

WIN A \$10,000 RENOVATION PAGE 110

AUSTRALIA

WINTER-PROOF THE YARD

Handyman

REPLACE
A WINDOW

STEP BY STEP

Before & after laundry
makeover

33 GIFT
IDEAS FOR
MUM

WOODWORKING
MADE EASY
DOWEL & BISCUIT
TECHNIQUES

35 FAST
FIXES
THAT DON'T
COST A CENT

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Mayissue



COVER PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS L JONES
STYLING GEMA BENEITEZ

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ONE BATTERY FITS OVER 30 TOOLS.



workshop to the garden we have clever shortcuts for a multitude of problems.

I look at them and wonder, 'Why didn't I think of that?'. Hope you find them equally impressive.

More virtual reality

Well, Cherie Barber has done it again. Australia's renovation queen has taken a *Handyman* reader's house facade and transformed it on a computer to show how it could look, on page 66.

It's a great way to visualise your project before committing to it.

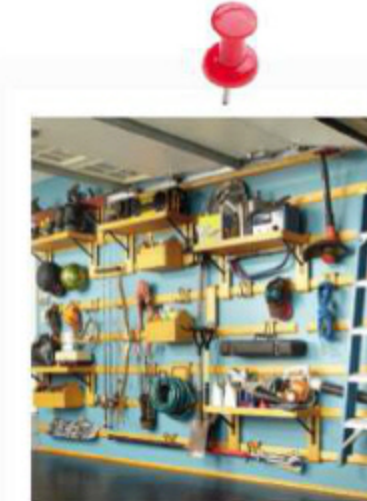
If you would like the chance to have Cherie come up with a plan for any room in your house, or the garden, visit handyman.net.au and upload your 'before' pictures.

Include a brief description of what you'd like done, as well as your budget.

Please make sure the pictures are taken from a distance to show the entire area. And check out our tips below for taking pictures that are high-quality enough to publish.

Enjoy the issue,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL



Get organised in the garage by creating a home for every tool.

More inspiration

Need more effective storage in the garage? Pinterest lets you create and organise boards of your favourite 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 this code with your phone.



Pinterest

SHOW US YOUR DIY & WIN \$300



DO MAKE SURE that the subject is centred, well lit and in focus.



DON'T TAKE SHOTS from odd angles, in low resolution or with shaky hands.

We love seeing what you are working on and sharing it with other readers, but we often receive photos that are too small to publish. If you're sending in a project, please make sure your photos have:

- A file size of at least 1MB
- Image size 2000 x 1000 pixels or more.

Take your photograph in good light and try a few shots at different times of the day. If you are photographing a single item, place it on a clean background. Visit handyman.net.au to upload.

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Handyman

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STN/005

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hillshome.com.au

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* Requires post-kit and mounting bracket.
Both sold separately. Slim 6 line Stone featured.
Also available in Silver.

HILLS.

HANDYSTUFF

Give a DIY present this Mother's Day with a potted plant designed and created by you to suit your mum

WORDS ARTEMIS GOUROS PICTURES LEE DASHIELL



1

Karneval Chilli Plants,
\$9 each, from Bunnings.

3

Miracle Gro 10L Veg & Herb
Mix, \$7. miraclegro.com.au

2

Tuscan Path 37cm Barrel,
\$26. tuscanpath.com.au

Masterchef mum

Give a foodie mum the gift of fresh, homegrown ingredients with a container full of edibles.

Fill a wooden barrel with a good-quality potting mix, add chillies and position it in full sun.

A tasty pick-and-eat crop, chillies add colour to any outdoor area and like lots of sun.

PICTURES THINKSTOCK

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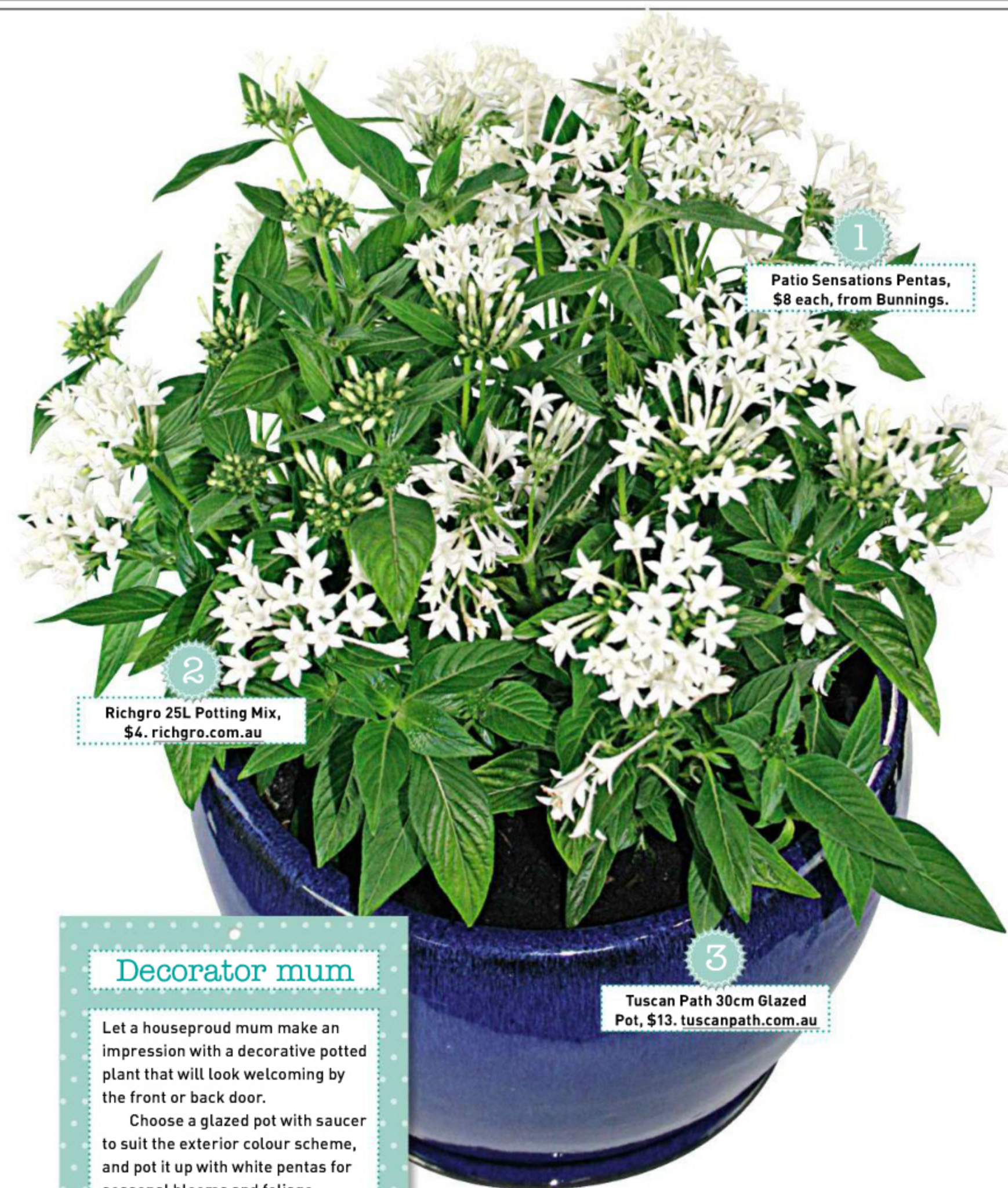
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THIS ISSUE



Decorator mum

Let a houseproud mum make an impression with a decorative potted plant that will look welcoming by the front or back door.

Choose a glazed pot with saucer to suit the exterior colour scheme, and pot it up with white pentas for seasonal blooms and foliage year-round in warm climates.

Green thumb mum

Surprise a mum who loves to garden with a pot full of bright and beautiful blooms this autumn.

For an instant colour injection in a covered outdoor area such as a pergola or patio, plant up a metal hanging basket with shade-loving impatiens. But don't hang it too high as they like lots of water.

1

Patio Jewel Impatiens, \$8 each, from Bunnings.

2

Yates 30L Potting Mix, \$10. yates.com.au

3

Gardman Metal Basket, \$18. brunnings.com.au

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BUYER'S GUIDE

HOSE NOZZLES

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT PICTURE STUART SCOTT

Take aim and turn the garden green with this standout collection of spray attachments for easy watering

Sure shot

Channel your inner cowboy when watering the yard with the Toro Adjustable Aluminium Trigger Gun, \$36. A control dial allows you to moderate water flow while the one-hand design won't strain your grip.

Lock & load

No need to keep your finger on the trigger of the Gardena 18mm Premium Metal Multi-purpose Spray Gun, about \$40, as it locks into place. Four different spray patterns enable you to get a lush garden fast.

Magic wand

Sick of stretching yourself to the limit when giving the garden a drink? Make life easier with the Holman Grip 8 Function Wand, \$10. A 12mm quick-snap connection allows you to soak hanging baskets with ease.

Soft touch

Nurture thirsty seedlings without drowning them by using the Pope Soft Shower Hand Spray, \$11. The ergonomic grip features an adjustable throttle control that makes it easy to regulate the flow rate.

Jumbo flow

Water shrubs, clean equipment or fight fires using the Holman 18mm Metal Fire Nozzle, \$20. When paired with an 18mm hose it can provide large volumes of water while the rubberised body makes it easy to keep a grip.

Fighter jet

Water any terrain with the Nylex Jet Spray Gun, \$29. UV-stabilised to withstand extended sun exposure, it switches between a strong jet and shower spray with a twist of the head.



Courtyard Series

Cyclone's extensive new timber garden tool range. Designed for the style conscious urban gardening enthusiast.



- Smooth finish, contoured handles are gentle on the hands
- Ideal for Units ► Apartments ► Townhouses ► Gardens ► Schools

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NEW

Metallic
circles



Timber
blocks



Wall treatments

Turn a blank space into a work of art using four eye-catching decorating techniques

PROJECT GEMA BENEITEZ PICTURES SUE FERRIS

Rubber
tiles



Cork
panels



PICTURE (BACKGROUND) THINKSTOCK

DECORATE



Scan to view
step-by-step
how-to video
and painting tips



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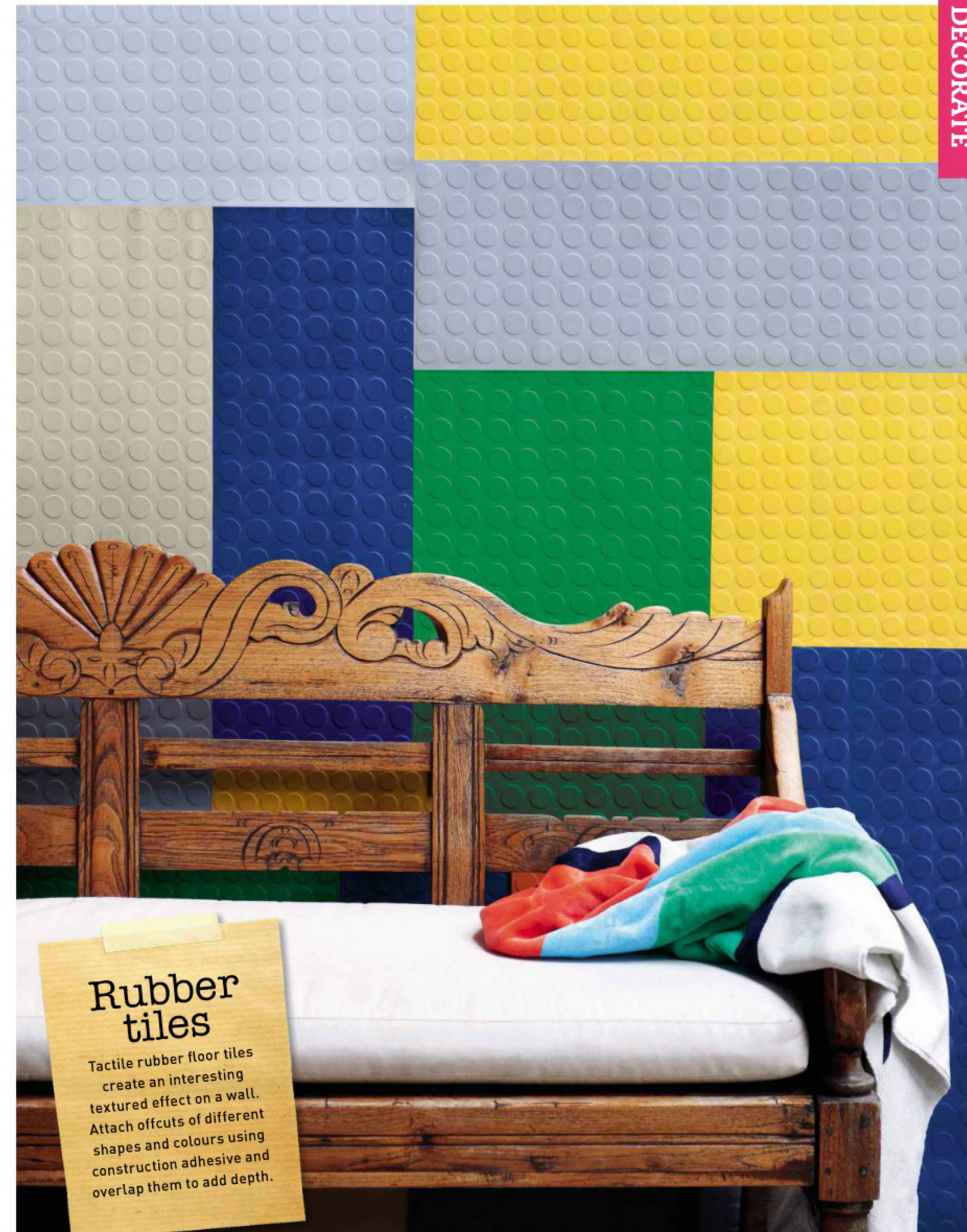
Visit whiteknightpaints.com.au for all the tools, tips and tricks you will need to achieve results you can be proud of.

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Cork panels
Create wall art that doubles as a noticeboard using panels of cork. Buy cork tiles from a hardware store, cut to size and attach with construction adhesive.

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Feature wall

Adding a feature wall is an effective way to bring a splash of colour and personality to a room without the result being overpowering.

When all the walls of a room are painted in a neutral colour, it can look bland. Decorating one wall in brightly contrasting shades or a bold pattern introduces some visual interest.

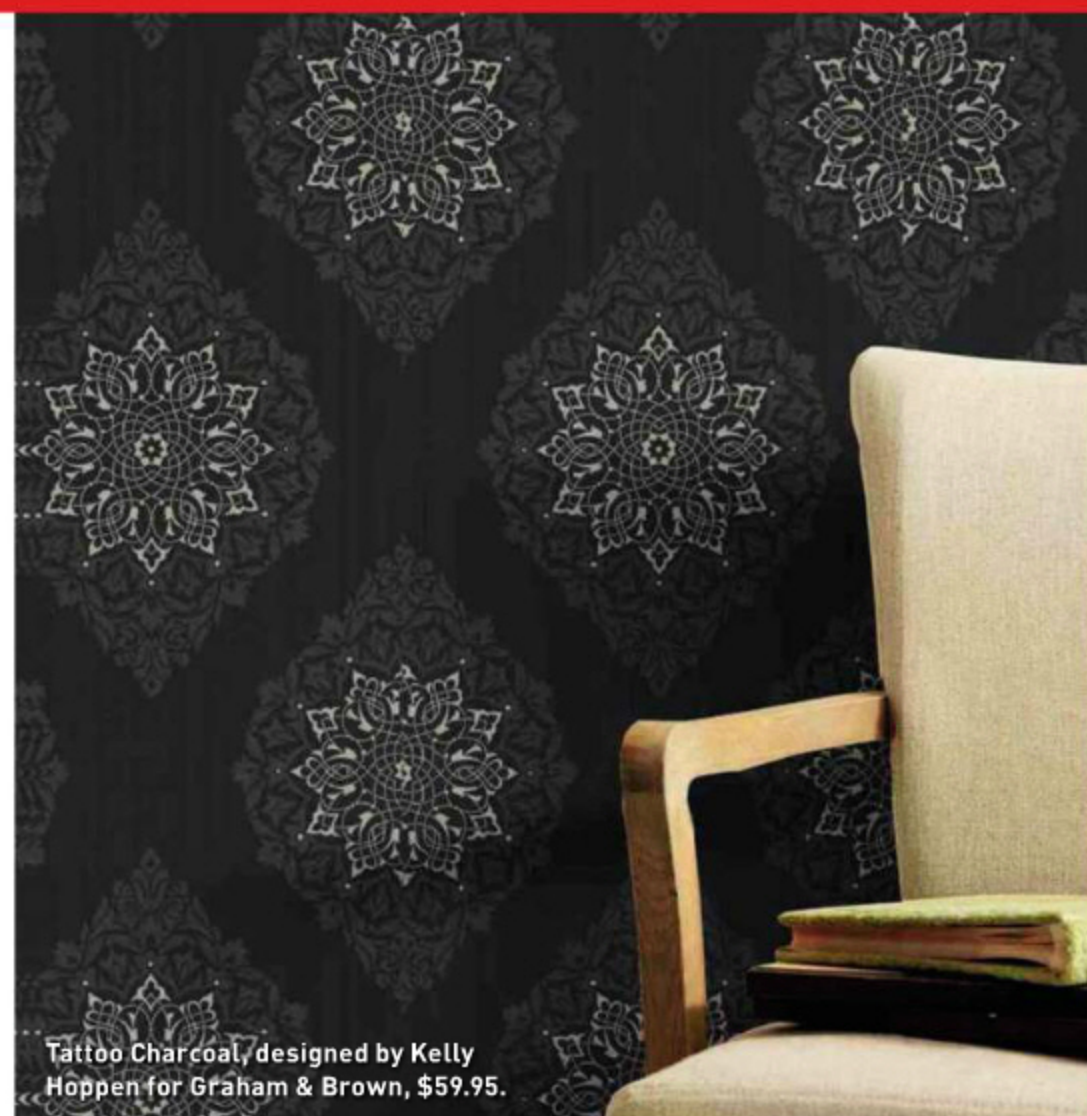
One of the easiest ways to achieve this look is with eye-catching wallpaper.

Graham & Brown's wallpapers simplify the hanging process by allowing you to apply the paste directly to the wall, rather than to the back of the wallpaper.

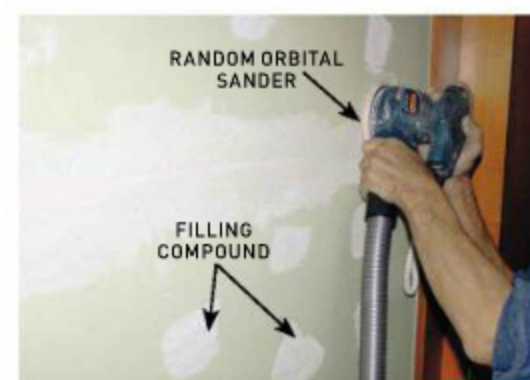
When it's time for a change, the paper peels away in one strip with no need for scraping. This makes it easy to update your feature wall for a new look.

Graham & Brown's wallpapers come in a wide variety of designs and colours.

The SuperFresco range has both paintable and patterned options which start from \$29.95 a roll. The Kelly Hoppen range, styled by the British designer, starts from \$59.95 a roll.



Tattoo Charcoal, designed by Kelly Hoppen for Graham & Brown, \$59.95.



1 PREPARE THE WALL by repairing any holes and cracks using a filling compound. Smooth it over with a metal spatula or broadknife depending on the hole size and leave to dry. Sand with 180 grit paper then apply primer to the wall.



2 MIX UP THE PASTE then select a place to start, usually the middle of the wall and draw a vertical line. Measure the wall height, lay the paper flat and cut it to length with 200mm extra. Brush the paste over the wall.



3 HANG THE WALLPAPER with a helper to position the first sheet against the line, overlapping the cornice by 25mm. Smooth the paper with a plastic broadknife and trim the excess. Match up patterns on each sheet as you go.

D.I.Y. Workshops

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

SATURDAY 26 APRIL
WINDOWS AND DOORS
KIDS' WORKSHOP ANZAC DAY

SATURDAY 17 MAY
KITCHEN, BATHROOM AND LAUNDRY
KIDS' WORKSHOP WALL ART

SUNDAY 27 APRIL
WINDOWS AND DOORS
KIDS' WORKSHOP DRESS UPS

SUNDAY 18 MAY
KITCHEN, BATHROOM AND LAUNDRY
KIDS' WORKSHOP DRESS UPS

SATURDAY 3 MAY
HOME ORGANISATION
KIDS' WORKSHOP CRAFT

SUNDAY 4 MAY
HOME ORGANISATION
KIDS' WORKSHOP MAKE A GIFT FOR MUM

SATURDAY 10 MAY
SAVE ENERGY AND WATER AROUND THE HOME
KIDS' WORKSHOP MAKE A GIFT FOR MUM

SUNDAY 11 MAY
SAVE ENERGY AND WATER AROUND THE HOME
KIDS' WORKSHOP DECORATOR

Mother's Day Family Night

Come down to your local Bunnings on Thursday 8th May (Wednesday 7th May in WA) from 6pm to 8pm and join in activities for the whole family. Kids can even make a gift for mum! Times may vary, so contact your local store for details.



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.

Mother's Day craft

Turn family snaps and favourite pictures into a personalised gift for Mum with a few easy techniques

WORDS ARTEMIS GOUROS PICTURES SUE FERRIS PROJECTS GEMA BENEITEZ

Giving a homemade present on Mother's Day is a tradition that starts at school and is usually abandoned once pocket money is introduced to a kid's life.

There's no reason to stop making Mum gifts, but you might want to give her something more sophisticated than a pop-up card or paper flower.

To make a gift from the heart, you could personalise an item with photos. Boyle has a range of trinket boxes, picture frames and other craft supplies, available at Bunnings (boyleindustries.com.au).

