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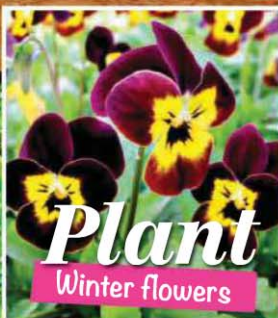
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MAY ISSUE



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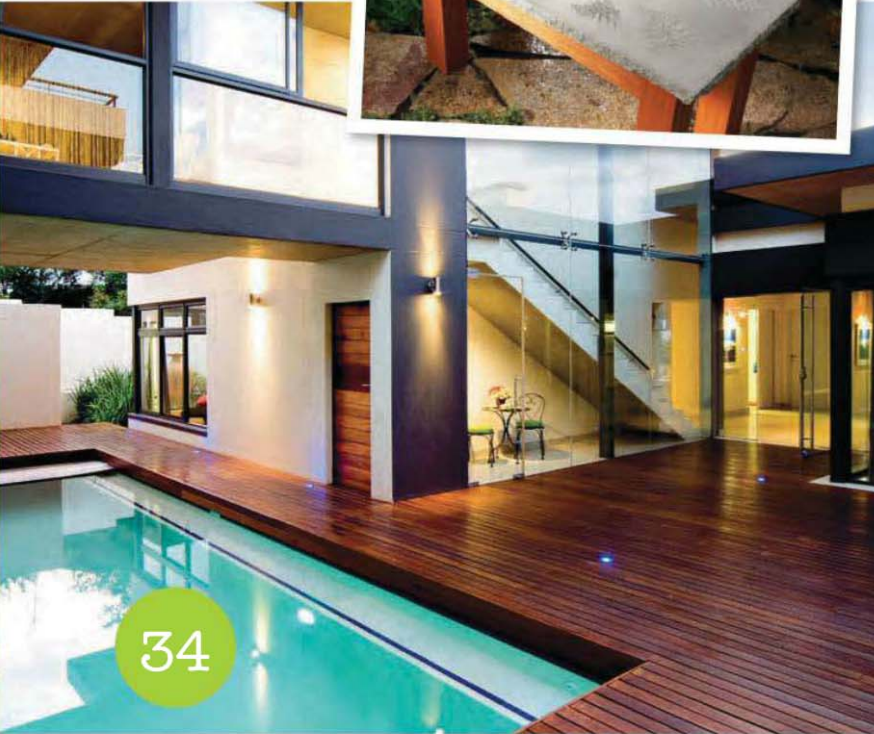
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THIS ISSUE

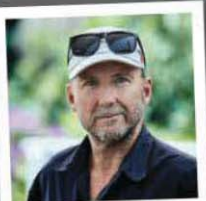
MEET THE TEAM

Welcome to the newest members of the *Handyman* team, our project editors, Adam and Stuart.



Adam Woodhams

Lifelong gardener and keen home renovator Adam has worked in the fields of horticulture, lifestyle magazines and landscape gardening for over two decades, and is deeply passionate about sustainability in all its forms.



Stuart Scott

With 25 years of photography experience, plus one house build, three renovations, a restored boat and countless more projects under his belt, Stuart proves that if you do what you love, you'll never work a day in your life.

EDITOR'S LETTER

New look, new attitude! *Handyman* has gone under the microscope and we want to help inspire you, our readers, to DIY more than ever.

Art director Kate Timms and designer Connie Leung have done a brilliant job making the pages livelier and brighter, but still keeping the depth of detail you expect from *Handyman*.

With extra hints, tips and expert advice, every story delivers even more to you. We also want to get more connected with you, so we've amped up our presence on social media.

There is more Facebook and Twitter content, where we announce the new issue on sale, as well as competitions you can enter.

Our Pinterest profile is bursting with inspirational boards. Check them out and pin your favourite pics to get a look together for your own home.

And for more pictures to drool over, visit our Instagram page. Share and get involved, we want to hear from you!

Winter solution

A chill in the air may be a sign winter is on its way and, for the cooler areas, it limits what you can grow outdoors. But if you build a greenhouse like the



one on the cover, you can almost certainly grow anything you want.

Simply put sensitive plants in the greenhouse to avoid frost and get them safely through winter, plus establish spring and summer crops ahead of time for an early start to harvesting.

This greenhouse kit, on page 18, is easy to assemble. Check out Adam Woodhams' video on how he put it all together at handyman.net.au/mag.

Blogging DIYer

This issue, we also welcome Melissa Darr, whose motto is to 'cook, create and decorate'. Her blog, *The Whimsical Wife*, is full of furniture restorations, renovation projects and tasty recipes.

We're sharing her renovations, beginning with her laundry on page 54. She transformed this average run-down room into a French-inspired laundry with plenty of hidden storage and useful bench space.

Enjoy the issue,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL

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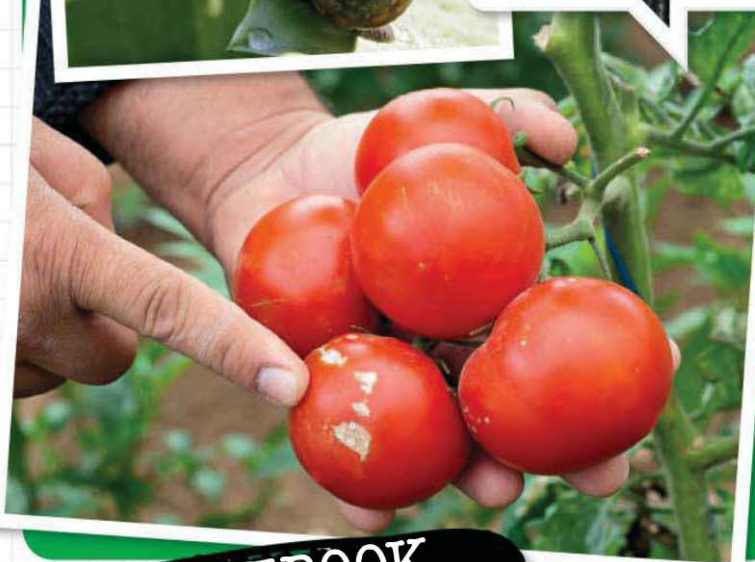
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HANDY STUFF



Mother nature

Treat a mum that loves to cook to a Mr Fothergill's Kitchen Herb Planter Kit, \$13 (mrfothergills.com.au). Each kit contains easy-to-grow seeds for parsley, chives and sweet basil, quick soil mix pellets and hand-finished pots ready to be labelled with chalk.



TIP

Make flowers last longer by adding 2 tablespoons each of apple cider vinegar and sugar to the vase water.

Floral fantasy

Provide a pretty place to display Mother's Day flowers with a striking vase from the Villeroy & Boch Verso range, from \$119. These elegant glass vessels are available in 250 or 380mm sizes and come in six custom colours to suit a variety of decorating styles.

villeroy-boch.com.au

MOTHER'S DAY GIFT GUIDE

Show Mum how much she means to you by picking out the perfect gift

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT PICTURES STUART SCOTT

Room to roost

Brighten up the yard with the bustle of songbirds by hanging the Garden Trend Papyrus Pocket Bird House, \$10, from a tree. The 22 x 18cm house has two entrances and a rounded base, making a welcoming home where wild birds can safely nest.

gardentrend.com.au



Enjoy daily visits from feathered friends by providing them with a home.

Delicate digits

Save soft hands from DIY damage by giving Mum a pair of tough Hortex All Terrain PVC 40cm Garden Gloves, about \$6, from Bunnings.



Potted sun

Bring a smile to your mum's face with the cheerful Mr Fothergill's Sunflower Dwarf Sunstation Grow Pot, about \$9. Each pot is made from recycled materials and is the ideal size for a shelf or windowsill.

mrfothergills.com.au



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Fresh feet

Save on washing by adding the attractive Zone Hardware Timber Rope Mat, \$31 (zonehardware.com.au), to the bathroom. Easily folded for storage, this is a great low-maintenance alternative to a cloth mat.

Bamboo bliss

Allow Mum to feel as though she's lounging in a day spa with the Boutique Bamboo Toothbrush Holder, \$13, and Boutique Bamboo Soap Dish, \$8. The light bamboo and stainless steel materials help these items bring a special touch to a modern bathroom.

bunnings.com.au

TIP

Remove stubborn fingermarks from stainless steel with glass cleaner and a soft cloth.

Small finishing touches can set the right tone for a relaxing bathroom.



Suspended style

Add extra storage space and keep the bathroom neat and tidy with the Evoque Bamboo Ladder Towel Rack, \$36. With a protective lacquer finish for durability, it is designed to lean against a wall, and has five 35cm wide rungs that can hold up to a kilo each.

zonehardware.com.au

Eco efforts

Make composting easier for an environmentally conscious mother with the Maze 7L Kitchen Caddy, \$10. The snap-fitting lid keeps in odours and the handle makes carrying green waste easy.

mazeproducts.com.au



DIY dairy

Healthy eating is simple with the EasiYo Yoghurt Maker, \$25 (easiyo.com). Your mum will love making yoghurt that's free from artificial ingredients, additives and stabilisers. The pack includes a retro red yoghurt maker and a 1kg jar.





Foodie fun

Inspire kitchen creativity by turning the home into a dairy with the Mad Millie Artisan Cheese Kit, \$185. It contains the recipes and ingredients to make a variety of cheeses and includes a thermometer, wax and moulds, so your mum will be able to make the perfect block.

madmillie.com

Get sorted

Help your mum structure her busy schedule by giving her the Betani Combination Board, about \$10 (bidware.com.au). Half corkboard and half non-magnetic whiteboard, it can be teamed with Sharpie Bullet Tip Markers, \$3 each (sharpie.com).



TIP

Sort receipts, bills and forms by attaching labelled envelopes to a corkboard or the fridge.

An organisation board helps hectic mums keep track of commitments.



Canine collation

Keep track of invites and school permission slips with the cute pooch-inspired Fletcher May Dachshund Magnet Board, from \$60. It's lightweight and easy to hang on any wall in the study or kitchen. This sunny yellow board is sold in either a small or large size.

downthatlittlane.com.au

Tune out

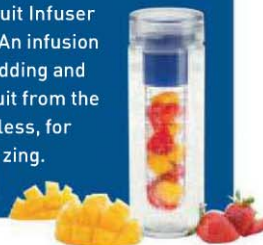
Make sure your mum always enjoys her downtime by giving her the Marshall Major Brown Headphones, \$160 (marshallheadphones.com). The fully collapsible frame makes them easy to store or transport, while the microphone and remote enable hands-free calls, so she can talk on the go.



Fruity fresh

Give the leading lady in your life pure and tasty infused water with the Ovela Fruit Infuser Bottle, \$15. An infusion rod makes adding and removing fruit from the bottle effortless, for a refreshing zing.

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BUYER'S GUIDE

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Protector Pre-filters,
\$11 for 20.

Protector P2
Particulate Filter, \$5.

Protector Gas or
Vapour Filter, \$5.



Breathe easy by using the best protective equipment when working with chemicals or tools at home

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT PICTURE STUART SCOTT

Tough trio

Wear the triple-layered Protector Trade Mate P2 Disposable respirator, \$30 for 20, to keep out mechanically or thermally generated particles.



Metal blockade

Steer clear of inhaling metal fumes and odours courtesy of the Protector Multi Mate P2 Disposable Carbon Respirator, \$10 for two.



Double duty

Stay safe with a Protector Spraysafe Ready Pack, about \$47, including a half face twin-filter respirator, 10 sets of pre-filters and two combination filters.



BACKYARD GREENHOUSE

Use a kit to create a place to enjoy year-round gardening whatever the weather

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



Put up an affordable greenhouse in the backyard using a DIY kit, and take your gardening to the next level.



No longer just for gardeners with a big property or deep pockets, new materials mean a greenhouse can be yours at home in a size to suit.

Featuring strong yet lightweight aluminium frames and clear, virtually unbreakable polycarbonate panels, they can now be packed into kits.

We built a Maze Palram 6 x 10' greenhouse, \$940, with a finished size of 3.1m long, 1.85m wide and 2.09m tall. It comes in two easy-to-handle boxes and can be assembled in just a morning (mazingproducts.com.au).

Build your greenhouse on the best site. The ideal orientation is north to south, so one side gets the morning sun and the other afternoon sun. ➤

TAILOR MADE

- **VENTILATION** The greenhouse came with a roof vent, but a wall panel was replaced with a louvre window, \$149, to increase airflow.
- **SHADE** To cut light intensity, part of the roof was screened. The Maze Shade Kit, \$72, has a cloth and 10 hangers to clip it to the frame that can also hold hanging baskets.
- **SHELVES** Maze Heavy-duty Shelves, \$90 each, were bolted to the frame. Each shelf holds up to 40kg and has three plant hangers.

BUDGET TIP

To save money, raise vegie and flower seedlings for the next season and grow plants from cuttings.



Watch Adam build this

Like it at facebook.com/HandymanMagazine



Prepare the site

The starting point for installing a greenhouse is to create a level area with a well-drained floor.

If you already have a level area, you can build a box frame with timber or metal garden edging, lay weedmat and fill it with gravel to 50mm deep.

For this slightly sloping site, we built a simple jetty-style sleeper floor using next generation treated pine 200 x 50mm x 2.4m sleepers.

Let the sleeper floor settle for two weeks before adding the greenhouse so it can move as the timber dries out.



Select a sunny site for your greenhouse that's protected from heavy winds



MAKE THE SLEEPER FLOOR



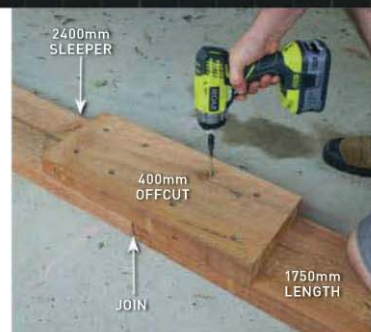
1 Mark the location

Use grass-marking paint to set out the area of the sleeper floor at the site of the greenhouse. For this project, the floor measures 4200 x 2400mm to allow for a landing at the front and a walkway down one side. To get the setout square and accurate, use a carpenter's square for the corners.



2 Dig the trenches

Mark the location of two side and one centre bearer parallel to the setout. Locate the bearers at 300mm, 1200mm and 2100mm from one long side. Excavate shallow trenches to level along the line of the bearers, making them a bit longer and wider than the bearers for easy positioning.



3 Make the bearers

For a 50mm overhang at the front of the floor, make three 4150mm long bearers using the 2400mm sleepers. Cut a 1750mm length, lay it end to end with a sleeper and position a 400mm offcut evenly over the join. Align and secure with three 75mm bugle batten screws on either side of the join.



CHOOSING TIMBER

• **TREATED PINE** was chosen for the greenhouse floor. We used next generation IronWood Sienna 200 x 50mm x 2.4m sleepers by Carter-Holt Harvey, costing \$15 each, from Bunnings.

• **SELECT TIMBER** sourced from sustainable pine plantations.

These sleepers are treated in a way that avoids the use of potentially hazardous arsenic.

This makes them safe for use in areas of close contact and also gives them a long-lasting colour closer to traditional hardwoods.

• **USE SCREWS** that are either Climacoat or stainless steel with these high-copper Sienna or ACQ treated pine sleepers. **TIP** To build the sleeper floor, about 100 bugle batten screws measuring a minimum 75mm in length were required.



4 Position the bearers

Lay the bearers parallel with the setout of the sides with the joint face up, check for level front to back and side to side, excavating more if needed. To level, add blue metal gravel to the trench or use 300mm long sleeper blocks as risers. Position the blocks every 500mm or so as needed.



5 Attach the sleepers

Position the first sleeper across the bearers with 50mm overhang at the front. Check for square and secure to each bearer with at least two 75mm bugle batten screws towards the edges of the sleeper to prevent cupping. Lay each sleeper hard up against the one before, check alignment and secure. ➤

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BUILD THE GREENHOUSE



1 Position the base

Assemble the base frame, position it on the floor and check it is square by measuring the diagonals. The distance from the internal rear right to the internal front left corner, then the internal rear left to the internal front right corner, should be equal. Adjust the frame, if needed.



2 Add the wall panels

Build the wall frames, checking the uprights are plumb as you work. Add the polycarbonate wall panels, replacing a side panel with a louvre window, if including. The greenhouse is mostly built with sliding bolts and nuts that are tightened using the supplied pipe spanner.



3 Check for square

When all the wall panels are in place, check the frame is correctly positioned and square by using a large carpenter's square in the corners and measuring the diagonals again. Reposition, if required.

TIP All parts are either clearly stamped or marked with a numbered sticker.



4 Secure to the floor

Once you have confirmed that the base frame of the greenhouse is correctly positioned and square, use bugle batten screws to secure it to the floor, here a timber deck.

TIP If the greenhouse is positioned on the ground, use tent pegs to secure it in position through weedmat.



5 Install the roof

Add the included or optional roof window or vent first, then the polycarbonate roof panels. Assemble and install the door. When adding a roof window, consider airflow and cross-ventilation, positioning it near the centre or front to keep the rear corner of the greenhouse warmer.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Spirit level
- Tape measure
- Large carpenter's square
- 75mm stainless steel or Climacoat bugle batten screws
- Cordless drill-driver
- Phillips head screwdriver
- Large tent pegs (optional)



Maze Greenhouse Kit, \$940

Maze 150kg Greenhouse Work Bench, \$125.



CREATE A WORK SPACE



Maze 20kg Twin Shelf Kit, \$72.

A greenhouse provides the ideal place to pot up seedlings and propagate cuttings.

➤ **ADD A BENCH** with a lower shelf to store tools and equipment, including potting mix and a hand trowel.

➤ **INSTALL SHELVES** to hold small pots and seedling trays. Attach at the same height as the bench to make potting up easier.

➤ **HANG SHADECLOTH** to give more sensitive plants a sheltered environment.

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DESIGN TIP

If you are in a high wind or high storm-risk area, you may need to buy a carport that has a cyclonic rating.

DIY CARPORT

Give the car a new sheltered home in just a weekend by using a kit

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



ABOVE Buying in modular form means the kit comes in a surprisingly small bundle.

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COST**After**

Putting up a carport is a quick way of adding value to a property.

Before

When you read the real-estate ads, one thing that always grabs attention and gives a property an advantage is covered off-street parking.

Having a carport for your vehicles doesn't just improve property value, it helps prevent storm damage and keeps cars cleaner for longer, as well as keeping you dry on rainy days.

Building a garage is a bit beyond most people's DIY skills, so what's the quick, easy and budget-friendly alternative? The best solution is a classic skillion roof carport in a kit.

For this project, we installed a 5.5 x 5.5m Non-Cyclonic Double Skillion Carport, costing \$1650, from Absco (abscosheds.com.au). ➤

WHAT YOU NEED

To build a carport from a kit, you'll need basic equipment, power tools and appropriate safety gear.

- Heavy-duty work gloves, and ear and eye protection
- Angle grinder with metal cutting blades
- Sawhorses and stepladder
- Rivet gun

- Hammer drill and drill driver
- Masonry bit for Ramset bolts
- 10mm metal drill bit and metal rivet bit
- Phillips bit for Tek screws
- Silicone roof and gutter sealant
- Retractable tape measure
- Long spirit level
- Spanners and clamps

PLAN AHEAD

Building a structure this size may require approval, so check with your local council before you DIY.

