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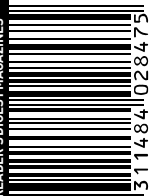
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SECRETS TO THE LUSHEST GRASS EVER!
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time savers
SPRING CLEANING SHORTCUTS

Design Outdoor Style

Plant Garden Plants

Grow Family Gardening

Trim Lawn Edges

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY
STUART SCOTT

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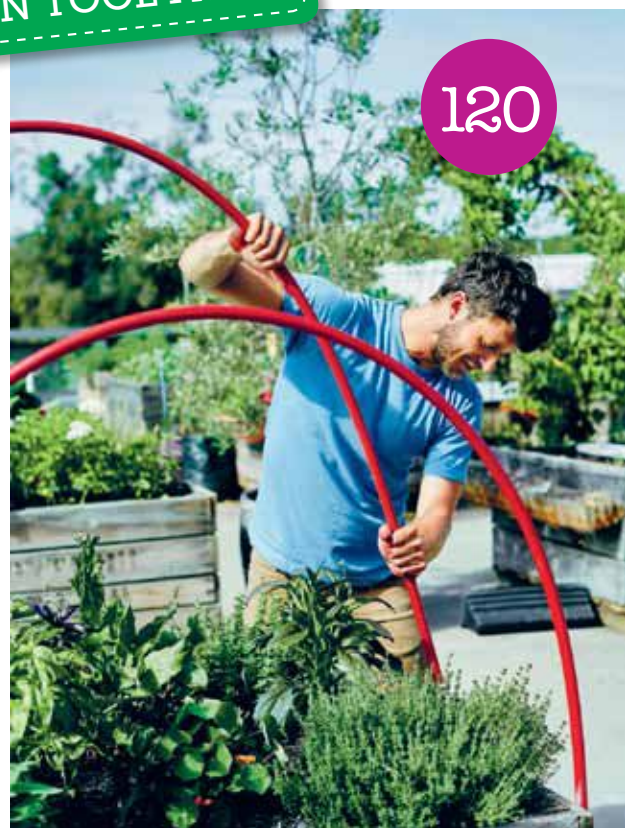
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Fertilise roses, azaleas and more



**GET THE
LOOK**

LOVE THE COVER?

A clear fence and sandstone teamed with tropical plants make this pool a stand-out

MAIN PICTURE STUART SCOTT



Glass fencing enhances this lagoon-style backyard pool.

For a luxurious resort-style feel, this pool was made the star of the space by replacing the old fence with frameless glass panels.

Palms and mondo grass combined with natural stone create a lush lagoon feel, while functional wicker-look and timber furniture complete this relaxed poolside entertaining area.



Mimosa Nine-piece Red Gum Timber Setting, \$1499. bunnings.com.au



Everton 1200 x 1000mm Glass Pool Fence Panel, \$94. everton.com.au



Kas Room Maddox Cushion in Citrus, \$42. zanui.com.au



Mimosa Three-piece Aluminium Day Bed, \$999. bunnings.com.au



Bangalow Palm, 250mm, \$30, from nurseries.

PICTURE (PALM) ALAMY



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THIS ISSUE

EDITOR'S LETTER



Cheryl Maddocks shows how you can grow them at home and harvest a great crop every year, on page 128.

If you follow her advice, it's very likely you will have an abundance, so we've included plenty of recipes and ways you can preserve them as well.

Luscious lawns

Want your lawn to be the envy of the neighbourhood? Garden guru Adam Woodhams gives you the know-how to lift your game, on page 60.

He solves problems such as weeds and bald spots, and shows how to lay new turf. To finish the job like a pro, there's also a guide to buying and using line trimmers, on page 70.

Enjoy the issue,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL

The heat is now rising, so it's time to start thinking about summer and how we will enjoy our leisure time.

Swimming pools are one of life's luxuries, providing many hours of entertainment for the whole family.

Australian safety regulations are very strict so, this month, we look at a few ways to install safety barriers around your pool, on page 78.

