with an accessory adaptor, six sanding sheets, sanding pad and two blades.

Ryobi 200W Multi-Tool, \$99.
ryobi.com.au

REGULAR USE



Robust design with dust-extraction port and electronic speed control. Comes with plunge and segment blade, plus sanding attachment.

Bosch 180W Multifunction Tool, \$99.
bosch-do-it.com.au

HEAVY USE



With a powerful 250W motor and Quick-Fit system for fast accessory changes, this tool is exceptional value for money.

Dremel 250W Multi-Max, \$79.
dremel.com.au

CORDLESS

Oscillating tools tend to be used intermittently and are not kept switched on for long periods. As it is the speed of the oscillation that does the work, not the amount of force applied, the battery isn't likely to run out halfway through a job or become overworked. The biggest advantage of a cordless model is manoeuvrability in confined spaces.

OCCASIONAL USE



Lightweight and boasting a soft-grip handle, a scraper is included along with the usual accessories. Price includes battery, so it's good value.

Ozito 10.8V Multi Function Tool, \$89 including battery. ozito.com.au

REGULAR USE



Reliable all-rounder with LED work light, variable speed and magnetic tool tray. Compatible with ONE+ batteries and comes with a range of accessories.

Ryobi 18V One+ Multitool, \$79 plus battery.

HEAVY USE



Packed with features including an LED job light, soft-start function and variable speed, it's compatible with a 3.0Ah battery for extended use.

Makita 18V Mobile Multi Tool, \$179 plus battery. makita.com.au



Profile Series

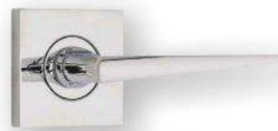
Style, Design & Function



Architects and decorators are always looking for ways to improve the style and the appearance of homes. **The Lane Security Profile Series** offers modern, contemporary designs for the budget conscious renovator.



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Calibre square



Tuija



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Indigo square



Pius

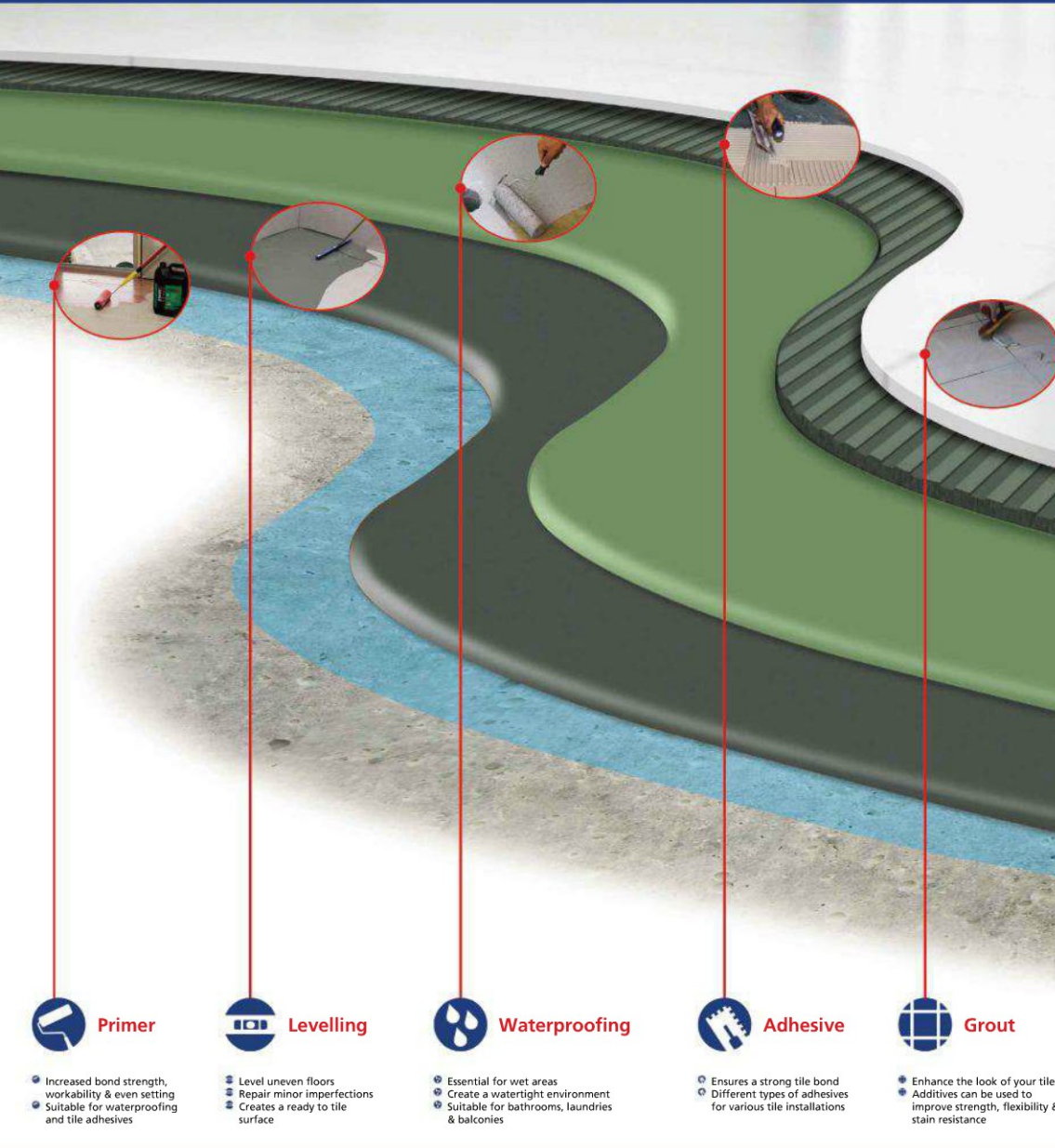
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Reliable System Approach

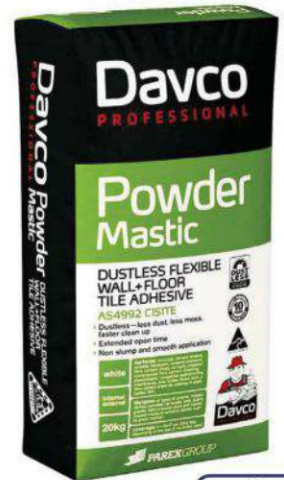
All ParexGroup primers, technical mortars, waterproofing membranes and tiling products have been engineered and tested for compatibility. This gives you confidence in the strength, reliability and durability of the complete installation.

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LANKO
TECHNICAL MORTARS



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JIGSAWS

Versatility and ease of use make this the most popular power tool after a drill for DIY



CORDLESS

CUT ANYTHING

A jigsaw makes straight and bevelled cuts, curves and intricate shapes.

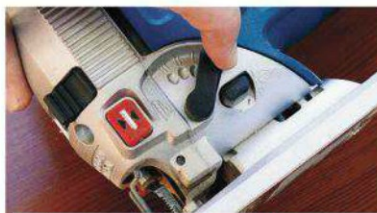
The position of the blade and the plane of its motion make it a relatively safe tool to use, even when operated with one hand.

There are blades for use on timber, stainless steel, fibre cement and even ceramic, with some able to cut material up to 100mm thick.



1. VARIABLE SPEED

Adjust the speed control to suit the material and feed rate of the cut. Use a slow speed for dense materials such as hardwood and metal. Use a faster speed on softwood or sheet material.



2. PENDULUM ACTION

This makes the blade swing forwards and back as it moves up and down. Use a low setting for thin material and the neatest cut, increasing for thick, soft timber or when cutting along the grain.



3. TRIGGER LOCK

To reduce hand fatigue, most jigsaws have a trigger lock that keeps the tool switched on without maintaining pressure on the trigger. It's an especially useful feature when operating a jigsaw one-handed. ➤



*GENERAL CUTTING

1. CLAMP THE WORKPIECE

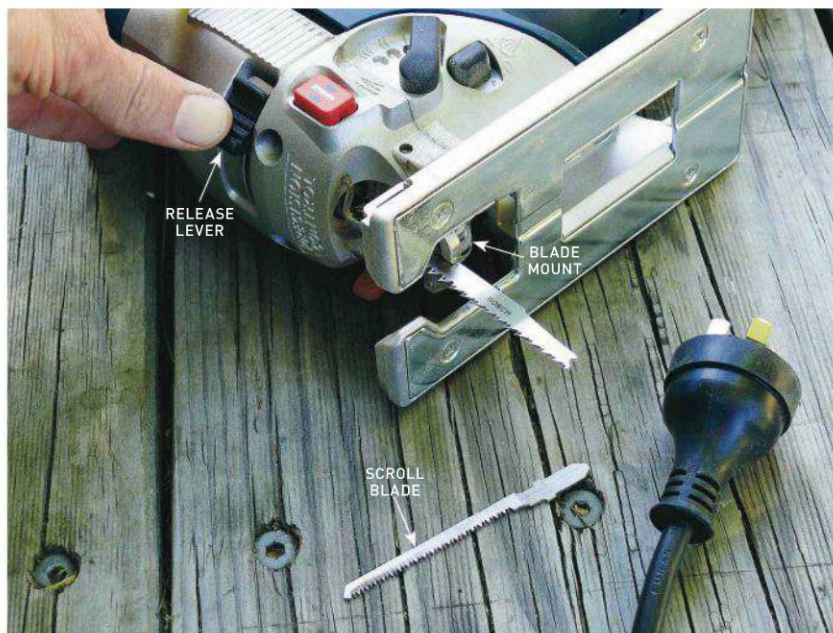
Position the clamps so they won't interfere with the course of the saw and allow clearance for the blade underneath the material being cut.

2. START THE CUT

With the front of the shoe firmly on the workpiece, align the blade with the waste side of the cut line, select the speed and start the saw. **TIP** Don't force the jigsaw, just steer it and let the blade do the work.

3. MAKE EXTRA CUTS

Don't try to turn a 90° corner, cut into it from different directions. When making long cuts, periodically saw through the waste area to the cut line for better access.

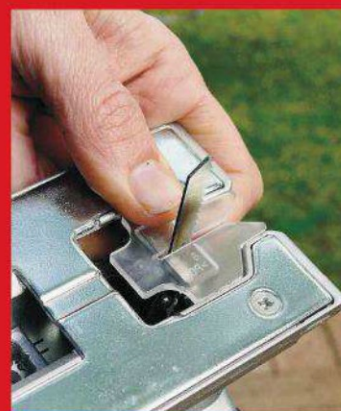


*CHANGING BLADES

To change the blade, disconnect the power and wait for the blade to cool if you have just been using the jigsaw.

Depending on the design of your tool, use an Allen key, operate the lever or turn the quick-change mount to release the blade.

Remove the old blade then fit the new one and tighten the mount.

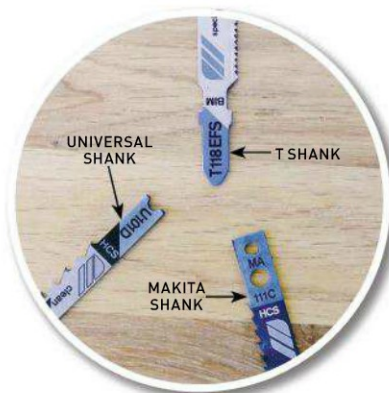


*CHOOSING A BLADE



CONSIDER THE MATERIAL and the shapes you are cutting when choosing a blade, using a fine-toothed one for smooth cuts in thin timber and a long, open-toothed blade for thick material.

Use a laminate blade for clean cuts through laminated material and a scroll blade for tight curves.



MATCH THE SHANK to the blade mount on your jigsaw. Most newer models take the T or bayonet shank, but if you are unsure of which yours is, simply take the old blade with you when buying a new one.

TIPS FOR

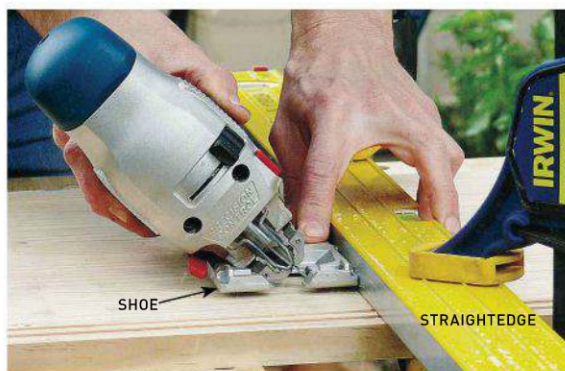
CLEAN CUTS

Jigsaws cut on the up stroke. Follow these guidelines to prevent timber fibres being torn up around the edge of the cut.

- **POSITION** the workpiece face down and cut from the back.
- **CLAMP** a sacrificial layer of thin board over the material.
- **ATTACH** the small, clear plastic plate that fits around the blade.
- **USE** a clean-cut blade with teeth shaped to minimise breakout.

MAKING SPECIAL CUTS

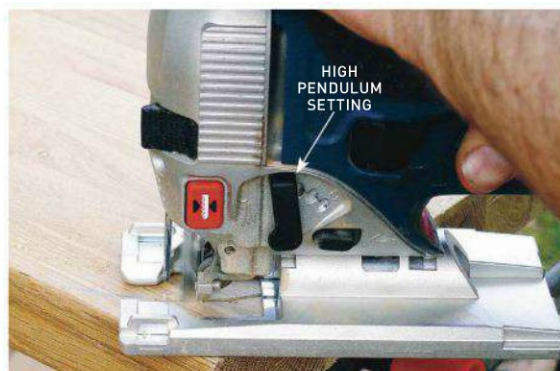
Like circular saws, jigsaws can be used for bevel and plunge cuts, and can deal with unusually thick as well as thin material. Although the depth of cut can't be adjusted, jigsaws are much more manoeuvrable than circular saws.



CUT BEVELS

Disconnect the power and tilt the shoe to the required angle, up to 45°. Most jigsaws need a screw to be loosened to free the swinging shoe, although some models have a quick-release lever instead.

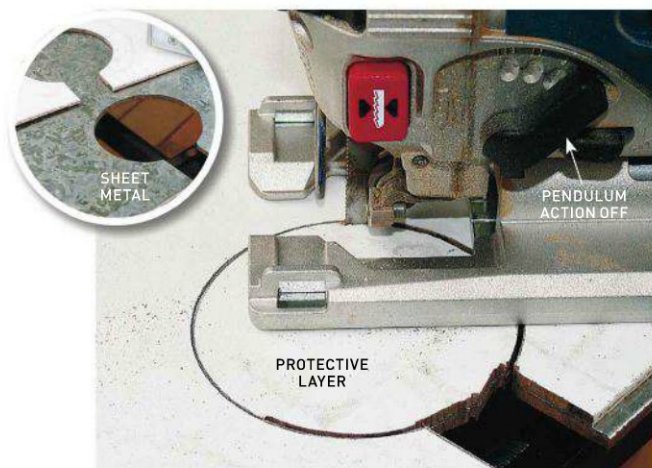
Clamp a straightedge to the work surface to keep the saw straight. Don't push too hard but keep downward pressure on the shoe.



NEGOTIATE THICK MATERIAL

Jigsaws work best on hardwood up to 20mm thick and softwood up to 35mm. The blade tends to bend in thicker material, resulting in a bevelled edge instead of a square cut.

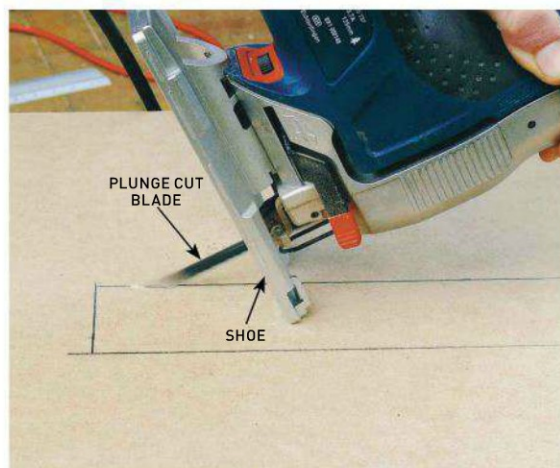
For thick material, use a fresh, sharp blade. Set the pendulum action to maximum and make the cut in short runs, backing up frequently to ease the pressure on the blade.



PROTECT THIN SHEETS

Sandwich thin sheet material such as metal, laminate or plastic between sheets of plywood or MDF about 6mm thick, then cut through all the layers.

Position the layered sheets on a cutting surface with a dedicated channel or keyhole for the blade to pass through while the material is resting on either side.



MAKE PLUNGE CUTS

It's best to drill a starter hole but if you can't, fit a blade suitable for plunge cutting and lean the jigsaw forward, pivoting the front edge of the shoe until the blade is clear of the work surface even at full extension.

Hold the jigsaw firmly, bring it up to full speed then pivot down slowly until the blade penetrates the material. ➤

JIGSAW BUYING GUIDE

The most important thing to consider when buying a jigsaw is what you will use it for the most. Choose a tool with the feature set that is best matched to your DIY tendencies, which may mean just going for a good general-purpose jigsaw.

ELECTRIC

With all the features available in jigsaws, think about what will be most useful for the typical projects you undertake. Whether your priority is value for money, good dust extraction, a range of pendulum settings or the option to change blades quickly and without tools, remember that options which are useful to others may not be best for your own needs.