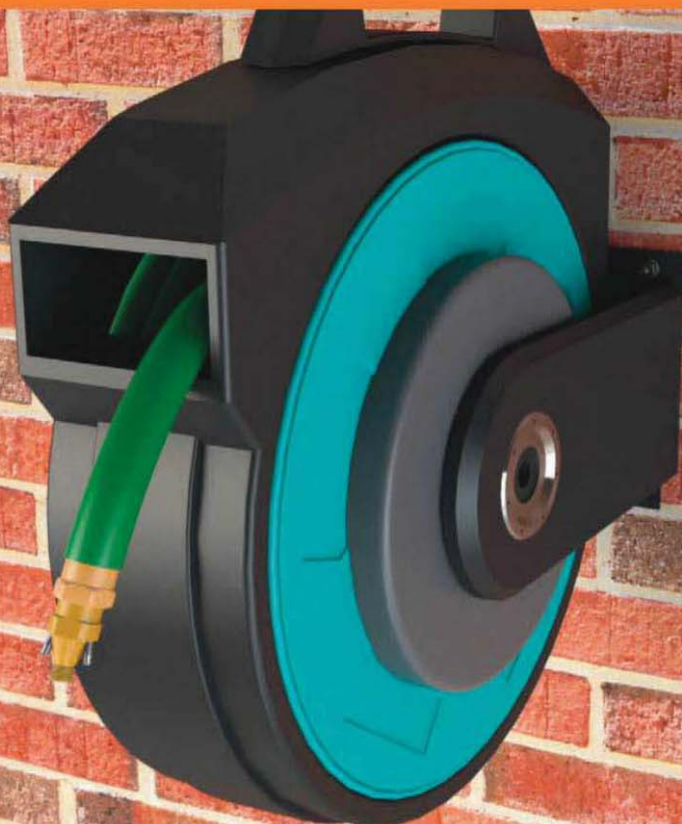
- When replacing an existing carport of the same size or larger, approval is generally not needed. But if you're in doubt, check with the council.
- New structures such as carports can be covered by Exempt and Complying Development guidelines, but again, check with the council.
- Our kit came with engineering plans ready for submission to the council, so ask your supplier whether yours has these as well.
- If your carport is to be installed underneath powerlines, then the power cable may need temporary sheathing with tiger tails. Call the electricity provider for advice.
- Consider how you will dispose of runoff water. Either fit it to your stormwater system, or run it through an ag pipe and use it as a soaker hose for garden areas.

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The best way to mount your new carport is to bolt it to a slab. Without a slab, use 650mm square x 550mm deep steel-reinforced footings for each column.



Working with kits

If you've assembled any large items such as steel shelving or a flatpack kitchen, you'll find this DIY project quite straightforward.

The difficulty comes from the heavy lifting required to get the roof off the ground, so make sure you have a few pairs of hands at that stage.

Before you start, open the kit and check carefully that all the parts are present to avoid any future problems.

After you finish building, paint the downpipe the same colour as the roof and fascia. Our carport features Colorbond trim and roof sheets in the colour Woodland Grey. ➤



Ask for help when handling heavy materials and lifting the carport roof off the ground

ADAM'S TOOLKIT

➤ **PROTECT** yourself when handling roof sheets by always using heavy-duty gloves, and when cutting or drilling metal by wearing safety glasses.

➤ **PLUG** in the Ryobi One+ 18V charger and radio, \$199, to recharge Ryobi One+ batteries and play music while you're hard at work.

➤ **PAINT** the downpipe using White Knight Grip-Lock Primer, \$18, then finish with Dulux Weathershield, tinted to match the Colorbond roof and fascia colour.



INSTALL THE CARPORT



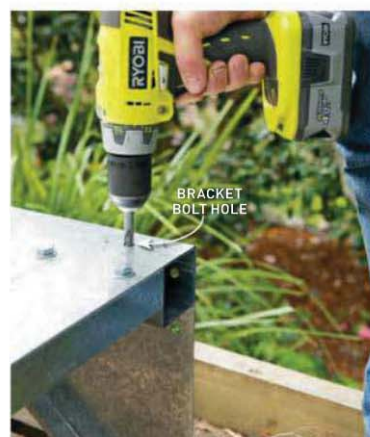
1 Secure the mounting plates

Mark the positions for the mounting plates on the slab. To accurately check the diagonals, measure the distance from the front right mounting point to the rear left, then from the front left to the rear right. The distances should be equal. Use a hammer drill to make the bolt holes, then secure the plates.



2 Join the beams

Assemble and lay out the beams on a level surface to prevent bows at the joints. Join the centre cross beams to the edge beams with bolts through the splice plates, then join the edge beams to make the box frame. Run a bead of silicone around the joints of the edge beams to seal the box gutter.



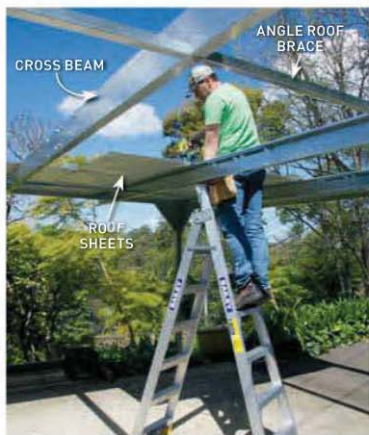
3 Prepare the columns

Mark the position for the column brackets on the edge beams and drill bolt holes using a 10mm bit, ensuring the angles are correctly set for roof fall. Mark and drill the column pivot hole, then drill and position the brackets on the column, attaching to the first and last cross beams.



4 Raise the frame

Use joiner plates to attach the first and last cross beams to the box frame. Bolt the front columns through the pivot hole and finger tighten. Raise the frame until the top brackets align with the holes, inserting bolts, then repeat for the rear columns. Tighten all bolts and add the angle roof braces.



5 Install the roof

Drill a hole in the box gutter for a drainpipe at the point of greatest fall, then attach. Secure the first roof sheet at the drain end corner. Position the sheets against the side edge beam with a gap at the fall point for runoff. Attach the sheets with self-tapping screws, joining the overlaps with rivets.



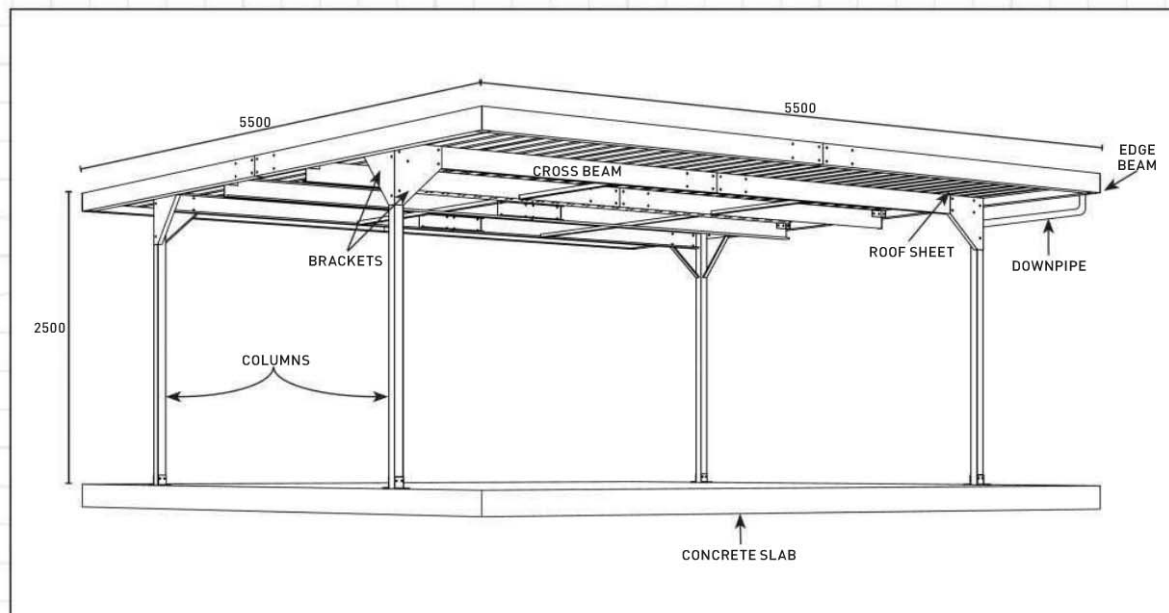
6 Add the downpipe

Use self-tapping screws to attach zigzag brackets at appropriate spacings, then pre-drill to attach fascia boards to the brackets with pop rivets. Cut the downpipe to size so it can be held with the supplied straps against the closest column, then attach. If painting the pipe, use primer and two coats of paint.



CARPORT KIT

measurements in mm



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MADE**

NEW

BUDGET TIP

Cut costs by doing jobs like painting and gardening DIY instead of using a tradie.



After

Modern features and an appealing colour scheme add instant value.



Before

FROM DATED TO DESIGNER

A simple facelift instantly boosts the kerb appeal of this home for less than \$10,000

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERIE BARBER



This is, in many ways, your typical suburban house. There's nothing glaringly wrong with it, and it has a generous front yard, but it definitely lacks street appeal.

The pale brick and arched windows particularly date the house, making it obvious to any potential buyer that the house needs updating, which in turn limits its value.

A few smart cosmetic fixes will dramatically change the whole look and feel of the facade and modernise its features.

The reno plan

Although it's not a very inspiring house, it's definitely a blank slate and proves just how much of an impact can be made on a tight budget with a few simple updates.

It's possible to increase the value of the home by tens of thousands of dollars simply by rendering and painting the external surfaces and neatening up the front yard.

With minimal outlay, this could easily look like a brand-new home and, with its smart new exterior, become the star of the street. ➤



GET A FREE
MAKEOVER

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

She is also a public speaker and TV renovator on the popular Network Ten show *The Living Room*.

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

Send us a photo and description of an area in your home that needs work for the chance to get a makeover.

To upload your photos, go to handyman.net.au/virtual-makeover.

SIX STEPS TO SUCCESS

1 RENDER THE WALLS

The most effective way to quickly ramp up the value of a brick house is by rendering and painting.

A few coats of exterior paint instantly bring this dated suburban home into the 21st century.

We'll use a modern charcoal that will still look good 10 years from now.



Rockcote PM100 Quick Render, \$15 for 20kg.
rockcote.com.au

4 REVAMP THE WINDOWS

Timber slat shading running along the tops of the windows cleverly conceals the original arches to give the windows a contemporary look.

The same slats are used for a new railing and screen around the porch to define the entrance and provide privacy.



Hyne 70 x 35mm H3 Treated Pine, \$11 for 3.6m.
hyne.com.au

2 COAT THE CONCRETE

To bring them up to date, the bare concrete driveway, path and steps simply need a couple of coats of paving paint the same colour as the house.

This is something any capable DIYer can do cheaply and easily, saving on tradie costs and boosting the potential resale value of the house.



Berger Jet Dry Heavy Duty Deep Charcoal Paving Paint, \$93 for 4L.
bergerjetdry.com.au

5 RESTORE THE LAWN

The lawn is a vital part of any update and can add real kerb appeal.

This lawn is looking very scrappy, but a good dose of fertiliser, regular deep watering and TLC will have it looking lush and green in no time.

For a particularly bad lawn, you can always replace it with turf for an instant impact.



Hortico Organic Lawn Fertiliser, \$16 for 15kg.
hortico.com.au

3 PAINT THE DETAILS

To achieve a smart uniformity in the colour scheme, the roof gable and perimeter fences are painted in the charcoal used on the exterior.

We've selected gloss white for the slats and beneath the roof to contrast with the charcoal and make the home stand out on the street.



Taubmans Sun Proof Gloss Accent Exterior Paint, \$50 for 4L.
taubmans.com.au

6 ADD GARDEN BEDS

Low-cost treated pine sleepers painted in soft grey create neat-looking garden beds and give much-needed definition to the front yard.

Planted with bushy, low-maintenance shrubs, the new garden beds, framed by the grey sleepers, will provide plenty of greenery and visual interest.

Camellia Japonica, 200mm, about \$15, from Bunnings.



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DREAM HOME

After many years living away, this family returns home to a house in the country that suits all their needs

WORDS SITA SIMONS

Laying low and flat like the landscape, this contemporary dwelling forms a horseshoe shape on the edge of a golf course.

It was a big change for the owners, Jonathan and Sheree, who had lived in the very urban setting of Robertson Quay in Singapore for the last 10 years.

'We enjoyed the lifestyle but always knew we'd return home,' says Jonathan.

Having both grown up on farms, each was surprisingly reluctant to fully embrace country living.

'You get used to having people around and I didn't like the thought of being in the middle of nowhere. A golf estate seemed a great compromise.' >

The landscape of the house flows seamlessly into the golf course green.



PICTURES AUSTRAL

Large expanses of glass take in the views and make the most of the natural light.



ABOVE While still part of the living space, the dining room has its own identity.
BELOW The neutral expanses in the kitchen are punctuated by artworks and ornaments.



Everything about the design of the house was to reflect the brief of generously sized, light spaces, with optimum function and minimal fuss

Best of both worlds

The kitchen was positioned just off the main living space.

'We had the idea for completely open-plan living, an antidote, if you like, to our apartment in Singapore, which was a series of small rooms.'

'But due to the scale of the house, our architect explained that functions can compete, leaving you with a large

expanse that has no clear identity. So she suggested placing the kitchen off the living area and installing bifold doors that can be opened up or closed for privacy,' says Sheree.

Glossy surfaces and integrated appliances look luxurious, while large-format floor tiles and seamless cabinetry make the space appear spacious and streamlined.





ABOVE Lighting has been used creatively to illuminate spaces and add character and ambience.
LEFT Even the guest ensuite has more than ample storage.
BELOW The main bathroom boasts an oversized spa.



Polished but practical

Comfort is everything in the main living area, and just like the rest of the house, nothing is stingy or small.

Leather sofas can accommodate the whole family with ease and the marble-tiled floors are given warmth underfoot with a large tufted rug.

The soft neutrals are picked up in the cushions. It's a study in contrasts, with the hard surfaces softened using velvet and chenille.

'I wanted a polished look, but it needed to be practical. I don't want to be always running around with a cloth.

'Leather is so durable, and while I was hesitant to go for white initially, it's surprisingly easy to keep clean and looks incredibly chic,' says Sheree. ➤

Warm and welcoming

The bedrooms embrace warmth and softness with wool carpets and a palette of earthy colours. Again a mix of materials offers contrast, with the timber one-piece bed, headboard and bedside tables offset by a leather panel.

A gas fire adds to the notion of the bedroom as a haven for the grown-ups.

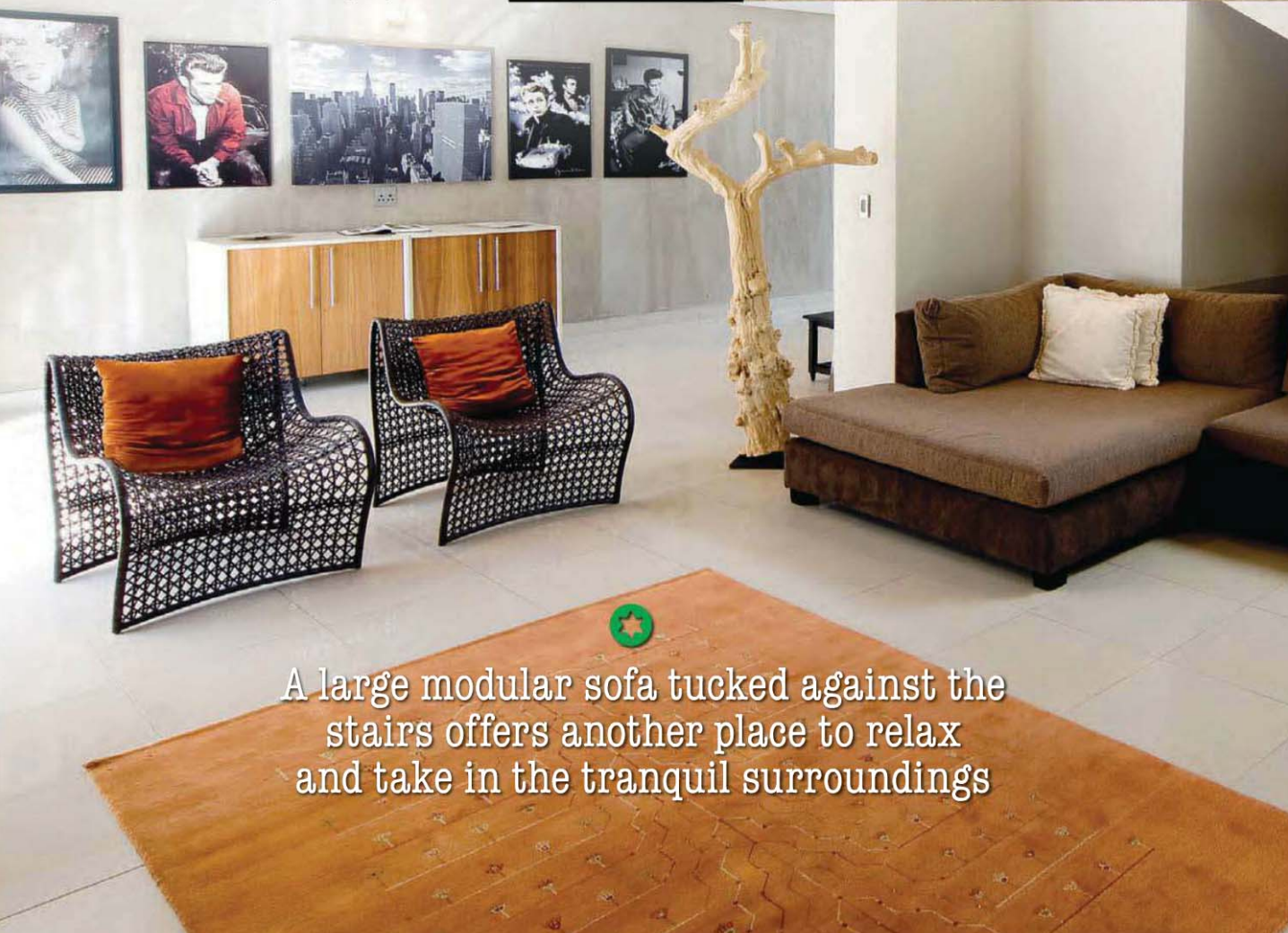
'It gets cold in winter, so it's a real luxury to put on the fire and read or watch television,' says Sheree.

Throughout the home, clever use is made of awkward spaces, and a large lounging sofa fits neatly under the stairs. Framed vintage movie posters add a quirky touch of personality to the expanses of white walls.

'We collected things from around the world and now it all has a place. I wouldn't change a thing,' says Sheree.



In the main bedroom, the gas fire is a luxurious addition for chilly nights. **BELOW** The furnishings all complement the architecture and finishes.



A large modular sofa tucked against the stairs offers another place to relax and take in the tranquil surroundings



STEAL THIS STYLE

Glossy surfaces and integrated appliances look luxurious, while large-format floor tiles and seamless cabinetry make this home appear spacious and streamlined.

Sita Simons



 **Designing your own home?**
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LAY A FLOATING FLOOR

Make over your home with timber flooring that's quick and easy to install

PROJECT JOHN BOWLER MAIN PICTURE STUART SCOTT

1
DAY

\$1550
COST

Materials

Bamboo flooring	\$1351
Underlay	\$113
Colonial skirting	\$86
TOTAL	\$1550



An easy way to transform your home and add warmth without doing a major reno is to put down a floating floor.

The boards come in a range of colours and materials such as natural timber glued to plywood and laminated melamine.

Bamboo boards are a popular choice, as they're eco-friendly, durable and harder than oak.

The old worn cypress floor of this 28sqm lounge and dining area was replaced with Tarkett 10mm Woven Bamboo Flooring in Coffee, \$68 for a 1.41sqm box (tarkett.com.au). ➤



Before laying the floor, check the clearance under the doors. Use a block and a pencil to scribe at least an 8mm clearance, then remove and trim the door.



These pre-finished boards simply click together to cover almost any existing floor and provide good insulation when combined with an underlay.

DESIGN TIP

Lay boards lengthways using the longest wall, as laying them crossways can make a room appear narrower.

TOOLS

CIRCULAR SAW,
MITRESAW, JIGSAW,
BRAD NAILER

■ Floating floors expand and contract after installation, so leave a 12-15mm gap around the perimeter of the room at all walls and fixed vertical obstructions.

■ The boards respond to temperature and moisture changes, so leave them in the room where they'll be laid for at least 48 hours before installing them.

★ Made from woven strands, bamboo boards are much harder than oak

↖ A rich look and durability have made bamboo a popular choice for flooring.

INSTALL THE BOARDS



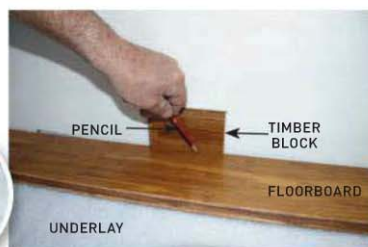
1 Trim the architrave

Remove the old skirting boards with a chisel levered off a block, taking out any protruding nails. As a height guide, place flooring and an underlay offcut against the architrave and trim off the base using a multi-tool saw.