You'll also need A4 self-adhesive paper for printing photos, about \$10 for a pack of 20, and iron-on transfer paper, about \$42 for a pack of 10, both from Officeworks (officeworks.com.au).

TIP To cut out different shapes, make sure you have a sharp craft knife as well as a good pair of scissors. ➤

Selleys Aquadhere PVA Wood Glue Interior, \$4.60 for 100ml. selleys.com.au



Fabric portrait

Give Mum a soft crate for her odds and ends. Print a background pattern or image on transfer paper and iron it onto a felt square. Print a family shot on self-adhesive paper then secure it to the crate. Add self-adhesive foam letters to finish.



Painted memory chest

Decoupage a large trinket box, about \$10, for Mum to keep photos, letters and other memorabilia. Paint the box then print a background image from the internet and a photo on self-adhesive paper, using clear varnish to seal the images.



1 PAINT THE BOX white then apply a coat of blue acrylic, wiping it with a cloth while still wet. Seal the finish with water-based clear varnish.



2 ATTACH THE PICTURES to the lid of the box, cutting the background to size and centring the photo on top. Smooth out any air bubbles by hand or roller.



3 SEAL THE LID by spraying with clear varnish or applying decoupage medium with a brush, then use PVA adhesive to add decorative buttons.

PICTURE (TOP) THINKSTOCK



3D picture frames

Make lightweight block frames for Mum to show off pictures of the grandkids or pets. Attach the photos to 300 x 100 x 50mm balsa blocks, about \$15 each, and top with acrylic. **TIP** Buy 1mm thick acrylic sheet from online suppliers for about \$25.



1 PRINT THE IMAGES onto self-adhesive paper and cut to fit the blocks. Centre and attach them, smoothing out any air bubbles.



2 SEAL THE PICTURES by applying a decoupage medium with a paintbrush or use clear spray varnish. Cut the acrylic sheet to fit the top of the block.



3 CUT TWO STRIPS from 10 x 3mm balsa wood, apply adhesive to the thin edges and attach to the block sides. Position the acrylic on top.



Holiday coasters

Make Mum coasters to remind her of her favourite holiday using basic decoupage methods and MDF circles costing 69c each. Print graphics onto blank stickers, trim to fit then attach, sealing with a coat of spray varnish. **TIP** Use a black marker on the edge.

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

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



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Sure can!



What's new

»Head in-store to pick out a custom present your DIY mum will love this Mother's Day

»Personalised presents



LEAVE A NOTE for Mum on a Craftwood House with Blackboard, \$19.95, painted in her favourite bright colours.



STORE KEEPSAKES for Mum in this Large Trinket Box, \$9.26, customised with patterned PVC self-adhesive film.



SEND A MESSAGE using a Photo/Note Clip Mini Pot Set, \$9.90 for four, in tulip, daisy, frog and star shapes you can decorate DIY.



FRAME UP Mum's most treasured picture in a Rectangle Photoframe, \$12.95, and paint it a colour she'll love.

»Storage solutions



STAY TIDY to make your mum's life easy with the Handy Storage 4 x 4 Clever Cube Storage System in white, \$139.



STORE AND STACK Mum's favourite drop in a Zone Hardware 12 Bottle Wine Rack, \$29.98.



HIDE CLUTTER in a Keter 43L Rattan Square Flexible Storage Tub, \$17.98, with durable inbuilt handles.



ADD SPACE to Mum's wardrobe with a 2 Tier Shoe Rack, \$19.98.

»First aid



BE PREPARED for accidents at home or on the go with the St John Ambulance 80-piece First Aid Kit, \$19.98.



MEND MINOR INJURIES with a St John Ambulance 150-piece Comprehensive First Aid Kit, \$49.98.

What's new

» Tool time



STAY IN TUNE in the garden or workshop with the Ryobi ONE+ 18V AM/FM Cordless Radio, \$59 excluding battery.

SEE THE WAY in any dark space using the Ryobi ONE+ 18V Torch with pivoting head, \$19 excluding battery.

TACKLE ANY TASK with the Ryobi ONE+ 18V Cordless Multi Function Tool, \$99 excluding battery.

» Garden goodies



ADD COLOUR to Mum's day with 140mm Mother's Day Double Chrysanthemum, from \$5.98.

DECORATE THE YARD with the Gardman Ornate Bird Bath, \$49.98, to draw in birds and delight Mum.

POT UP POSIES in Northcote Terracotta Pots, from \$1.49, in five sizes.

» Wall clocks



PASS THE TIME with a Vintage Beaujolais Wall Clock, \$69, that Mum will love.



STICK TO SCHEDULE with an Antique De Paris Fob Clock, \$120, to make Mum's day.



BRING A FLAVOUR of France to your mum's home with the Paris Wall Clock, \$139, to match her style.

» Gift card

CAN'T DECIDE on the right gift? Go online and make Mum a personalised Bunnings Gift Card.



Flooring for every room

Take your time when choosing what to lay and get the right look and feel for the space

WORDS SITA SIMONS MAIN PICTURE CHRIS L JONES STYLING GEMA BENEITEZ

Choose timber for a timeless look in both old and modern homes.

Choosing what kind of floor to lay is one of the most important renovating decisions you can make. Along with the walls, flooring determines the look and feel of a room.

The range of flooring options is extensive with a surface for every budget and level of DIY skill. Before you buy, consider the main function of the room and determine which material is most practical for the space.

Flooring can have a big impact on comfort and aesthetics so consider what look you want for the room and how frequently it will be used.

In a high-traffic area choose durable materials that require minimal ongoing maintenance.

For rooms where you will be on your feet for a long time, tiles and concrete may feel too cold or hard.

Most modern renovators choose the flooring best suited to each room, but using the same flooring for the whole house can work well in homes with an open-plan design as it improves the flow between spaces.

The choice of flooring can influence key elements such as paint or furniture, so select carefully to avoid clashes, reduce wasteful refurbishing costs and create a harmonious result.

Decide early if you'll install the floor DIY or have it done professionally so you can book trades well in advance to minimise delays. ➤



Timber

Quality timber flooring adds warmth and classic style to a room.

Living & dining

Hardwood floors are always appealing and work as well in a modern space as in a traditional period home.

No matter what the room, timber is a timeless choice well suited to the Australian climate and lifestyle.

It's easy to maintain and clean, ages well and hardwoods are particularly durable. For family rooms such as the living room and dining area, timber is practical and welcoming.

A well-installed, high-quality timber floor is one of the most expensive options, but should last a lifetime.

DIY or not?

Laying a hardwood floor is best left to the professionals as it needs specialist equipment to ensure the boards stay tightly in position.



Bathroom

Tiles are the best choice for wet areas, particularly bathrooms, and there are three main types.

CERAMIC tiles are the most popular and come in a vast array of colours, sizes and designs.

They are the most affordable and easiest for DIYers to cut at home.

PORCELAIN tiles are more expensive than ceramic, but are resistant to chips and scratches. Newer polished porcelain tiles do not require sealing.

They are also suitable for use with underfloor radiant heating. **POROUS** materials such as stone or composite stone look beautiful but they require regular maintenance to keep them sealed and are the most expensive option. >

Tiles



DIY or not?

Tiling can be done DIY if you have the skill level and patience required. Take your time to guarantee good results.

Practise cutting before you start and use a plumb line as the guide. Make sure the adhesive and notched trowel are suitable to the type of tile and have the waterproofing done by a pro.

Extend floor tiles up the walls and create an immersive effect.

PICTURES ALAMY AND THINKSTOCK

IDEAL WINTON VINYL TILES

NEW Larger Sized 45 Series

45.7cm x 45.7cm

(5 tiles = 1sq. mtr)

SELF STICK
For quick installment

Suitable for
WET AREAS

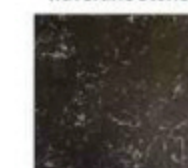
7 YEAR
Domestic Wear
Warranty



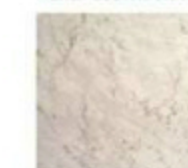
Travertine Stone



Char-Brown Slate



Black Marble



White Marble

Sized 30 Series

30.5cm x 30.5cm

(10.75 tiles = 1sq. mtr)

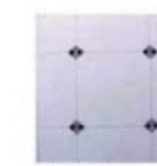
SELF STICK
For quick installment

Suitable for
WET AREAS

3 YEAR
Domestic Wear
Warranty



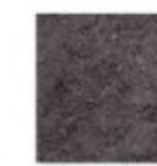
Black & White



Black Diamond



Finger Parquet



Char Stone

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Kitchen & laundry

Wet areas need special consideration when it comes to what goes on the floor. The idea of vinyl may conjure up images of 1970s interiors, but today's options have improved in both range and finish.

Not only can modern vinyl replicate the look of timber and stone, it can be any colour and any combination of patterns for a highly individualised look.

This material is very practical, is water, mould and mildew resistant, can withstand spills and scuffs and is comfortable underfoot.

It's easy to clean and there is virtually no maintenance required. Damaged areas are easily replaced.

The price point is typically at the lower end of the flooring scale, with some variance between basic sheet options and high-definition plank and tile varieties.



Vinyl

Forget the 1970s, modern vinyls are durable, attractive and affordable.



DIY or not?

Laying a vinyl sheet floor can be a simple job if the area is small and evenly shaped, but you may need help lifting heavy sheets. Self-adhesive tiles and planks are easier to install alone.

If the sheet needs to be cut, make a template from kraft paper and use a sharp cutting tool.

Turn to page 36 to find out how to install vinyl flooring.



Glide around the home office on a floating laminate floor.

Home office

Floating floors are a versatile, durable and inexpensive alternative to timber boards. Floating floors are either engineered timber or laminate.

Engineered timber combines a hardwood veneer with several layers of plywood or MDF, while laminate is a high-definition image printed on an MDF base.

Office chair castors slide across laminate easily, and scratches from furniture are less likely to show. It's also more soundproof than timber. ➤

Floating floor

DIY or not?

Installing a floating floor can be done DIY by one person. Buy a tapping tool and a pulling tool to get a tight finish with tongue-and-groove boards, or choose simple click-together boards.

Take the skirting off before laying. When the skirting is reattached it will conceal a 10mm gap that must be left around the perimeter of the room to allow for expansion of the boards.

PICTURES ALAMY AND GETTY IMAGES

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stylish solutions for walls and ceilings

Bedrooms

The bedroom needs to be a restful, welcoming space, and nothing says luxury and comfort like a soft, deep-pile carpet under bare feet.

There's less foot traffic in a bedroom, which means you can invest in a light-coloured carpet without worrying about it being ruined by excessive wear and tear.

Carpet also offers better sound and heat insulation than hard floors.

Budget and colour schemes are the main factors to guide the choice. Pure wool plush carpets are at the highest end of the price spectrum, while nylon and polyester blends are much more affordable.

The underlay improves comfort and makes a big difference to the finished result, so always buy the best quality you can afford.



DIY or not?

Laying a carpet is not a difficult DIY job, but it does require two people and can get fiddly if there is a lot of cutting involved. And mistakes are difficult to hide.

A laying kit can be bought for under \$100, but considering that installation doesn't cost much more, it's safer and easier to have carpet installed by a professional.



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A plush new carpet underfoot lends a little luxury to a bedroom.

PICTURES (LEFT) ALAMY (TOP) THINKSTOCK

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LAY VINYL TILES

Get a new floor in just a day with this budget-friendly DIY solution

WORDS AND PICTURES ARTEMIS GOUROS

A playroom all of their own is every kid's dream, so when five-year-old Karissa Gouros was told she could have the new attic at her place she was thrilled.

Measuring 7.8 x 2.4 metres with a sloping ceiling, the attic is a good size for storing all her toys and books, with plenty of space left over for playing games solo or with friends.

Part of a second-storey addition to the house, the plasterboard walls and ceiling needed to be sealed and painted and a floor had to be laid.

Karissa wanted a bright, fun colour for the walls which meant the flooring couldn't be dull or neutral. Her mum just wanted something easy to clean.

The best floor

For a low-maintenance floor that lasts years, vinyl is ideal. It is comfortable underfoot, comes in a big range of patterns and is quick to DIY.

Instead of sheet vinyl, large-format self-adhesive tiles were chosen for the attic to make the room look bigger.

To create a designer look for the attic playroom that won't date, marbled black and white tiles were laid in a chequerboard pattern.

At 45.7cm square, the tiles add depth to the long, skinny space.

Winton Tiles, from Ideal DIY Floors cost about \$4 each, and also come in cartons of 16 for about \$71 (ideal-diy-floors.com.au).

To cover the almost 19 square metre attic, and factoring in an extra 10% for cutting and wastage, four cartons of each colour were bought.

To lay the floor, the particleboard was sealed with Bondcrete, about \$20, then the self-adhesive tiles laid directly on top. ➤



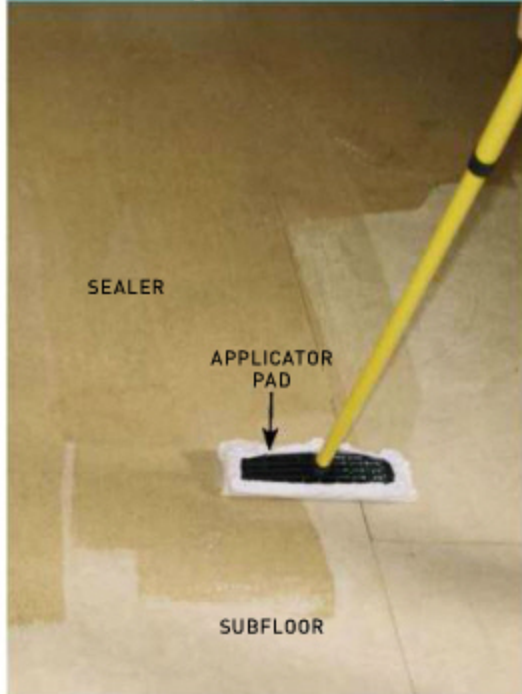
Black & Decker 1600W Deluxe Steam Mop, \$199. blackanddecker.com.au



TIME 1 DAY
SKILL BASIC
DIY \$605
TOOLS UTILITY KNIFE,
ROLLER

AFTER
Vinyl tiles are soft underfoot and easy to clean, making them the ideal flooring for a playroom.

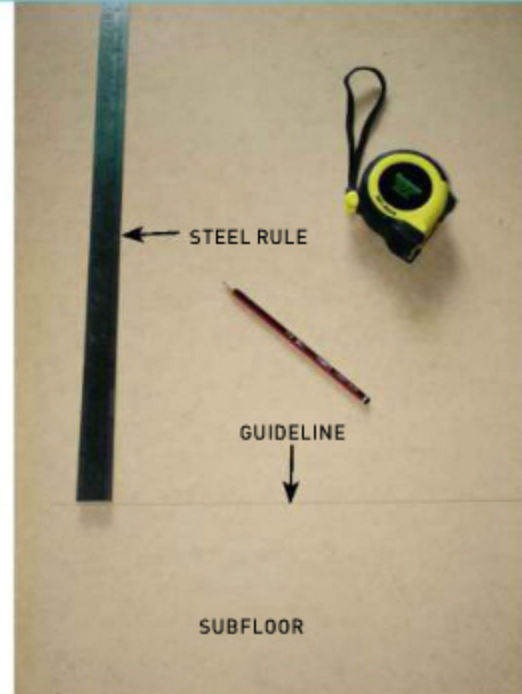
⑦ Lay the vinyl tiles



1 Prepare the floor

Apply diluted Bondcrete or similar sealer to the clean, dry particleboard subfloor using a lambswool applicator and leave to dry for an hour.

TIP Before sealing, fill nail holes or big dents with timber filler then sand.



2 Mark the grid

Find the centre of the room and draw a guideline across the floor with a steel rule, marking a second line at right angles to the first using the 3:4:5 method and a tape measure.

TIP A builder's square can also be used.



3 Position the tiles

Test-fit the vinyl tiles on the floor with the paper backing intact, using the guidelines to check the fit and ensure you have enough tiles. Follow the pyramid laying pattern for the tiles, leaving the perimeter bare.



4 Lay the tiles

Peel the paper backing off the first tile and position it against the first tile and position it against the guidelines, applying firm pressure all over the tile surface by hand. Lay the rest of the tiles in the pyramid pattern until the section is finished.



5 Finish the floor

Working from the marked centre, continue laying the floor in sections until all the full-size tiles are laid, then use a roller to press each tile down.

TIP A heavy wooden rolling pin can also be used to go over the tiles.

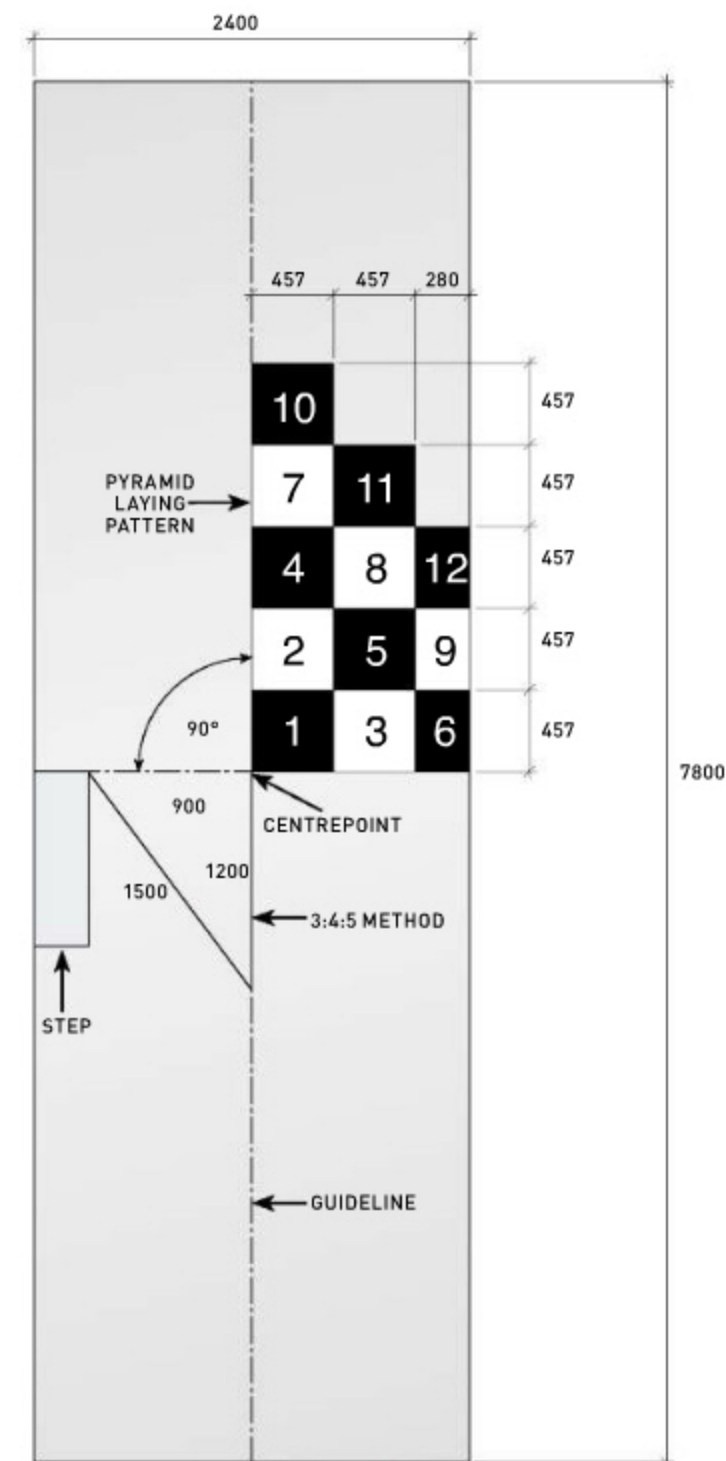


6 Cut the tiles

Measure the perimeter and cut tiles to fit. Mark the paper backing using a pencil then cut using a utility knife with a steel rule as a guide. Lay the cut tiles around the perimeter with the cut edge against the wall.

⑧ Floor layout

measurements in mm



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Preparation for tiling

Lay the foundations for a professional finish when tiling a kitchen, bathroom or laundry

There's more to tiling a wet area than just choosing tiles and laying them. Preparation and the materials used need as much consideration as the choice of tile.

Preparing the room prior to tiling will ensure the renovation lasts a lifetime and prevents costly repairs further down the track.

LEVEL THE SUBFLOOR before laying the tiles to ensure an even surface.

Inspect the floor to identify any undulating areas and paint them with a mix of one part Bondcrete to one part water, topped with a wet mix of six parts sand and one part cement.

Screed the mortar to a smooth and level finish and fill variations with a self-levelling compound.

CREATE A SLOPE towards the drain by applying a wet-mix topping. Ensure the floor falls at least 15mm and has a maximum slope ratio of 85:1.

PRIME THE SURFACE to enhance the bond between the waterproofing membrane and the walls and floor. Clean the surface then apply wet area primer and allow to dry.

WATERPROOF THE ROOM by applying a waterproofing membrane to walls and floors. Check regulations in your area as some councils require this to be done by a professional.

The Dunlop Shower Waterproofing Kit contains everything required including a primer, waterproofing membrane, silicone, reinforcing mat for corners and instructions.

Apply silicone sealant to the corners of the floors and walls after priming and smooth with a finger dipped in soapy water. Fit drains and fittings with waterproof flanges.

LAY THE TILES using an adhesive designed to be applied over the waterproofing membrane. Choose an adhesive suitable for the type of tile.

Non-slump tile adhesives such as Dunlop Multipurpose Mastic Adhesive make it easier to apply large-format tiles to walls and floors.

The LASH (Level, Align, Space, Hold) system from QEP is an easy way to avoid lippage and uneven gaps, resulting in trouble-free grouting and a professional looking finish.

