

AUSTRALIAN

September 2013
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Handyman

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- + Step-by-step makeovers
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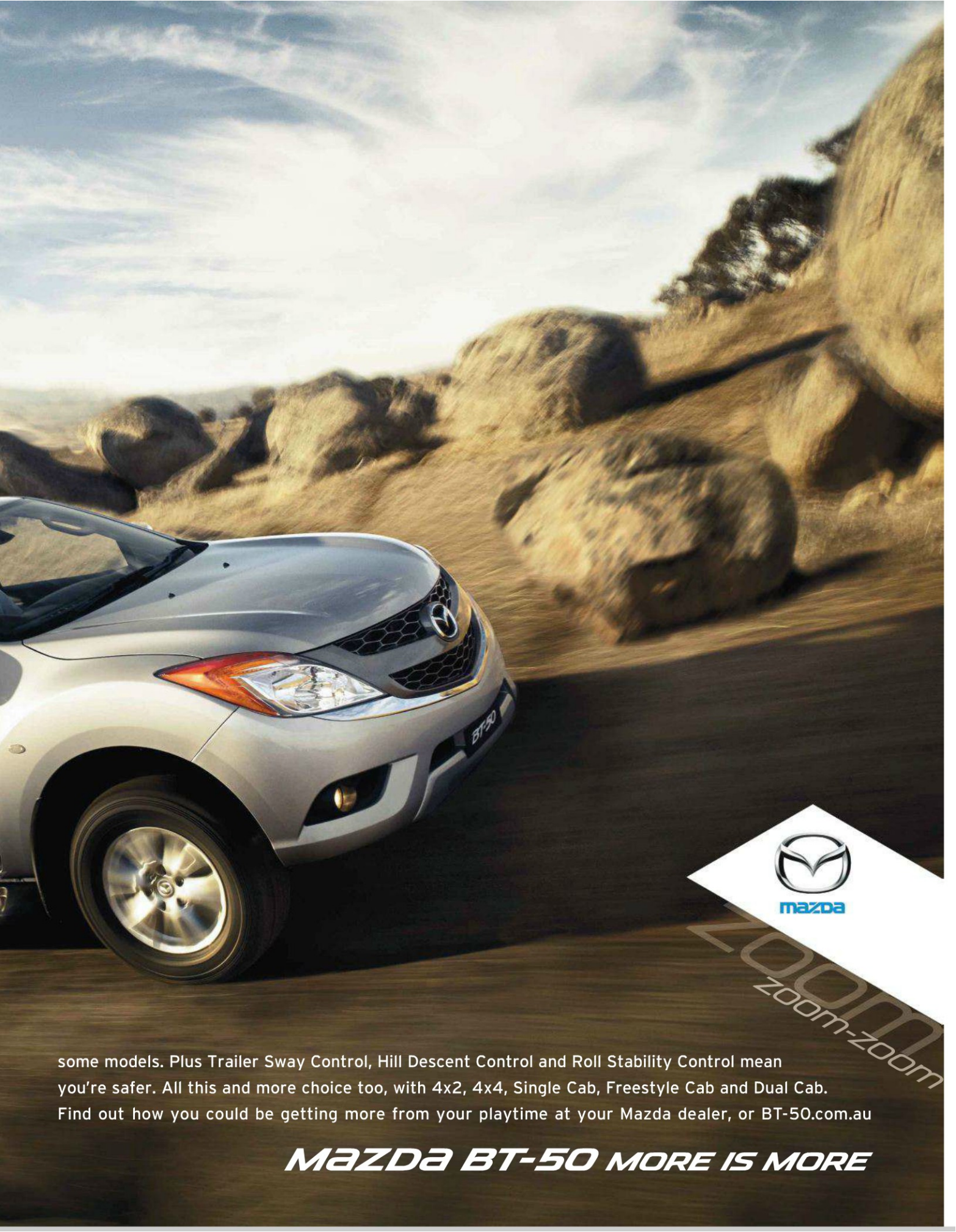
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MAZDA BT-50 MORE IS MORE

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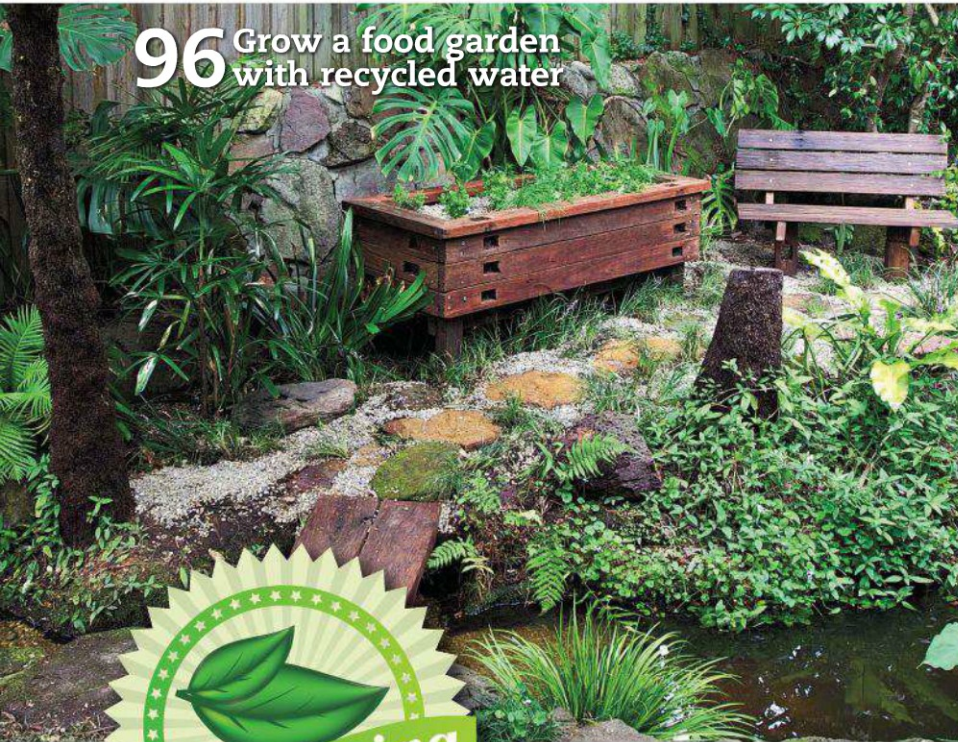
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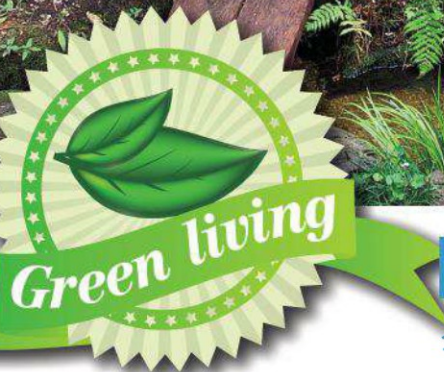
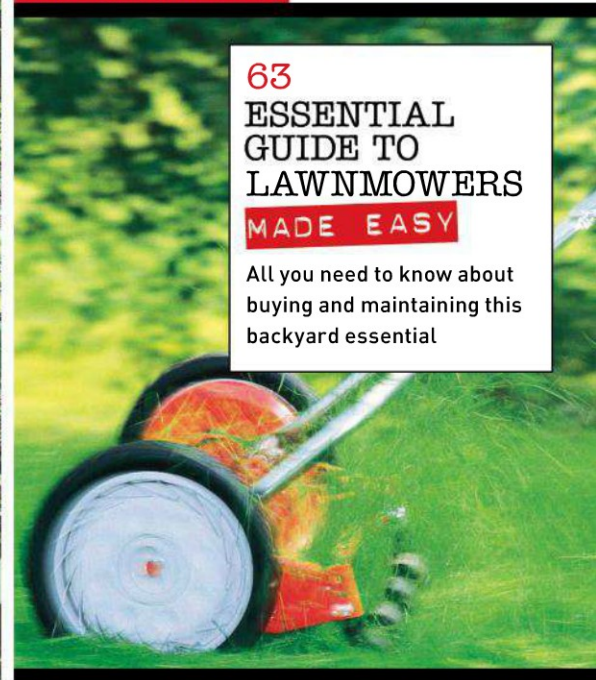
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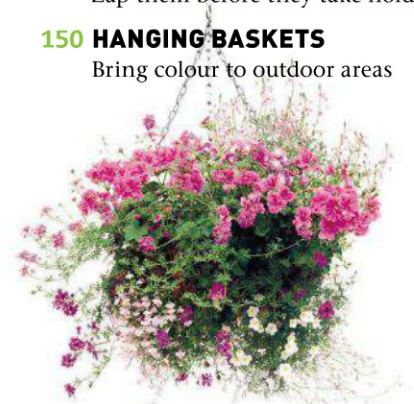
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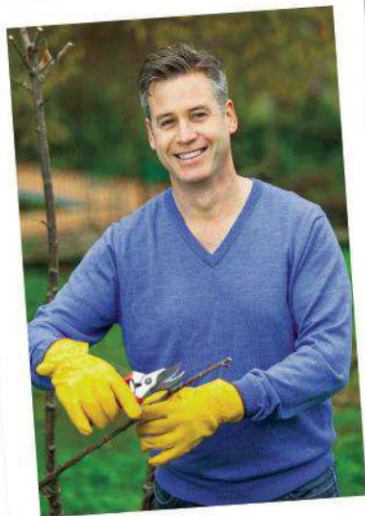
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your rooms, or even the front of your house, turn to page 42 to find out how.

LUSH LAWNS

A thick carpet of green grass not only looks beautiful, it also adds value to your home but you have to find which type of lawn is best suited to your place.

To help you out, we have created the ultimate lawn guide showing how to grow the greenest grass, including what to do, what not to do and how to install irrigation. There's also a guide to lawnmowers with tips, techniques and a buyer's guide.

And if all else fails, you could always install synthetic turf. We even show you how to do that, on page 60.

Before embarking on renovations, wouldn't it be great to gaze into a crystal ball and see what the final outcome will look like?

Cherie Barber, Australia's Renovation Queen, joins *Handyman* to provide one reader each month with a virtual renovation. This issue, she has taken a picture of a dated kitchen and photoshopped it to show what it would look like with a fresh modern facelift.

She also shares her knowledge on how to renovate inexpensively to add value. And Cherie should know as she has renovated more than 35 houses.

If you would like a chance to have Cherie do a virtual makeover of one of

KEEPING IT GREEN

From the kitchen to the garden, this month we have some fantastic tips for reducing waste and saving money.

We also show you a unique sustainable house, how to keep bees and even how to grow vegies in a raised bed, which is fertilised by the water from a fishpond. That would have to be recycling at its best!

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL

More inspiration

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



Plenty of natural light enhances a bright, clean bathroom renovation.



Pinterest

Bathroom makeovers

The bathroom is one of the most costly rooms to renovate so you want to make sure you get it right.

Keeping the plumbing in the same position is one way to save money, but if the overall design doesn't work, it is probably worth the cost of moving things around.

We spoke to several design experts to get their best renovating tips, from page 16.



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WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

A dog's life

Bluey, an Australian cattle dog from Victoria, is said to have been the oldest dog on record. According to Guinness World Records, he died in 1939 at the ripe old age of 29 years and 5 months.



Home & away

Keep your pooch comfy at home or on the road with a Hound House Canvas Dog Kennel, from \$119. Lightweight and collapsible, it's made from waterproof marine grade canvas that stays cool in summer and warm in winter.

houndhouse.com.au



Fangs alert

Does your dog morph into Cujo when greeting visitors? Give them a heads up with a Sandleford 'Beware of the Dog Sign', \$10. Durable and UV resistant, its precut corner holes make it easy to hang on the gate or fence.

bunnings.com.au

Canine comfort

If your pup picks your best cushions for nap time, claim them back by giving your best friend his own luxury mattress to snuggle on. The durable Mojo Doggie Lounge, \$40, is easy to set up. Just release the straps, stretch out the fabric and watch as it expands to full size.

mojobrand.com



Pooch palace

Don't let your dog rough it outside, make him comfortable in a Ferplast Dogvilla, from \$199, featuring a water drainage system, ventilation grille and patented side wall opening panel for extra space. It's made from durable plastic with an aluminium-lined entrance to discourage chewing.

ferplast.com

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For the Trades

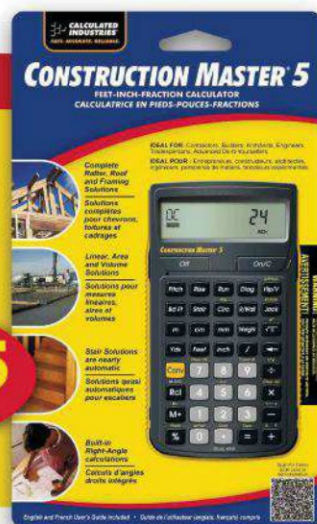
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Australia's top dogs

We love dogs Down Under, with 38% of households counting man's best friend as part of the family and spending about \$3.6 billion every year on those precious pooches. *Australian Geographic* reveals which breeds are the most popular.



Easy entry

Avoid being doorman for the hairiest member of the family with the Hartman Large Pet Door for patio and sliding doors, \$229. Its two-piece aluminium construction with vinyl magnetic flap is designed to fit most doors and can be installed permanently or temporarily for renters. Featuring 4mm tempered safety glass and a sturdy locking function on the flap, it won't compromise the security of your home. hartmangroup.com.au



Prickly pet paws

Fed up with your dog destroying your garden and possums running riot? Discourage your dog for good with the On-Guard Dig Stopper Possum Guard, \$15 for 2m. Bury it in your pet's favourite spot with the plastic spikes facing up, or wrap it around the base of a popular tree with the spikes facing out to stop possums clawing. bunnings.com.au



On the nose

Protect up to 50 square metres of your yard from problem pets with Skedaddle Dog and Cat Deterrent Granules, \$12 for 500g. The non-toxic granules come in an easy-to-use shaker pack and contain citronella and eucalyptus oils that dogs and cats dislike. multicrop.com.au



Stuck on you

Embrace your pets in all their furry glory then freshen up with the Mr Clean Pet Hair & Upholstery Cleaning Mitt, \$5. Just slip it on your hand like a glove and swipe lightly, lifting away stubborn hairs and lint from clothes, bedding, couch and cushions. bunnings.com.au





Chicken Coop

Happy little layers

Making sure your hens are safe and productive is easy with the QIQ FIX Pet Ranch Chicken Coop, \$229. The double-storey coop is simple to assemble, with a hinged lid and doors for easy access when cleaning. The chooks can wander down to the enclosed mesh area via a wooden ramp or roost in the separate laying box.

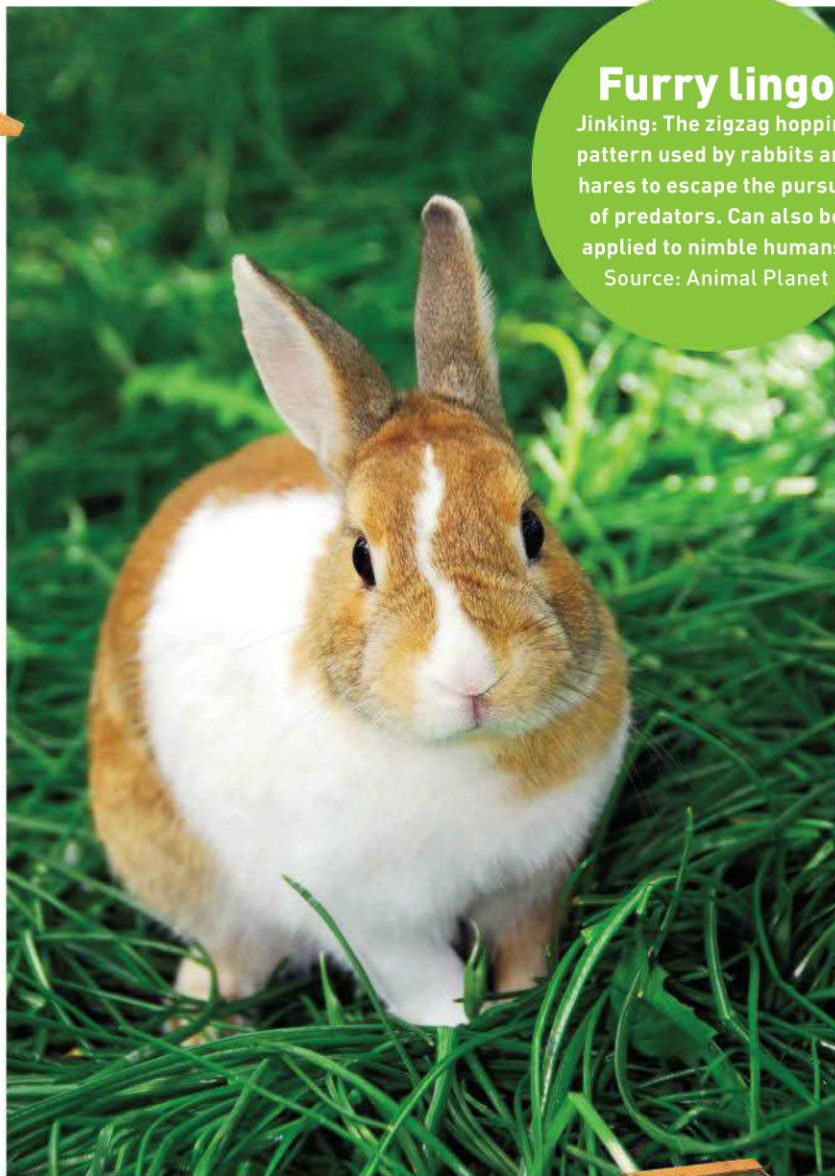
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Purr-fect treat

Sick of your cat scratching the sofa instead of its pole? Cultivate Mr Fothergill's Catnip Seed Raiser Kit, \$6, then rub the herb over the scratching post. Your cat won't be able to get enough of it and will leave the sofa alone. Easy to grow, the kit contains seeds, seed-raising mix, a reusable growing tray and lid.

mrfothergills.com.au



Furry lingo

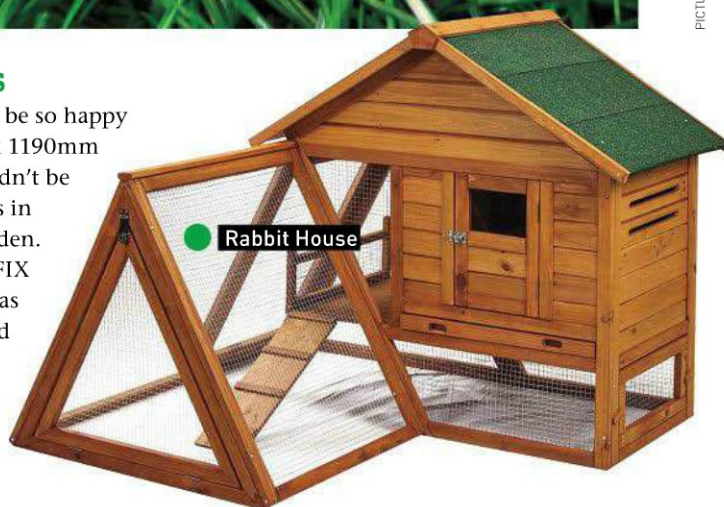
Jinking: The zigzag hopping pattern used by rabbits and hares to escape the pursuit of predators. Can also be applied to nimble humans.

Source: Animal Planet

Bunny bliss

Peter Rabbit would be so happy in this huge 1410 x 1190mm enclosure, he wouldn't be tempted to trespass in Mr McGregor's garden. The spacious QIQ FIX Pet Haven, \$299, has side ventilation and three access doors, so keeping it clean is a breeze.

bunnings.com.au



Rabbit House

PICTURES: THINKSTOCK

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BUYER'S GUIDE

SQUARE TOOLS

1

Trace evidence

Like a square that can be set to any angle, the Empire Sliding Bevel, \$15, can be used to mark cut lines by setting the stock against a surface and tracing along the blade. It's a super handy tool that can transfer an initial angle from an existing workpiece but it can also be set with the aid of a protractor.

2

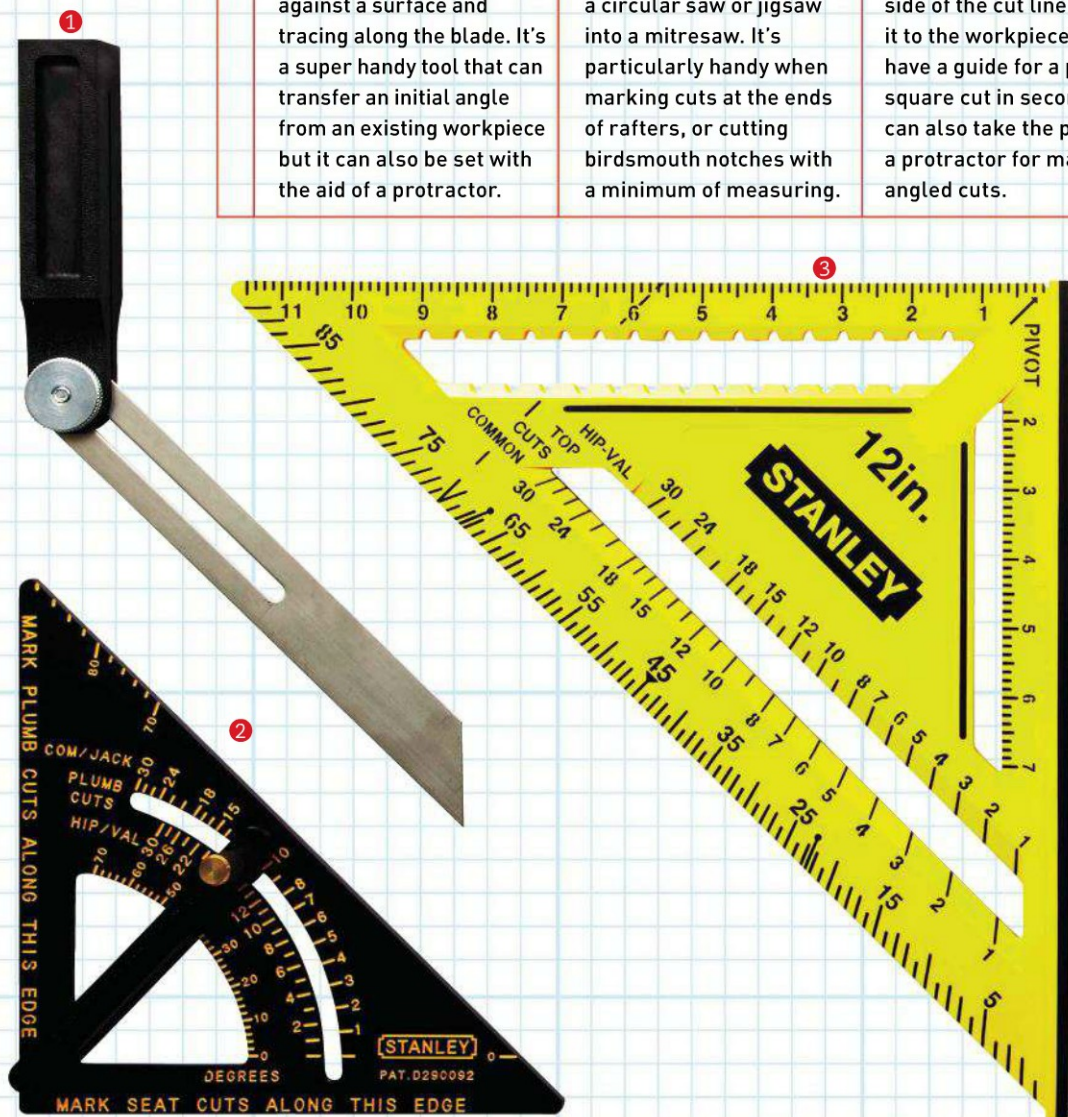
Quick draw

With an adjustable swing arm, the Stanley Quick Square, \$27, can be clamped firmly to act as a saw guide, turning a circular saw or jigsaw into a mitresaw. It's particularly handy when marking cuts at the ends of rafters, or cutting birdsmouth notches with a minimum of measuring.

3

Slip & guide

Slide the Stanley Speed Square, \$20, up to the baseplate of a jigsaw or circular saw with its blade resting against the waste side of the cut line, clamp it to the workpiece and you have a guide for a perfectly square cut in seconds. It can also take the place of a protractor for marking angled cuts.



If you're feeling a bit out of square, invest in tools that will guarantee a desirable angle

4

Try hard

With no protruding bits that can snag on a toolbelt or the edge of your pocket, and no moving parts to come loose, the CraftRight Try & Mitre Square, \$13, is a cheap essential to whip out any time you need to square a line. The joint between the stock and the blade also has a 45° angle for marking mitres.

5

All-in-one

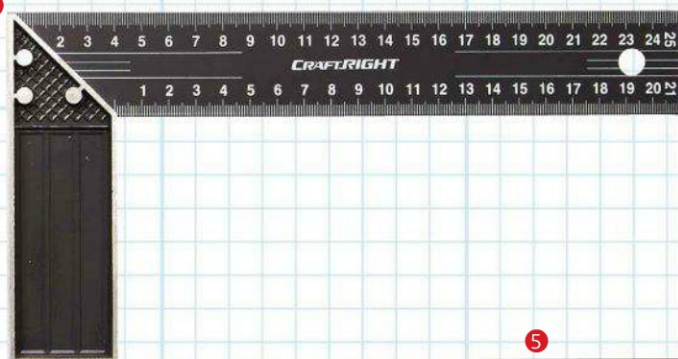
A great all-rounder, the Trojan Combination Square, \$20, can be used to mark level lines, set out mortises, adjust the depth of cut for a circular saw or router, and measure or transfer the depth of one workpiece relative to another. And of course, it's perfect for indicating 90° and 45° angles.

6

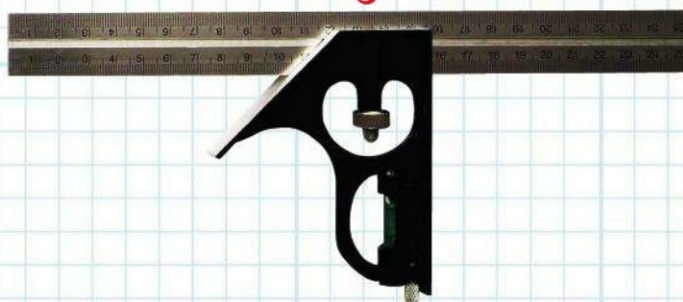
Square up

As its name suggests, the Lufkin Rafter & Framing Square, \$20, also called a builder's square, is for large-scale jobs such as building a deck. The arms of this square are just over 600 and 400mm long to accurately indicate square corners over the greater distances involved in building work.

4

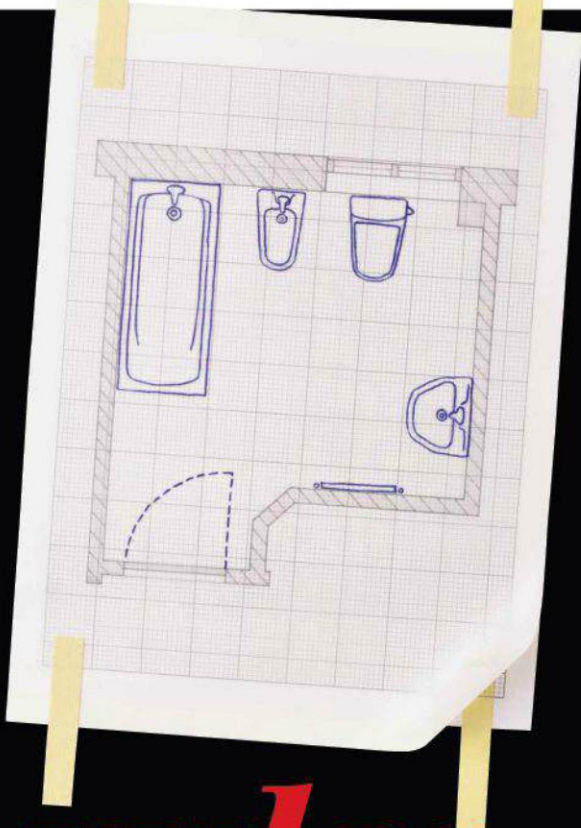


5



6





PLAN THE
RENO

TOP 10 *design rules*

Do the homework and take the time to get the best bathroom for your budget

WORDS SITA SIMONS

A well-planned bathroom is a pleasure to spend time in and since it's a room that is used daily by every member of the family, it's worth getting the design right.

A full bathroom renovation is costly and mistakes can be difficult to live with. Saving money with DIY installation can be tempting, but if your skills are not up to it don't risk a reno disaster and call in the pros.

Shop around for fittings and keep within your budget. While a dream bathroom is great on paper, be realistic when drawing up the plans as moving the plumbing can cost thousands.

To get the best return on your reno investment, follow these 10 simple rules for designing a bathroom.

1 Go for a flush fit

Anything freestanding or fancy may look great when installed, but the bathroom is a space that needs to be regularly cleaned. Reaching in behind awkwardly placed fittings can be difficult, and leaving parts inaccessible can result in a health hazard.

Instead choose flush or floating vanities, toilets and sinks that make cleaning much easier as well as giving the illusion of extra space. ➤



Good storage can take a room from slovenly to serene.

2 Keep to a schedule

You don't want the bathroom to be out of action for long, particularly if it's the only one in the house.

Being well prepared and doing all the research and planning before you start will cut the length of time the room will be out of commission.

The average bathroom renovation takes between one and two weeks, so book contractors and ensure all fittings and fixtures are on site.

Plan a time when perhaps not all members of the household will be there, check in with friends about using their facilities and investigate hiring a portable toilet, if necessary.

3 Be clever with cash

It's important to be realistic about the amount of money you have to spend, allocating the most cash to quality upgrades that improve functionality rather than style.

It's tempting to go for obvious additions that have a big visual impact but a dingy bathroom that could be transformed by a skylight will still look dingy if you simply add an expensive clawfoot enamel bath.

4 Add enough storage

The bathroom gets cluttered when storage is scarce. Well-designed vanities and wall-mounted cabinets are good long-term investments that pay for themselves.

Wraparound shelves, recessed nooks and slimline cabinets all help to streamline small spaces.

5. Get the light right

As in all parts of the house, natural light in the bathroom is desirable. If you're not lucky enough to have a large window, a skylight is a fantastic investment as it gives even, ambient light throughout the daylight hours.

Wall-mounted task lighting is best around the mirror and vanity for grooming as overhead lights cast shadows on the face. Use recessed downlighting for general illumination and access lighting under cabinets, in nooks or around the bath for visual impact and atmosphere.

6 Materials matter

Getting the surfaces right can set the tone of the room. The materials must be moisture resistant and able to withstand high humidity.

Unsealed timber may warp and stain over time, but stone, porcelain, laminates and vinyls work well.

Consider paying a bit extra for superior quality that will look better and stand the test of time.

7 Room for two

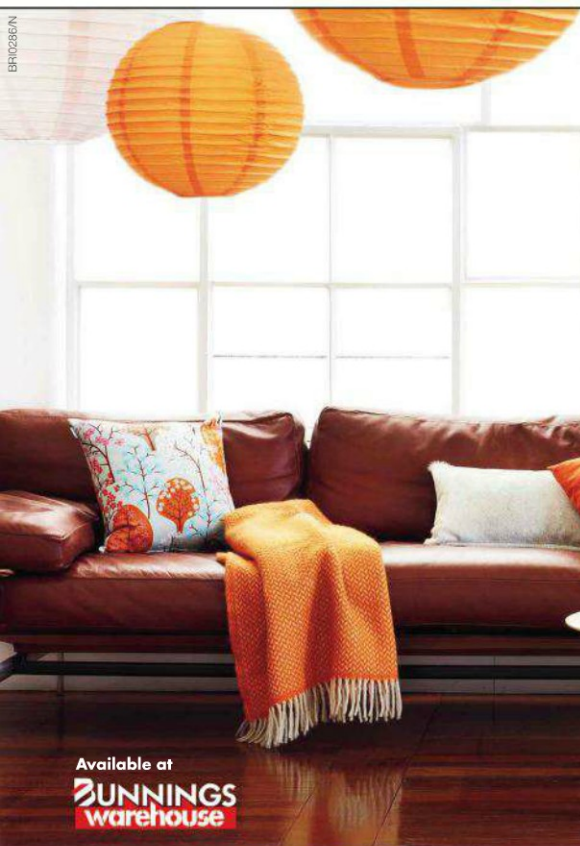
In a family home there may often be more than one person using the bathroom at the same time.

Create a functional space in even the tightest of spots by anticipating individual needs such as power points for appliances and extra storage.

Buy fixtures and fittings that are compact enough to work in the dimensions and allow two people to manoeuvre simultaneously. Avoid sharp corners in a small space. ➤



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8 Mind the view

If you are tearing out your old bathroom suite and rebuilding it completely from scratch, take the opportunity to consider the right location for the toilet.

It should be positioned out of the line of sight when the door is open, and in the most private situation possible so that it's not the first thing that people see when they enter the room.

If you are renovating and not willing to go to the considerable expense of changing the location of the plumbing, experiment with different layouts and consider other ways of screening off the toilet, such as building a partial wall.

9 Function over fashion

The proliferation of renovating blogs and reality TV shows means that ideas for home design and improvement have never been more plentiful and available.

But translating those ideas to your own home won't necessarily work if you are choosing them primarily for their appearance rather than performance or practicality.

Over time, the user-friendliness and functionality of an appliance will become much more important than how it looks.

And like trends elsewhere in the home, following fashion means the room will date and lose its value sooner rather than later.

10 Plan for the future

If you are remodelling a bathroom in a home you anticipate staying in for the long term, planning a few elements for older age will serve you well.

Baths are favourable for young families but not necessarily practical in later life. By eliminating steps, slopes, difficult angles and corners when renovating the bathroom you'll save yourself having to shell out for a redo further down the line.

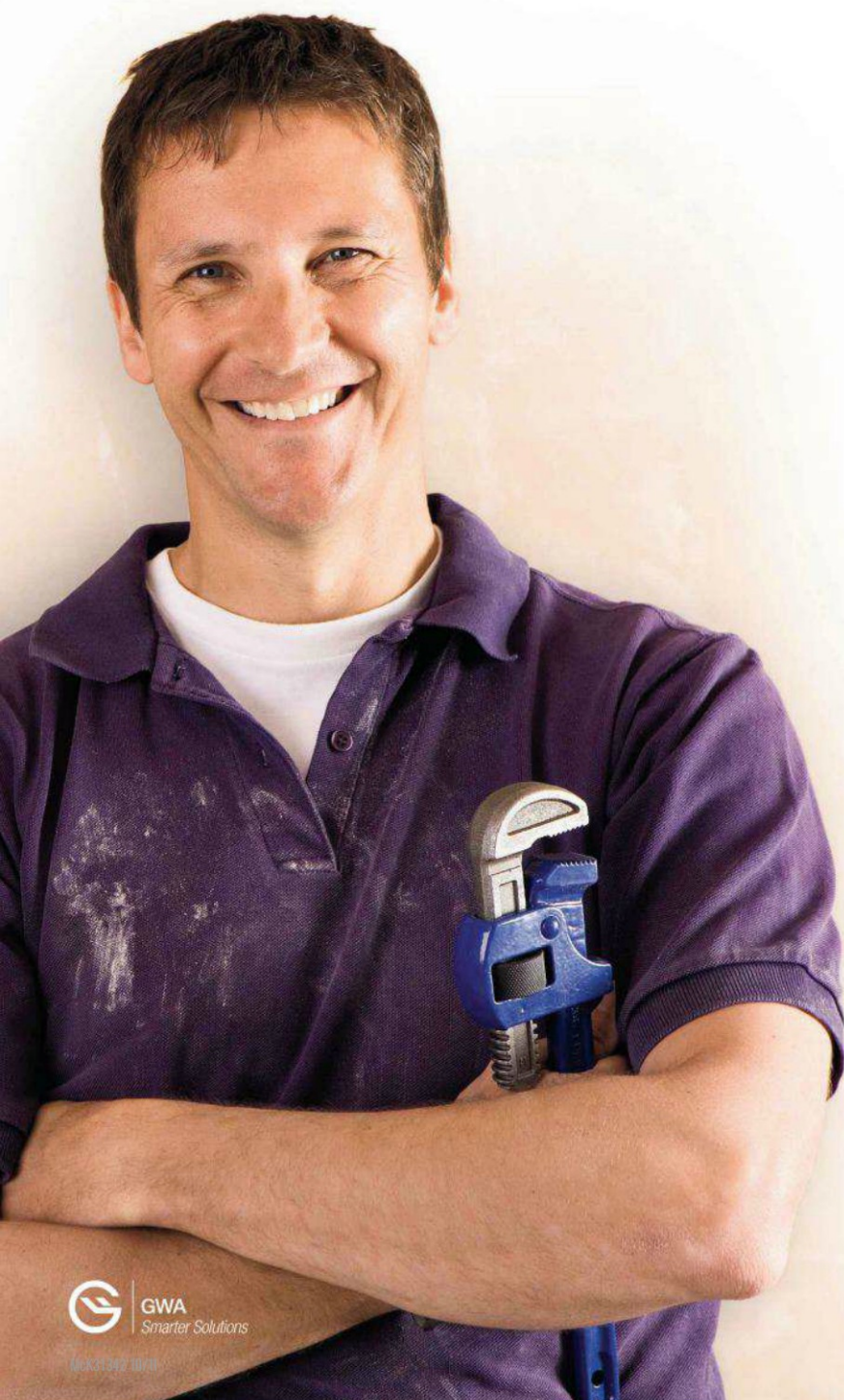


When space is tight, curved lines work better than sharp edges.

PICTURE: THINKSTOCK

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SHAPE SHIFTING

The modern bathroom is one that suits your space and lifestyle so make it your own with elegant fixtures



The softness of rounded, organic shapes is very much on trend. Keeping the traditional elements on track while using form as a point of difference adds spa-like appeal. Create a natural colour scheme to complement the look.

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Start a curvaceous theme with an egg-shaped bathtub and echo with a curved freestanding tap and hemispherical sink. A curved walk-in shower makes the most of corner space while feeling roomy within.

Quay 1200mm wide
Wall Hung Vanity,
\$899.



Modern Freestanding Bath,
1720 x 730 x 740mm, \$1300.



Curved Euro Shower Screen and
Base, 1000 x 1000 x 1900mm, \$999.



GET THE LOOK

Combining shapes and materials turns what can be a sterile space into a room that maximises function and design. Gentle curves, natural stone and moisture-loving plants bring the outside in.



Make a square statement



Caroma Cube Freestanding Bath
1600 x 768 x 560mm, \$1445.

Caroma Track Basin Mixer, WELS 5 Star
6L/min, \$257.



Kaboodle Neve Vanity, \$798.



SPACE
SAVER

AFTER
The frameless glass shower screen opens up the space and is accessorised with a Kenyan kikoy sarong beach towel, \$65, from Mocho (mocho.com.au).

BATHROOM MAKEOVER

Removing an old spa made room for a shower cubicle and new loo

PROJECT **DARREN BRADFORD** MAIN PICTURES **GEOFF BECK**

The spa in this bathroom was only used as a shower space and was taking up room that could be used more efficiently.