We show you how to install and update metal fencing, and share some great new latch technology, on page 86.

Cherie Barber also waves her magic wand at a basic pool area, on page 92, transforming it digitally into a sleek and welcoming entertaining area.

Passion for the fruit

One of the most popular stories on our website, handyman.net.au, is about passionfruit. These unusual, slightly tart, slightly sweet, seedy, pulpy balls of deliciousness seem to capture everyone's imagination.



Check out our line trimming guide, on page 70.



PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Ensure your home stays safe with the discreet Protector Aluminium Make It Secure Security Door with Premium Stainless Steel Woven Grille, \$549 (protectoraluminium.com.au).

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HANDY STUFF



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bunnings.com.au

Ground work



Maintain moisture and reduce weed growth in garden beds and pot plants with the Richgro Natural Hard Wood Mulch, \$10 for 40L, (richgro.com.au). Each bag covers a 1.5sqm area.

Slow food

Get back to basics with *A Year Of Practiculture* by Rohan Anderson, \$50. It features 100 rustic recipes, growing tips and tales of a former city dweller's escape to the country.

hardiegrant.com.au



GET INTO THE GARDEN

Fix up the backyard for when the temperature rises this summer

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



Grow your own vivid floral displays during the warm seasons.

Poppin' pebbles

Add vibrant patches of colour to garden beds, potted plants or even a vase with Tuscan Path Red Aztec Pebbles, \$8 for 1kg (tuscanpath.com.au).

The decorative painted glass pieces are also available in white and orange.



Bio boost

Provide sustenance for your soil and create a lush-looking garden with the Osmocote Plus Trace Elements Total All-Purpose Fertiliser, \$9 for 500g. It will feed plants for a year, slowly releasing vital nutrients. >

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Protect your skin from the full force of the summer sun with an umbrella.

TIP

Add a shadesail or umbrella to provide a cool space to relax and just pack it away in winter.



Woven wonder

Trade in tired planters for a Tuscan Path Euro Design Petite Round Pot, \$16. It's 250mm tall, lightweight and comes with a plastic insert planter. The pot is handwoven from synthetic rattan, making it ideal for use both inside and out.

tuscanpath.com.au

Sturdy screen

Block out nosy neighbours with the Lattice Makers Black Bamboo Screening Roll, \$89 (laticemakers.com). The 1800mm wide by 1500mm high naturally black bamboo is ethically sourced and threaded with galvanised wire for a flexible, durable finish.



Luxe letterbox

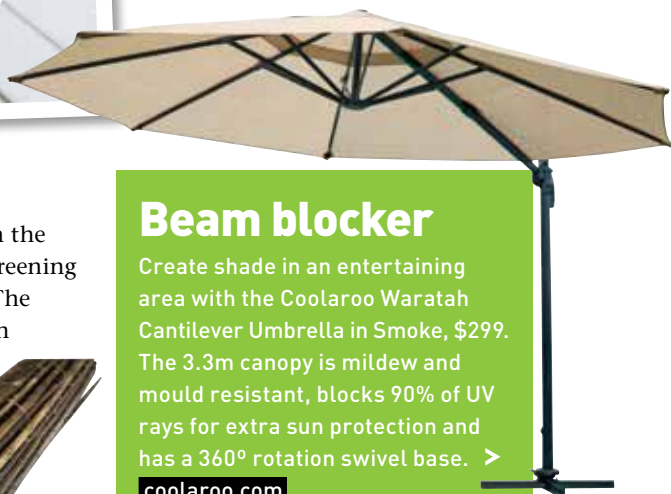
Switch your sad, ordinary mailbox with the smart Northcote Pottery Elite Centric Letterbox in Rust, \$250. Made from Corten steel, it takes A4 mail, is 95cm high and has a newspaper slot.

northcotepottery.com.au



Polished partition

Add style and privacy to the backyard or garden with a Design Flow Matrix Tangle Décor Screen in Charcoal, \$99 (designflow.com.au). Each panel measures 1800 x 900 x 7mm and is made in Australia from 100% recycled plastic. The durable design means it won't rot, rust, swell or leach colour.