OCCASIONAL USE



With variable speed, a trigger lock and soft-grip handle, this entry-level model has a decent 400 watts of power at an affordable price.

Ozito 400W Jigsaw, \$35.
ozito.com.au

REGULAR USE



Features pendulum action, speed control, dust extraction port and a LiveTool light that improves safety by showing when the unit is plugged in.

Ryobi 600W Jigsaw, \$75.
ryobi.com.au

HEAVY USE



This one has the lot, with 80mm cutting depth, four-stage pendulum action, a dust extraction port and quick-change blade mount.

Bosch 530W Jigsaw, \$99.
bosch-do-it.com.au

CORDLESS

Jigsaws are versatile and handy, often used to make cuts that might otherwise be done with a handsaw, for example out in the garden or trimming just one or two pieces of timber. A cordless unit is perfect for these types of applications, as you can take it anywhere and not have to worry about finding a nearby powerpoint or snagging the extension cord.

OCCASIONAL USE



A laser-guided tool with four-stage orbital cutting action. Onboard blade storage and tool-free blade change to switch between materials easily.

Ryobi ONE+ 18V Cordless Jigsaw, \$89 plus battery.

REGULAR USE



Counterbalanced for low vibration, this jigsaw features storage for up to six blades, tool-free blade change and CutControl for staying on the cut line.

Bosch 18V Cordless Jigsaw, \$99 plus battery.

HEAVY USE



Tool-free blade change, four-pole motor, and integrated dust blower to keep the cut line visible. Electronic brake ensures safer operation.

Makita 18V Cordless Jigsaw, \$219 plus battery. makita.com.au

Limitless bathroom creativity begins with **SANIFLO**

Now you can locate your designer bathroom wherever you want it.



Today's bathrooms are not what they used to be. In many homes, they're a statement of luxury and comfort. Best of all, superbly designed bathrooms are springing up in places you may not expect them – adjoining alfresco dining areas, in granny flats and guests suits – even in garage or 'man caves'.

Sadly, plumbing challenges often get in the way of builders or renovators achieving their dream design outcome.

You may have been told that your dream bathroom is too far from the plumbing mains. Perhaps you've planned a bathroom that's below the level of the mains. Or maybe the task of achieving a traditional plumbing outcome is too destructive, complex or expensive.

Now you're wondering how you can

ever achieve the outcome you really want – without spending the kids' inheritance.

ENTER SANIFLO

Saniflo has a sophisticated, state-of-the-art plumbing solution that allows you to situate your brand new bathroom in locations too hard or expensive to plumb using traditional techniques.

Saniflo's quiet, state-of-the-art, concealable macerator pump system can transport waste water up to 5 metres vertically or up to 100 metres horizontally – easily reaching your nearest plumbing mains. And because it enables the use of small diameter uPVC waste pipes (just 20mm in diameter), it minimises the amount of disruption to existing structures.

It brings your dream of that extra en-suite, alfresco, swimming pool or guest bathroom into design and cost reality. Simply put, the location of your bathroom is now limited only by your imagination.

Saniflo macerator pumps have been used extensively throughout Europe since 1958. They're superbly reliable, quiet and can be easily concealed within wall cavities or in cabinets.

Saniflo products come with a 2-year warranty and can operate with water temperatures of up to 40 degrees.

Best of all, the time and money you save can be invested in buying the luxury bathroom fittings you've always dreamed of. So no matter where you plan to put your bathroom, remember, nothing is impossible with **Saniflo**.

For more information call **1300 554 779**
or visit **saniflo.com.au**

SANIFLO



RENOVATE
AND SAVE

GREEN *living*

One couple downsizes their empty nest by transforming a dilapidated home into an eco-friendly haven



Light and airy, the house has an open-tread metal staircase that leads up to a sleeping loft and down to another bedroom.

Five years ago, with retirement approaching and both their adult children set to fly the coop, Kevin and Lucille Davie found themselves living in a home that was too big for their needs and too time-consuming to maintain.

Faced with a variety of options, including moving to a city apartment or townhouse, the couple decided to remain in the suburbs but in a more modest house on a much smaller block.

They were looking for a property in good condition but were eventually drawn to what Kevin describes as 'half a house', attracted by the idea of turning it into the kind of energy-efficient home they had long dreamed of. ➤

THE TRANSFORMATION

Kevin and Lucille transformed their rundown find into a very different three-bedroom home. The top floor has a loft-like master bedroom, with balconies on two sides.

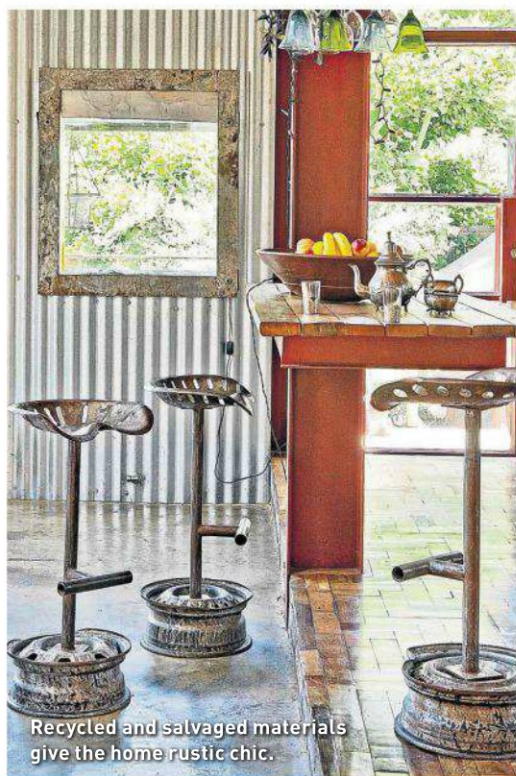
Beneath the ground-floor living area is a sizeable second bedroom looking onto the garden, while a small separate cottage provides extra accommodation. All the bedrooms have ensuite bathrooms.

There are two striking features about the house. The first is that it succeeds in providing spacious living on a relatively compact footprint, leaving room for a small garden, a vegie patch and plenty of parking.

The second is that it was done with a keen sense of sustainability, from its construction through to its finishes.

'This house is not trying to save the environment,' Kevin says.

'We make sure we optimise our energy requirements and use resources as efficiently as possible, but we also want a nice place to live in.'



Recycled and salvaged materials give the home rustic chic.



Reclaimed timber was used for the floors in the open-plan kitchen and living room.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Kevin and Lucille made some simple environmental savings during the build. They used as much of the material that had been left on site as possible, incorporating existing rubble into the fill and recycling timber.

The couple chose gas for hot water and cooking and a wood stove for heating, and used interior finishes with thermal and aesthetic value such as concrete floors and stone-clad walls.

'There's this idea that a timber house is environmentally friendly but energy-efficient homes also have to have good thermal mass,' Kevin says.

Thermal mass is a measure of a material's ability to absorb, store and later release heat.

THINKING AHEAD

The structures they have put in place offer Kevin and Lucille the flexibility to adapt and experiment in the future.

They installed pipes for underfloor heating during construction but haven't managed to make the system efficient yet, and are considering the future addition of solar hot water to augment the gas system.

The couple has plans to eventually add solar panels for power generation, but are holding off for now. The cost of the installation needs to be weighed against the cost of their current electricity bill, according to Kevin.

'An energy-efficient house also has to make economic sense,' he says. ➤

Making a difference

Small changes go a long way when saving money, energy and water.

1 SWAP your showerhead for a low-flow unit, choosing one that aerates the flow so you save water without the shower feeling different.

2 PLAN the lighting around your needs, don't just go for low-wattage options. 'Where you need them, install big lights but don't just flood a place with light,' says Kevin.

3 RECYCLE materials, keeping your eyes open for interesting pieces.

Lucille found ceiling boards made locally from compressed waste.

4 DECLUTTER before you move.

'The bigger the house, the more you accumulate,' says Lucille. When the couple moved out of their large family home, Kevin says they got rid of half their stuff. 'It was the most liberating thing.'



The master bedroom overlooks the main floor and has two balconies.

THE SIMPLE LIFE

Even though the home has three ensuite bathrooms and a kitchen it still manages to save water in two significant ways.

There's a greywater system that harvests water for the garden from the showers and a rainwater tank.

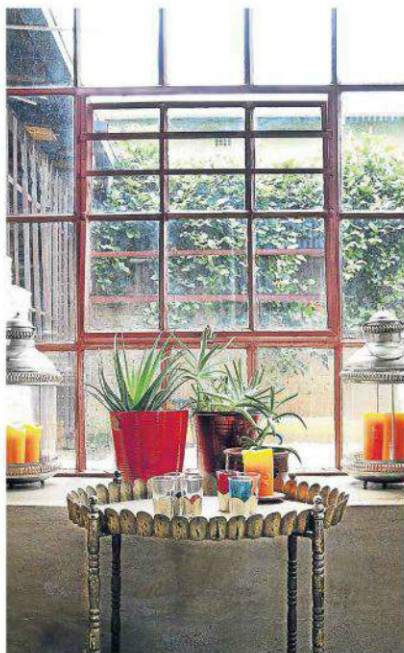
The showers themselves, along with other tapware, are fitted with low-flow water-saving devices.

Aside from the savings on power and water bills, the entire property is also designed to be low maintenance, reducing time spent working in the yard or cleaning the house.

Lucille and Kevin separate kitchen waste for compost, recycle heavily and throw very little away.

'Our bin goes out just once a month,' Lucille says.

She adds, 'It's a good way to live. The clean living space, small garden and open-sky views allow us to concentrate on the real stuff.'



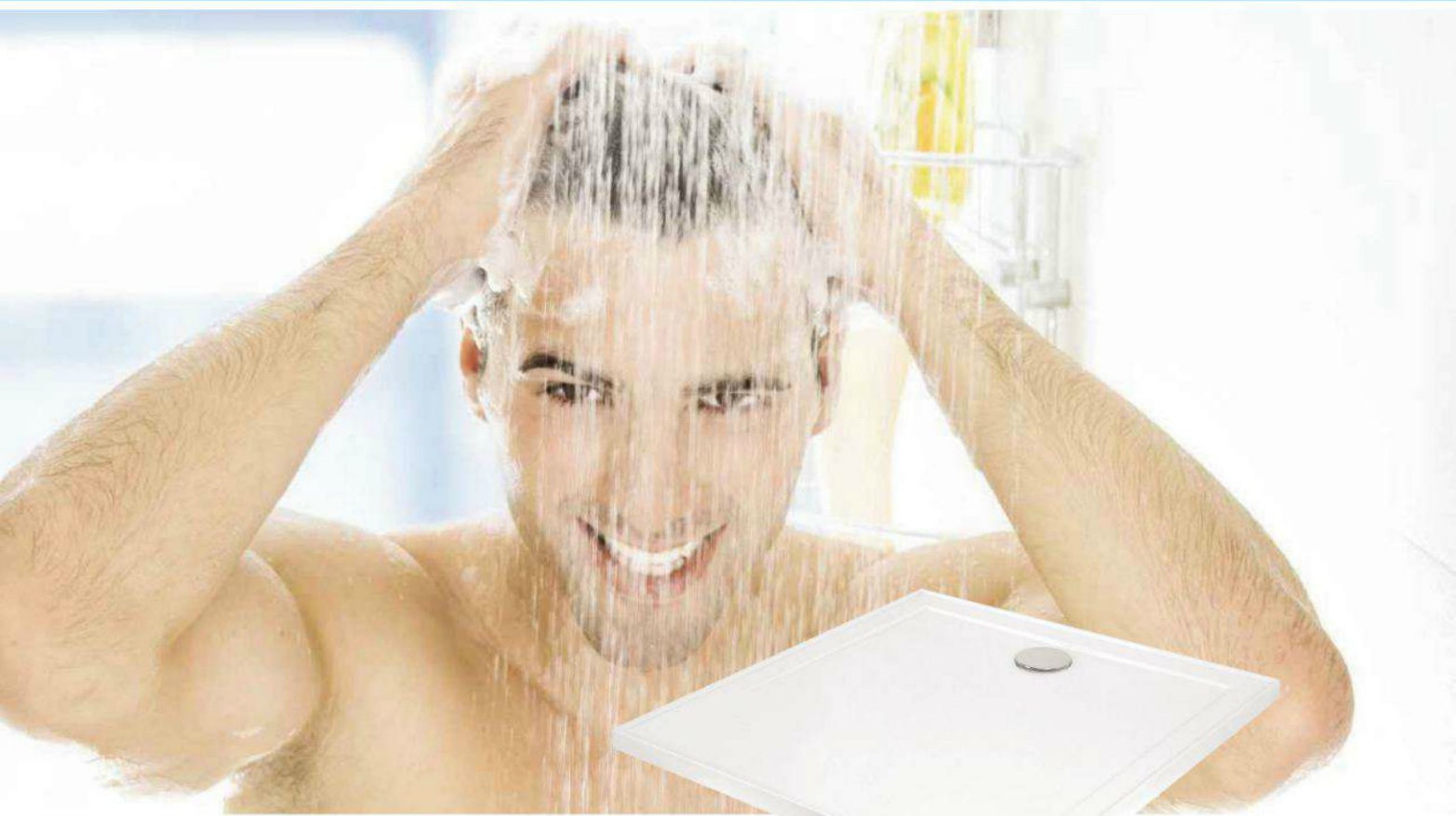
A wall of windows lets in lots of light and opens the home to leafy views.

+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for a guide to Buying Recycled Building Materials.



Every bedroom has an ensuite, but a greywater system means that luxury goes hand in hand with sustainability.



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    marbletrend.com.au



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BATHROOMS

Marbletrend Ultra Shower Bases are available at major plumbing, bathroom and hardware specialists.

INSTALL A FLEXIBLE SKYLIGHT

Cut a hole in a metal roof and add a light shaft to flood a windowless bathroom with sunshine

PROJECT **FRANK GARDNER**

DIY > \$165

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$415

SKILL > 1 2 3 4 5

TIME > 5 HOURS

The bathroom is not normally the first place we think of to install huge windows, as it is a space requiring privacy not views.

Most bathrooms have small windows, usually positioned up high, and as a result the natural light is often quite lacking.

And in some homes the bathroom is located in the centre of the layout plan, making it windowless.

Installing a flexible shaft skylight is the easiest way to give a bathroom an illumination upgrade.

Unlike a traditional roof skylight, a shaft is flexible and reflective, so can be fitted to funnel light anywhere, even in a two-storey building.

CHOOSE A KIT

Skylight kits feature a roof dome, flexible shaft and ceiling diffuser. They come in a variety of sizes with round or square shafts and domes.

We bought a round Acol Skylight Kit, from Bunnings, but the supplied shaft wasn't long enough to reach from the flat Colorbond roof to the ceiling of the ground floor bathroom.

To solve the problem we bought a 300mm diameter mylar/polyester bonded light shaft measuring three metres long, costing \$51.

This type of 300mm light shaft is ideal for small bathrooms, toilets and also hallways, but is generally recommended for a maximum length of only two metres.

At the stretch required of the shaft for this home, a 400mm diameter skylight would have been preferable, but wouldn't fit through the upstairs cabinetry it needed to pass through.

To install the skylight, we cut a hole in the corrugated metal roof for the dome using a jigsaw.

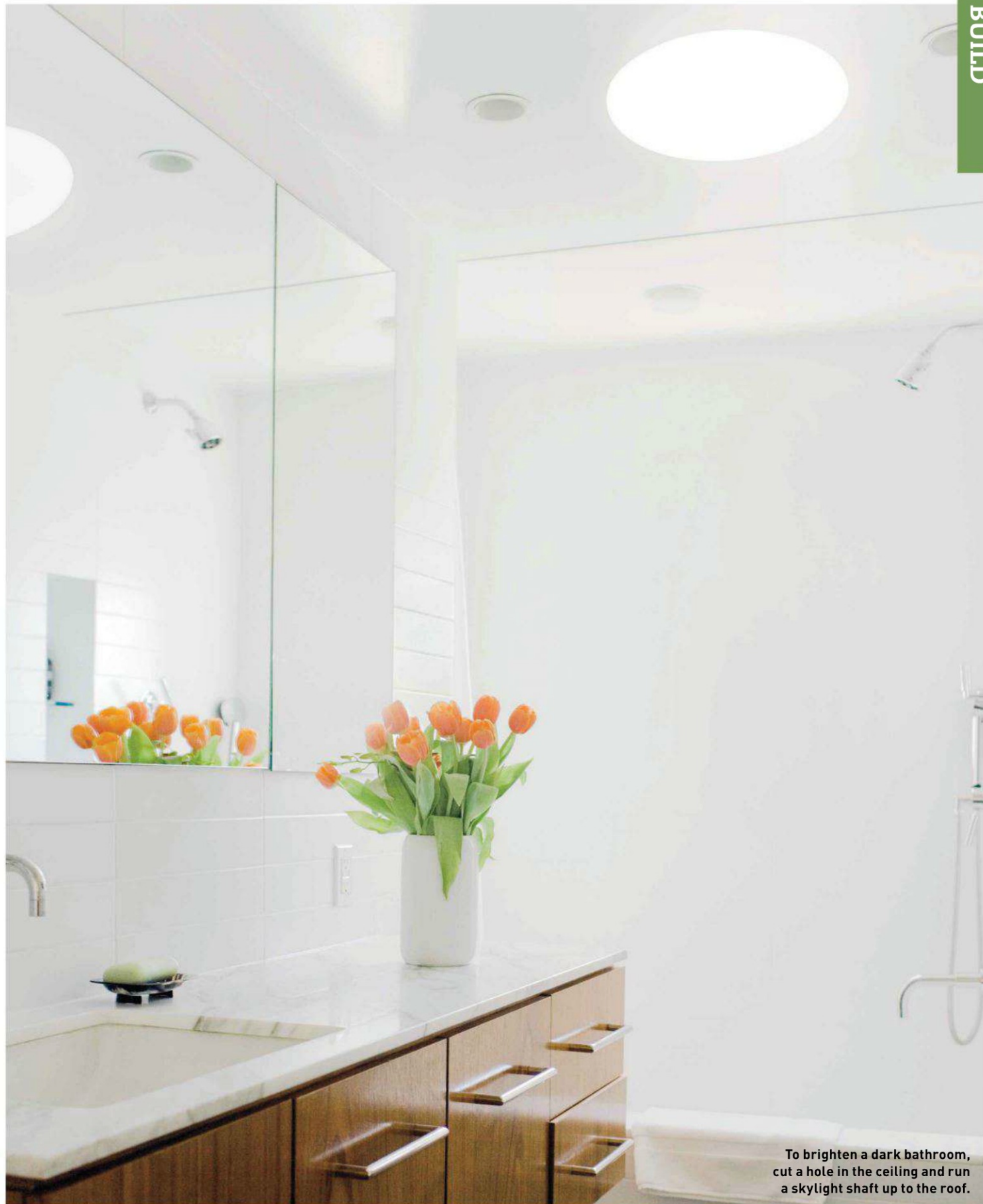
Another hole was made in the bathroom ceiling for the diffuser, and as the shaft extended through an upper storey, an additional hole was cut through the upstairs flooring.