And while there was a separate toilet in the house, removing the spa from this bathroom created space for an additional loo.

The tiles on the wall were thick, and in order to remove them it was necessary to take off the plasterboard right back to the studs.

New insulation and wet-area plasterboard were installed before the waterproofing could be applied.

The slate floor was mostly level, so coating it with a self-levelling

compound meant tiles could be laid directly on top, which was much easier than demolishing the slate.

PLANNING THE MAKEOVER

Before starting on the reno, the lighting, heating and colour scheme were worked out in advance.

LIGHTING The single recessed light over the vanity was not bright enough, so it was replaced with three warm white LED recessed downlights.

The light bulb hanging from the ceiling and a plastic ventilation fan were both removed and replaced with a combined light, heat light and vent fan in a stainless steel finish.

HEATING Before the renovation an oil-filled electric heater had been sitting on the floor with its power cord trailing to a socket above the sink.

It looked untidy and obstructed the vanity drawers. A wall-mounted electric heater was installed to free up floor space and improve safety.

COLOUR To avoid trendy shades that might date, sand-coloured floor tiles and alabaster wall tiles were installed.

The other walls hadn't been tiled, so they were used to inject colour into the room and can be easily repainted to change the look. ➤



BEFORE

The spa took up too much space while the slate floor tiles were dated and dull.

Solutions



Revolutionary Suction Technology

The Everloc Solutions range offers a wide selection of contemporary designs with an elegant chrome finish.

Everloc's Super Strong suction system allows for easy installation whilst providing consistent load bearing ability.

Ideal for installing on non-porous surfaces such as glass, tiling, mirror and laminate.

-  **NO DRILLING**
-  **NO SCREWDRIVING**
-  **NO TOOLS REQUIRED**
-  **NO SURFACE DAMAGE**

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everloc.com.au

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Waterproofing wet areas

For any wet-area makeover, making sure the surfaces are properly waterproofed is essential.

Apply the appropriate primer to the walls and floor then a bead of wet-area silicone to all wall and floor joints up to tiling level.

Protect areas prone to movement like wall and floor joints, drains and pipe outlets by embedding a joint band or mat into the first layer of waterproofing membrane.

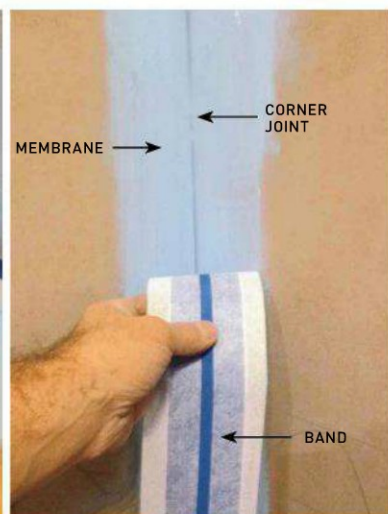
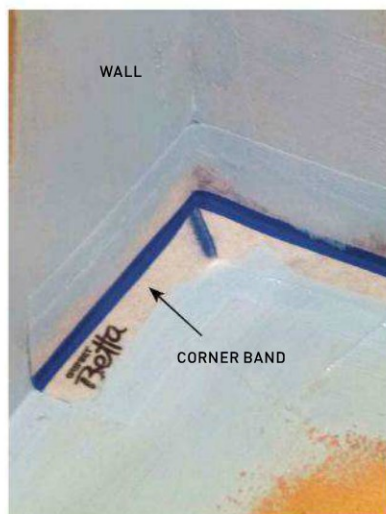
TIP Some local councils require waterproofing work to be carried out by licensed professionals, so always check what applies in your area.



Gripset Betta Under Tile Membrane, \$79 for four litres. gripsetbetta.com



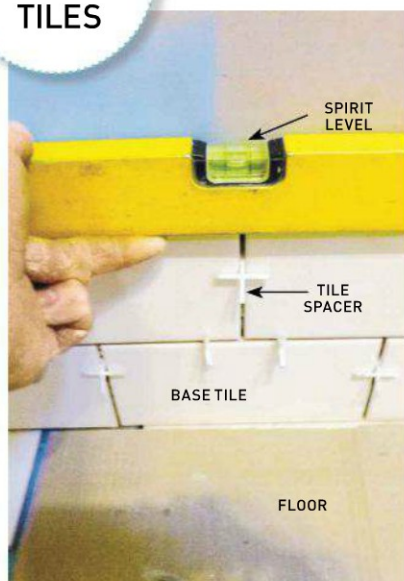
- 1 USE A PAINTBRUSH** to apply a waterproofing membrane to all horizontal and vertical movement joints. Coat the floor and wall joints, waste outlets and floor penetrations with a 1.5mm film of membrane to 75mm wide on either side.



- 2 SET CORNER BANDS** using ready made waterproofing corners to lay banding in tricky areas and ensure a rupture-free seal. Set internal and external corner bands plus pipe sleeves into the first coat of membrane while it is still wet.

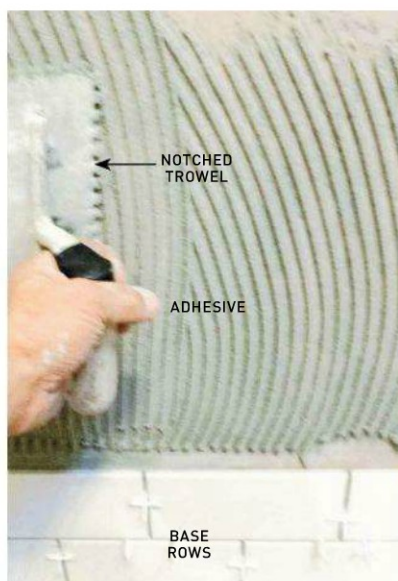
- 3 SEAL THE JOINTS** with cut lengths of straight waterproof banding, overlapping the corner bands and bedding it into the wet membrane. Apply a coat of membrane to the walls and floor and let dry then apply a second coat to the entire area.

LAYING THE TILES



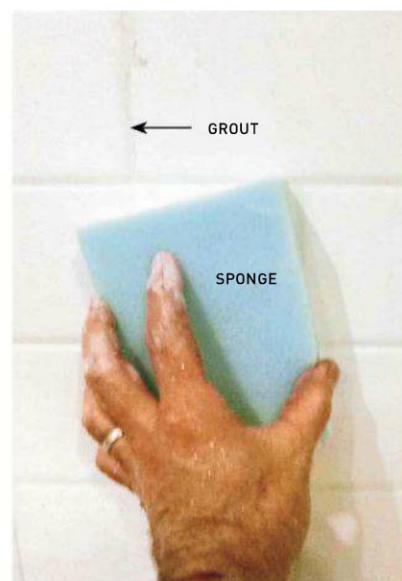
1 Lay the base wall tiles

Check the corners for plumb then draw a vertical setout line that reduces corner cutting. Draw a horizontal line on the walls at the top of the base tile. Lay two rows with spacers using the lines as a guide then check for level.



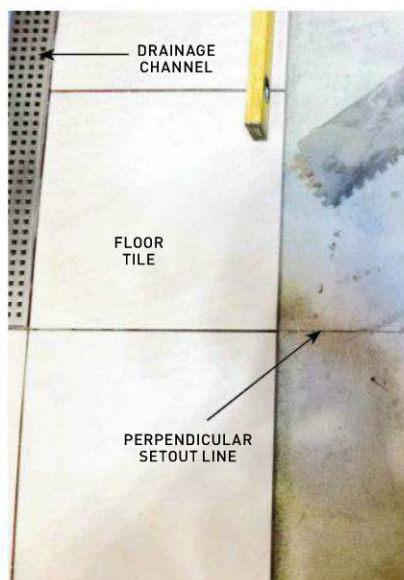
2 Spread the wall adhesive

Use an 8mm notched trowel to spread tile adhesive in an upward motion. Follow the plumb line, bedding the tiles with an up and down push to expel any air then align using spacers, laying one row at a time.



3 Grout the wall tiles

Mix grout to a creamy consistency and work it into the joints diagonally with a sponge float. When the adhesive starts to set, clean the tiles twice using a sponge and water. Let the grout dry then wash the tiles with warm water.



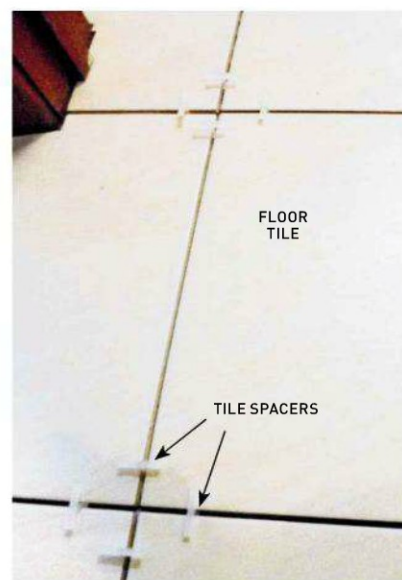
4 Set out the floor tiles

Draw two perpendicular setout lines on the floor using a builder's square. Here, a line was set at a right angle to the shower drainage channel. **TIP** Position the lines to avoid having to make cuts for small tiles at the walls.



5 Spread the floor adhesive

Mix the floor adhesive using a drill and mixing screw then use a 10mm notched trowel to spread one square metre of adhesive at a time. Hold the trowel at a 45° angle and make circular sweeps to get an even adhesive bed.



6 Lay floor tiles

Position the tiles along the marked setout line, here the drainage channel, setting them 1mm higher than the edge. Lay one row at a time and settle each tile, aligning with spacers. Allow the adhesive to dry then apply grout.

Get the look



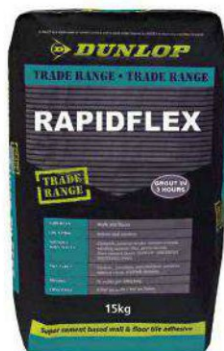
Highgrove 2000 x 875mm Fixed Shower Panel, 10mm safety glass with mounting brackets, \$232. highgroveglass.com.au



Johnson Tiles 200 x 100mm Alabaster Gloss Ceramic Tiles, \$0.58 each. johnsontiles.com.au



Caroma Cube Wall Faced Toilet Suite with soft-close seat, \$1299. caroma.com.au

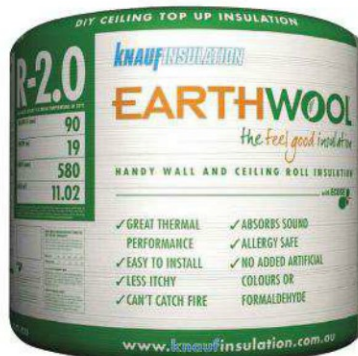


Dunlop Rapidflex Tile Adhesive for walls and floors, \$40 for 15kg. dunlopdij.com

The Affiniti Shower Mixer features an easy installation system, \$75. brasshards.com.au



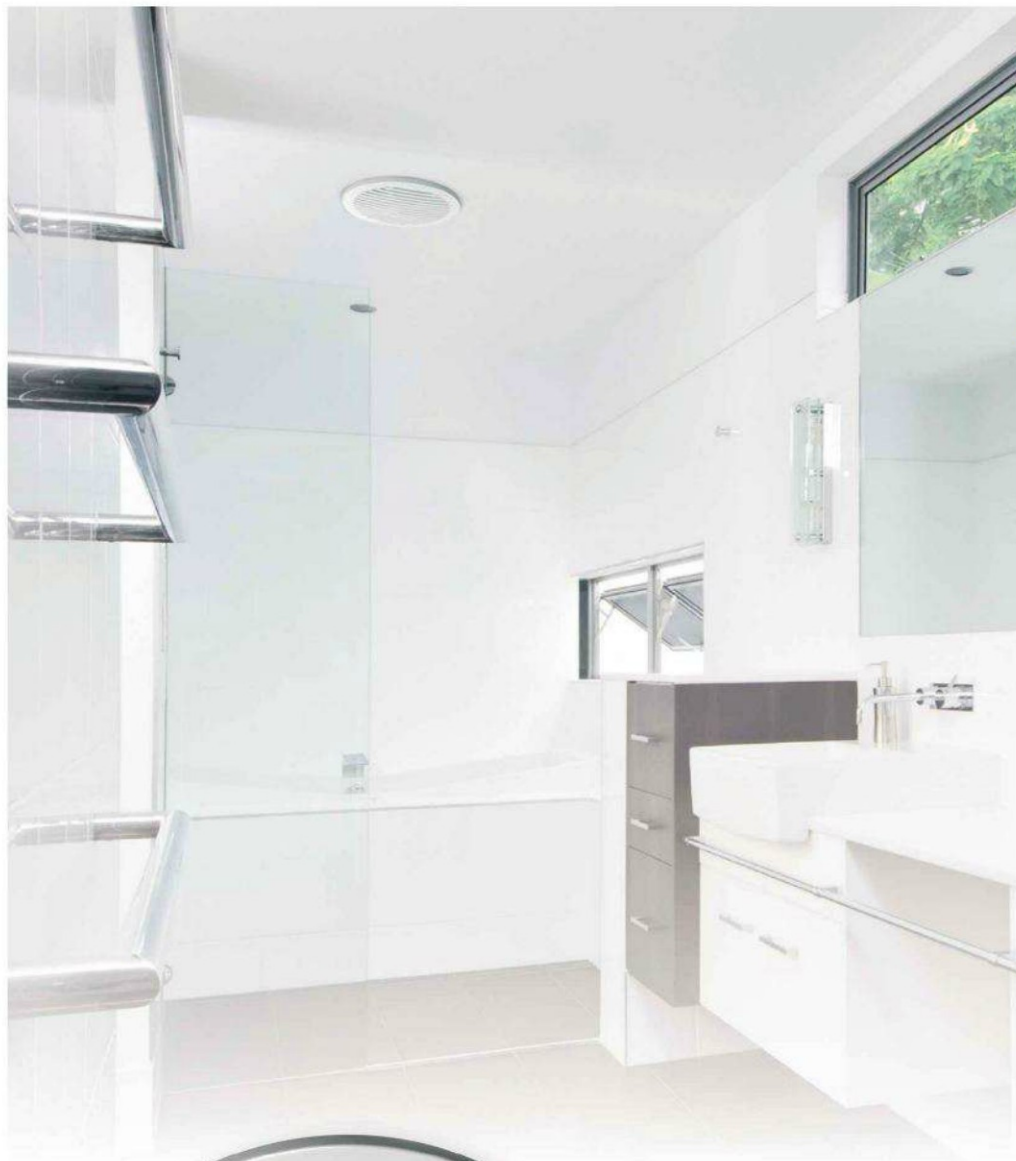
IXL Tastic Neo Remote Single with light, heat lamp and exhaust fan, \$752. ixlappliances.com.au



Knauf Insulation Earthwool R2.0 95 x 580mm Glasswool Insulation Roll, \$35. knaufinsulation.com.au



Dunlop Flexible Coloured Grout, \$22 for 5kg. dunlopdij.com



Eco

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Powerful Extraction
Ventflo 200
- 340 m³/h
Ventflo 250
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The new IXL Eco Ventflo is available in two sizes and is the must have ventilation unit for your bathroom. With powerful extraction, self-sealing draught stoppers and suitable for installation directly above a shower, keeping your bathroom free from unwanted moisture build up and cold draughts has never been easier.

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DESIGNER
MAKEOVER

RENEW THE LOO

Install a new toilet and revamp the walls and floor to bring a small space bang up to date

PROJECT **LEE DASHIELL** MAIN PICTURE **GEOFF BECK**

The toilet may be the smallest room in the house but there's no reason it can't have style.

Last renovated 25 years ago, this powder room looked cold and uninviting. The slate floors were dark, making the room appear

smaller and the basic toilet had an unusually large setout, with all the plumbing visible.

The challenge was to create a warm, tidy, modern look in a small space.

■ **RETILE THE FLOOR** with light coloured large-format tiles to make the room seem bigger.

■ **CREATE A FEATURE WALL** using glossy black tiles laid in a brickwork pattern with a cream surround.

■ **REPLACE THE TOILET** with a sleeker and more streamlined model.

■ **COVER THE WALLS** with grasscloth wallpaper for texture and warmth.

■ **DECORATE WITH ARTWORK** that suits the look and adds atmosphere such as framed photos and statues.

■ **ADD BLING** with a light fitting that complements the decor and injects a bit of sparkle, like the Mercator Zahlia black shade with gold lining, \$60 (mercator.com.au). ➤



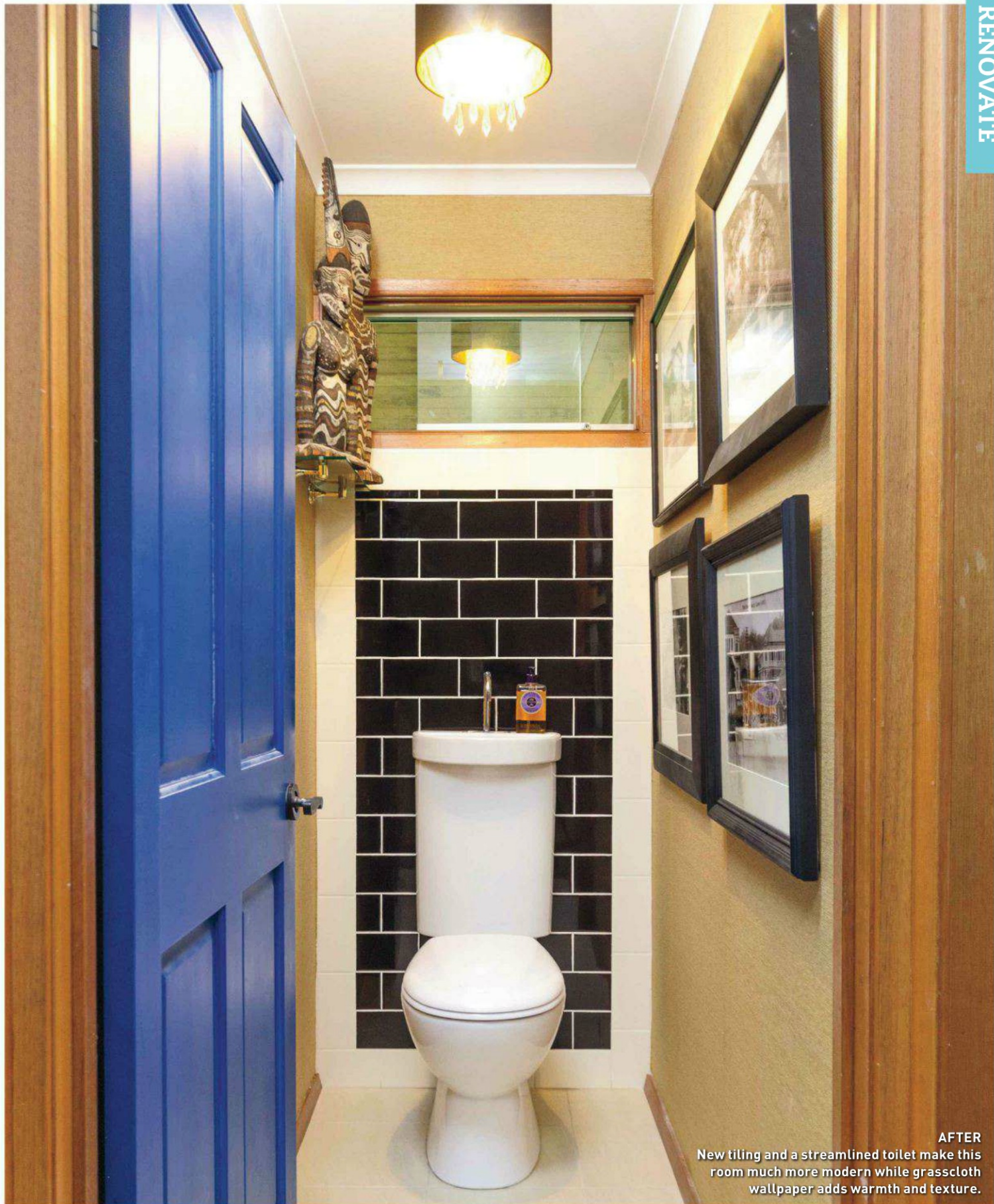
Saving water

To save space and water the Caroma Profile 5 Deluxe Toilet Suite with integrated handbasin was chosen for this powder room.

It uses fresh water for hand washing which then flows into the cistern to be stored for flushing the toilet. With a soft-close seat and dual flush this self-contained unit is just \$884 (caroma.com.au).

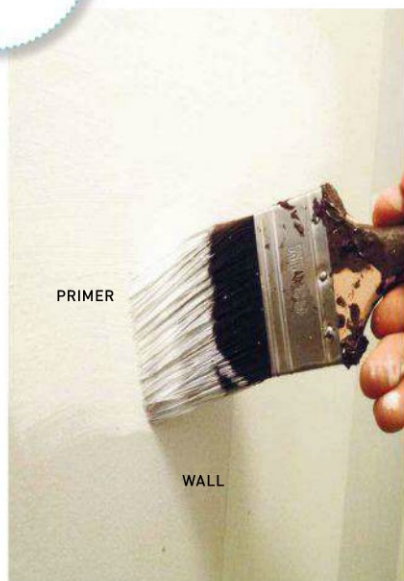


BEFORE
Cold and bare with stripy walls and a slate floor, this loo was a mishmash of styles.

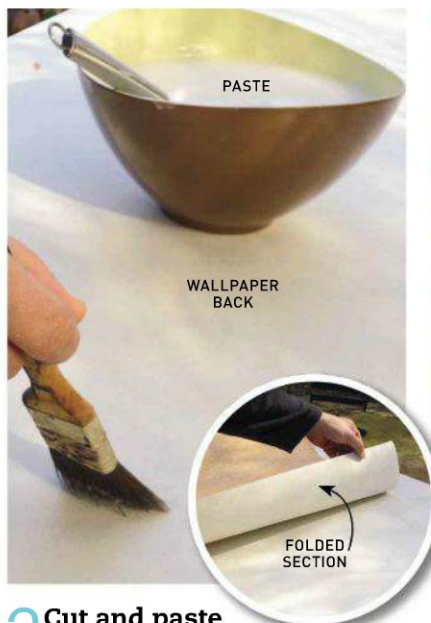


AFTER
New tiling and a streamlined toilet make this room much more modern while grasscloth wallpaper adds warmth and texture.

HANG THE WALLPAPER



1 Prepare the surface
Repair any cracks or dents in the walls, mask off the skirting boards and apply primer with a paintbrush. Use an oil-based primer to prevent wallpaper paste being absorbed, creating a base for better adhesion.



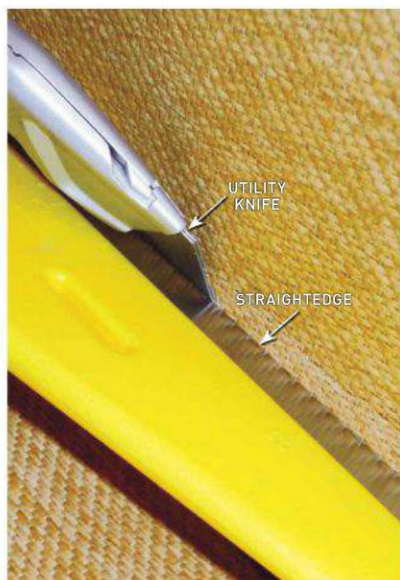
2 Cut and paste
Measure the wall and cut the paper to length with 100mm extra. Apply wallpaper paste to the back of the sheets with a brush then fold the top and base quarters of the sheet into the centre to keep the paste moist.



3 Hang the first sheet
Starting from one corner, draw a plumb line using a spirit level. Unfold the top half to position the first sheet, aligning the edge with the marked line and overlapping the cornice by 50mm, leaving the base folded.



4 Smooth the surface
Run a vinyl smoother across the top half of the wallpaper sheet, moving up and down then diagonally away from the edge to work out air bubbles and wrinkles. Unfold the base half and continue smoothing.



5 Trim the overhang
Use a utility knife and straightedge guide to trim the overhang. Align the second sheet by matching the pattern then press the edge, working out any wrinkles with a vinyl smoother. Wipe off excess paste with a damp sponge.



Cutting wallpaper

Grasscloth wallpaper was used in this powder room. It features variations in tone throughout, so the colour at the seams will always show a visible variance.

To create the least contrast when using textured wallpaper, work with a few rolls at a time.

Compare adjoining drops before cutting from the roll, moving them up and down to match the colour closely.



CUSTOMISE PICTURE FRAMES

To decorate the revamped powder room, vintage prints were hung on a wall. Having the pictures professionally framed would have cost \$270 each, but some clever scouting around and a little DIY resulted in a saving of \$830.

Four frames were bought from an op shop and painted all the same colour to unify the different styles. The frames and glass were in excellent condition and cost between just \$5 and \$20 each.

The glass was removed and two coats of matt black spray paint applied to the frames.

The pictures were professionally mounted in the frames for \$50 each.



+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for step-by-step instructions on How To Make A Picture Frame.

miXX

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AFTER

Laying the tiles DIY saved enough money for a new shower, toilet and vanity to streamline and modernise the bathroom.

Half price bathroom

Handyman reader Alex Goodwin and his partner Samantha consulted their favourite magazine when tiles started falling off their shower wall.

The couple were inspired by the easy to follow step-by-step instructions and decided to renovate the whole bathroom with a modest budget of just under \$3500.

After talking to builder friends and staff at various hardware stores Alex estimates that the renovation would have cost at least double that amount if done professionally.

'In total it took seven weeks and included new plasterboard, floor and wall tiles with a mosaic feature strip, toilet, shower, taps and rose, mirrored cabinet and vanity.

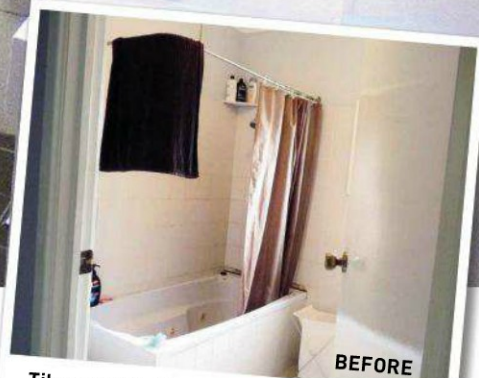
'We gutted the room and demolished the old bathtub ourselves with our nosy cat, Billy acting as foreman, and saved heaps of money in the process.

'We'd never tiled before but found the process fun and it was great to see an end result,' says Alex.

Cash for DIY?

Send us photos of your DIY project for your chance to win \$300 and be published in *Handyman*. Take before and after high-resolution pics, plus one of yourself, and simply submit them online.

handyman.net.au



BEFORE

Tiles were falling off the wall in this dated bathroom with tub and shower curtain.



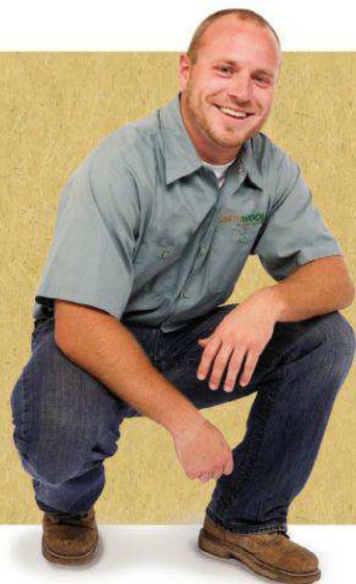
Billy the cat inspects the work in progress as the bathroom is gutted.

KNAUF INSULATION

it's time to save energy

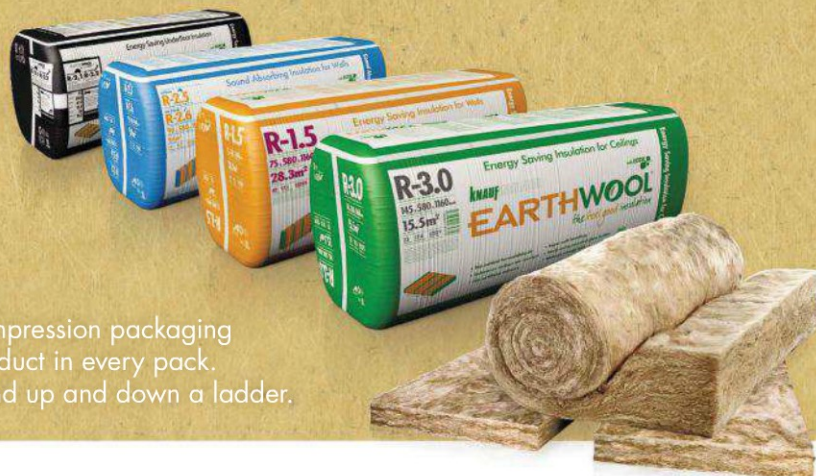
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the feel good insulation



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Earth Wool's unique compression packaging means there's more product in every pack. Less trips to the store and up and down a ladder.



Choose your energy saving performance and comfort level.

WALLS				ACOUSTIC PARTITIONS		CEILINGS					UNDER-FLOOR	SPACE BLANKET	
R-1.5 430mm 580mm	R-2.0 430mm 580mm	R-2.5 430mm 580mm	R-2.7 430mm 580mm	11KG 450mm 600mm	14KG 430mm 580mm	R-3.0 430mm 580mm	R-3.5 430mm 580mm	R-4.0 430mm 580mm	R-5.0 430mm 580mm	R-6.0 430mm 580mm	R-2.1 480mm 610mm	R-1.3 1200mm	R-1.8 1200mm
BASIC energy saving for the budget conscious home owner	SUPERIOR energy saving and acoustic performance	ULTRA energy saving and high density sound blocking performance		BASIC sound absorbing performance	ULTRA sound absorbing performance	BASIC energy saving performance	SUPERIOR energy saving performance			ULTRA energy saving performance	SUPERIOR energy saving performance	SUPERIOR anti-condensation and energy saving performance	ULTRA anti-condensation and energy saving performance
75mm	90mm	90mm		50mm OR 75mm		145mm	175mm	195mm	210mm	275mm	75mm	55mm	75mm

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

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WALL



UNDERFLOOR



CEILING

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SPRING CLEAN SECRETS

Get the busiest room in the house sparkling this season with these top 10 tips to banish grime

WORDS **ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT**



PICTURE THINKSTOCK

TIME SAVERS

For most families the bathroom is a morning battlefield, meaning that it can get filthy fast.

Water, soap, toothpaste, hair products and makeup are thrown at its surfaces every day in the morning rush, and scrubbing it all off can be tricky and exhausting.

And with a huge 50% of Australian families reportedly feeling stressed for time, cleaning duties are often put on the back burner.

Hardly surprising when you consider that we're already spending an average of two hours on chores around the house every single day.

1 Buff off grime

If your clear shower doors are starting to look like frosted glass then the soap scum has become nearly impossible to remove and normal cleaning products just won't cut it.

Pick up some polishing compound from your local hardware or auto parts store and use an orbital buffer to polish the scum off for a streak-free finish.

TIP Remove the doors and buff them clean in the garage.



Ozito 110W Orbital Buffer Polisher, \$35. ozito.com.au

This spring, take back control of your bathroom with these no-fail techniques and fast-acting products that will make it easier to clean and keep it gleaming for longer.



De-Solv-it Citrus Based Cleaner, \$16 for 750ml. rcr.com.au

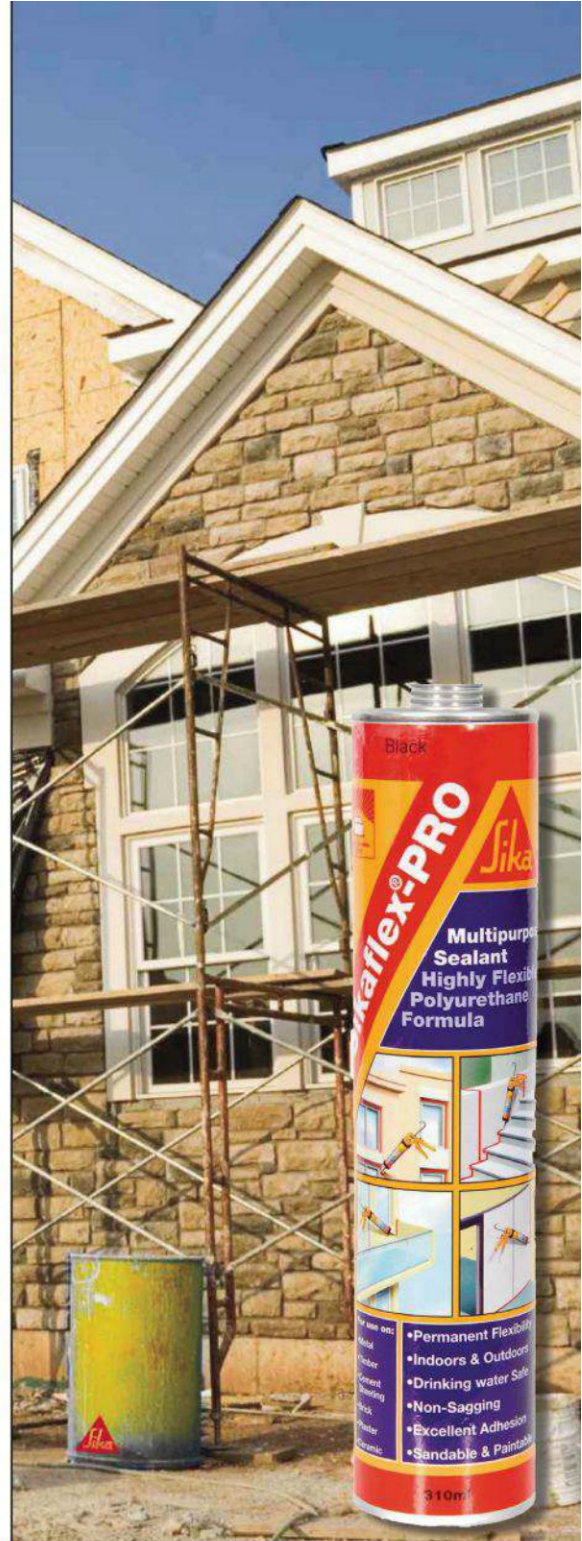
2 Polish up

For a brilliant result with minimum elbow grease, microfibre cloths are the best choice. They pick up dust, wipe off smudges, don't shed fibres and won't leave streaks or scratches.

Microfibre cloths can be used wet or dry on glass, mirrors, countertops, tiles and fixtures. **TIP** Use a cleaning solution first, dry the area then polish off with a microfibre cloth to a high shine.



Glitz Microfibre Glass Cloths, \$9 for a three pack. cleanwithglitz.com.au



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3 Prevent build-up

When the beads of water on your glass shower door dry out, they leave minerals behind that are at best unsightly and at worst can be tough as nails to remove if you allow them to build up.

Stop the water from beading on the surface in the first place by coating the glass with a treatment such as Enduro Shield, which repels water, soap scum and grime.

Follow the instructions on the packet to apply the treatment to your glass shower door for lasting clarity.



Highgrove Enduro Shield Glass Kit, \$139 for 500ml. enduroshield.com.au

4 Remove rust

If you have high levels of iron in your water supply and struggle with rust stains in the toilet or bathtub, there is a removal solution that works.

Ranex Rustbuster cuts through rust quickly to leave your bathtub looking like it came straight from the showroom. Just apply the rustbuster with a cloth and wait a few minutes before rinsing off with clean water.

TIP For stubborn stains, reapply and scrub the surface with a brush.



Ranex Rustbuster, \$24 for 1L. bondall.com/rustbuster/

5 Dirt buster

Whether it's built-up soap scum on the shower walls, ground-in dirt on the floor tiles or dried toothpaste on the sink, a Mr Clean Eraser Pad will power through it fast.

Melamine pads are especially useful for removing stubborn dirt from porous floor tiles and getting those non-slip strips in the bottom of your tub clean.

Just dampen the sponge and rub over the target area.

TIP Unlike regular sponges they wear out quickly, so stock up.



Mr Clean Melamine Eraser Pads, \$6 for a 4 pack, from Bunnings.

6 Greener cleaner

To clean your bathroom thoroughly without upsetting Mother Nature, mix up this planet-friendly solution.

In a 5L bucket, combine a cup of distilled vinegar, three tablespoons of borax, 3.8L of hot water and half a cup of natural cleaning soap. Add 10 to 15 drops of tea tree, lavender or lemon oil for a nice fragrance.

Stir well, then fill a spray bottle with the solution to clean tiles, vanities and painted woodwork or apply to floors with a squeeze mop such as the Oates Sqwivel Mop for easy manoeuvrability in tight spaces.

TIP Store any extra in a bottle for next time.



Oates Sqwivel Mop, \$19. oates.com.au

7 Clean grout

Is the grout in your bathroom breeding more fungus than a petri dish in a lab? Claim it back with a grout pen.

Selleys Grout Stain Whitener can restore clean white lines to your tiled walls and contains an antimicrobial to break the mould cycle, preventing new spores from taking hold.

Applying the paste takes patience, but it's time well spent as your newly whitened grout will be protected against future stains.



Selleys Grout Stain Whitener, about \$9 for 280g. selleys.com.au

8 Vacuum first

If you've ever been driven nuts pushing hairballs around the bathroom floor when mopping, you should try vacuuming before you start cleaning.

Begin at the top, sucking dust from light fixtures, then work down around the room, before methodically vacuuming the floor. A wet-and-dry vacuum with an upholstery brush attachment will work best.



Dirt Devil 6V Wet & Dry Hand Vac, \$29. dirtdevil.com.au

9 Detachable toilet seat

No matter how hard you try, cleaning the hinges on the loo is tricky and there's always some cleaning fluid that seeps out later. A detachable toilet seat is the solution to this particular problem.

The Caroma Germgard Seat snaps on or off for easy access when cleaning and is coated with an additive that disrupts the metabolic process of microorganisms to inhibit bacteria.



Caroma Germgard Toilet Seat, \$45. caroma.com.au

10 Scrub and wax

Give your showerhead and taps a facelift by scrubbing them with CLR Bathroom & Kitchen Cleaner to erase calcium and lime deposits, soap, dirt and tarnish. Rinse before buffing with car wax to keep them shiny for up to three months.



CLR Bathroom & Kitchen Cleaner, \$14 for 750ml. clrbrands.com.au

DIY SAVERS

Learn how to save time, money and effort.

Packed with practical hints and clever shortcuts, *How to Clean Just About Everything* (\$50, readersdigestdirect.com.au) is the ultimate household helper.



For An Effortless Clean...

- Antibacterial
- Remove Soap Scum
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BATHROOM
RENO

DIY OR TRADIE?

Be clear about your skills and know when to call in the professionals



There is plenty you can do in a bathroom reno to save money without compromising safety standards but knowing your limitations and the legalities is key.

Overestimating what you can achieve in terms of quality and time is the DIYer's downfall, and skimping on quality can cost you more in the end.

Warranties and insurance for many products may be void unless

installed by a licensed tradie and in most cases you need a compliance certificate to make a claim.

Anything involving plumbing or wiring is off limits, but jobs you can do yourself include stripping and demolishing the old bathroom.

Replastering, tiling, painting and installing fixtures are all DIY jobs.

TIP If you are doing a complete reno, factor in skip hire or waste removal.

General guidelines

A plumber and a sparkie are essential and, depending on your state and council regulations, a waterproofer may be required.