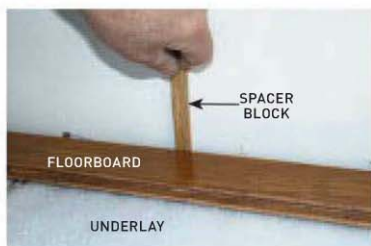
2 Tape the underlay

Roll out the underlay foil side down with the tape edge by the wall, peel off the cover strip and secure to the floor. Secure the other edge with duct tape and trim with a utility knife. Overlap the join with the next strip.



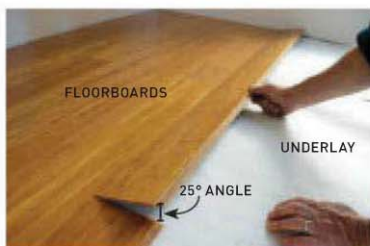
3 Scribe the first row

For a neat fit along the wall, use a pencil and a small timber block to scribe a line on the first row of boards, allowing for the expansion gap. Check the corners for square, then use a small circular saw to cut along the line.



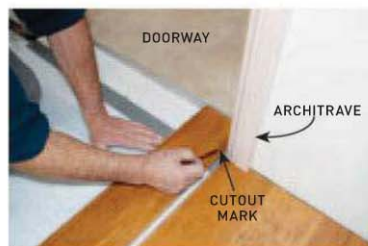
4 Add the spacer blocks

Position 12-15mm spacer blocks behind the starter boards and at the ends to create an expansion gap. Make sure the first row is square by using the 3-4-5 method. Click the second row in to help keep the boards in position.



5 Lay the boards

Place the boards in a random pattern with the joints at least 250mm apart. Angle the boards at 25° and push until they click into place, then tap together. Cut the end boards square to the walls and secure with a pull bar.



6 Cut out the door jamb

Click the door board into place, then use a pull bar to tap it on the end to slide it under the cut architrave. Position the next board and mark the cut out for the jamb, leaving 12mm for expansion. Cut to shape with a jigsaw.



7 Install the last row

Measure the gap for the last board row, allowing for the expansion joint. Clamp the board across a pair of saw stools and rip to width using a jigsaw or circular saw. Click in position and tap together both ways with a pull bar.



8 Fit the skirting boards

Remove the spacer blocks at the starter boards, then secure the skirting, starting at the door architraves. Create scribe joints at internal corners and mitre joints on external corners. Secure the skirting with 50mm brads.



9 Fix transition strips

Rip a 25mm wide strip from a board. Plane the top edge at an angle to create an easing transition at the doorway. Apply a protective coat and use clear silicone to hold in place. Seal the bottom of the doors and rehanging. ➤

GET THE LOOK

Bamboo grows at a rapid rate and also regenerates quickly when it is cut down, making it a much more environmentally friendly choice than timber. It is incredibly durable and is suitable for any climate.

It has gained in popularity in the last few years with its warm hues and different finishes.

The looks range between subtle wood grain or dramatic streaky effects to suit the style of your home.



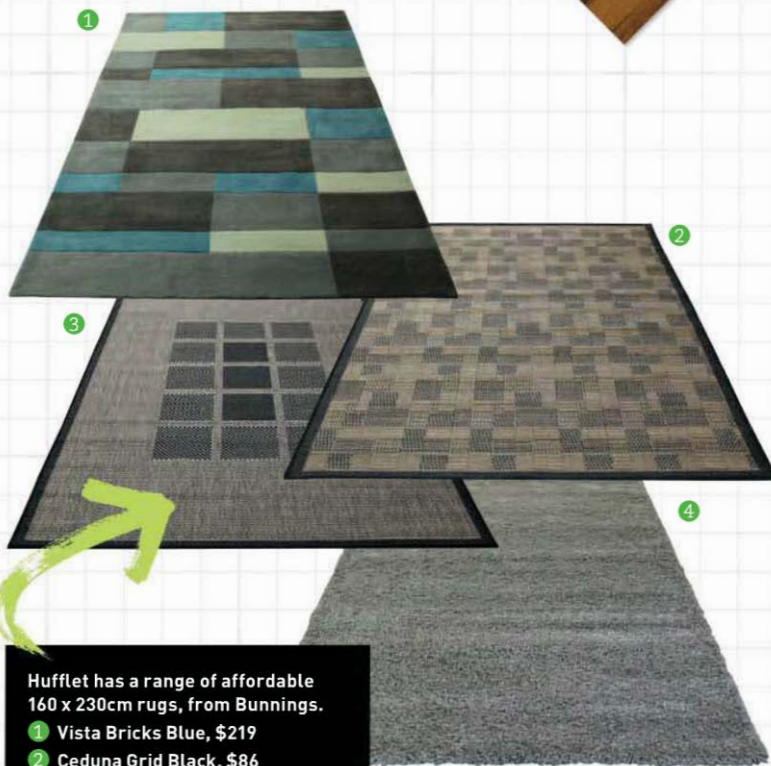
Add a rug

Bamboo flooring visually warms up a room, but adding a rug will also incorporate colour and softness underfoot. Providing a visual anchor in open-plan living areas, a rug can be easily removed or repositioned.

Go for a rug big enough to unify the area, but consider lifestyle factors like pets before splurging on pure wool. Synthetic rugs are a good option as they're tough and low maintenance. ➤



Select a rug in neutral tones to create harmony in an open-plan living space



Hufflet has a range of affordable 160 x 230cm rugs, from Bunnings.

- 1 Vista Bricks Blue, \$219
- 2 Ceduna Grid Black, \$86
- 3 Ceduna Windows Grey, \$86
- 4 Paradise Silver Shaggy, \$234



Join the boards

Floating floorboards click into each other, eliminating the need for fasteners.

Lay the first row square to a side wall, then in a staggered pattern with overlaps of at least 250mm, checking every 5-6 rows that the boards are still square.

Position each board to be laid at an angle of 20-30° to the boards that are already installed.

Insert the tongue into the groove then move the board gently up and down while pushing forward and it will click into place.

To tighten the joint, gently tap the board along the side and ends.

Minimise gaps at the end joints by positioning end-to-end boards as close together as possible.



ABOVE Use a hammer and block to tap gently along the board.

BELOW Use a pull bar to tap the board ends and last row tightly in place.



COVER THE GAP

➤ **REMOVE** all the skirting boards and replace them using 50mm brads when the floorboards have been laid, but never secure the skirting to the floor itself.

➤ **USE** toe beading to cover the expansion gap around the walls and give the floor a neat, even look.



TOE BEADING

PICTURES (MAIN) STUART SCOTT (BOTTOM) FRANK GARDNER (TOP) JOHN BOWLER

Blend different shades of the bamboo boards together for a natural finish.

THE IN-LAWS ARE JUST “DROPPING BY” SUCK IT UP...



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DESIGN TIP

Soften hard floors and add warmth underfoot with a rug that matches the look of your home.

Long lasting

FIND FLOORING TO SUIT YOUR SPACE

Do your homework and choose the right material for each area of your home so it's compatible with your lifestyle

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

PICTURE THINKSTOCK

Kid friendly

The wide range of materials on offer for flooring can make selecting what to lay a daunting task, especially if you want to install it DIY and stick to a budget.

When renovating a home, the choice of flooring can set the tone and comfort level for each area.

Evaluate the level of foot traffic through the space and the aesthetic you want to create, plus factors such as water exposure and how much time will be spent standing in each room.

Making a poor choice can result in an expensive refurbishment, so it's also important to consider design elements such as paint and existing furniture.

While it's smart to select the material to suit the specific needs of each room, in open-plan designs, using the same flooring for the entire house is best to unify the space. ➤



Other factors to take into account are pets, kids and your regular activities



High-traffic areas like hallways need durable, low-maintenance materials.

If exercising in the living room is your thing, bear it in mind when choosing flooring.



Pet proof



CHOOSE THE MATERIAL

TILE

TILE is ideal for wet areas and comes in three main materials. Durable porcelain is resistant to chips and scratches, ceramic is the cheapest and easiest to cut DIY, while porous stone is costly and needs regular resealing.

➤ **DIY OR TRADIE?** Tiling requires accuracy and patience, but have the waterproofing done by a pro.

Cotto Agra Terracotta Ceramic Floor Tile, \$3, from Bunnings.

VINYL

VINYL is a top choice in kitchens as it's soft underfoot, durable, low maintenance and mould resistant. Made to last up to 20 years, vinyl comes in boards, tiles or sheets.

➤ **DIY OR TRADIE?** Laying sheets is simple in small, angular areas. Self-adhesive tiles or boards are easier to install solo and damaged areas can be easily replaced.

Winton Slate Self Stick Tile, \$64 for 45. ideal-diy-floors.com.au

CARPET

CARPET is great in areas that need heat and sound insulation, such as a bedroom. Modern machine-made tufted carpets range in price from low for acrylic fabrics, such as polyester blends or nylon, to high for pure wool.

➤ **DIY OR TRADIE?** Carpet is easy to lay DIY but is inexpensive to have installed professionally.

Minster Carpets Glencord Carpet, \$110 for a metre. feltexcarpets.com

LAMINATE

LAMINATE is an affordable alternative to timber, ceramic or stone for any room in the home, as it's durable and resistant to scuffs and stains. The boards are laid as a floating floor over a subfloor.

➤ **DIY OR TRADIE?** Laminite does not need professional installation but for a neat edge on a DIY job, remove the skirting first.

Formica Western Jarrah Laminite, \$51 for 2.4sqm. formica.com.au

BAMBOO

BAMBOO is becoming more popular for use in high-traffic areas. Unlike costly hardwoods, bamboo is highly sustainable, budget-friendly and looks just as good as more traditional timbers.

➤ **DIY OR TRADIE?** As it is sold as a pre-finished product, bamboo needs no sanding, sealing or polishing, so it's easy to install DIY.

Tarkett Woven Bamboo, \$68 for 1.41sqm. tarkett.com.au

CORK

CORK is great in kitchens as it's warm and comfortable underfoot and absorbs impact better than hard surfaces like tiles. It's ideal for allergy sufferers, as it doesn't absorb dust, and offers insulation and soundproofing qualities. It can also be dyed any colour.

➤ **DIY OR TRADIE?** Laid like vinyl tiles, cork is easy to install DIY.

Natural Cork Tile, about \$14 for 6, from Bunnings.

SUBFLOOR

The flooring is laid on a structural layer called the subfloor.

The type of material used for a subfloor depends on various factors, such as how even the ground is and whether it will be laid on the first or second level of your home. **TIMBER** or steel frames, or a concrete slab, are the most common subfloors.

Concrete is more often used at ground level, while steel or timber are popular for uneven blocks or second storeys.

PARTICLEBOARD or concrete sheeting is required to form a supportive surface over either steel- or timber-framed subflooring. These form an even base for any flooring to be laid straight on top.

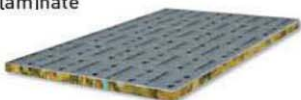


DESIGN TIP
Adequate ventilation is essential for timber subfloors to prevent moisture damage.

USING UNDERLAY

Designed to provide cushioning, bounce and acoustic-insulation to flooring, underlay can be laid under bamboo or laminate floating floors and carpet.

It helps keep rooms warm in winter and makes a difference to the finished feel and result of the carpet, so invest in the best quality you can afford. ➤



Dunlop Carpetmate
Standard 8m
Underlay, \$82.



IDEAL WINTON VINYL TILES

45 SERIES

45.7cm x 45.7cm
(5 tiles = 1sp. mtr)

7 YEAR
Domestic Warranty

They are suitable for
WET AREAS

SELF STICK
For quick installment



Char-Brown Slate



Travertine Stone



Black Marble



Natural Wood Plank



Mocha Parquet



White Marble

30 SERIES

30.5cm x 30.5cm
(10.75 tiles = 1sp. mtr)

3 YEAR
Domestic Warranty

They are suitable for
WET AREAS

SELF STICK
For quick installment



Black Diamond



Beige Stone



Charcoal Stone



Finger Parquet



Black & White Cheq



Grey / Blue Stone



Green Slate



Strip Parquet

PRINTED CARPET RUNNER



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www.ideal-diy-floors.com.au
IDEAL helpline 03 9562 8298



Concrete facts

A versatile and affordable material, concrete can be a fabulous flooring option for living areas or kitchens. While it can look cold, its high thermal mass makes it comfortable underfoot.

While concrete finishes are often associated with an industrial look, grey isn't the only option, as pigments can be mixed into the wet product or applied to the surface as stains or dyes.

The two finishes available are diamond polishing, which exposes the aggregate and adds shine, or sealing, where an epoxy finish uses a resinous, two-part material as a sealant.

For a flawless, smooth finish and minimal mess, laying concrete indoor flooring is best left to the professionals.

As a flooring material for a sleek designer finish, concrete has moved into interiors.

REFRESH THE FLOORS

When grout becomes discoloured or damaged, replacing the entire floor is unnecessary, but removing just the grout can be a tedious task.

Parex Davco Rejuvenation Grout, about \$27 for 1.7kg, contains biocide, which resists mould or bacteria growth and makes reviving the look of tiling fast and easy.



- 1 **CLEAN** the tiles and grout with a soap and water mix or sugar soap.
- 2 **APPLY** the Rejuvenation Grout with a float, spreading it diagonally and evenly across the joints. Work on 1sqm at a time.
- 3 **LEAVE** for a few minutes, then clean off the excess grout with a damp sponge, lightly wiping it in a circular motion. Clean the tiles using the same method, avoiding the joints.



Before

After

With the grout rejuvenated, the tiling looks like it's brand new.

DampRid® Puts

MOISTURE

In Its Place...™



...To Fight Mould, Mildew & Musty Odours.

Excess moisture can be a big problem – turning your home into a breeding ground for mould, mildew, musty odours and allergens. But, DampRid is the proven, safe, effective way of removing excess moisture from household air. *You can actually see it working.* And, since DampRid doesn't use electricity, you can use it in any room or wardrobe. So, put DampRid to work in your home, and put moisture in its place.



For a free sample of a DampRid Hanging Moisture Absorber simply email your name and address to sales@kendler.com.au

Learn more at: www.kendler.com.au

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

CHOOSING LAMINATE

Timber-look flooring is a durable and cost-effective option for the home

Q Find it at Bunnings

DIY TIP

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

Great value

Pet proof



One of the most budget friendly of all timber-look options, laminate flooring does not use solid timber.

The boards consist of a base of moisture-resistant resins, topped by a woodchip composite layer.

A high-definition image of timber, ceramic or stone is then covered in tough melamine resin.

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

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

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


A rich look and hard-wearing finish gives laminate its instant appeal

FLOORING COLOURS

Kid friendly

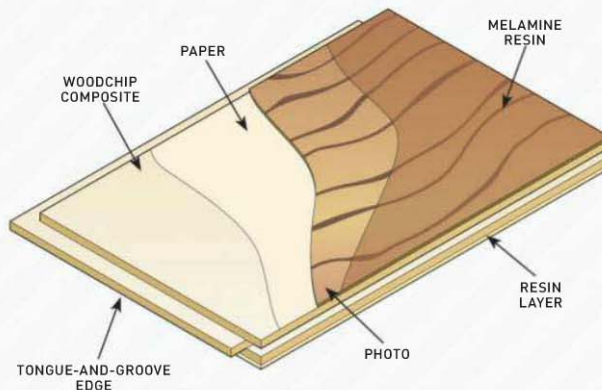


LAMINATE boards vary in price according to thickness and finish, costing from \$29 to \$35 a square metre.

Wide range



BOARD LAYERS



Laundry refresh

A crafty blogger renovates an old 70s wet room on a DIY budget with amazing results

PROJECT AND PICTURES MELISSA DARR

SAFETY CHECK

- **ARRANGE** for an asbestos check, which is essential for homes built before 1987 with walls clad with fibro sheeting.
- **FIND** a professional through the National Association of Testing Authorities (nata.asn.au), who will inspect the walls.

For more DIY from Melissa, follow her blog thewhimsicalwife.com



The laundry in this Queensland home was left to last on the renovation plan for DIY blogger Melissa and her handy husband.

'We decided to wait until we had time to do it properly,' says Melissa.

The room was a good size, but it needed a complete overhaul to bring it into line with the rest of the house.

'I wanted to keep it in the French country style I have been decorating the entire house in,' she says. ➤

Before



PICTURE (MAIN/ALAMY)

Melissa



EXPERT SECRETS

When you're looking for styling ideas for any room in your home, check out Pinterest for inspiration.

MEL'S PLAN

Putting in a French door allows lots more light into the hallway

After

Designer additions like a timber benchtop and chrome light give this laundry a high-end finish.

BUDGET TIP

The new laundry tub was a bargain, found for \$100 on Gumtree, and still in the box.

- **REMOVE** everything from the room, pull up the floor tiles and tear out the splashback.
- **DEMOLISH** part of a wall so that the washing machine taps can be moved.
- **LAY** large-format floor tiles and repair the damaged wall.
- **REPLACE** the sliding door before painting the room and adding decorative features.



Prepare and paint

With original 1970s floor tiles and splashback, the laundry was accessed by an inconvenient sliding door.

'First, we replaced the sliding door with a French door, which is more aesthetically pleasing. We paid nothing for this door as it had been left underneath the house, and I knew I had to incorporate it into the design of the laundry,' says Melissa.

The room was then ready to be prepped for painting. The whole room, including the trim, was undercoated.

'It was time to say goodbye to the drab wall colour and say hello to Dulux Hog Bristle. We've used this colour at half strength in the entire house. For the trim in the laundry, we used Dulux Fair Bianca.'

Melissa's husband then installed timber panelling to create a wainscot on the opposite wall to where the appliances and cabinetry were to go. ➤



ABOVE Timber panels were installed to create a wainscot. **LEFT** With the sliding door removed, a benchtop could be put in.



To overhaul an outdated laundry, paint the room, add storage and a benchtop, then accessorise

CUT COSTS

For the cabinetry, Melissa got a quote from the joiner who did the kitchen for it to be custom made for the laundry.

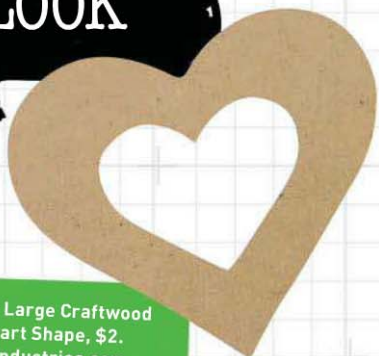
The quote was \$1500-\$1800, which was more than the budget allowed, so Melissa had to figure out a few clever cost-cutting solutions.

• **FLATPACK** cabinets and doorknobs were sourced online for half the price.

A single base cabinet, double base cabinet and double wall cabinet were bought and fitted DIY.

• **A BENCHTOP** in a rich dark timber, \$99, from Bunnings, was installed next to the washing machine.

GET THE LOOK



Boyle Large Craftwood Heart Shape, \$2.
boyleindustries.com.au



Mercator 30cm Nizzari Crystal Chrome Light, \$57.
mercator.com.au



Prestige 34mm Black Cast Iron Cupboard knob, \$7.
itwproline.com.au

Kaboodle 800mm Kitchen Wall Cabinet, \$93.
kaboodle.com.au



The ampersand sign is from Melissa's favourite shop Teacups & Twigs.



DESIGN TIP
Attach timber panels to the base half of a wall and add decorative trim for a DIY wainscot.

HOG BRISTLE
HALF

Dulux Wash & Wear
Kitchen & Bathroom, about
\$61 for 2L. dulux.com.au



HomeLeisure Trend 20L
Laundry & Utility Basket,
about \$7. homeleisure.com.au

sand closer into tight corners



A Rocket mouse sander can get right into the corners and along edges of window frames, door jams, and all those tight spots. Plus, the handy peel 'n' stick backing lets you tear off sheets and change sandpaper grades in just seconds. Don't paint yourself into a corner. Reach for Rocket, for premium products at affordable prices.

For more handy
renovation tips
& hints scan here:



Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse



Look in the sandpaper section at Bunnings.



ABOVE Plain wall tiles were used for a splashback. **RIGHT** To make the room appear more spacious large-format tiles were used.



DIY TILES

➤ **SPLASHBACK** After installing the cabinetry, cream tiles were chosen for a splashback to keep it simple.

'It looks a million times better than the retro laminate board that was on the wall,' says Melissa.