TIP If possible install the dome in a north-facing aspect on the roof for maximum light benefit. >



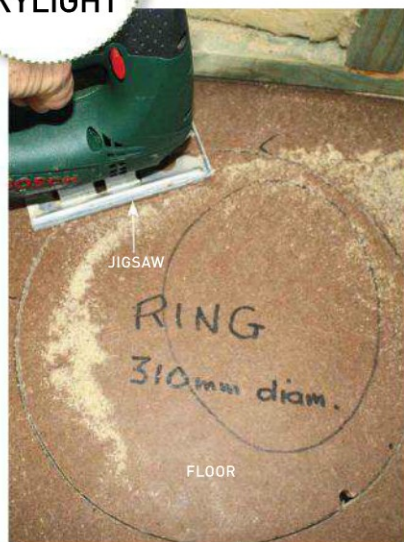
Acol 300mm Ezy-Lite Round Skylight Kit, \$99. acolskylights.com.au

PICTURE (RIGHT) THINKSTOCK



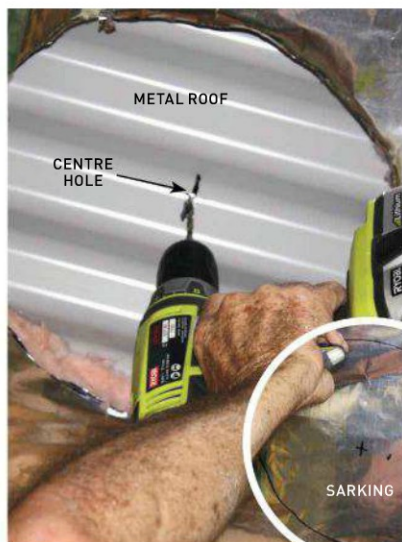
To brighten a dark bathroom, cut a hole in the ceiling and run a skylight shaft up to the roof.

INSTALL THE SKYLIGHT



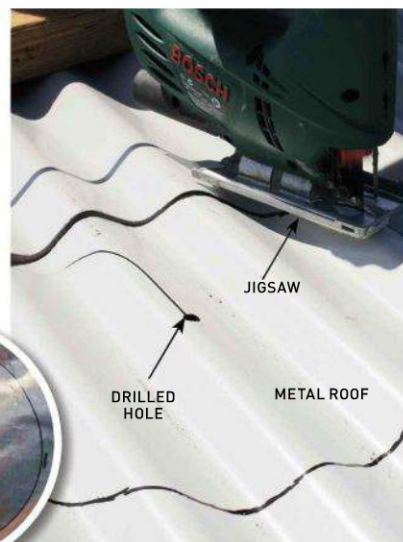
1 Cut the floor hole

Locate the floor joists then cut a 310mm diameter circle template from cardboard and use it to scribe a circle on the floor between the joists. Drill a 10mm starter hole then cut the circle using a jigsaw with the pendulum action set to high.



2 Mark the roof hole

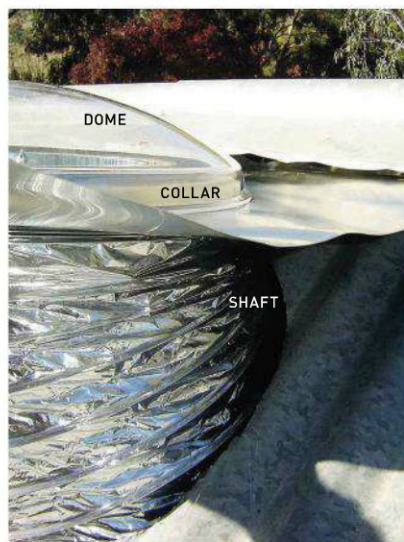
Drop a plumb bob from the roof sarking to the centre of the floor cutout, ensuring the roof hole is between battens. Use the template to scribe a circle, cut away the sarking with a utility knife and drill a 5mm hole through the roof centrepoint.



3 Cut the roof hole

Locate the drilled hole on the roof, using the template to scribe a circle. Drill a 10mm starter hole and cut out using a jigsaw with a metal cutting blade and the pendulum action off.

TIP You can also use aviation shears to cut a hole in metal sheet roofing.



4 Attach the shaft

Stretch the shaft to fit over the base collar of the dome and secure together, overlapping both the collar and the shaft with the supplied aluminium tape. Position the shaft through the roof hole and let it drop to the floor carefully.



5 Secure the dome

Slot the dome through the roof hole and square up the aluminium tray. Use a soft-faced hammer to shape the tray, matching the roof profile. Secure the dome by sealing the edges with roof and gutter silicone, adding roofing screws if needed.



6 Install the diffuser

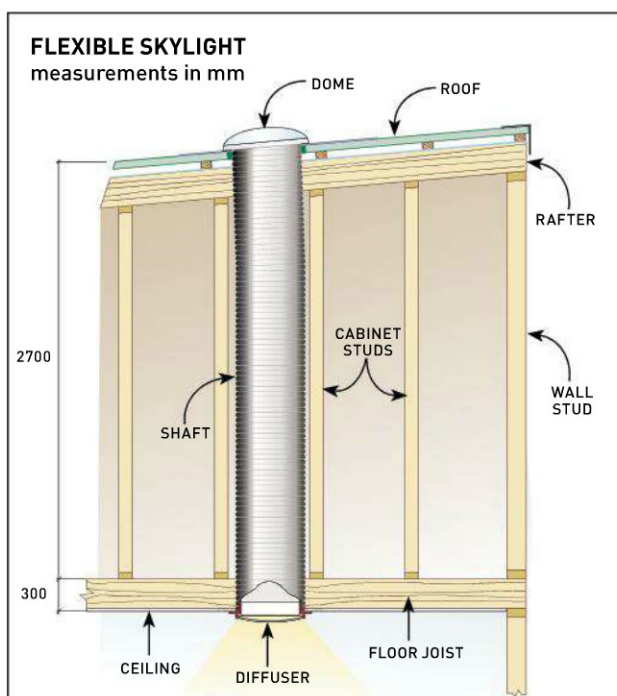
Mark the ceiling hole and cut with a plasterboard saw then pull the shaft down, cutting any excess. Overlap the shaft and ceiling ring, securing with aluminium tape. Slot the diffuser into the ceiling ring, push it into the hole and secure with the supplied screws.



Locating the holes

Installing a skylight in a single-storey home is a simple matter of running the supplied two-metre shaft from a standard kit directly through the roof cavity to the ceiling below in your desired location.

For a two-storey home an additional shaft has to be purchased and must be concealed as it passes through the upper storey, affecting the positioning of the skylight. The shaft is flexible so you don't have to maintain a direct line to achieve a good result.



+ Handyman.net.au

Download the tools, materials and costs to install a flexible skylight.

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**BUDGET
BUSTERS**

Small changes go a long way to save money, so turn down the heat in winter by just one degree to reduce the bill by up to 10%.

WINTER *savers*

Give your home a smarter future and stretch your dollar further with these simple eco ideas and updates

WORDS **SANDRA BRIDEKIRK**

As energy prices bite and the cost of living continues to rise, it's more important than ever to make changes to the ways we consume resources.

More sustainable living leads to real reductions in household costs as well as benefits for the environment, for now and the future. There are many ways to save energy and water

around the home, all of which contribute to reducing bills.

Environmentalism, TV presenter and author of *Greenology 2020* (MUP, \$37), Tanya Ha believes we can all play a role in saving the planet.

Tanya shares her simple strategies for greener living with *Handyman* to help you save money and make your home more energy efficient. ➤



Tanya's guide for a greener home

1 BANISH THE SECOND FRIDGE or at least turn it off between parties. Your beer fridge could be adding \$180 or more per year to your power bill.

2 THINK AHEAD TO SUMMER and work to shade the north and west of your house. It's far easier and cheaper to prevent heat gain than to try and cool an already hot house.

Consider shadesails that can be removed in colder seasons, outdoor blinds, awnings and deciduous shade trees or vine-covered pergolas.

3 CHOOSE EFFICIENT PRODUCTS when replacing appliances. Consider running costs and the purchase price, getting the best model for you under the Energy Rating Label program.

Visit the E3 website and click on Compare Products to use the running cost calculator (energyrating.gov.au).

4 DRY NATURALLY when possible. Hairdryers cost about 40¢ per hour and clothes dryers 66¢ per hour to run, based on an energy tariff of 28¢ per kilowatt hour.

5 CUT STANDBY POWER by turning off appliances at the wall.

Also pay attention to your use of rechargers, which can draw standby power when plugged in and switched on, whether charging or not.

TIP Investing in a timer switch is a good solution.



Smart idea
Low-flow
tapware uses
up to 50%
less water

Bathrooms

Along with the kitchen, the bathroom is a very expensive room to run.

It accounts for the majority of hot water use and around half of all water consumption in the home, even higher if your family tends to have baths rather than showers.

There are easy ways to make it more comfortable and efficient, without blowing the budget.

DON'T DOUBLE UP

For long-term savings, replace an old single-flush toilet, which can use up to 12 litres of water per flush.

Swap it for a dual-flush version that does the same job with as little as three litres when used on the half-flush setting.

A water-rated dual-flush toilet costs about \$250 over 10 years to run, and an old single-flush version \$760.

TIP If you can't afford to upgrade just yet, insert a water displacement device into the tank or place a water-filled plastic bottle in the cistern.

WASTE NOT

The shower is usually the biggest user of water in the home so upgrade an old showerhead to a low-flow version.

Including a timer to help family members limit shower time to three minutes can dramatically reduce water use, slashing both the water and power bills.

A modern flow-restricted shower rose uses about 50% less water and 25% less energy than a regular product, saving about 14,500 litres of water every year.

Buy a reputable brand and read reviews, and you'll notice little or no difference in water pressure between

a conventional showerhead and a modern low-flow model.

A WELS-rated basin tap set is also a good idea and make sure you fix any leaks as soon as possible.

A dripping tap could waste more than 12,000 litres of water a year, in addition to driving everyone insane, while a leaking toilet can send 16,000 wasted litres down the drain.

TIP Every time you use hot water for small tasks such as washing hands, about a litre of heated water goes cold in the pipes afterwards.

KEEP IT COSY

Think carefully about good design when installing a new bathroom and pay close attention to aspects such as ventilation and efficient heating.

'Underfloor heating, particularly for bathrooms, is relatively inexpensive



Water savers and warmers

to buy and run, and it works best as hot air rises,' says interior architect Natalie McDonald of Look Interior Design (lookinterior.com.au).

If you're working with an existing room, invest in a heated towel rail. It helps avoid the unpleasantness of damp towels in winter and warms the room more quickly than a heater.

And most rooms will benefit from an extraction fan to remove steam, with some that also provide heat.

Hot water loses heat when being pumped to appliances or showers, so either move the system closer to where hot water is used most, or get a plumber to insulate the pipes to prevent heat from escaping.

TIP Check the tank and make sure your hot water storage system is set at 60°C. If it's any higher you are wasting energy. ➤



Arlec 65W Freestanding Heated Towel Rail, \$99. arlec.com.au



Caroma Midas WELS 4 Star Link Toilet Suite, 4.5L/full, 3L/half flush, \$199. caroma.com.au



Phoenix Wall Basin Set Gloss, WELS 6 Star, \$385. phoenixtapware.com.au



Flexispray Splash Hi-Rise Shower Rose, WELS 3 Star, \$55. flexispray.com.au



Naleon Digital Shower Timer, \$7. naleon.com.au



IXL Tastic Eco Sensation 3 in 1 Bathroom Heater, \$260. ixlappliances.com.au



Windows

The right type of windows and window coverings contributes greatly to the look and livability of a home.

Windows determine the levels of natural light, quality of ventilation and the amount of artificial heating and cooling required for comfort.

'Northern orientation is the most important thing but it must incorporate lots of glazing to capture the winter sun,' says interior architect Natalie McDonald.

'And if you have really good cross-ventilation you don't need air-conditioning in summer,' says Natalie, who often recommends louvre windows for maximum airflow.

'The same goes with shading. If you have good overhang on your eaves or shading devices over the windows or close to the home, it helps prevent heat from entering.

'Most of the heat loss or gain is through the windows, including skylights,' adds Natalie.

Insulation is another way to help regulate the temperature of the home, and is often undervalued as a resource.

'In Australia, one of the main building features should be good insulation but we don't tend to build homes that are well insulated and we don't often do double glazing, although we should,' she says.

Block the heat

**Windoware Charm
210 x 210cm Blockout
Roman Blind, \$139.**



**Windoware 1.2 x 2.1m
Retractable Blind, \$70.
windoware.com.au**



**Polar Eco-View Windows
600mm Double Glazed, \$153.
polarwindows.com.au**



Draughts

Currents of cold air entering a room in winter can lower the comfort level, so invest in door snakes and draught seals for external doors.

Apply new silicone caulking around windows and replace any worn or flattened weather stripping.

If you have a very large living room or an open-plan area that is only partially used in the colder months, rig up a curtain that can be closed to effectively seal off part of the area and keep the warmth where it's needed.

If you are using artificial heating or cooling, close doors to limit energy expenditure and never leave it on when you are out.

In winter it's important to prevent heat escaping. Close curtains and blinds and choose heavier fabrics backed with a sunblock material that shades as well as insulates windows.

If you have an unused but still open chimney, seal it by installing a damper to stop cold air entering the home and displacing warm air.

In summer, open curtains and windows in the early morning and

evening to let in light and cooler air but keep them closed during the hottest part of the day.

TIP To find the draughty spots in your home, hold up a lighted candle around windows and doors. ➤

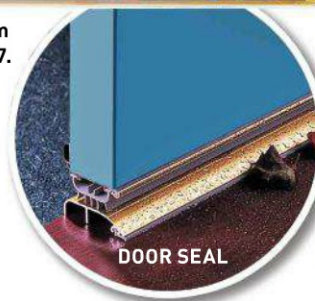
Seal the gaps



Raven 915mm Storm Proof Door Seal, \$27.
raven.com.au



Econo-seal Tape, \$3, from Moroday.
moroday.com.au





Electricity

When it comes to using and saving energy, it pays to be mindful each time that you flick a switch.

The obvious rules should apply, like switching off lights when leaving a room, running the dishwasher only when it's full and washing clothes in cold water, but other small changes can make big savings.

LIGHTING is one area where it's easy to save hundreds over the long term.

Start by maximising natural light, installing a skylight in a dim room or moving your desk closer to a window.

Replace energy-hungry globes with LEDs or CFLs, which cost more to buy but are far cheaper to run.

If replacing a room full of halogen downlights is too costly, use standard lamps fitted with CFLs instead.

APPLIANCES should be turned off at the wall and avoid leaving devices

charging all night to save up to \$250 a year in wasted energy costs.

To run major appliances, invest in an energy-saving powerboard or install an energy-saving socket, which shuts off power after a period

of time to control the use of chargers or appliances such as heaters.

HOUSEWORK can reduce bills. Clean air-conditioning filters so the unit runs more efficiently and regularly dust lights to burn brighter for longer.

Power down



**Crompton 15W
Reflector Globe, \$10.**
crompton.com.au

**HPM Leading Edge
Dimmer, \$51.**
hpm.com.au



**Kambrook Remote Control
Powerpoint Indoor Kit, \$30.**
kambrook.com.au



Fire safety

Staying safe in the home is something most of us take for granted but it's worth thinking beyond insurance and considering just what you can do to make the house as safe as possible.

Keeping everything in good repair is crucial but so is ensuring you have safety knowledge and an escape plan.

Every family member should know what to do in an emergency, so keep a list of numbers on the fridge and tape a basic CPR chart on the inside of an easily accessible cupboard door.