The system uses re-usable wedges and clips that keep tiles level, aligned and evenly spaced while holding them in position as the adhesive cures. The clips then snap off easily below the tile surface once the adhesive is dry.

GROUT THE TILES using a coloured grout that complements your choice of tile. Use an in-store grout selector chart to determine the best colour.

You will need

Prepare the room with the right materials for a professional finish.



Dunlop Shower Waterproofing Kit, \$109.



Dunlop Multipurpose Mastic Adhesive, \$34 for 20kg.



QEP LASH Tile Levelling Clips, \$25 for 100.

Laying a floating floor

»Upgrade a room DIY and get a professional result with an easy-to-install floating timber floor

Floating floors are easy to install as the locking system does not require nails or adhesive.

It's still a good idea to enlist another pair of hands to help speed up the process and ensure the boards are positioned evenly and clicked tightly.

Use underlay for soundproofing, which also provides cushioning and gives the floor added resilience.

When buying underlay, multiply the length of the room by the width and add 10% to allow for miscalculations.

If the base of a door sits close to the height of the existing floor, remove it and plane off the equivalent thickness of the new boards, so that it doesn't scrape.

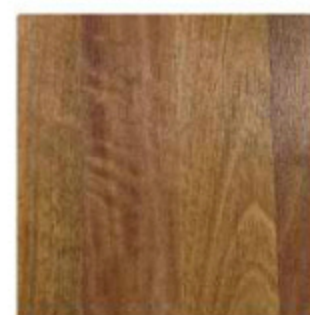
The boards are designed to respond to moisture in the air so leave the packs in the room for a few days before laying them.

A gap of 10mm should be left around the edges, concealed by skirting, to allow for expansion and contraction.

TIP A floating floor is not suitable for areas that get wet, such as bathrooms.

»Easy-click boards and underlay

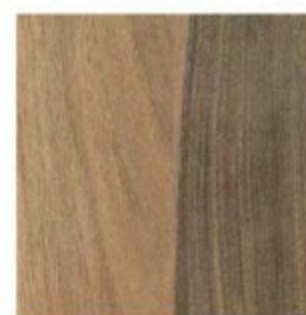
Laminate flooring is available in a wide range of natural-look finishes.



Tarkett Vibrant Sydney Blue, \$52.55 per 1.754sqm.



Formica 8mm Luce, \$51.60 per 2.40sqm.



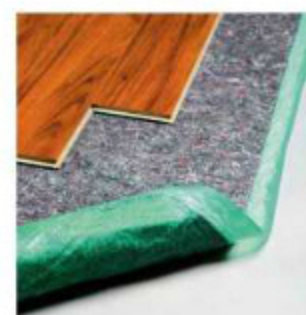
Formica 8mm Ideal Walnut, \$50 per 1.86sqm.



Formica 10mm Spotted Gum, \$64.96 per 2.24sqm.



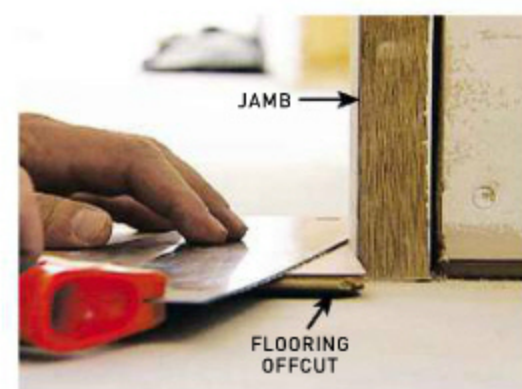
Formica 10mm Satin Gloss Jarrah, \$55.55 per sqm.



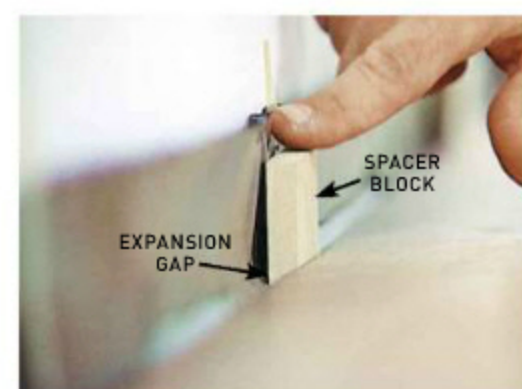
QEP Floating Floor Underlay Felt, \$55.50 for 10 x 1.1m.



1 REMOVE THE SKIRTING before installing the floor and replace it when all the boards are down, allowing a gap beneath the skirting for the floorboards to expand and contract.



2 POSITION AN OFFCUT of flooring and underlay next to the doorjamb to determine where it needs to be trimmed. Cut the base off the doorjamb slowly and squarely using a sharp handsaw.



3 USE PLASTIC OR TIMBER blocks to space the first row of boards away from the wall for the required expansion gap around the perimeter. The gap will be hidden by the skirting when it's refitted.



Floating floors offer the beauty and tactile comfort of timber floorboards but are much simpler to install.



4 LAY THE FLOOR starting with the underlay, adding a moisture barrier beneath on concrete floors. Lay the boards starting from a left side corner, completing each row in turn.



5 CLAMP ANY BOARDS that need to be cut across a pair of sawhorses and trim to size using a jigsaw, face side down. **TIP** You can also use a small circular saw and guide fence.

»Keep it clean

Vacuum often to avoid scratches from dirt and pebbles tracked into the house and position doormats at entrances. Clean spills with a damp cloth but don't use wax, polish or scouring agents.

Engineered floors can be refinished at least once because of the top 4mm layer of timber that laminate floors don't have.

Bamboo can be refinished as often as regular timber floors.

Home sweet home

If the typical suburban plot makes you yawn, take inspiration from these unconventional dwellings

A high ceiling and lots of light makes this tiny DIY home feel more spacious.

The loft sleeping area is built above the narrow kitchen and bathroom.

The Small House Movement encourages people to live more simply in scaled-down homes, and it's a message that Chris and Malissa Tack have really taken to heart.

The couple reside in a miniature home that they built themselves, despite having little construction experience prior to the project.

The Tiny Tack House, as they named their cottage on wheels, packs a kitchen, living room, bathroom and sleeping loft into a space that measures just 13 square metres.

Malissa, a 3D artist, and Chris, a graphic designer and photographer, designed the house and made a virtual version of it before picking up tools.

They spent 800 hours over seven months constructing the home, with some help from an electrician, a plumber, and some parental muscle when it was time to install the roof.

'Just about everyone we know thought we were crazy, but now they love the idea of the house,' says Malissa.

The house, which sits on a rented block of land, has four solar panels and a 150-litre fresh water tank, making it both economically and environmentally friendly.

The Tacks expect to pay the house off within two or three years, despite Chris recently losing his job.

'Without the substantially lower cost of living, we would definitely be struggling financially,' he says.

The Tacks add that living small has made them stronger as a couple. It forces them to respect each other's space and to be more polite, as the tiny kitchen barely allows a squeeze-past. ➤



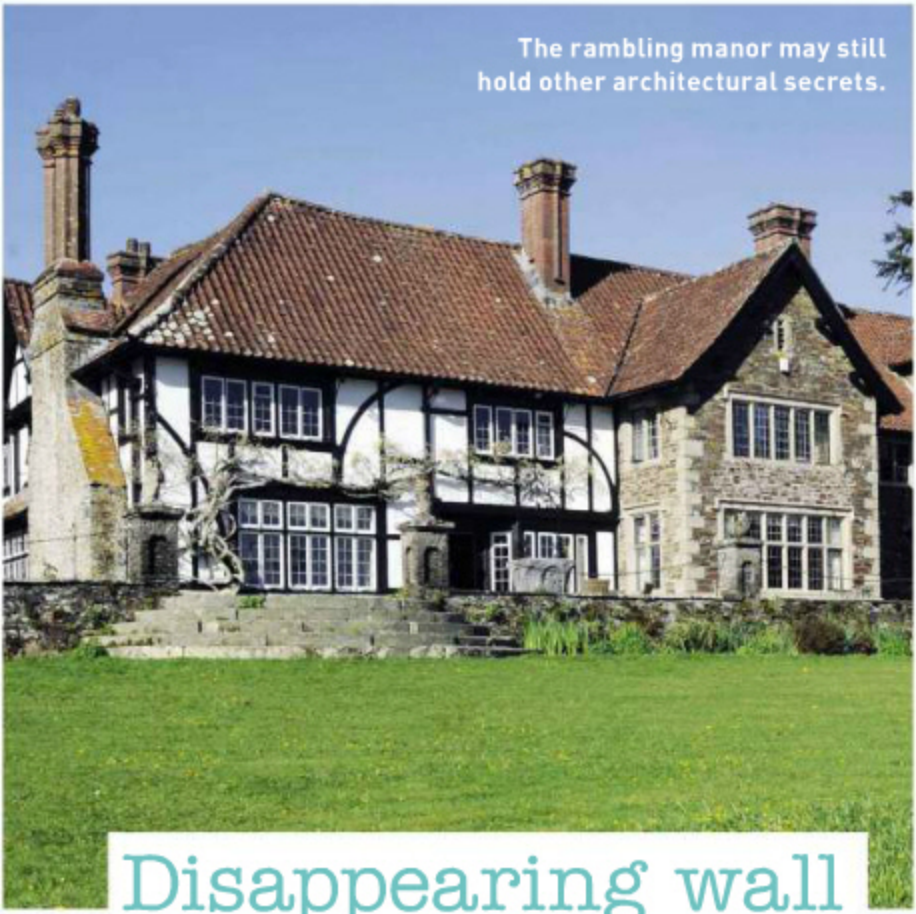
Owner Sarah Marsh shows how the room looks when closed off.



The disappearing wall slides down like a giant sash window.



With the wall beneath the floor, a large living room is opened up.



Disappearing wall

For the owners of this stately Arts and Crafts style home, there was a secret waiting to be discovered. Sarah and Philip Marsh had lived in their house for years before they found the unusual feature, possibly the last surviving example of a disappearing wall.

They had known the wall existed from reading historical records when they bought the estate, but only stumbled upon it one day while hosting a dinner party.

'There were two beautifully carved wooden columns on rollers in the void under the stairs but they never matched anything,' says Sarah.

Another mysterious clue was the large hook that hung down from the ceiling in the centre of the reception room wall.

'One of our friends decided the floorboards were meant to come up, which left two rectangular gaps which looked as if they could take the columns,' says Sarah.

'Once the floorboards were removed, we could see a void beneath the wall.

'With a bit of huffing and puffing, we gave the hook a tremendous heave and the wall started to slide down through the floor.'

Sarah admits she was worried that the wall would never come back up again.

'But the Edwardians knew how to build and it went up without a hitch.' ➤

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Rather than remove the tree, Jia Fulian built it into his extension.

Tree house

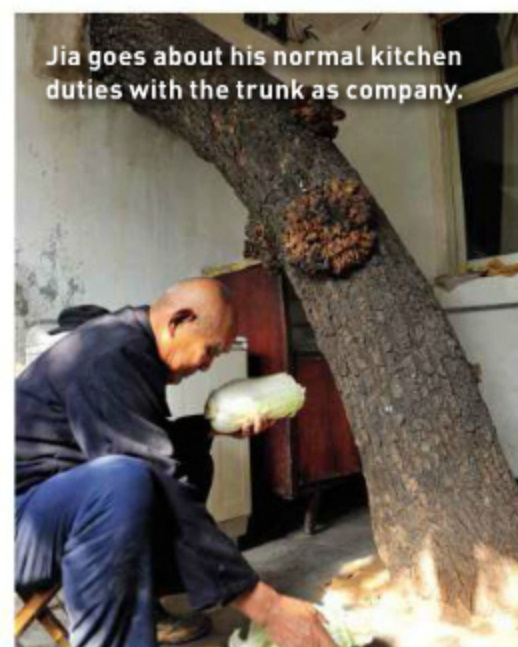
Many of us profess to feeling close to nature, but few end up treating it like part of the family.

Jia Fulian is different. The 91-year-old from Beizhao village in Hebei province, northern China, has been living with a tree growing through his house for 40 years.

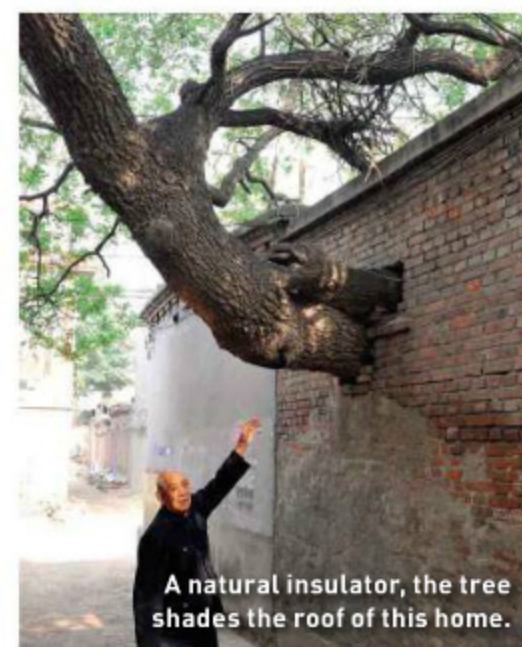
When Jia decided to extend his childhood home in 1974, the tree stood in the way. But rather than chop it down, he simply built around it.

Now the locust tree grows through the kitchen and out of a side wall.

'I grew up with the tree and have a strong connection with it,' says Jia.



Jia goes about his normal kitchen duties with the trunk as company.



A natural insulator, the tree shades the roof of this home.

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35 DIY problem solvers

Save time, money and space with these inspired ideas for the workshop, outdoors and around the house

Rack it up

This rack is a great way to drip-dry paintbrushes after washing. Just measure the thickness of your sink edge, notch a couple of timber offcuts and attach them to a cross support. Drive in screws to hang the brushes and set the rack in position.



In a scrape

When you're stripping furniture, use this easy method for getting all the goo off your putty knife. Make some cuts in the side of a cardboard box and just pull your knife through the slits. All the goo will drop off into the box. Stripping chemicals can be combustible, so make sure you let the goo dry thoroughly before disposing of it.

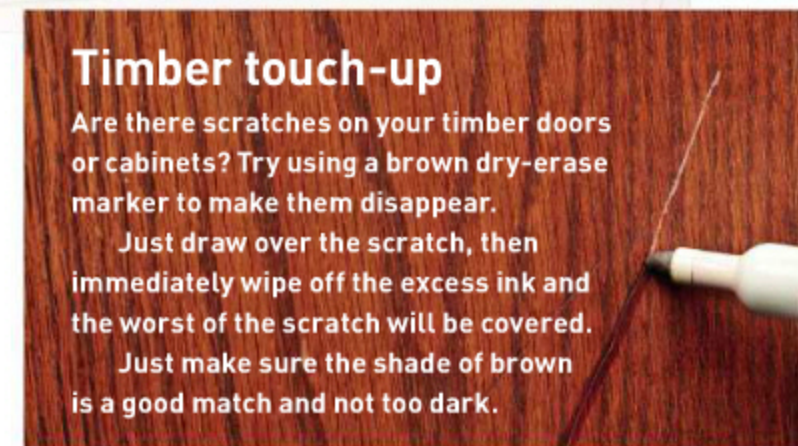


Timber touch-up

Are there scratches on your timber doors or cabinets? Try using a brown dry-erase marker to make them disappear.

Just draw over the scratch, then immediately wipe off the excess ink and the worst of the scratch will be covered.

Just make sure the shade of brown is a good match and not too dark.



It's a wrap

When painting around windows, you'd normally expect to have to remove the blinds before you start. But taking them down and putting them back up again can take longer than the actual job of painting.

Instead, wrap the blinds in plastic bags and paint around them. No drips, spray or spatter, and you simply throw the plastic away when you're done.



Painter's helpers



Bag it

If you're working on a paint job that uses many colours, you may find yourself constantly cleaning brushes and containers.

For less fuss, try putting the paint in ziplock bags. Then when it's time to change colours, all you'll have to do is change the bag in the paint bucket. If you then expel all the air from the bag and seal it tight, the paint should keep indefinitely.

Tape it

Here's a clever trick for painting corners where two different colours meet on adjoining walls.

Instead of taping right at the corner, apply the tape so that most of it is on one wall, but about 5mm overlaps onto the adjacent wall. This has a similar effect to adding a quirk when securing architraves.

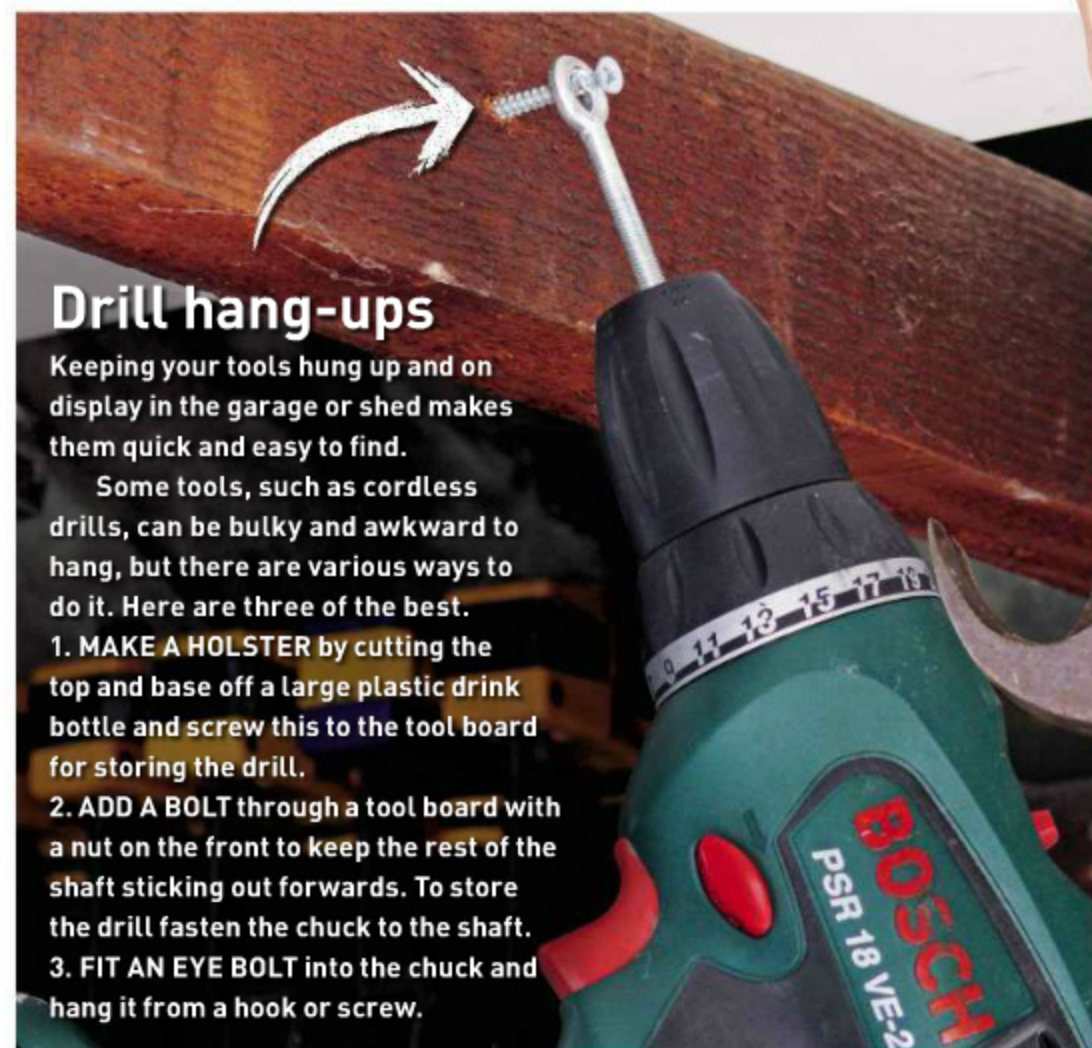
The technique works particularly well when you're butting darker and lighter colours together.

Zip it

This is another way to keep your paintbrush fresh while you take a break in the middle of painting.

Snip the base corner of a ziplock bag, then slide the brush in handle first, feeding it through the hole, and zip it closed. The brush won't dry out and the mess will stay inside the bag. ➤





Drill hang-ups

Keeping your tools hung up and on display in the garage or shed makes them quick and easy to find.

Some tools, such as cordless drills, can be bulky and awkward to hang, but there are various ways to do it. Here are three of the best.

1. **MAKE A HOLSTER** by cutting the top and base off a large plastic drink bottle and screw this to the tool board for storing the drill.
2. **ADD A BOLT** through a tool board with a nut on the front to keep the rest of the shaft sticking out forwards. To store the drill fasten the chuck to the shaft.
3. **FIT AN EYE BOLT** into the chuck and hang it from a hook or screw.