➤ **FLOOR** Large-format tiles in a neutral colour were laid before the wall was repaired and the room painted.

The cut tiles were positioned along the wall where the cabinetry and fittings would conceal them.



Style and sort

The last fixture that needed to be installed was a new light fitting.

'I agonised over this for ages. I wanted something special but not over the top. Each time we went to Bunnings, I'd make a beeline for the light section and walk up and down the aisles trying to figure out what I wanted.

'I ended up seeing this light in a cafe. It's probably too showy for a laundry, but I don't care. It's visible through the front door, so it's a feature that will be seen often,' says Melissa.

After decorating, Melissa turned her attention to organising the room.

She left the shelves out of the single base cabinet so she could add a laundry basket to keep dirty clothes out of sight, while the wall cabinet was used to store cleaning products.

'I love my new laundry. Doing the washing is so much more fun now,' she says.

TIDY TIP

Use baskets to keep cleaning supplies for different rooms in order and easily accessible.



Leave out the base cabinet shelves to store the linen basket.



“

Update your
laundry with
Clark

”



Laundries are fast becoming a stylish room of the house and our Clark laundry tubs are designed for functionality and style. Our flushline tubs are designed to fit right into your bench space, while tubs and cabinets offer a practical storage option.

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UPDATE BLINDS

Modernise your window treatments by installing new venetians

PROJECT AND PICTURES STUART SCOTT

Find it at Bunnings

DESIGN TIP

For a more streamlined look, install venetian blinds to fit inside the window reveal.



Old window blinds don't do their job very well. Frayed or broken cords make blinds difficult to adjust, letting too much or not enough light into a room.

Modern blinds come in designs to suit any style of interior and are made of materials that are easy to clean.

Venetians are a good choice for filtering glare while letting in light, to create an airy atmosphere in any room.

Available in a wide range of colours and widths, with either narrow or wide slats, they add classic charm.

Budget-friendly venetians are an easy option to DIY, as they can be installed by one person with a drill.

Simply measure up, then choose a new blind to match the width of your window but with a drop longer than needed, as you can adjust this once the blind is installed.



Smart Home Products
Multi-prong Slat Cleaner, \$5.

1 2 3



1 Mark and measure

Measure the width and height of the window. Mark the centre of the frame at the top. Measure the width of the new blind, mark the centre and align it with the centre mark on the frame. Mark the edges of the blind on the frame with 2mm clearance either side.



2 Attach the brackets

Position the supplied brackets on the frame to mark the screw holes, then drill pilot holes. Secure the brackets to the frame with screws, checking they are level. Insert the blind in the brackets, fully lower the blind and mark the desired length of the drop.



3 Adjust the drop

Release the cords from under the base rail and untie them. Pull the cords out of the rail and excess slats to the marked drop. Remove the excess slats, rethread the cords in the base rail, tie off and trim. Add the pelmet with the supplied fasteners.

Zone Hardware 25 x 900 x 1500mm Alabaster Aluminium Venetian Blind, \$27.



Venetian blinds are a budget friendly way to transform a room and add privacy

Find it at Bunnings

Install blinds

Turn the deck into an outdoor room for winter entertaining

Add bistro blinds to a covered deck and it can be used as an entertaining space year-round even when the weather turns nasty.

They protect against wind and rain but are easy to unzip and roll up on days when they're not needed.

Bistro blinds come in a wide range of ready-to-hang sizes, and accessories like zip joiners mean several of them can be joined for large areas.

Awning-style blinds are another way to help keep spaces cosy in winter and cool in summer by blocking out heat or keeping in warmth.

Folding-arm awnings can be used on both windows and doors while fixed-arm awnings are only suitable for use on windows.



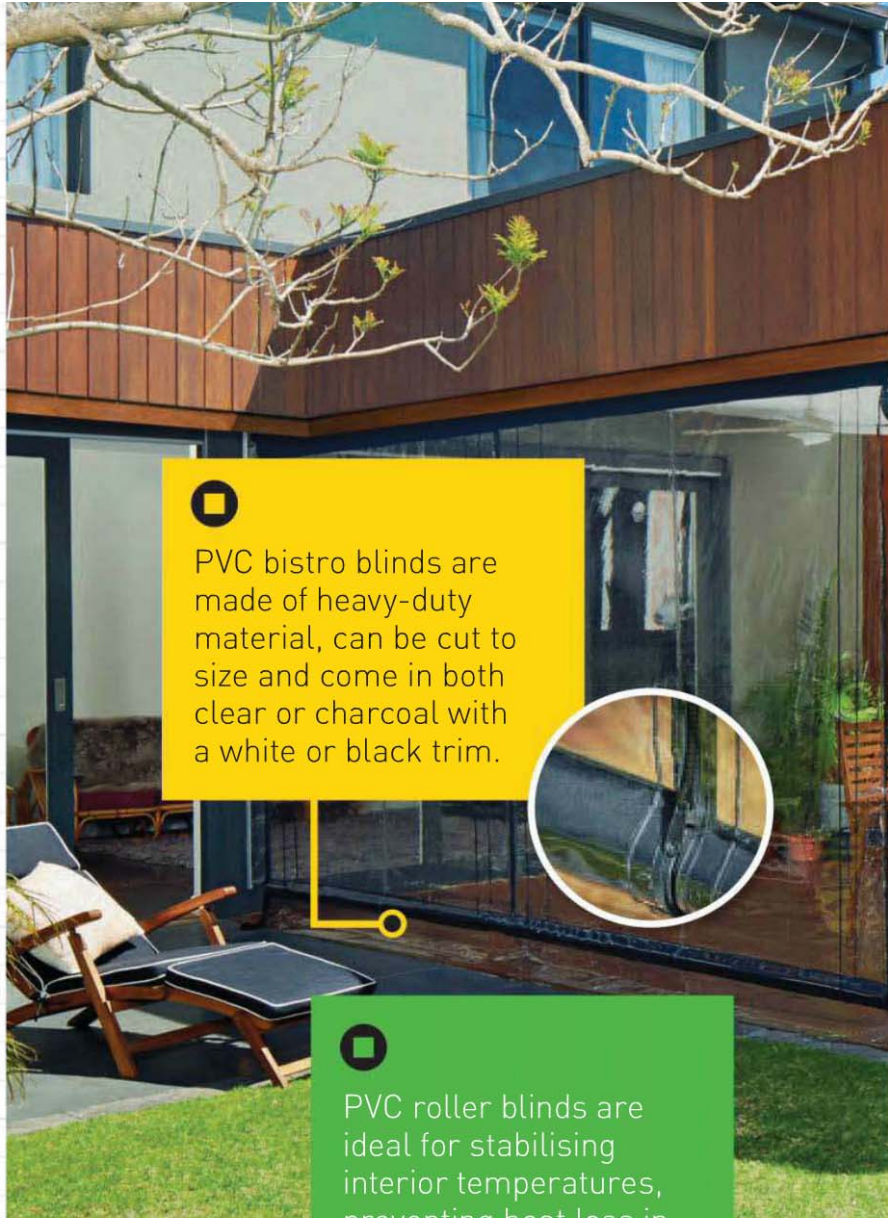
Protect your home from the elements all year round



PVC bistro blinds are made of heavy-duty material, can be cut to size and come in both clear or charcoal with a white or black trim.



PVC roller blinds are ideal for stabilising interior temperatures, preventing heat loss in winter or blocking heat and UV rays in summer.





Fixed-arm awnings are compact and retractable, and great for retaining heat inside the home and also protecting furniture and fabrics from fading.



Folding-arm awnings shield doors or decks from excessive sun or rain and make a useful temporary cover, as they are easily folded back.



INDUSTRIAL CHIC

Mix steel pipes with timber to make affordable designer furniture

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH **PROJECTS** GEMA BENEITEZ **PICTURES** SUE FERRIS

Making furniture out of industrial materials and salvaged or repurposed items is a hot decorating trend, and these creations can command high prices.

Our table cost a total of \$207 to build, with the pipes and fittings costing between \$3 and \$12 each.

Metal and timber are the hallmarks of this style, so threaded steel pipes make an ideal frame for a coffee table, as they're easy to assemble.

Calculate the number of pieces needed and their lengths, then use connectors to assemble the frame.

Spray the frame with paint and attach a plywood top. You can leave this raw or apply a clear varnish. ➤



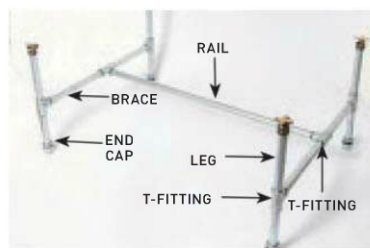
Create a designer table with a few basic materials from the hardware store



EXPERT SECRETS

This style can work in both retro spaces and modern homes if used sparingly. The trick is to make feature pieces that don't dominate the whole room.

1 2 3



1 Assemble the base

Join two 20 x 200mm pipes using T-fittings to make the legs. Repeat with two 250mm pipes to make the braces, then screw to the leg T-fittings. Use a 900mm pipe as a rail to connect the legs. Attach end caps to the leg bases and lugged capillary elbows to the tops.



2 Paint the metal

Lay a drop sheet and apply etch primer to the base frame, then apply 2-3 coats of spray paint. We used White Knight Rust Guard Epoxy Enamel, about \$16 for a 310g can.

TIP When spraying, wear a safety mask and work in a well-ventilated area.



3 Attach the tabletop

Cut a 1000 x 750mm piece of 19mm plywood using a circular saw. Lay the top face down, centre the frame on it and attach it with 6g x 20mm timber screws through the lugged capillary elbows. Sand the top with 180 grit paper and apply a coat of clear varnish.



BUDGET TIP

Plywood is the best choice for the top as it's more affordable than timber panels.

Get the latest looks on a DIY budget by building your own furniture.

PIPE SHELF

DIY TIP

Mount the shelf to the studs or use hollow wall anchors through plasterboard.



This eye-catching wall-mounted shelf is made out of a salvaged timber floorboard and recycled pipes and fittings. It gives the impression that the shelf has been installed around the plumbing.

When mounting the shelf to a plasterboard wall, find the studs and mark them on the wall using masking tape, then use the distance between the studs to determine the length of the lower pipe. >

GEMA'S TOOLKIT



Loctite 243 Threadlocker, about \$13 for 10ml. loctite.com.au

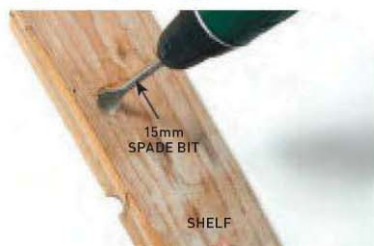


Dy-Mark Etch Primer Premium Formula, \$11 for 350g. dymark.com.au



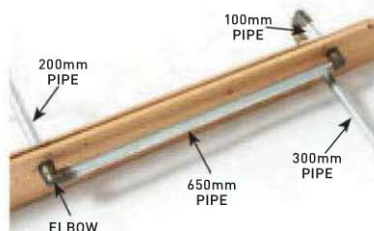
Redline 13-piece Wood Spade Bit Set, \$20, from Bunnings.

1 2 3



1 Drill the holes

Mark two pipe holes on the shelf with the centres spaced the same distance apart as the stud centres, and 40mm from the front edge. Drill the holes using a 15mm spade bit. Make a third hole in line with the first hole on the right, 90mm from the front edge.



2 Assemble the pipes

Attach a 200 and 100mm long 15mm pipe to each end of a 650mm pipe with 90° elbows and feed through the front holes from underneath. Add an elbow to the 200mm pipe and two joined elbows to the 100mm, feed a 300mm pipe through the back hole and attach.



3 Mount the shelf

Join a 150mm pipe to the left vertical pipe and a 100mm to the right one with 90° elbows, then attach a lugged capillary elbow to the end of each horizontal pipe. Mark the screw holes on the wall, securing the shelf to the studs with 10g x 75mm timber screws.

The shelf is made from a recycled floorboard that sits on elbow fittings.



Use recycled materials to make a rustic shelf that looks like it's been there for decades

 Making your own furniture?
Get inspired at pinterest.com/DIYhandyman

STEEL STOOL

DESIGN TIP

Add a touch of texture to a modern all-white kitchen by introducing industrial-style seating.

This unique stool has galvanised steel pipes for the frame and features a timber seat that was reclaimed and recycled from an old broken stool.

The legs on the frame have been splayed wider at the base to provide more stability, and they're also braced using a length of pipe.

Use thread adhesive on all fittings for a tight connection and secure hex fittings using a spanner and pipe wrench so they don't become loose.



Galvanised steel pipes make the ideal frame for a one-of-a-kind bar stool

1 2 3



1 Assemble the feet

Join two 20 x 100mm pipes at right angles using 90° elbows to make four feet. Add an elbow to one pipe and an end cap to the other. Attach the elbow to a T-fitting using a hex nipple. Join two feet using hex nipples and a T-fitting to make two pairs.

Felt protectors on the feet keep the floors scratch and damage free.

Recycled plywood gives the seat a weathered look.

woodhouse
EDGE LINE
WHITE PRIMED FINGER JOINTED RADIATA MOULDINGS
www.woodhouse-edgeline.com.au

Renovating and need a moulding option that is ready to install and paint?

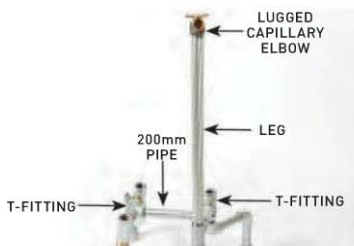
Select from the Woodhouse Edgeline® range of products to complete your internal fitout.

- Dual coat white primed finish
- Ready for your final topcoat application and finishing
- Made from plantation radiata pine
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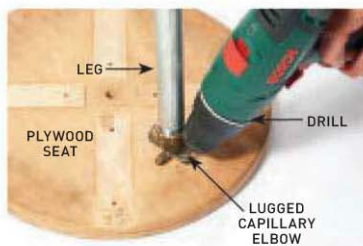
Contact your nearest building materials centre or scan this QR code for information on the Woodhouse® Edgeline range.

Available at
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warehouse



2 Finish the base

Connect each pair of feet to the two horizontal T-fittings with a 200mm pipe to make the base. Attach a 450mm pipe to each of the four vertical T-fittings to form the legs, then add a lugged capillary elbow to the top of each leg.



3 Attach the seat

Draw a 350mm diameter circle on 19mm plywood using a compass. Cut out the circle with a jigsaw, then sand the edges with 120 grit paper. Attach the seat to the lugged capillary elbows using 6g x 20mm screws, then seal with two coats of clear varnish.

DESIGNS ON CONCRETE

Build decorative outdoor furniture with the look and durability of natural stone for a fraction of the cost

Stone garden furniture is timeless, but it can be pricey. This table has a concrete top featuring fern leaf imprints, which is supported on a solid timber base and assembled using dowel joints.

This top costs about \$60 to DIY, which includes the formwork and reinforcement, but the total cost will vary with the timber used for the base.

It needs to be exterior grade and the type has to suit the finish. Go for clear treated pine if staining and finger-jointed H3 LOSP pine if painting.

The formwork for the tabletop is made from melamine-coated

particleboard so it is easy to remove once the concrete has cured.

A tabletop slab needs strength, a low shrinkage rate and a long cure time. Use a high-strength concrete mix, add a layer of galvanised light gauge steel mesh and reinforce it with three 8mm galvanised threaded rods.

Shrinkage and cracking is usually caused by excess water, so keep the mix as dry as possible but still workable.

Allow the concrete slab to harden for at least two days, keeping it moist and covered in plastic. To prevent staining, and to give a glossy finish, apply 2-3 coats of an acrylic sealer. ➤

2
DAYS

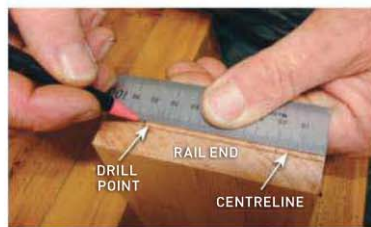
\$145
COST



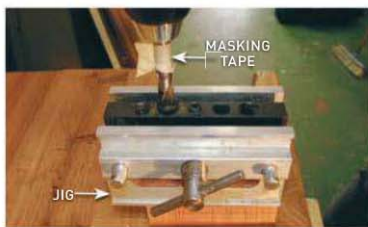
Fern-leaf imprints on the concrete make the tabletop look like a modern fossil record



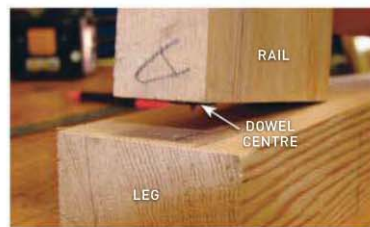
BUILD THE BASE Cut the legs and rails to length with a mitresaw, then drill dowel holes and assemble the frame using 50 x 10mm dowels and exterior PVA adhesive, pulling it tight with sash clamps. **TIP** Use masking tape around the drill bit as a depth guide.



1 SET OUT THE RAIL CENTRES on the ends of all four rails, marking vertical centrelines and hole locations for the dowels 15mm in from each edge along the marked lines.



2 DRILL THE DOWEL HOLES by clamping the rails in a vice and using a dowelling jig with a 10mm diameter brad point bit to drill holes 27mm deep at each marked position.



3 TRANSFER THE HOLE LOCATIONS to the legs using dowel centres so the rails are set 12mm down from the top edge. Drill the holes, then test-fit. Apply adhesive and tap in the dowels.

TOOLS

MITRESAW, DRILL,
TABLESAW

DESIGN TIP

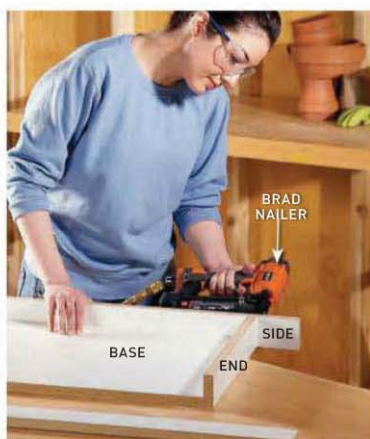
Try inlaying decorative objects like seashells, coloured glass, tiles or even coins in the top.

Materials

Melamine-coated particleboard	\$12
Pine	\$37
Galvanised mesh	\$18
Galvanised rod	\$9
Silicone	\$5
Adhesive	\$20
Acrylic sealer	\$20
Concrete	\$14
Dowels	\$10
TOTAL	\$145

The top is attached to the base using silicone, so hold the table under the rails if moving it.

MAKE THE TOP



1 Assemble the formwork

Secure the formwork ends to the base then attach the sides using a brad nailer, spacing the fasteners 150mm apart. Rub wax over the surface of the formwork to help release the concrete later.

TIP The sides of the formwork extend 170mm beyond each end.



2 Prepare the cast

Create even edges by applying masking tape along the formwork ends and sides 5mm in from the corners and edges. Apply a bead of silicone, smooth it with a wet finger, then remove the tape. Lay the fern leaves on newspaper and spray with adhesive, then press them onto the formwork base.



3 Pour the concrete

Use a spirit level to check the formwork is level in both directions, raising one side with shims, if needed. Pour the concrete around the perimeter to 25mm deep, then position the wire mesh with three lengths of reinforcing rod tied on. Pour in the remaining concrete to 40mm deep.



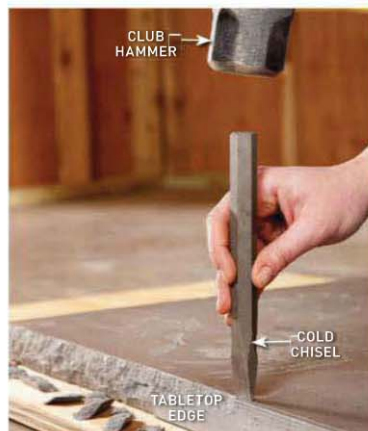
4 Settle the concrete

Wearing plastic gloves, carefully work the concrete mix into the edges and corners of the formwork and around the leaves. To drive out air bubbles, lightly tap the sides of the formwork with a hammer. When the concrete has settled, smooth out the surface using a steel float.



5 Clean the tabletop

Leave the concrete to dry and cure for at least 2-3 days, then carefully turn the slab over and remove the formwork, starting with the overlapping sides. Use a stiff brush and awl, if needed, to work the leaves out of the concrete top, then scrub the whole surface to remove wax and clean up any melamine residue.