Tiling and painting can be done DIY but be realistic about your skills and the value of your time before getting stuck in.

PAYING THE PROS

TRADE	WORK	COST
PLUMBER	A licensed plumber will disconnect and reconnect the services, as well as installing tapware, toilets, sinks, showers and baths. You'll need a plumber to move or reconnect pipes and install waste outlets.	About \$70 an hour. If you don't relocate plumbing then budget for \$1200.
SPARKIE	A licensed electrician has to do all hard wiring of lighting and power, and can also install exhaust fans, heaters and power outlets.	About \$60 to \$70 an hour plus appliance costs.
WATERPROOFER	Waterproofing is essential to prevent leakage that can cause structural damage and damp. Termites are also attracted to wet and warm environments. It's illegal to DIY the waterproofing in some areas.	An average-sized bathroom costs about \$600 to waterproof.
TILER	A pro charges by the square metre, plus materials. The final quote will depend on logistics and the condition of the walls and floor.	From \$2000 for labour, plus materials costs.
PAINTER	A pro quotes for a full job but the final bill also takes logistics such as height of the room, access and preparation requirements into account.	About \$50 an hour plus the cost of the paint.



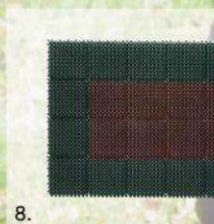
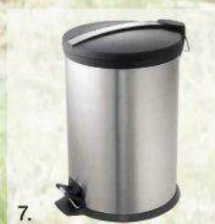
Gotta love a good spring clean.

Whatever you need to clean, Oates has a product to meet your needs. For over 80 years we've been making innovative, great value cleaning products that you can rely on to get the job done, easily and effectively.

From scourers to mops, brushes, brooms, buckets, sponges and wipes, Oates® is the name you can trust.

See our full product range at www.oates.com.au

Whatever you clean, Oates® cleans best!



1. Household Deck Scrub

B-12401

- Short, stiff durable synthetic bristles for aggressive scrubbing
- Ideal for scrubbing large areas, concrete, decking and patios
- 22mm powder coated handle

2. Supreme Garden Broom

B-11306F

- Ideal for concrete & paved areas
- Extra stiff dense bristles for heavy duty outdoor use
- 22mm powder coated steel handle

3. 450mm Medium Stiff Outdoor Broom

B-12135

- Stiff durable bristles ideal for concrete, paving and outdoor surfaces

4. 600mm Medium Stiff Outdoor Broom

B-12133

- Stiff durable bristles ideal for concrete, paving and outdoor surfaces

5. Catch All™ Broom & Dustpan Set

B-10411F

- Save time – sweep, collect & go
- Compact dustpan set conveniently clips onto slimline broom
- Angled bristles for tight spots & skirting boards
- 22mm powder coated steel handle

6. Sqwivel® MK2 Squeeze Mop

MS-020

- Unique rotating sphere enables mop to swivel and glide over floors
- Heavy duty wringing mechanism
- Angled mop head for getting into tight spots
- 22mm powder coated steel handle

7. Stainless Steel Designer Round Pedal Bin 20L

BB-020SS-2

- Hygienic heavy duty opening mechanism
- Durable inner bin with handle
- Non-slip foot pedal and non-marking base
- Convenient carry handle

8. Grit Guard® Mat Large

MAT-158

- Open back design helps eliminate build up of dirt making mat easy to clean
- Unique 'pin' like bristle design helps remove dirt from footwear
- Mat can be joined together to make larger mats

FROM DRAB TO FAB

Design software shows how to transform a 1980s relic for less than \$2000 with a few cosmetic touches

DIY profits

Cherie Barber is the director of Renovating For Profit (renovatingforprofit.com.au), a workshop training provider that teaches everyday Aussies how to buy, fix up and sell property for a healthy return, from business basics to reno steps and project completion.



The dowdy cupboards, bland tiles, dated lino and old benchtops in this kitchen would lead many renovators to simply gut the room and start again, easily spending at least \$7000.

But the drab finishes mask good bones that could be transformed for a budget price using paint, resurfacing products and clever know-how.

THE RENO PLAN

To modernise the kitchen while keeping the existing layout, saving on plumbing costs and materials.

- **REVAMP** the cabinetry with paint.
- **REPLACE** the lino with flooring that can go straight over the top.
- **RESURFACE** the existing appliances, as they are still in good shape but look old-fashioned. ➤



After

New flooring and paint make the kitchen look modern and bright.



Maximising light

To combat gloomy areas, Cherie says get rid of poorly positioned ceiling lights and install halogen downlights in brushed chrome, about \$12 each, for a more streamlined look.

With the sparkie already on the job, Cherie would get him to lower the rangehood power point to hide the ugly, dangling cord, then get a handyman to patch the wall or do it DIY.

The 6 secrets of success

① **CABINETS** are revamped with White Knight Laminate Paint tinted to a custom colour. Remove the handles and lightly sand the doors then apply one coat of White Knight Tile & Laminate Primer, then two coats of paint to block out the brown and create a new finish.



White Knight Laminate Paint, \$47 for 1L.

② **BENCHTOPS** can get the look of granite or natural stone for a fraction of the cost with a resurfacing kit that lets you recoat them in situ. The product comes in five shades with Desert Sand the most modern looking. It takes about two days to apply but is worth it for the savings.



Rust-Oleum Countertop Transformations Kit, \$195.

③ **SPLASHBACKS** are easily transformed with White Knight Tile Paint, saving the labour and cost of retiling when the only real problem is the colour. Use White Knight Tile & Laminate Primer followed by two coats of paint, available in a range of shades including white.



White Knight Tile Paint, \$47 for 1L. whiteknightpaints.com.au

④ **WALLS** are painted the same colour as the cabinetry so the tones of the room are consistent, then the trim and door architraves finished in an off-white, high-gloss enamel. Paint the ceiling white using Dulux Once which only needs one coat and hides surface imperfections.



Dulux Super Enamel High Gloss Paint, \$45 for 1L. dulux.com.au

⑤ **APPLIANCES** that are the wrong colour but too good to be replaced are easy to resurface using Rust-Oleum Stainless Steel paint. This product contains real stainless steel pigments to create a rich, metallic finish, making that old oven or rangehood look like new.



Rust-Oleum Stainless Steel, \$69 for 887ml. rustoleum.com.au

⑥ **FLOORING** is easy to update when you have a level concrete base to lay a laminate floating floor. There are many different timber tones to choose from and if you decide not to DIY you shouldn't pay more than \$50 per square metre, supplied and installed.



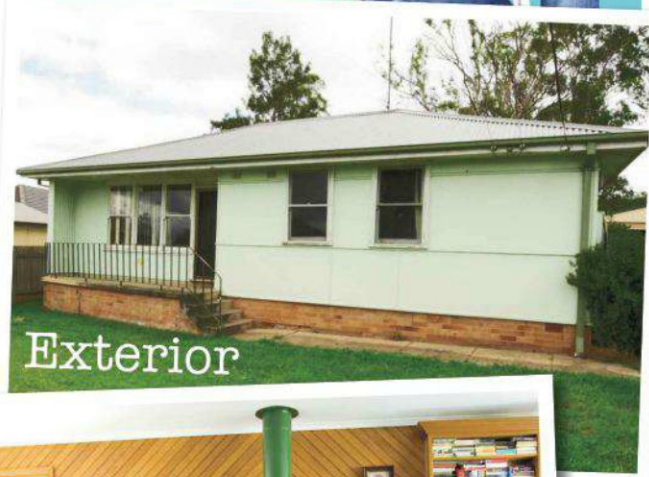
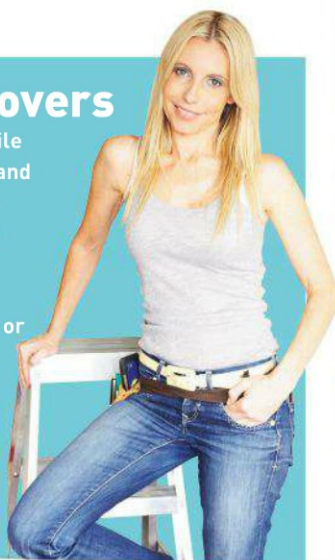
Laminae and Pascal 8mm Laminate Flooring, from \$15 per square metre, from Bunnings.

Virtual makeovers

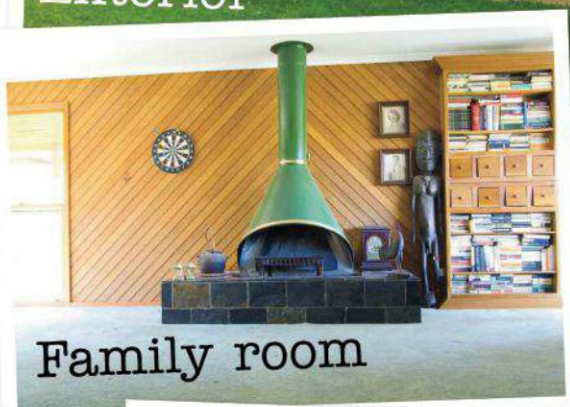
Each month Cherie will profile a *Handyman* reader's home and reveal, using software, how simple enhancements could add significant value.

Want Cherie to virtually make over an internal room or the exterior of your home?

To be in the running, go to handyman.net.au/mag and enter your details plus photos of the area and a brief description.



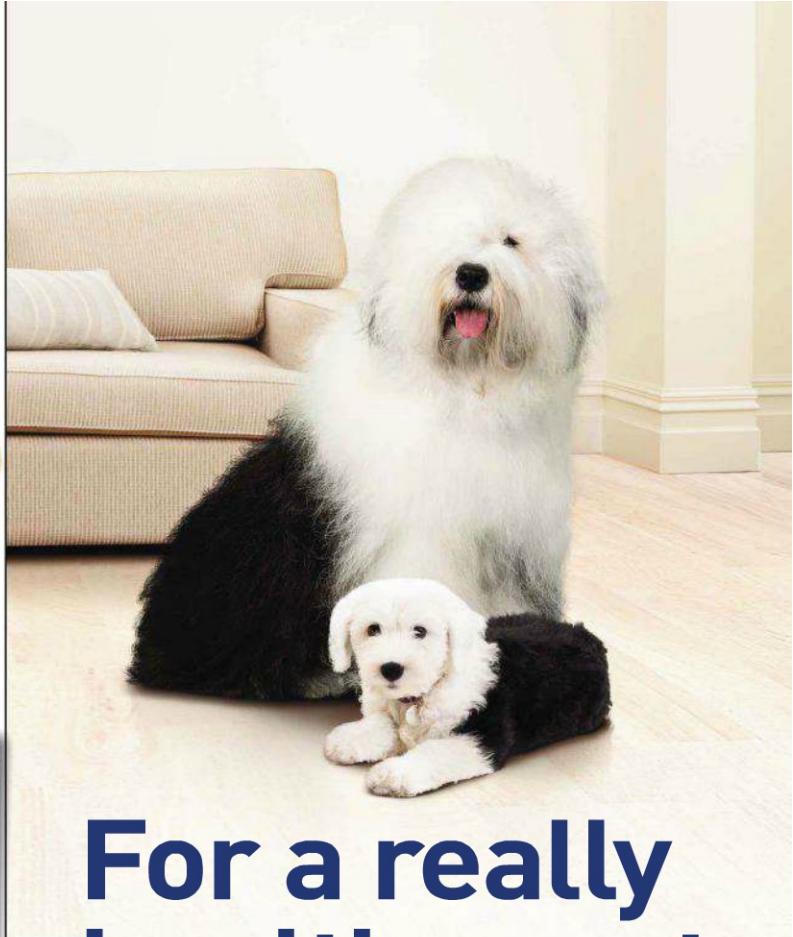
Exterior



Family room



Bedroom



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Dulux Wash & Wear® +Plus will resist almost anything a busy family can throw at it. Resistance against stains, marks and now bacteria and mould, mean homes will stay looking clean and fresh for longer than ever before.

Dulux Wash & Wear® +Plus resists the growth of mould on walls, which may trigger asthma and allergy symptoms.

Visit dulux.com.au for more product information.





FIND IT AT
BUNNINGS

BENCH BEAUTIES

Give the kitchen a finishing flourish with stone-look benchtops that will impress without breaking the budget



As durable and attractive as the real thing cut to measure for your kitchen.

The look of natural stone is highly prized in the kitchen as it adds warmth and an organic feel to a very functional space.

Using the real thing, however, can be expensive and difficult to source.

Get the look of marble or granite and save money and time with Kaboodle's new range of cut-to-measure benchtops that make installing a Kaboodle kitchen even easier.

SPECIAL FEATURES

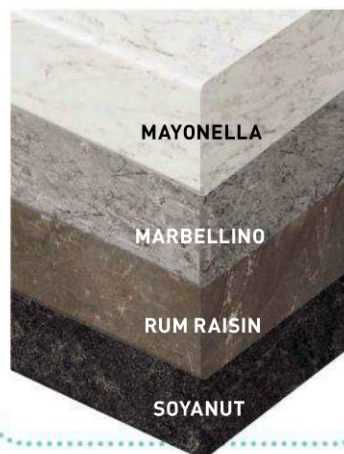
These benchtops are 38mm thick and feature a modern tight radius profile, or pencil round edge, to give the look of real stone.

Made of moisture resistant particleboard, the laminate finish is impact and scratch resistant. Each benchtop has an innovative vertical support edge to increase durability.

Style file

The Kaboodle range includes a selection of Europe's most popular colours and features both matt and gloss finishes that are easy to install, care for and maintain.

Simply choose a colour, draw the dimensions and place the order for a new-look kitchen.



Grow your **GREENEST LAWN EVER**

Make the neighbours envious with lush expanses of weed-free grass

There are many advantages to having a healthy, verdant lawn. Not only does it look great and increase the value of your home, but it can also have a noticeable effect on the local microclimate.

‘Vegetation surrounding the dwelling plays an important role in storm drainage and biodiversity, and has serious ecological implications,’ says Tony Hall, professor of Urban Research at Griffith University.

Unfortunately, the Aussie backyard is shrinking as we continue to build high-density housing. Garden areas are now typically 100 square metres smaller than 20 years ago.

The home also covers a larger proportion of the average block, leaving less natural space to balance the impact of artificial developments.

With outdoor areas getting smaller Meredith Kirton, horticulturalist and spokesperson for Turf Australia, says it’s more important than ever to utilise the space we have.

Turf Australia has found that a lawn adds significant value to the home, with buyers prepared to pay up to \$75,000 more for a lawn.

‘Surrounding the home with natural turf increases property value and aesthetic appeal,’ Meredith says.

‘It also means you are doing your bit to ensure environmental sustainability,’ she adds.

Whether you have huge expanses of green or just a tiny patch of grass in a courtyard, here is the ultimate guide to planting, fertilising, weed killing and mowing, plus how to lay a new lawn from scratch. ➤

Get a striped lawn

This effect is achieved by having bands of lawn with grass blades growing in alternating directions.

Leave the grass to grow at least 70mm long then make the lawn stripes using a wire doormat to press down the grass.

ATTACH THE MAT to your mower using wire, a wire coathanger or a length of chain joined to the lower part of the mower handle.

MOW THE BANDS in opposite directions.

To finish, mow a border to tidy up the edges. If water restrictions allow, water immediately after mowing.



WATER DEEPLY, NOT OFTEN

If you water frequently and for short periods, the grass has no reason to grow long roots. Shallow roots can't reach nutrients deep in the soil, or deliver extra water when the surface is dry.

Water deeply enough to penetrate the soil to about 100 or 150mm deep. Use a spade to check the water penetration and get an idea of how long and how often to water for your local soil type and weather conditions.

Heavy clay soils should be watered less often and less intensely but for longer periods of time. Sandy soils, on the other hand, can handle heavy, fast watering but also dry out more quickly.

OPTIMISE GROWING CONDITIONS

Feed the lawn well in autumn, as even after grass growth slows right down the roots are soaking up nutrients and storing energy for the warm months.

Another important consideration is the soil's pH level, because grass grows best when the soil is neither too acidic nor too alkaline.

Soil pH meters and DIY test kits can be purchased from hardware stores and nurseries, or collect three tablespoon-size samples of soil from different parts of the yard and take them to a garden centre for testing.



Set up a sprinkler

Water the grass for 30 minutes then plunge a spade into the soil and pry open a wedge to see how far the water has penetrated.

If the soil at 100 to 150mm below the surface is dry, water for a few more minutes. When you know how long the lawn needs, set up sprinklers and connect a timer.



A neutral or slightly acidic pH between 6 and 7.2 is ideal. If the pH is too high, treat the lawn with iron sulphate or sulfur, or apply lime if the pH is very low.

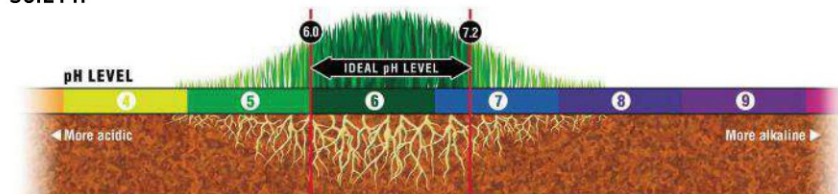
Ask the staff at the garden centre where you buy the lime or sulphate for advice on how much to use. From there, it's simply a matter of dispersing the product over your lawn.

KILL WEEDS WHEN IT'S WARM

Herbicide is absorbed into weeds through the leaves. When the weather is cool, the weed isn't actively growing so the herbicide won't be absorbed.

If the weather is too hot, the herbicide will stress the grass, but don't apply weed killer when rain is forecast. A downpour is likely to rinse off the herbicide before it can act.

SOIL PH





MOW TO IDEAL CUTTING HEIGHT

Each type of grass has an ideal cutting height for good health and strong growth. If it is cut back to this height before it gets too long, it will usually outcompete weeds as long as it's also fertilised and watered properly.

Longer grass helps prevent weeds by shading the ground, keeping it cooler and slowing weed germination. And if weed seeds sprout, they have insufficient sunlight for hardy growth.

It's important to mow your grass when it's about 30% longer than the ideal cutting height.

Depending on the weather conditions and the time of year, that can mean mowing each week or fortnight, or every four to five days.

Keeping the height in check also means you're clipping off the seed heads of weeds before they can spread.

Don't mow after it's been raining, or you'll leave giant clumps of sodden clippings that will smother the grass beneath. You will also need to clean a thick layer of matted clippings from under your mower deck. ➤

Beware of bindii

Bindii has brown seeds with sharp spines. Most active in early autumn, it has green flowers when mature.

CONTROL is easy if bindii is spotted before it has gone to seed. Remove the weed by hand or spray with a herbicide.



THREE WAYS TO MAKE IT ALL QUICKER, SIMPLER AND CHEAPER



USE A BROADCAST SPREADER not a drop spreader to distribute seeds and fertiliser. Drop spreaders are difficult to use and can result in stripes or chequer patterns.

A broadcast spreader sprinkles its contents in a wider pattern, resulting in consistent coverage.



RESEED IN LATE SUMMER or early autumn for best results. The fragile seedlings are unlikely to survive when the weather is too hot and dry.

By the time winter comes, the grass will be well established and the heavier rainfall will promote strong and deep root growth.



USE CONCENTRATES whenever possible and dilute them yourself, which is considerably cheaper than buying premixed products.

Only mix as much as you can use within a week or two, as minerals in tap water will reduce the potency of the chemicals within that time.

Green lawn dos and don'ts

Ensure the best results when sowing or caring for grass with these easy tips.

✓ DO APPLY SEED CAREFULLY

To avoid an overpopulated lawn with too many plants competing for nutrients and sunlight, take care when distributing grass seeds.

The exact concentration for a given species will be recommended on the pack of grass seed, but it will usually be about 40g per square metre.

Water new seed lightly at least twice a day. Dampen the soil more often during hot, windy weather and keep watering for at least two weeks.

✓ DO READ THE INSTRUCTIONS

Whether you're diluting concentrate or adjusting the spreader setting for grass seed, take care to follow the recommendations on the packaging.

It's also important to pay attention to the details, such as the preferred temperature range or to avoid using a product if rain is forecast.

✗ DON'T CATCH THE CLIPPINGS

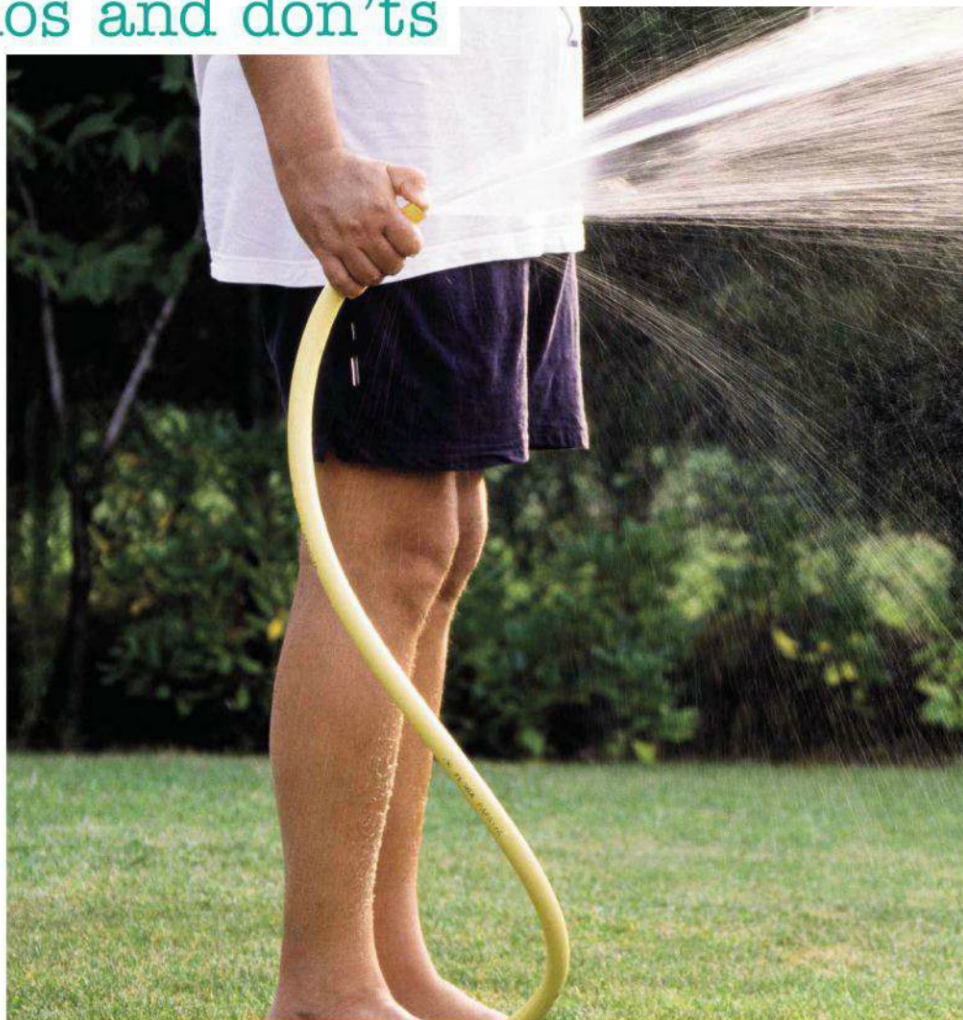
Leaving grass clippings on the lawn releases nutrients back into the soil, reducing the need for fertiliser by up to 25%. Spread them in a thin layer instead of leaving them in thick clumps to avoid suffocating the grass.

✗ DON'T OVER-FERTILISE

Increasing the amount of fertiliser you use is not going to improve its effect. Overdosing on fertiliser will either kill your lawn outright or make it turn yellow and take weeks to heal.



Seasol For Lawns, about \$10.
seasol.com.au



✓ DO WORK WITH THE SEASON

Rake up fallen leaves in the autumn or they will suffocate the new sprouts in spring and leave dead spots.

Aerate before fertilising in autumn if you have heavy loam or clay soil.

Just before winter, mow the lawn back hard to about 40 to 50mm high to help prevent mould growth.

✗ DON'T DETHATCH TOO OFTEN

Dethatching, also called vertimowing, involves using a device resembling a powered rotary rake to tear out the matted dead grass stems below the green growth. Dethatching damages the roots as well, stressing the grass, and should only be done when more than 6mm of thatch has accumulated.

✓ DO USE A SPREADER

For the most even distribution of seed or fertiliser, set your spreader to half the recommended rate and treat the lawn twice from opposite directions.

When using the spreader for fertiliser, fill it on a paved area, not grass, and clean it carefully after use.



Scotts Handheld Spreader, about \$19.
scottsaustalia.com.au

WIPE OUT WEEDS

IDENTIFY THE INVADERS in order to decide which product and method of application to use. Using the wrong approach will do more harm than good.

SPOT-KILL WEEDS using a trigger spray as you find them. No matter how healthy your lawn is, a few isolated weeds will pop up, but that doesn't mean you have to apply weed killer to the entire area.

APPLY HERBICIDE DIRECTLY to weeds that spread through root systems. Wearing gloves, dip your hand in herbicide and spread it on the leaves.

SPRAY ANNUAL WEEDS such as crab grass before they can self-seed near the end of the growing season. This will stop new plants from germinating the following spring.



New directions

Poor conditions can make it impossible to grow grass in some areas. If you've tried and failed repeatedly, it may be worth trying a landscaping alternative.

The best choices are stone, mulch and attractive groundcover plants that thrive in the conditions the grass can't handle.

Kill weeds with a non-selective herbicide, which will break down within two weeks and leave the ground safe for new plants. If you're planning to cover the ground with a decorative material such as pebble mulch, lay weedmat first to prevent the weeds from returning.



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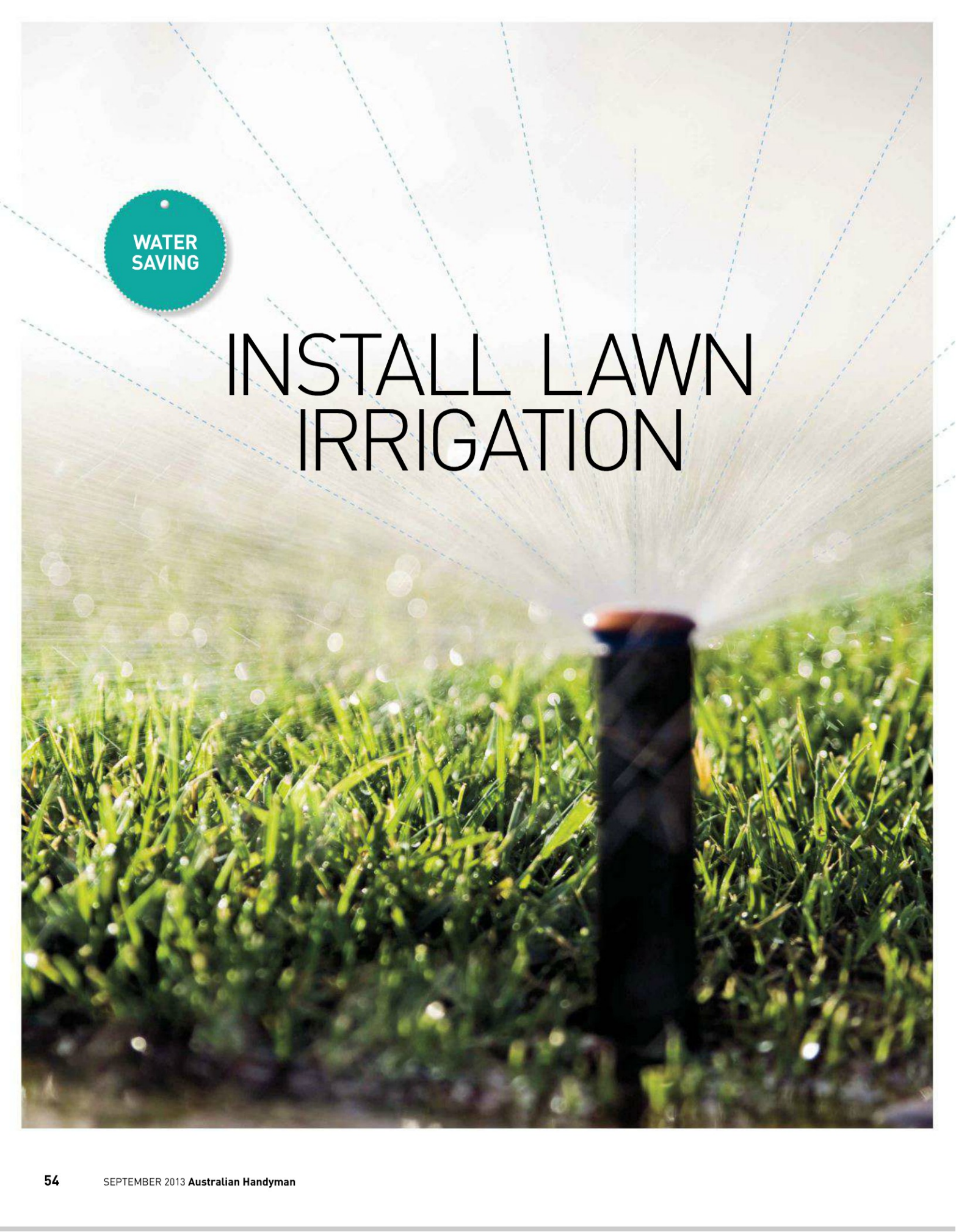
Seasol is an organic health tonic that imparts plant vitality and well being throughout your entire garden. It simply provides your plants with the essentials they need to thrive and survive, even through harsh conditions. Seasol also invigorates the soil to release it's nutrients to the plants for a happy, healthy garden.



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WATER
SAVING

INSTALL LAWN IRRIGATION

Keep your grass healthy and green by installing a simple watering system

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Since water restrictions have been relaxed in many parts of Australia after increased rainfall, an automatic watering system has become a viable way to give your lawn the water it needs without wastage.

The type of pop-up sprinklers you choose will depend on the flow rate of your local water supply, which can easily be calculated by timing water as it flows into a bucket.

You will also need to sketch a scale diagram of your lawn, including the position of larger trees, any shady or sunny areas and slopes where water may run off.

FINE-TUNE THE SYSTEM

When the system is set up, attach a timer and position small containers in different parts of the lawn.

Time how long it takes for the containers to fill up with water about 30 to 40mm deep and set the timer for this number of minutes.

Water penetrates clay soils more slowly than sandy soils so they should be watered at a slower rate to reduce runoff. The system should also be adjusted in winter when the lawn won't need as much water.

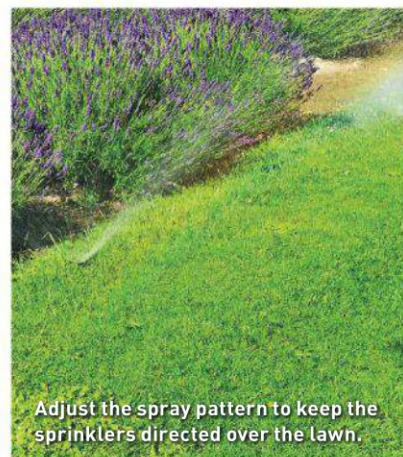
DIG WISELY

Even for a small-scale project like this one, it's essential to dial 1100 before you dig or visit 1100.com.au to locate any underground utilities.

Mark these on your diagram to prevent disasters like putting a shovel through a pipe or cable.

When the trenches have been backfilled, reseed the bare patches, or for running grasses you can just wait until they spread to cover the soil.

Add some turf fertiliser and water regularly, keeping weeds at bay so the grass has a chance to grow. ➤



Adjust the spray pattern to keep the sprinklers directed over the lawn.

Irrigation essentials



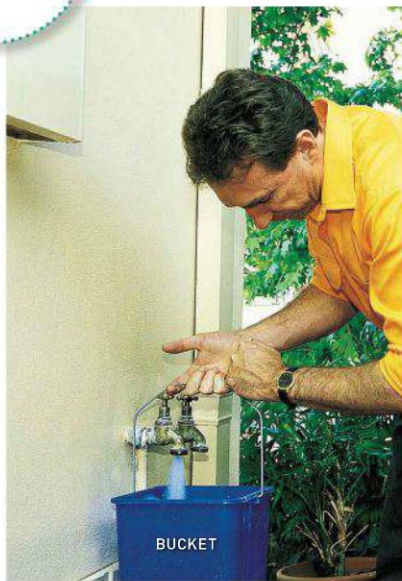
Pope Full Circle Pop Up Sprinkler, about \$3.
popeproducts.com.au

Holman 19mm x 25m Black Poly Tube, about \$17.
holmanindustries.com.au



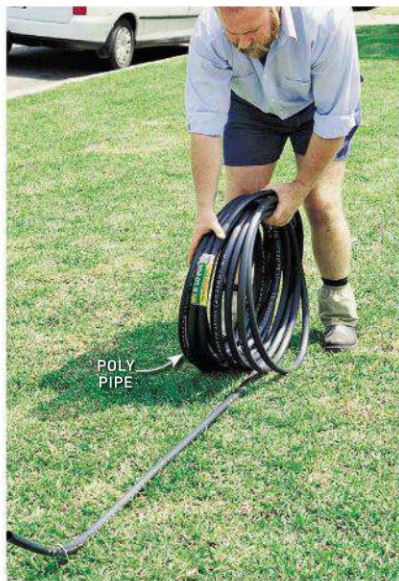
Holman Digital Tap Timer, about \$37.
holmanindustries.com.au

INSTALL LAWN IRRIGATION



1 Measure the flow rate

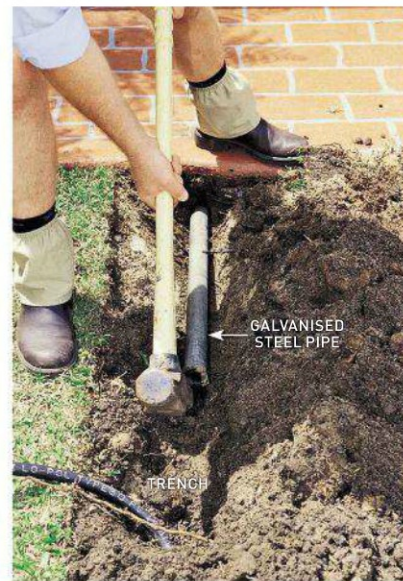
Position a bucket under the tap that will supply the system and open fully for exactly 10 seconds. Measure how much water is in the bucket and multiply the number of litres by six to find the flow rate in litres per minute.



2 Set out the system

Unroll the poly pipe on the surface of the lawn and position the pop-up units, elbows and T joiners according to your planned setout.

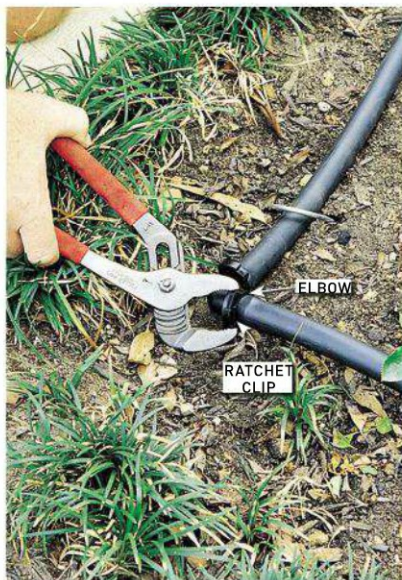
TIP Leave the pipe in the sun to soften slightly so that it is easier to uncoil.



3 Dig the trenches

Excavate trenches deep enough for the sprinklers to finish at ground level then position the pipe in the trenches.

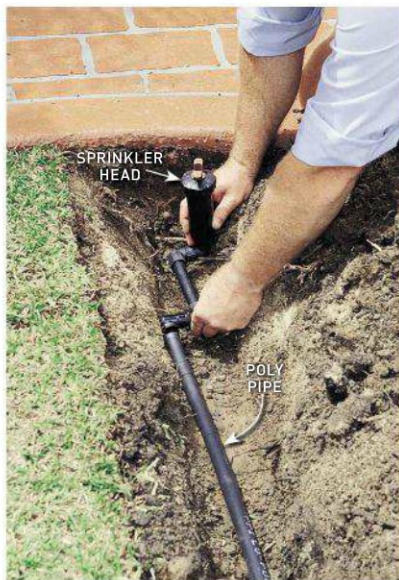
TIP To get poly pipe under a path, tap in a length of 50mm galvanised pipe, pulling it out to clear every 200mm.



4 Connect the parts

Assemble the system, including the timer and backflow preventer, using ratchet clips to secure the joints.

TIP The backflow preventer stops dirt being sucked back into the potable water supply if there's a pressure drop.



5 Install the sprinklers

Install the sprinklers, packing the soil firmly around the sprinkler heads to hold them in position.

TIP Bury the heads slightly lower than the surrounding lawn surface to avoid damage from lawnmowers.



6 Test the system

To flush out any dirt in the pipes, turn the tap on before adding the end sprinklers. Inspect the system for leaks and rotate the heads to keep the entire spray pattern over the lawn, instead of overlapping any hard surfaces.

LAWN IRRIGATION



✦ Get more online

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How To Install A Rainwater Tank.

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- It's the complete package!*

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LAY A NEW LAWN

If the yard has more weeds than grass, the simplest solution might be to dig it all up and start again

There is nothing worse than a dry, patchy lawn studded with weeds and struggling to survive. It ruins the appearance of the yard and feels unpleasant underfoot.

This lawn was little more than a mass of weeds because the type of grass that had been planted found it hard to cope with the dry conditions. The easiest solution was to rip it up with a bobcat and lay new turf.

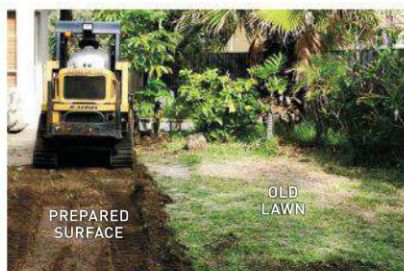
Once the new Sir Walter buffalo lawn was established, some simple rules were followed to keep the grass in optimum shape.

MOWING every two weeks should normally be enough. Cutting the grass too much and too often reduces root growth, which can weaken the plants and allow weeds to invade.

The higher you leave the grass, the more moisture it is capable of holding.

WATERING should only be done when needed. Test by walking across the lawn and if the grass is slow to spring back in your footprints, it needs watering. Soak thoroughly to help the grass establish deep roots.

FERTILISING is best in the form of a complete lawn food with wetting agent, applied four times a year. The best time to fertilise is after mowing, and the worst is during a hot day.

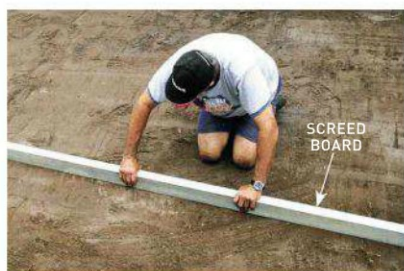


1 PREPARE THE AREA by hiring a bobcat, from about \$90 an hour, to excavate the area efficiently. It took just 30 minutes to scrape this 40 square metre backyard, removing the weeds and levelling the surface.



2 TRIM THE EDGES using a shovel or spade to level to about 50mm below any adjacent hard surfaces.

TIP This keeps the lawn just below paving height, letting water run off the hard surfaces and onto the lawn.