Almost half of all home fires begin in the kitchen and 43% of fatalities occur in winter.

Reduce your risks by conducting an online Home Fire Safety Audit (homefiresafetyaudit.com.au).

SMOKE ALARMS are mandatory and one of the best investments you may ever make. Studies have shown

a reduction in house fire deaths of more than 50% in homes where working smoke alarms are installed.

The number of smoke alarms required depends on the size of the home, but in general there must be

at least one on each storey and close to every bedroom.

TIP To reduce the likelihood of false alarms, avoid locating smoke alarms too close to kitchens or bathrooms, where steam can set them off. ➤

Protect the family



Family First Smoke Alarm With Escape Light, \$25.
family-first.com.au



Fire SENTRY 1M Fire Blanket, \$10,
from Bunnings.

Fire SENTRY 1kg Dry Powder Fire Extinguisher, \$20.
bunnings.com.au





Heating

Insulation can make a home more comfortable to live in and is now mandatory for new builds. It offers greater protection from temperature extremes, meaning a reduced reliance on artificial heating and cooling.

In winter, up to 42% of heat loss occurs through the roof and ceiling, 24% through walls and 10% through floors, so correct insulation can make a big difference. In summer, energy bills can be curtailed by about 50%.

Certain types of insulation, such as acoustic batts, can also reduce noise between rooms, as well as damping irritants such as aircraft or traffic noise.

Insulation is most effective when installed during the building process, when studs and joists are exposed.

But it can also be retrofitted, particularly if parts of the structure are being uncovered during a reno.

While insulation can be fitted DIY it's worth consulting an electrician before proceeding. If certain types of insulation are not fitted correctly they can result in a house fire or even electrocution of the installer.

The efficacy of insulation is measured in R-values, where the greater the number, the higher the thermal resistance or benefit. Check with local council to determine the R-value that is best for your area.

WARM A ROOM

Heating and cooling can account for up to 50% of a home's energy use and the wrong choice can really send bills skyrocketing, so assess your needs and what you can do in your home before going shopping for a heater.

When choosing a heater consider the type of fuel that best suits your

area, the space you want to heat, how much heating you require and the environmental cost. Save money by only heating the rooms that are most used, such as the living room.

GAS can be a great option in areas that have supply but flued and

Winter warmers



Knauf Earthwool R-2.0 Insulation Batts, \$78 for a 20 pack. knaufinsulation.com.au



unflued units are expensive to buy, although they are cheaper to run than heaters fuelled by electricity.

WOOD is cheap and handy for those in rural areas so a slow-combustion fire may be the best bet, as long as the fuel is dry, well-seasoned hardwood.

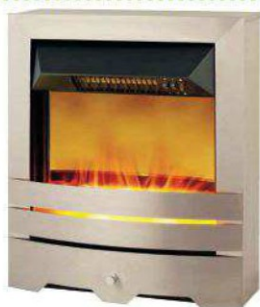
ELECTRICITY can power myriad types of heaters, and many people simply switch their reverse-cycle air-conditioner to winter mode.

Whichever option you choose, keep bills down by using it sparingly. Dress warmly in winter and resist

turning up the thermostat. Lowering the temperature by just one degree can reduce heating bills by up to 10%.

TIP Invest in ceiling fans for bedrooms and living areas. They're cheap to run and can be used to distribute warm air more evenly in winter. ➤

Kambrook 2400W Column Heater, \$89.
kambrook.com.au



Arlec 2000W Fireplace Heater, \$99. arlec.com.au



Moretti 1500W Fan Ceramic Heater, \$30, from Bunnings.



Brilliant 130cm Contempo Ceiling Fan, \$129.
brilliantlighting.com.au

Eco living

All savings help the environment by preserving precious natural resources and there are many ways that you can boost your green credentials around the home.

If your hot water system is due to be replaced, go for a solar-based one.

Depending on where you live, it can supply 50 to 90% of your hot water needs from the sun, creating significant savings since hot water accounts for 25 to 50% of annual household energy usage.

You don't run out of hot water on a grey day as remaining requirements are boosted by gas or electricity.

A new system may be eligible for Small-scale Technology Certificates (STCs), which can be traded for cash or as a discount for the purchase price.

Although many parts of Australia have suffered recently from excessive

rainfall, saving water also makes financial and environmental sense.

Garden-loving Aussies use up to 60% of their water outdoors while the average Aussie household produces about 200 litres of greywater a day.

Install a system that uses the usually wasted greywater to flush toilets or irrigate the garden.

If that's not an option, adding a tank to harvest rainwater for garden use, switching to water-wise plants and placing a cover on the pool can all lead to significant savings.

HOW SUSTAINABLE ARE YOU?

Visit the Bunnings website at bunnings.com.au and complete the Sustainability Savings Planner to create an action plan to help you make your home as efficient and eco-friendly as possible.

Efficient choices



Dux Sunpro 250L Solar Hot Water Tank and Pump, \$1898.
dux.com.au

Arlec Energy Cost Meter, \$25.
arlec.com.au



Acol 800 x 550mm Roof Window, \$785.
acolskylights.com.au



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WALLS				ACOUSTIC PARTITIONS		CEILINGS					UNDER-FLOOR	SPACE BLANKET		
R-1.5	R-2.0	R-2.5	R-2.7	11 KG	14 KG	R-3.0	R-3.5	R-4.0	R-5.0	R-6.0	R-2.1	R-1.3	R-1.8	
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

Available at
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WALL



UNDERFLOOR



CEILING

Find out more at www.knaufinsulation.com.au

What's new



FOR SLEEK LINES choose the Bellini Designer ceramic glass cooktop and touch control oven package, \$866.



TRIM AND SHAPE timber and laminate with the Ryobi 18V ONE+ Trim Router, \$69.



STACK IT with the Bottle Store wine rack insert, \$22, white matt cubes, \$39 each, and black drawer, \$40.



SMOOTH AND POLISH metal, wood and plastic with the Ozito Die Grinder, \$69.

»Storage solutions



HANG IT on a 1.2m slimline rail, \$24.98, with sturdy hook, \$8.98, and two basket hooks, \$4.98.



GET SORTED with a Cleaning Station with paper towel holder, \$19.98.



WALL MOUNT a Storease 20 x 30cm basket with fixed hooks, \$24.98.



STORE PLASTIC BOXES in a Storease wall mount, \$24.98.

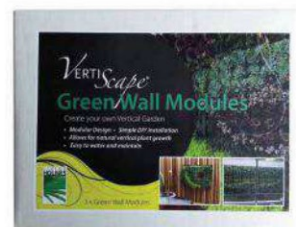
»Head in-store for storage solutions to get the house and garage organised plus the latest DIY and garden tools



STAY SAFE while you work on the roof with the Gorilla Roofers Safety Kit, \$279.



PARK IT behind classic single-car insulated panelled garage doors, \$899.



DESIGN A GARDEN with Verti Scape Green Wall Modules, \$119.



FILL THE CRACKS with LeakSeal Flexible Rubber Coating, \$15.90.



HEAVY METAL to keep your tools safe, Rhino Breadbox Ute Toolbox, \$248.



GREEN A WALL with a VertiScape Mini Vertical Garden Kit, \$49.96.

LANDSCAPE
SOLUTION

CREATE A *raingarden*

For the ultimate in no-maintenance greenery, use native plants to filter runoff and help save our waterways

WORDS **GUN ARVIDSSEN**

The hot new trend in sustainable landscape design, raingardens are taking off all over Australia, particularly in areas of high rainfall.

Also called bioretention systems, they comprise beds of free-draining soil with sand underneath, planted with species that thrive even when dry for long periods then saturated during times of heavy rain.

A raingarden acts as a living filter for stormwater. The plants draw nutrients from organic matter and fertilisers in the water that would have ended up in rivers and creeks, and the sandy soil collects oil and particulate waste, reducing the sediment and other pollutants in our waterways.

In addition to the rain that runs off our roofs, stormwater is washed from driveways, roads, paved areas and other hard surfaces.

This runoff can contain pollutants ranging from oil and biological waste like animal droppings and leaf litter to nitrogen, phosphorus and fertilisers.

It is directed into the stormwater system and finds its way to rivers and creeks, where it harms aquatic animals and promotes excessive algae growth, reducing oxygen levels in the water.

The government is keen to get behind the concept, with Melbourne Water providing a dedicated website on why and how to build a raingarden (raingardens.melbournewater.com.au).

MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

Even if you already have a rainwater tank installed, a raised raingarden is great for draining the first-flush diverter, and is invaluable for those times when the rainfall exceeds the capacity of the tank.

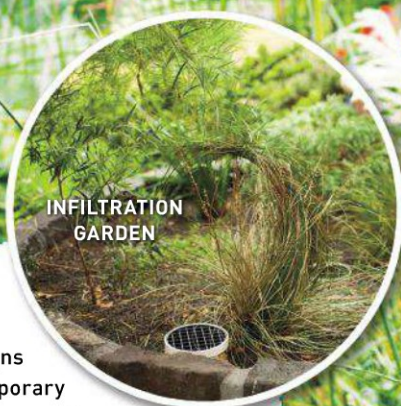
Runoff from hard surfaces like a driveway, patio or paving that doesn't make it into the tank can also be used.

An inground raingarden can be fed by the drainage channel that collects this runoff and positioned to divert overflow to the stormwater system.

It also makes an attractive, functional border for the downhill edge of a patio and is the ideal feature to replace a lawn that gets boggy.



Agricultural Pipe, \$77 for 20m x 100mm, from Bunnings.



INFILTRATION GARDEN

Types of raingardens

There are three main types of domestic raingardens.

PLANTER-BOX STYLE are raised, lined garden beds that can be positioned under downpipes, first flush diverters or the overflow pipes of rainwater tanks. They are drained through a slotted pipe in the base.

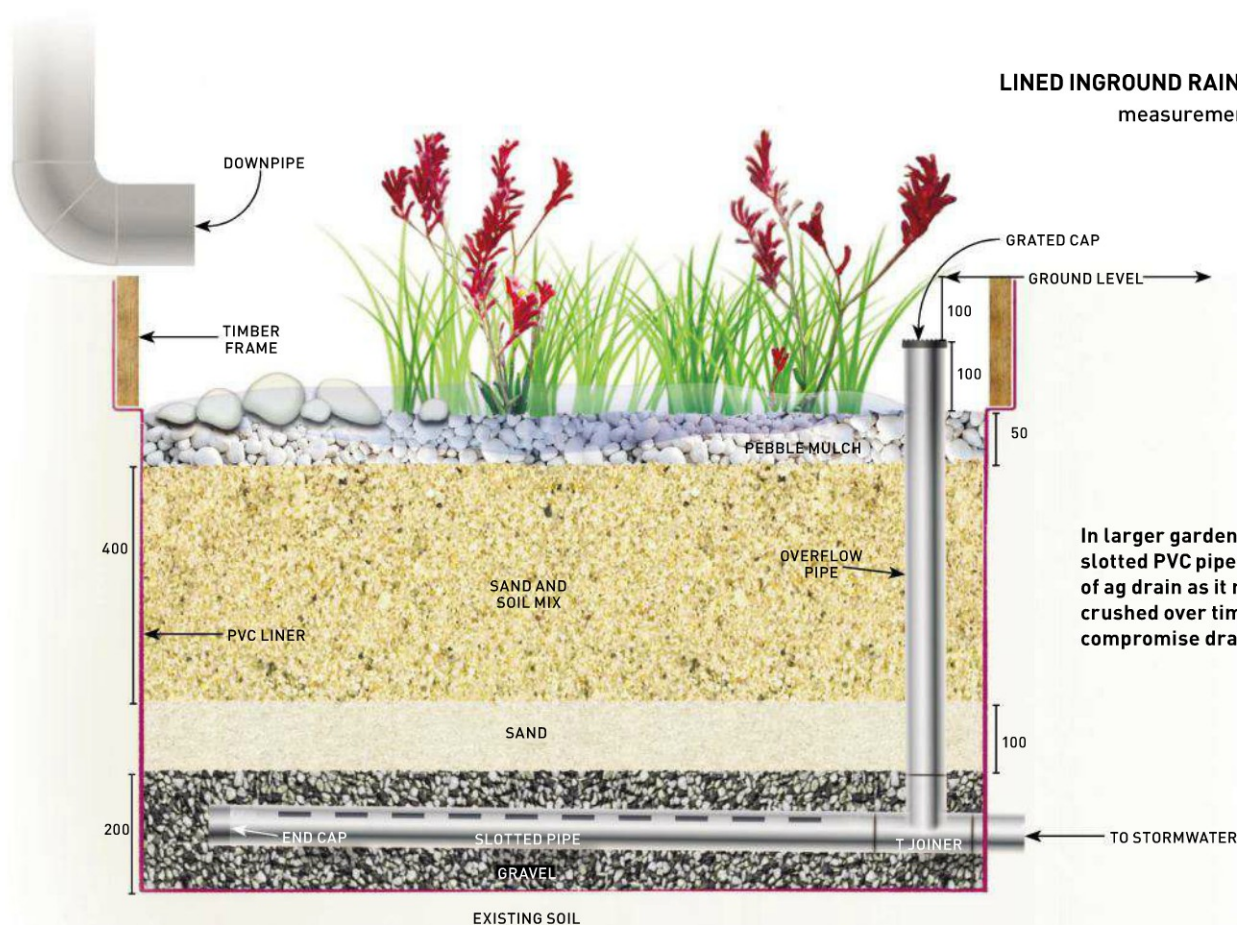
INFILTRATION raingardens allow runoff from paving and downpipes to filter directly into the soil through layers of sand and scoria, and are planted with deep-rooted species.

They reduce the amount of runoff entering the stormwater system and supply clean groundwater.

INGROUND LINED designs act as a temporary reservoir for runoff, with a PVC liner preventing direct infiltration into the soil. The water gradually drains through a slotted pipe into the stormwater system. ➤

LINED INGROUND RAINGARDEN

measurements in mm



BUILD A RAINGARDEN

An inground raingarden is lined with PVC and drains filtered runoff into the stormwater system instead of the soil, so can be sited nearer the house or garage than an infiltration design. **TIP** Check with council about whether a plumber is needed to modify the stormwater and dial 1100 to locate underground utilities before digging. **CHOOSE A SITE** close to a water source such as a first flush diverter but at least 500mm from the house to avoid disturbing the foundations.

Don't site it under the canopy of a large tree, as the root system will extend about the same distance.

EXCAVATE THE HOLE by pegging out an area large enough to manage the stormwater it will be absorbing, usually about 2% of your roof area.

Set stringlines and excavate the bed to a depth of about 1000mm with a gentle slope in the direction of your existing stormwater system. **POSITION THE LINER** along the base and sides of the hole, overlapping the sheets by 200mm and sealing the joints with PVC tape.

Add 7mm screening gravel to a depth of 50mm and position 100mm agricultural pipe along the centreline. Use a T joiner to connect one end to the stormwater and cap the other.

ADD THE OVERFLOW PIPE by attaching 100mm stormwater pipe to the T joiner, topping it with a grated cap to finish 100mm below ground level.

Use lengths of 190 x 45 hardwood to build a border around the hole, securing the PVC liner to the outside of the frame with galvanised staples.



FINISH THE GARDEN by backfilling with 7mm gravel to a depth of 200mm. Add a 100mm layer of washed sand then mix four parts sand with one part of topsoil and backfill to 400mm deep.

Add suitable plants then mulch with a 50mm layer of pebbles.

TIP Position a layer of geotextile fabric between the gravel, sand and soil mix.

CHOOSING THE PLANTS

Raingarden plants have to survive long dry periods then saturation when the water tank overflows. Ask a local nursery about the best plants for your area.



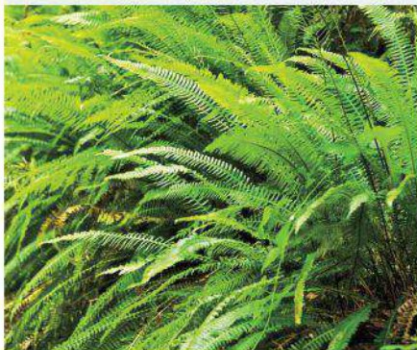
KANGAROO PAW

- Full sun
- Up to 900mm high
- Grows to 1200mm wide



MAT RUSH

- Full sun to part shade
- Up to 1200mm high
- Grows to 1000mm wide



FISHBONE WATER FERN

- Full sun to part shade
- Up to 1000mm high
- Grows to 800mm wide



YELLOW RUSH

- Full sun to part shade
- Up to 1200mm high
- Grows to 1000mm wide



MATTED PRATIA

- Part shade
- Up to 150mm high
- Grows to 500mm wide



NATIVE IRIS

- Sun to part shade
- Up to 400mm high
- Grows to 600mm wide

Shoulda Gotta Brushguard



Brushguard formally known as hedgehog has been in the market place for almost 20 years its 100% Owned and Manufactured in Australia. Brushguard is an innovative 3 dimensional gutter guard that is easy to install and easy to remove to hose out any sediment in the gutter. If sediment is not removed sediment can hold the moisture and will rot your gutters away, Also sediment makes an ideal environment for any seeds to grow. A little maintenance every 3 years will increase the life of your gutter. Brushguard is a great barrier to all leaves and excellent deterrent for birds, rats, mice, snakes and possums helping to vermin proof your home. Brushguard gives cleaner water in your tank or pool because of its 3 dimensional filtering qualities.