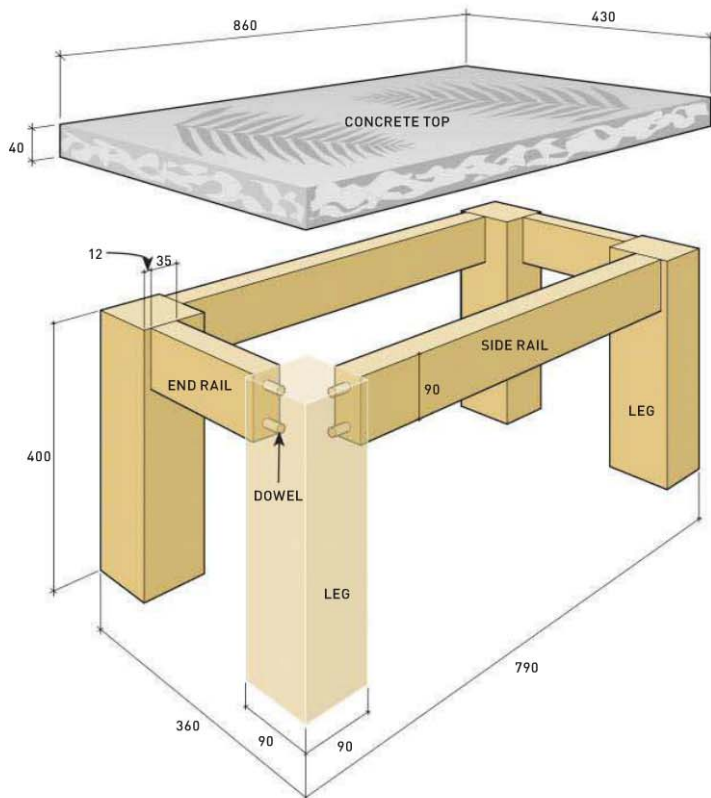


6 Finish the table

To give the illusion of natural stone, chip around the edges of the tabletop using a club hammer and cold chisel. Turn the top over and chip from the other side, then hone down any remaining sharp edges using an angle grinder. Build the base, then attach the top using silicone.

CONCRETE TABLE

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
Melamine		
Formwork base	860 x 430 x 16	1
Formwork sides	1200 x 65 x 16	2
Formwork ends	430 x 65 x 16	2
Pine		
Legs	400 x 90 x 90	4
Side rails	610 x 90 x 35	2
End rails	180 x 90 x 35	2

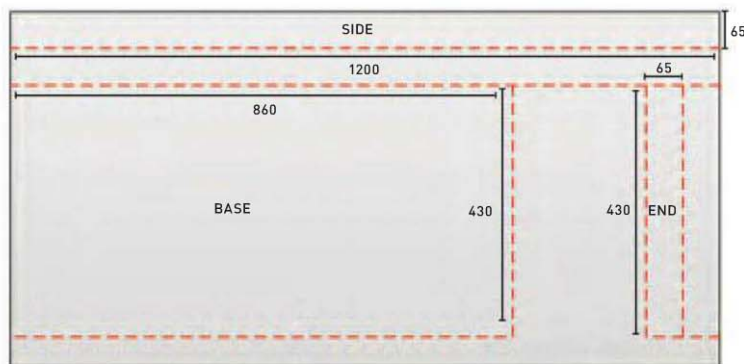
BUILDING THE FORMWORK

Melamine-coated particleboard is an ideal material for formwork as it's inexpensive, smooth and water-resistant. It costs about \$12 for a 1200 x 600 x 16mm sheet.

Cut the formwork pieces using a tablesaw or circular saw with a straightedge guide. The two sides are cut to extend beyond the ends for easy removal.

Use a brad nailer or drive screws by hand, drilling pilot holes. Seal the inside corners using silicone to give the cast rounded edges.

TIP To spot smudges during the clean-up, use dark silicone.



FORMWORK CUTTING DIAGRAM

MOTHER'S DAY GIFT GUIDE

Pick out a pressie that your DIY
or green thumb mum will love

FUN FINDS

DECORATE Mum's favourite part of the garden with a Lytworx 20 LED Butterfly Solar String, \$19.90, with metal finish.

Q Find it at Bunnings

DESIGN TIP

Use citronella candles in outdoor lanterns to keep mosquitoes at bay in entertaining areas.



Delight your mum with the glow of a Haven White Arc Garden Lantern, \$19.95.

Pass the time with the Terracotta Garden Clock and Thermometer, \$12.98.

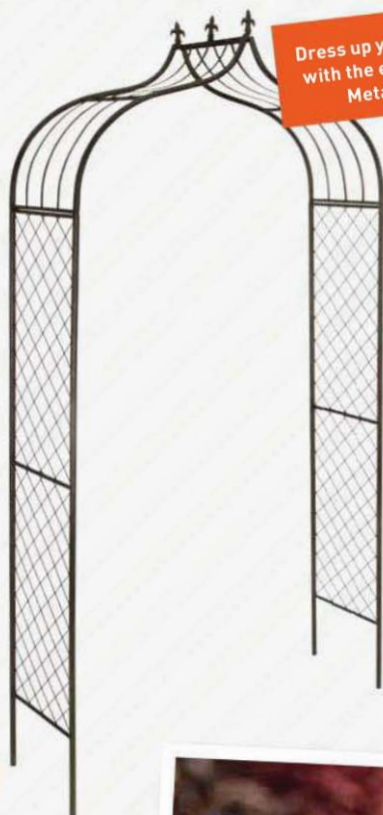


Pot up kitchen herbs for Mum using Chalkboard Flower Pots, \$9.98.





Grow Mum's favourites all year with a Naturallife Four Tier Greenhouse, \$47.97.



Dress up your mum's garden with the elegant Versailles Metal Arch, \$125.

GARDEN GOODIES



Brighten the balcony with blooms using the Garden Up Terrace Trio, \$29.95.



Raise fresh vegies in a Birdies 900 x 900 x 400mm Raised Garden Bed, \$99.

Feature Mum's favourite flowers in a Botanica Egg Pot, from \$29.98.



Protect your mum's hands with Showa Medium Garden Gloves, \$12.68.



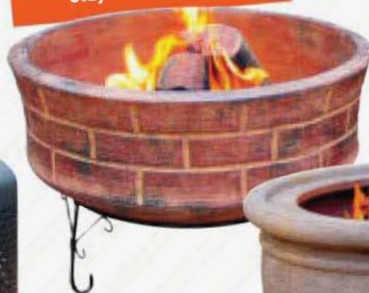
SET UP Lytworx Colour Change Solar Bird Stakes, \$6 each, along a path to enchant your mum and guide the way at night.

HOT OPTIONS



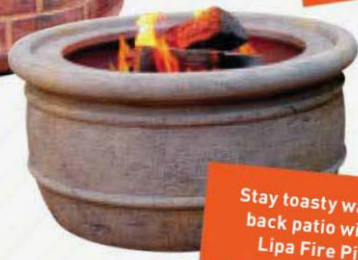
Bring the heat back to the yard with a Glow Maya Sun Clay Chimenea, \$189.

Dine alfresco all winter around a Glow Venetian Clay Fire Pit, \$229.



Stock and stoke the fire with the Four-piece Fireplace Tool Set, \$49.

Make the outdoors cosy for Mum with a Steel Glow Acheron Fire Pit, \$149.



Stay toasty warm on the back patio with a Glow Lipa Fire Pit, \$400.

MUST HAVES



LIGHT UP Mum's day by giving her the Home Design Table Lamp, \$19.90, with five colours to choose from and a ceramic finish.



GIFT CARD

Can't decide on a gift? Go to bunnings.com.au and personalise a Bunnings Gift Card for Mum.



Be prepared with the St John Ambulance Comprehensive 150-piece First Aid Kit, \$49.98.



Let Mum tackle any small task with the Supatool 105-piece Tool Kit, \$39.99.



Keep Mum's tools organised with the Stanley Mobile Tool Chest with Organisers, \$95.



Organise shoes with an Easier Storage Two-tier Chrome Expanding Shoe Rack, \$12.

DIY in paradise

Building on Norfolk Island is a creative process, as hardware is pricey and materials are scarce

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



DISCOVER THE TERRITORY

Rich in natural beauty, the island has a year-round comfortable climate, and it's also a history lover's haven with its Polynesian settlers, First Fleet farmers, the convicts and the last wave of settlers, the descendants of the famous Bounty mutineers.

- **SIZE** 8km long by 5km wide.
- **LOCATION** About 1400km east of Australia in the Pacific Ocean.
- **POPULATION** About 1800 permanent residents.
- **INFO** Norfolk Island Tourism Office (norfolkisland.com.au) and Norfolk Island Travel Centre (norfolkislandtravelcentre.com).

Two of Australians' favourite pastimes have to be DIY and home renovation.

It's fairly simple to get into DIY. Read a good magazine or surf the web for ideas, get the materials you need, and you're on your way.

But what if the range of materials available was cut by 50%? And what if the price, even for a pack of nails, was double what you normally pay?

Or, what if specially ordered items took six months or even longer to arrive and cost \$500 or more a cubic metre to freight?

Well, this is the reality for DIYers and tradies on Australia's far-flung external territory Norfolk Island in the South Pacific.

Getting that dishwasher, box of tiles or bundle of timber is expensive and can take months.

Bulky goods all come from the mainland by freighter, which moors about a kilometre offshore, safely outside the reefs. The unloading is done by craning into and out of lighters or whaleboats.

A big load, like a car, comes ashore on top of two lighters tied together. ➤



Spectacular views abound on the island, all dominated by the iconic Norfolk Island pine. **TOP RIGHT** Getting goods to the island is a costly and complicated exercise.

Using Norfolk pine

If you've visited any seaside area in much of mainland Australia, you're most likely familiar with *Araucaria heterophylla* or Norfolk Island pine.

This species of pine tree was one of the main reasons the island was settled by the First Fleet in 1788.

When Captain James Cook discovered and named the island in 1774, he saw the pines as significant enough to record them in his journal.

'The chief produce of the isle is the spruce pine ... Here then is another isle where masts for the largest ships may be had,' he wrote.

But the first settlers found they were too knotty to be suitable for structural uses such as masts. Despite this, the timber is useful in many other ways. ▶



DECKING When rough-sawn, the pine is ideal for an exterior deck.



FLOORING Fully dressed and milled, it makes a superb timber for floors.



CABINETS With its beautiful grain and colour, it is great for use in fine cabinetry.

Properties like the elegant Bishop's Court, constructed from Norfolk Island and kauri pine in the 1880s, have stood the test of time.



This modern home, built by Paul Crookwell, has Norfolk Island pine decking, doors and cladding. **RIGHT** Planted in the mid-1830s and standing 40m high, this pine is a relative youngster on the island.





ABOVE Remnants from World War II, rust-resistant Marsden steel mats are still used for fencing.
BELOW This wall-hanging made of beach finds is a character-filled piece of 'make do' artwork.



With their aged texture and long life span, Marsden mats can be cut into unique garden decor.



Because of their high manganese content, Marsden steel mats are super-resistant to rust

Making do

When conversing with local tradies, artisans and DIYers, one thing that really comes across is sustainability.

To them, it's about being sensible in the usage and disposal of materials and resources. Cost and scarcity creates a greater respect for materials.

Then there's waste disposal. On an island, you don't put waste in a bin and send it off to be buried. Waste is a communal and environmental issue, so again this creates a greater level of what we'd call sustainable behaviour, but to an islander is just commonsense.

The level of recycling and upcycling on the island is huge because it makes sense to reduce wastage and increase the range of available materials.

A great catch-all phrase you keep running across is 'make do', which covers this re-use of materials. One of the best examples of 'make do' is the World War II era Marsden mats.

During the war, these steel mats were used by the military to build the island's first airport. Many are still in good condition today, and you'll see them used for fencing, livestock pens and even reinforcing concrete.

The local experts are more than happy to share their DIY tips and tricks, which inevitably come with a South Pacific twist.

Paul Crookwell

A relative newcomer as he's only been on the island for about 15 years, Paul is a builder who still takes on odd building jobs, even in semi-retirement.

Moving to Norfolk Island from Sydney was a shock for Paul, as he suddenly went from a position of having easy and cheap access to an abundance of materials to finding them expensive and also difficult to get hold of.

Paul loves working with the local timbers, and much of his family home is built from locally sourced timber. Here he shares a few handy tips.

➤ **BUILD MODULAR** Shape the dimensions of a project around the size of the available materials. Base

the lengths of walls on plasterboard sheet sizes. This reduces wastage and costs, but also speeds up the job as there's no fiddling around with cuts.

➤ **PREPARE WELL** When it comes to preparation, take the time to ensure surfaces are appropriately sanded and cleaned of dirt, dust and oil, and you'll extend the life of paintwork by years, even in harsh coastal situations.

➤ **SALVAGE MATERIALS** Use demolition materials when you can. Long, sound lengths of timber from walls or roofs can often be re-used for framing once the nails have been removed.

➤ **SAVE LEFTOVERS** Keep any offcuts, as you never know when they may come in handy for future projects or for making patch repairs.

➤ **DO YOUR RESEARCH** Use the internet to find how-to videos to watch before you start a project. Paul says to check the videos are locally relevant and from a reputable source. ➤

There's a New Boss of the Underground

Everhard's new PIT BOSS provides an easy, quick and simple method of securing 90mm or 100/110mm uPVC pipe to polypropylene stormwater pits.



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Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

The EasyDRAIN™ Pit Boss provides a secure and easy connection between Everhard's range of polymer rainwater and stormwater pits and uPVC pipe.

Made from ABS material, the EasyDRAIN™ Pit Boss can be secured to the wall of either the rainwater pit, Series 300, 450 and 600 Stormwater Pits using a suitable adhesive and stainless steel screws. Once installed, 90mm or 100mm uPVC pipe can be connected and sealed using plumber's solvent cement, providing a secure, water tight seal between the stormwater pit and the stormwater pipe, eliminating issues of pipe separation caused by subsidence and poor pipe connections.



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Roy Nobbs

Norfolk Island born and bred, Roy Nobbs is a builder by trade and runs Rocky Point Joinery.

This is also where you'll find the island's Tahitian ukulele workshop, a spin-off that developed from a visit to a craft show in Noumea.

Roy has a wealth of wisdom, the sort that comes from a lifetime of working with timber and having a passion and respect for the material.

And what is the difference between a Tahitian ukulele and a regular one, you may wonder. Tahitian ukuleles have the port on the back so the player can regulate the sound by moving the ukulele closer or further away.



Proper sanding is the key to giving your product a superior finish, says Roy



ABOVE Mixing a variety of timbers makes every piece unique. **LEFT** Milled in Roy's joinery, Norfolk Island pine is left to season naturally. **RIGHT** Roy's great wall of clamps is an impressive sight.





LEFT Made from driftwood, this chair endures the elements, as the salt water acts as a preservative.

TOP A tile inlay adds character to this bedside table.

RIGHT Sections of an old oar handle are used as shelf supports.



Brendon King

Although he has a trade background, Brendon King's passion today is in creating furniture and other objects from salvaged and recycled timber.

Fishing is his other passion, which oddly enough aligns with his furniture work, as he finds lots of great pieces of driftwood while dropping a line.

His work is so well recognised on the island that people now come to him with pieces of timber and ask what he can make with it for them, or to let him know when good timber may become available.

He'll often design furniture around a particular piece of salvaged timber and sometimes waits months to finish a project until he finds the right bit.

WORKSHOP STORAGE

Organise your garage with drawers designed to hold all your tools and equipment



Shelves and drawers are a good way to add storage space to a workshop, but they must be sturdy if they're to handle the weight of power tools.

It costs about \$240 to build one of these boxes and four drawers, plus a plinth.

You'll need two sheets of 2400 x 1200 x 19mm plywood and one 1200 x 600 x 12mm sheet, as well as pine for the plinth.

For a wall of storage, build more boxes and a full-length plinth. Separate them with open shelving and add a worktop. ➤



Cut the shelves from 19mm ply. Position the base shelf on the plinth and attach cleats to the outer box sides to install the rest without screws.

DIY TIP

Use a tablesaw to cut the parts to width and a circular saw with a straightedge guide to cut them to length.



These tough drawers and the boxes they are housed in are built from plywood. The drawers come in three sizes to hold a range of tools and materials.

TOOLS

DRILL, TABLESAW,
CIRCULAR SAW,
BRAD NAILER



The length of the worktop depends on the number of boxes, while the depth will be 590mm. We cut a sheet of 2400 x 1200 x 19mm ply in two to make the top.



Lay the box sides next to each other with the most flawed surfaces face up. These will be on the inside of the box. Arrange so the best edges face the front.



Countersink all screw holes on the outside of the boxes and fill all screw and brad holes before staining. Seal the drawer faces with polyurethane.

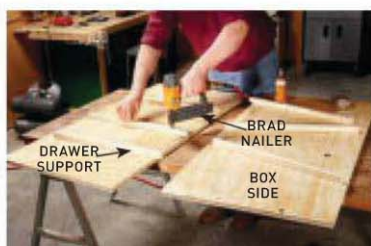


If you build several boxes, you'll need to make one big plinth to stand them on. Create a toe space by making the plinth 60mm shallower than the boxes.

Materials

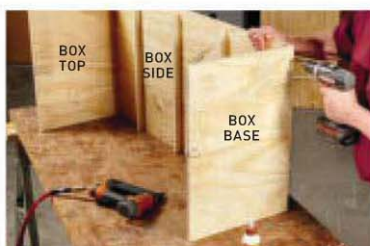
CD plywood	\$162
Pine	\$4
2.4m treated pine	\$9
Pine dowel	\$7
Timber screws	\$12
Cuphead bolts, nuts and washers	\$12
500ml paint	\$17
1L clear polyurethane	\$18
TOTAL	\$241

MAKE THE BOX AND DRAWERS



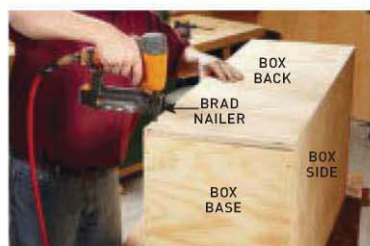
1 Secure the supports

Mark the top of the drawer supports on the sides of the boxes 355, 660 and 965mm from the base. Apply adhesive and position the supports on the lines 12mm from the front edges. Tack in place with brads, securing with screws.



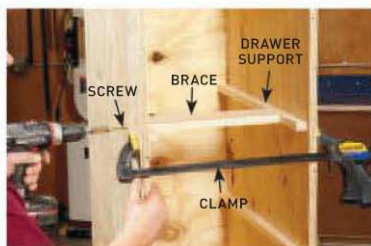
2 Assemble the box

Apply PVA adhesive, then tack the top and base to one box side with brads. Drill 2mm pilot holes and secure with screws set at least 40mm from the edges. Add the other side and secure using adhesive and screws.



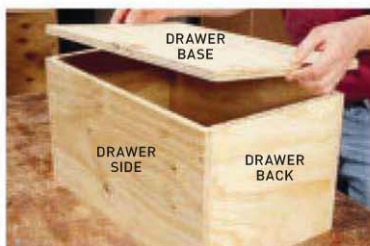
3 Secure the back

Use a builder's square to check the box back is cut square. Apply adhesive, then position the back and use brads to tack down one side only. Use the back to square up the box, securing with screws spaced 300mm apart.



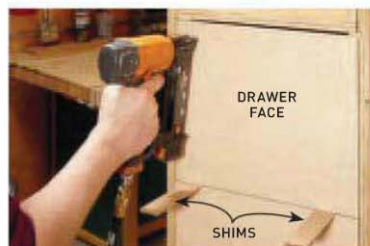
4 Attach the brace

Measure the distance between the centre drawer supports, then cut the brace to fit exactly between them. Clamp it 100mm from the front and 1mm below the top of the supports, securing with adhesive and screws.



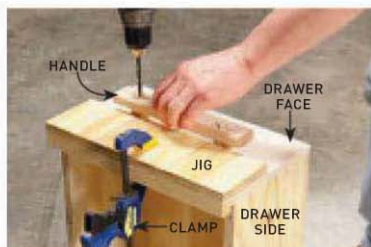
5 Build the drawers

Lay out the pieces for each drawer with the best edges face up, assembling with adhesive and three screws at each joint. Cut the bases to the exact size and use them to square up each drawer, securing with screws.