True grip

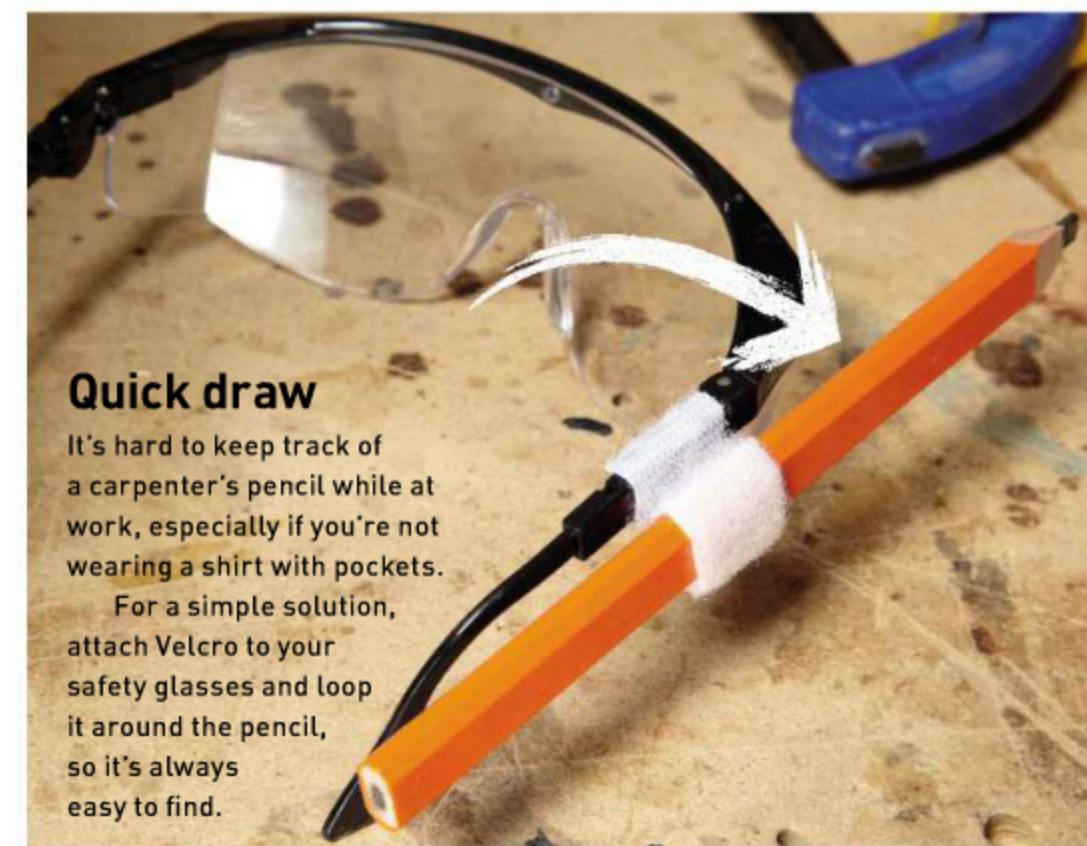
Over time the handles of well-used old tools start to deteriorate, making them more difficult to hold for long periods of time without chafing.

Bind the handles with silicone rubber wrap such as Tommy Tape. It uses no adhesive but fuses to itself to create a comfortable, padded and slip-proof grip that won't deteriorate.

Shock and awl

Removing a door should be as easy as extracting the hinge screws, but if the door is old it may be more difficult.

Use the tip of a pointed tool such as an awl to dig out any layers of old paint. If the screw still won't budge, tap the end of the screwdriver with a hammer.



Quick draw

It's hard to keep track of a carpenter's pencil while at work, especially if you're not wearing a shirt with pockets.

For a simple solution, attach Velcro to your safety glasses and loop it around the pencil, so it's always easy to find.



Handy bands

Old rubber gloves can still be useful even once they have become too worn or torn to use.

Chop them up with a pair of scissors, making a series of neat parallel cuts across the hand and finger sections and you will be left with a pile of different-sized, multipurpose rubber bands.

On a roll

Here's how to keep paper towel on hand in the workshop at all times. **SLIDE A ROLL** of paper towel over a quick-release clamp and attach it to a workbench, car bonnet or stepladder. You'll never need to wipe your hands on your pants again.

ATTACH A ROLL to the inside of a car boot with an octopus strap. The towel will be accessible without taking up space.



In the workshop

Tied up tight

Make wraps using lengths of bungee cord and synthetic wine corks. Drill two holes in the cork, thread the cord through the holes and tie off the ends.

You can make them as long or as short as you want. They're lightweight and work well for securing air hoses.



Colour coding

Use coloured vinyl tape on wrenches to identify their type. Wrap blue tape around the handle of metric wrenches and red tape around the imperial. Don't tape up the whole handle, just put a strip at one end to avoid covering up the size marking.



Squared away

Before cutting a length of timber you'll want to mark a square line to guide your saw. Did you know most timber saws are made with a built-in square?

Closer inspection of the handle will reveal 90° and 45° markings, which can be used to make precise cutting measurements.



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Herbs on hand

Do you like having fresh herbs at your fingertips? Keeping them on a benchtop takes up space and they may not get enough light.

Install a wire rack between the upper cabinets flanking your kitchen window. You can set your plants where they'll get plenty of light without blocking the view.

This also makes watering easy and keeps them available for snipping. Make sure to put the shelf high enough so you don't bump into it when at the sink.



On the shelf

To stop your spices from getting lost in the back of the cupboard, buy shelf supports and cut 90 x 19mm timber to match the existing shelves. Measure the tallest container, add 30mm for the shelf thickness plus clearance, then drill 5mm holes for the supports this distance below the next shelf or top of the cupboard. You'll never lose the paprika again.



Basket case

Free up valuable bench space by mounting a simple wire basket for fruit on the end of an upper cabinet near your kitchen sink. The fruits and vegies will ripen nicely and look beautiful too. Wire baskets work well because they allow light and air to circulate for even ripening, which also helps prevent produce from spoiling. Wire baskets are inexpensive to buy and easy to hang on hooks.



Around the house

Raise the bar

If you have shelves or cabinets above your washer or dryer, you've got the perfect spot to store clothes hangers. Just mount a towel bar to the base of the cabinets.

This puts hangers at your fingertips so you can hang up shirts and pants fresh from the dryer.



Lofty ideas

The space above a doorway is much overlooked in terms of storage, yet it's the perfect spot to install a shelf.

A shelf over the door is ideal for holding items such as files in the study, towels in the bathroom, or cookbooks in the kitchen.



Off the rails

Pullout towel rails are typically meant for kitchens, but they're also perfect for cramped bathrooms.

They keep damp hand towels and washcloths off the vanity so they can dry out of the way.

Pullout rails only cost a few dollars and are simple to install.



Tag it up

The little plastic tags used to close bread bags are handy for identifying a tangle of computer cables.

Just write the name of the device on the tag and slip it around the cable.

No more wondering which wire belongs to which device.



Charged up

Tired of rummaging through drawers and boxes trying to find the right cords and chargers for all your electronic gadgets?

Invest in a clear vinyl over-the-door shoe organiser and make labels for each pocket so that every item has its own home. Now you'll be able to find everything you need without getting frustrated.



Outside the box

If your bathroom is very small, try hanging a wide shadow box picture frame around the toilet roll holder.

It provides two convenient little shelves for small items when storage space is tight. Frames like these can be bought cheaply from hardware stores and then painted to match the colour scheme of the bathroom.



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Spray on target

To protect shrubs and flowers when using a weed killer such as Roundup, take the sprayer head off the spray wand, tape a funnel to the wand and then replace the sprayer head. The funnel directs the weed killer exactly where you want it to go and protects all the other vegetation from overspray.

Pull up posts

When removing fence posts sunk in concrete, use screws to secure an offcut of timber about 100mm from the ground. Use a landscape timber as your fulcrum, and a long spud bar as a lever. Stand on the bar, and the post and footing will usually slide out of the ground.



Arm extenders

To cut tree branches that are just out of reach, extend the range of your lopping shears and gain leverage with this easy trick.

Slip lengths of PVC pipe over the handles, tape them in position and you'll have shears that reach out much further for pruning.



In the garden

Rock dolly

Need to move stones, potted trees or bags of soil? Make your own sturdy garden dolly from a two-wheel hand trolley and plywood.

Make the box in any dimensions you want and then attach it to the trolley with U bolts. It can handle a lot of weight and is easily removed.

It's also low to the ground, so you can just roll stones and other heavy items right into it without having to lift anything.



Pole position

If you live in a rural area, your gutters should be checked at least twice a year to make sure they're free of leaves. But instead of hauling out the ladder each time, make your own DIY gutter inspection tool.

Tape a side mirror from an old car to an extension pole. This gives you a perfect view of the condition of the gutters without leaving the ground.



Shady shelf

Here's a beautiful idea for sprucing up the fork of a tree. Make yourself a plant shelf by measuring the gap and cutting a piece of shelving to fit. Cut a notch in each side of the board so that it hugs the tree and sits securely. Set the shelf gently inside the fork of your tree, position shade-loving plants on it and enjoy the blooms all season long.



A line in the sand

When you sow new seeds in spring, it's hard to remember exactly where they're planted before they sprout. That's a problem when putting in other seeds and plants and even for watering.

To make rows easy to find, sprinkle a little washed river sand over the seeds as you plant them. The seeds will sprout right through the sand, so you know exactly where to water.

The sand also helps keep the weeds down while providing good drainage.

Smart watering



Going to seed

When you need to water newly seeded patches throughout your lawn, it can be tough to remember where you've spread the seed.

Give yourself a visual reminder by topping the new grass seed with wood shavings. They will keep the newly seeded areas moist, the grass will grow right through them and you'll immediately see where you need to water.

On the rocks

If your sprinkler system heads are surrounded by landscape rocks they need to be protected to keep the rocks from interfering with the water output.

Cut PVC pipe into 150mm lengths and push it into the ground around the sprinkler heads so the pipe sticks up a little bit higher than the rocks.



Use your head

Sprinkler heads in a lawn often need replacing as it's easy to run over them when mowing.

To solve the problem, stick short lengths of PVC pipe around each head so they stick up about 25mm higher than the sprinkler heads.

Not only will the sprinkler heads remain intact, this will also help stop leaves and grass clippings from building up around them and causing blockages.



From dull to deluxe

Updating the facade could turn this home into a modern masterpiece

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERIE BARBER

This house's front yard is an eyesore. When viewed from the street, it has zero appeal.

The front yard is a mishmash of concrete, paving, turf, garden beds and brick and stone walls, and they're all at different levels.

The brick, weatherboard, tile and corrugated tin exterior looks messy and unplanned. The clashing mix of finishes and add-ons make the place look unkempt.

This house needs a makeover in order to restore some uniformity and give it a whole new look.

The challenge

All the stepped-down levels from the street to the house have to go.

In their place, we'll create a gently sloping front garden, which is much more in keeping with the neighbouring properties.

The competing surfaces of weatherboard and brick need to be unified, and the house could also do with a repaint in contemporary colours. Those faded pastel shades aren't doing it any favours.

Sleek timber screening gives the home a modern upgrade and adds much needed privacy.

This makeover illustrates why less really is more. A front facade doesn't have to win design awards to be a success. It just has to look neat and tidy, and not detract from the look of the streetscape. ➤

Get a free makeover ▼

Cherie Barber is the owner of Renovating For Profit, a company dedicated to teaching people how to add value through renovation.

She's also a public speaker and TV renovator on Network Ten's *The Living Room*.

Cherie is offering a free virtual makeover to *Handyman* readers in need of inspiration.

Send us a photo of an area in your home that needs work and we'll show you what can be done. Go to handyman.net.au/mag to enter.



After

Smart landscaping and a coat of render give the home a modern look.



Before

The mismatched exterior makes this house look awkward.

PICTURE THINKSTOCK

The six secrets of success

1 CLEAR THE YARD

The site needs to be cleared by removing all the concrete and low brick walls, from street level right down to the path that runs along the front of the house. We'll use an excavator to grade all the steps into one even slope, in preparation for a lawn to be planted.



Trojan 5.4kg Sledge Hammer, \$59. trojantools.com.au

2 RENDER THE WALLS

Transforming the drab brick exterior of the ground level with render will give the house a modern look that will appeal to potential buyers. Depending on the budget, the second storey could be painted as it is, or have the cladding removed, blueboard installed and tinted render applied to match downstairs.



Dunlop Multipurpose Acrylic Render, \$12 for 20kg. dunlopdry.com

3 INSTALL TIMBER SCREENS

The facade needs a unifying feature, and timber screening will be perfect for this. We'll use it on the windows as overhead awnings for added dimension to the house, as well as for the gates on either side and as a timber slat balustrade to enclose the front porch.



Hyne 1800 x 69 x 15mm Merbau Screening, \$5. hyne.com.au

4 PAINT THE HOUSE

Changing the colour of the house will make the biggest impact. Purple and white trim is a popular choice for exteriors, especially on a good-sized house like this where the colour has space to breathe. We'll use a Midnight Blue for the roof and new screens.



Dulux Weathershield Low Sheen, \$87 for 4L. dulux.com.au

5 LAY NEW PAVING

We'll dig up the dated old brick path and take the opportunity to make it a little bit wider. Using loose gravel or pebbles and a setting agent is a simple way to pave a large area and create a variety of different looks without spending a huge amount of time and money.



BPS River Pebbles, \$7 for 20kg. bpsaust.com

6 ADD GARDEN BEDS

An expanse of low-maintenance turf will replace the jumble of concrete and bricks. It's neat, simple and all you really need on a modest budget. Some border plants set in timber sleepers and a new letterbox are the finishing touches that complete the look.



Sir Walter Buffalo Turf, \$10 per sqm. sirwalter.com.au



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OVERHAUL AN OLD WINDOW

Take out a rusting aluminium sash and replace it with a brand new wind-out timber frame

PROJECT FRANK GARDNER MAIN PICTURE STUART SCOTT

This aluminium window set in double brickwork had corroded over time with exposure to salty air. The surface was pitted and eaten away in parts and the double hung sash was no longer functional.

As part of a new look, the old 1800 x 2000mm floor-to-ceiling combination window was replaced with a smaller 1800 x 1200mm high wind-out awning timber window.

An 800mm gap below the window was filled with two 1800 x 800mm stud frames built from 90 x 45mm T2 Blue pine to guard against termites.

Blueboard was used to clad the outside of the new stud wall.

Insulation was fitted into the cavity and plasterboard attached using stud adhesive and clouts.

The new timber, blueboard and plasterboard were sealed and finished

to protect them from the weather and blend in with the existing decor.

All the frames were sanded using 240 grit paper and stained in Sikkens HLS Light Oak, then finished with two coats of Sikkens Supernatural Top Coat.

Two coats of Dulux Weathershield were applied to the blueboard.

The new plasterboard was sealed before undercoating and painting with two coats of acrylic wall paint. ➤

Build a stud wall

To replace a full-length window with a smaller one, build a stud wall to close the space in between the floor or wall and the base of the frame, using 300mm wide flashing to seal the gap.



1 MEASURE THE OPENING and cut the top plates, base plates and studs to length. Assemble an outside and inside frame, securing each joint with a pair of nails.



2 CUT THE FLASHING to length from the roll, turning up 100mm at the ends. Position it across the cavity leaving enough to turn up at the back of the stud wall before the plasterboard is installed.



3 POSITION THE FRAMES and drill two 5mm holes 100mm from the top and base through the studs into the brick joints. Push plastic spaghetti into the holes and secure with nails.



Warm timber frames with matching fittings breathe new life into a once neglected part of the house.

Overhaul an old window



1 Remove the old window

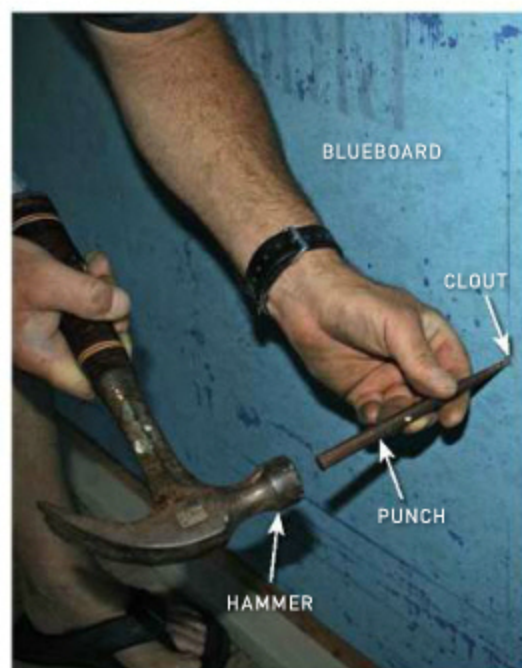
Remove the sash then drill out the rivets at the centre mullion. Tap the mullion sideways then pull out the rubber seals to remove the glass. Cut through the rails with a hacksaw and pull inwards, prising the stiles from the brickwork.

2 Position the frame

Roll flashing across both stud wall top plates, turning it up at the ends. Lift the frame into position on top of the flashing and use a spirit level to set it plumb. Insert timber wedges between the stiles and brickwork to hold the window frame in position.

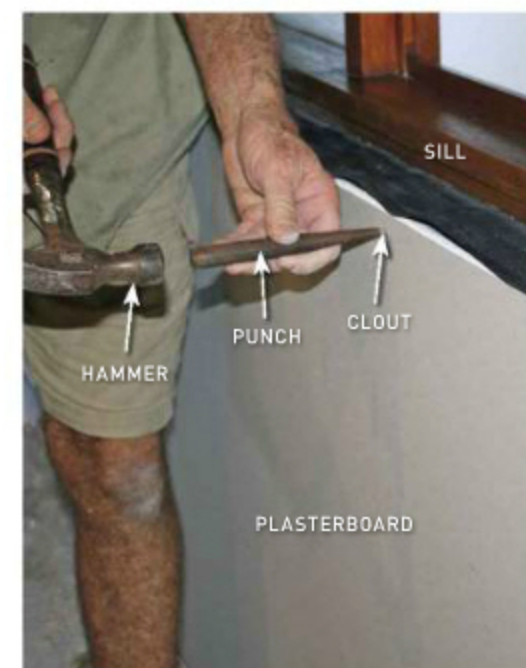
3 Secure the window

Measure 150mm from the top and base, drill 5mm clearance holes through the stiles into the brickwork and push in plastic spaghetti, securing the window with two nails through each stile. Punch the nail heads and fill them with timber filler.



4 Clad the outside

Measure the stud wall and mark on a sheet of blueboard. Use fibro cutters to trim the sheet to size, tidying up rough edges with a file. Secure the panel with galvanised clouts to the wall studs. Punch the clout heads and cover with two-part epoxy.



5 Clad the inside stud

Fit insulation inside the framework. Measure and cut the plasterboard to size, apply stud adhesive to the frame edges and position the plasterboard, securing with screws or clouts. Set the plasterboard joints with paper tape and three coats of compound.

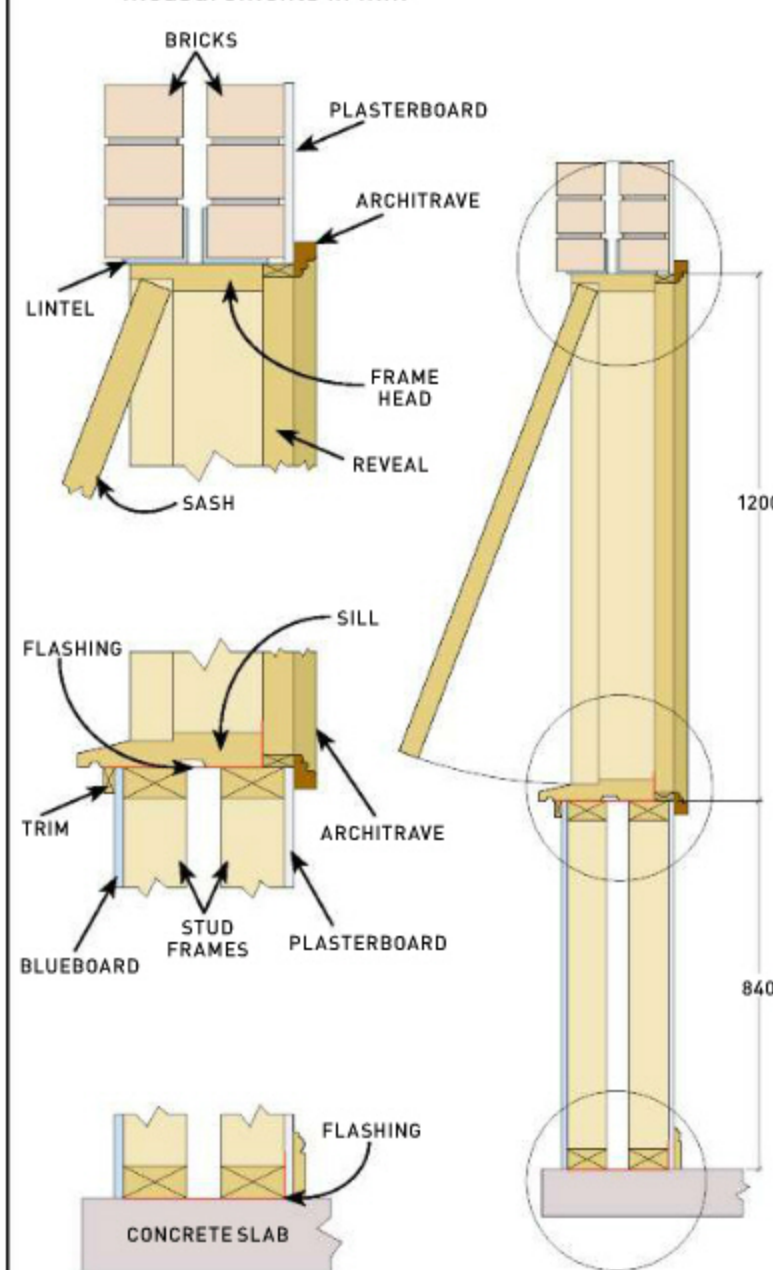


6 Add the winder

Secure the winder to the sill with screws, aligning the back with the edge of the rebate, and the chain in line with the centre of the sash. Open the sash, wind out the chain and secure the chain cleat to the frame with screws.

Timber window

measurements in mm



FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Galvanised bullethead nails, 75 x 3.75mm	Stud frames
Galvanised bullethead nails, 100 x 3.75mm	Stud frames and window to wall
Galvanised clouts, 25 x 2.8mm	Blueboard
Plasterboard screws, 30mm x 6g	Plasterboard

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INSTALL A SLIDING SASH

Replace an old double-awning style window with a sleek timber alternative to show off new shutters

PROJECT JOHN BOWLER

This old window was in urgent need of an upgrade, as its double-awning style sashes opened into a side passage, creating a hazard for passers-by.