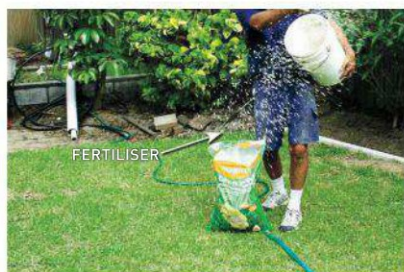


3 IMPROVE SANDY SOIL as in this yard by topping it with 25mm of loam to help it retain moisture. Screed the area level before laying turf.

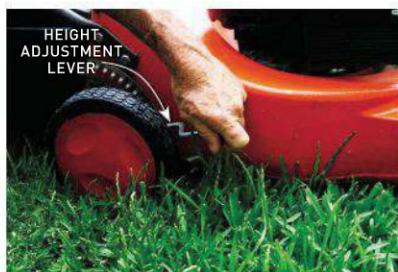
TIP Break down a clay soil using gypsum and top with sandy loam.



4 LAY THE TURF in a brick-bond pattern as soon as it's delivered, using a spade to trim. Butt the edges without overlapping or leaving gaps, then use a lawn roller to go over the turf, improving root contact with the soil.

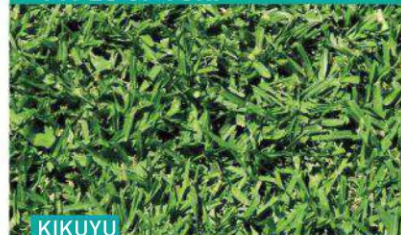


5 WATER IMMEDIATELY and don't allow the lawn to dry out for the first few weeks, watering twice daily if possible. Wait four weeks then fertilise with a complete lawn food, adding a good handful for every square metre.



6 LEAVE THE GRASS for up to four weeks before mowing. Couch grass should be left to grow up to 30mm, buffalo and kikuyu up to 50mm. Cut 25% off the leaf length on the first mow, then gradually cut it shorter.

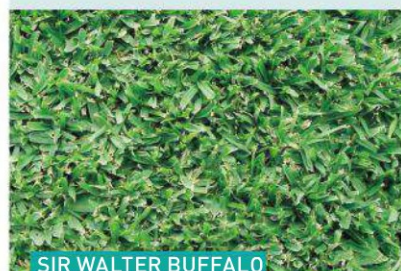
TYPES OF TURF



KIKUYU

Thriving in sunny areas, kikuyu can withstand heavy traffic, but sends out runners at the edges. It costs about \$5 per square metre.

MAINTENANCE Mow this variety once a week in summer.



SIR WALTER BUFFALO

Sir Walter is suitable for all soil types, has soft blades and likes hot weather, but also tolerates shade.

It costs up to \$10 per square metre. **MAINTENANCE** In summer, mow Sir Walter Buffalo every fortnight.



ZOYSIA

Tolerating both sandy and clay soils, zoysia has soft, dark blades and costs \$6 per square metre.

MAINTENANCE Requires less mowing than other grasses.



LANDSCAPE
SOLUTION

LAY A FAKE LAWN

For a foolproof alternative to real grass with zero maintenance, install sheets of synthetic turf

Alawn can be tough to grow, plus it needs regular mowing, weeding and watering. But there is an easy way to make your garden green without the hassle.

Synthetic grass has come a long way since the days of lurid AstroTurf and is available in tiles and rolls, with options to suit a range of applications.

For a no-mow lawn that looks real, lay Coolaroo Plush synthetic turf,

a third-generation synthetic grass from Coolaroo (coolaroo.com).

Calculate how much is needed by dividing the lawn into rectangular areas and multiplying the length by the width. Next, scrape away weeds and excavate the yard, spraying it with a glyphosate weed killer.

Whatever base material you use will need to be compacted, forming a solid substrate to lay the sheets on.

Your local landscape supplier will be able to recommend a suitable choice.

For the best results, take your time when levelling the base material and pay particular attention to the joints, which need to be invisible for a realistic, natural look.

TIP Use a commercial grade tape, like Tuff Turf Synthetic Turf Joining Tape, \$35 for 10m, with a woven backing to prevent tearing (tuffturf.com.au).



1 EXCAVATE THE AREA by setting out perimeter stringlines to the desired finished height. Remove weeds then excavate the soil to a depth of 75mm. **TIP** A standard house brick is 76mm high and makes an ideal height gauge.



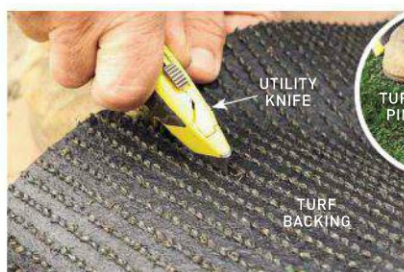
2 COMPACT THE BASE by laying weedmat with an overlap of 50mm, turning up the edges. Spread roadbase to 15mm below the stringline, screed the surface and spray with water then firm down using a plate compactor.



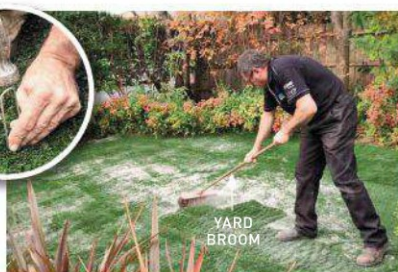
3 LAY THE TURF by first spreading a thin layer of dry, fine sand and raking it level. Measure and cut the first piece of turf to length with an extra 50mm. Unroll it in position and repeat for adjacent pieces, aligning the grain.



4 JOIN THE PIECES by peeling off half the protective backing and firmly attaching one roll of turf tape. Peel off about 600mm of the remaining backing at a time, carefully join both edges and press down firmly.



5 TRIM THE EDGES using a utility knife to carefully cut around the borders. Trim in small sections and check the fit to avoid cutting too much. **TIP** Cut from the underside of the turf and use a sharp new blade in the knife.



6 SECURE THE GRASS by driving turf pins around the perimeter and across the joints at 300mm spacings and at 600mm across the centre. Wearing safety glasses, brush in fine, dry sand against the grain to half-pile height.

THE BEST OF COOLAROO

PLAY TURF

Perfect for exterior floor coverings and high-traffic areas, this turf features a short one-tone 9mm pile and costs \$30 per metre. **WARRANTY** One-year cover against UV degradation.

PET TURF

Ideal for replacing natural lawn, this two-tone 30mm pile has a special backing that helps drain animal waste. It costs \$63 per metre off a 1.83m wide roll. **WARRANTY** Five years.

PLUSH TURF

For realistic lawn replacement without the maintenance, this long three-tone 40mm pile can't be beaten and costs \$79 per metre. **WARRANTY** Eight years.

LAST THE DISTANCE



POWERED BY
LITHIUM ION

Go longer in the garden with Ozito

Introducing the new 36 volt Lithium Ion Cordless Mower from Ozito. No hassle start, super quiet operation, no extension leads and powered by Lithium Ion technology to last the distance. Another reason to give it a go with Ozito!

Visit ozito.com.au or call 1800 069 486

NEW

36V CORDLESS MOWER

\$399

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

2 YEAR
REPLACEMENT
WARRANTY

ozito

give it a go!

LAWNMOWERS

Keeping the grass neat has never been easier thanks to this ever-evolving garden must-have

CARE FOR YOUR MOWER

'Mowers are real workhorses, especially if you give them some routine maintenance,' says Joe Camilleri, Victa technical services officer. 'Just like you service your car, you should give your mower some TLC. It'll run better, last longer and burn fuel more efficiently.'

'And the good news is that most mowers are quite simple machines, so they're easy to service. Seasonal maintenance consists largely of cleaning and lubricating,' he explains.



THE HISTORY OF LAWMOWERS

Before a machine for trimming grassy areas was designed, the only options were grazing animals or scythes.

In 1830, Edwin Budding patented a contraption that was remarkably similar to the cylinder mowers used today, although the first petrol-driven mower was not invented until 1919.

The idea was scaled down to a size suitable for the average backyard when Mervyn Victor Richardson

designed his 'peach tin' prototype Victa mower in 1952. With a rotary blade instead of the original cylinder arrangement, it went on to become an icon of Aussie domesticity.

By 1973, Victa Mowers expanded to New Zealand, and a record two million mowers were produced. The first electric models appeared in 1980, then in 1996 the mulch-and-catch alloy based mower was introduced.



*CHOOSING A LAWNMOWER

The most important issue to consider is the size of your lawn. A small 20 sqm courtyard lawn is easily kept neat with an old-style cylinder push mower.

They're great for a bit of exercise, plus there's no engine to worry about, so they're eco-friendly, inexpensive and problem-free.

Cost is another significant factor, with a basic four-stroke petrol push mower costing about \$250 and up to \$3000 for a quality ride-on mower.

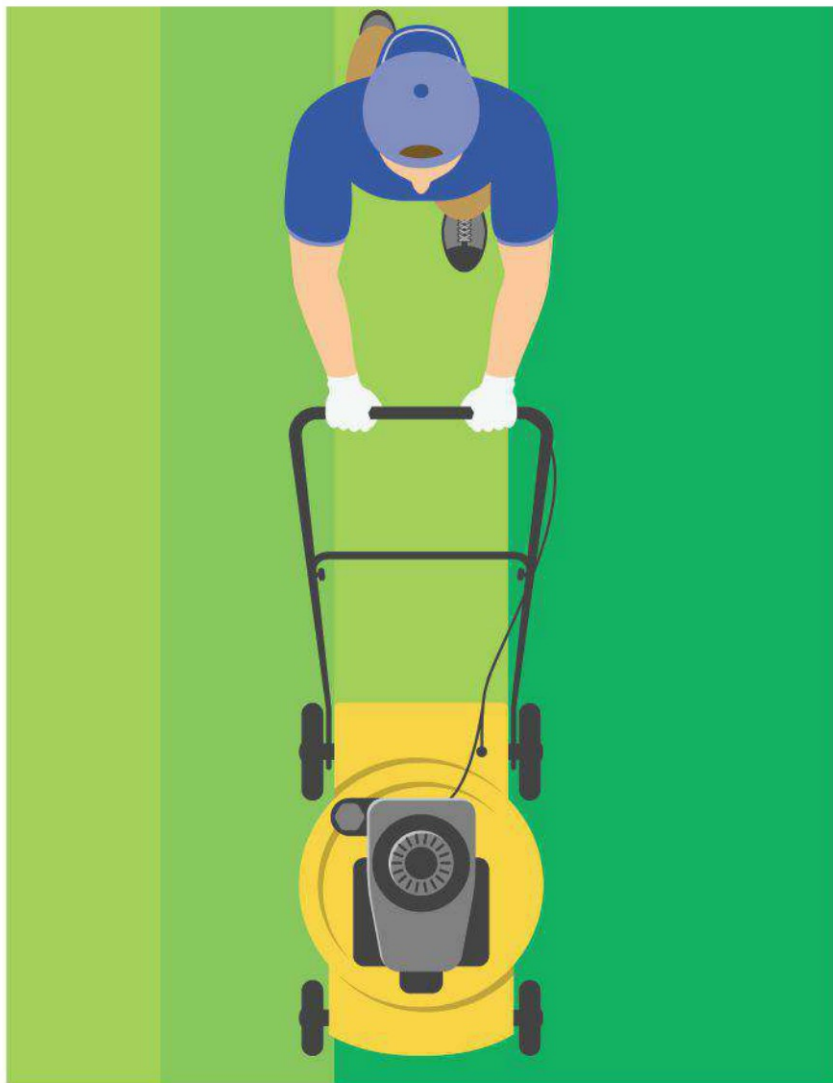
MATCH THE MOWER TO THE LAWN

Electric or battery-powered models are the perfect choice for small yards typical of townhouses and inner-city dwellings.

Both are much quieter than petrol-driven mowers so they cause less disturbance to neighbours.

Most petrol push mowers have a larger cutting radius than electric units, making them the best choice for urban lawn areas that are from 250 to 1000 square metres in size.

Self-propelled push mowers are one labour-saving option, but if the lawn area is so great that it takes a prohibitive amount of time to cut it, a ride-on mower becomes a worthwhile investment.



*ELECTRIC

Electric mowers have two main advantages, they are significantly quieter than their petrol-powered cousins, and they do not produce any CO2 emissions. They are generally less powerful than petrol mowers, but are very easy to use and require less maintenance.

The downside of using an electric mower is that you need an extension cord long enough to reach the farthest point of your garden, unless you opt for a battery-powered model.



HOVER MOWER

This type of mower has a fan mounted above the blades that directs air downward, creating a cushion of air on which it hovers.

The design makes it far more manoeuvrable than a wheeled mower, as it can be swept from side to side. Current models available in Australia are not equipped with a grass catcher.

*PETROL MOWERS

Petrol push mowers are the most common type in Australian yards. More powerful than electric and battery powered mowers, they also often have a wider cutting radius.

They are the noisiest variety of lawnmower and it's essential to wear hearing protection when using one.

They have either one, two or four blades mounted on a hub that

rotates underneath the base, sucking the grass up so the blade edges can cut it as you push the mower along.

Mulching mowers are a more expensive variation as they recut the lawn clippings into tiny pieces and blow them back onto the lawn.

The two basic types of petrol push lawnmowers feature four-stroke and two-stroke engines.



TWO-STROKE

These mowers are the best option for use on steep sloped lawns as four-stroke mowers need to be kept upright to work efficiently.

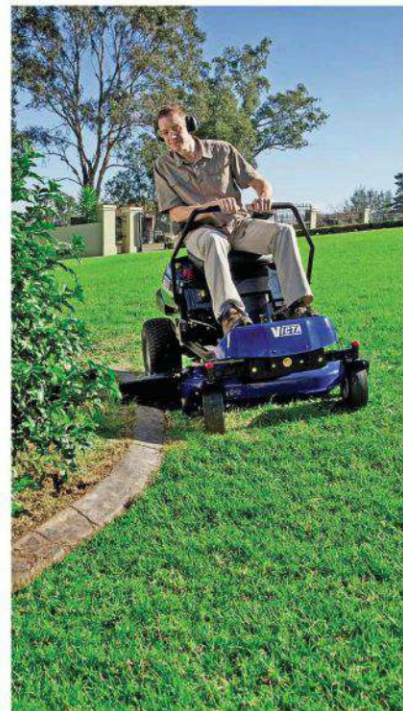
In a two-stroke engine, petrol must be mixed with oil in a ratio specified by the manufacturer. The engine will seize otherwise, and repairing the mower is likely to cost more than replacing it.



FOUR-STROKE

This type offers the widest choice of mowers available in stores. They operate like the engine of a car with the oil contained separately to the petrol.

The oil needs to be changed on a regular basis to maximise engine life. Four-stroke engines use less fuel than two-stroke varieties, offer greater torque and are easier to start.



RIDE-ON

The traditional ride-on mower has a rear-mounted four-stroke engine with a cut width of about 700mm and is popular on large residential blocks.

The lawn tractor is the other main variety, and is available in sizes up to 20 horsepower or more. It features a front-mounted V-twin engine and has a cut width of more than 1000mm.

*BATTERY POWERED

As simple and quiet to use as mains-powered mowers, while offering all the freedom of petrol-driven ones, battery mowers combine the best of both worlds.

They run off a 36V battery, but despite this giving an impressive power output, they are best suited to smaller gardens.

Not designed for continuous use over long periods, most battery mowers have a maximum run time of half an hour or less.



ROBOTIC

With autonomous vacuum cleaners increasing in popularity, their outdoor cousins are also gaining a foothold.

Even though they cost as much to buy as a ride-on mower, you'll never have to mow your lawn again.

They run on battery power and recharge themselves automatically.

Anti-theft safeguards are included, such as an alarm, PIN lock or even sending an SMS alert to a mobile.

*MOWER MAINTENANCE

In winter, when grass growth slows and you only mow the lawn once a month, give the mower a maintenance makeover.

Thoroughly clean the catcher and undercarriage of clippings to help prevent rust while the mower is stored for lengthy periods.

Tighten all the nuts and bolts, change the oil, replace the spark plug, clean the air filter and sharpen or replace damaged blades.

Lastly check the pull-start mechanism, replacing a badly worn pull cord before it breaks.

TIP To store newer-type mowers for a lengthy period, drain the fuel tank, spray the mower with WD40, cover with plastic and keep in a dry place.

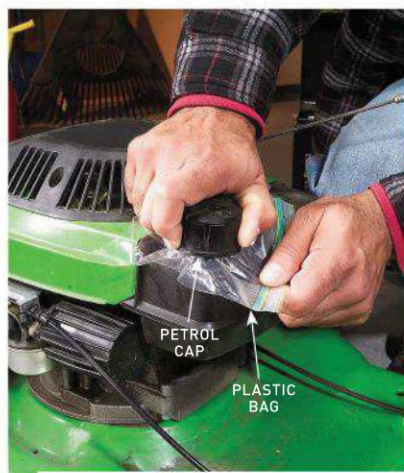


*CHANGE THE OIL

Changing the oil in a four-stroke lawnmower takes about 15 minutes but will greatly extend the life of its engine. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations, which are often to change the oil after every 25 hours of operation.

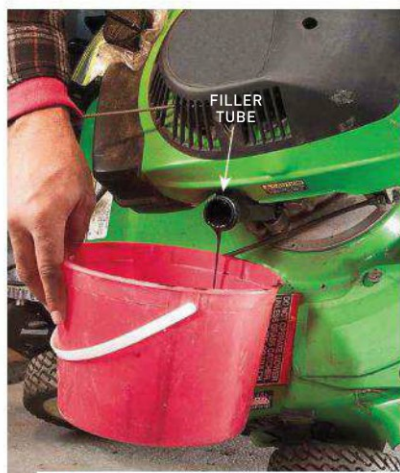
Before you drain the old oil, run the mower for a few minutes to warm it and stir up the sediment.

Then disconnect the spark plug, drain the old oil and add the new to the correct dipstick level using the oil type recommended in the manual.



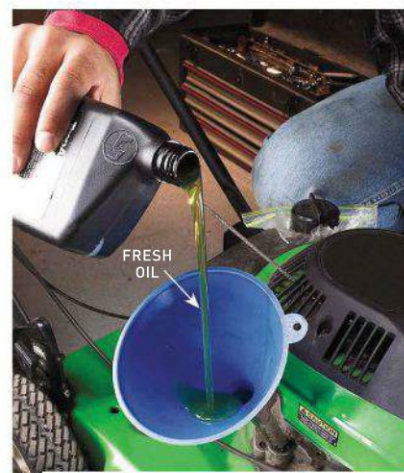
1. SEAL THE TANK

Unwind the petrol cap and cover the opening with a plastic bag. Screw the cap back over the plastic bag to prevent fuel leaking out through the vent.



2. DRAIN THE OIL

Remove the dipstick from the oil filler tube, tip the mower onto its side and let the oil drain into a container. Contact your local council about recycling the oil.



3. REFILL THE ENGINE

Pour the recommended amount of new, clean oil into the filler tube. Use the dipstick to check the level, adding more if needed but taking care not to overfill.

*REPLACE THE SPARK PLUG

If your lawnmower is running badly and misfiring, or is difficult to start, it might be because the spark plug is worn or dirty, or the gap between the tip and electrode is set incorrectly.

The easiest solution is to replace the plug, which costs less than \$7.

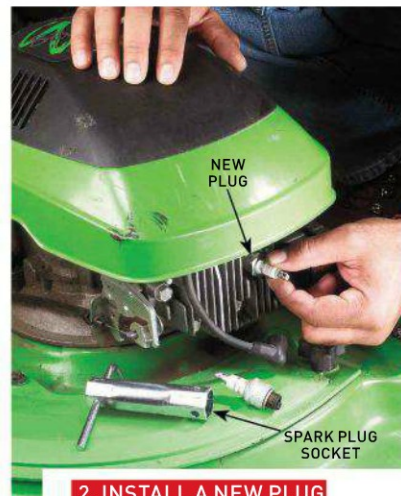


Select a spark plug socket sized to fit over the hex collar on the plug, turning anticlockwise to unscrew it.



1. REMOVE THE PLUG

Pull the cap of the spark plug cable off the spark plug. Fit a socket over the plug and apply firm pressure in an anticlockwise direction to unscrew and remove the plug.



2. INSTALL A NEW PLUG

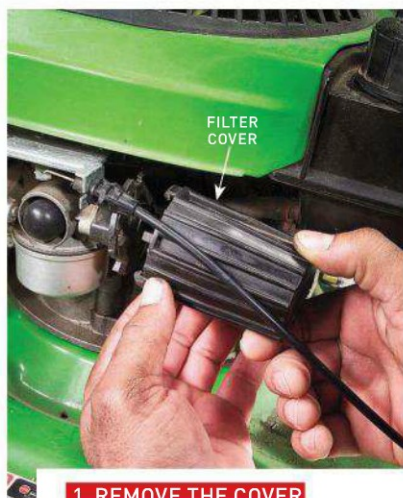
Wind in the new plug until it is finger tight then use a socket to rotate it by only another half a turn in a clockwise direction to compress the washer. Refit the plug cable onto the terminal.

*CHANGE THE AIR FILTER

A dirty air filter can choke the engine, causing it to run poorly and lose power. If you have a very dry and dusty lawn, the filter may get clogged in a matter of months.

Some mowers have cylindrical paper filters while others, especially

older models, have foam filters. Whichever type of filter your mower uses, soak it in motor oil then squeeze out the excess before installation. **TIP** Check the air filter by shining a torch into it. If you can't see any light coming through, replace the filter.



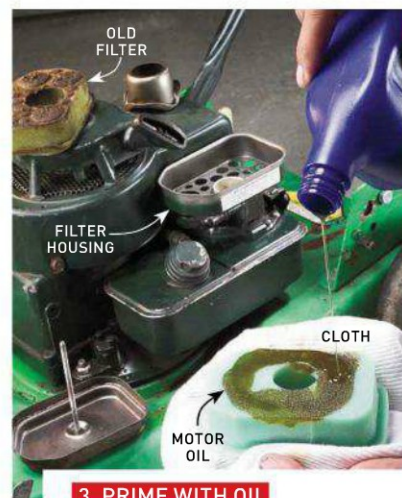
1. REMOVE THE COVER

Unscrew a pleated paper filter cover or snap it out of its mount. To open a rectangular foam filter cover, unscrew the retaining bolt or unhook the cover.



2. TAKE OUT THE FILTER

Remove the filter then clean the cover and filter mount, wiping away any grass or dirt. On a foam filter, wipe the housing and cover using a clean cloth.



3. PRIME WITH OIL

Soak the new filter in fresh motor oil then wrap it in a clean cloth and gently squeeze out the excess. Position the filter in its housing and replace the cover.

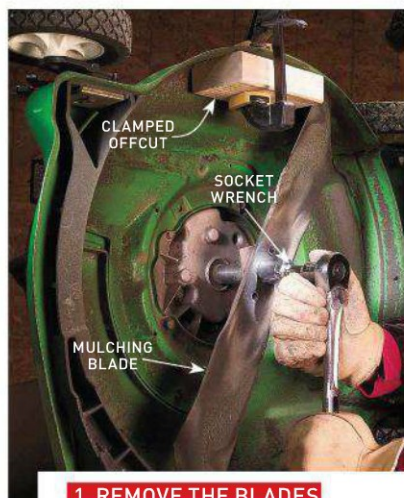
*SHARPEN MOWER BLADES

Dull blades make mowing more laborious, and they also tear the grass instead of cutting cleanly, increasing your lawn's risk of sun damage or disease.

Mower blades can be sharpened with a file, using a bench grinder or angle grinder, but in these cases they have to be removed first.

For safety, always disconnect the spark plug first, then tip the mower on its side and clamp the blade against an offcut of timber to keep it stationary while you remove it.

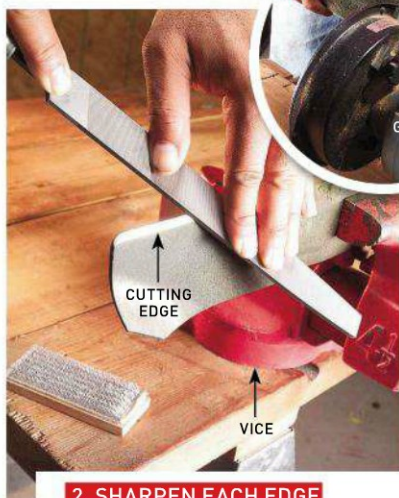
On an electric mower, the blades can be easily sharpened in situ. Simply turn the machine upside down, clamp the blade in position and grind the edge with a high-speed rotary tool such as a Dremel.



1. REMOVE THE BLADES

Use a socket wrench to undo the nut securing the blade or blades.

TIP Before tipping over a petrol mower, secure a plastic bag under the fuel cap.



2. SHARPEN EACH EDGE

Clamp the blade in a vice then use a file or angle grinder to remove dings and hone the edge.

TIP You can also sharpen the blade on a bench grinder.



3. BALANCE THE BLADE

If your mower has a single blade, hang it on a nail and if one side dips, grind that edge down a little more, then check again before reattaching the blade on its hub.



*REPLACE THE STARTER CORD

The nylon starter cord on a petrol mower is subjected to considerable wear and tear while being yanked every time you start the engine, so it will eventually snap or come loose from the spool.

To replace it, buy a new rope with a handle for about \$7.

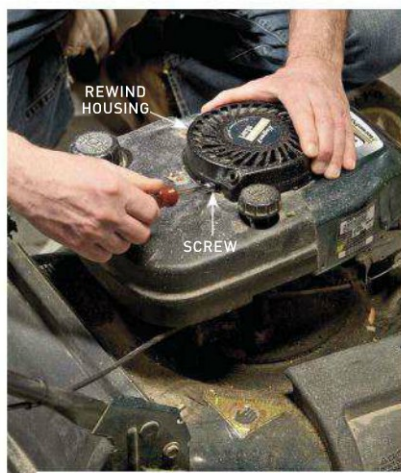
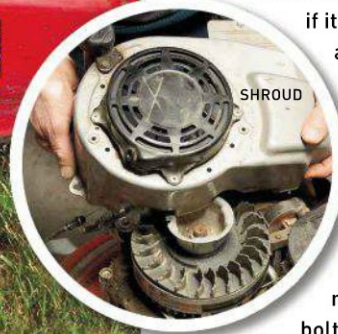
If you find the return spring is broken when you remove the rewind housing, which is less common than the cord failing, take the mower to a professional repairer.

DEALING WITH RIVETS

The rewind housing is usually secured with screws, but

if it's held with rivets, gain access to it by removing the whole shroud, unscrewing the bolts holding it to the engine.

If rivets are loose or damaged, drill them out and replace them with bolts and Nyloc nuts.



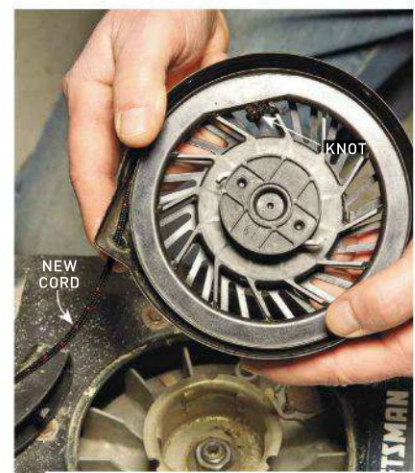
1. OPEN THE HOUSING

Remove the screws that secure the rewind housing to the lawnmower, then turn it upside down and use long-nose pliers to remove the broken cord.



2. WIND THE RETURN SPRING

Turn the cord spool to tension the spring then wind it back until the holes in the spool and housing are aligned. Wedge a screwdriver in to keep the spring tensioned.



3. SECURE THE NEW CORD

Thread the end of the cord through both holes, then tie a knot in the end to secure it and gently let the spool take up the slack.

LAWNMOWER BUYING GUIDE

Just as there is a great deal of variation in lawn sizes, there is a range of mower sub-types within the main categories of petrol-driven or electric, while human-powered push mowers also continue to be popular for very small lawns.

PETROL

ROTARY PUSH

Affordable four-stroke mower with 460mm cut width, pressed steel chassis and 140cc engine. Perfect for medium-size residential lawns, it has a cut height from 11 to 75mm and dual swing-back blades.



Victa 18in Classic Cut Four-stroke Mower, \$349. victa.com

RIDE-ON

Ideal for domestic applications with an ergonomic seat and 660mm wide cutting deck. This ride-on has three-speed manual transmission and cutting height from 38 to 102mm.

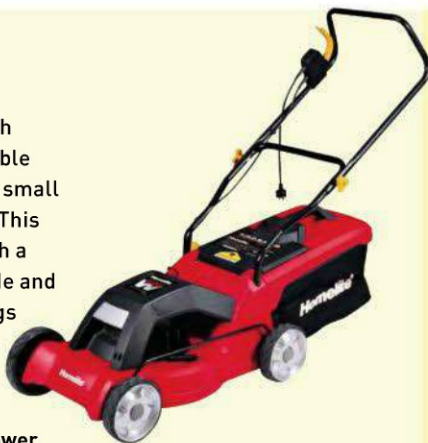


McCulloch MowCart66 Ride-on Mower, \$1448. mcculloch.com

ELECTRIC

ROTARY PUSH

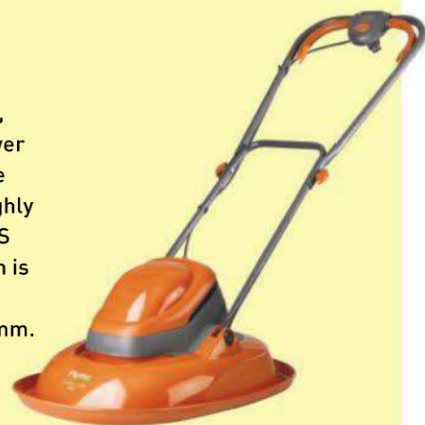
Powerful yet quiet electric mower with 1600W motor suitable for townhouse and small residential lawns. This mower is fitted with a single 420mm blade and eight height settings from 20 to 77mm.



Homelite 1600W Mower, \$229. homelite.com

HOVER

Made to cut small to medium sized lawns, this lightweight mower is easy to manoeuvre and is made from highly impact-resistant ABS plastic. Cutting width is 350mm and cutting height from 15 to 41mm.



Flymo Turbo Lite 350 Mower, \$219. flymo.com.au

CORDLESS

BATTERY

No need to worry about extension cords or mixing fuel with this 36V lithium-ion powered mower. It's suitable for small residential lawns with five height settings from 20 to 70mm and a single 400mm blade.



Ryobi 36V Li-ion Cordless Mower Kit, \$499. ryobi.com.au

PUSH

With slip-resistant dual-drive wheels and self-sharpening blades, this mower has a cutting height from 15 to 42mm and cut width of 300mm. It's also the most eco-friendly type as it has no motor.



Ozito Push Reel Mower, \$59. ozito.com.au



From father to son A Victa is second to none



For generations, dads have been teaching their children the art of lawn mowing using their trusty Victa. And ever since the first Victa lawn mower was invented in 1952, our Australian development team of thinkers and tinkerers have been hard at work designing new products to help families turn their gardens into a

picture. Today, Victa has a complete range of outdoor equipment that includes Chainsaws, Hedgers, Edgers, Trimmers, Ride-ons and more. So whether you're a backyard learner or expert turner, a lopper or a chopper, history has proven that Victa is altogether better.



victa.com.au

VICTA
Altogether Better™

my first garden™

Fun outdoor learning.

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

Introducing
kids to the
wonderful world
of gardening.



Learning and development

My First Garden gives children the opportunity to create and care for their own project, from soil preparation to harvesting their garden, whilst also developing their fine motor skills.



Healthy lifestyle choices

By planting and growing their garden, children will be encouraged to make healthier food choices and lifestyle habits which they will carry through to their adult years.



Five-minute assembly

My First Garden's patented assembly system slides together in less than five minutes, with no tools or screws required!



For boys and girls 4+

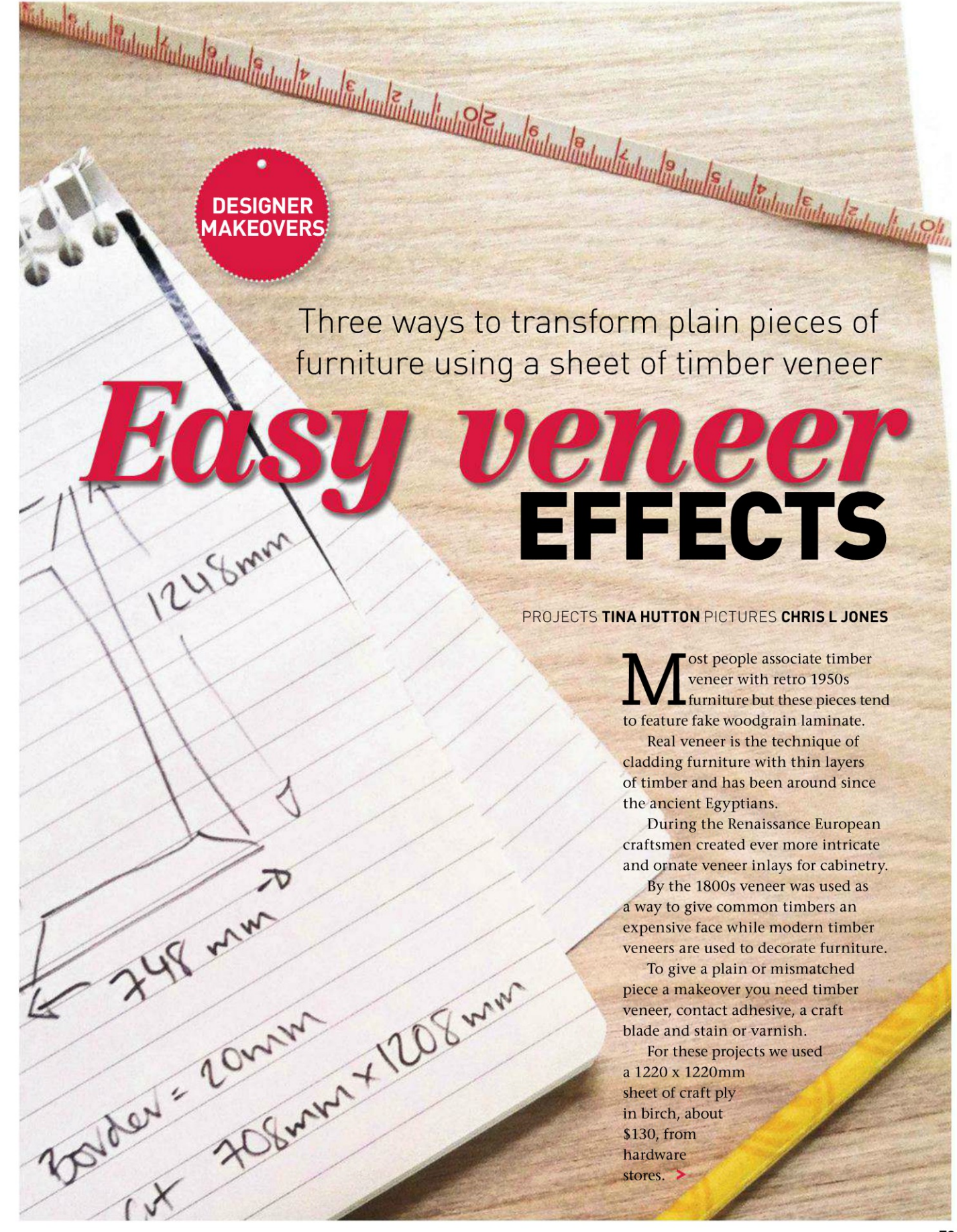
My First Garden is a great hands-on outdoor activity for boys and girls ages 4 and up.



Australian Made

My First Garden was developed and is manufactured in Australia using high quality Australian BlueScope Steel.

www.myfirstgarden.com.au



DESIGNER
MAKEOVERS

Three ways to transform plain pieces of furniture using a sheet of timber veneer

Easy veneer EFFECTS

PROJECTS **TINA HUTTON** PICTURES **CHRIS L JONES**

Most people associate timber veneer with retro 1950s furniture but these pieces tend to feature fake woodgrain laminate.

Real veneer is the technique of cladding furniture with thin layers of timber and has been around since the ancient Egyptians.

During the Renaissance European craftsmen created ever more intricate and ornate veneer inlays for cabinetry.

By the 1800s veneer was used as a way to give common timbers an expensive face while modern timber veneers are used to decorate furniture.

To give a plain or mismatched piece a makeover you need timber veneer, contact adhesive, a craft blade and stain or varnish.

For these projects we used a 1220 x 1220mm sheet of craft ply in birch, about \$130, from hardware stores. ➤

Stained veneer table

To turn a bargain melamine table into a designer piece all you need is a homemade stencil, contact adhesive, timber stain and a sheet of veneer.

Measure the tabletop accurately and cut a sheet of veneer to size using a craft blade and metal ruler.

For this tabletop the veneer top was inset 25mm all around and a 20mm wide border added, leaving 5mm of the melamine edge showing. The border was stained to match the stencil cutout.

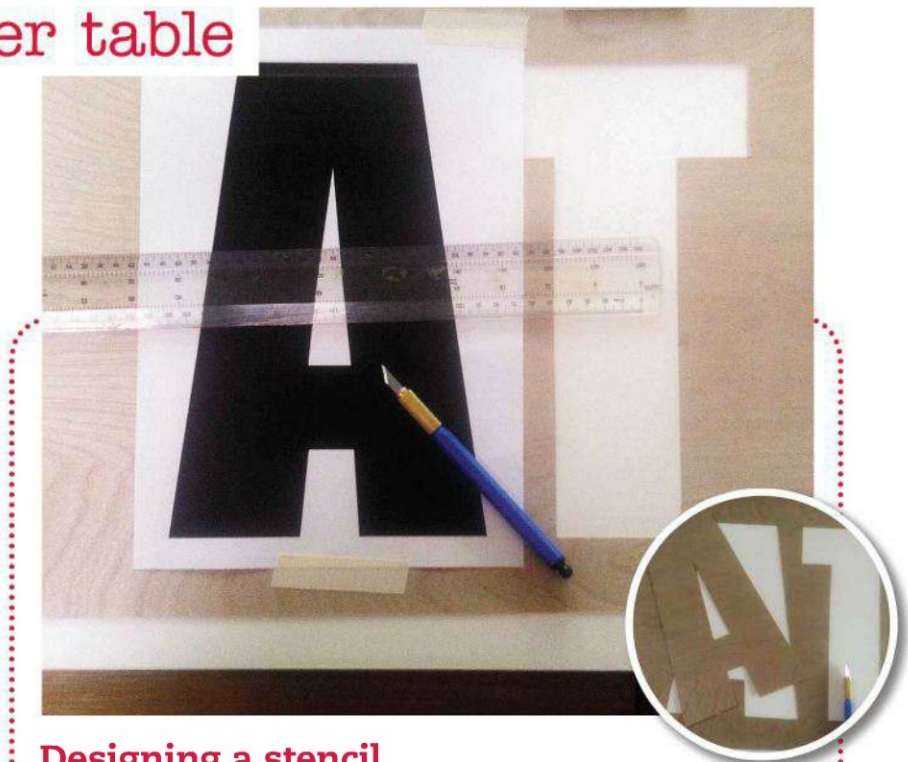
Dilute the stain with methylated spirits to control the depth of colour.