6 Add the drawer faces

Starting with the base drawer, cut the faces to size, with 3mm side gaps and 5mm in between the drawers. Shim the drawer faces to ensure the gaps are even, then secure with adhesive and brads in each corner.



7 Install the handles

Round off the edges of the handles and cut the posts to length. Clamp the handle jig to the drawer face and attach the dowels. Hold the handle in position and drill 8mm clearance holes, then secure with bolts, washers and nuts.



8 Build the plinth

If assembling more than one box, measure the space and calculate the number of boxes and shelves needed. Cut the plinth to match. Secure the sides and add a brace every 1200mm. Paint the plinth to match the boxes.



9 Hang the shelves

Secure each box to the wall studs and the plinth with screws. Install the base shelf on the plinth, then secure 550mm cleats to the box sides for extra shelves. Cut the top to fit over the boxes and shelves. Secure with screws.

SHORTCUT

Make a simple handle jig.
CUT 19mm ply to 110mm wide and the length of the drawer faces.

SECURE a 40 x 19mm ply scrap flush with the top edge of a face, marking the handle ends and post hole centres 80mm and 50mm from each end.

CLAMP the jig and glue the dowels to hold them in position until the handles are bolted on.



When all the boxes are in position, secure to the plinth and to the wall studs with 75mm x 8g screws. Add the shelves and attach the worktop with screws.

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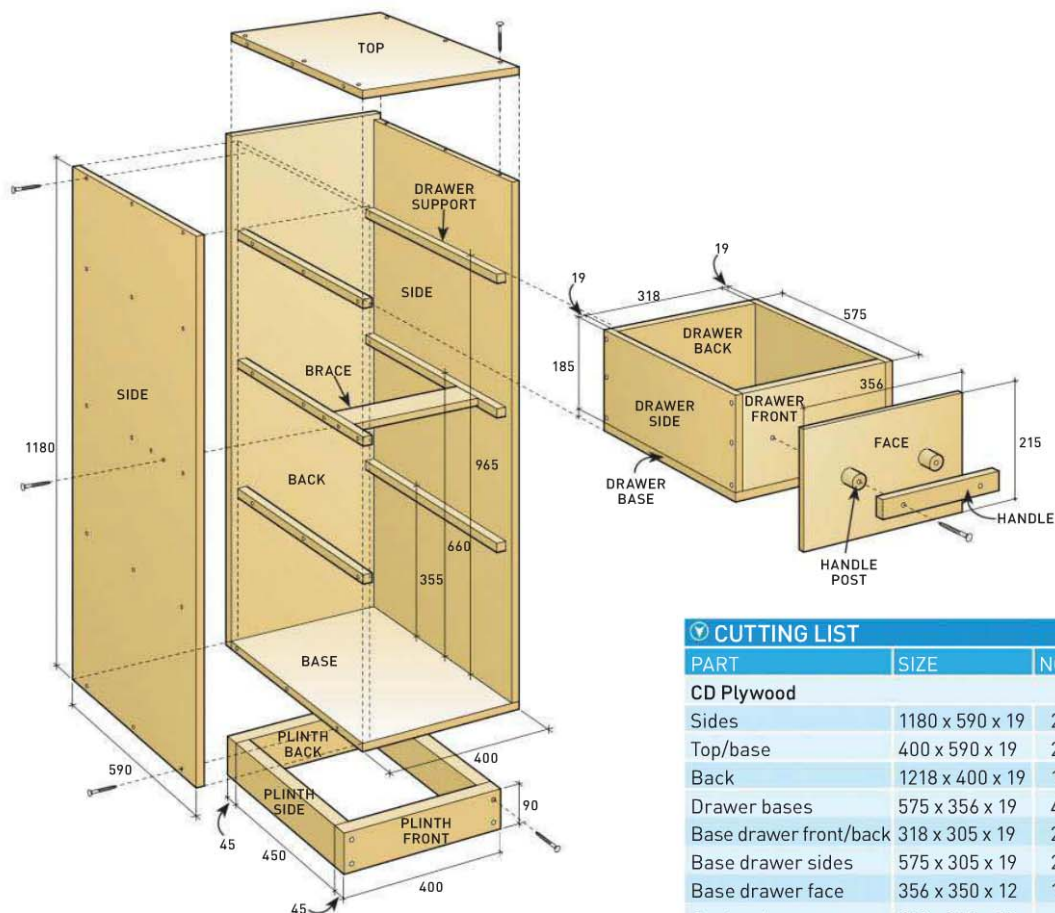
- Ready to use
- Spreads easily
- Interior/exterior use
- Long shelf life
- Comes in white and a range of popular decking colours





BOX AND DRAWERS

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
CD Plywood		
Sides	1180 x 590 x 19	2
Top/base	400 x 590 x 19	2
Back	1218 x 400 x 19	1
Drawer bases	575 x 356 x 19	4
Base drawer front/back	318 x 305 x 19	2
Base drawer sides	575 x 305 x 19	2
Base drawer face	356 x 350 x 12	1
Centre drawer front/back	318 x 255 x 19	4
Centre drawer sides	575 x 255 x 19	4
Centre drawer faces	356 x 300 x 12	2
Top drawer front/back	318 x 185 x 19	2
Top drawer sides	575 x 185 x 19	2
Top drawer face	356 x 215 x 12	1
Pine		
Drawer supports	578 x 25 x 19	6
Centre brace	312 x 90 x 19	1
Handles	250 x 42 x 19	4
Dowel		
Handle posts	25 x 25 dia	8
Treated pine		
Plinth front/back	400 x 90 x 45	2
Plinth sides	450 x 90 x 45	2

FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Timber screws, 35mm x 8g	Drawer supports, shelf cleats
Timber screws, 40mm x 8g	Box, drawers
Timber screws, 75mm x 8g	Centre brace, plinth
Cuphead bolts, M8 x 90mm	Handles
Brads, 32mm x 18g	Supports, boxes, drawers

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HANGING PLASTERBOARD

Learn the skills to finish stud walls DIY and save money on your renovation



Plasterboard is a sheet material that is commonly used to line internal stud walls.

The strong, highly fire-resistant sheets are made up of a gypsum core encased in heavy-duty lining paper.

Hanging plasterboard isn't hard to do DIY, relying mostly on accurate cutting, but getting the joints smooth is a skilled job. A rough finish on the joints will show through even when the walls are painted.

We show you how to cut and hang plasterboard sheets step by step and also finish the joints.

If you want to call in a plasterer for the joints, it will take them a day and cost about \$400 for an average-sized room.

DIY TIP

Use a utility knife to score the paper and the gypsum will break along the line of the cut.

WHAT YOU NEED



Lufkin AutoLock
8m Tape Measure, about \$13.
cooperhandtools.com.au



Trojan Folding Utility Knife,
\$10. trojantools.com.au



Irwin Heavy Duty Jab Saw,
\$17. irwin.com.au

Another pair of hands is helpful to support the plasterboard sheet while you're cutting



LINE IT

Here are the basics of hanging plasterboard on a stud wall.

➤ **SCORE** the front paper, then snap and fold open the sheet.

➤ **CUT** through the paper on the back. Use a keyhole saw for short cuts, like a switch plate hole, and a coarse-tooth saw for cuts around doors.

➤ **LAY** the sheets flat on the floor to do intricate layouts so it is easier to use chalklines and straightedges.

➤ **MAKE** openings for existing doors and windows before hanging other sheets. Jambs and insulation will prevent cutting sheets in position, so cut these on the floor.

➤ **SAVE** waste by cutting to length before cutting to width.

➤ **USE** 3600 or 4200mm long sheets instead of 2400mm.

The leftover pieces will be longer and more useful, with fewer joints to tape.

➤ **POSITION** the cut sheets to minimise the number of joints, especially hard-to-tape butt joints. ➤



Irwin Chalkline Reel, \$20. irwin.com.au



Hyde 1.2m Detachable T Square, \$24, from Bunnings.



Stanley 4-Way Keyhole Saw, \$23. stanleytools.com.au

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CUT THE PLASTERBOARD



1 Set up the plasterboard

Lean the stack of plasterboard sheets at a slight angle against the last wall to be covered. Make sure the top edges of the sheets are evenly supported by the stud framing to prevent them from warping.



2 Cut to length

Mark the length along the top and base of the sheet, then line up the right side of the square with the marks. Starting at the top, score two-thirds of the way down with a utility knife, then finish scoring from the base up.



3 Snap the sheet

Lift the sheet away from the stack and position yourself with the scored side facing away. Ensuring the sheet is resting on the floor, knock your knee on the scored line to break the gypsum core so you can fold the sheet open.



4 Finish the cut

Using the utility knife, cut halfway down through the crease on the reverse side of the sheet facing you, finishing the cut from the base up. Steady the top of the sheet with your free hand to hold the two halves together.



5 Cut to width

Pull the utility knife behind the square to cut sheets to width. Hold the blade against the aluminium tongue, then pierce the lining paper with the tip. Slide the top of the square and the knife along the length of the sheet.



6 Snap the cut

Clear the floor of scraps and screws so you don't dent the sheet. Lower the sheet close to the floor and snap each cut open with a soft karate punch. Slice through the lining paper along the crease on the underside to finish.



7 Make the wall openings

Nail or screw the plasterboard sheets over wall openings when possible, leaving the area above the opening unfastened until you finish cutting. Cut upwards using a saw until the blade hits the timber at the top.



8 Cut out the openings

Score the underside of the plasterboard sheet along the top of the door framing. Snap the flap up, then cut through the front lining paper of the plasterboard sheet, following the crease line carefully.

HANG THE SHEETS

➤ **SECURE PLASTERBOARD** by applying stud adhesive to the wall framework in daubs 30mm wide and 12mm thick, spaced 250mm apart and 250mm away from any nailed or screwed edge. Position each sheet and secure along the recessed edges at each stud, then at the ends every 150mm using plasterboard screws or nails.



Taping recessed joints

Self-adhesive fibreglass or paper tape is bedded into plasterboard joints, using three layers of compound, to help strengthen them and make them seamless.

Use a base coat compound for the first two layers, then a finishing compound for the last layer.

Or you can use an all-purpose compound for all three coats.

Fibreglass tape is the easiest to use, but it isn't as strong as paper tape and is not suitable to be used with pre-mixed compound.



Gyprock Ultra-AP Compound, \$49 for 15kg. gyprock.com.au



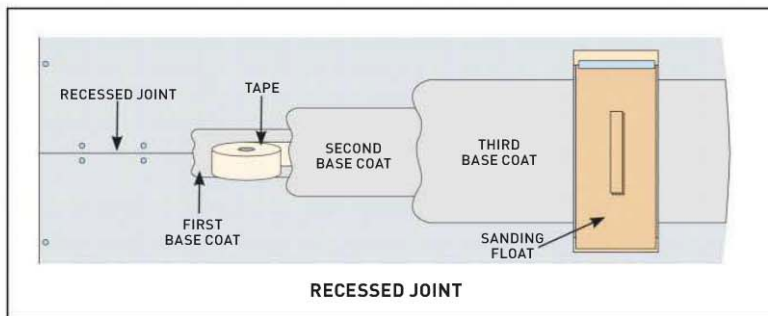
1 Bed in the tape

Use a 100mm broad knife to fill the recessed joint with compound. Roll out the tape over the joint, then gently press along the tape using the broad knife to bed it in. Allow to dry.



2 Add the finishing coats

Apply a second coat using a 150mm broad knife. Allow to dry. Apply a third coat with a 200mm knife. Allow to dry, then sand flush with the plasterboard surface using a sanding float.



FINISH INTERNAL CORNERS

Rest one end of a broad knife on the tape in the corner and the other end on the plasterboard for an even taper.

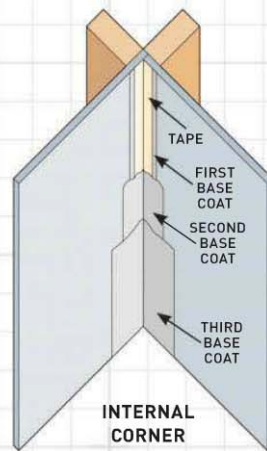


1 CUT THE TAPE to length and fold in half lengthways. Apply the first coat of compound with a 100mm broad knife.

TIP The crease stiffens the tape and helps keep the corner straight.



2 POSITION THE TAPE near the ceiling, lightly pulling the knife down to bed the tape in the compound. Apply two more coats 150mm either side of the joint, feathering the edges.



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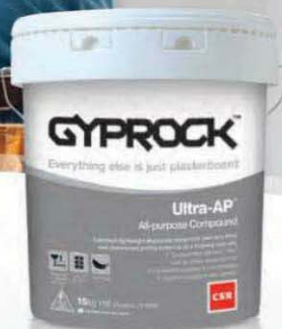
Multi-Purpose Joint Compound

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- Easy to follow instructions on the pack



Pre-Mixed Total Joint Cement

- A heavyweight compound with excellent tape adhesion and joint strength
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CSR



Mix the joint compound by adding the dry powder to the water, according to the instructions, then mix until it forms a smooth and creamy consistency.



Covering butt joints

Butt joints are where two non-tapered edges of the plasterboard meet. They are difficult to hide because the tape protrudes above the surface of the plasterboard.

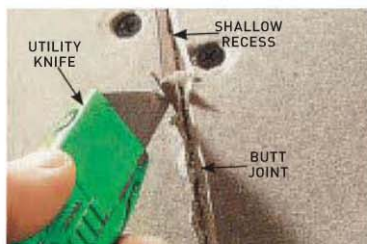
You can avoid butt joints by using long sheets of plasterboard to span the walls and ceilings, but you will still end up with a few.

The key to hiding a butt joint is to keep the tape coat thin. Build up a layer of compound over the tape that's thin and wide enough to blend into the surrounding surface.



2 Bed in the tape

Fill the recess with a 100mm wide, 2mm thick coat of compound using a broad knife. Roll out the tape, then lightly press along it with the blade, so 1mm of compound is left underneath.



1 Tidy up the joint

Once the plasterboard is secured to the studs, use a sharp utility knife to trim the edges of each sheet at an angle to remove loose or torn paper and create a shallow recess for the compound.



3 Add the finishing coats

Apply a thin second coat of compound 200-300mm wide over the tape. Allow to dry, then apply a third coat, tapering out the edges 300-500mm to conceal the bump left by the tape.

FINISH EXTERNAL CORNERS

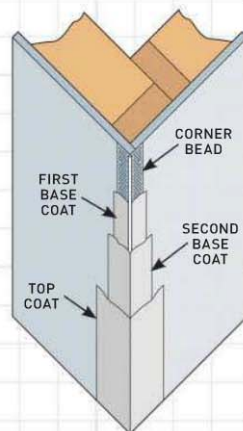
Secure corner beads on all external angles, such as doorways, then apply three coats of compound.



1 ATTACH THE CORNER BEAD to the doorway or corner, securing every 300mm with ring shank nails, screws or staples, ensuring the corner bead isn't misaligned.



2 APPLY THE COMPOUND over the corner bead with a broad knife, using two base coats and one top coat. Feather the edges, allow the compound to dry, then sand smooth.



EXTERNAL CORNER

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Dust catcher

To drill a hole without making a mess, use masking tape to attach an open envelope to the wall underneath where you're drilling. The envelope will catch any dust and keep the floor clean.

Jonathan Heathcote, TAS

HANDY HINTS

Make common DIY jobs easier with these tips from *Handyman* readers

Ticking items off the to-do list is very satisfying but when it comes to DIY, working smarter, not harder, is the best plan of attack.

Tried-and-tested tips from those who have done it before can help you work more efficiently, so you can get the job done faster and with less chance of disaster.

That's why we love to hear our readers' Handy Hints and have put together these 15 DIY shortcuts to help you with home maintenance, gardening and more. ➤



2

Clever clips

Attach bulldog clips to electrical cords, then hang them on hooks to eliminate trip hazards. The clips are also a good way to keep multiple cords organised.

Philippa Clapham, QLD

3

Colour code

Secure a cable tie at the top and plug end of a power tool cable. Use a different colour for each tool so that when working with multiple power tools, you'll easily know which plug belongs to which.

Ryan Johnstone, QLD



4

Rustic solution

To make a budget and effective rustic timber stain, add one ream of plain steel wool to a cup of white vinegar and use it to give timber an aged and weathered look instantly.

Nicole Tapp, TAS



5

Top down

Always start painting furniture from the top and work your way down. That way, if any paint drips get on the base of the piece, they will be covered by the final coat.

Catherine Brauer, NSW

6

Leak prevention

If you have a habit of forgetting to turn the hose off at the tap, there's a way to avoid burst connectors flooding the backyard.

Drill a tiny hole in the hose near the tap and the small spray of water when it's left on will remind you to turn off the water.

Patricia Comer, NSW



7

Oil slick

When nailing into hardwood, rub the nail in your hair first. The natural oils and sweat will make the nail much easier to knock in without bending it, and the timber absorbs the oils so the nail stays stuck fast.

James Sizer, ACT



8

**Nail holder**

Use a blob of Blu-Tack to hold small nails in place before hammering them in. This keeps your fingers clear of danger and the Blu-Tack can be re-used over and over again.

Carrol Ham, QLD

Photo finish

When you need to disassemble something to repair it, take digital photos of each stage so you can use them for reference when you reassemble it. You can enlarge the photos on a computer for clarity.

Joyce Hall, WA

9

10

Hot dog

To stop your dog digging up your new plants, sprinkle chilli powder around them. This natural method repels dogs and also works as a pest deterrent.

Kristopher Evans, ACT





Odour away

Place a cotton ball soaked in an essential oil inside the vacuum cleaner bag and it will leave a nice scent while vacuuming, so your home smells fresh and clean.

Tanya James, VIC

12

Battery band

Put a rubber band around batteries that are fully charged and remove it when it's been used, so you'll always know which ones are ready to go. Add a label to track how many times it has been recharged and how often.

Lorraine Stacey, NSW



13

Dent defence

To get furniture pressure marks out of wool carpet, cover with a tea towel and lightly iron over the spot. The fibres will quickly spring back into shape.

Clare Willis, VIC



14

Upside down

When you've finished using gloss paint, put the lid back on firmly, then turn the tin upside down to store it. That way the skin forms on the base and not the top.

Alasdair Hirst, VIC



15

Magnet magic

Put a large magnet inside your pocket and attach screws, nails and other metal fasteners to the magnet from the outside of your pocket for easy retrieval while you work.

Ben Kimpton, SA



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Do now

- **PLANT** a rhododendron now for spring blooms, page 110.
- **GROW** garlic at home for organic flavour, page 114.
- **KEEP** an avocado tree healthy for a bumper crop, page 124.

Flowers to sow

Plan ahead for blooms in warm weather.

- **WALLFLOWER**
- **DELPHINIUM**
- **CINERARIA**
- **PRIMULA**
- **STOCK**



Vegies to grow

Greens and bulbs are the crops to start this month.

- **LETTUCES**
- **SHALLOTS**
- **SPINACH**
- **ONIONS**
- **CRESS**



This month

Enjoy the cooler weather as you prepare for winter and plan for spring



What's in bloom

Violas are a favourite winter flower, bringing cheerful colour to the garden at the time it needs it most.

The beautiful but hardy cultivars Viola 'Blue Moon', 'Starry Night' and 'Harvest Moon' are the result of a long breeding program focused on producing free-flowering forms.

Featuring large faces in bright colours, these violas have a compact, mounding habit. Growing to 200mm high and 500mm wide, they're great in borders, pots or hanging baskets.

Give them full sun to part shade in moist, well-drained soil. Water regularly and cut back in summer.

Book club



Growing your own food has lots of health benefits, but you can get more crops than you bargained for. One of the best ways to use your fresh produce is to drink it.

After beating cancer, TV host Sally Obermeyer was determined to take back her life, and did so by adopting a smoothie lifestyle.