The windows were replaced with cedar frames that fitted into the existing framework. These can be ordered from a supplier such as Trend Windows (trendwindows.com.au).

On the inside, the old architraves were removed and reveals installed to accommodate timber shutters.

The shutters were purchased as part of an interior reno from More Than Curtains, a designer specialising in window coverings (morethancurtains.com.au).

One window sash was secured to the frame, while the other was mounted on sliding door carriages allowing it to slide open and shut.

Nylon sliding door carriages from Cowdroy run on a bearing and are

suitable for timber windows. Each pair can bear up to 28kg.

Grooves were cut along the base and top edges of the sash using a router and circular saw, to house the sliding door tracks. The top and base tracks are available from Cowdroy in either bronze or aluminium.

For this upgrade, both the upper and lower tracks were cut to a length of 1750mm using a hacksaw.

The frames were glazed DIY using silicone and beading to mount two 756 x 484 x 4mm panes for the sliding sash and 722 x 484 x 4mm for the fixed sash, supplied by a local glazier.

A Lane Profile Mini Bolt was fitted to the frame for added security.

To finish, the shutters were fitted with magnetic catches and cabinet knobs, then new architraves were secured around the reveals.

TIP When handling glass, use non-slip gloves and wear eye protection. ➤



Cowdroy Nylon Sliding Door Carriage, about \$14.
cowdroy.com.au



Lane Grey Profile Mini Bolt, \$22.
itwproline.com.au

Install the window



1 Remove the architrave
Drive a 25mm chisel between the architrave and window frame then gently lever the architrave away, taking care not to damage the plaster. Remove all nails and sand back the edge of the frame. Fill any holes in the plaster and sand smooth when dry.



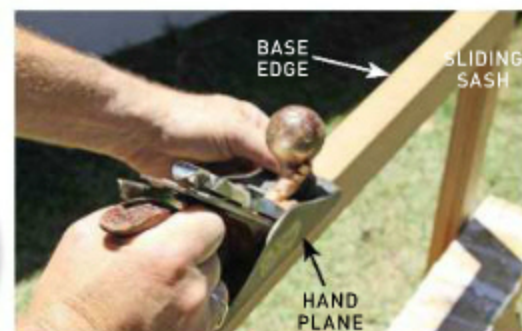
2 Attach the reveal
Cut 31 x 31mm timber reveals to fit around the interior of the window frame using a mitresaw. Secure with nails at 250mm centres through the reveal into the back edge of the frame. Punch the nail heads, fill holes and sand with 180 grit paper.



3 Remove the sashes
Remove all hardware then unscrew the hinges while a helper holds each sash. Remove the sashes then use an oscillating tool to cut along the baseline of the rebate on each side of the mullion. Fill any defects with two-part filler and sand smooth.



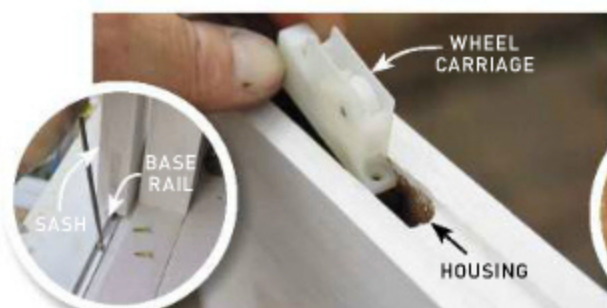
4 Secure the fixed sash
Use a hand plane to adjust the sash size so it fits tightly inside the frame opening. Apply a coat of paint to seal all timber surfaces, then replace the sash in the opening and secure with galvanised screws through the base of each rebate.



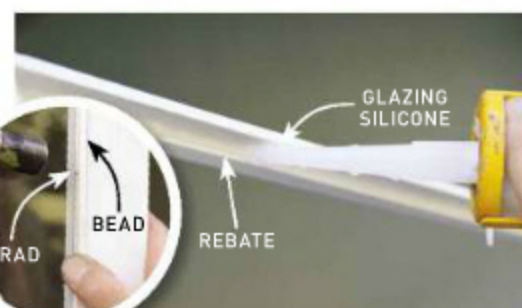
5 Plane the sliding sash
Plane a slight bevel on the base edge of the sliding sash to match the splay on the sill. Reduce the height of the sash by planing the top edge to create a 12mm gap at the top. This gap will enable the sash frame to clear the top and base tracks.



6 Prepare the grooves
Use a circular saw to cut a 20mm deep groove along the centre of the top edge of the sash. Use a router with a 10mm straight cutter to machine a 5mm deep groove along the base and also cut a 25mm deep housing for the wheel carriages at each end.



7 Fit the sliding sash
Secure the wheel carriages then position the track on the sill and add the sash. Use screws to attach the track, allowing a 4mm gap around the rebate. Adjust each carriage to align the sash, then fit the top track in the groove and secure with screws.



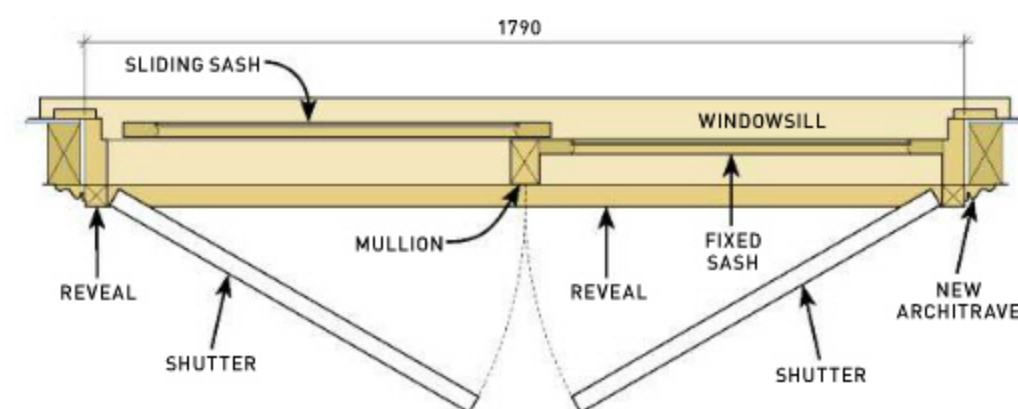
8 Glaze the windows
Seal the timber with undercoat, leave to dry then apply glazing silicone to the back of the rebates. Position the glass in the base rebate first then push it in at the top to ensure a seal. Cut timber beading to fit around the face of the glass and secure with brads.



9 Attach the shutters
Stand each shutter on two coins and mark the hinge positions. Remove the pins to separate the hinges then drill pilot holes and secure the leaves to the shutters and reveals. Lift the shutter into position and replace the pins then fit the lock and handles.

Sliding sash window

measurements in mm

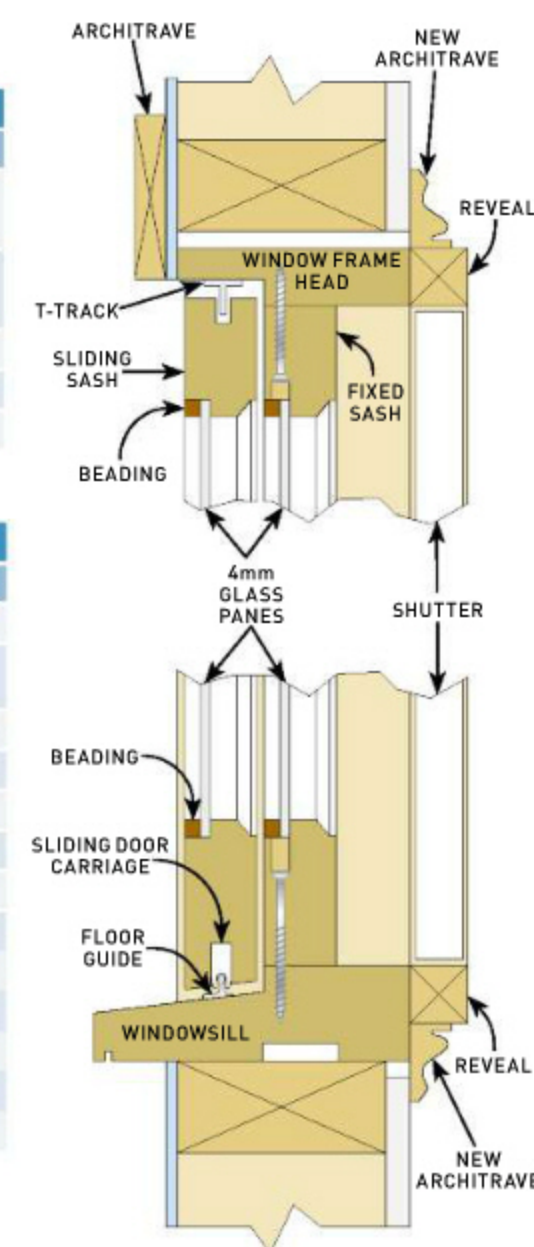


FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Bullethead nails, 75 x 2mm	Reveal
Bullethead nails, 50 x 1.6mm	Architrave
Brads, 15 x 1.5mm	Beading
Screws, 20mm x 6g	Track
Screws, 65mm x 8g	Fixed sash

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
Maple DAR		
Top/base reveal	1728 x 31 x 31mm	2
Side reveals	1170 x 31 x 31mm	2
Maple moulding		
Architraves	1872 x 40 x 19mm	2
	2172 x 40 x 19mm	2
Cedar sashes		
Sliding	1110 x 875 mm	1
Fixed	1093 x 841 mm	1
Cedar DAR		
Beading	486 x 6 x 6mm	8
	725 x 6 x 6mm	4
	759 x 6 x 6mm	4



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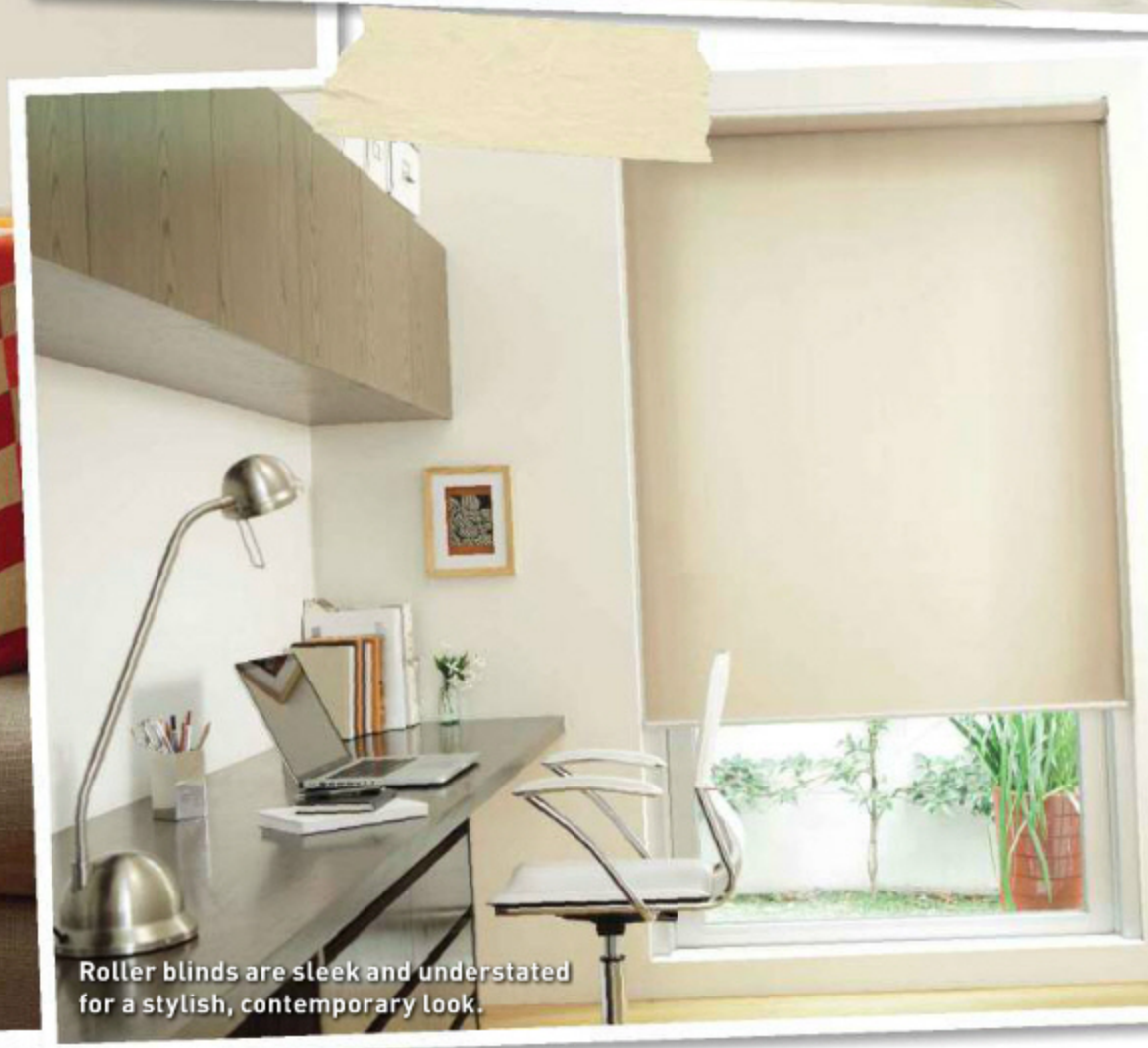
Update your living spaces with a new look for the windows, choosing a blind that complements your style



Roman blinds modernise a living space and give total block-out from light.



Venetian blinds are ideal for filtering light through large kitchen windows.



Roller blinds are sleek and understated for a stylish, contemporary look.

From controlling light and privacy to heat retention and deflection, there's a window blind style for every space and budget.

ROLLER BLINDS are inexpensive to buy, and simple to install and maintain. They suit modern living and provide excellent sunshading.

Choose a colour close to the wall shade for a disappearing effect.

VENETIAN BLINDS are a popular choice for filtering out glare while still allowing some light through.

Available in various materials and colours, they add classic charm to a room and suit any environment.

ROMAN BLINDS are often made from block-out fabric to stop the light getting in entirely.

These blinds combine the softening appeal of curtains with practicality and effortless operation.

LAUNDRY MAKEOVER

An awkward and under-utilised room gets a spotless refit on a DIY budget

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH PROJECT SCOTT HUNT

The laundry is usually the most neglected room in the house, often last on the renovation list and the one with the smallest budget.

Yet despite its unglamorous nature, the laundry will see enough use to warrant a well-planned renovation to make it more functional.

The laundry of this 1950s home had seen better days. Detached from the house, it served as a dumping ground for junk and felt more like a shed.

With no proper storage, the room was in chaos. An affordable cabinet system from the Flatpax Utility range (flatpax.com.au) was installed to keep things tidy and accessible.

Flatpax Utility cabinets come with the cabinet, doors, hinges and relevant assembly hardware in the one box. All that needs to be added is a benchtop.

The deep cupboards provide plenty of storage for household supplies while concealing unsightly items. A new laundry chute means the hamper can go, reducing clutter in the room.

A clever new feature is the drying cupboard installed above the cabinets. It allows clothes to be dried indoors without taking up floorspace and looks neat and tidy when not in use. ➤



Reno budget	
Ceiling paint	\$45
Wall paint	\$54
Joint compound	\$12
Tiles	\$86
Tile adhesive	\$45
Grout	\$9
Cabinets	\$701
Benchtop	\$255
TOTAL	\$1,207

Update the surfaces

The walls and ceiling hadn't been painted in at least a decade, so the room looked tired and grubby, and was filled with cobwebs.

Mouldings covered plasterboard joints and there was an unsightly patch of bare wall where a cupboard had once been removed.

To revamp the walls, the mouldings were taken away and the gaps between the panels were filled with joint compound then sanded.

A blue-grey shade of low-sheen interior paint was chosen for the walls, along with white for the ceiling, to give the new laundry a clean, fresh look.

The stark concrete floor slab was heavily stained, and seemed more suited to a warehouse than a laundry.

Large-format floor tiles were laid directly on top of the slab from front to back and left to right. This technique allows any cut tiles to be hidden by the cabinets and makes the end result look much neater.

Large tiles are a cost-effective and attractive option to install DIY. Not only do they make a room look bigger and more streamlined, they are far less fiddly and time consuming to lay than smaller tiles.



The laundry has become a haven of clean lines and cabinetry.

Lay the floor tiles ▼

Calculate how many tiles you need by measuring the length and width of the floor and adding 5% extra for wastage. When laying tiles square to walls, lay full tiles first then cut tiles. Dry fit the tiles before laying them to check positioning.



- 1 APPLY TILE ADHESIVE to the floor in sections with a notched trowel. Press the tile into the adhesive with a twisting motion, position spacers and level the tile.
- 2 APPLY THE GROUT after leaving the tiles to dry for at least 24 hours. Mix grout in a bucket to a runny consistency and spread over tiles using a sponge squeegee, forcing it into the joints.
- 3 LET THE GROUT SET for 15 minutes then wipe the tiles twice with a damp sponge and leave to dry. Clean them with a sponge and solution of warm water and white vinegar.

Get the look

Lay large-format floor tiles to make a small laundry room feel bigger, and update the walls and ceiling with paint. Install modular flat-pack cabinetry for storage and add a modern laminate benchtop.



Kaboodle Almond Brittle Benchtop, 2250 x 600mm, \$255. kaboodle.com.au



Dulux Ceiling White Paint, \$45 for 4L. dulux.com.au



Taubmans Easy Coat Low Sheen Paint, \$54 for 4L. taubmans.com.au



Flatpax 450mm Laundry Chute, \$171. flatpax.com.au

Online inspiration

Visit handyman.net.au/mag to see other inspiring laundry transformations and ideas to incorporate into your renovation. See how Kate gave her dark, dated laundry a modern makeover and find out how to conceal a laundry in a cupboard.



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DOWELLING JIG



POCKET HOLE JIG

*JOINING FORCES

'When working with timber, using adhesive with mechanical fasteners, such as screws and nails, creates the strongest joints,' says Handyman Technical subeditor Gun Arvidsson.

The problem is that the heads of the screws or nails then have to be hidden with filler or timber plugs.

'An easy solution is to use dowels, biscuits or pocket hole screws, allowing the fastener to be completely enclosed by the workpieces,' says Gun.

COVER YOUR TRACKS

Screws and nails are typically used to join workpieces that are already aligned, and this is true of pocket hole joinery as well.

Dowels and biscuits, on the other hand, must have precisely matching holes made for them in both items being joined.

DOWELLING JIGS are used to guide a 6, 8 or 10mm diameter brad-point bit when drilling holes for dowels, which are glued into position.

BISCUIT JOINERS are power tools similar to small angle grinders that have a fence mounted on a sliding carriage. The biscuit joiner cuts

slots for small ovals of pressed beech that are used with adhesive in a similar way to dowels.

POCKET HOLE JIGS hold timber with an integrated clamp and align a specialised bit at 15° to drill the holes. The timber is then secured using pocket hole screws. ➤



*DOWELLING JOINTS

Dowels are probably the simplest form of concealed fasteners, requiring a minimum of specialised hardware and the lowest outlay.

To make a dowel joint, all you need is a drill and brad-point bit, the dowels themselves, and a set of dowel centres to accurately transfer the hole positions so the workpieces will match up correctly.

A dowelling jig makes it easier to drill perpendicular holes, and can also be used instead of dowel centres to align corresponding pairs of holes.

Depth collars or simple rubber grommets are also useful for

ensuring the holes don't end up being too deep or too shallow.

A great way to get started with dowelling is to buy a kit that includes all the accessories you need, including dowels, dowel centres, a jig, drill bits and even PVA adhesive.



*DEPTH COLLAR

For optimum joint strength, it's important for the dowels to be embedded to an equal depth in both pieces of timber, but in some cases the dowel must sit more deeply in one piece than in the other.

For maximum accuracy, use a depth collar that is secured to the drill bit using a grub screw.

TIP You can also wrap masking tape around the bit to show the depth.

*DOWELS

Dowels are short lengths of round, profiled timber, secured into matching holes using adhesive.

The grooves or fluting along the length of the dowels allow air and excess adhesive to escape.

This prevents the timber from splitting and the joints being forced apart by compressed adhesive after the clamps are removed.



*DOWEL CENTRES

The simplest and most reliable way to mark perfectly matching holes in the second workpiece is to put dowel centres in the first set of holes.

Align the timber with the joining piece then tap it with a mallet so the dowel centres will make small indentations at the centrepoin of the corresponding dowel holes.

*DOWELLING BIT

Also called a brad-point bit, this has a sharp central point that stops it from moving off the marked hole location.

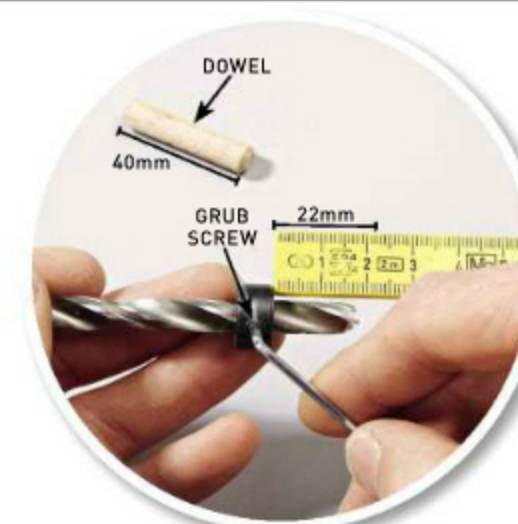
The side spurs cut a very smooth hole with a relatively flat base, while the spiral fluting has a stepped profile to minimise binding.

*SET THE DEPTH COLLAR

To drill holes to the correct depth, measure the length of the dowel.

For a standard equal-depth dowel joint, the hole should be half the length of the dowel plus 2mm to allow space for excess adhesive, so a 40 x 10mm dowel will need a 22mm deep hole.