So easy - just lift, shake, hose & replace

Things to watch out for when buying gutter guard.

- ① Make sure you can easily remove your gutter guard so maintenance and removal of sediment is easy.
- ② Avoid the screw and glue gutter guards they tend to be attached higher on your roof so sediment can build up around the joint or fitting, holding the moisture and causing premature corrosion to your roof.
- ③ Buy a gutter guard that will also help vermin proof your home.

 facebook.com/enovee  twitter.com/gutterguardguru

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Enovee
INNOVATIONS GROUP
Smarter Solutions
www.enovee.com

INSTALL GUTTERS

Replace the guttering and downpipes on your house to stop them clogging, leaking and overflowing

WORDS **FRANK GARDNER**

The guttering is not a part of the home we often think about until something goes wrong. When gutters and downpipes become clogged or leaky, their functionality is compromised, resulting in water damage to walls and foundations.

But because the gutters are hard to reach, maintenance is often neglected even though it is easy to keep them in good working order.

Minor problems like small holes are easily repaired with a squirt of silicone, while installing gutter guards prevents a build-up of leaf litter.

But if the damage is extensive and guttering is corroded or coming away from the wall, it's better to replace the

damaged sections or install a whole new system. Begin by removing the old gutter and brackets, then repair and repaint the fascia before securing the new guttering.

DO THE WORK DIY

The gutter system has to cope with the volume of water runoff that spills from the roof, so consideration must be given to rainfall intensity, roof catchment area, gutter size, downpipe parameters and overflow capacity.

To calculate how much guttering you need, measure the lengths of fascia runs and sketch the house to scale, marking the required number of downpipes as discreetly as possible.

Your gutters must comply with National Plumbing and Drainage Code AS/NZS 3500.3-2003, which you can find in your local library.

The minimum gutter fall to a downpipe is 1:500, meaning an extra 2mm of fall for each metre of gutter.

Before buying, talk with your supplier to ensure the gutter system you have selected meets the criteria.

Working up high is hazardous, so also hire scaffolding on wheels to provide easy access and simplify the installation process.

Always check with your local council before you start work as in some areas of Australia, gutters must be installed by qualified tradespeople.



APPLY THE FINISH

Gutter styles range from the modern square and half-round styles secured on steel fascias to the traditional quad gutters with external brackets that adorn every Federation home.

Whatever the style, gutters should blend in with the home, usually in a colour matching the roof and fascia.

To finish bare zincalume gutters, wash with sugar soap, sand and apply a coat of etch primer, leaving it to dry. Apply two coats of specialised paint such as Metalshield Premium. ➤

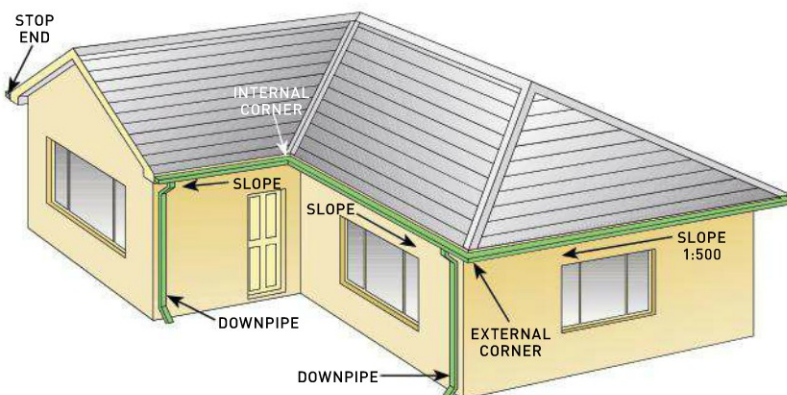


Dulux Metalshield Premium, about \$83 for 4L. dulux.com.au

MEASURE UP

When calculating how much guttering a house needs, allow a minimum 100mm extra for any joints and add at least twice the width of the gutter for external corners as length is lost in cutting mitres. At return stop ends, add the width of the gutter.

TIP Internal corners and pre-made stop ends don't need extra length.



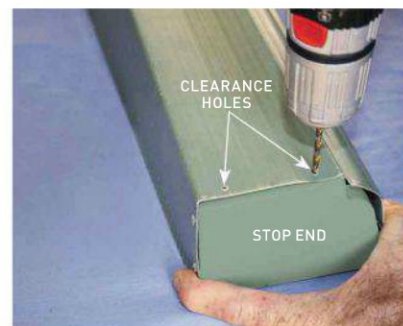
REPLACE A GUTTER



1 MARK THE GUTTER HEIGHT with the back 20mm below the fascia top. At one end mark the base of the gutter bracket and use a water level to create fall, marking along the fascia every 3000mm and at downpipe positions.



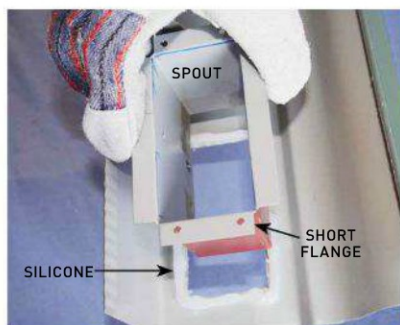
2 SECURE THE BRACKETS by setting a stringline along the fascia at the base of the gutter brackets with fall to the spouts. Secure the brackets with clouts at a maximum 1200mm apart. **TIP** The fall should be a 1:500 pitch.



3 ATTACH THE STOP ENDS at the end of gutter runs by drilling clearance holes for rivets then running a bead of roof and gutter silicone along the overlap. Secure the ends with 2mm rivets and waterproof with silicone.



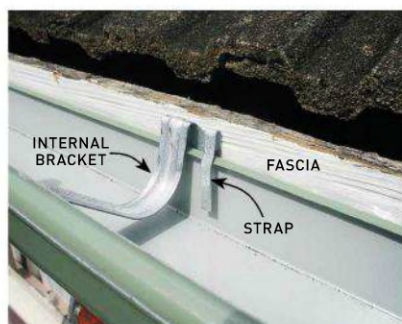
4 CUT THE OUTLET HOLES by tracing around the spout on the base of the gutter at the stormwater pipe locations, leaving room for the spout flanges. Drill starter holes and cut out using nibblers, a sharp chisel or tinsnips.



5 ADD THE SPOUTS by positioning them in the outlet holes and drilling clearance holes in the short flanges. Run silicone around the hole on the inside of the gutter, press the spout in and secure with rivets from beneath.



6 CUT THE END MITRES with tinsnips, marking the gutter to length with internal or external mitres. Use a hacksaw to cut the bead then smooth the edge with a file. Secure with silicone and corner mitre brackets.



7 HANG THE GUTTER on the brackets, pushing it onto the support lips. Use pliers to fold the bracket strap over the gutter. Midway between the brackets, secure the back of the gutter to the fascia using 40mm gutter twist nails.



8 JOIN THE OVERLAPS by positioning the high side of the gutter joint into the low side with a 100mm overlap. Open the outside bead with pliers and secure the overlap with rivets, sealing with silicone between the layers.



9 CONNECT THE DOWNPIPES by adjusting the gutter offset for a neat fit between spout and wall then securing the downpipe to the spout with rivets. Cut the downpipe to length, securing it to the wall using gutter brackets.

KEEP GUTTERS CLEAR

Leaf litter clogs gutters, presenting a fire hazard and causing overflow.

Install a gutter guard to prevent water flooding the eaves and birds nesting, and to stop sediments entering water storage tanks.

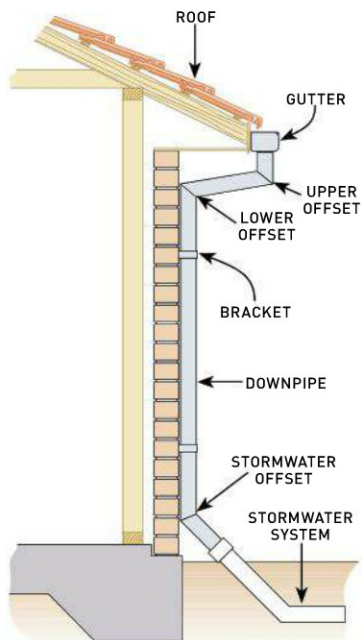
Gutter guards usually come in sheet or roll form and are fitted inside or secured over the gutter.

TIP Choose a product that meets council regulations, especially if your home is in a fire risk area.

FOR AN EASY FIT use Fielders WaterGate Leaf Guard sheets. They clip into position easily and cost \$45 for a pack of five 2m sheets.

DOWNPIPES

Designed to convey runoff from the gutters to the stormwater system via mitred joints called offsets, downpipes are usually 100 x 50mm rectangular section or 90mm round. To find the number you need, divide the roof catchment area by the allowable maximum catchment per downpipe.



INCREASE FIRE SAFETY with

Whites Fire Guard Gutter Guard, made of fully hot-dipped galvanised mesh. It comes in a 190mm x 10m roll for easy installation.

TEAM A CORRUGATED METAL ROOF

with GumLeaf Gutter Guard, made from Colorbond steel with a patented 3D louvre design for market-leading performance.

KEEP PESTS AWAY with Enovee Brushguard, made of plastic bristles in a roll that can be bent to shape for speedy installation as well as easy removal. It blocks debris while letting water flow and deters mice, birds and snakes from entering the gutters.



Fire Guard Gutter Guard, \$14 for 190mm x 10m. whitesgroup.com.au



GumLeaf Gutter Guard, about \$15 for 1200mm. gumleafgutterguard.com



Enovee Brushguard, \$16 for a 1000mm length. enovee.com

AS
SEEN ON TV

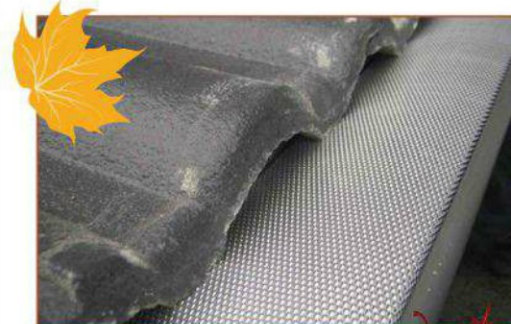
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Gutter Protection

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Map of Australia These raised garden beds are made in Australia from high-quality BlueScope Steel.

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CLARE'S GARDEN

No Sharp Edges!

4+

Expert tips on how to get the life back into the wood you love

1. Look at the piano on the right. The front of the lid is unrestored, the rear of the lid has been restored
2. The floor to the right has had marks removed with Restor-A-Finish and then polished with Restor-A-Shine
3. Here's how it was done. First saturate a pad of Howard special steel wool with Restor-A-Finish
4. Wearing rubber gloves you apply it over the entire surface of the item you are working on
5. You must use firm but careful pressure as you go, while increasing the pressure into bad marks
6. Repeat this procedure over any marks that need it, then wipe the surface completely dry with a soft cloth
7. After an hour or so take a soft cotton cloth (old t-shirts are good) and apply some Restor-A-Shine
8. Rub it onto the surface using vigorous friction, as if you were polishing a car. Wait... now buff it to a shine
9. You do this in sections being careful to overlap each section to avoid dividing lines
10. Now take a large chunk of clean soft cloth and using good friction polish the entire surface to a shine
11. The surface will now really shine but it still may have some white residue of the polish visible
12. To eliminate residue spray the surface very lightly with Howard Orange Oil and buff clean. NICE!
13. If you'd like a waxed finish to preserve and protect the new finish apply a thin coat of Feed-N-Wax



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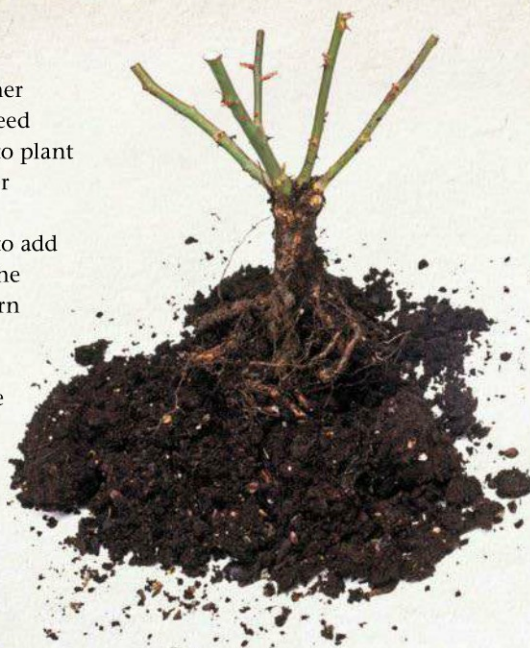
For bookings or enquiries contact Cristian Arratia on
(02) 9018 6253 or email cristian.arratia@rd.com

Do now

■ **RAISE** petunias and other colourful annuals from seed indoors so they're ready to plant out when warmer weather arrives, on page 142.

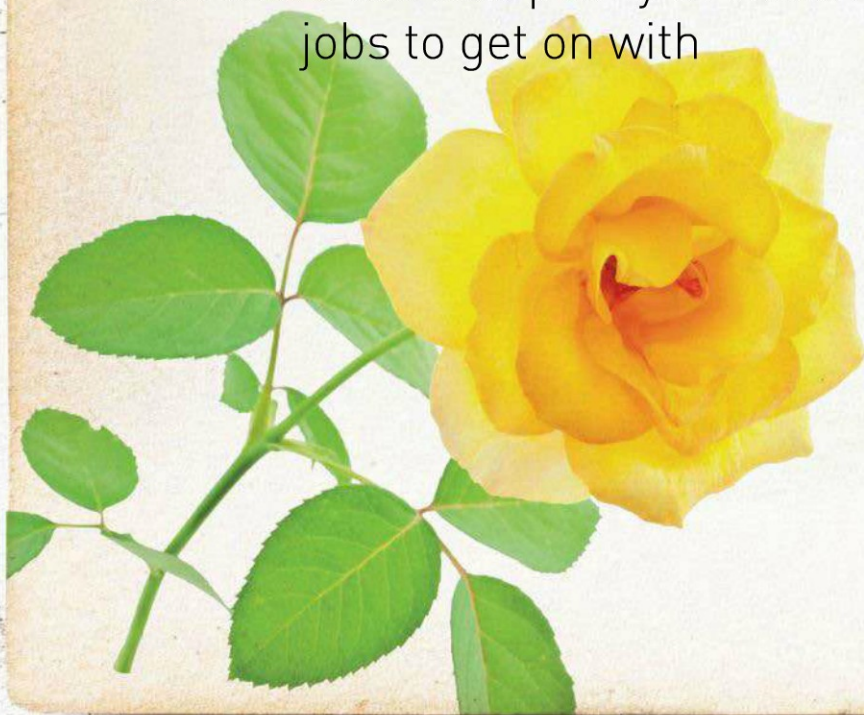
■ **PLANT** bare-root roses to add colour and fragrance to the garden in spring, and learn the correct way to prune them, from page 124.

■ **CONTROL** stinky bronze orange bugs now to stop them multiplying and destroying the health of your citrus trees, see page 136.



THIS MONTH

Things are looking a bit bare outside but there are still plenty of winter jobs to get on with



Sow now

To enjoy beautiful blooms during spring and beyond, put in seeds for these bright sparks.

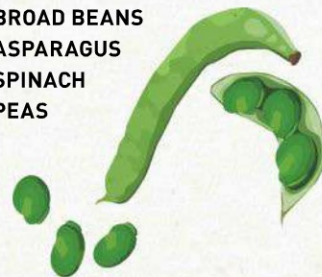
- **LINARIA**
- **DELPHINIUM**
- **DIANTHUS**
- **GERBERA**
- **STATICE**



Plant now

For fresh food when the weather warms, get these in the ground.

- **SPRING CABBAGE**
- **BROAD BEANS**
- **ASPARAGUS**
- **SPINACH**
- **PEAS**

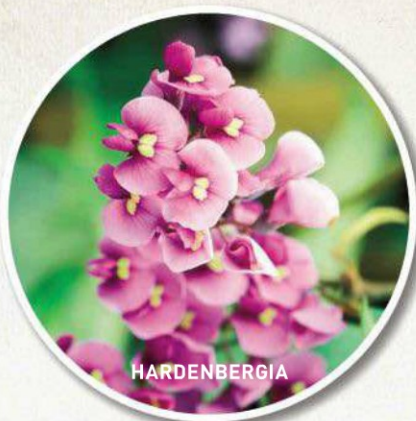


Prune now

■ **TRIM** deciduous crepe myrtle to keep its natural vase shape.

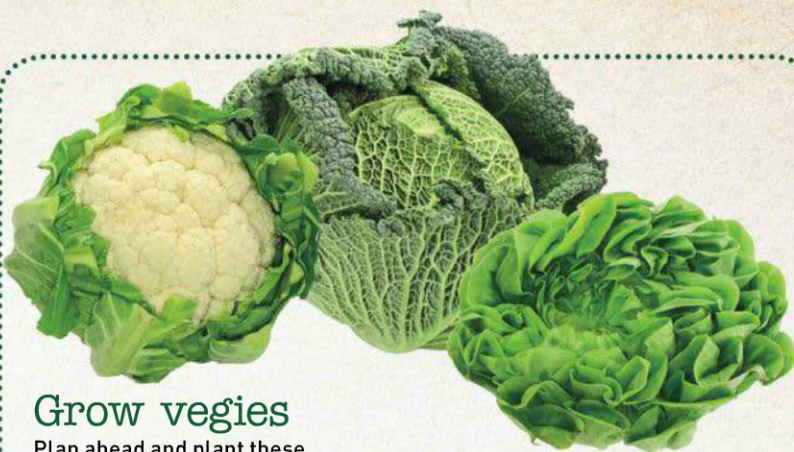
■ **GIVE** leggy hibiscus a hard prune to encourage new growth lower down the stems and increase flowering.