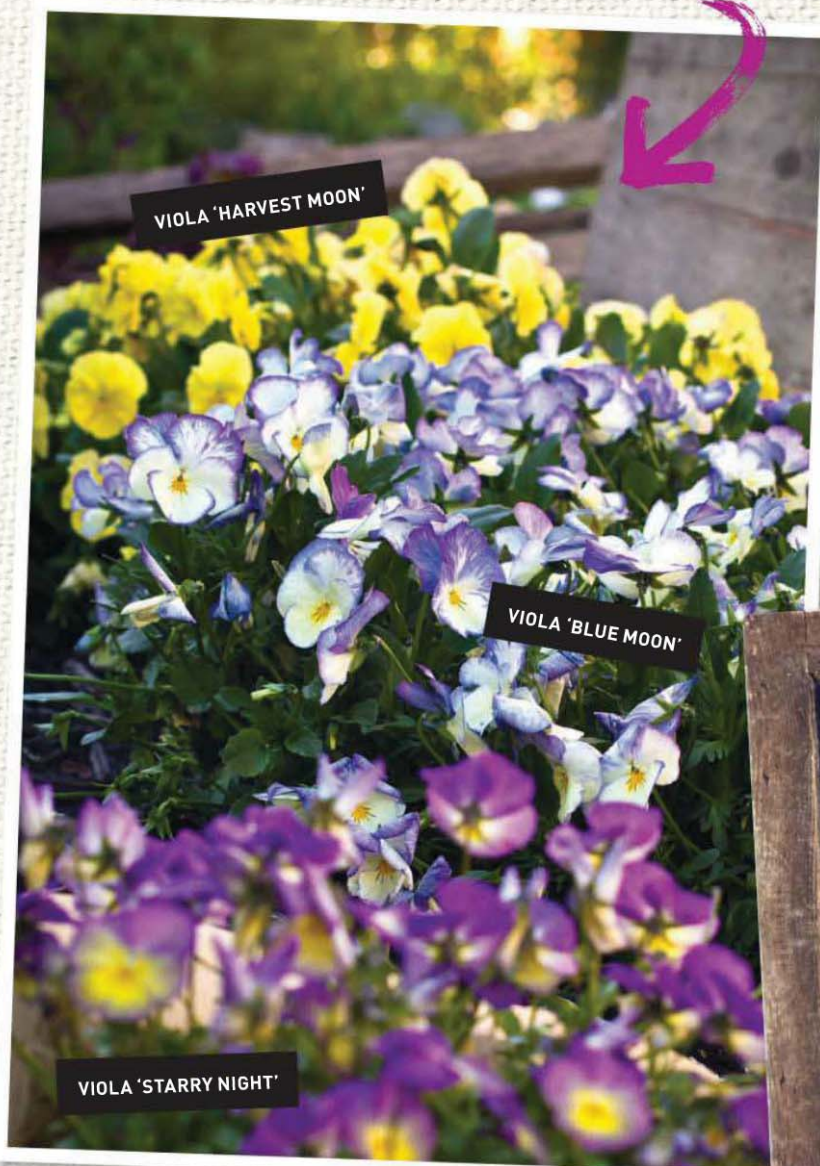
Sally spent a year creating delicious recipes with her sister Maha, losing 15kg in the process, and the result is *Super Green Smoothies* (Allen & Unwin, \$20).

Featuring 60 easy recipes that use leafy greens, vegies and fruit, it's a fantastic way to get the most out of your backyard harvest.

To-do list

Prepare the backyard for winter.

- ✓ **PROTECT** kiwi vines, tender fruit trees and young citrus from frost in cold areas.
- ✓ **CHECK** indoor plants for mealy bug and shift with a jet of water.
- ✓ **ADD** fallen leaves to compost or bag them to make leaf-mould.
- ✓ **TAKE** semi-hardwood rose cuttings, except in tropical zones.
- ✓ **WATER** indoor plants less as the weather cools down.
- ✓ **RAISE** mower blades to keep the lawn a little longer. ➤

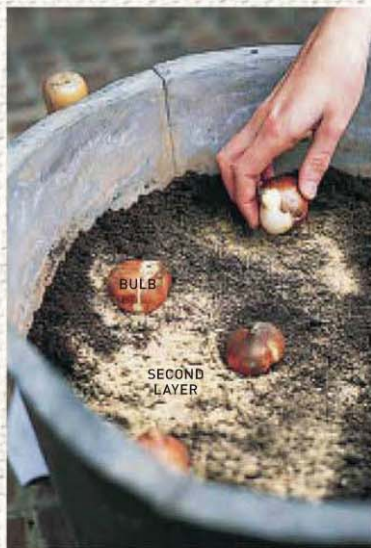


How to

Plant bulbs in a pot

May is the last chance to plant bulbs for a spring showcase. Layer bulbs in three different sizes in a pot at least 250mm high for a fabulous display.

TIP Stagger the layers so the bulbs aren't positioned directly over each other.



1 Prepare the pot

Add potting mix to the base of a pot with good drainage holes. Plant large bulbs, like tulips, at least 150mm deep in the pot. Cover with mix and plant a layer of medium-sized bulbs, like grape hyacinths, at 100mm deep.



2 Layer the bulbs

Cover the second layer of bulbs with mix, then plant a layer of small bulbs, like crocuses and dwarf narcissi, covering with 50mm of mix. Water in well, then regularly during winter, but don't keep the soil wet.

Feed now

Give greens and leafy vegetables a liquid feed.

- SILVERBEET
- CABBAGES
- BROCCOLI
- LETTUCES
- CELERY



Prune now

Cut back perennials that have finished flowering.

- AGAPANTHUS
- PENSTEMON
- BEGONIA
- DAHLIA
- SALVIA



Harvest now

Pick root vegies for autumn soups and stews.

- BEETROOT
- CARROTS
- TURNIPS
- SWEDES
- RADISHES



Yard clean-up

When the weather cools down in autumn, it's a great time to tidy up outdoor areas and prepare for winter by pruning and planting.

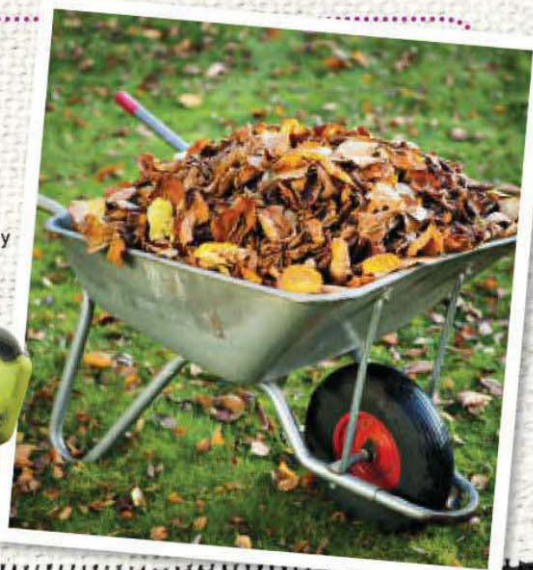
And whether you have a big backyard or a compact courtyard, autumn leaves can be an issue.

It's important to get fallen leaves off the lawn so that sunlight can reach grass blades in autumn. Lawns that are covered in leaves will become patchy and weedy.

If you don't have a lawn, taking care of fallen leaves is still important as they can be a trip hazard on pavers or concrete, especially when wet.

Raking is the traditional way to get the job done but to save time and your back, a blower is the fastest and easiest way to deal with fallen leaves.

Ryobi One+ 18V Cordless Blower, \$69. ryobi.com.au

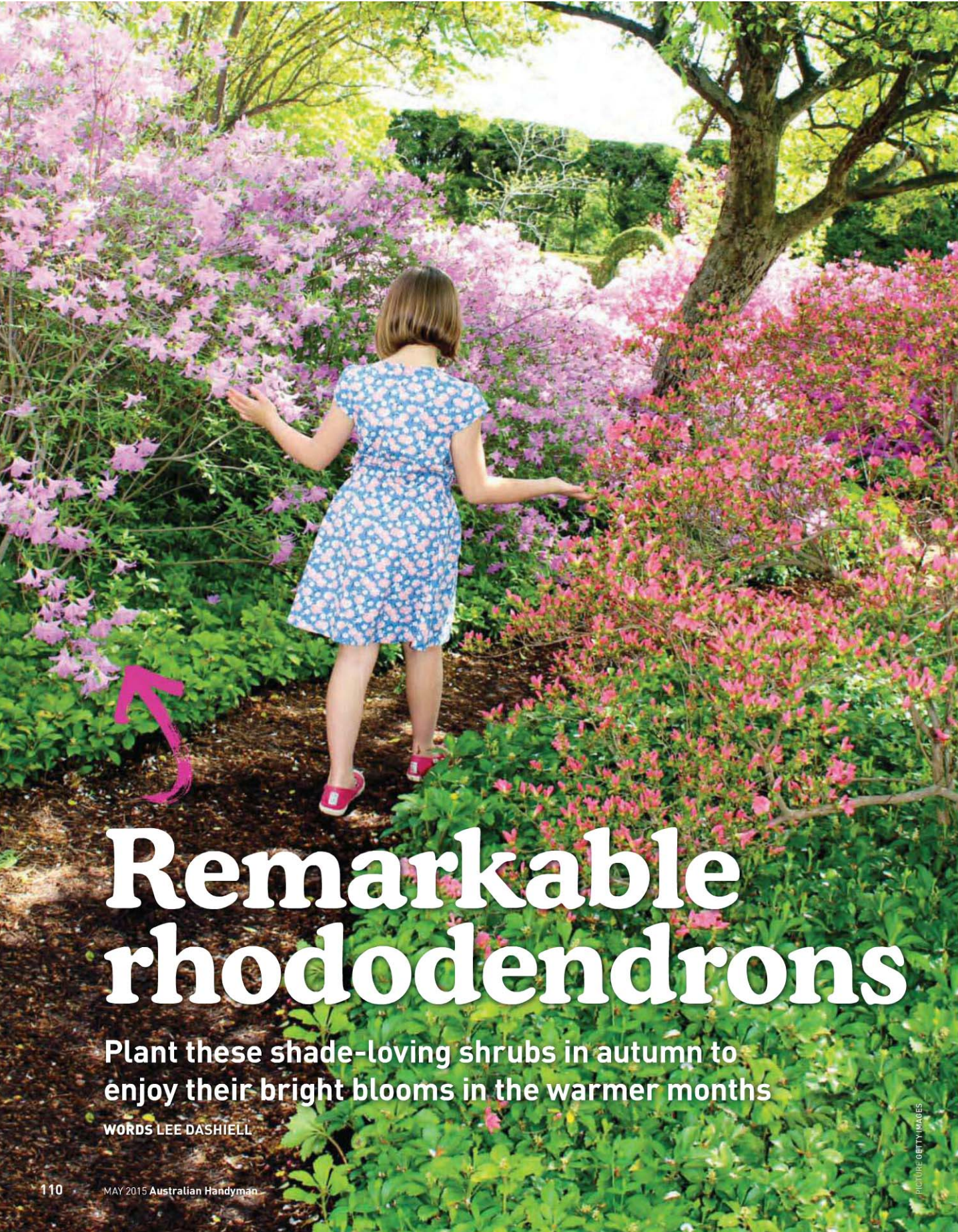


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Remarkable rhododendrons

Plant these shade-loving shrubs in autumn to enjoy their bright blooms in the warmer months

WORDS LEE DASHIELL

Stealing the show in spring, rhododendrons are covered with large clusters of flowers, and many keep their foliage year-round.

Autumn is the best time to plant them so the roots develop before winter sets in. Avoid planting in midsummer.

Most varieties prefer lightly shaded areas sheltered from the wind.

The soil should be well-drained, so if it is heavy, loosen it and dig in organic matter like leaf mould or pine needles and a generous amount of potting mix.

Plant the rootball just below the surface, taking care not to stamp on it when firming up the soil.

If the plant is looking unhappy after a year or so, it can be moved to another spot. Ensure the rootball is moist, dig it out and replant, then water in and add mulch. ➤



TEST THE SOIL

Rhododendrons like an acidic soil with a pH level of 4.5-5.5. If it's too alkaline, growth will be stunted and the leaves will turn yellowish.

PLANT IN POTS

If the soil in your garden is high in lime, don't plant rhododendrons in the ground, grow them in large pots.

- **USE** a potting mix with a high acidity to provide the correct soil conditions.
- **MAKE** a hole twice the size of the rootball and tease out the roots.
- **WATER** the shrub in well to remove air pockets and keep the roots moist.

TOP PICK

'If you need to increase acid in the soil, use liquid sulfur.'

- LEE DASHIELL, MANAGING EDITOR



Yates Soil Acidifier Liquid Sulfur, \$10 for 500ml. yates.com.au

KEEP THEM FLOURISHING

Rhododendrons are shallow-rooted and don't like the ground beneath them to be overly raked or dug over.

In prolonged dry periods, water regularly and mulch with pine needles.

To prepare them for the cooler weather, water well in late autumn if there hasn't been much rain.

They generally don't freeze in winter, but they will dry out if the leaves lose water through evaporation and the roots are in frozen ground.

For healthy growth, cut off dead flowers in late spring and spread a thick layer of bark mulch.

They don't need regular pruning, but tip pruning while the plant is still small encourages bushy growth.

EASY SHRUB CARE



✦ **DEADHEAD** after spring flowering to promote stronger growth.



✦ **PROTECT** the roots by spreading a thick layer of bark mulch.

The blooms range in colour from white to pink, yellow and mauve.

Feed it

Apply an acidifying fertiliser in spring or add a 50mm layer of half-rotted compost, taking care not to disturb the roots of the rhododendrons.



Share your fave flower
Post a pic on Instagram and tag it #HMgrowit

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DIY PEST SPRAY

Garlic has insecticidal qualities when used in an all-purpose spray. You can buy a pre-mixed formula for the garden or make your own. It is best sprayed directly onto pests.

- ✦ **COMBINE** 4 large crushed garlic cloves and 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, then leave to soak for 2 days.
- ✦ **STRAIN** and add 1 teaspoon pure liquid soap and 1 litre water to the oil.
- ✦ **POUR** into a spray bottle and use within two weeks. Store in the fridge.

Grow organic garlic

Plant your own cloves to enjoy a delicious fresh flavour

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

DID YOU KNOW?

A study in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* found that men who consumed more than 10g a day of vegies from the *Allium* genus, which includes garlic, spring onions, chives, onions and leeks, were about 50% less likely to get prostate cancer.



When grown with tomatoes, eggplants, cabbages and roses, garlic acts as an insect-repelling plant



Homegrown for health

To get rid of bugs, all imported garlic is fumigated with the toxic chemical methyl bromide, and some have been treated with growth-inhibiting chemicals. Garlic is easy to grow and good for you, so it makes sense to grow your own.



Garlic has a rich history of being used for its healing qualities. There is evidence to suggest it was given to the pyramid workers in ancient Egypt to keep them strong and protect them from illness.

It was regarded as a panacea by Chinese, Greek and Roman physicians, who prescribed it for everything from infections, cancer and leprosy to tapeworm and heart problems.

In the late 1850s, French chemist Louis Pasteur noted its antibacterial effects, and garlic juice was used during World War I to treat wounds.

With the later discovery of the chemical alliin in the vegetable, it is now known that this is responsible for garlic's beneficial qualities. >

IN THE KITCHEN

To get the strongest taste, add garlic to dishes when they are nearly cooked.

- ✦ Roast whole garlic bulbs and serve with other baked vegetables.
- ✦ Stuff a chicken with 40 garlic cloves and roast to make garlic chicken.
- ✦ Make a garlic and parsley sauce for fish, called a persillade. Finely chop four cloves of garlic and one bunch of parsley, and blend with a little olive oil.

✦ To make garlic bread, rub raw garlic cloves on both sides of hot, toasted Italian bread or a sliced French bread stick. Drizzle with olive oil and serve.

You can easily turn the garlic bread into bruschetta by topping it with tomatoes, mozzarella and basil. Or use it as a base for toppings such as olive tapenade with goat's cheese, or tomatoes and anchovies.

HEALTH TIP

When raw garlic is chewed or crushed, the chemical alliin is converted into allicin, which has antibiotic properties.



Use garlic bread as a base for a range of toppings.

CURES FOR GARLIC BREATH

There are no prizes for guessing why garlic is called the stinking rose, but this doesn't put off garlic lovers. Cures for smelly breath include chewing parsley or fennel seeds. Better still, the odour is reportedly reduced when garlic is eaten with a glass of red.



HOW TO GROW

You can buy garlic to sow from the nursery or use store-bought organic bulbs that have sprouted in the pantry.

Plant cloves in autumn in a sunny position in a garden bed or pot. They will produce leaves in winter, which supply nutrients to the maturing bulbs and stimulate growth during spring.

The bulbs will be ready to harvest in about 6-8 months after sowing.

PLANT THE CLOVES



1 REMOVE individual cloves from the bulb. Don't remove the papery covering around the clove. Fill a pot with potting mix.



2 PLANT each clove about 50mm deep and spaced 120mm apart with the flat base pointing down. Cover the exposed tips with mix.



3 WATER in lightly. The mix must be free-draining or the cloves will rot. Feed monthly with an organic fertiliser like Powerfeed.



You can eat the young bulb and leaves of garlic. Young, or green, garlic is harvested in spring



Share your garlic recipe
Post a pic on Instagram and tag it #HMCookit



LINARIA

- ✚ POSITION Sun
- ✚ CULTIVATION Sow seeds where they are to grow. Good for mixed planting in pots.

VIOLA

- ✚ POSITION Sun, semi-shade
- ✚ CULTIVATION Picking the small pansy-like flowers encourages further blooms.

CINERARIA

- ✚ POSITION Semi-shade, shade
- ✚ CULTIVATION Grow in pots and bring indoors when the plant begins to flower.

Winter wonders

Fill the garden with fabulous plants that work their magic at this time of the year

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

PRIMULA

- ✚ POSITION Sun, semi-shade
- ✚ CULTIVATION Grow in pots and garden beds.

ICELAND POPPY

- ✚ POSITION Sun
- ✚ CULTIVATION Shelter from wind and plant in soil with excellent drainage.

PANSY

- POSITION Sun, afternoon shade in hot climates
- CULTIVATION Picking flowers encourages more blooms.



Easy-care blooms

- ✦ Remove the plant carefully from its punnet so you don't disturb the roots.
- ✦ Plant it into damp soil or potting mix and water in well.
- ✦ Feed it monthly with a soluble complete plant food.
- ✦ Deadhead flowers on a regular basis.



The garden doesn't have to be dull just because winter is around the corner.

Annuals are a quick colour fix for beds or pots

GROW TIP

Always water annuals in seedling trays before you transplant them into garden beds or pots.

CALENDULA

- ✦ **POSITION** Sun
- ✦ **CULTIVATION** Remove spent blooms to prolong flowering. Petals are edible.

POLYANTHUS

- ✦ **POSITION** Sun, semi-shade
- ✦ **CULTIVATION** A perennial, often grown as an annual. Don't allow the potting mix to dry out.

NEMESIA

- ✦ **POSITION** Sun
- ✦ **CULTIVATION** Pinch out the growing tips while young to encourage bushiness. ➤

PLANT IN POTS

Containers and pots filled with flowering annuals can transform any courtyard or patio from insipid to inspired in no time.

You can mix annuals in different sizes and colours in a pot or stick to just the one colour theme.

Use high-quality premium mixes that carry an Australian Standard label to get your plants off to a good start.

And while planting in plastic pots is best for water retention, you could use an attractive terracotta pot as a sleeve.



TOP PICKS

‘Annuals are good value at a few dollars a punnet, so you won’t break the bank trying different looks each winter.’

- CHERYL MADDOCKS, HORTICULTURIST



Pansy Baroness Seedlings, about \$6 a punnet, from Bunnings.



Polyanthus Primula Acaulis, 125mm, about \$2, from Bunnings.

SEASONAL SCENTS

Fragrance need not be missing from the garden during the cooler months.

Daphne odora shows off at this time of the year with pink flowers that have a heady scent. It needs good drainage, slightly acidic soil and morning sun only.

Another plant that likes morning sun is *Luculia gratissima*. It grows 3m high and has equally sweet-smelling flowers.

Other great fragrant winter shrubs include *Buddleia salvifolia*, *Boronia megastigma* and *Viburnum farreri*.

Flowering climbers

The orange flowers of the evergreen flame vine, *Pyrostegia venusta*, will brighten the garden from winter into spring in frost-free climates. It is best used for screening purposes. Depending on the cultivar, you could also choose purple, white or pink flowering hardenbergia. Another evergreen, this native is ideal for metal fences. ➤



❖ **FUCHSIAS** Honey-eating birds flock to the bell-shaped flowers of native fuchsias (*Correa*). This plant is a vital source of nectar for small birds throughout the winter months.