Beam blocker

Create shade in an entertaining area with the Coolaroo Waratah Cantilever Umbrella in Smoke, \$299. The 3.3m canopy is mildew and mould resistant, blocks 90% of UV rays for extra sun protection and has a 360° rotation swivel base. >

coolaroo.com



Soil sifter

Loosen compact soil with the Ryobi 25cc Two-stroke Garden Cultivator, \$419. Four 200mm tines till a width of 258mm at a time to make setting up a new garden bed easy.

ryobi.com.au



Good coverage

Power through a paint job with the Bosch PFS 1000 Paint Sprayer, \$99 (bosch-do-it.com.au). It can hold 800ml and allows for a fast, even finish of water-soluble timber paints, lacquers or glazes. Controlling the spraying volume is easy to do with a switch on the head of the gun.



Speed snip

Forget the hassle of removing your garden gloves to unlock secateurs with the Cyclone Titanium Quick Release Bypass Pruner, \$32. One pump of the handles releases the 90mm non-stick titanium-coated blades, ready for cutting.

cyclone.com.au

Power pruner

Tackle towering hedges with ease using the Ozito 10.8V Li-ion Grass Trimmer & Shear, \$109 (ozito.com.au). It weighs 1.65kg and has a tool-free, quick blade change.



Smooth move

Treat your garden gear to some TLC with the WD-40 Specialist Lawn & Garden General Use Lubricant, \$9 for 400g. Get stiff joints moving and protect metal from rust and corrosion.

wd40.com.au



TIP

For a fuller hedge next year, prune branches just above the bud to promote denser growth.



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HAMMERS & WRECKERS



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Strip or strike

Pull out old nails and get the job done with a Kinchrome 24oz Steel Claw Hammer, \$40 (kinchrome.com.au).



Bang on

The Sidchrome AntiVibe 32oz Ball Pein Hammer, \$45, features a shock-absorbing handle (sidchrome.com.au).



Demolition duty

The durable Craftright 1.8kg Stoning Hammer, \$16, cuts through stone or metal with a chisel (bunnings.com.au).

Tackle any task around the home and garden with this selection of specialty hammers for the DIYer

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



Tender tap

Build flawless furniture with a Thor 1.5lb Nylon Hammer, \$50, as its soft face generally won't mark timber (thorhammer.com).



Brick breaker

The Trojan 21oz Brick Hammer, \$18, has a carbon steel head and fibreglass handle for strength and control (trojantools.com.au).



Plaster master

Remove or install plasterboard with a Stanley Fatmax 14oz AntiVibe Drywall Hammer, \$50 (stanleytools.com.au).



Full force

Break up slabs or bricks with a Hart 3lb Club Hammer, \$38, featuring an I-beam handle (harttools.com.au).



BACK TO BEAUTY

After a four-year renovation, a crumbling period property is transformed into a sensational 21st-century home

WORDS SITA SIMONS



The facade has been freshened up, with the fascia and roof tiles painted and new hedging planted.

Not everyone can spot potential, but Christy Simitzis and Scott Smith saw it straightaway when they inspected a single-storey house in Sydney's inner west.

The block was over 400sqm, and the location good, but on inspection day most people were walking straight out before making it down the hall.

'It was dark and dingy and nothing made sense in terms of the layout. It certainly wasn't what people want in a modern home,' says Christy.

But what put others off convinced the couple to bid on what would be their first full-scale renovation project.

Over a period of four years, using weekends, holidays, evenings and occasional mornings, they restored a dilapidated shell into a period gem.

First impressions

The same family had lived in the property for decades and they had chosen to dispense with the original features of the Federation-era house.

Leadlight windows were replaced with casements, decorative plasterwork had been left to crumble, and outside, Travertine tiles had been covered up.