Mix one part timber stain and three parts methylated spirits in a plastic container. Apply the diluted stain to the border and stencil cutouts with a paintbrush using long strokes.

Reapply the stain until the desired depth of colour is achieved.



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



Designing a stencil

To create the stencil, select the word or image from a computer program, printing one letter per A4 sheet.

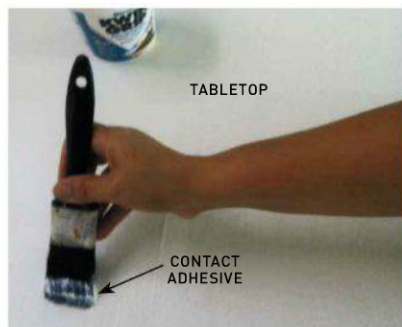
For this project a compressed helvetica font was chosen for its straight edges and simplicity.

Straight edges are easier to cut and refit than curved edges so keep this in mind when choosing a design.

Position the veneer tabletop piece on a self-healing mat.

Secure the printed pages on the veneer using masking tape, cutting out the stencil with a craft blade.

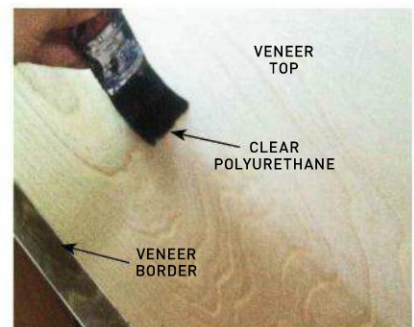
TIP Using a self-healing mat protects the surface underneath, gives you more control over the cut, and helps blades last longer. ➤



1 Prepare the surface
Sand the tabletop with 180 grit abrasive paper to create a key for the adhesive. Apply a 2mm thick coat of contact adhesive using a paintbrush, then leave for 20 minutes until tacky.



2 Secure the veneer
Lay the stencil and border pieces face down, then apply contact adhesive to the back and leave it to go tacky. Position the veneer top, the stained border then the stencil cutouts.



3 Apply the finish
Let the adhesive dry for 24 hours then apply two coats of water-based polyurethane with a paintbrush, sanding lightly between coats.
TIP Use a floor product for durability.



STYLING (SILVER HIDE, TOLUX STOOL AND CHAIR) MATT BLATT (CERISE RUG) ARMADILLO & CO

Customise a plain table in just a few hours by adding a veneer top.



Cover the doors of a basic cabinet with scallop-edged veneer strips.

STYLING (MARGOLD RUG) ARMADILLO & CO

Hallway cabinet

Decorate the doors of a melamine cabinet with rows of timber veneer with a scalloped edge.

Measure the doors then make a template of the scallop design and calculate the number of rows needed.

Here, the total width of both doors was divided by 10 to give the width of each scallop. To get the height of the scallops, divide the door height by the number of rows you want.

For this project there were 12 rows of scallops and two 100mm wide strips of veneer cut to fit across the base of each door to conceal the white surface area scalloping didn't cover.

Remove the cabinet doors and lay them side by side to attach the scallop rows, checking the half-scallops on the inside edge are aligned.

TIP To seal the veneer doors, apply a water-based polyurethane.



Selleys Kwik Grip Contact Adhesive, \$40 for 2L. selleys.com.au



Making a template

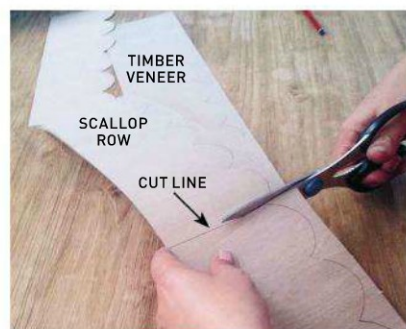
Draw a rectangle on a piece of paper using a marker pen then trace around a drinking glass to make a curved edge at one end, ensuring the diameter of the glass is the same width as the rectangle.

Cut out the paper shape using scissors then position it on one corner of a sheet of timber veneer.

Mark the rectangle with the curved end on the veneer in pencil and cut out with scissors.

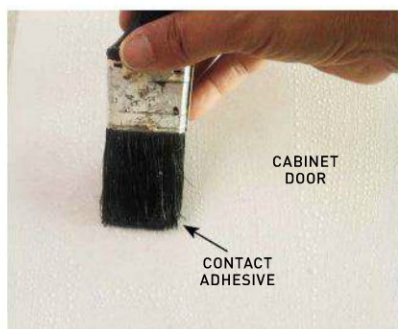
Use the veneer template to mark rows of 12 scalloped rectangles butted up against each other.

TIP Veneer is used for the template as it's thick enough to give a good edge for tracing. ➤



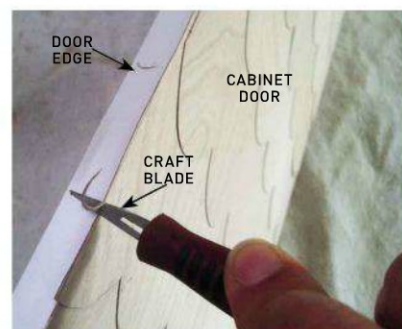
1 Cut the veneer

Use the template to trace the scallop design on lengths of veneer. Cut each strip in half, alternating full and half-scallop ends, cutting around the scallops using a craft blade.



2 Secure the scallops

Apply a 2mm thick coat of contact adhesive to the doors and the scallop rows with a paintbrush and let it go tacky. Attach the scallop rows, starting from the base and overlapping.

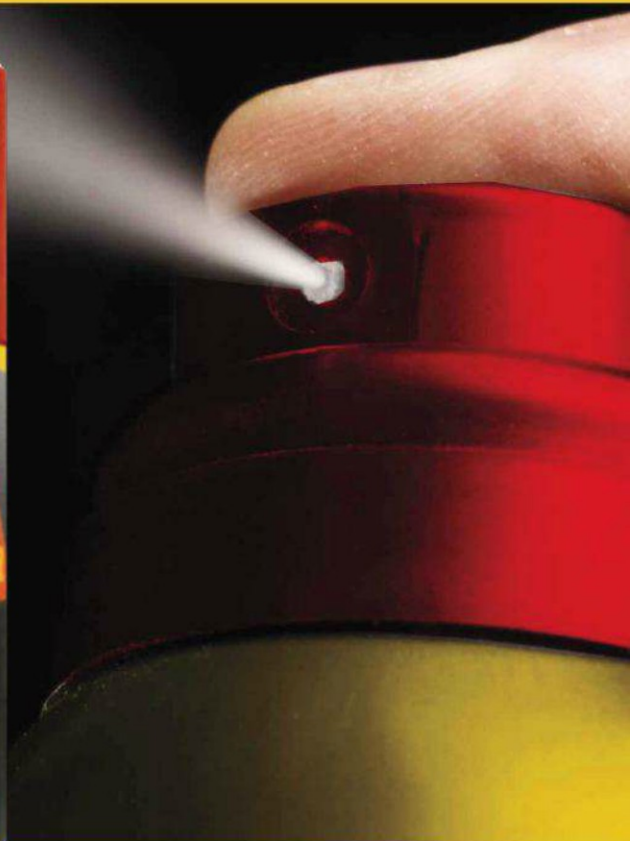


3 Trim and finish

Use a rolling pin to go over the doors to remove any air bubbles. Let the adhesive dry, then trim any excess veneer on the door edges with a craft blade and lightly sand to smooth.

SIKABOND SPRAYFIX

HIGH STRENGTH AEROSOL CONTACT ADHESIVE



- Superior bond strength aerosol adhesive for easy application
- For permanent and temporary bonding, repositionable for 1-2 minutes

- Will not damage delicate materials including photographs
- Suitable for use on a wide range of substrates and surfaces including laminate and carpeting

aus.sika.com

1300 22 33 48

BUILDING TRUST



Pendant light shade

Give a pendant light a new look by using two embroidery hoops and a small piece of 6mm thick plywood to make a frame for a shade.

A sheet of timber veneer is cut and wrapped around the frame to make a two-tier drum shade then finished with Scandinavian timber oil.

Designed to fit an existing light fitting, the plywood is cut to house the socket. Only use CFLs with this light shade as they produce 75% less heat than incandescent bulbs.

Buy timber embroidery hoops, sized from 75 to 350mm in diameter, for about \$3 each, from suppliers like Craft 4 Less. craft4less.com.au



Cutting the veneer

Use a tape measure to find the hoop circumference, add 20mm extra for overlap when gluing, then mark and cut a 300mm wide piece of veneer to length for the shade. Cut a 100mm wide strip to the same length.

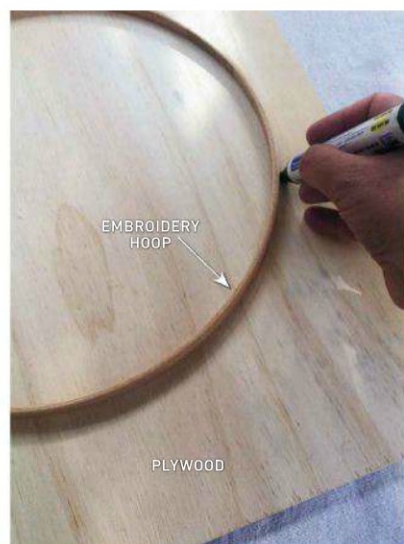
For straight strips of veneer, cut right through the sheet with a utility knife for the best finish.

Or you can score the marked line then fold it against a straight edge and back on itself.

TIP If you want the grain of the timber veneer to run around the light, cut the long edge in the direction of the grain. ➤

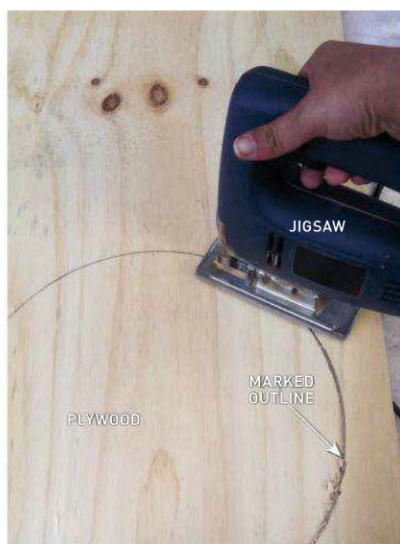


Give a pendant light a new designer shade using plywood and timber veneer.



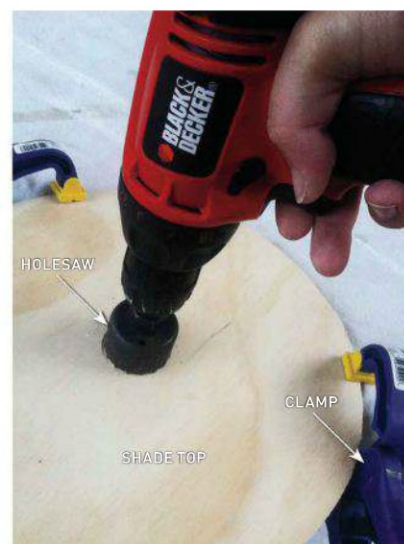
1 Mark the plywood

To make a top for the pendant light shade for the light socket and socket cover, lay the piece of 6mm thick plywood on a flat surface and position a timber embroidery hoop on top, tracing around the outside edge with a marker pen.



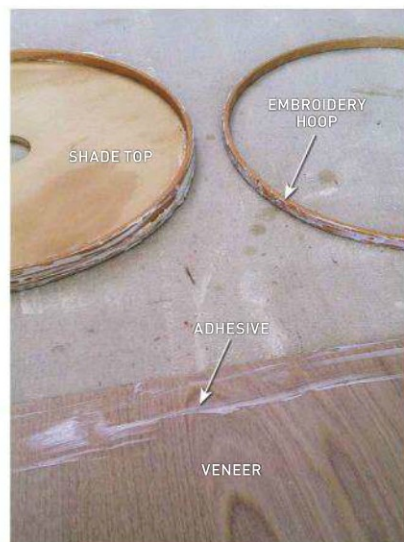
2 Cut the shade top

Clamp the plywood to the work surface and drill a starter hole at any point on the marked outline. Cut out the top of the light shade using a jigsaw, keeping the blade directly on the outline for a top exactly the same size as the hoop.



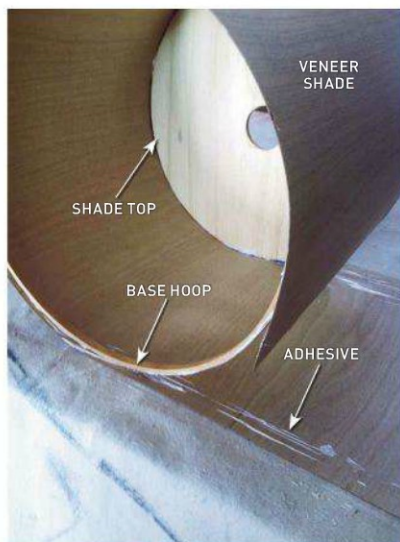
3 Make the light hole

Find and mark the centre point of the shade top then measure the light fitting to cut a hole for it to pass through using a holesaw. Make sure the hole is big enough for the socket to pass through but small enough for the cover to sit against the plywood.



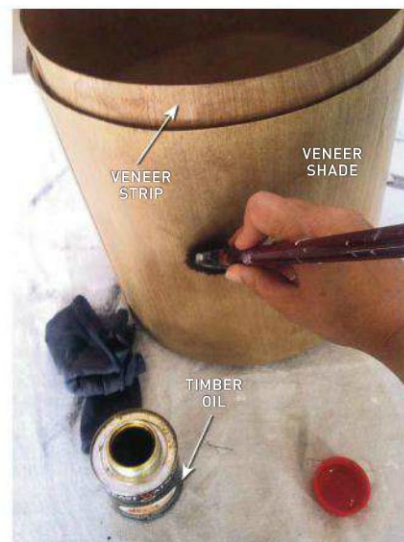
4 Apply the adhesive

Use a paintbrush to apply contact adhesive to the edge of the shade top and the inner edge of an embroidery hoop, leave for 15 minutes to go tacky then slot the hoop over the ply. Apply adhesive to the outer hoop edges and 20mm from the veneer long edges.



5 Secure the veneer

Position the shade top and base hoop at one end of the veneer shade and roll along the glue line. Apply adhesive to the base hoop inner edge and the top outer edge of the veneer strip and let it go tacky then secure, ensuring both shade seams line up.



6 Finish the light shade

Peg the shade on the seam until the adhesive dries then apply two coats of Scandinavian timber oil to the veneer using a paintbrush. Leave to dry then attach the light fitting to hang the pendant shade.

TIP Stain the veneer before oiling.

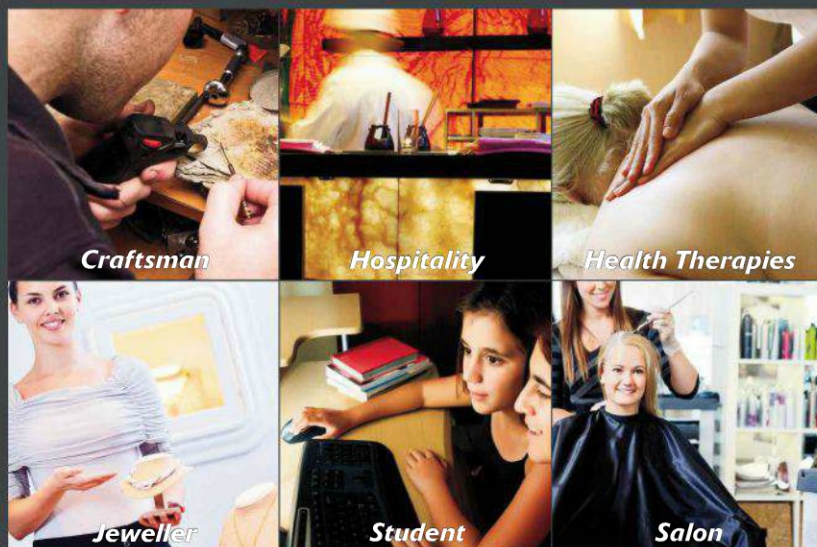
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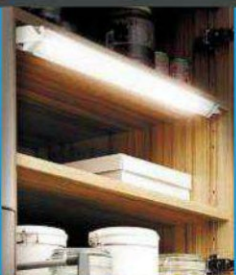


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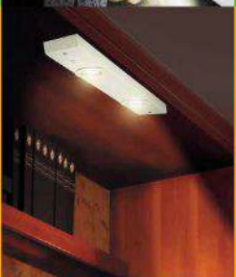
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CHANNELLED

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PREPARATION

- Whether renovating or retrofitting, take advantage of DIY under cabinet lights by getting that extra power point installed when your shelving is being built.



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Designer furniture upgrades

»Be inspired to transform classic timber pieces using paint, stain and varnish for a contemporary look

Check out these furniture makeovers by two Australian designers. They both upcycled old timber items into modern statement pieces using Feast Watson wood-care products. Stripping, refinishing and upholstering furniture are all jobs that can be done D.I.Y. Here's how.

REVAMP A TELEPHONE TABLE

This telephone table was a great shape and in good condition but the dark timber stain and faded pink upholstery dated the piece.

The original finish was sanded off and the upholstery removed. Proofseal was applied to the timber frame then three coats of white stain and varnish.

New fabric was stapled in place and trim hot-glued to cover the staples.

Feast Watson Liming White Stain & Varnish, about \$52 for 1L.



»Paint dining chairs



Functional but plain these timber dining chairs needed a makeover. The current trend of dipping, where most of the piece is painted but some raw timber is left, was used to colour each chair.

The timber was sanded, primed and the legs taped. Two coats of semi gloss enamel were applied and the pieces finished with a coat of clear varnish.

Feast Watson Clear Varnish Matt, \$38 for 1L.



D.I.Y. Workshops

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

Grow Your Own Workshop Weekend

Get out into the garden this spring with Bunnings D.I.Y. weekend workshops. On Saturday the 28th and Sunday the 29th of September, all adult and kids' workshops (excluding QLD) will be focused on helping customers grow their own vegie and herb gardens. So visit your local Bunnings to learn how to grow your own and live more sustainably this spring.

SATURDAY 31 AUGUST
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KIDS' WORKSHOP WOODWORK

SUNDAY 15 SEPTEMBER
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KIDS' WORKSHOP DECORATOR
GROW YOUR OWN in QLD

SUNDAY 1 SEPTEMBER
INDOOR PROJECTS
KIDS' WORKSHOP WOODWORK

SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER
SPRING PROJECTS
KIDS' WORKSHOP SPRING PROJECTS

SATURDAY 7 SEPTEMBER
KITCHEN, BATHROOM & LAUNDRY
KIDS' WORKSHOP GARDEN CRAFT

SUNDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
SPRING PROJECTS
KIDS' WORKSHOP SPRING PROJECTS

SUNDAY 8 SEPTEMBER
KITCHEN, BATHROOM & LAUNDRY
KIDS' WORKSHOP DECORATOR

SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER
GROW YOUR OWN
KIDS' WORKSHOP GROW YOUR OWN (ex QLD)

SATURDAY 14 SEPTEMBER
GARDENING
KIDS' WORKSHOP GARDEN CREATURE
GROW YOUR OWN in QLD

SUNDAY 29 SEPTEMBER
GROW YOUR OWN
KIDS' WORKSHOP GROW YOUR OWN (ex QLD)

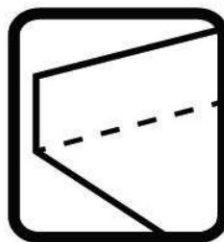
Our workshops are held every weekend at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm. For specific topics, ask in-store or go to bunnings.com.au. If you live in South Australia, speak to a team member about one-on-one sessions.



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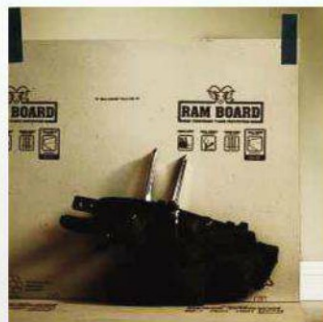
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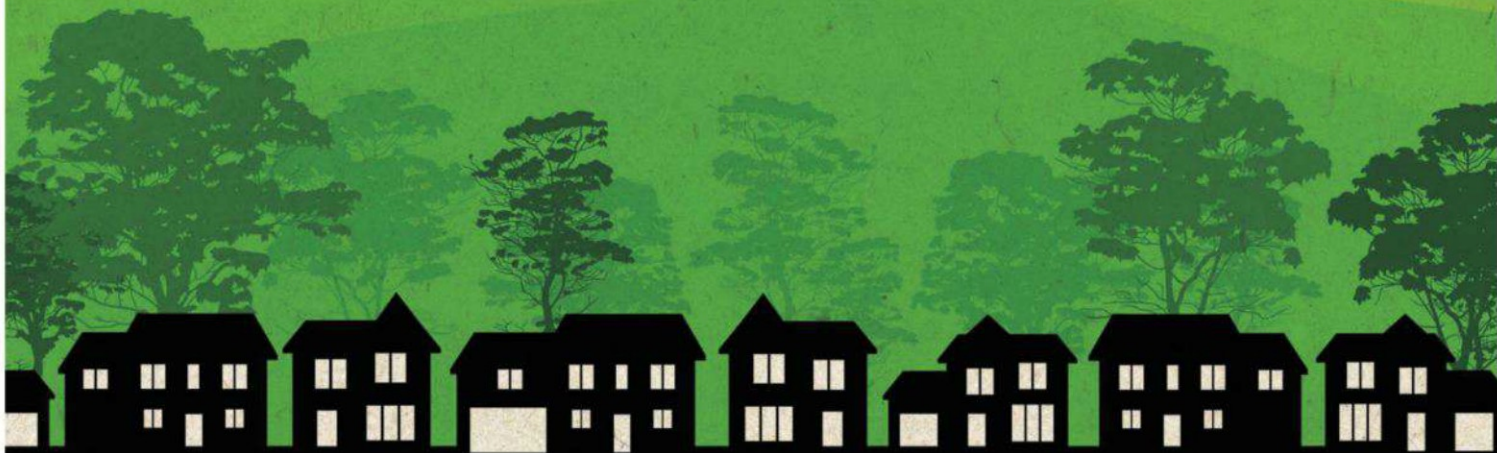


Your guide to

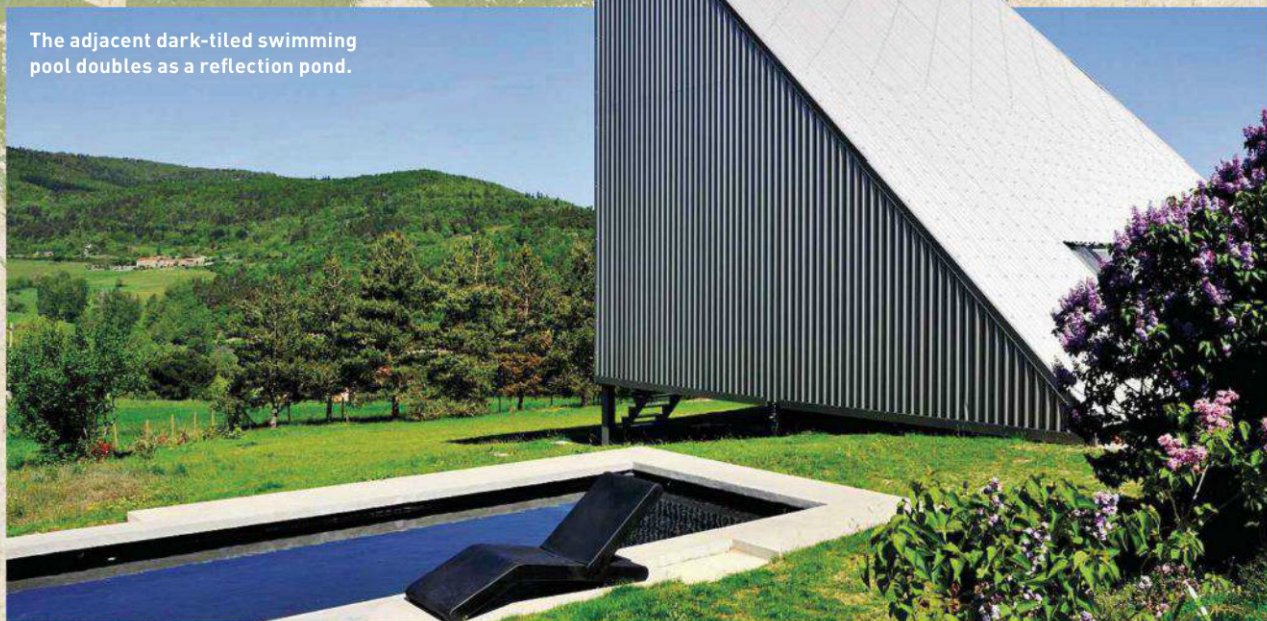


Green living

Plant the roof, keep bees and grow food at home
to save you money and help the planet



The adjacent dark-tiled swimming pool doubles as a reflection pond.



INNOVATIVE
DESIGN

DESIGN FUTURE

An enterprising duo on a tight budget create a bold sustainable home in a stunning location

Perched on the edge of a valley in a clearing surrounded by hectares of lush bushland, the dramatic shape and unusual materials of this home rival its surrounds.

The private property is reached via an unsealed road. With no neighbours in sight, the architects were able to design a bold structure unhampered by restrictions.

The two-level steel isosceles triangle with mezzanine is anchored on stilts with a 45° roofline starting at ground level and soaring to the peak of the top floor.

Its reflection is mirrored in an adjacent swimming pool that is finished with dark tiles.

THE DESIGN BRIEF

Created by architects Caroline Barres and Thierry Coquet, the futuristic home was built for a young couple, David and Justine.

The pair are passionate lovers of contemporary architecture who simply wanted 'something original'.

The architects chose industrial-style materials for longevity and to fit the eco-friendly brief and budget.

Inside the 160 square metre home is just as innovative, with galvanised walls and lofty ceilings reaching seven metres at the apex.

Truly open plan, the two levels are separated by safety netting that's also used on the deck. ➤

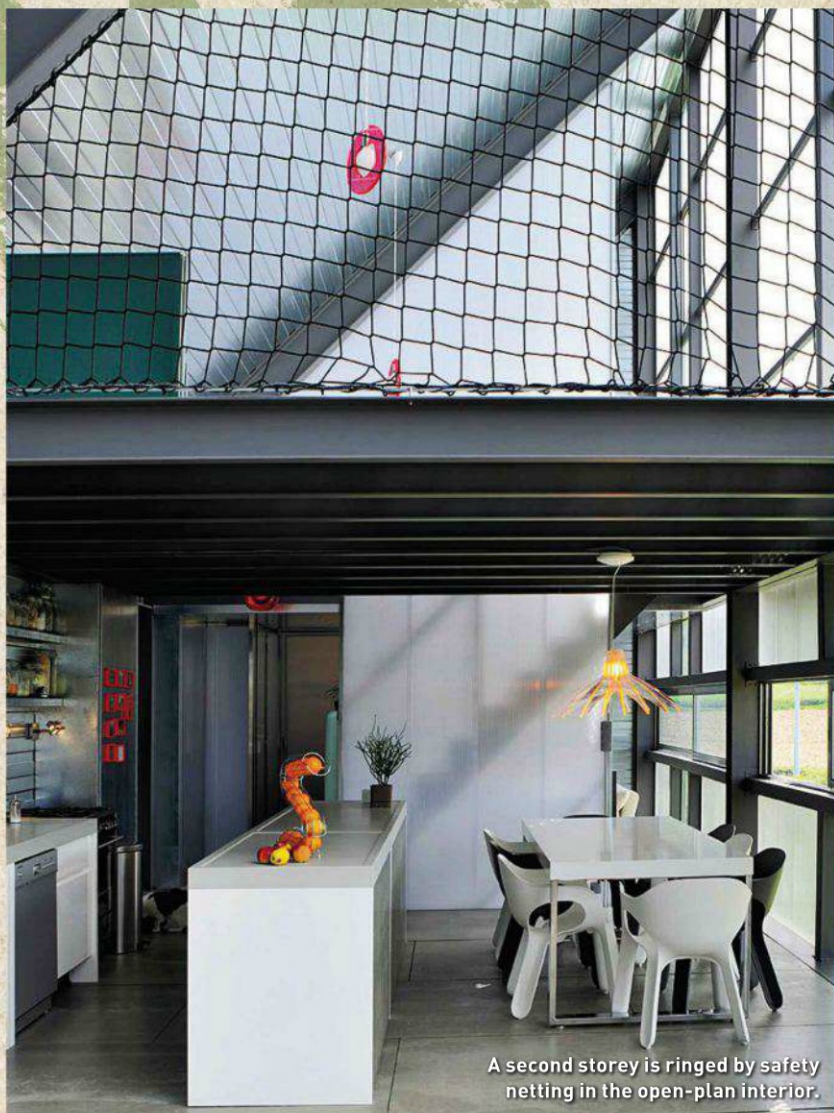


JUSTINE AND
DAVID

PICTURES © STUDIO ERICK SAILLET/PICTURE MEDIA



Enclosed by safety netting, the deep deck appears suspended in nature.



A second storey is ringed by safety netting in the open-plan interior.

Sustainable construction

Pure, inexpensive materials in shades of grey are the hallmark of this environmentally friendly modern designer home.

The framework is anti-rust treated steel, cladding consists of siding container steel and the woodwork is a natural shade of aluminium grey.

Underfloor heating runs on a geothermal system while harvested rainwater supplies the garden and both toilets.

The front of the house features an entire wall of translucent polycarbonate instead of glass to keep costs down, while numerous aluminium-framed opening windows provide airflow.

Like a giant Meccano toy the framework and structure were fabricated off-site then pieced together at the location.

As a bonus, the final cost for the home came in under budget at about \$2300 a square metre.

BUILT TO LAST

The ground level has a combined dining and kitchen area opening directly to the pool, plus a garage, three bedrooms, the main with ensuite, and a bathroom.

Structural walls of galvanised metal and white polycarbonate form room partitions.

The mezzanine level incorporates a living area and a home office space where the couple can work without leaving their idyllic surroundings.

The floors are divided by a beamed punched metal ceiling, and large sliding aluminium windows capture valley views, airflow and sunshine.

A suspended deck off the top floor living area juts out dramatically, providing an excellent viewing platform and capturing breezes from three directions.

With its perforated metal flooring, the deck looks like an industrial cage but is cleverly designed for maximum strength and durability. ➤



The panoramic views are maximised by a wall of polycarbonate and glass.



Richly coloured fabrics pop against the backdrop of hard industrial finishes.



The ensuite forms part of the master bedroom and the tub is freestanding.



A sheet metal divider screens the shower recess for a bit of privacy.

INDUSTRIAL MATERIALS

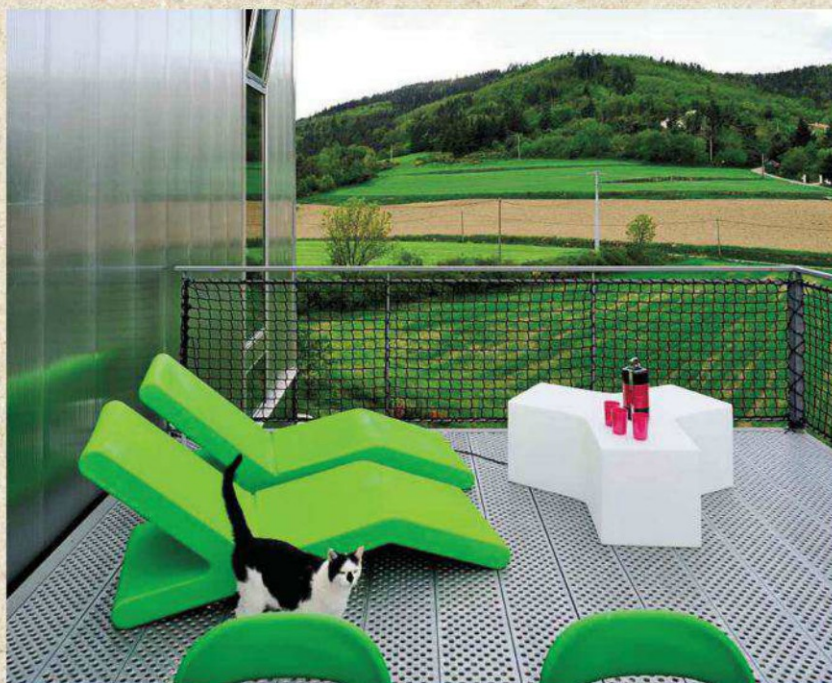
The triangular shape with a single facade and side-view windows to the southeast forms what the architects call an eye on the valley.

In an unusual choice of materials, the high-ceiling side of the house features a floor-to-roofline wall of translucent polycarbonate to let in light and frame the view.

The master bedroom has a very contemporary, industrial look with walls of white-ribbed polycarbonate sheeting and an open-plan ensuite with sink, shower and tub.

In the kitchen the workbench and ceiling are made of punched metal sheeting, which also forms the staircase.

With the look of a viewing platform, the deck is ideal for outdoor entertaining.



Corrugated iron

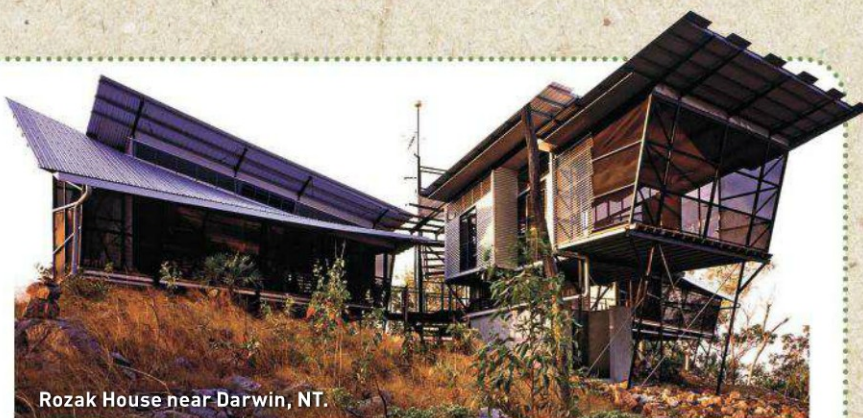
It may have originated at the London Docks in the 19th century, but generations of Australians have grown up under corrugated iron roofs and built any number of sheds and chook houses with it.

As fashions changed and more modern alternatives became affordable and available, corrugated iron roofing was gradually replaced by materials such as tiles and the more rust-resistant Colorbond.

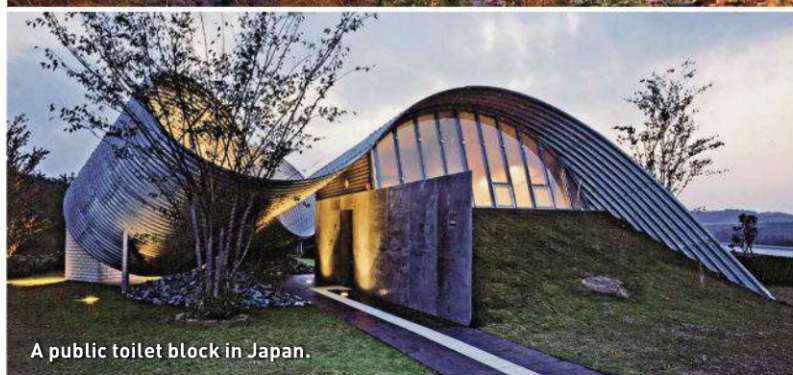
But in the last 40 years or so, corrugated iron has enjoyed a resurgence as architects have come to appreciate its appearance and design potential.

+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for three builds using corrugated iron.



Rozak House near Darwin, NT.



A public toilet block in Japan.

PICTURES (RIGHT) CORRUGATED IRON: BUILDING ON THE FRONTIER BY ADAM MORNEMENT & SIMON HOLLOWAY (FRANCES LINCOLN)

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Natural ROOFING

Maximise green space and reduce cooling costs with a garden up high

WORDS **MONICA NYE**

Australia's population has passed 23 million, which means more people squeezing into cities and towns designed for far more modest numbers.

About 90% of Aussies live in urban areas, most in freestanding homes, and modern block sizes are being scaled down to accommodate us.

In the 1950s, the average block size was 810 to 910 sqm, dropping to 600 sqm by the 1980s, then 350 to 450 sqm by 2000. As of last year, new lots were as small as 187 sqm, with an average of 200 to 350 sqm.

Fortunately, a shrinking block size doesn't have to mean a corresponding reduction in green space.

Melbourne-based company Fytogreen (fytogreen.com.au) has been addressing the issue in an innovative way for the past decade by establishing roof gardens on public, commercial and residential buildings.

National sales manager Stuart Tyler says the concept of gardens going up,

which originated in northern Europe, is gaining traction here as engineers, architects and horticulturalists work together to create rooftop oases that last as long as the building itself.

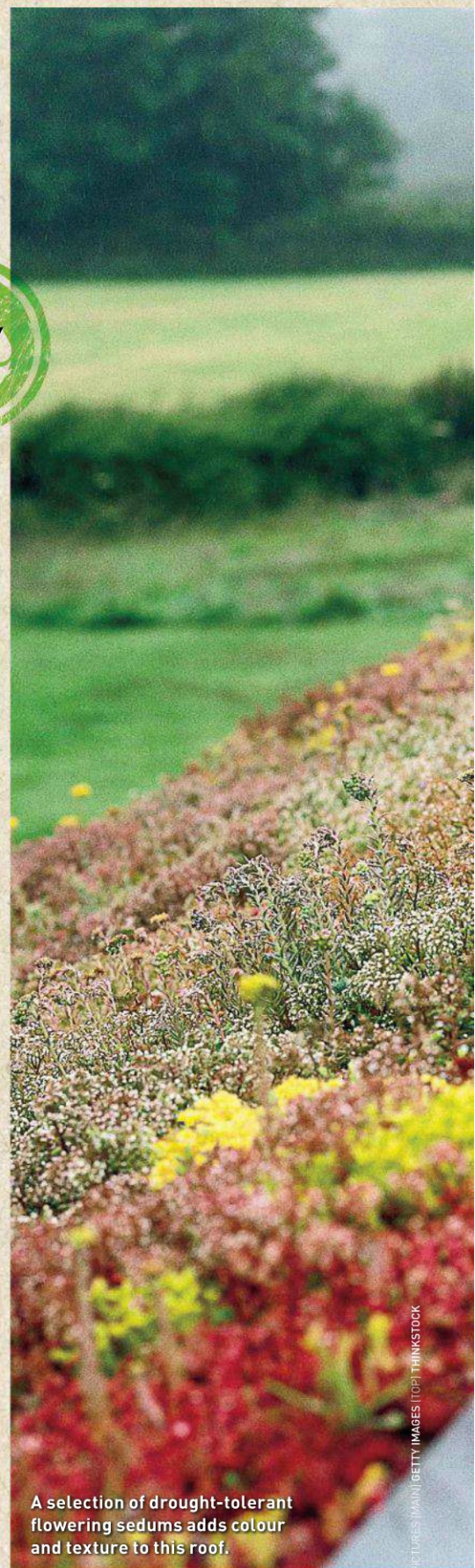
WEIGHING UP COSTS

As with other energy-efficient additions, such as solar panels, installation costs are outweighed by the long-term benefits.