WHAT TO PLANT

FOOD FOR BIRDS

It's hard for birds to find nectar in winter and you can help them by planting winter-flowering natives. Introducing these plants will also have a good impact on the overall environment, as the birds, animals and insects they attract will find their way into other neighbourhood gardens.



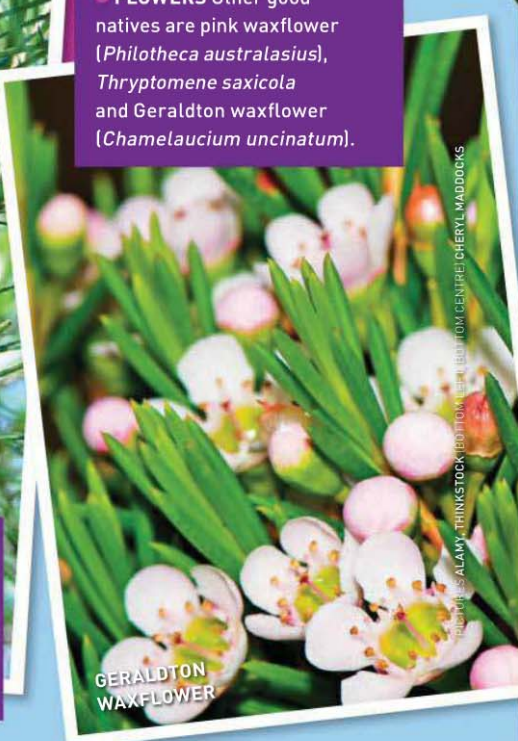
HEATH BANKSIA

❖ **GREVILLEAS** Best used as a screening or feature plant, the grevillea flowers in cooler weather, attracting many honeyeaters. You can choose from a variety of colours.



❖ **BANKSIAS** The heath banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*) and the coast banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*) are two hardy flowering shrubs that will attract birds during winter.

❖ **FLOWERS** Other good natives are pink waxflower (*Philotheca australasius*), *Thryptomene saxicola* and Geraldton waxflower (*Chamelaucium uncinatum*).



GERALTON WAXFLOWER

WINTER BULBS

The dark-green strappy leaves of *Clivia miniata* look good throughout the year and its orange-scarlet flowers lift the tone of the garden during late winter.

Ideal for planting in dry, shady positions, this flowering plant comes in cream, pale yellow, salmon pink and bright-red cultivars.

Snowflakes and early jonquils also begin to make an appearance during the last month of winter to add another burst of colour to the garden.



Osmocote Professional
Bulb Mix, \$7 for 10L.
scottsaustralia.com.au

DESIGN TIP

Bring brightly coloured potted cyclamen indoors during winter to use as living decorations.



All about avocados

Grow a tree in the garden or in a pot for your own supply of this tasty and versatile fruit

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS



Weight for weight, avocados contain more potassium than bananas and are also packed with vitamins, meaning they're full of both goodness and flavour.

Very easy to grow, avocados, *Persea americana*, are great evergreen shade or feature trees. Native to Central and South America, they grow up to 20m.

Grafted cultivars vary in size, but some have a spreading habit and reach 10-12m high, so they're only suited to big backyards. Smaller cultivars reach 4-6m and are ideal trees for small gardens and even large tubs. >

DID YOU KNOW?

The avocado has been considered an aphrodisiac for centuries. The Aztecs called it the testicle tree, no doubt because of its dangling pear-shaped fruit. Californian growers ran an ad campaign in the 1920s, deliberately denying the fruit was an aphrodisiac. This bit of reverse psychology worked well and since then the 'avodisiac' has never looked back.



EXPERT SECRETS

To hasten ripening, put avocados in a paper bag with an apple or banana.

HOW TO GROW

You can buy potted avocado trees to plant from nurseries for \$40 to \$80.

- ✦ **POSITION** in a sunny spot, protected from strong and salt-laden winds.
- ✦ **SOIL** must be well-drained, rich, deep and friable with a pH of 6-7.
- ✦ **DIG** the planting hole twice as wide as the rootball. Add organic matter like cow manure or compost to the soil from the hole before backfilling. Don't

disturb the roots, and plant so the soil level is the same as it was in the pot.

- ✦ **WATER** regularly, especially during summer, to produce more fruit.
- ✦ **MULCH** with lucerne hay or pea straw, keeping it clear from the trunk.
- ✦ **FEED** young trees three times a year with a fertiliser with added nitrogen. Feed mature trees yearly in spring with a fertiliser for flowers and fruit.

TREE TYPES

If an A and a B group tree are planted, they'll cross-pollinate and each produce more fruit. But most grafted cultivars self-pollinate, so in a small yard you can get fruit from one tree, especially in a temperate climate.

✦ **WURTZ, A GROUP**
Reaching 4-6m high, it produces medium fruit with dark-green skin.

✦ **HASS, A GROUP**
Bears black-skinned fruit that stores on the tree for months. A tall spreading tree, this popular cultivar likes frost-free climates.

✦ **BACON, B GROUP**
Upright and vigorous, it bears a medium fruit with light-green skin. Good for cool climates.

✦ **FUERTE, B GROUP**
Suits cool climates and makes a great shade tree for a large garden. Bears small to medium green-skinned fruit.

Gender bender

This fruit has an interesting sex life. Split into two categories, the flowers of Group A open as female in the morning, then close and re-open as male the next afternoon, while Group B's flowers open as female in the afternoon, then close and re-open the next morning as male.

PLANT IN POTS

The cultivar Wurtz can be grown in a large pot at least the size of a wine barrel. Choose a premium potting mix with an Australian Standard label. Stand the pot on feet so that drainage is not impeded and water the tree regularly, especially during hot summer days when pots can dry out quickly.



HARVESTING THE FRUIT

Avocados don't ripen until picked, so you don't have to harvest them all at once. When the fruit is fully formed, pick one and, if it ripens indoors within 7-10 days without shrivelling, they're ready to be picked off the tree. >



RAISE A TREE

While avocados grow easily from seed, don't expect any fruit for 7-15 years.

Even if you don't get fruit, an avocado tree makes a pretty pot plant for a sunny patio and growing one from seed is a great project for kids.

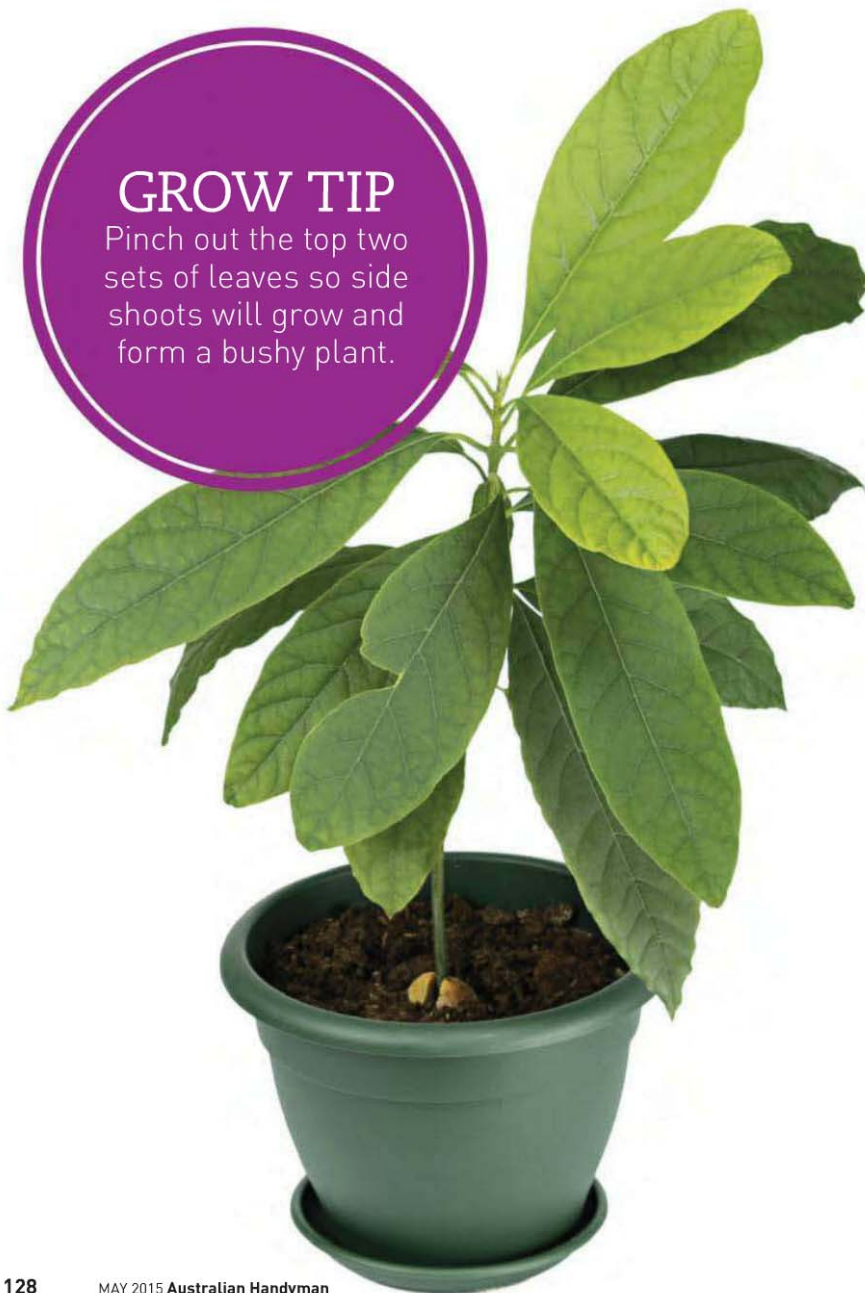
Remove the seed, called a pit, from an avocado without cutting it and

wash it thoroughly to get rid of the flesh, taking care not to remove the brown skin or seed cover, then put it in water to form roots and a shoot.

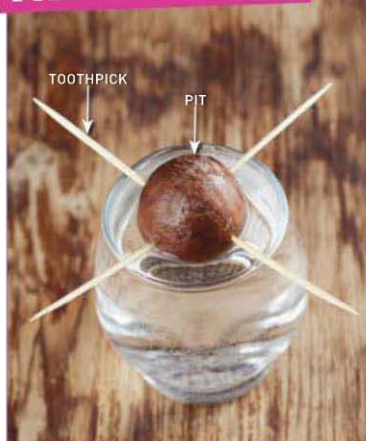
When the stem reaches 150mm high, transplant it into a 150mm pot, leaving the top half of the pit exposed. Water regularly, but don't overwater.

GROW TIP

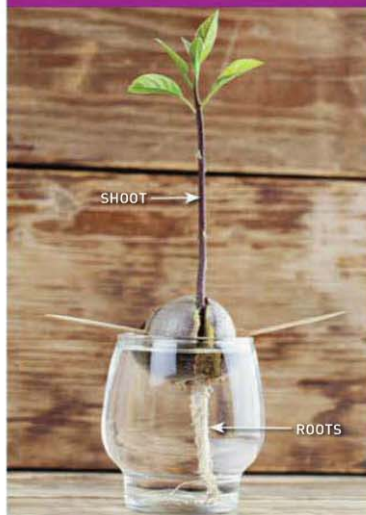
Pinch out the top two sets of leaves so side shoots will grow and form a bushy plant.



PREPARE THE PIT



1 SPACE 3-4 toothpicks at a slight angle evenly around the circumference of the pit. Put in a glass of water, flat-end down. Position the glass on a sunny windowsill and change the water every 4-5 days to keep it clean.



2 MAKE sure the water always covers the base of the pit. The top of the pit will dry out and form a crack that will extend to the base. Roots will then grow from the base and new shoots emerge from the top after 3-4 weeks.

IN THE KITCHEN

Great to eat fresh or cooked, avocados are a versatile food to have on hand.

✦ **MAKE** guacamole by mashing 2 ripe avocados. Add 1 finely chopped medium tomato, 1 finely chopped small red onion, 2 crushed garlic cloves and 1 tablespoon lemon juice. Mix well and season to taste. Serve with corn chips.

✦ **STUFF** halved avocados with chopped chicken, a chopped spring onion, goat's cheese and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Top with a slice of tomato and bake in a hot oven for about 10 minutes.

✦ **MASH** a boiled egg with mayonnaise, chopped parsley or coriander, and avocado, and use as a sandwich filling.



Find out how to achieve a three-way
balance between pests, their natural
enemies and plants in any garden

Spot the invaders



Pest ecology

Australian plants in their natural environment suffer from attacks by a range of pests.

Most attacks are of a minor nature, causing superficial damage. Severe attacks which kill plants occur in one of two ways.

❶ When an insect is introduced into a new environment which is free of its natural enemies.

❷ When the natural balance between pest and predator is upset by outside influences, like bushfire or spraying with insecticides.

Outbreaks are a problem in new gardens, such as when suburbs are created and natural bush is cleared.

Their incidence lessens as the gardens become established and balance is achieved again between pests and natural predators.

The environment where the majority of Australians live today has changed so much from its original state that it is hard to envisage what most areas were like.

We live in modified environments, creating parks and public gardens and tending our own private plot of lawns, ornamentals, vegetables and fruit.

Each of these gardens, private and public, are full of insects. Most are completely harmless to us and our plants, and many are beneficial.

A few are capable of being pests, while others are not so bad and add interest to a garden, even if they do cause some plant damage.

Even the pests have a niche in the environment, and as gardeners we tend to forget this natural relationship among living creatures.

We must not overreact by spraying to kill all creatures indiscriminately.

Such a practice only creates more problems than it solves because new insects may become pestiferous when indiscriminate spraying kills their natural enemies.

Sometimes assistance is needed to restore the balance, but learn the name and characteristics of any creature before you take steps to kill it, because you might be doing yourself a favour by leaving it alone. ➤



Pest outbreaks happen in every garden, but spraying is not the only solution

They feed on the new fruit, shoots and buds of a wide range of natives, but few caterpillars are serious pests.

RIGHT Butterflies and moths are treasured garden visitors.





Principles of pest control

There are seven basic principles that should be followed to protect your garden plants from being impacted by pest outbreaks.

1

Vigorous healthy plants are able to resist attack better than weakened plants.

If pests continually attack plants, it could be an indication of some other ailment, such as waterlogged soil weakening a tree.

In this case, the answer is to improve the soil drainage.

The use of suitable fertilisers will often dramatically increase a plant's resistance to pests, especially if the plants have been deprived of nutrients.



Christmas beetles are a common sight in Australian gardens during early summer.

2

Identify accurately the culprit causing the damage.

This step is of paramount importance because the particular control system chosen will vary with the species of pest.

4

Ensure the pest is still active and causing problems.

The scale-like covering in lerps is conspicuous but control measures are not warranted unless the lerps are still alive underneath the cover.

Spraying would only kill other insects, including harmless and beneficial types.

3

If natural control systems are becoming established, then do not interfere.

SEE THE SIGNS



The leaves of this tree have been eaten by caterpillars, as seen by the holes.



A dead branch in a healthy canopy may indicate the presence of borers or disease.



This palm has been damaged by a leaf-spotting fungus. Note the yellow halos.



Root problems are usually the cause of discoloured and dry-looking leaves on grass trees.



These blobs of wax are actually what is covering the scale insects on this tree.



Harlequin bugs are commonly found on marshmallow weed.

5 If the pests are potentially serious, such as aphids, scale insects, leaf skeletonisers or borers, act as soon as symptoms are noticed.

Such pests can build up in number rapidly and cause considerable damage in a short time.

If action is delayed, control may be more difficult to achieve.



Feeding ants often indicate sap-sucking insects like these jassid nymphs.

6 Do not try to eliminate all pests, only attempt to reduce them to safe levels.

7 Use the safest control systems first and only employ toxic sprays as the last resort.



✦ The information and images in this story were reproduced with permission from the book *Pests, Diseases, Ailments and Allies of Australian Plants* by David L. Jones, W. Rodger Elliot and Sandra R. Jones (New Holland Publishers, \$45). It is an invaluable resource for identifying and controlling pests in Aussie gardens.



These wounds on an acacia are done by a sap-feeding bug, note the puncture holes.



Leaf-spotting fungi often have a halo of pale-coloured tissue around the site of infection.



Exudation of gum in the absence of obvious insect damage often indicates disease.



Clusters of frass can disguise holes and indicate the presence of borers in trees.



This particular type of feeding on bottlebrushes is caused by sawfly grubs.



Find it at Bunnings

PLANTER BOX



Make Mum a personalised timber planter box for Mother's Day this year and fill it with her favourite blooms.

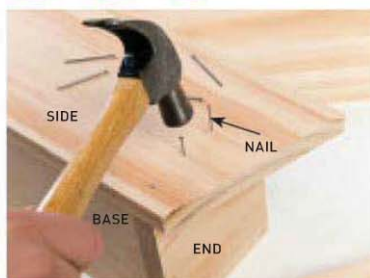
The box can be any size, but this one was made to fit on a windowsill and holds 2-3 plants. We used pine as it's durable, affordable and easy to paint in Mum's favourite colour.

Cut from 140 x 19mm boards, the base is 450mm long and the ends are 120mm. The sides are cut with angled ends so the top edge is 600mm long and the base edge is 500mm.

Materials

140 x 19mm pine board
PVA adhesive
Exterior paint
Craft shape
Weedmat
Nails

1 2 3



1 Build the box

Run a bead of PVA adhesive along the edges of the box base and ends. Position the ends against the base, adding the sides with equal overhang either end. Let the adhesive dry, then nail the sides to the ends and base.



2 Paint the timber

Lightly sand back the timber with 180 grit abrasive paper and wipe off any dust with a soft cloth. Apply two coats of an exterior paint or stain using a paintbrush, allowing the finish to dry in between coats.



3 Add the plants

Paint an MDF craft shape and attach it to the box with PVA adhesive as a decorative touch. Line the planter with weedmat so that the timber is protected and the box doesn't leak. Fill the planter with flowers.

What's on this May

Adult D.I.Y. Workshops

Saturday 2 May Outdoor project	Sunday 17 May Indoor project
Sunday 3 May Outdoor project	Saturday 23 May Flooring
Saturday 9 May Gardening	Sunday 24 May Flooring
Sunday 10 May Gardening	Saturday 30 May Tiling and plastering
Saturday 16 May Indoor project	Sunday 31 May Tiling and plastering

Our workshops are held every weekend at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm. For specific topics, ask instore or go to bunnings.com.au. If you live in South Australia, speak to a team member or visit bunnings.com.au for details about our great one-on-one D.I.Y. workshops. These workshops run from 10am to 4pm each Saturday and Sunday.

Kids' D.I.Y. Workshops

Saturday 2 May Make a gift for Mum	Sunday 24 May Fun mosaics
Sunday 3 May Make a gift for Mum	Saturday 30 May Fun with paint
Saturday 9 May Make a gift for Mum	Sunday 31 May Craft
Sunday 10 May Make a gift for Mum	
Saturday 16 May Game makers	
Sunday 17 May Animal craft	
Saturday 23 May Decorator	

For more information on other instore events or to book, call (03) 8831 9777 or visit bunnings.com.au

BUNNINGS
warehouse

COVER UP SEEDS

When sowing seeds in rows, dig a small trench at the right depth, add the seeds, then gently brush soil over them with a large paintbrush. This allows you to distribute the exact amount of soil needed.

5 extraordinary uses for paintbrushes

BRUSH OFF SAND

Keep a paintbrush in your bag for return trips from the beach. Remove sand from chairs, toys, the kids and yourself before opening the car door. You'll have a lot less to vacuum next time you clean it.

DUST EVERY NOOK

Get into hard-to-reach places in wicker furniture, baskets, intricate statues and knick-knacks with a small natural-bristle brush. It's also great to use for dusting all your delicate items.

CLEAN UP SCREENS

Give dirty mesh window screens a thorough brush and shake off the dust. Pour a little kerosene into a dish, dip the brush into it, then paint both sides of the screen. Dry off the mesh with a clean cloth.

BASTE AND GLAZE

Use a small synthetic paintbrush to glaze pies, or brush on marinades and sauces while roasting or baking, or spread sauces on meat. They are easier to clean than most pastry brushes.

A CUT ABOVE

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GEORGIA EZRA, G.A.B.B.E INTERIOR DESIGN



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