'I could see the old house almost busting to get out,' says Christy.

'The great thing is, once you start, the smallest recoveries make such a huge difference.'

Christy and Scott undertook all the work themselves, save the electrics and plumbing. Using a mix of thorough research, precise planning and hard work, they kept their costs in check to complete a remarkable renovation. ➤

After

A stunning redesign has made the yard both functional and inviting.



Before



Christy and Chynna the dog, and Scott with daughter Rachel celebrate the house sale.



Light and open

Three small rooms housed the kitchen, dining and living areas, with the main bathroom off the living space. The old kitchen was tucked into a corner with insufficient bench space and storage.

'For what people want today, it was all wrong,' says Christy.

'Not only was it dark and cramped, but it didn't work logistically and there was no sense that the outside area was connected to the house at all.'

The partition walls came down and the area was opened up into a spacious and light-filled living and eating hub.

An island between the kitchen and dining area was installed to act as a casual seating area, while a red-tiled splashback was added, bringing a large slice of warmth and personality.

'Renovating a kitchen is one of the most satisfying parts,' she says.

'It's amazing how much better you can make the area function just with better use of the space, more cabinets, benchtops and built-in appliances.' ➤





Before



Before



After

A fireplace keeps the open-plan living spaces cosy in winter.



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www.handihome.com.au.

Entrance impact

Grand proportions, like high ceilings, wide hallways and large rooms, are a main feature of homes from this era.

Through the front door, the long hallway was painted in a soft grey, so the decorative trim and architraves really stand out. An archway has been added to reflect back to the decorative preferences of the Federation period.

'Before we renovated, this hall just looked long and cold,' says Christy.

'All the features were gone or boarded over and it just didn't invite you in at all. But that impact you can make on people entering is really easy to achieve once you take it back to how it would have originally been.'

The flooring adds to the dramatic effect, with old telegraph poles used instead of the more usual boards.



After

Graceful period features, such as this hallway arch, were added or restored.



Before

After

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Before

Sleeping beauties

The original three-bedroom layout has remained the same, but the treatment of the space is dramatically different.

All extra large, the bedrooms had no storage at all. Each bedroom now has floor-to-ceiling built-in wardrobes.

'There was so much empty space, but just a small timber wardrobe in each room,' says Christy.

'The possibilities for brilliant storage were endless, and we did plan the built-ins carefully so they have well-considered solutions inside.'

In the master bedroom, a large ensuite has also been added. ➤



Textured wallpaper
helps to bring
the space inwards,
making the rooms
feel more cosy



Spa appeal

When redesigning the space, the couple had to work out ways to incorporate existing features into the new layout.

One of these was a light well, which was in the centre of the home.

‘This was empty space, and while it served a purpose, I looked at it and immediately knew we had to do something with it,’ says Christy.

‘When I saw that the bathroom in the old house was accessed through the living space, it was clear that we

had to move it and the light well area was the obvious choice.’

Taking some floorspace from the second bedroom, Christy and Scott decided to create a large family bathroom with luxury finishes.

‘Scott saw this stone bath and said we had to have it. I wasn’t convinced at first, but I have to say it’s definitely a feature that people love,’ she says.

‘I’m really happy we didn’t skimp on space, as it’s now a luxury retreat, not just a functional bathroom.’ >



Working out ways to incorporate existing features into a renovation can stimulate the imagination and produce striking results

Before

After

The skylight allows natural light to flood through the spacious bathroom.

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Garden redesign

Christy and Scott built a new deck off the back of the house, to replace the concrete suntrap they found there.

An old Hill's Hoist dominated the outlook and there was nowhere with any shade. Retro purple paint and masses of plantings made the backyard feel small and undefined.

To make the most of the area, they created a covered deck with a built-in barbecue and plenty of room to sit out and eat in the warmer months.

Below this, a patio area has been defined with a low border wall, which also doubles as seating. A pizza oven has been installed for entertaining.