In addition to looking good and reducing energy costs, the gardens delay stormwater runoff, provide filtered rainwater and create habitats for birds and insects.

'Costs can range from less than \$200 a square metre up to \$300, depending on the profile depth of the roof, but if you have a roof of less than 50 square metres, that cost is going to increase quite dramatically,' says Stuart.

'The infrastructure, the design process, getting everything there then lifting it onto the roof all has a bearing on the price,' he adds.



A selection of drought-tolerant flowering sedums adds colour and texture to this roof.

PICTURES (MAIN) GETTY IMAGES (TOP) THINKSTOCK



What to plant

The right plants for a green roof depend on climate and exposure to elements such as harsh sunlight and strong winds.

LAY trafficable turf and appropriate drought-tolerant grasses such as couch or kikuyu.

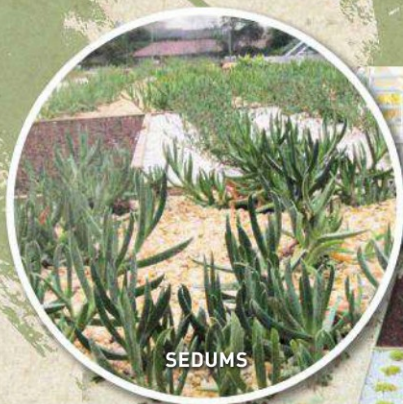
SELECT plants based on profile depth, water needs and weather tolerance as well as appearance.

ADD hardy species like succulents, sedums and native groundcovers.

PLANT trees but take the size into account as it affects structural costs.

USE drip irrigation for establishing plants and for keeping plants alive during prolonged dry periods.

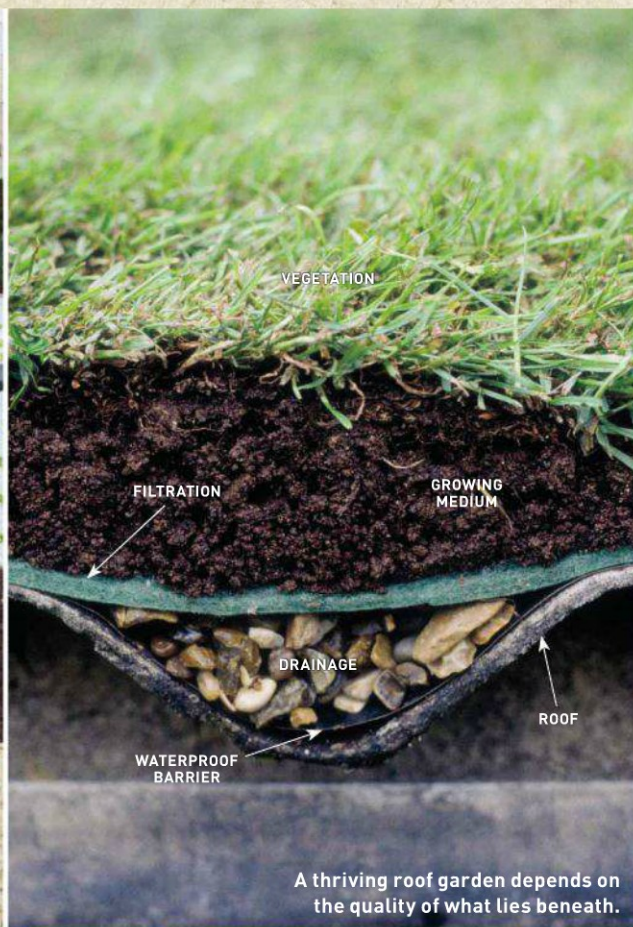
For more information visit the Green Roofs Australasia website (greenroofsaustralasia.com.au). ➤



SEDUMS



New plantings at Holt & Hart rooftop garden in Sydney's Surry Hills.



A thriving roof garden depends on the quality of what lies beneath.

TYPES OF GARDEN

Fytogreen installs two main types of roof garden for different applications.

Extensive roof gardens have a thin growing medium less than 200mm deep and can be retrofitted on existing homes or sheds.

Intensive gardens support a soil depth of up to 1500mm or greater and substantial vegetation.

Says Stuart, 'Extensive roof gardens maximise the outdoors, reduce energy emissions and create enhanced landscapes.

'Any shaped roof is suitable, up to a 60° pitch if needed, and as long as you have the right structural support beneath it, you can clad the garden with as little as 25mm of plywood.

'Intensive roof gardens are ones you can walk around as they have hard surfaces like paving, built-in

seating, garden beds, a recreational area or maybe even a barbecue.'

An extensive garden is generally installed for its insulation and aesthetic properties.

The aim could be to deflect glaring light and radiant heat if located near a metal roof, or the owners may want to create an appealing outlook.

'Extensive roof gardens are mostly all garden and you can't walk around them as they have no hardscape areas like concrete and paving.

'This type has a much thinner profile, is much lighter and typically you only go on it when you're doing maintenance,' Stuart says.

HOW IT WORKS

Before considering a roof garden, ensure the structure can hold the saturated weight loading of the entire

profile, including mature plants.

The surface also needs to be prepared with proper waterproofing and drainage installed.

Fytogreen uses a growing medium called Hydrocell, a lightweight, water-retentive soil enhancer that enables fast plant establishment and lasts for up to 10 years.

An extensive roof garden with a thin profile has a blanket of air created by the foliage above the soil.

There's also air within the soil layer and an air gap with the drainage layer underneath.

The air in gaps provides the insulation and protection against temperature changes.

As water transpires in and out of the plants the composition of the layers changes. Water is held in the soil and flows out of the drainage layer.



SAVING MONEY

Whatever the reason for the installation of a rooftop garden, the happy result is a marked reduction in cooling and insulation costs.

'One of the true benefits of a green roof is it keeps hot air out of the building,' Stuart explains.

'In Japan I've seen an example where a green roof installation resulted in a 40% reduction in air-conditioning use. If you apply that to Australia, especially during our warmer times, there's a huge energy cost benefit that can be achieved.'

Many countries consider green roof design an essential part of the national landscape, Stuart says.

'It is far more accepted in northern Europe and in countries like Germany. In Dusseldorf, government incentive programs have led to a huge uptake of green roof construction.'

Stuart says although a green roof costs more, it pays for itself.

'The idea is to last the life of a building or a home. We start work knowing it's going to last a minimum of 20 years.'

PICTURES (RIGHT) GETTY IMAGES (TOP) ADAM WOODHAMS



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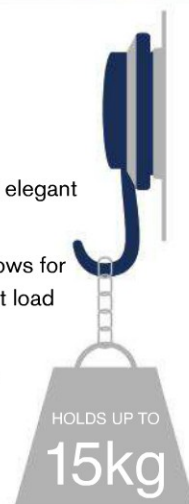
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BEFORE

This pond was a nice feature but needed an upgrade to become more eco-friendly.



Aquaponics MADE EASY

Build a raised garden bed and link it to a backyard pond to grow vegies using recycled water

PICTURES **ADAM WOODHAMS** PROJECT **CHARLIE BACON**



AFTER
In the revamped landscape, a raised bed grows edibles using pond water, while a bench and footbridge provide access and seating.

As plots get smaller and homes get greener we seem to be demanding more and more from our shrinking outdoor spaces.

At the same time there is growing awareness about sustainability and the advantages of growing your own food.

But how do you get a small garden to perform the multiple functions of producing edibles and providing a place to relax, maximising space and giving you bang for your buck?

One solution is aquaponics, a system that combines aquaculture, raising aquatic animals in tanks, with hydroponics, cultivating plants in water. The idea behind it is very clever

and surprisingly simple, and can be used in the average garden to create a self-watering veggie and herb bed.

It's easy to retrofit an aquaponic system to an existing pond, adding a new dimension to your landscape.

INSTALL THE SYSTEM

To turn a basic backyard pond into an aquaponic system for growing edible fish and greens, all you need to do is build a raised planter, called a grow bed, and connect a few pipes.

The grow bed is filled with gravel then planted and pond water is pumped in to fill it before draining back into the pond.

Natural bacteria colonise the gravel which works like a big biofilter to break down waste from the water so it returns to the pond filtered.

The edible plants thrive on the nutrients that are in the pond water and made available by the bacteria.

And if you choose edible fish over ornamentals like koi for your pond you won't just be harvesting veggies.

As long as a pond is deeper than 600mm and has a volume of over 2000L, converting it to an aquaponic system means it can house edible fish such as silver perch or barramundi.

TIP Ensure you select fish that are suitable for your local climate.

Build a grow bed

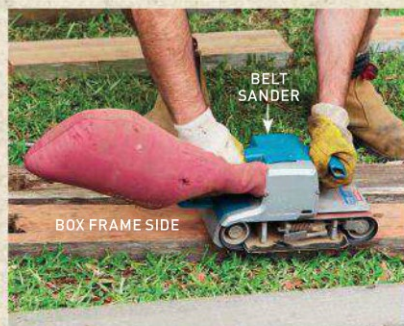
For this aquaponic system, recycled hardwood 1800mm fence posts were cut with a circular saw to build a 1700 x 766 x 300mm deep grow bed.

Three box frames with internal dimensions of 1624 x 700mm were assembled using 100mm galvanised bugle screws. The bed was capped with mitred fence posts positioned face down and joined using exterior construction adhesive and screws.

As the output needs to be 300mm above the water level of the pond, the

grow bed was secured to posts to elevate it, with the high end of the bed 20mm above the low end where the drain will be fitted.

An 1800 x 1200 x 18mm sheet of marine plywood was used as a base for the grow bed and secured to base frame rails and joists using construction adhesive. The post holes were covered with pieces of paling. **TIP** You can also use ACQ treated pine 2400 x 200 x 50mm sleepers and 90 x 90mm posts for the grow bed.



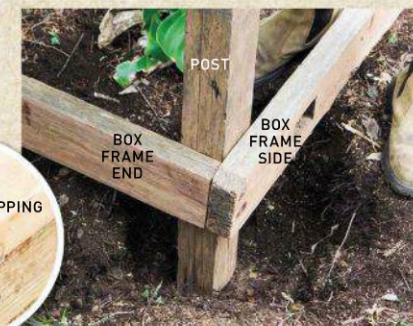
1 Prepare the timber

Recycled timber needs sanding to freshen its appearance and remove the splinters. Use a belt sander fitted with a 40 grit belt to tidy up the faces that will be exposed, then an 80 grit belt if a smoother finish is desired.



2 Make the box frames

Butt the sides against the ends to make three box frames, drilling pilot holes then securing with screws. Cut the capping sides and ends with 45° mitres, securing the mitred corners with adhesive and screws.



3 Sink the posts

Mark the corners of a box frame, dig holes 300mm deep and 200mm square then add 50mm of gravel. Position the posts and check for plumb then add quick-set concrete, angling the top away from the posts.



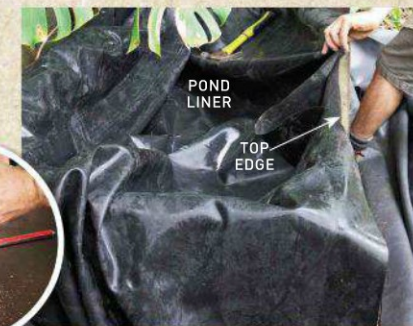
4 Build the raised bed

Position the box frames and check for level, attaching to the posts with screws. Secure the rails with their top edges level with the box frame base. Drill clearance holes then position the three joists, securing with screws.



5 Secure the base

Use a circular saw to cut the base to fit, notching the corners around the posts. Seal the edges with exterior paint then position the base. Use a holesaw to drill a 35mm hole centred 200mm from the edge of the low end.



6 Line the grow bed

Cover the internal sides of the grow bed with geotextile fabric, securing to the top edges with a staple gun. Spread pond liner over the grow bed and push it into the corners. Trim it to fit and secure to the top edge with clouts.

Setting up an aquaponic system

Here are the materials and equipment you need to build a raised grow bed to convert a backyard pond into an aquaponic system. Other basic items like hardware, exterior paint, timber oil and sealant are also required.



Aquapro 3 x 2m PVC Pond Liner,
\$45. aquapro.net.au



Grow Bed Auto Siphon Assembly
Kit, \$69, from Practical
Aquaponics online store.
aquaponics.net.au



Pope Poly Irrigation 19mm Inline Barb
Tap, about \$5. Elbow joints about \$1.
popeproducts.com.au



Sika 310ml Sikaflex 11FC
Polyurethane Adhesive Sealant,
about \$17. sika.com.au



10mm river gravel from
landscaping suppliers and
hardware stores.



Australian Builders 20kg Quick Set
Concrete, about \$7. bpsaust.com



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* Independent laboratory tested (according to ISO 2231-06 or AS 2331.3.1 standard) Tech-Shield™ provides, on average, 3.9 times the protection of Zenith hot dipped galvanised bolts when used in treated pine.

Connect the plumbing

The grow bed was lined with flexible pond liner, filled with gravel then planted with herbs and vegies.

A pond pump continuously runs water through the grow bed while a purpose-designed valve called a bell siphon creates cycles where the bed fills to 90% of capacity then drains automatically back to the pond.

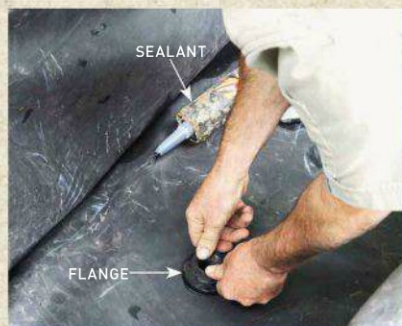
This action takes nutrients and waste material from the pond, giving the plants a constant supply of nutrient-rich water that acts like

a natural liquid fertiliser and returns clear, filtered water to the pond.

A bell siphon kit includes a 25mm tank flange and a length of 100 or 150mm PVC or rigid poly pipe. The pipe is fitted as a shroud to keep the bell siphon filter clear of gravel.

You can buy a bell siphon kit from an aquaponics supplier or go online for instructions on how to make one.

TIP Only use blue metal aggregate and washed river pebbles in the grow bed to stop sediment entering the pond.



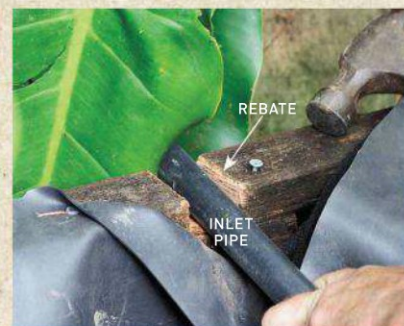
1 Secure the flange

Find the hole in the base, clean the lining with methylated spirits then cut it out with a utility knife. Apply caulking sealant to the hole, position the nut and join it to the other half of the flange fitting from underneath.



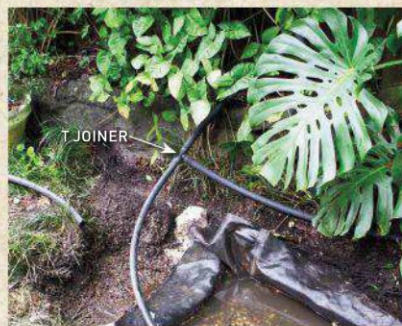
2 Attach the shroud

Use a drill to perforate the 100mm pipe for drainage. Measure from the bed base to 10mm below the top edge, cutting the pipe to length with a saw. Slot the pipe shroud over the flange, adding 40mm pebbles to the base.



3 Install the inlet pipe

Cut a 25 x 25mm rebate on the back of the grow bed using a saw and chisel. Fill the bed with 10mm gravel, add the inlet pipe and siphon then drill pilot holes and secure the capping with a 25mm overhang using screws.



4 Connect the pump

Use a T jointer to connect the pond pump to the grow bed inlet pipe and to the waterfall reservoir above the pond.

TIP The outlet finishes at the waterfall reservoir and runs in cycles as the siphon is established then broken.



5 Lay the pipes

Connect an inline tap to the inlet pipe and add a piece of pipe with an elbow. Position the outlet pipe from the bell siphon far enough away from the pump pick-up point to maximise water turnover in the pond.

Planting the bed

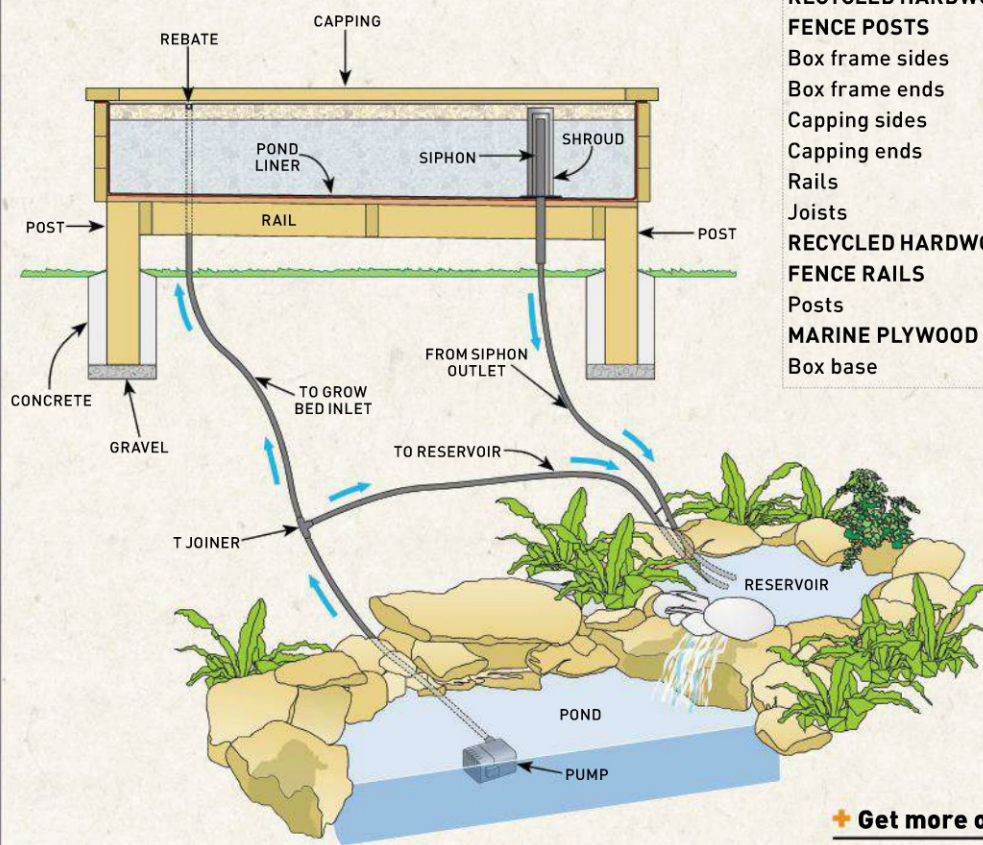
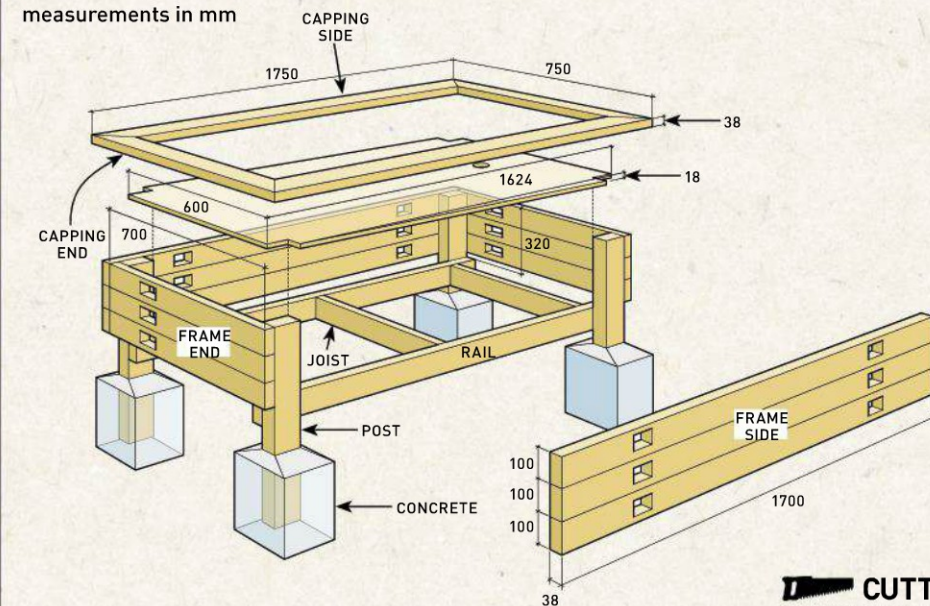
Before you plant any herbs or vegies in the grow bed you need to remove all the soil from the rootball of the plants.

Soak the plants in a bucket of water then remove them from their pots and gently rinse off remaining soil in a bucket of water.

Dig a shallow hole in the grow bed and position the plants, filling around the roots with the gravel.



AQUAPONIC SETUP measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
RECYCLED HARDWOOD		
FENCE POSTS		
Box frame sides	1700 x 100 x 38	6
Box frame ends	700 x 100 x 38	6
Capping sides	1750 x 100 x 38	2
Capping ends	750 x 100 x 38	2
Rails	1624 x 100 x 38	2
Joists	524 x 100 x 38	3
RECYCLED HARDWOOD		
FENCE RAILS		
Posts	800 x 75 x 50	4
MARINE PLYWOOD		
Box base	1624 x 700 x 18	1

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Visit handyman.net.au/mag for instructions on ponds and water features.



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BACKYARD *Beekeeping*

Take the next step in sustainable living and keep bees at home for fresh honey and a healthy yard

WORDS **SITA SIMONS**

Bees and human beings have co-evolved over many thousands of years and in the last century the relationship has spawned a global industry.

Recent times have seen a boom in urban farming and sustainable living, putting hobby beekeeping firmly back on the agenda.

For a yield of fresh, natural honey up to three times a year depending on the climate and general health of the hive, beekeeping is a relatively low-demand interest.

It can also be accommodated in small spaces and city environments.

Our suburban landscapes and cities have plenty of nectar-rich flowers and bees will happily produce honey and serve in their essential role as nature's pollinators. ➤



Honey can be harvested when a frame is three-quarters capped with wax.



Beekeeping at home

Most of us try to avoid them, but without bees our natural ecosystems would collapse. Worldwide, bees are responsible for pollinating a third of all crops, including orchard fruits, nuts and most vegetables.

Industrialisation within agriculture has brought dramatic changes for the lives of bees and large-scale beekeeping has become big business.

Because wild bee populations have dwindled dramatically while the demand for crops has skyrocketed, commercial apiarists keep thousands of colonies and rent them to farmers to pollinate crops.

This leads to bees being transported thousands of kilometres and then introduced to new and often hostile environments, which threatens the bees and hastens the spread of disease.

Just this year, the Californian almond harvest, source of much of the world's supply, was under threat because there were simply not enough bees to pollinate the plants.

Scientists and theorists put forward many reasons for the great decline.

Global climate change, pesticides used on crops, decline of wild habitats, a hive-destroying insect called the small hive beetle, and a nasty parasite called the varroa mite all play significant roles.

As does monoculture, or forcing bees to pollinate only one species of plant, which happens commercially.

Luckily, Australia is unaffected by the varroa mite, but many of the other conditions that threaten bees and their survival exist here and experts feel that it's only a matter of time

before the mite reaches our shores.

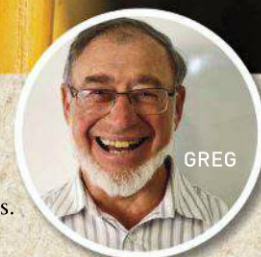
TIP For a free online training course on bee health and biosecurity visit planthealthaustralia.com.au

TAKE UP THE HOBBY

Keeping a couple of beehives for home honey production is a rewarding and undemanding hobby that will produce up to 20kg of liquid gold a year, more than enough to supply the family.

Greg Deakin has been keeping bees for 25 years and has seen a huge increase in the number of people interested in having a hive or two in the backyard.

'People are getting greener and many are noticing that their gardens are not being pollinated like they



used to be. This sparks an interest in bringing pollinators to the garden and bees are foremost among them,' he says.

You need space to house the hives, ideally away from neighbours, and the willingness to learn.

The best idea for anyone wanting to start hobby beekeeping is to join a local club. There are many listed online and local councils also offer information and guidelines.

Greg obtained his knowledge the hard way, through trial and error.

'Now, with all the gear and access to a club, you have so much support and shared information,' he says.

'Bees can be susceptible to many diseases and it's a climate dependent hobby, so there are variables.'

Despite the challenges, the hobby has a very successful uptake.

'Most people who show an interest go on to keep hives and really enjoy the process. It's very family friendly, for the obvious reasons of fresh honey and environmental contribution.'

TIP Check with your local authority before setting up a hive because you may need to be registered with the Department of Primary Industries. ➤

Local beekeeping clubs provide information to new enthusiasts.

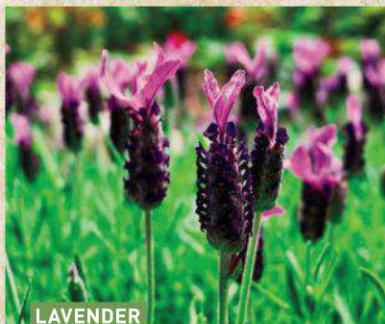


Planting for pollination

If you don't want to commit to beekeeping, you can do your bit by consciously planting to attract pollinators to the garden.

Native gardens will attract native honey bees, but all types of bees enjoy a wide range of nectar sources. The highest sugar content is what a bee is actually after, and blooming annuals are the best providers.

Planting in a crescent shape in a sunny, sheltered area of the garden will bring the bees buzzing and keep flowering plants happy.



LAVENDER



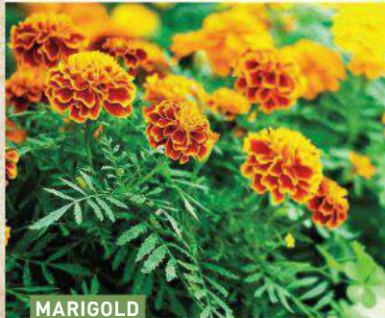
CLOVER



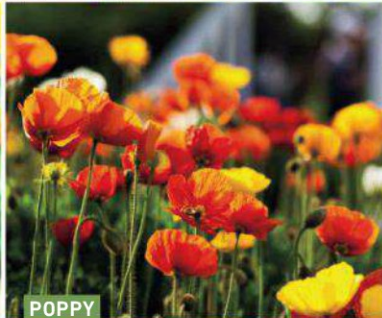
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PLUS Gardening projects your kids will love.

Garden

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PLUS Outdoor furniture you can make DIY.

Tools

All you need to know about line trimmers, blower vacs and edgers to keep your yard tidy.

PLUS Expert advice on which tool is best for you.



HIVE



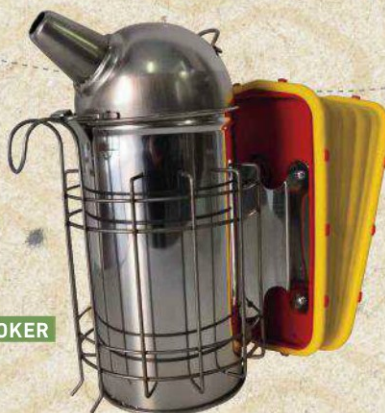
BRUSH



HIVE TOOL



BEES



SMOKER



PROTECTIVE GEAR

What you need

September is the ideal month to start and you can set yourself up for about \$600, with little further investment other than jars for storing honey.

Here's what you need to get started.

HIVE to house 40,000 to 60,000 bees. Start with one box, adding boxes up to four layers high three to four weeks later as the numbers increase.

Not giving the bees enough space can cause swarming, in which the queen leaves with a number of workers and drones and establishes a new hive.

There are several components you'll need to set up the boxes, including frames, foundation sheets that go in the frames, stainless steel wire to suspend the foundations in the frames, and paint to finish it all off.

A beehive is a very moist environment as the bees have to evaporate 60 to 70% of the moisture from the nectar to make honey, so

nails and other hardware should be cement or plastic-coated.

SMOKER of any size, although larger ones are easier to keep lit. You can burn bark, casuarina needles, woodchips, even hessian, but don't use anything that has been sprayed with pesticides.

PROTECTIVE GEAR such as a suit that covers you head to toe, or a veil, gloves, long sleeved top and long trousers, socks and shoes.

HIVE TOOL to lift off the lid, move the boxes around and lift out the frames. Buy a commercial one or use a flat drive screwdriver for the job.

BRUSH for gently removing bees from the frames when harvesting honey.

BEES are sold by weight and a 2kg bag of bees costing about \$100 is sufficient for a four-box hive. Each bag contains a new queen in her own wooden cage. She is placed in the box and the rest of the bees are shaken in. ➤

Treating stings

Though a bee sting can cause potentially fatal anaphylaxis in a very small minority of people, it generally triggers a localised reaction of swelling, redness and itching that should improve within a few hours.

Remove the stinger as quickly as possible using a fingernail, then ice the area and take an antihistamine or ibuprofen tablet.

Seek immediate attention if there are multiple stings to the face, or if symptoms occur such as difficulty breathing, a spreading rash, a swollen mouth, eyes and throat, and a rapid pulse.



BEE STING

Types of bees

Most of the bees you buy for beekeeping in Australia are Italian honey bees. Well suited to hiving they make plenty of surplus honey.

Kangaroo Island in South Australia is home to the only pure Ligurian bee colonies in the world and is an environmentally protected site.

NATIVE BEES come in about 1600 varieties but only five of these form colonies, which is the social habit required for hiving. The others are solitary bees, with each fertile female building a nest for her eggs.

Most natives don't produce honey but 10 stingless species create small amounts, with a very distinctive taste. These are social bees that tend to hive in trees and prefer warmer climates.

HONEY BEES comprise seven of the 20,000 known species of bee. Many species make honey but only honey bees make enough to be harvested.

Some only make enough to feed the queen, others make enough to feed themselves and a little extra. Certain strains make as much as they can.

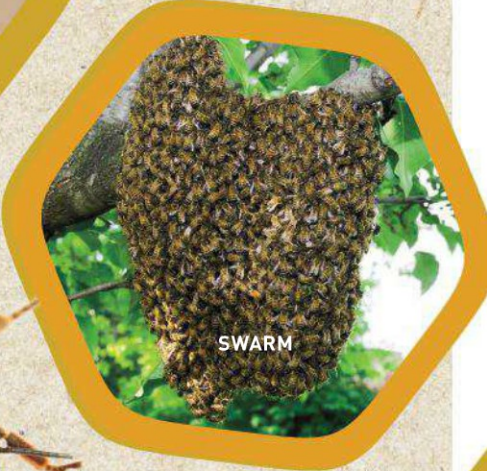
BUMBLEBEES are a species not native to Australia. Common in the northern hemisphere, they are larger and hairier than honey bees, with very defined

black and yellow stripes. They share many habits but don't live in large colonies or produce much surplus honey.

Feral European bumblebees were accidentally introduced to Tasmania in the early 1990s and are considered a pest.



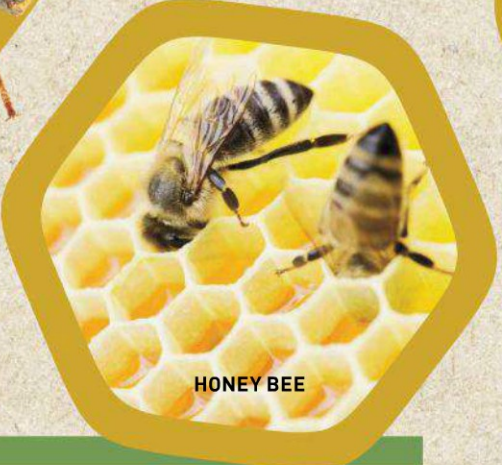
NATIVE AUSTRALIAN BEE



SWARM



BUMBLEBEE



HONEY BEE

AUSTRALIAN BEEKEEPERS' CALENDAR

Honey production is seasonal, according to the needs of the hive.

SPRING

The first flowers appear and nectar and pollen duly increase. The queen responds by laying more eggs to increase the population of the colony.

Most of the honey that is made will be eaten by the bees, who need it for wax production, energy and maintaining hive temperature, so there will be little surplus.

SUMMER

By summer, the colony is at full strength. The adult workers will die between six and eight weeks after producing a honey surplus.

During the summer months, honey can be harvested up to three times per hive. The hive requires little intervention but there must always be enough empty cells on the frames available to take honey.

AUTUMN

Most nectar-providing flowers are finished by autumn so the population declines. Some frames used to store surplus honey can be removed to make the hive smaller and easier to keep warm.

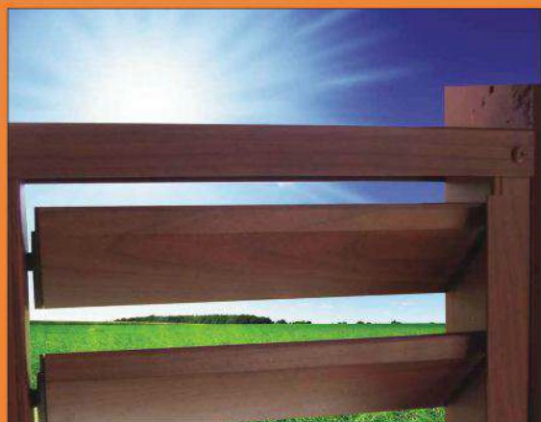
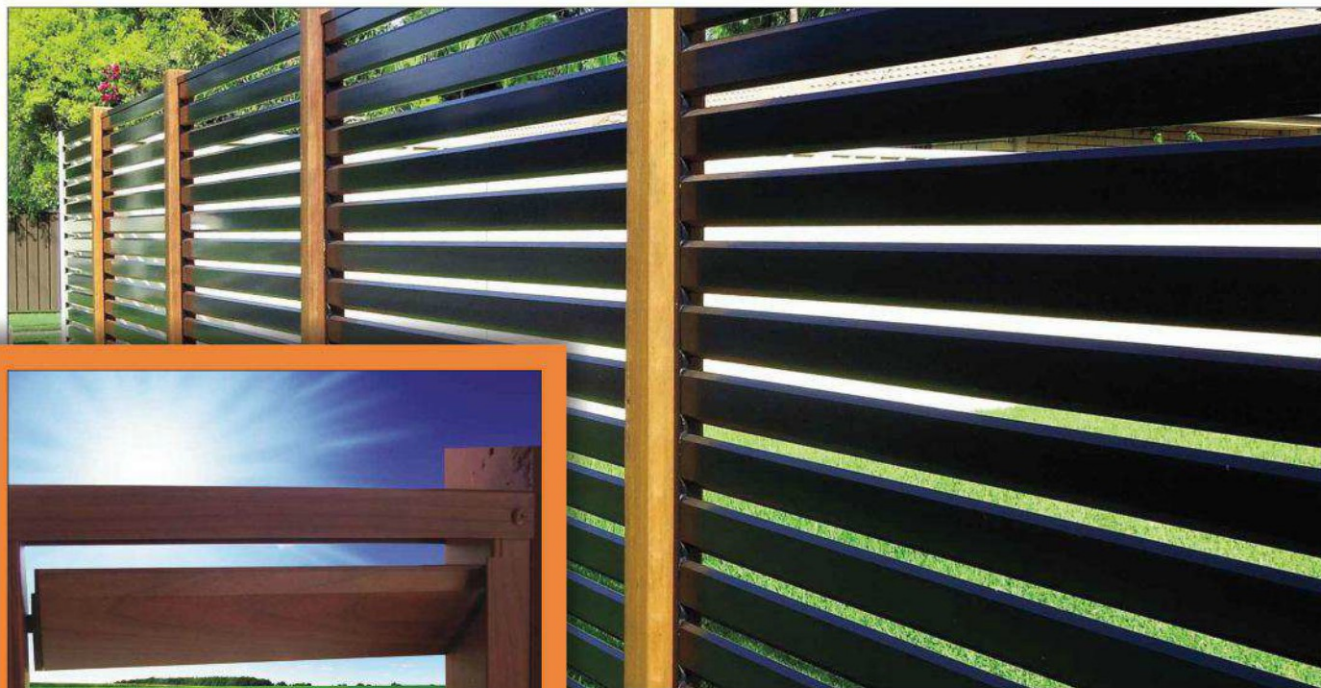
This reduces the honey in the hive, but there is enough for the bees to survive winter, ready to start work again in spring.

WINTER

In very cold conditions, bees stop flying and form a tight cluster in the hive to stay warm, though in mild climates this may not be necessary.

The brood nest is small in winter and adult worker bees may live for up to three months. The hive should be left alone as much as possible at this time.

MORE THAN A SCREEN A THING OF BEAUTY



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Easy Screen comes in Satin Black, Pearl White, Palladium Silver and Woodtech (wood grain) to fit in with your colour scheme. Larger sizes, different colours, adjustable louvers and welded panels are available – just ask at Bunnings special orders counter.

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Install a garden tank

Adding a rainwater tank to the yard is a smart way to irrigate plants throughout the year and is particularly good for growing thirsty food crops without the guilt.

While there is some cost at set-up, a tank adds value and will give many years of service. A range of materials, sizes and colours are available, with options to suit even the tightest space.

Before choosing a tank, consider how much water you use, whether you intend to use some of it inside the house for tasks such as flushing toilets, how much rainfall you receive in your area, and the size of your roof and garden.

The most efficient way to use water from a tank is by adding a pump, which creates even pressure and flow. It is essential to connect a pump if using the water inside.

Check with local council to see if requirements need to be met before installing. Most councils include tank information sheets on their websites.

TIP Choose a minimum tank size of 2000 litres if you have a small to average sized garden.

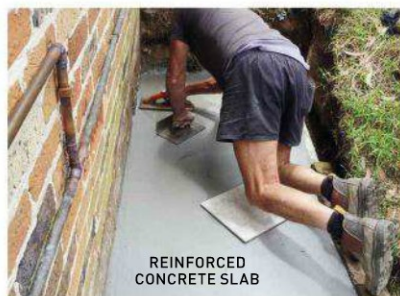
THE PERFECT SPOT

The correct position is essential when installing a rainwater tank. It must be located near a downpipe with access to a power supply for the pump, and it also must be close to the parts of the garden you wish to irrigate.

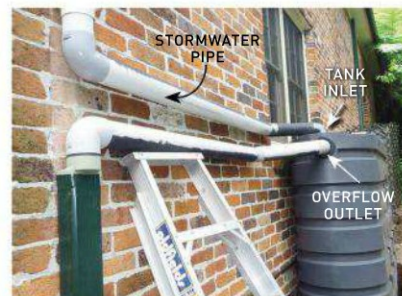
If an additional power supply is required it must be installed by a licensed electrician.



Drench the garden without the guilt when you install a rainwater tank.



1 POSITION THE TANK on a concrete base. This tank was installed on a slope so the site was excavated, formed up and a 100mm thick reinforced concrete slab poured then a brick retaining wall built.



2 REDIRECT THE DOWNPIPE by cutting it and adding a 90mm stormwater pipe to run water to the tank. Attach 90mm pipe to the overflow outlet to return excess to the downpipe, securing with PVC cement.