Top pick

Hardenbergia is a native climber that is covered in bright pea flowers from winter to early spring. The purple bloomed 'Happy Wanderer' is popular in Aussie gardens but there are pink and white varieties too. Plant in well-drained soil in full to part sun and train over a trellis.



Grow veggies

Plan ahead and plant these favourite edibles for a tasty harvest in spring and summer.

CAULIFLOWER is sown in winter for a summer harvest.

Feed with liquid fertiliser four weeks after planting and harvest when heads are firm and tight.

CABBAGE can be sown now for a spring crop. Build up the soil to support the stems as plants grow.

Dig out cabbage roots after harvesting to prevent any possible spread of disease.

LETTUCE is grown under cover in winter to transplant and harvest in spring. Keep crops well watered, especially just before harvesting.

TIP Loose-leaf varieties grow quicker than those that develop hearts, such as cos lettuce.

Get involved

This year National Tree Day is on Sunday 28 July, with Schools Tree Day on July 26, and Planet Ark is urging every Australian to get planting.

'Research shows there are significant personal benefits associated with spending time in nature.

Patients heal quicker, children learn better, and adults de-stress and relax,' says National

Tree Day manager Debbie Agnew.

You can get involved with a public site or organise your own event. Register at treeday.planetark.org



Buy an orchid

Colour up indoors with potted orchids in flower or add native Australian dendrobiums to the garden. Water orchids sparingly in cool weather.





BLOOMING *lovely*

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

Rose breeders give gardeners an exciting batch of new releases to choose from each season.

PLANT
PROFILE

Pick your favourite from the newest range of roses, plant it bare-root then wait for the beautiful blooms

The best time to plant roses is winter, when they are in a period of dormancy. It's also when roses are readily available as budget-friendly bare-root plants.

In this form they look just like a bunch of thorny sticks, so read the plant tag carefully. The tag gives you a good description of what the rose will look like in bloom, and the conditions in which it should be grown.

Rose breeders are constantly coming up with beautiful new

colours, scents and forms, and enthusiasts look forward to seeing what's in store for next season.

There are also trends in growing, so a type of rose that was popular decades ago can make a comeback.

Think about what you want from a rose before you head to the nursery.

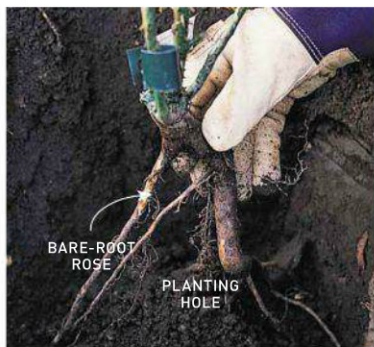
To cover a wall or fence you should choose a climber rather than a shrub rose. But to create big blocks of colour or mass plantings, use floribunda rather than miniature varieties. ➤



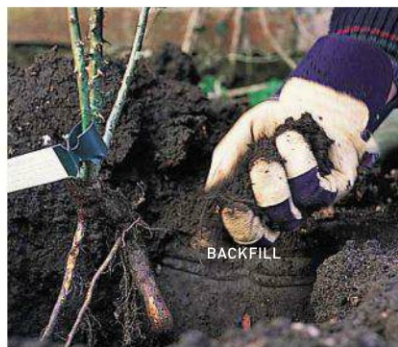
Miracle-Gro MaxFeed, \$6 for 500g.
scottsaustralia.com.au

Planting a bare-root rose

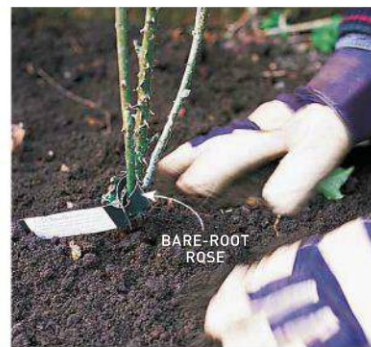
Before planting, cut back the stems to above a healthy bud and remove any spindly looking shoots. Cut back long shoots by a third to a half, and trim excessively long roots to about 250mm so they fit in the planting hole.



1 POSITION THE PLANT in a hole that's twice the width and the same depth as the bud join on the stem, spreading out the roots.



2 BACKFILL WITH SOIL a little at a time and use your fingers to gently work the soil under and around the roots to eliminate air pockets.



3 FIRM THE SOIL down when the hole is completely filled and water deeply to ensure there are no air pockets below the surface.

TYPES OF ROSES

A single rose flower is normally made up of five petals, where you can see the centre of the bloom. A double has the appearance of another flower inside the five petals. There are seven types of roses, with various sizes and habits.

NAME	DESCRIPTION	VARIETIES
SPECIES ROSE	A single flower of five petals, some double flowered. Blooms in spring with ferny foliage.	Moyesii Primula Rugosa RUGOSA
CLIMBING AND RAMBLING ROSES	Climbing plants that can reach up to three metres in height. Climbers have a single fragrant bloom while ramblers have trusses of flowers. Flower display in spring.	CLIMBERS Clair Matin Climbing Iceberg Golden Showers RAMBLERS Albertine Dorothy Perkins Excelsa CLIMBING ICEBERG
HYBRID TEA ROSE	Deeply scented double flowers that are up to 150mm across. Blooms in spring, summer and autumn.	Double Delight Fragrant Cloud Mister Lincoln Pascali FRAGRANT CLOUD
FLORIBUNDA ROSE	Large clusters of flowers that may be single, semi-double or double. Blooms throughout the year.	Apricot Nectar Iceberg Sexy Remy Satchmo SEXY REMY
MODERN SHRUB ROSE	Bushy plant with an average height and width of two metres. Single or double flowers that repeat-bloom. Flower display in spring, summer and autumn.	Autumn Delight Golden Wings Felicia Titanic Uncle Walter GOLDEN WINGS
OLD ROSE	Double flowers with strong fragrance. Blooms in late spring and early summer.	Charles de Mills William Lobb Celsiana Cecile Brunner CHARLES DE MILLS
MINIATURE ROSE	Semi-double or double flowers 20 to 40mm in diameter with bushes 200 to 500mm high. Blooms in spring, summer and autumn.	Beauty Secret Gold Coin Rise 'n' Shine Starina Love Potion LOVE POTION



Variegated petals make Pink Intuition stand out from the crowd.

New releases

Splash out with the latest beauties from the rose-growing world.

SOUL MATE is a pretty new floribunda from Swane's Nurseries with petal tones of lemon and butter gold and glossy green foliage (swanes.com.au).

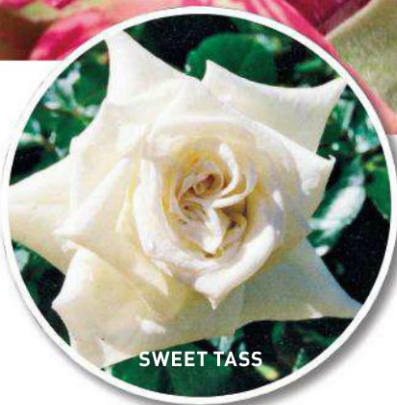
The scent is described as a strong licorice spice. Soul Mate has been bred with a good resistance to disease and a rounded growth habit.

PARFUM DE PARIS is available from Rankins Roses (rankinsroses.com.au) with huge blooms in rose pink shades fading to creamy pink at the base and a heady, sweet perfume.

PINK INTUITION is also from Rankins Roses and offers a whirling palette of pinks and a long vase life.

THANK YOU is from Gawler River Roses (gawlerriverroses.com.au), which has five new floribundas and a hybrid tea.

Thank You has large clusters of deep mauve flowers with a light fragrance, with a percentage of profits going to Transplant Australia.



SWEET TASS creates a fresh display with clear white blooms that grow in clusters and last well as cut flowers. It is ideal for growing as a low hedge.

CASANOVA features large orange flowers that bloom continually on an easy-to-grow bush.

LOVE IT is a mass-flowering mid-pink rose with a delicate fragrance and is known for its heat tolerance.

PEACH PROFUSION is good in pots, with peach blooms that age to cream.

PERFUME PASSION is the new hybrid tea from Gawler River Roses, and features a combination of pink shades and a tantalising scent.

Growing guide

Follow these simple steps on how to plant and care for roses for years of beautiful blooms.

■ **PLANT** in well-drained soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6 and added organic material.

■ **CHOOSE** a sunny, sheltered position and do not underplant.

■ **SPACE** plants about a metre apart for good air circulation to help prevent fungal diseases.

■ **WATER** regularly the first year and deeply in hot, dry weather.

■ **CHECK** regularly for pests or diseases and treat immediately.

■ **DEADHEAD** flowers as they finish blooming to encourage more flowers, and tear off any suckers as they appear.

■ **PRUNE** in winter and apply a preventative fungicide.

■ **FERTILISE** regularly for healthy growth and plenty of blooms.

TIP Companion plant roses with chives to avoid powdery mildew.

+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for How To Train A Climbing Rose.

PRUNING
KNOW-HOW

KEEP ROSES IN SHAPE

Give this garden favourite a good cut during the cool winter months for blooming beautiful results

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Roses look delicate but are quite hardy and once established are able to survive for years.

But without proper care and maintenance they won't put on their best show. For a top flowering display every season, give roses regular TLC.

The three main reasons to prune rose bushes are to help them maintain healthy growth, keep their shape and encourage the plant to produce plenty of flowers.

Winter is the best time to prune, from late June to the end of July when most bushes have finished flowering.

Pruning increases airflow around the plant and also stimulates new growth. Removing the unhealthy and weak branches leaves the plant free to concentrate its energy on producing strong shoots and stems.

THE ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Before you head out to prune the roses make sure you have the right equipment for the job.

First on the list is a pair of gloves tough enough to protect you from the thorns. Leather is a good choice, try Pope Rose Pruning Gloves Extra Protection, \$6 (popeproducts.com.au).

Next is a quality pair of bypass secateurs that should be cleaned and sharpened regularly. Dirty and blunt secateurs can pass on infections, as well as bruise and tear plant stems.

Finally, for thick or old stems you'll need a fine-tooth pruning saw and to tidy cuts and remove stumps you'll require a sharp pruning knife. **TIP** Clean tools with a soft cloth and give them a light coating of oil and a spray of WD-40 to prevent rusting.



PRUNING SAW



GLOVES



SECAUTEURS



Pruning terms

Learn the lingo so you know what to cut back and where.

NEW WOOD is a stem or branch from the current year's growth.

OLD WOOD refers to a stem from the previous year's growth.

EYE is a lateral bud in the leaf axil from which a shoot may grow.

BUD either refers to a leaf bud or a bud that develops into a flower.

SNAG is a dead stump from a pruning cut that was made too far above a bud. ➤

A regular snip keeps a rose bush at a manageable size and encourages it to produce more and bigger blooms.

CUTTING TECHNIQUES

Old, damaged, diseased or dead wood is removed first, followed by branches crowding the centre of the bush.

Next remove weak or thin growth then give the plant an all over trim, reducing stems by a third to a half.

MAKE CLEAN CUTS no more than 5mm above a growth bud, angling the cut so it slopes slightly back and away from the bud to let moisture drain.

The bud should face outward to allow growth to spread out from the centre rather than growing inwards.

CUT A COMPLETE STEM as close as possible to where it joins the main branch, using a sharp knife.

REMOVE THICK WOOD with a pruning saw, then use a sharp knife to trim the edges to keep cuts neat and clean.

GENERAL PRUNING during the year includes removing shoots that appear from below ground level.

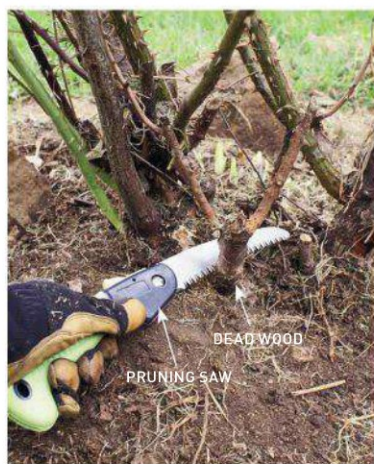
Called suckers, they grow from the rootstock so won't produce flowers. Suckers should be torn out and not cut, as this encourages more to form.



Deadhead flowers as they finish to encourage another flush and remove the rosehips, or fruit, of the plant.

Pruning overgrown roses

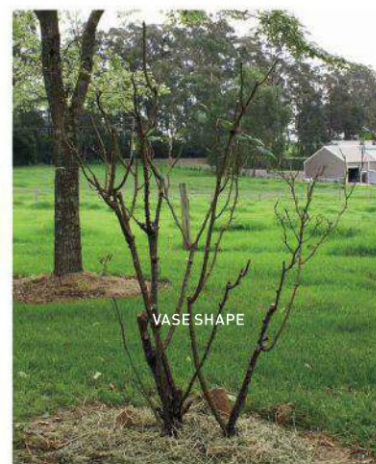
If a rosebush has been neglected for some time it will need to be cut back quite hard to get rid of all the dead wood and prune it to shape. You'll need a sharp pruning saw and secateurs to do the job.



- 1 **REMOVE DEAD WOOD** with a pruning saw, cutting it off as close to the base of the stem as possible.
TIP Wear leather gloves.



- 2 **CUT SPINDLY GROWTH** and remove shoots growing toward the centre of the plant using secateurs. Shorten stems to an outward pointing bud.



- 3 **CREATE A VASE SHAPE** by taking back remaining stems by about half. This form helps keep the plant open in the middle for good airflow.



The best time to transplant a rose is in winter when it is dormant, minimising the shock to the plant.

FOR GOOD HEALTH

After pruning the rose, spread a layer of well-rotted compost or animal manure about 100mm thick in spring.

As this begins to break down, add a 70mm layer of straw to conserve water and nutrients and deter weeds.

Water in the mulch then add a rose fertiliser at the recommended rate and water again thoroughly.

Fertilise again after spring flowering when the buds are forming for the next flush of blooms.

A final application should be given in late summer, but avoid feeding roses in autumn as new growth isn't encouraged before the onset of winter.

Roses are surprisingly tolerant of dry conditions once they are established but for young roses, water twice a week in hot weather when no rain has fallen.

Older roses should be happy with a deep watering once every week or two under the same conditions.

TRANSPLANT A ROSE

To move a rose, drive a sharp spade as deep as possible into the soil in a circle about 300 to 450mm from the trunk, cleanly severing the roots.

If you've planned in advance to move a rose this step is best performed a month or two before actually transplanting.

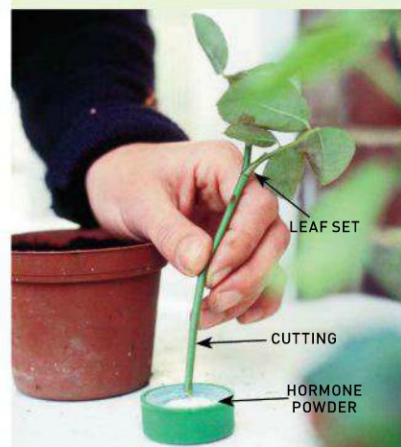
Lift the plant out of the hole, taking as much soil as possible, then cut the branches back by about two-thirds. Replant in the new, prepared hole, watering in thoroughly.