Finishing touches

A large purple-painted shed ran down the side of the garden, and Christy and Scott first thought to tear it down. But it had storage space and a laundry, so they changed their minds.

'I like a proper laundry, not one in the bathroom or just a cupboard, so we kept the shed and reconfigured the layout to include a toilet and study.

'Scott and I are really happy with how this all turned out. It took four years and cost \$200,000, but we made \$600,000 on the sale,' says Christy.

'We're already onto our next reno, another period fixer-upper that we hope to do in two years this time around.'



The deck flows out from the living area, creating a seamless space ideal for year-round entertaining

BELOW A large space for outdoor entertaining includes a dining setting as well as a built-in fridge and barbecue.



Before

After

The steps leading up from the patio blend in beautifully with the deck.

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A door is a statement of what to expect as you enter a room. That's why Sally Klopper of Sally Caroline Interior Design starts with Corinthian's Moda Collection. With 24 timeless designs to choose from, a Moda door will be right at home in your home. To watch Sally talk about her timeless design principles, visit Corinthian.com.au



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CHOOSING BLINDS

Here's how to use modern window treatments to update living spaces

From controlling light and privacy to heat retention and deflection, there's a window blind for every type of room and style of home.

With the broad range of materials, colours and designs on offer, choosing the right blinds to suit your lifestyle can seem like a big job.

To skip the stress and make sure you buy the best blinds for your place, use these handy tips to select a type for each room in your house. ➤

2 Suit the space

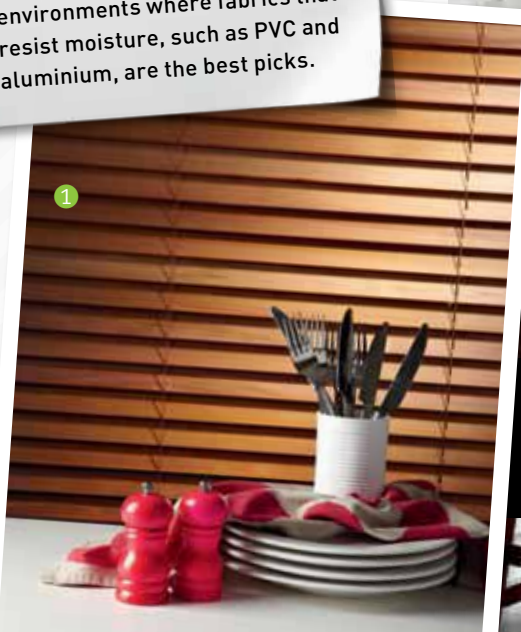
In areas exposed to high heat, consider aluminium venetians, white timber venetians or blackout roller blinds. All have a white or reflective backing to help eliminate heat.

Wet zones, like bathrooms, are environments where fabrics that resist moisture, such as PVC and aluminium, are the best picks.

1 Pick a style

Currently in fashion, venetian blinds are an affordable alternative to white plantation shutters. They also help control privacy and light.

Roller blinds are a practical option for areas that require frequent use or access, such as sliding doors, and provide a sleek, contemporary finish.



1 Zone Interiors 60 x 150cm Western Red Cedar Madison 45mm Timber Venetian Blind, \$73.

2 Zone Interiors Zone 180 x 210cm Charcoal Dusk Aluminium 25mm Venetian Blind, \$84.90.

3 Access all areas

Evaluate how you use the window or door when deciding on a style of blind.

If you regularly need to open or close them, a roller blind may be best. Venetians are ideal for spots like behind a couch.

Access is also an important consideration, as you need to be able to reach the cord or wand.

4 Check light levels

Venetian blinds are the ideal solution for general living areas, as the angle of the slats can be adjusted to suit your light and privacy needs.

In bedrooms where less light and more privacy are needed, fabric blackout blinds can provide a dark room for a deep sleep.