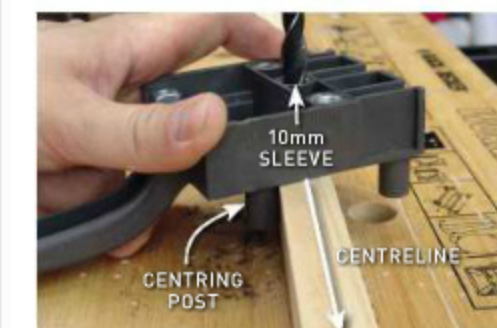
Slide the collar onto the bit then tighten the grub screw to hold it.



*DRILL INTO THE EDGE

Even simple dowelling jigs are typically self-centring when being used to drill holes into a board edge.

Lock the edge of a board or panel between opposite posts to centre it for 10mm dowels, and between the side posts for 6 or 8mm dowels.



*MARK UP THE JOINTS

With the workpieces end to end, square lines across both at the hole positions, then continue the lines down the edge that will be dowelled into the face of the other piece.

Set a marking gauge to half the thickness of the workpiece and use it to scribe the edge of one piece and the face of the other, crossing the hole position lines.

USING A DOWELLING JIG

As well as helping you drill perfectly perpendicular holes with ease, a dowelling jig is a versatile tool that can be used to precisely align dowel holes when making corner joints or T-joints between panels or boards.



For both corner joints and T-joints, set the dial to the thickness of the timber. The colour code shows which diameter of dowel is best to use.

Before drilling the face holes for T-joints, reset the thickness selector dial to the maximum position.

Drill for corner joints by clamping the two panels together with their edges flush, then clamp the jig onto the boards or panels at the dowel location.

Use the guide sleeves in the main face and the clamp arm to drill corresponding dowel holes.

For T-joints, secure dowels in the edge of the first board. Reset the dial and slot the jig over one of the dowels.

Adjust the boards so that the centreline for the dowel holes is aligned with the diameter mark on the side of the jig then drill each hole. ➤



*BISCUIT JOINERS

The heart of a biscuit joiner is basically a small angle grinder. But instead of being compatible with various cutting discs and grinding wheels, it is fitted with

a blade that has tungsten-tipped teeth similar to a circular saw blade.

In place of the semicircular shroud of an angle grinder, the biscuit joiner has a permanently mounted sliding carriage. On the front is an adjustable fence for aligning the biscuit slot.

The fence can be set to the optimal height to suit the thickness of the

timber being joined. It can also be tilted so the biscuit slots are cut at an angle for making mitred joints.

There are three settings for how deep the blade plunges into the timber when cutting the slots, corresponding to the three standard biscuit sizes.

TIP Always unplug the biscuit joiner when making adjustments.

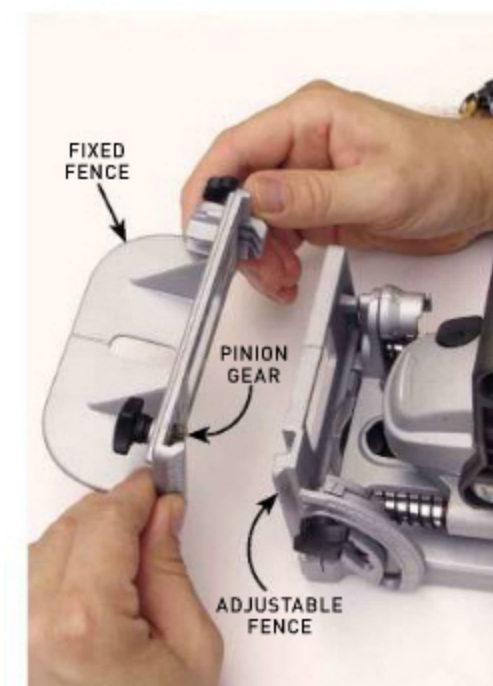
*MAKE ANGLED CUTS

If your biscuit joiner has a fixed fence permanently set to 90°, as here, unlock the height adjustment system and remove the fence by turning the height adjustment knob until the pinion gear disengages.

Unlock the angle adjustment system then tilt the fence to the

required angle and tighten the knob or lever to lock it in position. Use a protractor to double-check the angle then set the desired biscuit height and cut the slots.

TIP Some biscuit joiners are set at a fixed height that cannot be adjusted further when making angled cuts.

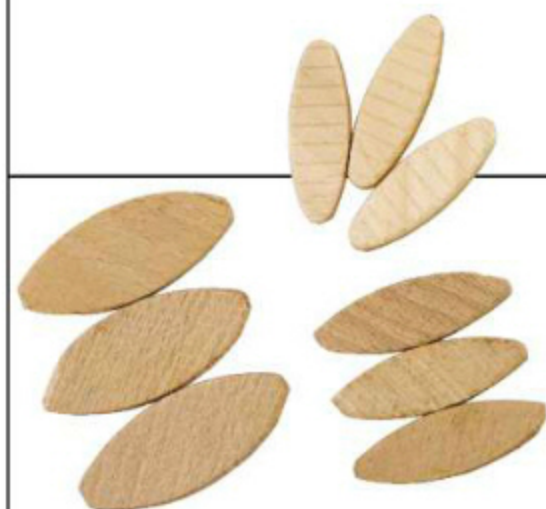


*REPLACE THE BLADE

Use a screwdriver to remove the machine screws holding the base plate then open the base.

Press the spindle lock button on the back of the tool, turning the blade by hand until it locks in position, then use the supplied pin wrench to unscrew the blade flange.

Replace the blade, wind the blade flange back on, then reattach the base plate.

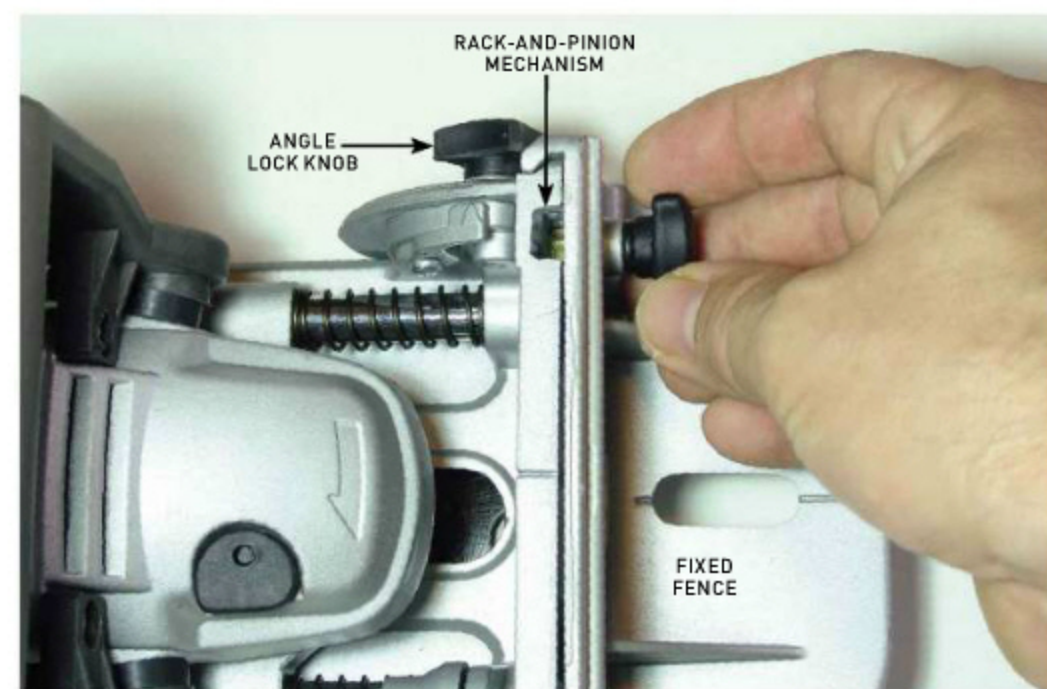


*CHOOSING BISCUITS

Biscuits are 4mm thick ovals of pressed beech, normally available in 16, 20 and 25mm widths, described as size 0, 10 or 20 respectively.

They swell as they absorb the moisture of the adhesive, making them fit tightly in the slot for an extremely strong joint.

TIP When joining thicker boards, use pairs of biscuits layered one above the other, about one-third of the board thickness from either face.



*ADJUST THE FENCE HEIGHT

Turn the knob or quick-release lever to unlock the fence then rotate the height adjustment dial to raise or lower the fence relative to the blade.

Some biscuit joiners do not have a rack-and-pinion system for height adjustment, and the fence is simply pushed up or down by hand.

MAKING BISCUIT JOINTS

Biscuit joiners cut slots in the edge of a board or on a mitred end. They are fast, efficient and accurate, making it easy to get professional results. **TIP** Biscuit joiners can also make plunge cuts into larger timber surfaces.



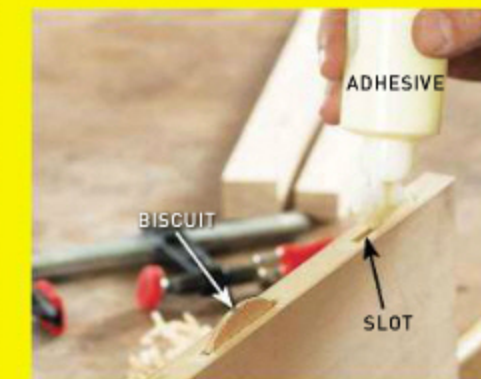
Butt the edges of the workpieces against one another then square a centreline for each biscuit slot across both pieces of timber.

Adjust the height of the fence so that the blade is centred at exactly half the thickness of the timber.



Position the fence against the edge of the workpiece, aligning the centre mark of the joiner with the slot position mark.

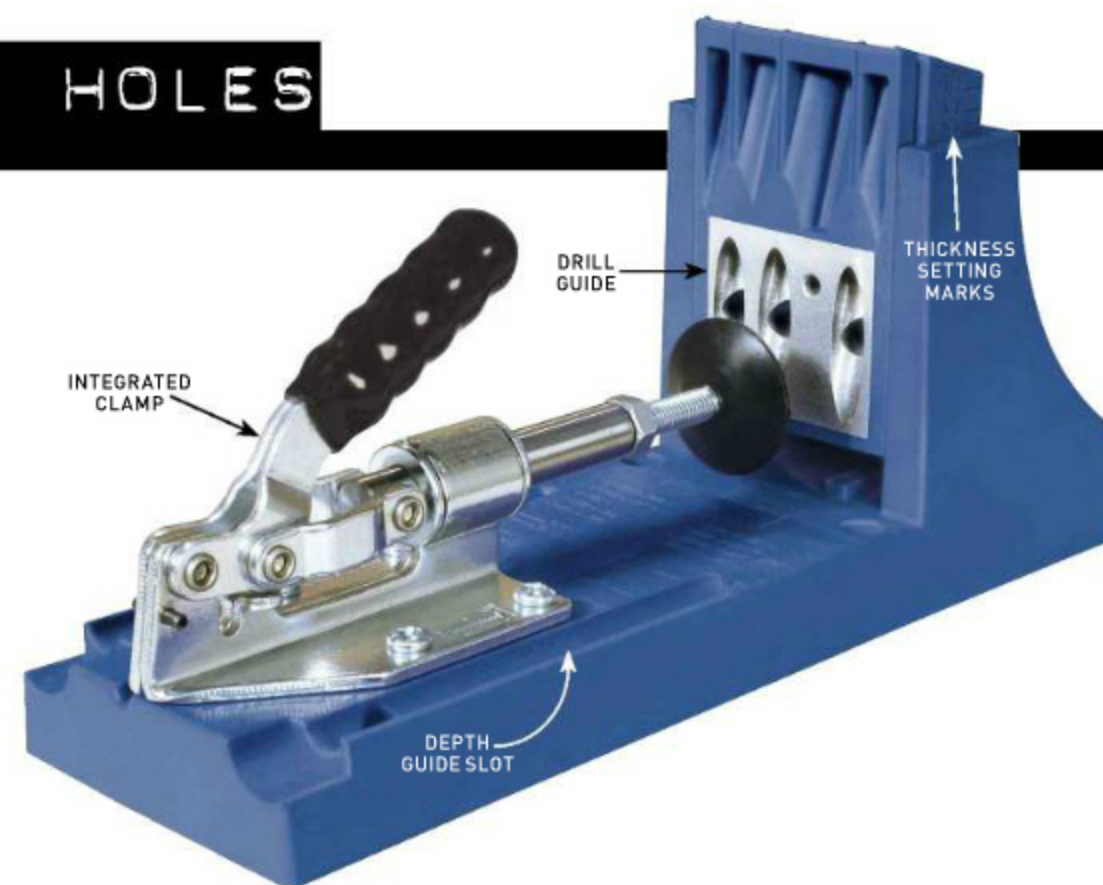
Switch on the biscuit joiner and let it spool up to full speed, then push it forward to plunge the blade into the timber and cut the slot.



Apply a small amount of adhesive into each slot, onto the biscuits and the joining faces of the timber.

Position the biscuits in the slots of one workpiece, align the second piece then use clamps to tightly close the joint and leave to dry. ➤

POCKET HOLES



*POCKET HOLE JOINTS

Mortise and tenon, dowel and biscuit joinery all require accurate alignment of the mating workpieces for the joint to be successful.

Joinery involving mortises and tenons or dovetailed edges can also require considerable skill and be very time-consuming.

Pocket hole joinery is a much quicker and easier way to join timber, even edge-to-edge, without compromising on accuracy.

The joints are made using a specialised jig with a stepped drill bit to bore holes at a 15° angle into the first piece of timber. This is then

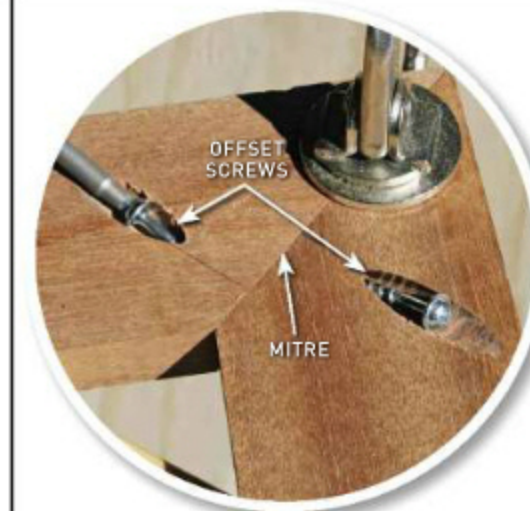
joined to the second workpiece using self-tapping square-drive screws.

Unlike dowels and biscuits, once the joint is aligned and clamped, you only have to drill a single hole into one side. The screws then pull the joint closed like internal clamps, so adhesive is usually not required.

*MAKE 90° CORNERS

Pocket holes are great for joining timber at 90° when securing rails to legs, building bookshelves, cabinet frames, face frames or even adding an apron or skirt to a table.

If the tabletop is secured to the apron, enlarge the clearance part of the holes then back the screws out slightly so the top can move with temperature and humidity changes.



*MITRED CORNERS

Use pocket holes to pull a mitre joint together for a picture frame or even a mitred face frame.

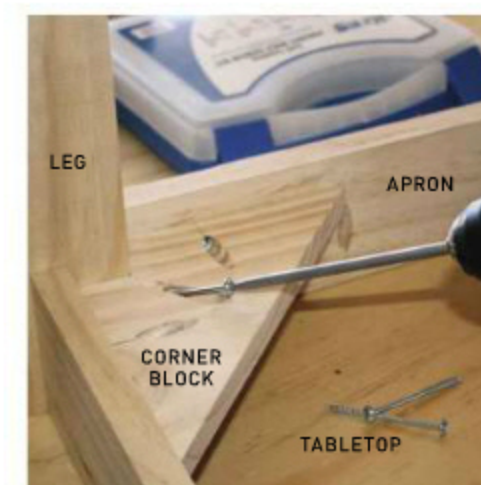
Use timber at least 75mm wide and drill a pair of offset holes on either side of the joint line.

Hold the mitre tight and flush using a face clamp while the holes are drilled and the screws driven.

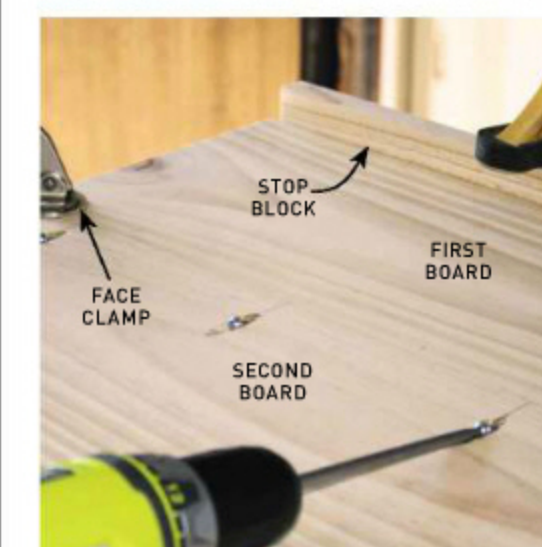
*REINFORCEMENT AND REPAIR

Instead of pulling apart, cleaning then re-gluing the joints of an old piece of furniture, just drill a pocket hole and drive in a screw to secure a loose leg or rail joint on an old chair that has become wobbly.

Table legs can also be reinforced with a corner block cut to fit then secured with a pocket hole screw into each side of the apron or skirt as well as one into the table leg.



*JOIN EDGE TO EDGE



Edge-laminating timber boards can be a slow process, necessitating the purchase of long sash clamps.

An easier way to edge-join boards is with pocket holes drilled into the underside of the boards at 150 to 200mm centres.

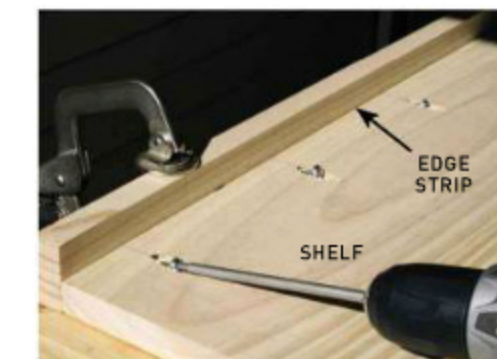
Simply set up a stop block on the workbench to hold the first board in position then drill the second and subsequent boards, holding them flush with extra-large face clamps before securing them with screws.

TIP This is one application where the use of adhesive is recommended. ➤

*EDGE BANDING

Securing a strip of timber to hide the exposed edge of a plywood shelf is quick and easy with pocket holes.

Drill pocket holes 150 to 200mm apart along the underside of the shelf, hold the edging in position using a right-angled clamp then secure it with pocket hole screws.



DRILLING POCKET HOLES

The integrated hardware of a pocket hole jig includes a guide slot to set drilling depth, a drill guide for perfect 15° angles, and even an integrated clamp. Once you've had a bit of practice, it takes less than one minute to set up.



Measure the thickness of the timber to be drilled then position the drill bit in the guide slot of the jig, aligning the stepped edge with the thickness indication mark. Slide the depth collar onto the bit until it reaches the jig then tighten the grub screw.



Loosen the brass nut holding the drill guide then slide the guide up or down to set it at the marked height for the thickness of the workpiece and lock it in position. Align each pocket hole centre with the jig's centring mark then clamp the timber in position.



Use the stepped bit to drill combined clearance and pilot holes, pulling it out to regularly remove the waste, until the depth collar connects with the edge of the sleeve. Unclamp the timber and move it to the remaining pocket hole marks to drill the holes.

BUYING GUIDE

The concealed fastening system you choose depends on what kind of joinery you do. For general projects, dowels are an economical option, biscuits are great for edge-joining, and pocket hole jigs are excellent all-rounders.

LIGHT DUTY

DOWELLING JIGS



Great value for its versatility, this simple jig self-centres for drilling into edges, and can be used for edge-to-edge, corner and T-joints.

Haron H4500 Dowelling Jig, about \$20. haron.com.au

MEDIUM DUTY



Specifically designed to make corner joints a breeze, this clamps onto a pair of workpieces to guide both the face and edge holes in one go.

Haron H6500 Concealed Corner Joiner, about \$50.

HEAVY DUTY



This professional tool features a thickness adjustment dial and integrated clamp, letting you make corner and T-joints in just seconds.

Haron H794 Deluxe Auto Dowelling Jig, \$99.

BISCUIT JOINERS



A powerful entry-level model with a 1010W motor, this is designed for simplicity and ease of use without compromising on accuracy.

Ozito 1010W Biscuit Joiner, \$89. ozito.com.au



With both a fixed and adjustable fence, this tool has a maximum plunge depth of 18.5mm and an angle cutting range from 0° to 90°.

Ryobi 600W Biscuit Joiner, \$119. ryobi.com.au



A rack-and-pinion height setting system ensures fine adjustment, while quick-release levers make locking the fence fast and easy.

Makita 701W Biscuit Plate Joiner, \$249. makita.com.au

POCKET HOLES



The Kreg Screw Kit features 675 screws in assorted finishes, \$48, while Kreg pocket hole plugs cover the screw heads, \$16 for 50, both from Carba-Tec. carbatec.com.au



With a throat depth of 82mm, the Kreg Automaxx 3in Face Klamp, \$42 from Carba-Tec, features non-slip grips and oversized pivot pads. It's also available with 150mm and 250mm reach.



The Kreg K4 Pocket Hole Jig, \$140 from Carba-Tec, has a removable drill guide for benchtop and mobile use. This jig can be set incrementally for materials up to 38mm thick.

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Establish a rock pool

Add a natural looking water feature to the garden in just a weekend using a preformed pond shell

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

A landscape of any size can benefit from a water feature, whether it's a fountain in a courtyard or a garden pond.

Water brings a tranquil element to a yard, with its soothing sounds and the beauty of light reflecting on the surface. It also provides an environment for growing a wide range of interesting plants.