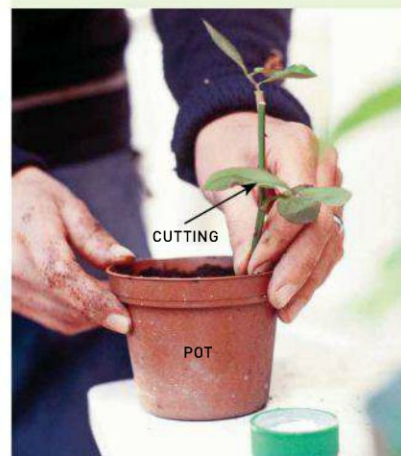
Scotts Osmocote Roses, Gardenias, Azaleas & Camellias, \$23 for 2kg.
scottsaustralia.com.au

PROPAGATE CUTTINGS

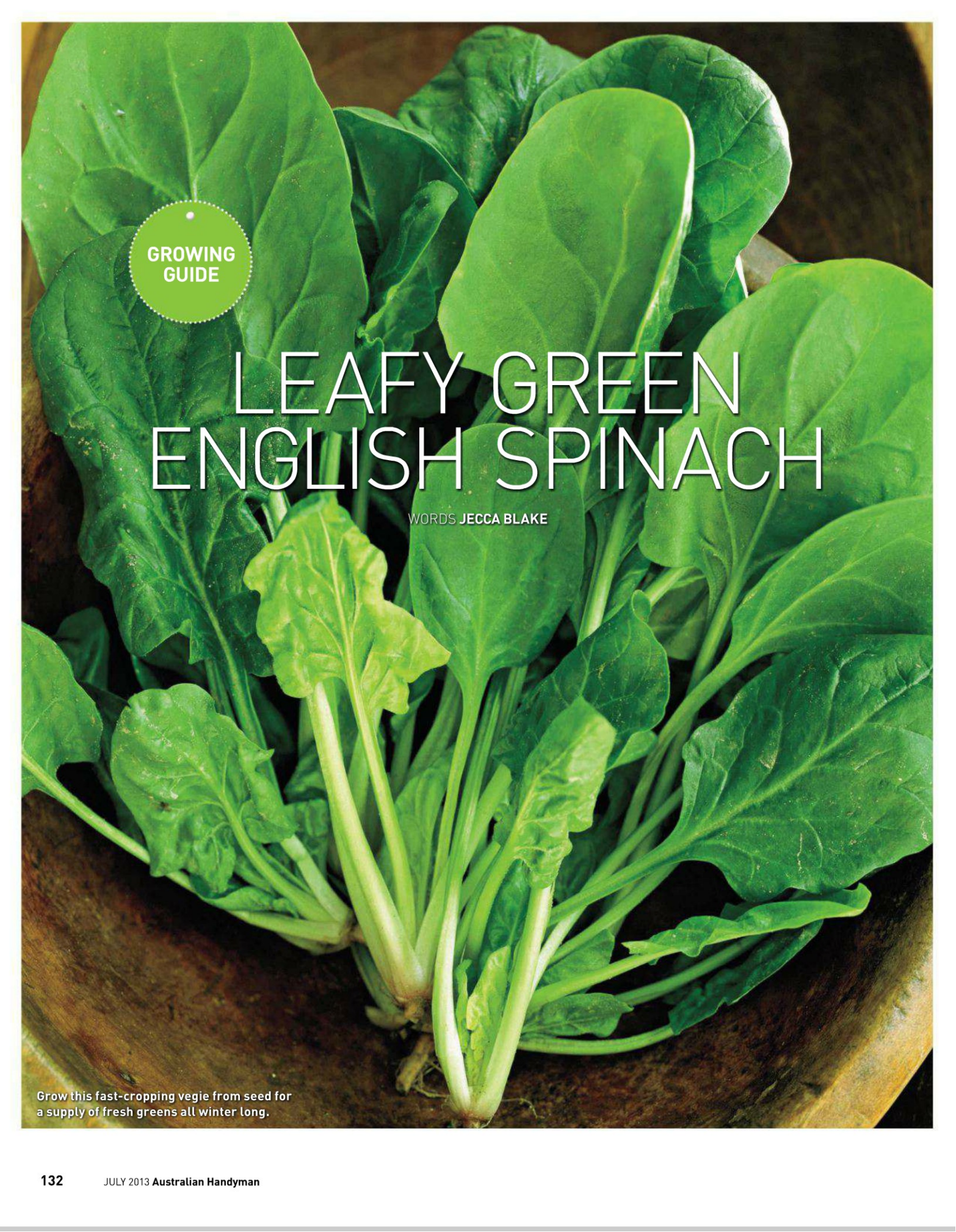
Pruning is the traditional time to strike evergreen roses. Choose a healthy cutting with six leaf sets, three on each side of the stem.



1 PREPARE THE CUTTING by snipping off the stem above the base pair of leaves, cutting straight across using secateurs. Cut the base of the stem on a slight angle using a sharp utility knife and dip it into propagation hormone powder.



2 PLANT THE CUTTING into a pot filled with propagating mix. Make a planting hole up to 50mm deep with your finger or a pencil, position the cutting and firm down the mix. Move the pot to a sunny spot indoors, watering regularly to keep the soil damp not wet.



GROWING
GUIDE

LEAFY GREEN ENGLISH SPINACH

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

Grow this fast-cropping vegie from seed for a supply of fresh greens all winter long.

Turbocharge your diet with homegrown spinach, a superfood that tastes great and grows all winter

Famous for giving Popeye his bulging muscles, most of the iron in spinach is not easily absorbed by the body but this leafy annual is still a nutritional powerhouse.

It's an excellent source of vitamins A and C, and antioxidants. It's also rich in B group vitamins like folate, plus protein and magnesium.

Like many vegetables, spinach loses some of its nutritional value in cooking, so just wilt the leaves when boiling or steaming.

Spinach grows best in a cool climate as in warm areas it is likely to bolt to seed. Grow in full to part sun in soil that is rich in nitrogen.

Turn the soil over before planting so the taproot has a clear path for strong growth, and add well rotted compost. Good drainage is essential so the roots don't rot.

Spinach is a hungry and thirsty plant, which explains its juicy, deep green leaves. Water regularly and apply a liquid fertiliser every two weeks to encourage fast growth. If the plant is slow to grow it can taste bitter.

If you have more spinach than you can eat, trim the stalks, wash and drain the leaves then blanch them for two minutes in small batches.

When it is cool enough to handle, squeeze out any excess moisture, pack

into containers and freeze for use in soups and stews.

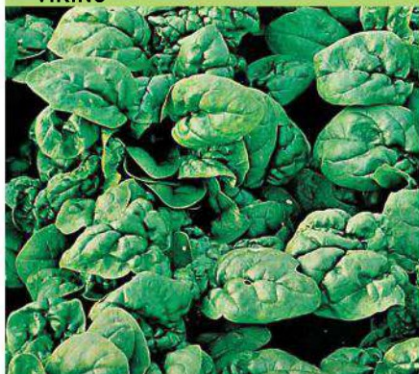
TIP Cultivate spinach alongside strawberries, broad beans and cauliflower for healthier plants. ➤



Seasol Ready To Spray PowerFeed For Veggies, \$13 for 2L. seasol.com.au

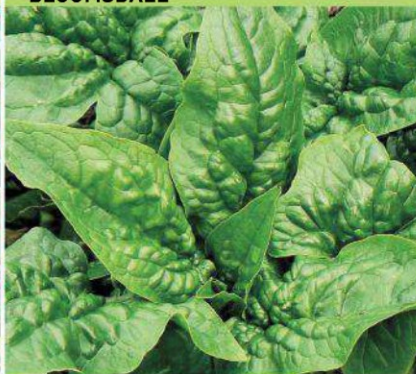
CHOOSING A VARIETY

VIKING



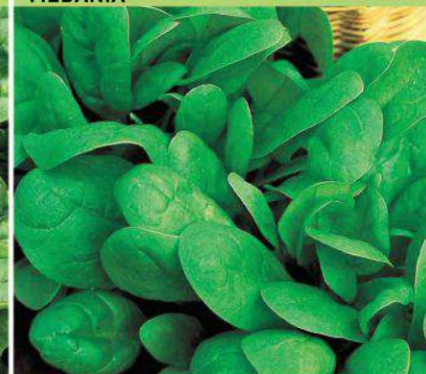
- Tasty dark green leaves
- Grows best in a shady spot
- Slow to bolt to seed

BLOOMSDALE

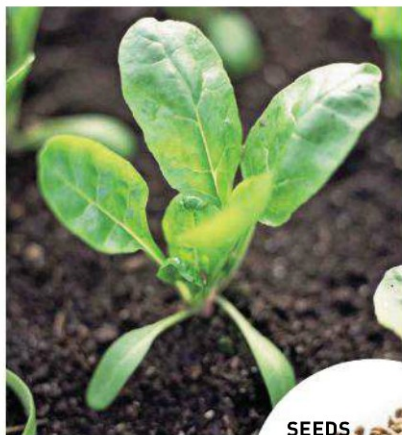


- Heirloom variety
- Large, crinkled, rich green leaves
- Compact growing plant

MEDANIA



- Thick, rounded, dark green leaves
- Sweet and earthy flavour
- Reliable cropper



SEEDS



IN THE GARDEN

A fast-cropping winter green, spinach is ready to harvest about 10 to 12 weeks after sowing.

SOW SEEDS into beds 100mm apart for picking leaves regularly or 200mm apart to harvest mature plants.

Keep the soil moist but not wet and don't let plants dry out or they'll bolt to seed. Sow seeds every six weeks for a constant supply, soaking them in cold water overnight to speed up germination.

HARVEST the outside leaves with a sharp knife when the plant has at least six leaves, each about 100mm long. If the plant looks like it is about to bolt, cut it at the base just below the soil surface and remove it.

WATCH FOR downy mildew during prolonged periods of damp. Remove the worst affected leaves and spray with a mixture of 100ml full cream milk, 900ml water and a pinch of bicarb soda.

Cucumber mosaic virus can be spread by aphids. Remove and burn stunted leaves with yellow mottling and spray aphids with white oil.

Pick off caterpillars by hand and destroy or sprinkle with derris dust.



Yates Nature's Way Derris Dust,
\$6 for 500g. yates.com.au



Spicy chicken with tomatoes and spinach

PREPARATION TIME 15 minutes

COOKING TIME 30 minutes

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

500g skinless chicken thigh fillets
1 cup finely chopped onion
4 cardamom pods,
split open at the top
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
50mm cinnamon stick,
broken in half
2 tsp crushed garlic
2 tsp grated ginger
¼ tsp ground turmeric
¼ cup low fat natural yoghurt
800g fresh English spinach, rinsed
1 cup canned diced tomatoes
¼ cup sour cream
Pinch of garam masala

1 TRIM ANY FAT off the chicken and cut each thigh in half. Heat a large pan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken, onion, cardamom, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, garlic, ginger, turmeric, yoghurt and salt to taste.

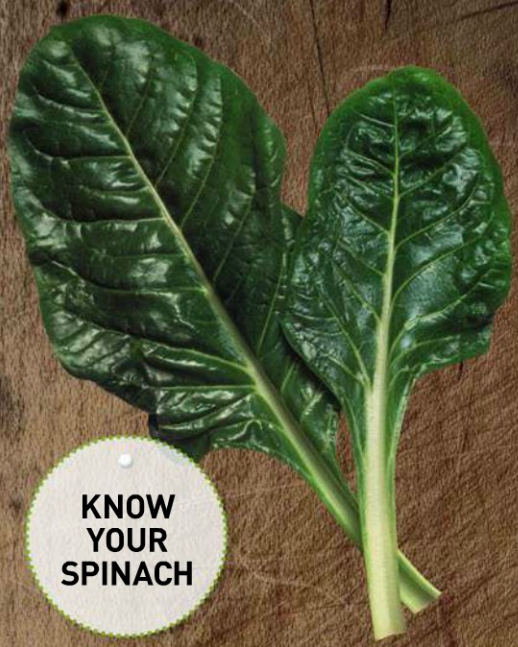
2 STIR THE MIXTURE until the chicken starts sizzling. Continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the chicken is lightly browned. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 12 minutes, stirring occasionally.

3 CHOP THE SPINACH and discard any thick stems, then uncover the pan and increase the heat to medium-high. Continue cooking the chicken mixture for 5 to 6 minutes, stirring frequently, until most of the liquid has evaporated and the sauce has thickened.

4 STIR THE TOMATOES into the chicken mixture and continue to cook, uncovered, for 1 to 2 minutes.

5 ADD THE SPINACH in batches, stirring well. As soon as the first batch begins to wilt, add the next. Reduce the heat to low and cook, uncovered, for 5 minutes or until the chicken is cooked.

6 TO SERVE add sour cream and garam masala and stir well. Remove the cinnamon stick before serving. Serve with pappadams or naan.



KNOW YOUR SPINACH

SILVERBEET

Also known as Swiss chard this vegie is closely related to beetroot. Sow seeds in cold climates from spring to autumn and all year round in warmer areas. Leaves are ready to pick in seven to 10 weeks from sowing. Harvest young tender leaves for salad or pick when mature and steam.



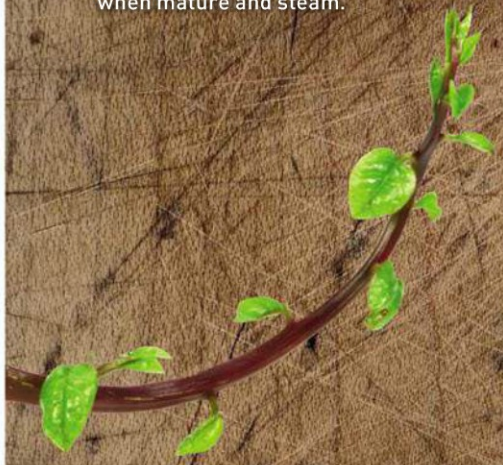
RAINBOW CHARD

There is a coloured variety of silverbeet or Swiss chard called rainbow chard. With its orange, yellow, pink and red stems plus dark green foliage it's popular for adding colour to the vegie patch. It does well in most climate zones but don't grow during very hot periods or when there's frost.



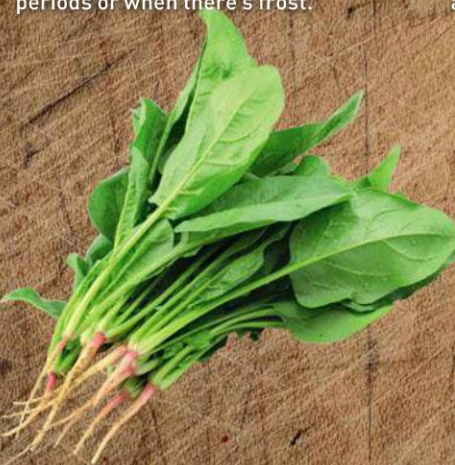
BABY SPINACH

The term baby spinach is used to describe the juicy young leaves of English spinach when they are about 40 to 50mm long. These small leaves are ready to harvest about four to six weeks after sowing and are mainly cut to use fresh in salads or as a garnish, or cooked in stir-fries.



CEYLON SPINACH

This red-stemmed leafy green is a vine that tastes similar to spinach. It grows well in summer when true spinach goes bitter. The easiest way to grow it is to cut a 200mm long stem from an existing plant, remove all but four to six leaves and plant into a pot with a trellis to support the vine as it grows.



WARRIGAL GREENS

Also called New Zealand spinach, this plant is a different species but grown and used in the same way. It tolerates high temperatures better than spinach. Sow seeds from late spring and the young fleshy leaves should be ready to start harvesting in six weeks. Regular picking encourages new growth.



KALE

A relative of cabbage this vegie doesn't form a dense heart but instead spreads out from the central stem. It's easy to grow and able to survive the harshest of winters. Sow seeds in autumn ready to harvest in eight to 10 weeks. Kale has a bitter taste and is better used cooked in soups and stews.

Problem solver

PLANT
CLINIC

BRONZE ORANGE BUGS

Give these stinky critters a good blast before they take over and destroy your citrus trees

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Anyone who's had a citrus tree will be familiar with bronze orange bugs. Also called stink bugs, they produce a foul-smelling secretion and suck the sap from stalks, causing flowers and fruit to drop.

These pests need to be controlled in winter before they can build up their numbers in spring and summer.

They lay eggs on the underside of leaves with the young, called nymphs, appearing in winter. The nymphs are flat, lime green and about 6mm long.

As they mature they turn orange or bronze and become rounded, going from brown to black and reaching 25mm long as adults.

METHODS OF CONTROL

Numbers of bronze orange bug build up rapidly, making control difficult, so take action immediately.

A high population may be a sign the tree is stressed. Give it a deep watering and apply a citrus fertiliser.

Wear goggles to control bronze orange bugs, as they expel a caustic liquid that can cause severe irritation.

For small trees, blast them off with a jet of water from the hose then

collect in a bag and squash, or drop into a bucket of methylated spirits.

Large trees should be sprayed every 10 to 14 days with Eco-Oil or Confidor to kill the nymphs before they develop into breeding adults.

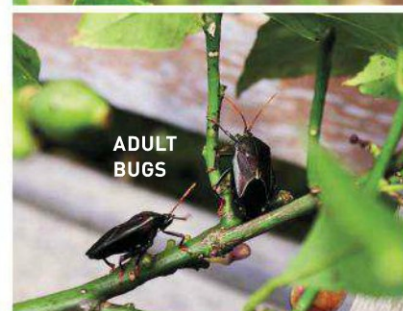
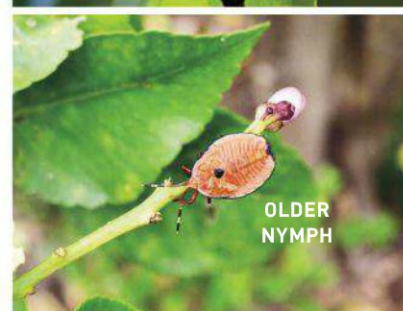
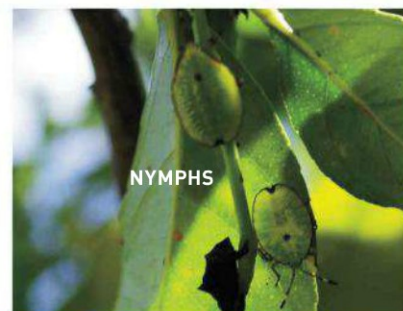
You may also notice green bugs with sharp shoulder spines. Native to Australia they're called spined citrus bugs. They like lemons and mandarins but suck sap from other citrus fruit.

This pest causes young fruit to develop flat patches of skin and brown stains on the flesh.

Treat them the same way as bronze orange bugs but you'll have to look a little closer to find them, as their green colour helps them blend in well.