3 Zone Interiors 60 x 150cm Winter White Long Island 50mm PVC Venetian Blind, \$45.70.

4 Zone Interiors 60 x 150cm Antique White 50mm PVC Cordsafe Venetian Blind, \$69.90.

5 Keep it safe

If you have children and pets, make sure you select window coverings that include child safety devices.

They are crucial for protecting kids and pets from hazardous dangling cords and chains.

Read the instructions carefully to install the blind correctly with the supplied safety devices.

6 Clean it easy

All blinds will attract dust, so consider the allergen tolerance of household members before buying.

Fabric blinds can hoard dust, unlike aluminium blinds, which are also easy to wipe clean with a wet cloth.



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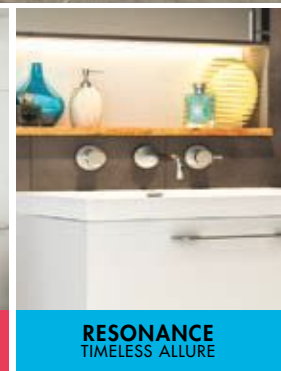
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White Mesh Basket, \$16.40.



Flexi Storage 250 x 580 x 435mm
White Single Drawer Unit, \$90.



Clever Closet 600 x 470mm
White Pants Rack, \$58.

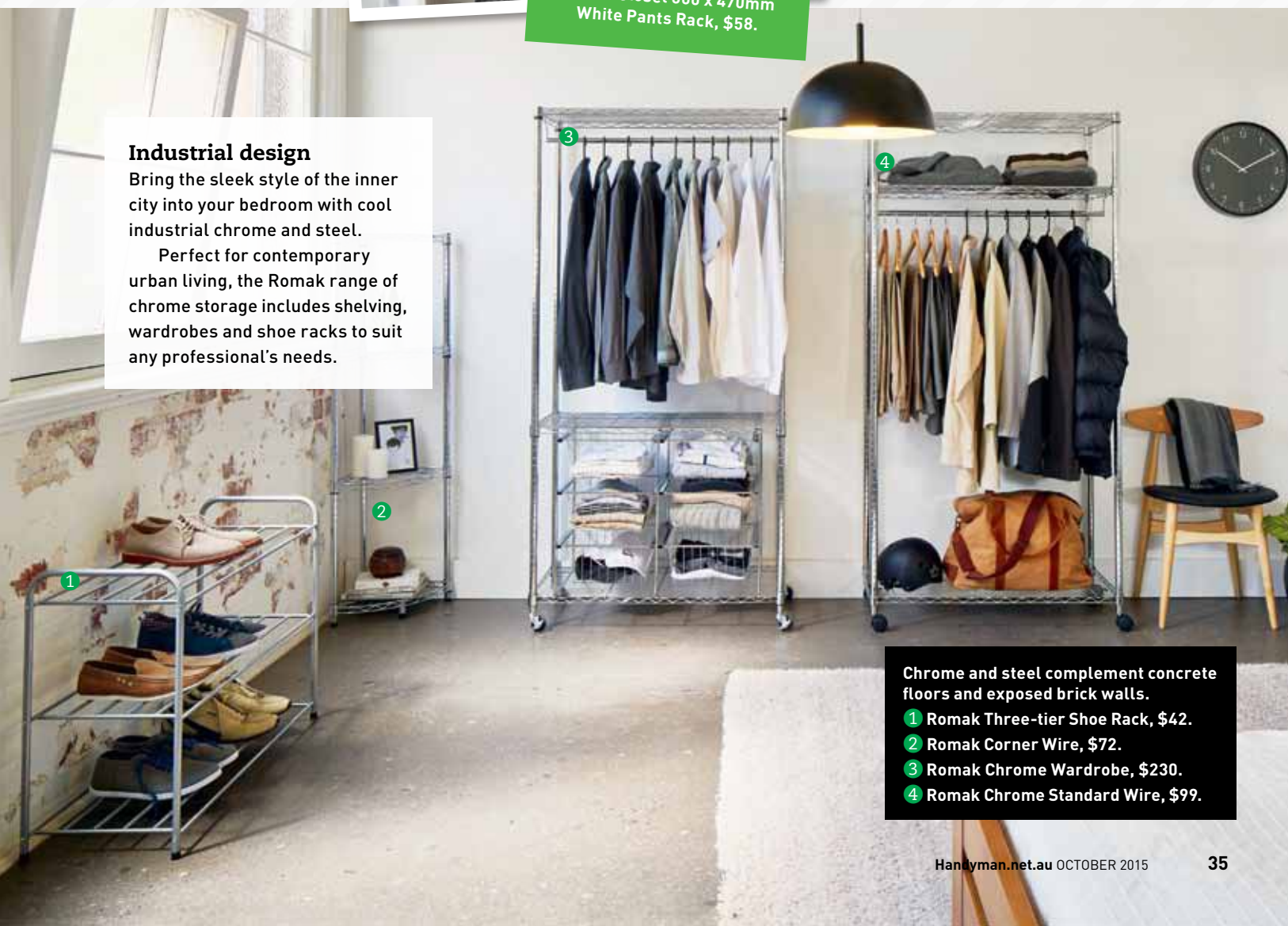


Accessories like
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drawers clear clutter
from surfaces for
a sleek design

Industrial design

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Chrome and steel complement concrete floors and exposed brick walls.

- ① Romak Three-tier Shoe Rack, \$42.
- ② Romak Corner Wire, \$72.
- ③ Romak Chrome Wardrobe, \$230.
- ④ Romak Chrome Standard Wire, \$99.



LIVING AFLOAT

A retired couple take a punt and turn a houseboat into a fantastic home

WORDS SITA SIMONS

These empty nesters had not envisioned a houseboat as a retirement home, but a trip to Europe inspired Tineke and Hans to explore the idea. A year later, they saw one for sale on a permanent mooring.

'It was in very poor shape, but its location and simplicity was something we couldn't go past,' says Tineke.

An offer was made and against stiff competition, the couple secured the sale. They didn't intend to set sail, but they saw the potential for a downsized home with a very different twist. >

Permanently moored on the riverbank, the old houseboat was totally transformed.