The sound of running water is also useful to help mask the hum of traffic from a busy road or other urban noise.

A pond deeper than 300mm may need to be fenced off, so check the regulations in your state.

Pick the site

There are many options for adding a water feature but the simplest way to install a pond is to buy a preformed shell off the shelf, then add a cascade or waterspout and a pump.

Choose a spot in the garden that gets direct sunlight for about half of the day in the warmer months.

Ensure at least one side has easy access for maintenance and that you can reach all areas of garden around the pond once it's installed.

Dig a hole for the shell, calling 1100 or visiting 1100.com.au first to check for underground utilities.

Add the filter and pump then drop the hose into the pond and start filling. As the water rises, add any extras like stepping stones and plants around the pond before mulching all exposed soil. ➤

Creating a pond

The equipment for this pond all came from Aquapro (aquatecequipment.com).

To install a pond DIY, measure the location to buy a preformed, rock-look fibreglass shell of the right dimensions for the site.

Choose a pump to suit the size of the pond and cascade then buy flexible, non-kink piping, a pump and a sponge-block filter.



Large Rock Look Pond, 300L, \$377.



Rock Look Twin Cascade, \$100.



Anti-Kink 3m x 20mm Tubing, \$18.



Black Pump Filter Sponge, 300 x 120 x 120mm, \$13.



Pond And Fountain 90W Pump Kit, \$148.



Before

AFTER
A rock pool with cascade turns an empty garden corner into a natural water feature.

GARDEN DESIGN ADAM WOODHAMS/TODAY'S GARDEN

Install the pond



1 Mark the site

Position the preformed pond shell and mark the outline on the ground using set-out paint. Also mark what will be the front of the pond in a spot that won't be seen once it's installed to make it easy to reposition it later. Remove the pond shell.



2 Dig the hole

Excavate the hole for the pond to the required depth, shaping the hole to roughly suit the form of the fibreglass shell. Pile the soil evenly around the outside of the hole as you dig, so it's on hand for backfilling once the shell is installed.



3 Install the shell

Position the preformed pond shell in the excavated hole then check for level using a spirit level. Lay the spirit level across the top edge of the pond to check for level from side to side, back to front and also diagonally across.



4 Backfill the hole

Backfill around the pond using small amounts of soil, packing it in as you go, to a finished level 30mm lower than the pond rim to prevent runoff entering the water during heavy rain. **TIP** Take care not to shovel soil into the pond or disturb it from level.



5 Add the cascade

Make a mound of soil and firm it down. Position the cascade and adjust the height then check for level. Backfill the soil underneath the cascade and plant into it or use sandstone splits to support it. Add pebbles to the base of the pond.



6 Install the pump

Position the pump and connect it to the cascade. Remove the pump cage and filter, run tubing to the opposite end then attach the sponge-block filter. Secure hoses with pipe clamps. **TIP** The filter is positioned opposite the cascade for even water circulation.

Add pond plants

Pond plants can be divided into two main groups of aquatic and marginal.

Aquatics such as waterlilies need to have their roots well below the water surface, while marginals live in shallow water or on the pond edges.

For this project, two familiar garden plants were used to give the pond a lush look instantly.

Instead of aquatic plants, *Colocasia* 'Black Magic', a type of elephant ear, was potted up and put in the water, and canna lilies planted pond-side.

You can use regular potting mix and a terracotta pot. Just repeatedly water the plant before putting it in the pond until the water coming from the drainage holes runs clear.

Cover the potting mix with pebbles to stop it floating away then position the pot in the pond.

TIP Fish are a fantastic pond addition as they eat mosquito larvae but to attract frogs avoid goldfish or koi and instead select smaller native species.

Using pebbles

To give aquatic plants a place to take root, add a layer of pebbles at least 30mm deep to the base of a preformed pond shell.

The pebbles also allow the pond to develop a more natural microflora and microfauna ecosystem and over time work as a natural biofilter, helping to keep the water clear and healthy.

Use washed river pebbles and rinse well before adding them to the pond, or using them to contain the potting mix in potted plants.



PICTURE (RIGHT) THINKSTOCK



Pond-side greenery and a potted plant give the rock pool an established look.

Waterlilies ▼



A well-balanced pond can become a wonderful habitat zone for wildlife.

Aquatic plants such as waterlilies help to keep water healthy and add a natural look to any pond.

They need a position that gets at least half a day of sun in order to flower and, as they are a true aquatic plant, waterlilies require a minimum of 300mm of water above their roots.

STEPPING STONES

Improve access to the house with a budget-friendly path you can lay in a day using pavers

Garden paths are often functional concrete surfaces that are laid to protect the lawn from heavy foot traffic, and to direct visitors to an entrance point.

A stepping stone path doubles as a landscape feature and is both affordable and easy to lay DIY, as it can be installed in straight or curved lines with ease in just a weekend.

Stepping stones can be made from a variety of materials, including timber, concrete, clay and stone.

They are a simple solution to provide access in areas that are constantly wet or muddy underfoot, or in a lawn showing signs of wear.

For this project, the original white crushed gravel pathway was removed. The ground was then prepared using a plate compactor to create a solid foundation for the pavers.

A stepping stone path with crushed rock surround was installed across the front and down one side of the house. Large format concrete pavers from the Adbri masonry range were used to form the path.

These 400 x 400 x 40mm concrete pavers are available to buy through Bunnings special orders. They are available in a variety of colours and have a non-slip surface.

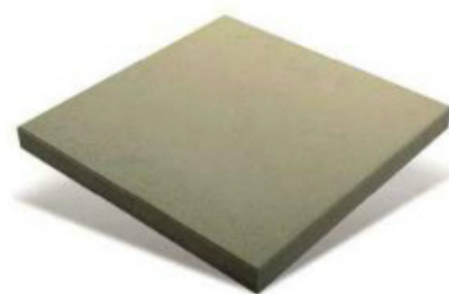
The pavers can be used as individual stepping stones or butted together to create a paved surface area for courtyards, patios or paths.

Lay the pavers

Prepare the foundations for the pathway then lay the pavers on a 40mm thick mortar base mixture of wet sand and cement.

Position the pavers to a set stringline to ensure that the rows of stepping stones are perfectly aligned.

On this job, 50 pavers were laid with a double row across the front and a single row branching into three rows down one side of the property. **TIP** Plate compactors can be hired for about \$45 for half a day. ➤



Adbri Euro Classic 400 x 400 x 40mm Pavers, \$52 a square metre.
adbrimasonry.com.au

Setting the stride width

Lay a few pavers spaced about 100 to 200mm apart then walk across to check stride spacing. Each step should land in the centre of each paver.

If necessary, adjust the distance between the pavers to suit your stride.

Aim for an average distance between pavers and avoid spacing them too far apart as it could make walking uncomfortable.

Measure the distance from centre to centre to establish stride width.



Upgrade a side passage by replacing a gravel path with stepping stone pavers.

⑦ Lay the pavers



1 Mark the paver spacing

Walk along the centre of the pathway and, with each step, have a helper mark the centre of each footprint with paint to establish the optimum paver spacing.

TIP The stride of an average adult is 500 to 600mm from centre to centre.



2 Set a laying line

Stretch a taut stringline for each row of pavers along the laying line across the front. Set the stringline at a height of 80mm above ground level, securing with pegs at both ends. Repeat down the side, setting a perpendicular line to the front pavers.



3 Mix the mortar

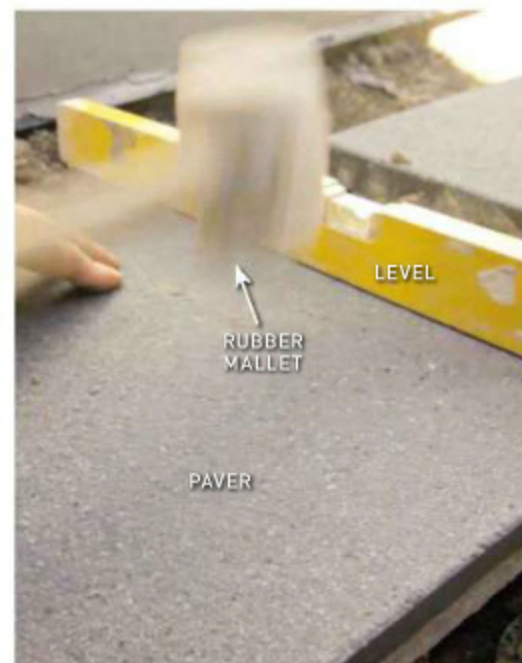
Combine four parts fine beach sand with one part cement, adding water and a few drops of a plasticiser such as Bycol. Mix the mortar to a creamy consistency. Use a bricklaying trowel to spread a 400 x 400 x 40mm bed of mortar at each paver location.



4 Bed the pavers

Hold the paver on both sides and lift into position, aligning the top edge of the pavers with the set stringline. Use a tape to check the measurement between the pavers is uniform.

TIP Use a house brick as a spacer to set a gap of 110mm.



5 Level the pavers

Gently twist each paver, applying downward pressure until the top of the paver is level with the stringline height. Position a 600mm spirit level across the top of the paver in both directions and tap it down with a rubber mallet until it's level.



6 Spread the crushed rock

Allow the mortar to cure for 24 hours then barrow in crushed rock or pebbles. Use a rake and square-nosed shovel to spread the rock, tamping with the back of the rake for a finished height 10mm below the top of the pavers.

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THIS MONTH

Autumn is almost over, so it's time to prepare for the winter garden



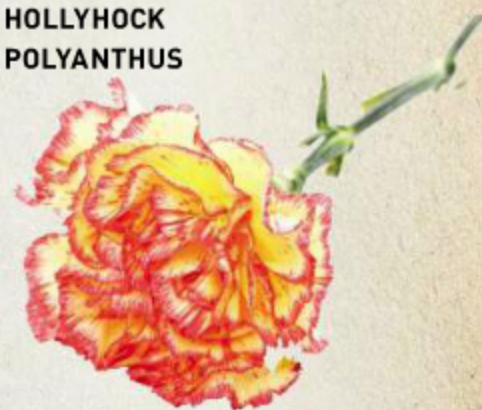
Do now

- **GET** the garden ready for winter with these essential outdoor jobs, from page 111.
- **PLANT** silverbeet for homegrown greens to use in winter recipes, see page 118.
- **ADD** a citrus tree to the yard for fresh fruit and fragrant flowers, on page 122.

Sow now

To enjoy colour from early winter, plant seeds of these flowers now.

- **CARNATION**
- **FOXGLOVE**
- **GYPSOPHILA**
- **HOLLYHOCK**
- **POLYANTHUS**



Grow now

For fresh food in weeks, get these vegies and greens in the ground.

- **BROAD BEANS**
- **LETTUCE**
- **ONION**
- **RADISH**
- **SPINACH**



Harvest now

Pick these fruits straight off the vine or tree to eat fresh or cooked.

- **APPLE**
- **FIG**
- **GRAPE**
- **NECTARINE**
- **PEAR**



PICTURES THINKSTOCK



Make leaf mould

To make a nutrient-rich mulch and soil improver, collect the fallen leaves of deciduous trees like ash and maple in a garbage bag.

Soak the lot with a hose then tie off the top. Punch a few holes in the bag to let in the rain, and some drainage holes in the base, then put the bag in a shady area.

Leaves can take two years to rot down into the dark brown crumbly

material called leaf mould, which is used as mulch for garden beds and a topdressing for lawns.

Leaf mould can also be dug into beds before planting to add organic matter or combined with equal parts washed sand, loam and compost to make potting mix.

Top pick

Nothing brightens the winter garden like pansies in pots, borders and beds. For a vibrant colour injection, sow seedlings of 'Vivid Orange' now and enjoy large bright blooms in just eight weeks. Part of the Natural Beauty range from Floriana (floriana.com.au) 'Vivid Orange' has a free-flowering nature, big blooms and a compact uniform habit, growing to about 250mm high.



PANSY 'VIVID ORANGE'

Autumn checklist

The May garden shows the colour of turning leaves and still-green grass, with lots of leafy plants in the vegie patch and bright flowers in the landscape. Keep plants happy and healthy by feeding them and tidying up before the cold sets in.

■ **ADD** winter and spring edibles and bloomers to garden beds and pots.

■ **PROTECT** tender fruit trees and container plants from frost.

■ **TIDY UP** indoor plants and treat them for any pests or diseases.

■ **POT UP** pansies and violas for cold-season colour outdoors.

■ **PLANT** late-flowering spring bulbs in the ground or pots.

■ **RAKE** and compost fallen leaves.

■ **MULCH** garden beds to keep the soil warm or cool, depending on the climate zone.

■ **ADD** a backyard pond or water feature before winter sets in.

■ **ORDER** roses to plant bare-rooted in either June or July.

■ **PREPARE** garden beds for new perennials and annuals. ➤



PICTURES THINKSTOCK

Replicotta pots

Terracotta pots look rustic and charming, especially when planted with herbs and seasonal blooms, but the big sizes can be heavy and they need watering more frequently than plastic containers.

Get the look of terracotta indoors or out without the weight using Replicotta, a range of pots from Master Distributors that look just like the real thing (masterdistributors.com.au).

Made from polypropylene, they have a rugged texture instead of a smooth plastic finish.

The pots cost from \$3 to \$25, and the saucers from \$2 to \$10 each, and are available exclusively from Bunnings.



Dividing lemon balm

Every three to four years, lift and divide vigorous clump-forming perennial herbs to control and rejuvenate their growth. Do this to herbs such as fennel, tarragon and lemon balm early in autumn or wait until spring.



1 LIFT THE PLANT by cutting back the old top growth close to the ground, then ease out the clump by inserting a garden fork all around the outside and levering upwards.



2 CUT THE CLUMP into small pieces with a spade, shake off loose soil and discard any dead or woody parts. **TIP** You can split a big clump in the ground then fork up the pieces.



3 PLANT THE PIECES in fresh soil using only the young outer parts. Firm down the soil by hand and water in well. Mulch to protect from harsh winter weather and water regularly.

Prune now

Tidy up perennials, get rid of any dead wood and cut back vines.

- **REMOVE** dead wood and lightly prune fruit trees.
- **DEADHEAD** flowering perennials such as agapanthus.
- **SNIP** chives as the leaves brown and start to die down.
- **CUT** back herbaceous climbers to ground level.
- **TAKE** hardwood cuttings to use for propagation.



Feed now

Lots of plants need a feed before winter dormancy or a boost if they crop or flower in the cold season.

- **LIQUID** feed leafy vegies like broccoli, cabbage and spinach.
- **GIVE** avocado trees a dose of citrus food in tropical areas.
- **APPLY** a seaweed fertiliser to ferns before they go dormant.
- **FERTILISE** the lawn to help it get through winter.
- **ADD** fertiliser to new planting holes when preparing beds.



PICTURES (RIGHT TOP, BOTTOM) BETTY IMAGES

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Preparing for winter

A little planning and maintenance in the garden now goes a long way during the cool months

WORDS ADAM WOODHAMS



At this time of year most gardens are on the cusp of going into their winter dormancy, or are at least having a well-earned slow down.

Now is the time to get outdoors and make things neat and tidy. Many of the simple tasks done in autumn prepare the yard for winter and set it up for a cracker of a spring.

There is really only one rule of thumb when it comes to the garden at this time of year. If a plant flowers in winter or early spring don't prune, transplant or divide it in autumn. The exception to this, of course, is roses.

Know the season

We think of spring as planting time but autumn is also the season to plant and transplant many species.

Before winter sets in, bulbs need to go in the ground, as do edibles and bare-rooted roses and trees.

Many perennials can also be lifted, divided and replanted.

Autumn is a good time for this as the soil is still warm, temperatures and evaporation are generally low and the days are still long enough for plants to develop new roots to see them through winter.

TIP Species planted in autumn take off twice as fast when spring arrives.

Choosing cool bloomers

If there's one group of shrubs that shine in the cooler months, it's camellias. The three main types are sasanqua, japonica and reticulata, and they flower from as early as late summer right through to spring.



SASANQUAS are the best known and first to bloom. They flower from late summer until about June and have the smallest leaves and blooms.



JAPONICAS are the next to bloom, bearing fancy flowers from May to September. With their glossy foliage they are a winter standout.



RETICULATAS have the largest leaves with individual blooms that can be as big as a saucer, and generally flower in late winter.

Pamper the lawn

Give the lawn TLC now to help it build resilience to the harsher conditions of winter and keep the grass looking better for longer.

Putting in a little effort in autumn will also provide the lawn with enough energy to keep in reserve for its spring surge of growth.

FEED the grass with a slow-release lawn fertiliser specially formulated for autumn and winter.

APPLY a hose-on soil stimulant to the lawn such as Seasol to increase biological activity in the soil.

TREAT the lawn for weeds, looking out for bindii and wintergrass. Remove by hand if possible, otherwise apply a selective lawn weeder.

If you have a buffalo type of grass such as Sir Walter or Palmetto, ensure you use a selective herbicide that is safe for the species.

RAKE the lawn to keep it free from fallen leaves, as even the slightest reduction in sunlight can reduce the ability of grass to photosynthesise at this time of year.

MOW with the catcher if your lawn is prone to staying damp in the cooler months, as a build-up of organic matter in wintry conditions can lead to fungal problems. ➤



Apply a selective lawn weeder to remove bindii and wintergrass.

Fertilise for winter ▼

Give plants a gentle feed to see them through the harsh winter months, to stimulate soil microbial activity and to allow plants to store away energy reserves for the coming spring.

At this time of year the new generation of biofertilisers and pelletised or powdered organic derived fertilisers are the best option, supplemented with an application of a seaweed tonic.

WATER the garden well before application or apply after an autumn rain shower.

SPREAD away from the trunk. The highest concentration of feeder roots is generally around and outside the drip-line of the canopy.

TIP Water in dry products well to reduce the risk of scorching.

Seasol Soil Revitaliser Concentrate, about \$10 for 1L. seasol.com.au





Plant and move

The right plants to get in the ground now include shrubs, both winter and spring flowering annuals, and edibles. But the varieties can vary dramatically with region so always check with your local garden centre.

Here are a few simple guidelines to follow to ensure success when planting or transplanting in autumn. **DIG** the planting hole double the size and slightly deeper than the rootball.

Ensure the soil on the sides isn't smooth and compressed. If it is, open it up with a fork or the roots will take much longer to colonise outside the planting hole.

WATER well before and after planting with a fertiliser that encourages root development or a seaweed tonic such as Seasol.

This helps reduce transplant shock and speeds up establishment.

BLEND compost or soil improver into the planting hole, making sure the material suits the needs of the plant.

POSITION the plant so it's no deeper in the hole than the top of the soil from its pot and gently backfill.

Firm down the soil around the side of the rootball but don't overly compress it then mound a 50mm high watering dam in a circle about 150mm out from the trunk.

FEED by spreading a slow-release product such as Scotts Osmocote on the surface, or apply a gentle organic fertiliser like blood and bone, before watering in. Don't put fertiliser in the planting hole as this can lead to root burn.

MULCH well once planted, keeping it clear of the stems.



Osmocote Total All Purpose Fertiliser, about \$8 for 500g. scottsaustralia.com.au

Bulbs for spring ▼

The end of autumn is the last chance to plant bulbs for a spring show. For seasonal blooms that also make great cut flowers, popular varieties to get in the ground now include jonquil, daffodil, freesia, tulip, ranunculus and anemone.



1 CLEAR THE BED and use a garden fork to turn over the soil. Add some well rotted organic matter such as manure or compost. Use a good quality, slow-release fertiliser for flowering bulbs then rake the soil to a level finish.



2 LAY OUT THE BULBS on the soil of the bed to check the heights and spacings. On single-faced beds remember to keep the tallest flowers to the rear and on beds which can be viewed from multiple sides, position the highest growers in the centre.



1 DIG THE HOLES for planting using a trowel and position the bulbs at the correct depth with the tips facing up, then backfill. Water in well and add an organic mulch like lucerne hay. **TIP** Planting depth varies with the species, so check the packet.



What to plant



TREES & SHRUBS

- Azalea
- Camellia
- Citrus
- Natives
- Bare-rooted or bagged roses, fruit and deciduous trees

ANNUALS

- Penstemon
- Poppy
- Pansy and viola
- Lupin
- Calendula
- Marigold
- Chrysanthemum

VEGIES

- Winter lettuce
- Cabbage
- Kale
- Broad beans
- English spinach
- Onion and shallot
- Radish

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Mulch for health

The simplest, most effective and sustainable thing you can do in your garden is to mulch.

Whether you use an organically derived mulch like leaf litter or an inorganic mulch such as pebbles, the benefits gained are huge.

Mulch helps soil retain moisture, buffers it from temperature drops and suppresses weeds. At this time of year your mulch is likely to need a top-up.

The best time to mulch is after feeding, especially with organic matter as the mulch suppresses its odour.

Calculate the amount of mulch required by multiplying the square metres to cover. One cubic metre of mulch covers 20 square metres when spread 50mm deep, which is the recommended thickness.

The cheapest way to buy mulch is to order it in bulk from a landscape supplier and have it delivered.

If you don't need a whole load, share the cost with a neighbour and you'll both save. For smaller areas you can buy mulch by the bag from a garden centre.

WATER the soil well or apply mulch after rain, spreading any fertilisers first. If extra weed suppression is required, lay weedmat or old newspaper to five sheets thick.

SPREAD mulch to 50mm thick, keeping it clear of trunks as contact can allow fungus or rot to develop in the trunk or stem.

TIP Cover all exposed soil then water in the mulch well.

Fiskars Large Nyglass Garden Rake With Aluminium Handle, \$29. au.fiskars.com



Prune and train

To keep plants under control or to a desired form, you need to prune. But the type of pruning you do in autumn depends on the climate zone.

In a frost-prone area don't prune anything that will reshoot quickly, as new growth may be damaged by frost.