»Even the smallest backyard can go green and stay greener with a rainwater harvesting system



What you'll need



Pope 20m Automatic Retractable Hose Reel, \$129.



Nylex 22mm Grey Water Chief Hose, \$27.98 for 10m.



Holman 2-Hour Tap Timer, \$11.79.



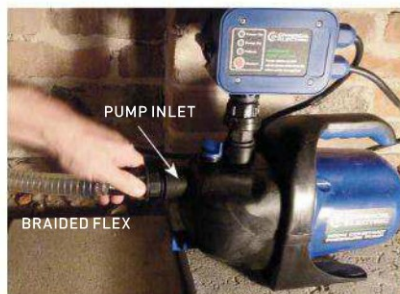
Commercial Electric 800W Constant Pressure Pump, \$149.



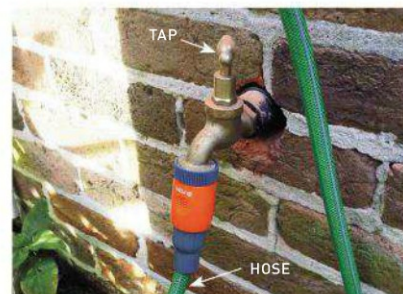
Commercial Electric 8-Piece Tank To Pump Connection Kit, \$29.90.



3 CONNECT THE OUTLET by wrapping plumber's tape around the thread. Wind the tap clockwise onto the thread then tighten with a shifter. Connect plumbing underground to the pump location.



4 INSTALL TO PUMP INLET securing a length of braided flex line to absorb vibration between the pump inlet and tank outlet. Use Dynabolts to secure the pump then connect to the power supply.



5 CONNECT PUMP OUTLET to the new tap. Secure the hose reel and connect to the tap with a short length of hose. For instant operation leave the tank tap open and the power switched on.

STORAGE
SOLUTION

Outdoor LOCKER

Make this compact shed for your garden tools and lawnmower

DIY> \$850

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$1650

SKILL> 1 2 3 4 5

TIME> 2 DAYS

Garden equipment seems to be either constantly underfoot or tucked away out of sight.

This easy-build locker solves both these problems, as it stores tools so they're organised and at hand without cluttering up the garage.

The 2400 x 1200mm footprint provides room for space-hoggers like lawnmowers and wheelbarrows, while long-handled tools and potting materials also fit inside nicely.

A flat site is ideal for this project and it's best to bolt the locker to a concrete slab. If you don't have one, site the locker on a paved surface or pour a 2500 x 1300 x 75mm slab with a layer of steel mesh in the centre.

You can build and paint the locker in a weekend, but you might need another half day to give the treated pine trim a second coat of paint.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

To assemble it you need a circular saw with a standard carbide blade and a drill. An air compressor and nail gun aren't necessary but will make the framing and trim work easier.

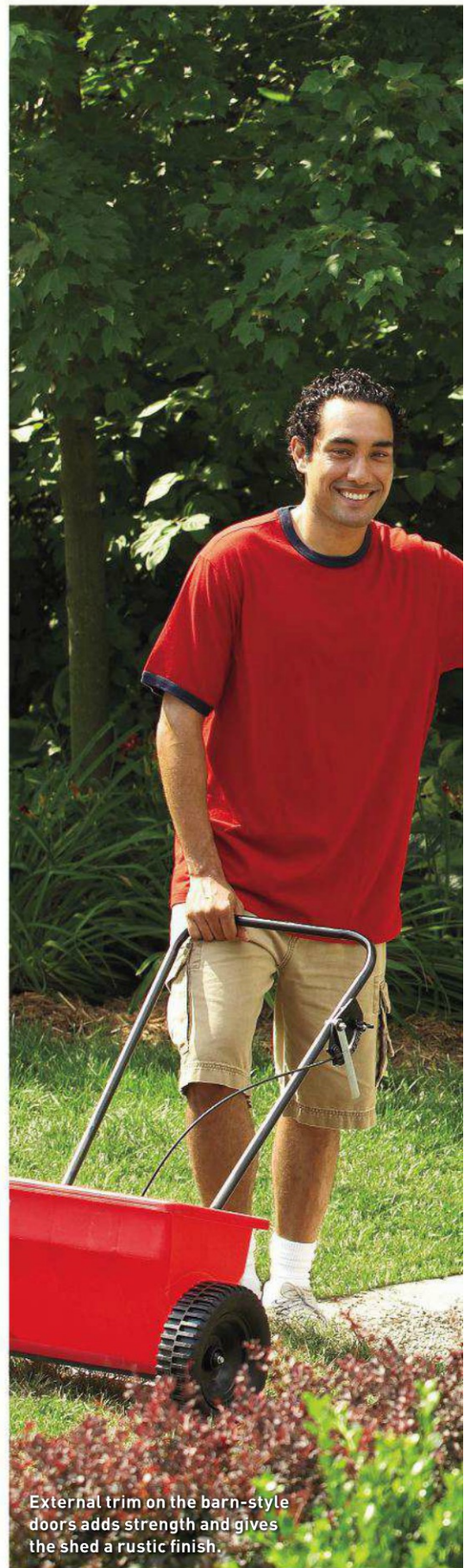
We used fibre cement (FC) panels for cladding as they resist rot.

The framework is built from H3 treated pine which is suitable for exterior use, but because the frame is covered we recommend using H2 blue pine for the interior framing to save about \$100 in timber costs.

Clear corrugated polycarbonate sheets were used for the roof as they let in light and are easy to install. ➤



Suntuf Clear Standard Corrugated Polycarbonate Sheeting, 3000 x 860mm, \$33, from Bunnings. bunnings.com.au



External trim on the barn-style doors adds strength and gives the shed a rustic finish.



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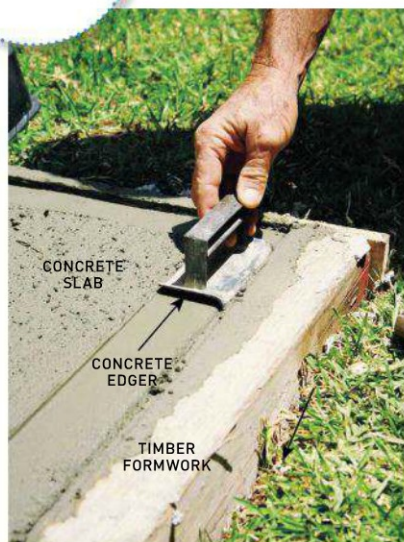
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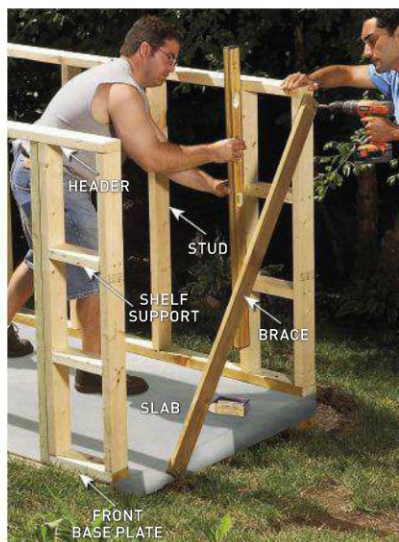
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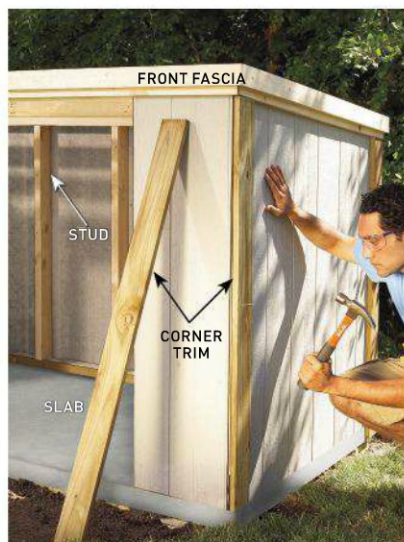
1 Pour a slab
Excavate the site and form up a 2500 x 1300 x 75mm deep rectangle. Secure level formwork with timber pegs and position a layer of steel reinforcing mesh. Pour the slab, screed the formwork and finish the surface with a timber float and concrete edger.



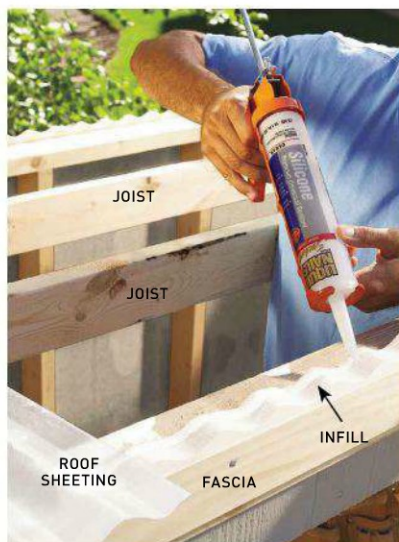
2 Make the wall frames
Build the stud walls and attach to the slab with Dynabolts. Plumb the frames and secure the header and temporary bracing. Skew-nail the side base plates, purlins and outside rafters to complete the framework, adding the roof joists and shelves.



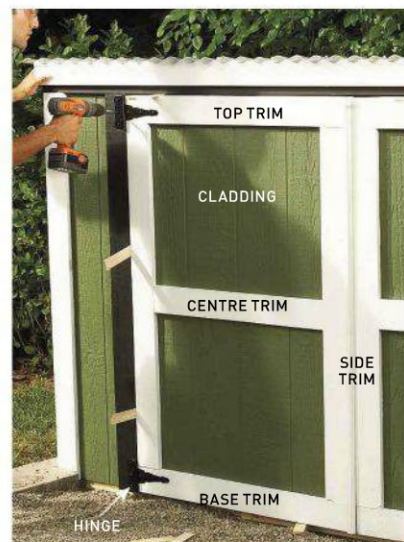
3 Clad the frame
Starting at a corner, install the front panels using clouts. Install the back panels so they butt together over the middle stud on the wall. Hold the side panels in position and mark along the top of the rafters, cut the cladding to size and secure with clouts.



4 Add the trim
Secure the front and back fascia, then hold the sides in position to mark the angle of the butt joint. Cut it to size and secure. Add the front and back corner trim with overlapping butt joints then cut the door supports, securing flush with the door opening.



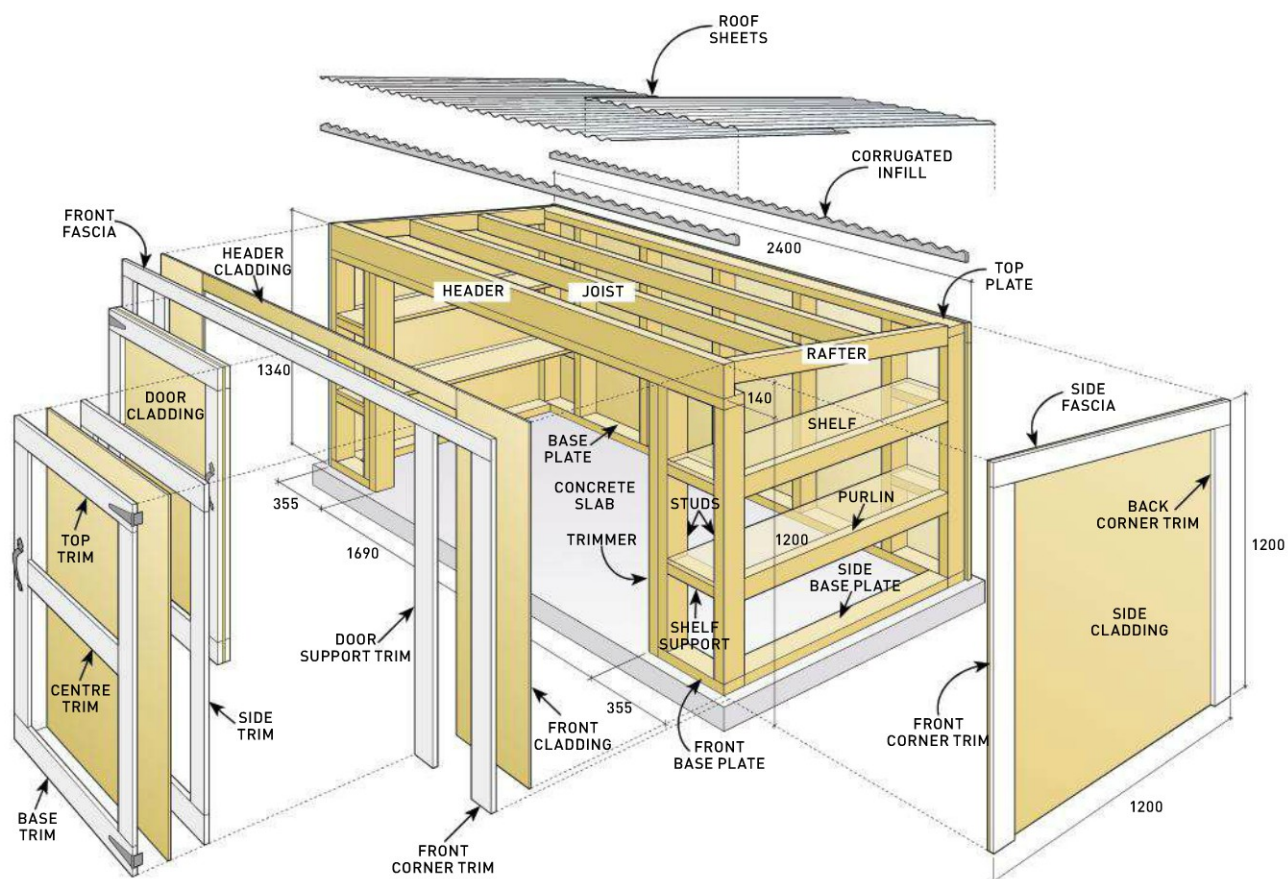
5 Install the roof
Secure the foam infills flush with the front and back fascia outside edge using construction adhesive. Cut the roof panels with 50mm overhang and position with an overlap of one and a half valleys, securing at every third ridge to the header, joists and top plate.



6 Hang the doors
Position the side trim between the top and base to make the door frames, adding the centre trim. Sandwich the cladding between two frames and hold the doors with shims wedged for even gaps, securing the hinges with screws. Add a handle and sliding pad bolt. ➤

OUTDOOR STORAGE LOCKER

measurements in mm



Fasteners

Use 75mm x 10g treated pine screws to join the wall frames and 100mm x 10g to attach the header.

Secure the frame to the slab with 100 x 10mm galvanised Dynabolts.

Attach the purlins and rafters with 75 x 3.15mm galvanised nails. Use 40 x 2.8mm galvanised fibre cement nails to secure the cladding.

Attach the shelves and trim with 50 x 2.8mm galvanised twist nails.

Join the door layers using 40mm x 8g treated pine screws.

Use 50mm x 14g Clearfix screws that predrill 10mm expansion holes to attach the roof sheets.

TIP Don't overtighten the screws so contraction and expansion can occur.

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
H3 TREATED PINE		
Top and base plates	2400 x 90 x 45	3
Side base plates	1020 x 90 x 45	2
Front base plates	310 x 90 x 45	2
Studs	1110 x 90 x 45	11
Shelf supports	220 x 90 x 45	8
Purlins	1020 x 90 x 45	4
Door trimmers	1155 x 90 x 45	2
Header	2400 x 140 x 45	1
Rafters	1065 x 90 x 45	2
Roof joists	2310 x 90 x 45	2
Front and back fascia	2456 x 90 x 19	2
Side fascia	1220 x 90 x 19	2
Front corner trim	1250 x 90 x 19	4
Back corner trim	1110 x 90 x 19	4
Door support trim	1250 x 90 x 19	2
Door side trim	1060 x 90 x 19	8
Door top and base trim	830 x 90 x 19	8
Door centre trim	650 x 90 x 19	4
PINE		
Shelves	220 x 1200 x 19	4
FC CLADDING		
Back	1225 x 1200 x 9	2
Sides	1340 x 1200 x 9	2
Front	1340 x 355 x 9	2
Header	90 x 1690 x 9	1
Doors	1240 x 830 x 9	2
POLYCARBONATE		
ROOFING		
Roof sheets	1350 x 860	4
Corrugated foam infills	915 x 20 x 30	6

+ Handyman.net.au

Go online to download the materials, tools and costs to build this storage locker.

Ramset™

AnkaScrew™
now has the

WERCS

The **Ramset™ AnkaScrew™** masonry anchor now comes with patented **WERCS** thread technology.

The new "sawtooth" thread allows for rapid removal of material, reducing jamming and installation torque.

The shallower thread pitch assists the rotary installation process and increases clamping force.

The combination of these product features makes installation easier and anchorage more secure.

On top of that, the **AnkaScrew™** is still

- 100% removable
- ideal for close-to-edge and close-to-anchor installation and
- ideal for use in concrete, brick and block (solid or hollow)

It's also the only screw-in masonry anchor manufactured in Australia!

For fast, easy installation, secure anchorage and excellent, instant loading in a range of masonry substrates, you really can't go past the new **Ramset™ AnkaScrew™** with the **WERCS**.

NEW



Now available at Ramset™ stockists.

OUTDOOR
PROJECT

Making the panels

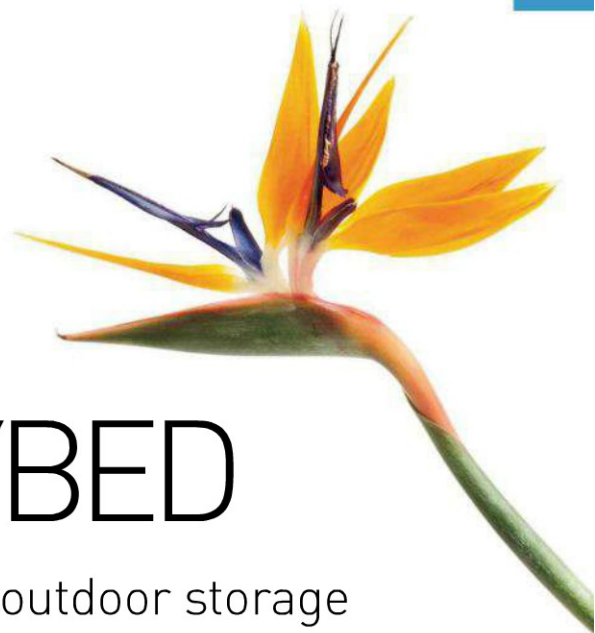
The blades for all panels are equally spaced and held securely in position by the slots in the end rails that match the profile of the blades exactly.

Simply push the blades into the slots, ensuring they are fully seated in both rails then secure with two screws through the pre-drilled holes on either side.

The panels can be positioned so the screw heads face out or in, just ensure they are all facing in the same direction.



Add a seat pad and cushions to this powdercoated aluminium box and use it by the pool as a daybed with storage.



POOLSIDE DAYBED

Make a bench seat that doubles as an outdoor storage box in less than a day using powdercoated aluminium

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

DIY> \$930

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$1330

SKILL> 1 2 3 4 5

TIME> 1 DAY

Making a storage box for pool maintenance equipment that can also be used as a daybed can take up to a week of planning, cutting, building and finishing.

But you can do it in a day with an Easy Screen Storage Box/Daybed plan from Protector Aluminium (protectoraluminium.com.au).

The unit is cut to size from 2m lengths of aluminium available off the shelf from Bunnings Warehouse.

To build the daybed you'll need a cordless drill with a Phillips head drive bit to secure the wafer screws and a mitresaw to cut the aluminium.

The panel parts are made from powdercoated aluminium so it's not only durable but low maintenance too.

BUILD THE BOX

The daybed is a 2040 x 1035mm box made up of a front, back and sides with a lid and floor, plus four horizontal ground posts to elevate the daybed by 50mm.

Assembling the panels of the box is as easy as slotting the blades into the end rails. The panels are held together with lengths of U channel side rails that fit over the end rails.

Secure the blades and U channels with 16mm x 10g wafer screws.

When the box is built, adding the floor is a simple matter of fitting the blades into a slotted end rail on either side and securing with screws, then laying it in the base of the box.

The lid has a framework of 50 x 50mm posts secured at the corners using slotted corner brackets.

Secured inside the framework are two end rails with the blades in between, just like the floor. The lid is attached to the box with hinges. ➤

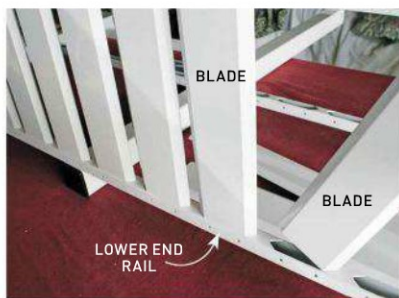


Keep pool equipment out of sight in an aluminium storage box that won't rust and can be used as outdoor furniture.

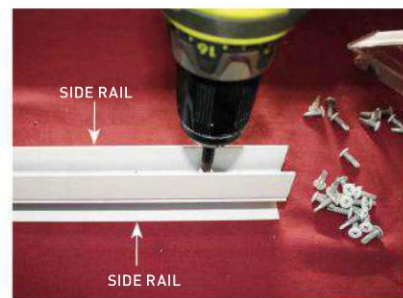
MAKE THE DAYBED



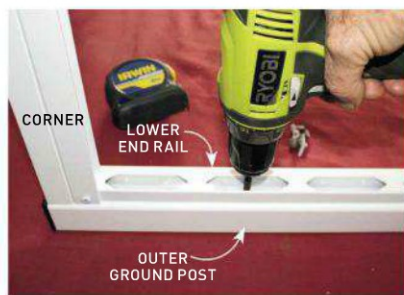
1 Join the rails and posts
Fix the end caps then lay the two centre ground posts on a level surface. Position the front and back lower end rails on the ends, centring the posts under the 8th and 15th slots. Secure the rails to the posts with screws.



2 Add the blades
Slot the blades into the lower front and back end rail then add the upper slotted end rail, checking it is fully seated. Secure each blade to the end rails with two screws at each end through the pre-drilled rail holes.



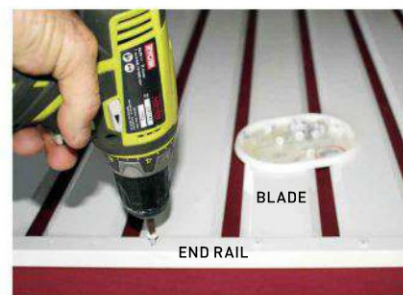
3 Make the corners
Position two U channel side rails with the back face of one rail against the side face of the other and the ends flush. Clamp then drill a 3.5mm pilot hole 50mm from each end, securing with screws. Make three more corners.



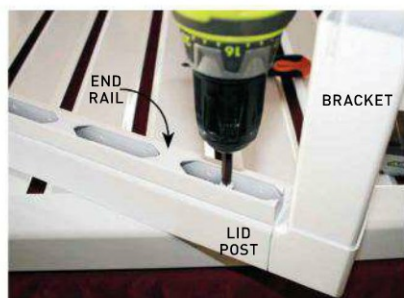
4 Secure the side rails
Position the lower slotted end rails for the side panels inside the corners, securing with screws. Position the end rails on the outer ground posts flush with the outside edge, securing each with three screws.



5 Build the box
Slot the corners over the front and back panels, securing with screws into the upper and lower end rails. Slot in the blades for the side panels then add the upper end rails, securing the blades with screws to finish the box.



6 Assemble the floor
Lay the blades for the floor panel on a level surface and fit into the slots of the end rail on one side with screw holes facing up. Brace the fitted rail then slot the blades into the opposite rail, securing the rails with screws.



7 Install the lid corners
Push the corner brackets inside the lid posts with the brackets pointing up. Lay the end rails on the posts flush with the base edges. Join the rails to the posts, securing four equally spaced screws through the slots.

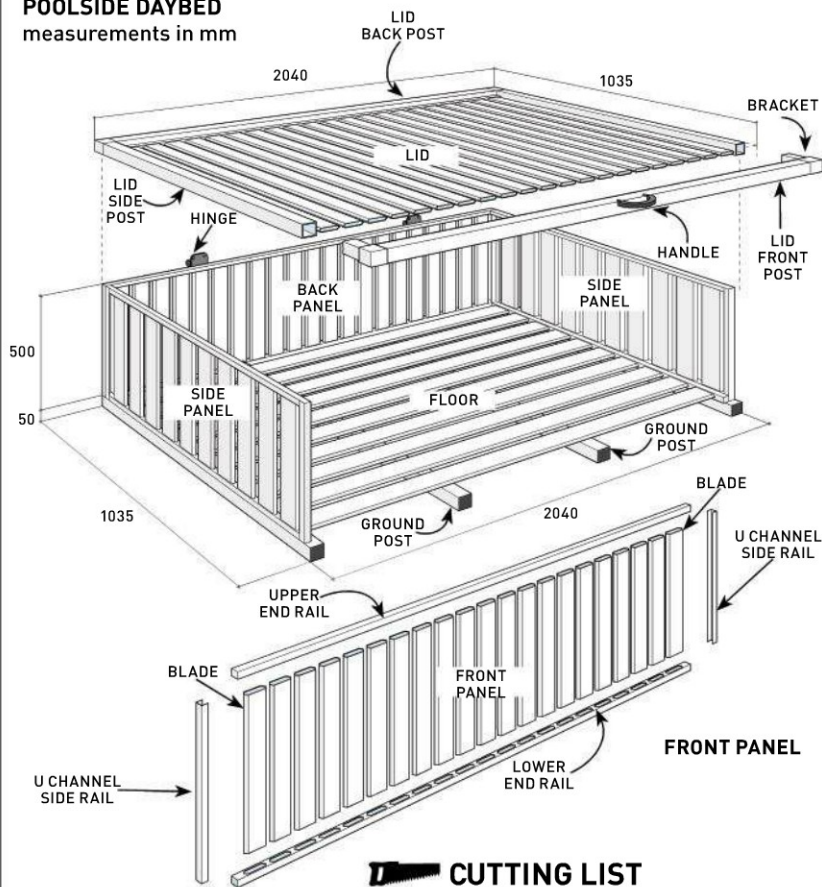


8 Attach the lid posts
Push the front post corner brackets into the lid side posts and slot in the blades, securing with one screw each. Position the back post and work the corners and blades into position until fully seated, securing with screws.



9 Finish the daybed
Position the floor and lid, squaring up the sides. Secure the hinges to the lid back post 400mm from the ends with the supplied screws, then to the back panel upper rail. Add the handle to the centre of the lid front post.

POOLSIDE DAYBED
measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
FRONT/BACK PANELS		
Slotted end rails	2000 x 20 x 20	4
U channel side rails	500 x 25 x 25	4
Blades	494 x 76 x 16	42
SIDE PANELS		
Slotted end rails	980 x 20 x 20	4
U channel side rails	500 x 25 x 25	4
Blades	494 x 76 x 16	20
FLOOR		
Slotted end rails	915 x 20 x 20	2
Blades	1930 x 76 x 16	10
Ground posts	1035 x 50 x 50	4
LID		
Slotted end rails	1930 x 20 x 20	2
Blades	929 x 76 x 16	21
Front and back posts	1930 x 50 x 50	2
Side posts	925 x 50 x 50	2

✦ **Handyman.net.au**

Go online to download the tools, costs and materials to make this storage box/daybed.

Ramset™

AnkaScrew™
now has the

WERCS™

The **Ramset™ AnkaScrew™** masonry anchor now comes with patented **WERCS** thread technology.

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NEW



Now available at Ramset™ stockists.



FIND IT AT
BUNNINGS

TIME TO PLAY

Give your kids a healthy outlet for all their extra energy by installing a playground in your own backyard

One of the joys of being a kid is having a swing or playset in the garden, providing a constant source of fun to keep boredom at bay.

Consider the size of the yard and the age of your children to decide on the most suitable equipment.

From swing sets for babies to cubbyhouses with verandahs, rock climbing walls and swings for older children, there is a great deal of choice available at Bunnings Warehouse.

They're easy to assemble yourself so you'll have a safe and private playground ready for use in no time.



Soft Fall Rubber Pavers, 1 x 1m
\$29.97 each, available in green or red.

UNDER 5



Bungalow Multiplay Playhouse, \$799.



Toddler Swing, \$49.



Plastic Playhouse, \$79.



Combo Gym Park, \$169.



Toddler Play Set, \$299.



Shangri La Multiplay Playhouse, \$1299.



Funtivity Playhouse, \$199.



Cottage with Crawl Tunnel, \$199.

OVER 5



Pandora Multiplay Playhouse, \$2197.



Avalon Swing Set, \$499.



Ponderosa Multiplay, \$1799.



Empire Multiplay, \$2197.



3 Function Swing Set, \$89.



2 Function Swing Set, \$69.



Avalon Multiplay, \$749.



Multifunction Swing Set, \$249.



OUTDOOR
REVAMP

PAVE A PATIO

Spend just \$990 to refresh a cracked and worn concrete surface by laying new paving over the top

A concrete patio is practical but plain and over time cracks and stains build up on the surface.

The easiest way to transform a patio slab is to lay paving bricks. It's a budget-friendly DIY solution that is much faster than demolishing and replacing the concrete.

To lay a herringbone pattern you need field pavers twice as long as they are wide. Choose a contrasting colour for the border pavers and hire a bricksaw to cut them to fit.

To order the materials, measure the surface area in square metres.

PAVERS are measured by surface area. Work out the number needed, adding 5% for breakages and cutting waste.

PAVING SAND is used to bed the pavers. To find the amount needed, multiply the surface area by 30mm.

BEACH SAND is used as grout and is available bagged from hardware stores.

TIP The paving should finish below the height of an exterior door sill and fall away from the house for runoff.



My Pave Sandstone Pavers in Charcoal, Coffee or Cream, 200 x 100mm 89c each, 200 x 200mm \$1.39 each from Bunnings.



BEFORE
Functional but drab, this concrete patio was ready for an upgrade.

WHAT IT COST

This 3.5 x 4.5m area required 12.75 square metres of pavers and 160 border pavers in a contrasting colour.

Paving sand	\$45
Beach sand	\$10
Cement	\$41
Border pavers	\$142
Field pavers	\$579
Plate compactor hire	\$60
Bricksaw hire	\$110
TOTAL	\$987

Using a compactor

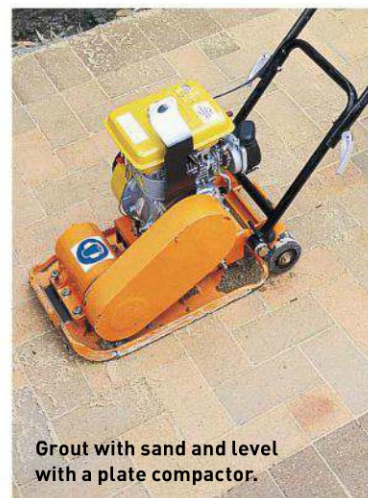
When the paving is complete it needs to be compacted to level the surface, keeping it flush with the border pavers.

Grout the paving by spreading a fine dry layer of beach sand over it, sweeping some into the joints.

Run a plate compactor over the surface once in sequence but not on the mortared border pavers.

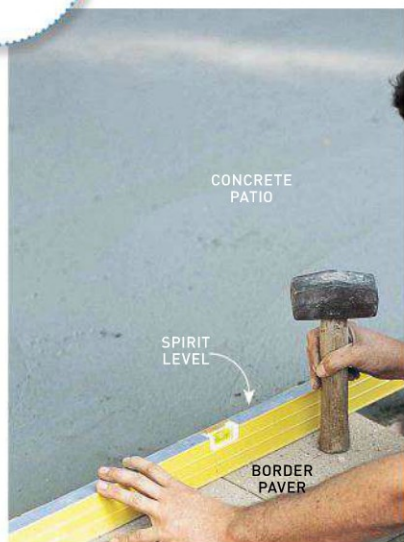
If the plate compactor bounces too much, tie a scrap of carpet to the base and continue.

TIP Plate compactors are available to hire for about \$60 per day. ➤



Grout with sand and level with a plate compactor.

LAY THE PAVERS



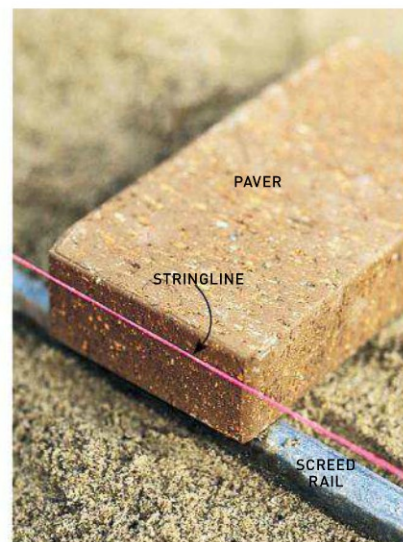
1 Lay border pavers

Measure and mark the setout of the border pavers on three sides so the corners are square. Mix the mortar and spread a 20mm thick bed, laying the pavers side by side in a soldier pattern with a 3mm gap in between. Use a spirit level to set pavers in place.



2 Spread paving sand

Allow 24 hours for the mortar to dry then spread paving sand over the entire concrete patio slab to a depth of 20 to 25mm. Use a square-mouthed shovel or a rake to roughly level the sand bed and use the back of the rake to tamp and compact the sand.



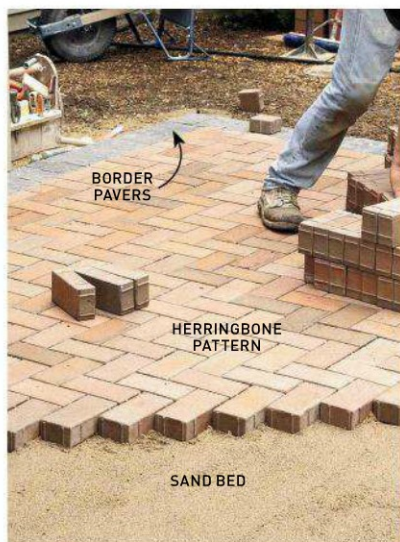
3 Set the screed rail

Divide the screed area into two by positioning a centre screed rail, such as galvanised pipe, down the middle. Set a stringline at the finished paving height and use a paver to set the rail depth to the thickness of a paver less 5mm, to allow for compaction.



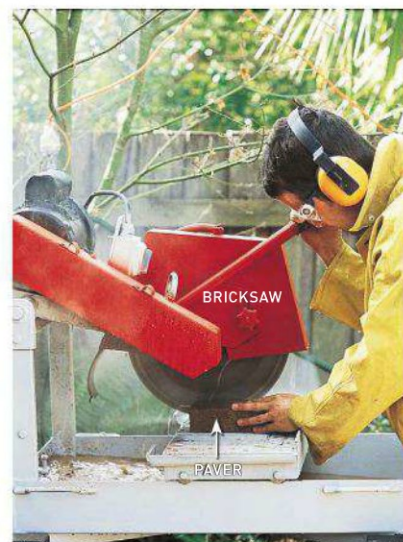
4 Screed the area

Cut a 45mm notch in one end of a straight timber screed board. Position the notch on the border pavers with the other end on the centre screed rail and screed the area level. Remove the rail and fill the channel with sand, smoothing with a steel float.



5 Lay the pavers

Set up stringlines to follow at one-metre intervals to help keep the paving lines straight. Lay down the stringlines first then fill in to each side, keeping the paving aligned with the border pavers and adjusting the joints so the gaps are even.



6 Finish the paving

Mark the pavers to be cut, cutting on the marked lines using a wet bricksaw and placing the cut edges to the border. Lay the last border side to complete the brickwork then sweep dry fine beach sand into the joints using a yard broom.

Setting out the border

Use stringlines or chalklines marked on the slab to set out the border and paving area. Bed the border pavers on mortar and leave to dry, then barrow in the paving sand.

Screed the sand level then lay the paving in a herringbone pattern.

1 **SET A STRINGLINE** parallel to the house to mark the location of the border pavers, leaving a gap of at least 5mm between the border pavers and the house.

2 **LAY OUT A ROW** of pavers to establish a field width that lets each course end with a full or half paver for less cutting and waste.

3 **MARK A SIDE BORDER** square with the house using a stringline and the 3-4-5 method.

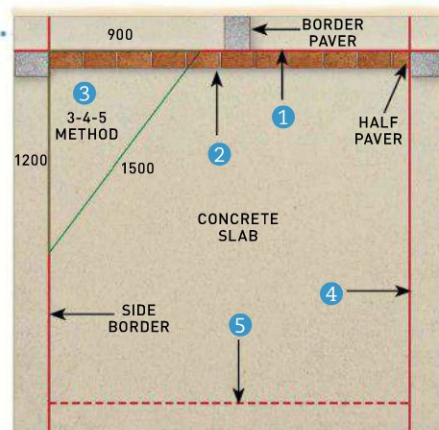
4 **SET OUT** the other side border, measuring from the first side to ensure they are parallel.

5 **LEAVE THE BORDER** opposite the house unmarked, installing the pavers after the herringbone pattern has been laid, making it easier to screed the excess sand and finish the border.

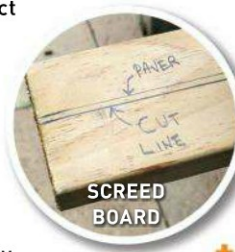
NOTCHING A SCREED BOARD

Cut a timber board with a notch on one end so it runs across the top of the border pavers while screeding the sand to the correct depth and level.

■ **MEASURE** the thickness of a paver and transfer the measurement to the end of the screed board, reducing the height by 5mm for later compaction. Mark the notch about 100mm long.



PAVING LAYOUT
measurements in mm



■ **CUT OUT** the notch on the screed board using a sharp handsaw, checking it fits against a paver.

+ Get more online

Visit handyman.net.au/mag for a guide to Classic Paving Patterns.

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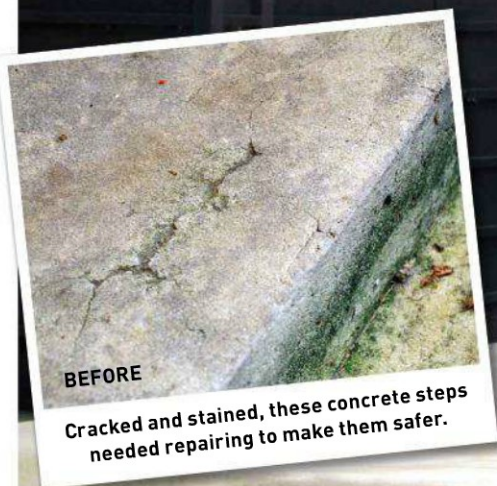
ACQ treated timber for safety & longevity



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BEFORE
Cracked and stained, these concrete steps needed repairing to make them safer.

WEEKEND
PROJECT

RECAPPING STEPS

Give outdoor stairs a makeover and a safety upgrade for only \$100

WORDS **FRANK GARDNER**

Concrete steps crack and break up over time as weather extremes cause expansion and contraction. Water can also seep in and freeze, deteriorating the edges.

Once the breakup starts, it spreads and gradually gets worse, making the steps unattractive and unsafe.

The best way to fix concrete steps is to demolish them and pour new ones. Replacement is the only real option for steps that have sunk out of level or cracked all the way through.

But if the steps have only surface damage, you can save lots of cash and effort by resurfacing and recapping.

Resurface steps with minor holes, cracks and spalling and recap any with more extensive damage. Both types of repair must be painted over.