Multicrop EcoPest Oil, \$17 for 3L.
multicrop.com.au



PICTURE (RIGHT) BETTY IMAGES



Organic remedy

Treat small nymphs in winter with a soap spray, concentrating on the underside of leaves and the lower part of the tree.

To make the spray, add one tablespoon of pure soap flakes, such as grated Velvet soap, to half a bucket of warm water.

When the soap has dissolved in the water, fill a spray bottle and treat leaves early in the day.

TIP Don't use any sprays on hot days, as this can damage stressed plants even more.



Velvet Soap, about \$5 for a five pack, from supermarkets.



In this garden, taut wire strands provide support while displaying a fruit tree to its finest advantage.

SPACE
SAVER

Growing SIDEWAYS

To cultivate market-fresh produce in a compact space, train your fruit trees to spread over a wire trellis

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

Espalier is a traditional gardening technique used for training plants to grow against a wall or fence on a wire support, creating a living garden feature.

The practice was established centuries ago in Europe where it was used to extend the growing season of fruit trees in cold climates.

It was observed that the warmth retained in walls from the heat of the day gave the plant protection from the chill night air.

Freestanding trees can also be espaliered to a timber or wire frame without a wall behind them.

BACKYARD ESPALIER

The technique involved in espalier consists of manipulating a tree or shrub into a two-dimensional shape by pruning and tying it until the plant grows to a desired size and form.

Mostly used as a space saver the many elaborate designs mean that espaliered plants can also double up as landscape art.

It is a great way of cultivating fruit in a small space, as the trees are easy to prune, thin, harvest and spray.

But it is not just for trees, as a variety of shrubs and vines can be espaliered for ornamental reasons.



MAKE A WIRE FRAME

To make a frame for espalier, secure 3mm braided wire to a wall or between timber posts, adding turnbuckles to tighten the wires as the plant grows.

FOR A TRELLIS set two timber posts at the mature width of the tree.

Attach screw eyes to the posts then thread the wire, securing the ends with wire rope grips.

Position the first wire 400mm above the ground then 350mm apart.

FOR A WALL build a trellis in front, leaving 300mm between the wires and the wall for good airflow and to stop the tree scraping the surface. ➤

Pruning an espalier

An espaliered fruit tree can take up to five years to achieve multiple tiers and three years to fruit.

Remove the blossoms in spring during the first three years so the plant's energy is going into growth.

If you choose to leave the blossoms and enjoy the spring

display, you'll have to wait longer for the tree to grow and produce.

The main pruning should be done in winter when the plant is dormant.

As the idea is to create flat growth, any branches that stick out or don't fit the desired shape should be pruned as they appear.

CHOOSE A FRUIT TREE

For homegrown success, select one of these popular varieties to espalier.

APPLE should be planted in late spring or autumn and pruned in early spring after harvesting.

OLIVE is planted in late winter to early spring and harvested in early autumn. Wait until the fruit turns purple if you wish to preserve it.

LEMON goes in the ground in spring and should be fertilised then and in early autumn. Lemon trees can crop almost all year round.

PEAR is best planted in late autumn or early spring and pruned in winter after an autumn harvest.

FIG is an early spring planter with a summer harvest. A first crop, called breba, appears in spring but is of lesser quality and is usually pruned off to improve the summer crop.

ALMOND should be planted in late autumn and is also harvested at that time of year. Prune in summer until the tree is established then change to pruning in winter.



Popular espalier patterns

Choose a spot in the garden that gets enough sun for the plant to grow strongly, with plenty of room in the ground for the roots to spread out. Almost any plant can be espaliered but those with flexible lateral branches are the best. Select plants with a natural growth habit that will work with your chosen pattern.



FAN SHAPE has branches radiating from the centre in a V shape. The branches are left to grow then lowered and cut back for further training and to continue the V pattern.



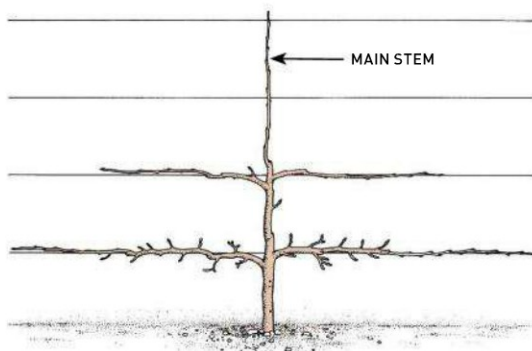
SIMPLE HORIZONTAL has one vertical trunk with two lateral branches that grow in opposite directions. The central trunk spreads opposite laterals every 400 to 500mm.



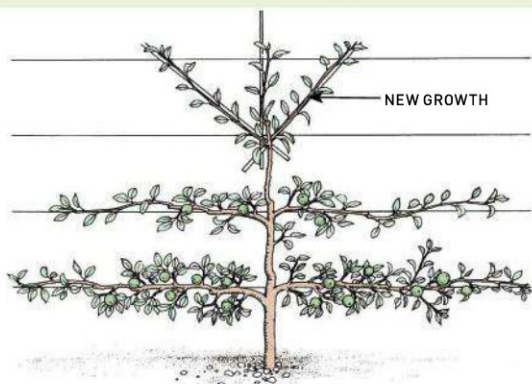
BELGIAN FENCE looks like a lattice structure and is created by planting similar trained vines or trees in a line 600mm apart with their branches trained in opposite 45° angles.

TRAINING AN ESPALIER

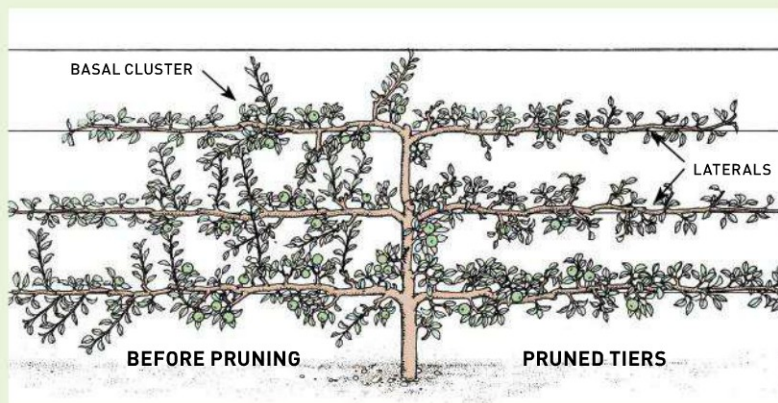
Plant the tree in front of the wire fence or wall trellis, cutting and tying branches as they grow. **TIP** Remove unwanted side branches as they appear.



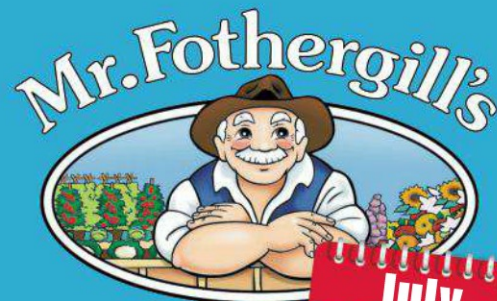
1 TIE THE BRANCHES to the wire with soft ties, choosing two strong limbs that are young, outward facing and the same height as the wire. Cut back the main stem to a bud 50mm above the wire to support the next tier of branches.



2 TIE THE NEW GROWTH next summer, selecting one bud pointing left and one pointing right below the cut made to the main stem at planting. As these shoots grow from the buds, tie them to the wire.

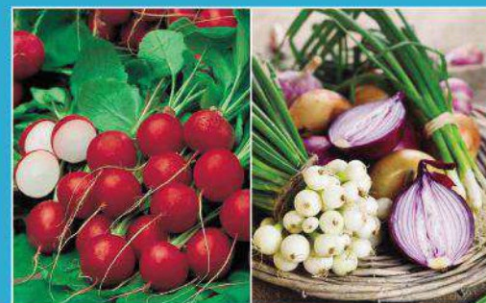


3 CUT BACK GROWTH from the previous year to 10mm in late autumn when the tiers reach the top wire. In late summer, prune shoots from the tiers to three leaves from the basal cluster, and shoots from laterals to one leaf.



What to Grow in

Right now the seed crops that are giving quickest returns are radish and lettuce, but even in cool temperate regions you can still sow many herbs and vegetables such as cabbage, carrot, celery, peas, parsley and broad beans. Now is also a great time to sow members of the onion family, who love the cooler conditions.



In warmer regions now is the best time to start your tomato seeds to establish an early crop and maximize yields before the Summer heat. However, whatever the climate you live in, you can get an early start to the Spring planting season by starting your seeds in a Jiffy Peat Pellet Greenhouse. When Spring arrives, plant the pellet and all in the garden. This will avoid transplantation shock, resulting in quicker establishment of the plant and earlier harvest!



For more inspiration for your garden:
www.mrfothergills.com.au



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START FROM SEED

Here's the inside scoop on how to get your petunias and other annuals off to a toasty start during the cold months

PROJECT JECCA BLAKE

Petunias are popular for adding a splash of winter colour but if you sow them in the garden, frost can kill seedlings as they emerge.

You can nurture the seedlings by growing them indoors until they're ready to be planted out.

To provide the required warmth, shelter and moisture the easiest option is to use a mini greenhouse.

This features a tray with a lid that has vents so you can control airflow.

For successful germination the soil temperature needs to be 16°C which is easily checked with a thermometer.

Sow the seeds in the tray and use a spray bottle to mist the potting mix with water, creating humidity.

Replace the lid and position the mini greenhouse in a spot with lots of light but no direct sun.

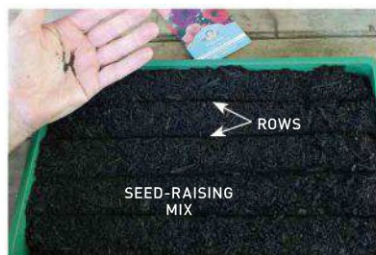
TIP Some greenhouses are called propagation units and have a built-in heater to regulate the soil temperature.



Saxon Mini Greenhouse, \$9, and Gardman Propagation Thermometer, \$8, from Bunnings.

Growing in a mini greenhouse

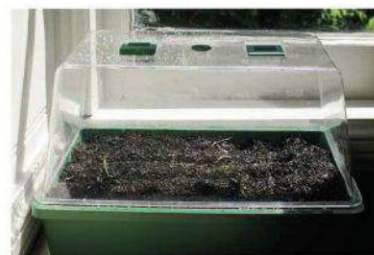
Petunias like a moist, well-drained growing medium and the seeds don't like to be covered in too much soil, so we took the seed cell tray out of the greenhouse and used the base for sowing. **TIP** The seedlings should emerge within a week.



1 ADD SEED-RAISING MIX to the growing tray then make four 10mm deep rows with a ruler, scattering the seeds then covering with a light dressing of mix.



2 WATER IN THE SEEDS by misting the mix with water using a spray bottle to settle the seeds in position, covering the growing tray with the lid of the mini greenhouse to keep the humidity high.



3 POSITION THE GREENHOUSE next to a window that gets morning sun, rotating it every few days so the seedlings grow straight up. Keep the soil moist but not wet. ➤



A favourite for windowboxes and hanging baskets, petunias brighten the winter yard.

PLANT THE SEEDLINGS

Taking petunias from germination to garden bed takes about six weeks.

When the seedlings emerge you can remove the mini greenhouse cover and let the growing medium dry out slightly between waterings.

After about 14 to 21 days the seedlings can be transplanted to pots or a windowbox. Lift them carefully out of the growing medium with a stick, being careful not to disturb the roots or let them dry out.

The seedlings can be put outside on warm days to acclimatise but make sure they're protected from direct sun and wind, bringing them back inside at night.

To plant them out in the garden, choose a spot with good drainage that gets plenty of light but not harsh afternoon sun and has good airflow.

Position petunias about 300mm apart and keep the area weed-free.



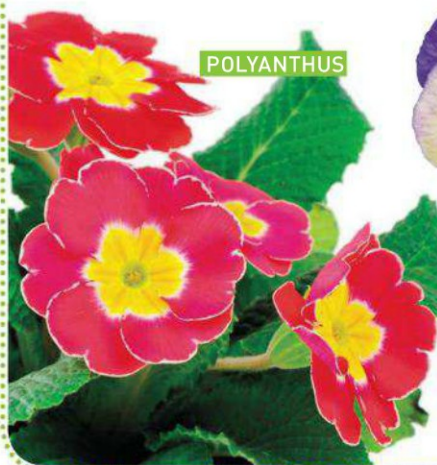
Mr. Fothergill's Petunia Confetti Mixed, \$4. mrfothergills.com.au



With varieties for beds, baskets and pots, petunias are very versatile.

Growing annuals

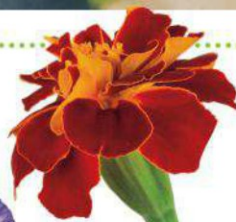
Here's a round-up of other colourful annuals to start indoors from seed for late winter and spring blooms.



POLYANTHUS



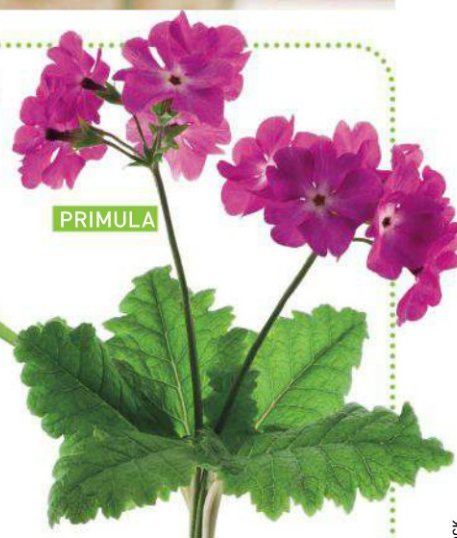
PANSY



MARIGOLD



ZINNIA

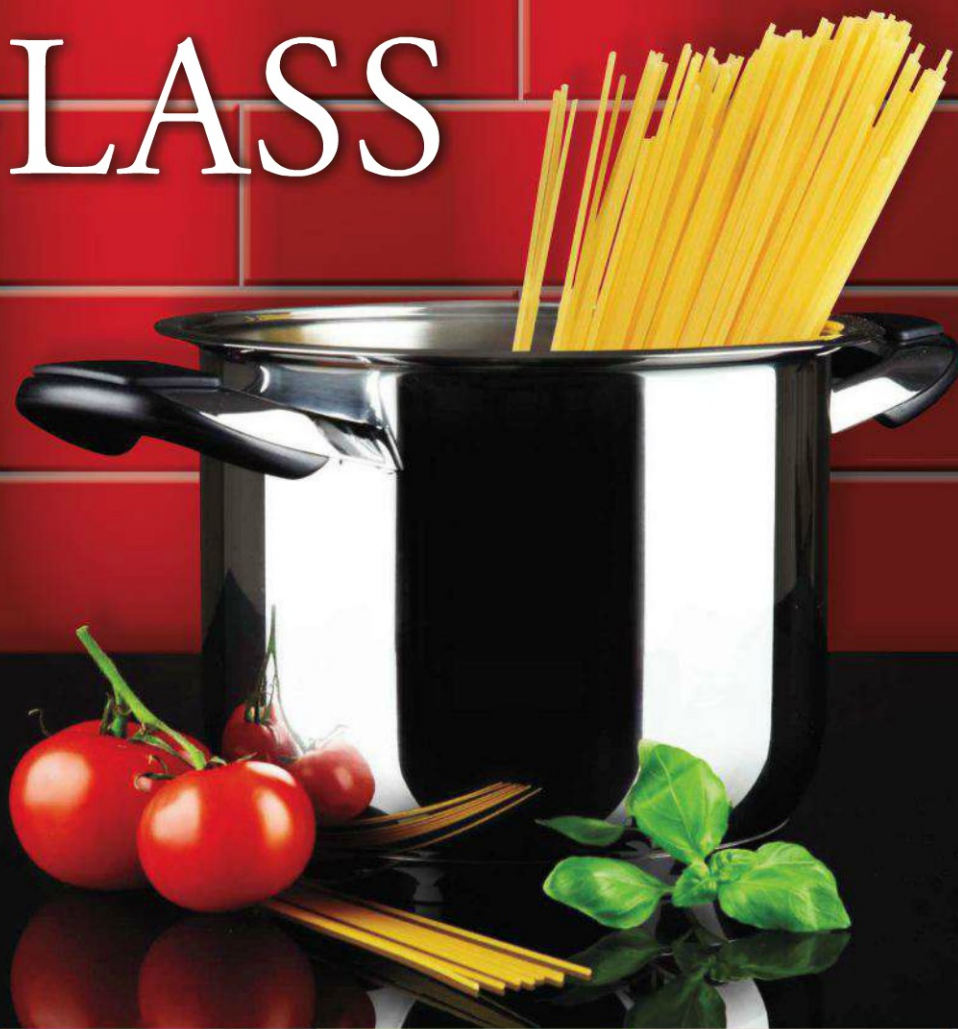


PRIMULA

+ Get more online

For a step-by-step guide to Sowing An Annual Bed, visit handyman.net.au/mag.

GLASS



RED

BLACK

LIME

MUSHROOM

WHITE

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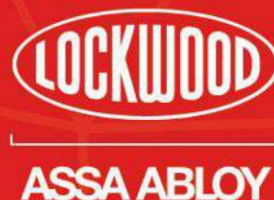
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