And if a plant is going to flower in winter or spring, apart from roses, pruning now will be at the expense of the flowering display for this year.

Specimen plants and hedges can be heavily pruned or lightly clipped. Each tip that is cut off will send out at least two new side-shoots, improving the density of the foliage of those plants grown for screening.

On many shrubs the tips include the remaining stems of last season's flowerheads, so cut them off to encourage new buds. With roses this may induce a late autumn flush of flowers, depending on the climate.

Cut off any damaged or diseased material from hedges, tip-pruning to remove the affected leaves, then rake up and dispose of the clippings.

Climbers throw out sprawling shoots over summer. Prune these back to encourage bushiness, then tie or train the remainder back.

As many climbers flower on new growth tips, this pruning also ensures a full flush of flowers next season.

TIP Don't prune either ornamental or fruiting grapes until June and give roses an annual winter prune in July.



+ Get more online
Visit handyman.net.au/mag for more on The Winter Backyard.

Hedges and shrubs like an autumn prune and tidy after flowering.

Divide and multiply ▼

While transplanting in autumn take the opportunity to lift and divide summer flowering plants. One clump of plants with fleshy storage roots like iris, agapanthus or canna can give you enough new plants from old for an entire border.



1 LIFT THE PLANT by using a sharp spade to dig around and raise the biggest ball you can. Locate a point that will allow you to cut or break off a section with a strong point of leaf growth and good root mass.

TIP The plants to be lifted should be watered well the day before.



2 SPLIT THE CROWN or the rhizome into suitably sized pieces using a sharp spade, secateurs or garden knife. Each divided section will need to have a reasonable amount of foliage and clump of roots and or rhizomes attached. Discard any obviously dead bits from the divided plants.



3 TRIM THE FOLIAGE back by up to half and reduce the root size to encourage new leaves, as well as minimise division and transplant shock by reducing moisture lost through transpiration. Replant or pot up the divided plant in fresh mix then water in gently with a seaweed tonic.

PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

PICTURE (MAIN) THINKSTOCK



Maintain the blades of secateurs and hedge shears with an Eze Lap Diamond Fine Stone Sharpener, \$20. ezelap.com.au

Three essential tools



Fiskars 330mm Fixed Blade Garden Saw, \$33. au.fiskars.com



Hortex 200mm Lightweight Bypass Pruner, about \$13, from Bunnings.



Ozito 520W Electric Hedge Trimmer, \$45. ozito.com.au

Leafy winter greens

Boost your health by sowing spinach and silverbeet for a homegrown harvest in just 10 weeks

WORDS ARTEMIS GOUROS

T rue or English spinach, *Spinacia oleracea*, is a fast cropper that is mostly grown in cool or cold regions. In warm areas it tends to bolt to seed so is grown as a winter crop.

Silverbeet, or Swiss chard, actually belongs to the beetroot family and its botanical name is *Beta vulgaris cicla*.

It's often mistaken for spinach but has thicker stalks and larger, darker, coarser, more crinkly leaves.

Silverbeet also has a longer cropping period than spinach and

does better in warm areas. Rainbow silverbeet, or rainbow chard, is a coloured variety with striking red, pink, orange and yellow stalks.

Raise spinach

Spinach likes a position in full to part sun in well-drained soil enriched with well-rotted compost or manure.

Cool soil temperatures are needed for successful germination, so soak seeds in cold water overnight before planting to speed up the process.

Sow seeds thinly to 12mm deep in rows 300mm apart. For a constant supply, sow seeds every three to six weeks, depending on the variety.

Water spinach regularly so that the plants don't dry out, and apply a liquid fertiliser every two weeks to encourage fast growth.

Pick young outer leaves for salads or harvest from 10 weeks by cutting off the head or pulling the whole plant.

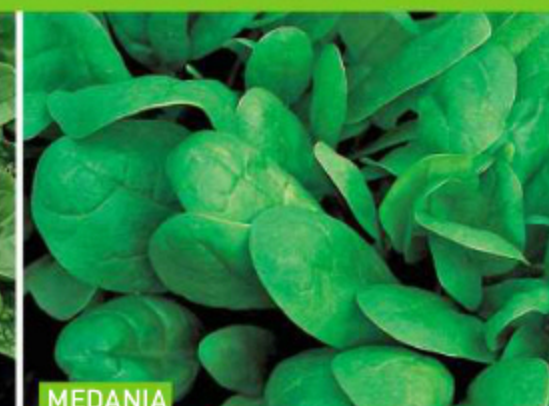
TIP Pale green, limp leaves indicate the soil is low in nitrogen. ➤

Choose a spinach variety ▼



BLOOMSDALE

- Large, crinkled, rich green leaves
- Compact growing habit
- Heirloom variety



MEDANIA

- Thick, rounded, dark green leaves
- Sweet and earthy flavour
- Reliable cropper



VIKING

- Tasty dark green leaves
- Grows best in a shady spot
- Slow to bolt to seed

Colour up the vegetable patch with the bright stems of rainbow chard.

PICTURE GETTY IMAGES



Silverbeet is a low-maintenance veggie that is ready to pick in weeks.

Grow silverbeet

Silverbeet can be grown any time of year in a frost-free location but it does not like hot, dry conditions.

SOW seeds thinly to 12mm deep in rows spaced 300mm apart, thinning to one plant every 400mm.

WATER silverbeet plants regularly, especially in dry weather.

MULCH to help retain soil moisture and keep plants weed-free.

Spreading a layer of lucerne hay will also prevent the leaves getting gritty from soil splash.

FEED with a seaweed liquid fertiliser every two weeks to encourage fast growth. If plants are slow to grow they can taste bitter.

HARVEST the outside leaves when the plant has at least six leaves, cutting or twisting them off from the base.

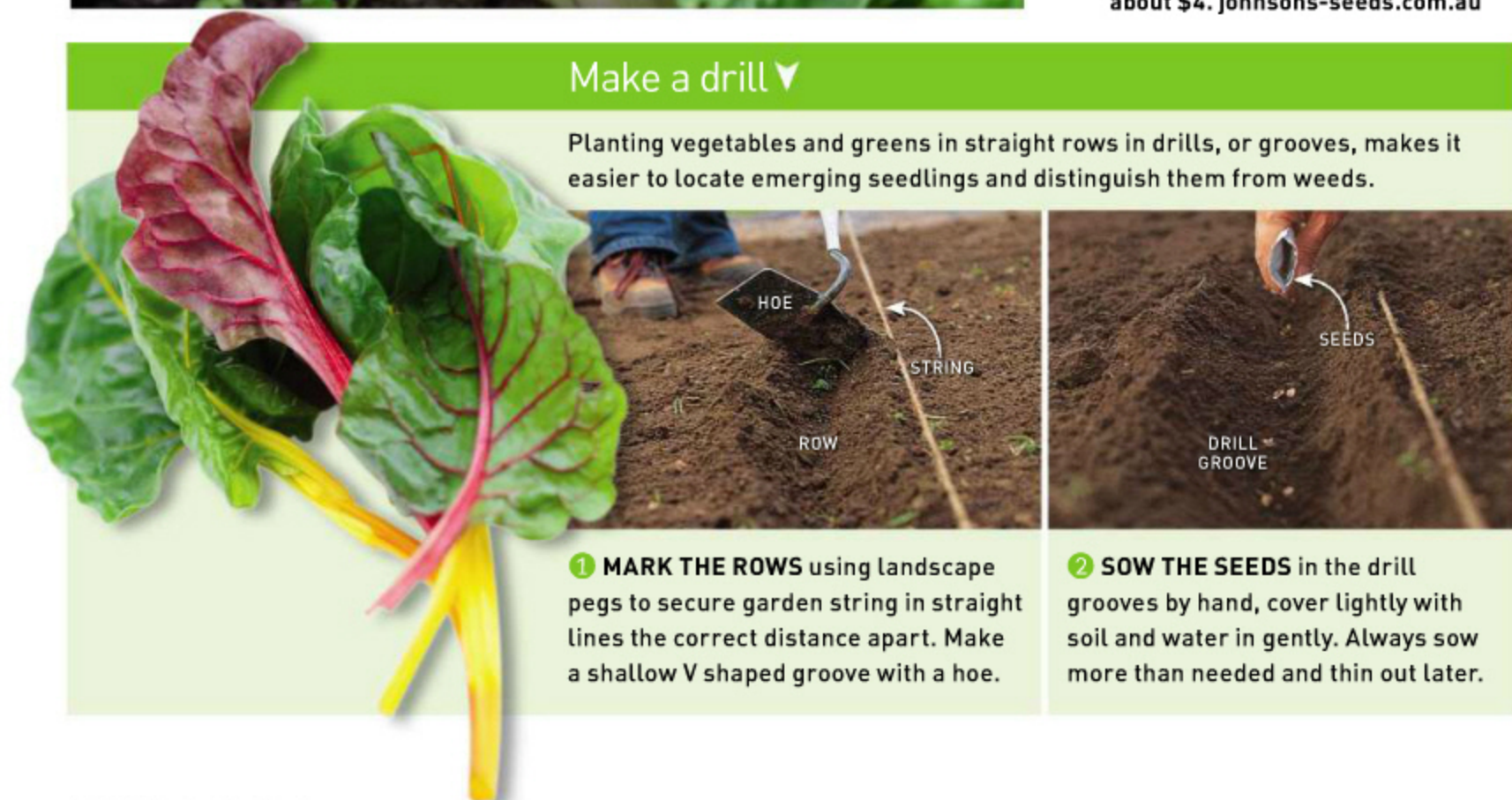
Picking young leaves in this way encourages more to grow and keeps the plant cropping for months.



Johnsons Silver Beet Bright Lights, about \$4. johnsons-seeds.com.au

Make a drill ▼

Planting vegetables and greens in straight rows in drills, or grooves, makes it easier to locate emerging seedlings and distinguish them from weeds.



1 MARK THE ROWS using landscape pegs to secure garden string in straight lines the correct distance apart. Make a shallow V shaped groove with a hoe.

2 SOW THE SEEDS in the drill grooves by hand, cover lightly with soil and water in gently. Always sow more than needed and thin out later.

PICTURES (TOP) GETTY IMAGES (FAR LEFT) THINKSTOCK



Penne with borlotti beans and silverbeet

PREPARATION TIME 20 mins

plus overnight soaking

COOKING TIME 30 mins

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

450g dried borlotti beans or
2 x 400g can borlotti beans,
rinsed and drained
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 brown onion, finely chopped
1 large carrot, diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
200g wholemeal penne
1 bunch silverbeet or Swiss chard,
leaves thinly sliced
½ cup roughly chopped fresh
flat-leaf parsley
Freshly ground black pepper
½ cup finely grated parmesan

1 SOAK THE DRIED BEANS in a large bowl of water overnight.
2 DRAIN THE BEANS and put in a large saucepan then cover with fresh water and add the lid. Boil

the borlotti beans for about 30 minutes or until tender.

3 MEANWHILE heat the oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, for eight minutes or until soft.

4 ADD THE BEANS and one cup of water to the vegies and stir to combine. Cook, uncovered, for 20 minutes or until the beans are soft and the mixture has thickened.

5 MEANWHILE cook the pasta in a large saucepan of boiling water, following the packet instructions, until just tender.

6 ADD THE SILVERBEET to the bean mixture, stir to combine and cook for one to two minutes until the silverbeet is just wilted. Stir in the parsley and season with pepper.

7 DRAIN THE PASTA and return to the pan. Add the bean mixture and toss through gently to combine. Spoon into four serving bowls, scatter with parmesan and serve.



GARDENING THIS MONTH



May is a delightful time of the year, with cool mornings and pleasant day time temperatures, perfect for planting, mulching and composting.

Plant Nasturtiums now for a burst of colour in late Winter and early Spring. To maximize flowers, avoid over-fertilising, and pinch off the running stems to keep the plants compact.

Other flowering favourites to sow now include

Aquilegia, Calendula, Carnation, Forget Me Not, Larkspur and Statice.

In the tropical north start planting Tomatoes and Eggplant now, and in the Southern states make sowings of cool loving vegetables such as Cabbages, Kale, Turnip, Swede, Celeriac and Parsnip. In most areas May is a great time to sow Broad Beans, Spinach, Lettuce and Onions. Broad Beans are a low maintenance plant that will not only provide you with a tasty crop of beans in the Spring,

but add much needed nitrogen to your soil in the lead up to Spring.

Flower bulbs to plant now include Bearded Iris and Alstroemerias, and you can still plant Daffodils, Crocus, Freesias, Hyacinths, Jonquils, Dutch Irises, Ranunculi and Tulips in most areas. Several produce bulbs are also in season including Potatoes, Garlic and Shallots, so plant them now for a late Winter harvest.

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www.mrfothergills.com.au

US ON FACEBOOK



Growing citrus

Easy to grow and tasty to eat, citrus are the most popular backyard fruit

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Juicy, tart and sweet, citrus fruit are a garden favourite and kitchen staple.

PICTURE GETTY IMAGES

There's nothing like the scent of citrus blossoms wafting through the garden. Add glossy green foliage and the taste of fresh organically grown fruit and you've got the complete backyard package.

Citrus are high in vitamin C and are ready for picking in winter when colds and flu are rife. The delicious fruit will hold on the tree in good condition for many weeks.

In the garden, citrus may be left to grow naturally into small feature trees, clipped for use as a hedge or espaliered against a wall.

Most citrus trees are happy to be grown in large pots, especially the newer dwarf varieties.

They only reach about half the size of ordinary trees, but the fruit they produce is exactly the same.

Choose from mandarin, lemon, grapefruit, lime and orange. ➤



Lots A Lemons Tree, about \$28 for a 200mm tree, from Bunnings.

LONG LIFE

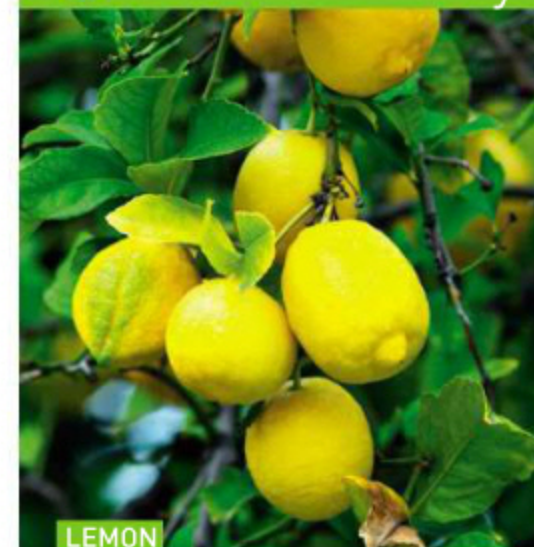
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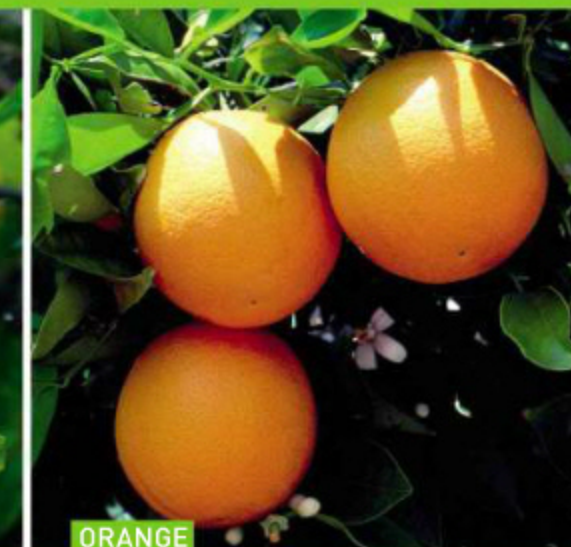
📍 Pick a variety



LEMON

An Aussie garden staple with more grown in yards than commercially.

- **LISBON** produces a heavy crop of thin-skinned highly acidic fruit in midwinter to early spring.
- **EUREKA** bears large acidic fruit with thick skins year round, with the heaviest crop in winter.
- **MEYER** is for cold climates with less bitter fruit than other lemons.



ORANGE

A beautiful small tree, especially when covered in ripening fruit.

- **WASHINGTON NAVEL** is the most popular orange and produces sweet, seedless fruit in midwinter.
- **LANE LATE NAVEL** has identical fruit to 'Washington Navel' and ripens in late winter and early spring.
- **VALENCIA** fruit hangs on the tree from midwinter until late spring.



MANDARIN

A hit with children, they peel easily and are ideal for lunch boxes.

- **IMPERIAL** is one of Australia's favourites. The tasty fruit has few seeds, is easy to peel and ripens over autumn and winter.
- **EMPEROR** has puffy skin that makes it particularly easy to peel. The fruit ripens in midwinter after 'Imperial' has finished.



GRAPEFRUIT

Both sweet and sour in flavour, those grown at home are more succulent than shop-bought fruit.

- **MARSH** is a yellow-skinned fruit with a nearly seedless pale flesh that has a sweet but tangy taste. It ripens over winter and early spring.
- **RIO RED** has a sweeter flavour than other grapefruit and red flesh. It ripens in winter and spring.



LIME

Weight for weight, limes have one and a half times the acid of a lemon.

- **TAHITIAN LIME** reaches about three metres high and bears thin-skinned, green fruit in late autumn to winter, and often during summer as well.
- **KAFFIR LIME** fruit is knobby and the flesh is not eaten, but the leaves are essential in Asian cooking and the zest is also used in recipes.



NATIVE CITRUS

These culinary delights are loved by many top Australian chefs.

- **FINGER LIME** contains a mass of juicy, citrus pearls with a strong lime flavour. Use to garnish chicken or squeeze over fresh oysters.
- **DESERT LIME** fruit usually appear in summer and are small, tangy and thin-skinned. Use it to make a zesty lime pickle or mayonnaise. ➤

How to grow

Citrus trees like a sunny location with shelter from wind and most prefer a frost-free climate.

PLANT in free-draining soil, digging in lots of compost before planting. Position the tree in the hole so the soil level is the same as in the pot.

Water in with a solution of Seasol to help prevent transplant shock.

WATER newly planted trees twice weekly for six weeks until established, then water thoroughly every week, especially while the fruit is ripening.

MULCH with sugar cane, lucerne hay or pea straw. Leave at least a hand's span clear around the trunk when applying mulch to prevent collar rot.

FEED with a complete citrus food, cow manure, or blood and bone applied under the mulch in early spring, early summer and again in early autumn.

Always apply fertiliser to damp soil and water it in. The roots of citrus trees spread to the outer perimeter of the branches, so feed and water there.

Don't feed newly planted citrus for at least six weeks or until new growth reveals the roots have established.

PRUNE half the developing fruit on young trees in their first and second years to prevent the tree exhausting itself.

Citrus don't need annual pruning for fruit production, but can be clipped into any desired shape.



Richgro Fruit & Citrus Organic Fertiliser, \$13 for 5kg. richgro.com.au

Fertilising DIY

The old wives' tale about the benefits of urinating on the soil around your lemon tree probably came about because in the old days of outdoor plumbing, the toilet was usually located at the bottom of the backyard near the lemon tree.

There is truth in the tale as urine contains urea, which is a fertiliser. But it should be diluted by at least half with water to prevent burning the tree. A citrus fertiliser not only works better but is easier to apply in front of the neighbours.

Add a citrus tree to any landscape for an edible and ornamental in one.



PICTURE GETTY IMAGES

🕒 Pests and diseases



BRONZE ORANGE BUG

SPOT IT Small green nymphs and brown or black adults 25mm long suck on stalks, causing fruit to fall.

CONTROL Spray nymphs in winter with insecticide. Drop adults in a bucket of boiling water and detergent by hand, wearing gloves and goggles as they squirt a smelly chemical.

Yates Success Naturalyte Insect Control, \$17 for 200ml. yates.com.au



CITRUS LEAF MINER

SPOT IT These small silvery moths are difficult to see. They lay their eggs on new growth and the larvae tunnel into the leaf. Look for silver trails on new foliage, and curling and distortion of leaves.

CONTROL Remove the infected leaves or spray with white oil.

Hortico White Oil, about \$7 for 750ml. hortico.com.au



CITRUS GALL WASP

SPOT IT Small black wasps lay groups of eggs in young soft twigs in early spring. As the larvae of the wasp develop the plant is stimulated to produce extra cells, causing galls on branches.

CONTROL Remove and dispose of the infected branches, preferably by burning. Do this before the end of winter or the wasps will emerge and lay eggs in new shoots.



COLLAR ROT

SPOT IT A fungal root disease that attacks the trunk just above soil level, identified by yellowing foliage and a damaged area on the lower trunk. If untreated the rot spreads around the trunk and can eventually ringbark the tree.

CONTROL Scrape the bark back to healthy growth. Keep the area around the trunk free from weeds and other plants. Do not over-water.

PICTURES (RIGHT) ROB HORTON AND GETTY IMAGES



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Weathered wall

Create the look of an ancient European villa with this weathered paint effect for rendered walls.

To create the gradient undercoat, apply a grey base coat to the entire wall using a roller and let it dry.

Divide the wall into five horizontal sections and dab the top section with blue water-based paint using a brush.

Use a damp sponge to smudge the paint across the wall then push it down into the next section.

Repeat for each section with less paint than the last, leaving the lower section unpainted.

Once the paint has dried, rub the wall with a wax candle in large patches where you would like the gradient to show through.

Apply yellow acrylic paint using a roller and let it dry. Lightly sand the waxed areas with 400 grit paper until the top coat flakes off.



Flexovit 400 Grit Wet & Dry Sandpaper Roll, 100mm x 1m, \$2.
flexovit.com



Create a similar effect to this ageing rendered wall in just a weekend.



Do you love the weathered look or do you prefer clean and modern?
Head to facebook.com/HandymanMagazine and tell us what you think.

PICTURE THINKSTOCK

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- EASY INSTALLATION
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