To recap, cut away the damaged areas and rebuild them using concrete.

Mix Bondall Bondcrete with water in a 4:1 ratio and apply to the surface of the old concrete. Top the steps with new concrete using Bondcrete and water in a 1:10 ratio to make the mix.

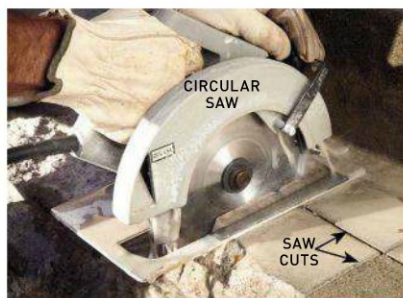
Allow a day for the repair and half a day to paint the steps for uniformity after the concrete has cured.

TIP Cutting concrete creates dust and flying chips so wear protective gear.



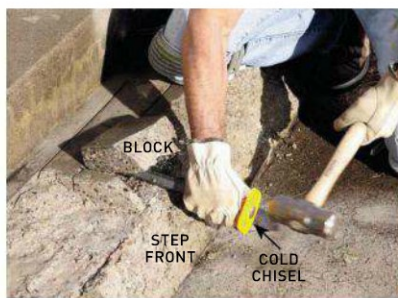
Resurface steps

Clean step surfaces of wax, grease or loose contaminating materials then mix repair mortar with water. Spread mortar over the step with a brush, using a trowel to smooth and sponge to finish. Allow to dry then paint.



1 Cut up to recap

Use a circular saw with segmented diamond blade, setting the baseplate depth to at least 40mm. Make a series of cuts on the step, without forcing the saw, slicing the surface into blocks about 100 x 100mm.



2 Chip off the blocks

Break the cut blocks off the step surface using a lump hammer and heavy-duty cold chisel. Begin at the front of the step and aim the chisel at the depth of the saw cuts, hitting with a heavy hand until each one pops off.



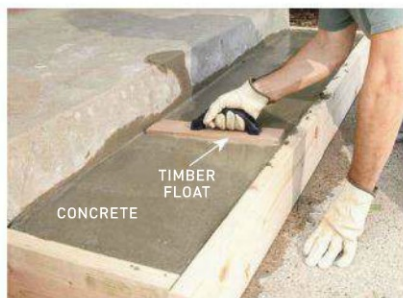
3 Remove the back corner

Make a cut as deep as possible along the back corner where the tread meets the riser using an angle grinder with a segmented diamond blade. Chisel out the last section of waste then hose away dust and debris.



4 Pour the concrete

Build formwork to the original step height and out in front by 40mm. Paint the surface with a bonding agent then mix new concrete and apply with a shovel. Work a screed board back and forth to level the surface.



5 Finish the steps

As the mix hardens, give it a rough non-slip surface using a timber float and round the corners with an edger. Remove the formwork after 24 hours and let the steps cure for 12 weeks. Etch with an acid mix then paint.

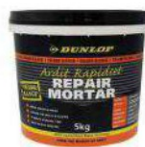
Essential products

CONCRETE MIX to recap the steps.

BONDING AGENT to bond the recap to the existing concrete.

MORTAR REPAIR for resurfacing the new concrete capping.

PAVING PAINT to finish the capped and resurfaced steps.



Dunlop Ardit Rapidset Repair Mortar, about \$19 for 5kg. dunlopdj.com



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FIND IT AT
BUNNINGS

OUTDOOR BLINDS

Shade the house before summer hits, or screen the deck or patio for an extra room that can be used year round

Not just for interiors, weather-proof blinds and awnings can transform an outdoor area into a comfortable space for year-round entertaining and relaxing, maximising the square footage of the home and adding value.

Whether you prefer cafe-style clear bistro blinds to keep the light flooding in and the views unimpeded, or fabric

blinds to protect against the elements, there is a product at Bunnings to suit every home and outlook.

Choosing the right style depends on what you want to achieve, from a cosy outdoor nook to a funky entertaining space or a vibrant play area for children.

It's a straightforward DIY job to install blinds to enclose the deck or

to fit a retractable awning to shade an exposed window in summer.

As a guide, standard bistro blind widths range from 900 to 3000mm, increasing in size by 300mm, with a drop of 2400mm that includes the base flap, but see instore for details.

TIP If decorating the outdoor area with coloured blinds, accessorise with matching cushions or rugs.



Shading the house in style

Awnings are a cost-effective way to shade windows from harsh sunlight, keeping the house cool.

They're often retractable with fixed or mobile arms, and made from durable fabric that blocks up to 90% of light and 99% of UV rays.

Complement your decor with a blind or awning from a range of fabric finishes and colours, including transparent. Decorators tend to recommend modern neutrals for a recent build and heritage colours for older homes.



Awnings provide privacy and protection from the elements.



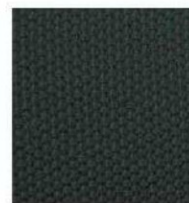
Marquee Smart 150 x 240cm Clear PVC Outdoor Cafe Blind, \$74.



Windowware 1.5 x 2.1m Fixed Arm Outdoor Awning, \$250.



BLACK/WHITE STRIPE



RAVEN



GREY/WHITE STRIPE



SAFARI

Handyman BUYER'S GUIDE

Take the DIY option for your home improvement projects by choosing the best tools and equipment from our market round-up

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Water Putty

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- ✓ Range of sizes from 500g to 20Kg
- ✓ Dries hard, can be drilled, sawn and sanded
- ✓ No shrinking or cracking
- ✓ Hardwearing
- ✓ Unlimited shelf life, just add water and mix as needed
- ✓ Value for money



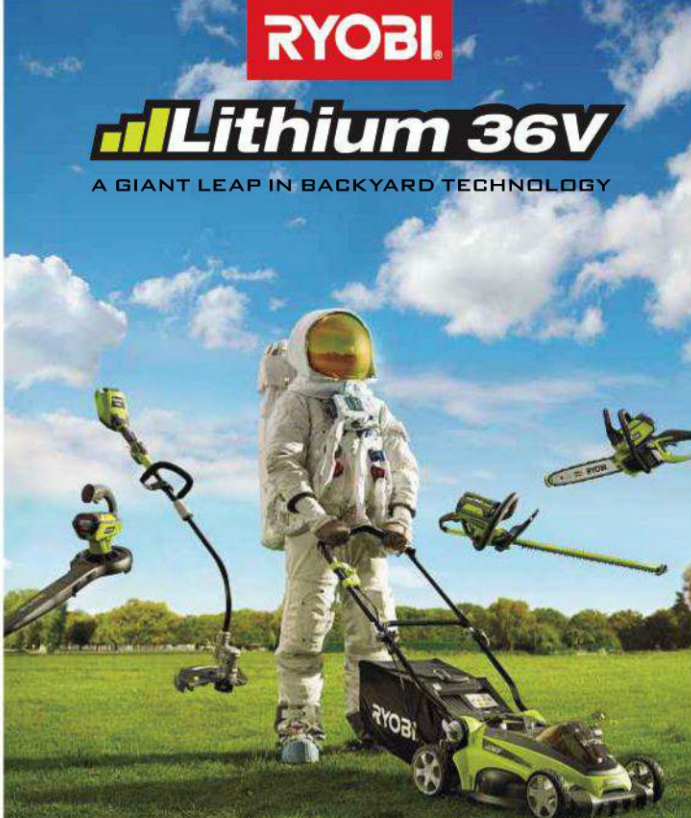
 Available at leading hardware & paint stores
www.agnewswaterputty.com.au

AGWP 1012 B&M

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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
14. Look at the floor on the right, notice the shine? Below the pic is the product that did it... Restor-A-Shine



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What's new

» Room refreshers



MAKE THE MOST of your wardrobe space by adding Bedford Modular Inserts, from \$944.97.



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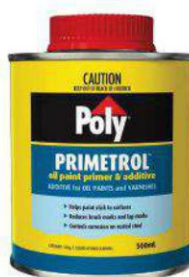
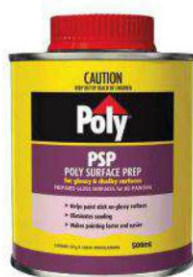
TO REFRESH the walls of your home easily, use British Paints Interior Low Sheen, \$44.90 for 4L.



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» Garden gear



LAY BACK AND RELAX in the Mimosa Hanging Lounger, \$249.



GET CONTROL of the garden with the heavy duty fibreglass-handled Kelso Digging Tools Range, \$44.94 each.

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CUT BACK unwanted branches with Fiskars Quantum Pruner, \$65.



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PREVENT BACK STRAIN with the Fiskars Telescopic Ergonomic range including a fork, pointed spade, and straight spade, \$49.96 each.

»Spring essentials

FILL HOLES in your lawn fast with Scotts Patch Magic, \$29.98 for 3.6L.



EASILY ERADICATE common weeds with Roundup Weedkiller Gel, \$19.90.

GROW YOUR OWN garnishes with Mr. Fothergills Microgreens Seed Tray, \$9.98.



NOURISH GRASS like the professionals with Golf Course Green Lawn Fertiliser, \$22.98 for 2.5kg.



TAKE YOUR PICK of Mr Fothergills Microgreens Seed Range, \$4.25 per packet.

Do now

- **GROW** ginger in warm areas from a piece bought at the supermarket and add zing to your recipes from page 144.
- **CONTROL** cutworms now using natural remedies to stop them making a meal of the garden in the warmer months, on page 148.
- **PLANT** up a hanging basket with your favourite spring blooms to add instant colour to an exterior wall, see page 150.



THIS MONTH

Welcome back the longer days
and warmer nights for extra
time in the garden



Sow now

For a garden showcase in spring and cut flowers for vases put in seeds for these vibrant bloomers.

- **CHRYSANTHEMUM**
- **GERANIUM**
- **RUDBECKIA**
- **ZINNIA**
- **GERBERA**



Plant now

To enjoy a festival of colourful vegetables for spring salads, get these seedlings in the ground.

- **BEANS**
- **BEETROOT**
- **CAPSICUM**
- **EGGPLANT**
- **PUMPKIN**



Prune now

- **KEEP** plants bushy by tip pruning soft new growth using your thumb and forefinger.
 - **PINCH OFF** dead flower heads of bulbs but leave the stems and leaves to die down naturally to feed the bulb for next season.
- TIP** When the leaves start to yellow, after about six weeks, cut them off at the base.





Create edible shade

Train quick-growing evergreen passionfruit over a fence or pergola to establish shade for summer and provide exotic-looking flowers and delicious fruit.

Plant in fertile soil enriched with well-rotted manure, and protect from strong winds and hot sun. Replace the vines every seven years to keep them in top condition.



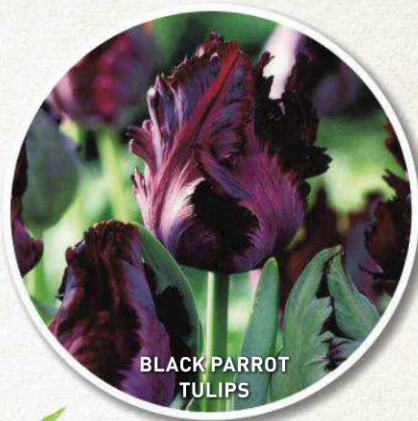
Seasonal vegies

Cold-weather vegetables that have finished for the season should be dug up, chopped into smaller pieces and put in the compost.

Dig out the last of the celeriac, parsnip and Jerusalem artichoke roots and enjoy them now while still fresh.

Top pick

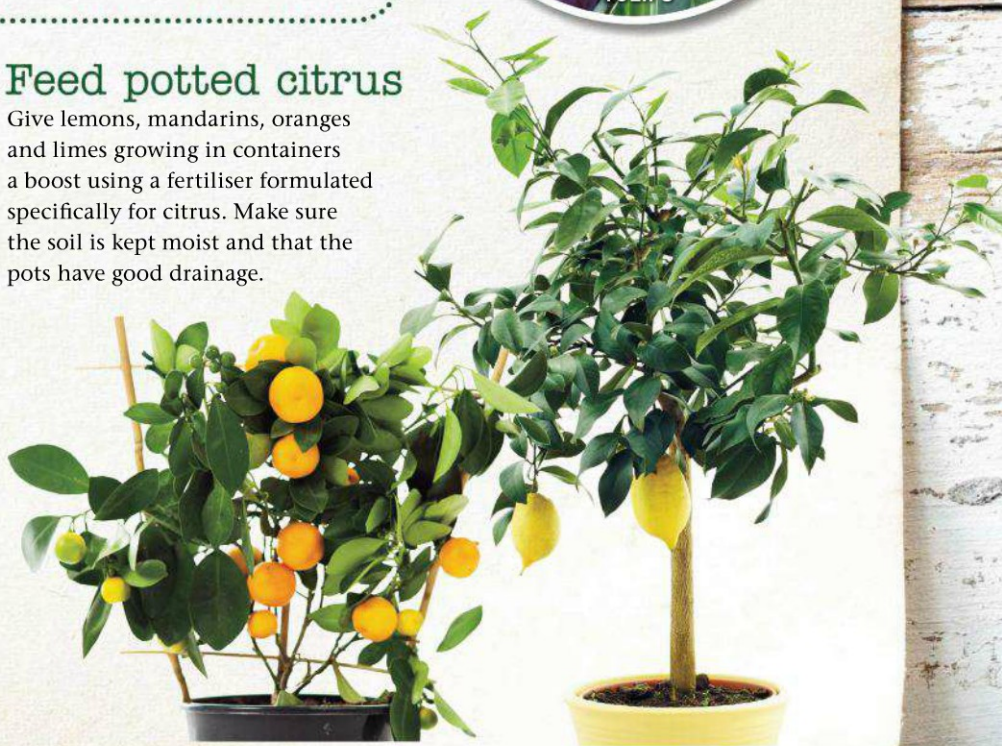
If you planted tulip bulbs in autumn they should be poking their pretty heads up now, or you can buy flowering pots at nurseries. There are hundreds of shapes, sizes and colours to choose from including Burgundy Lace, Golden Apeldoorn and Black Parrot. Leave bulbs in the ground for up to three years in cool areas but in warm climates, lift and pre-chill them before planting in autumn.

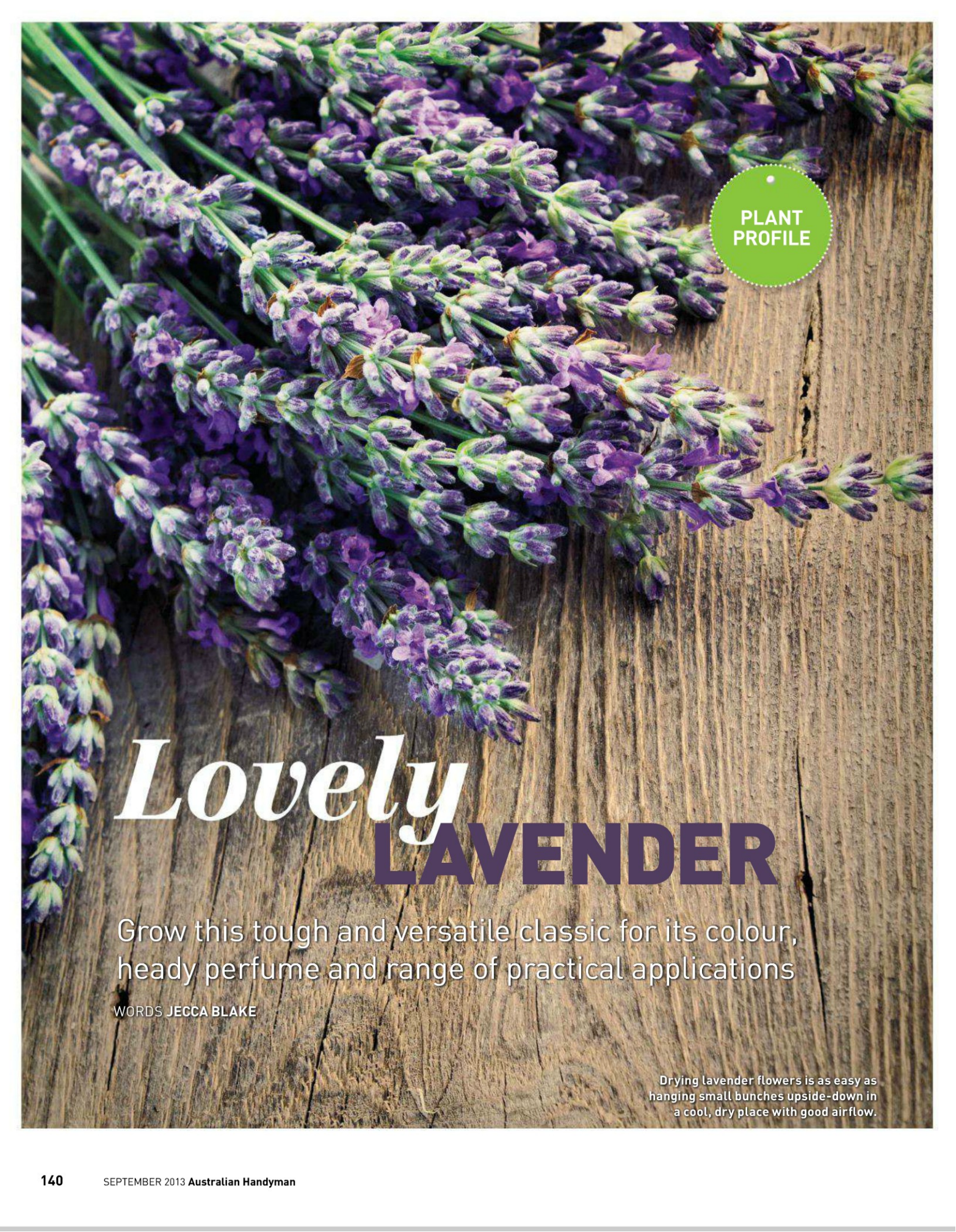


BLACK PARROT
TULIPS

Feed potted citrus

Give lemons, mandarins, oranges and limes growing in containers a boost using a fertiliser formulated specifically for citrus. Make sure the soil is kept moist and that the pots have good drainage.





PLANT
PROFILE

Lovely **LAVENDER**

Grow this tough and versatile classic for its colour, heady perfume and range of practical applications

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

Drying lavender flowers is as easy as hanging small bunches upside-down in a cool, dry place with good airflow.



A fragrant shrub from the Mediterranean, lavender has a long history as a healing herb and has been utilised as a tonic, antiseptic and sleep aid for centuries.

The ancient Egyptians used it for embalming and in cosmetics, while the ancient Greeks extracted lavender oil for medicine and aromatics.

It was carried by Roman soldiers to dress wounds and combat infection and was grown by monks and nuns in England in the Middle Ages.

Lavender became fashionable in Tudor times when it was used to perfume linen and its popularity peaked with the reign of lavender enthusiast Queen Victoria.

While lavender can be used as a culinary herb, these days it is mostly valued as an essential oil but still has many applications around the home.

KNOW THE TYPES

Lavender comes in three main types, English, Italian and French. Italian lavender has two brightly coloured wings at the top of each flower, while the French variety has serrated leaves.

The English variety is known as true lavender and is the most popular with home growers. It has deeply perfumed purple flowers that bloom on square stems from winter to spring with aromatic grey-green foliage.

Growing to 800mm high and 1m wide, this evergreen shrub forms a tight mound if pruned regularly.

It tolerates light frost but wet soil can cause root rot, while high levels of humidity lead to mould problems.

Avoid planting in exposed areas where it can be pummelled by strong winds and instead choose a warm northerly spot that receives full sun.

Position lavender next to a wall or solid fence to protect it during winter nights, as these surfaces retain heat from the day and release it after dark.

Lavender grows well in containers in part to full sun. Use a terracotta pot, as it's porous and dries out quickly. Good drainage is essential, so raise pots off the ground.

TIP Place potted lavender near vegies as a valuable companion plant. ➤



**Northcote Pottery 33cm Italian Terracotta Pot, \$20. northcotepottery.com
Pot Toes, \$5 for six. gardenrite.com**

CHOOSING A VARIETY

There are many different varieties of lavender available at nurseries and garden centres in a range of colours and sizes, so choose the plant that best suits your climate zone and landscape.



THE PRINCESS LAVENDER

A new variety bred in Australia with large pink blooms in late winter to summer. Ideal as a hedge in small gardens, it grows to 700mm high and wide, and needs no special care.



LAVENDER AVONVIEW

Growing to 1m high and wide this Italian variety has bright purple-tipped flowers from spring to autumn. Good for a hot and dry area of the garden, as well as in pots and containers.



LAVENDER LACE

This early flowering variety has lilac-coloured blooms from autumn through winter and grows to about 700mm high and wide. Plant it in entryways to add winter colour.

GROW IT AT HOME

Choose a variety to suit your climate, adding lime to acidic soils to boost growth. Lavender tolerates poor soil as long as it is very well drained.

POSITION in full sun, as shade causes the plant to grow towards the light.

PLANT seeds, container-grown plants or cuttings in spring.

FEED with liquid fertiliser just once or twice during the growing season.

WATER once or twice a week in hot weather after planting, as lavender is drought-tolerant once established.

MULCH year round to protect from the cold and reduce evaporation.

PRUNE the flowers in spring, cutting the plant back to keep it compact.

WATCH FOR grey mould in wet, humid conditions as fungal diseases can kill lavender. Ensure good airflow around plants and eliminate weeds. Remove and destroy badly infected plants.



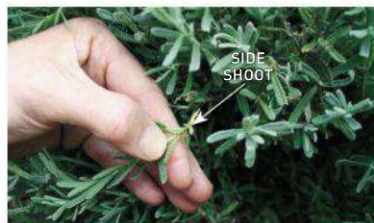
Mr Fothergill's Lavender English Dwarf Seeds, \$4. mrfothergills.com.au



Lavender attracts honey bees to the garden for pollination.

Propagating lavender cuttings

Take softwood cuttings from non-flowering stems in spring to grow a potted feature plant, hedge or garden border. Insert the cuttings in a pot and position in a warm shaded spot, transplanting into well-drained soil after six weeks.



1 PULL SIDE SHOOTS 70 to 100mm long off the main stem with a thin strip of bark, or heel, still attached. **TIP** This is where the roots of the new plant will develop.



2 STRIP THE LEAVES from the base of the shoots by hand so the cuttings have a sufficient length of bare stem for clean insertion, then dip each cutting into hormone powder.



3 MAKE HOLES around the edge of a small pot filled with seed-raising mix using a stick then insert the cuttings and water. Cover with a clear plastic bag to create humidity.

RAISE A HEALTHY HEDGE

Lavender releases a strong scent when brushed against, so it makes a very fragrant hedge. Mature plants can be bought and planted, but this is an expensive way to create hedging.

A more economical method is to buy small plants as tube stock or propagate your own plants in spring, planting them out about 300mm apart.

The effect might not be instant but within a year or two the hedge will be taking shape at a fraction of the cost.

Lavender is low maintenance but a hedge should be pruned twice a year to keep it compact and looking good.

Prune after flowering to remove spent blooms then give the plants a light trim in spring.

For the first prune, trim as much of the season's green growth as possible without cutting into old wood.

TIP Lavender won't regenerate from old wood, so don't prune too hard.



Lavender Fields Range, 140mm Avonview, \$10, from Bunnings.



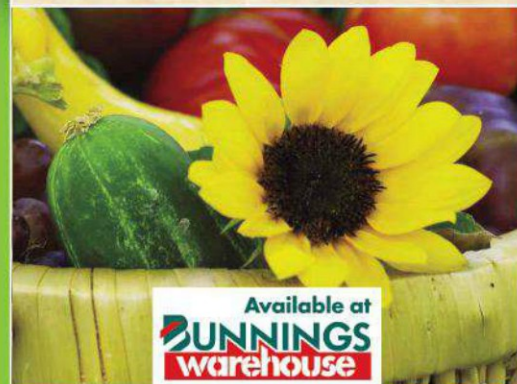
Brushing against lavender releases the fragrance, making it a great plant for pathways and hedges.



GARDENING THIS MONTH



- Now that the winter chill is behind us and all risk of frosts have passed, it is time to make sure you get your spring veggies underway. Capsicums, Chillies, Cucumbers, Eggplants, Tomatoes, Sweet Corn, Melons, Pumpkins and Zucchini should all be sown now for an early crop. Whether it's a Blue Lake, Butterbean, Snapbean, Borlotti or even Edamame Soy Bean - now is a great time to get your favourite beans in the ground too.
- All your favourite herbs can be planted straight in the garden now too, such as Basil, Coriander, Chives, Dill, Mint, Oregano, Parsley and Thyme. For exotic flavours try Lemon Grass, Lemon Coriander, Thai Basil or the new Celery Leaf that packs a strong celery flavour in each little leaf!
- Remember to plant flowers such as Californian Poppies, Cosmos, Sunflowers, Petunias, Phlox, Zinnias and Marigolds for a bright and colourful display throughout Spring. For something new try our new release Gomphrena Strawberry Fields or climbing Cathedral Bells. Marigolds are great planted near your vegetables as they can help deter insects and you can also add their petals to salads. See our website for other great 'companion plants' for chemical free pest management.



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www.mrfothergills.com.au



US ON FACEBOOK



GINGER & SPICE

Add zing to your spring with this easy-to-grow zesty root that is packed full of tasty goodness

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Ginger has been used in Asia for over two millennia to flavour food and drinks. It is an herbaceous perennial, meaning the leaves die down in autumn.

It has a hot, spicy taste without the burn of chilli and many health-giving properties, such as stimulating the heart, settling the stomach, and improving digestion and circulation.

The plant has a long history as a treatment for morning sickness and other types of nausea. Confucius was said to have eaten fresh ginger as a tonic with every meal.

Edible ginger is *Zingiber officinale* and the part used for cooking is a type of root called a rhizome, which can be lifted, split into smaller pieces then replanted each spring.

Versatile in the kitchen, ginger can be used freshly grated in stir-fries, curries and desserts, or kept dried and powdered for cakes and puddings.

It can be used to make a tea or brewed into beer, or preserved for serving with desserts or Asian food.

TIP Ginger can add an energising dash of flavour to basic dishes such as pumpkin soup or ice-cream.

STORING FRESH GINGER

Fresh ginger root can be stored unpeeled in a Ziplock bag in the fridge crisper for two months, just cut off pieces to peel and use finely grated.

For a ready-to-use supply, peel the rhizomes and cut into chunks then put in a clean glass jar and cover with sherry or vodka before sealing tightly.

To dry ginger, peel and cut into 5mm thick slices then put on a wire rack in the oven on the lowest heat setting for 10 to 15 hours, turning every three hours. Cool and store in an airtight container for a year. ➤

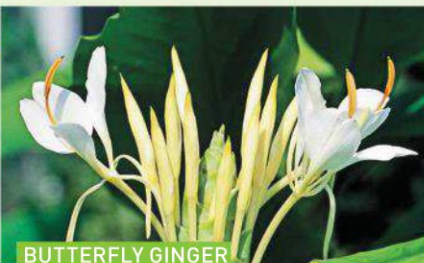
RAISING ORNAMENTAL GINGER

Closely related to edible ginger, the ornamental varieties are prized for their versatility and spectacular flowers. They grow best in tropical or subtropical areas and are effectively pest-free.



BLUE GINGER

- Grows up to 2.5m high
- Not a true ginger but has fleshy green leaves and ginger-like stems
- Bright purple-blue flowers appear in autumn



BUTTERFLY GINGER

- Grows up to 2m high
- Thrives in shady conditions
- Tolerates cold conditions
- Bears highly fragrant white flowers in summer



BEEHIVE GINGER

- Grows over 2m high
- Beehive-shaped bracts, or modified leaves, appear in summer
- The flower bracts turn from yellow-green to bright red



Grated, peeled or sliced ginger has a ton of culinary applications and is easy to grow from a piece bought at the supermarket.

IN THE GARDEN

Ginger likes warm, temperate and tropical areas, and moist, well-drained soil with added organic matter.

It can be grown indoors in colder areas or started in pots during the cooler months then moved outside.

The foliage grows to about 1.5m high with colourful flowers in summer and aromatic leaves.

It usually takes five to nine months to produce a decent crop, with ideal conditions consisting of temperatures above 30°C and regular watering.

PLANT segments of the rhizome containing one or two buds in spring. Remove any rocks or soil clods to give rhizomes smooth passage.

WATER sparingly until shoots appear to avoid root rot, then weekly from late spring to autumn in dry periods.

Keep the soil damp until a month or two before harvesting then stop watering for optimum root growth.

MULCH to keep weeds at bay, retain moisture in the soil and provide protection from the cold for ginger plants left in the ground over winter.



HARVEST fresh ginger in late summer and early autumn or, if drying, dig up about 10 months after planting.

WATCH FOR red spider mite, which attaches webbing to plants, making leaves go yellow and mottled, and possibly papery. Control by overhead watering and spray with a mite killer every week except in very hot weather.

Rhizome rot occurs in hot, humid conditions. Ensure good drainage and dig up and destroy any affected roots.



Yates Nature's Way Natrasoap Insect & Mite Killer, \$13 for 750ml. yates.com.au

Growing from a rhizome

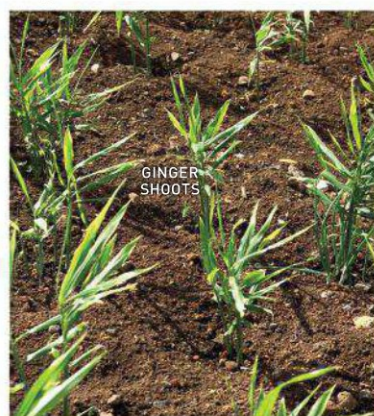
Ginger is grown from an existing root or rhizome, just like garlic or potatoes. Buy young, fresh, organic ginger to reduce the risk of contaminants. **TIP** Ginger likes moist not wet soil and filtered sunlight.



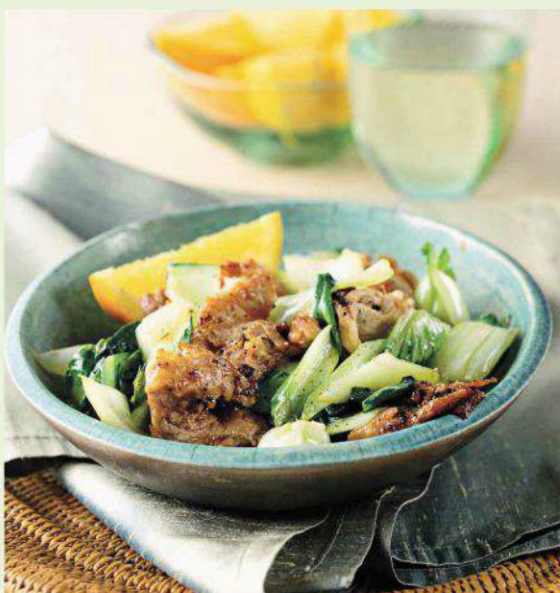
1 SOAK GINGER in water overnight to wash away any growth retardant it may have been sprayed with. Cut the rhizome into pieces that each contain at least one eye or bud.



2 PLANT THE PIECES in a container filled with good quality potting mix, making sure the knobby eyes are facing up, and just cover the rhizome pieces with more mix. Water in well.



3 MOVE THE POT out of direct sun when the shoots appear and water weekly. Transplant into a warm, sheltered spot in the garden and apply a liquid fertiliser fortnightly.



Stir-fried ginger pork

PREPARATION 30 mins, including marinating time

COOKING 10 mins

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

3 Tbsp dry sherry or rice wine
2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 Tbsp cornflour
1 Tbsp dark sesame oil
1 tsp soft brown sugar
4cm piece ginger, peeled and grated
500g boneless pork tenderloin, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp vegetable oil
3 bunches bok choy, coarsely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced

- 1 **COMBINE HALF THE SHERRY** or rice wine, soy sauce, cornflour, sesame oil, sugar, ginger and freshly ground black pepper to taste in a bowl. Add the pork and toss to coat. Marinate at room temperature for 15 minutes.
- 2 **HEAT A LARGE WOK** or frying pan over high heat and add half the vegetable oil. Add the bok choy and stir-fry for two minutes. Cover and cook until just wilted. Transfer to a plate and discard any remaining liquid.
- 3 **ADD THE REMAINING OIL** to the pan and saute the garlic for 15 seconds. Add the pork mixture and stir-fry for four minutes, or until just cooked through.
- 4 **RETURN THE BOK CHOY** to the pan and add the remaining sherry or rice wine. Cook until heated through. Serve immediately with steamed rice.



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Problem solver

CONTROL
CUTWORMSBOGONG
MOTH

Seek and destroy these troublesome pests before they make a tasty meal of your lawn and garden

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

The worst garden offenders are sometimes the ones you can't see, as they do most of their damage under the cover of darkness.

Nocturnal cutworms are the larvae of various moths that live in the soil. They earn their name by coming out at night and chewing through young plant stems and seedlings just above ground level.

They may only eat one side of the stem but it will eventually rot and topple over. Strawberry is a favourite plant for cutworms and they also destroy the fruit.

Measuring 30 to 40mm long and 5mm in diameter, these grubs vary in colour from pink to green and dark brown or black.

The bogong moth seen in the warmer months and in large numbers around lights at night hatches as a cutworm caterpillar.

TIP When disturbed cutworms curl into a coil, so keep an eye out for them when digging in the garden.

METHODS OF CONTROL

If a concentrated area of damage is noticed in the garden, dig up the soil and destroy any cutworms you find.

MULCH around new plants and keep garden beds free of weeds to help keep numbers down.

PROTECT seedlings by cutting out the bases of paper or plastic cups to make cutworm barriers.

Push them into the soil around the plants to keep cutworms from chewing through young stems.

SPRAY plants, seedlings and soil with insecticide in the late afternoon as the larvae feed at night.

MAINTAIN LAWNS as cutworms hide in the thatch layer during the day.

A regular lawn maintenance program of feeding, watering and dethatching helps to prevent thatch from building up and providing a shelter for cutworms.

For small areas of thatch, drag a steel rake across the turf to lift and pull the excess grass runners out.

NOCTURNAL
CUTWORM

Eco-Neem Botanical Insecticide, \$20 for 100ml. ecoorganicarden.com.au



Using natural repellents

A good approach when dealing with cutworms is to delay planting for a couple of weeks after the initial feeding frenzy that comes with early spring. After this the number of cutworm larvae and the extent of the damage they cause will generally decrease.

Try spreading crushed eggshells around the base of plants or seedlings to create a rough surface. This helps deter cutworms as the sharp shells can wound them, causing the grubs to dehydrate and die.

Coffee grounds also create a rough surface and are said to repel cutworms or you can whiz an onion in a blender, strain through muslin into a spray bottle and coat the soil surrounding newly planted seedlings.



GROUND COFFEE

ONION



EGGSHELLS



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“HEALTHY
Outdoor
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NEW
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www.birdiesgardenproducts.com.au

HANGING BASKETS

Plant a pot with colourful annuals and attach it to a wall to brighten up a dull outdoor area in time for spring

PROJECT **JECCA BLAKE**

A hanging basket is an easy way to add instant appeal and seasonal colour to an exterior wall, enlivening the area.

Many nurseries sell pre-planted hanging baskets but it's easy to make one using flowers you like.

Buy a pot with a metal chain or plastic hanger, or recycle woven baskets and old metal buckets.

Attach a bracket to the wall that's strong enough to hold the weight of a basket filled with potting mix, using fasteners appropriate for the surface.

PREPARE THE POT

To customise a container for planting, make drainage holes in the base and line it with coir to let water escape while keeping the soil contained.

Add a layer of plastic over the coir to keep more moisture in, poking holes in it to stop the roots rotting.

Hanging baskets dry out quickly so, to reduce the need for watering, use a mix with water-saving crystals.

These crystals can hold hundreds of times their weight in water and release it to the roots as needed.

TIP If the mix is so dry it shrinks from the sides, soak the basket in a bucket of water to saturate the soil. ➤



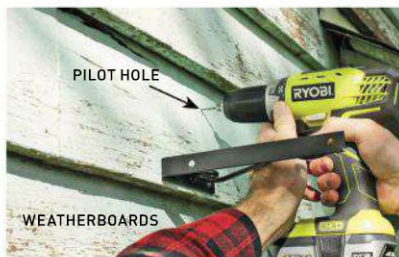
Gardman 40cm Beehive Hanging Basket With Liner, \$16. brunnings.com.au

Installing a basket

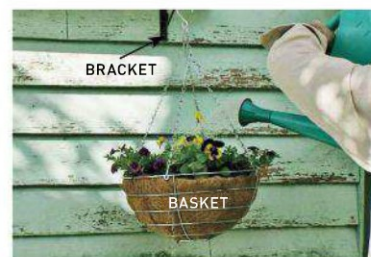
Plant annuals in a basket then drill holes in a weatherboard wall to hang them from metal brackets.



1 ADD THE PLANTS to a basket two-thirds full of potting mix. Work from the outside, position the plants closely and firm down with extra mix.



2 ATTACH THE BRACKET by marking the positions on the wall to drill pilot holes, securing the base and top with galvanised screws.



3 HANG THE BASKETS from the brackets and water thoroughly then apply a slow-release fertiliser.

TIP Apply liquid feed every 10 days.



Team affordable annuals such as daisies or pretty perennials like pelargoniums with plastic hanging pots for a fast and easy spring showcase.

DESIGN A DISPLAY

Create a basket to showcase flowers, combining a few different types.

For an exciting display include a variety of growth habits.

The general rule is to choose plants that fit these three categories for maximum texture and interest.

A THRILLER has an upright habit and unusual foliage to attract attention.

A SPILLER cascades over the sides.

A FILLER adds colour and substance.

Hanging baskets lose nutrients fast so give them a liquid feed fortnightly to encourage flowering and growth.

TIP Deadhead flowers as they die and replace annuals as they finish to keep hanging baskets looking fresh.



Scotts Osmocote Pots, Planters & Indoors, \$6 for 500g. scottsaustralia.com.au



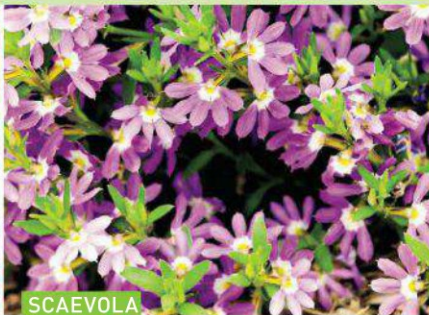
Pansies work as a thriller and filler in this basket, teaming up with lobelia as a spiller.

CHOOSING THE PLANTS

Popular inclusions for hanging baskets are brightly coloured annual bloomers and flowering perennials, or plants with variegated or coloured foliage that grow well in pots. **TIP** Choose plants that suit your local climate.



PELARGONIUM



SCAEVOLA



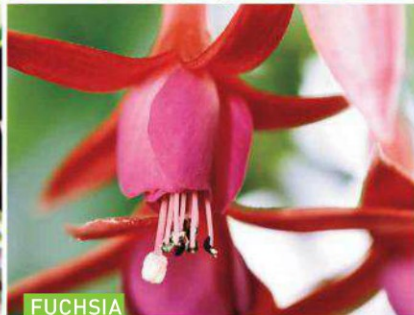
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