SAFETY TIP

Check with your local council regarding any building codes for deck construction in unusual environments.



High ceilings and lots of glass allow the light to flood in.



Light fantastic

The key to the design of the single storey, 129sqm rectangular houseboat was a light hand. Large floor-to-ceiling windows and bifolds dominate the kitchen and dining end, leading onto a small deck that floats on the water.

Clean white walls and limewashed oak floorboards, as well as a modern industrial approach to decorating, make the most of the limited space, allowing nothing to visually dominate.

Simple stainless steel kitchen cabinetry is functional and suitably restrained, but the surfaces also serve to reflect the light and water, always referencing the position and history of the structure. ➤

LEFT The concrete and steel kitchen is minimalism in practice.

BELOW The living room fireplace keeps the whole place warm in winter.

BUDGET TIP

When decorating, turn your favourite photographs into large artworks to brighten up bare walls.





Even with two renos under her belt, this project was still a challenge for Tineke.



After years of living in a regular home, this was a chance for the owners to simplify. It was an exercise in taking away, not adding

Industrial chic meets modern comfort to create a streamlined space.



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The houseboat is accessed via a neatly planted garden.

On solid ground

The patch of level ground on the land side of the houseboat provides a lawn and patio area. A shed has been converted into a second bedroom, which also has storage space above to keep the main living areas uncluttered.

'I wanted a cosy and colourful place to sit outside, and having this more usual patio setting as well as the deck over the water makes me feel we have the best of both worlds,' says Tineke.

★
A converted shed provides a second bedroom for visitors, complete with a relaxing outdoor seating area



The couch base and cushions are made from recycled pallets, foam and pillowcases.

'The houseboat has only one bedroom, so the guestroom in the old shed gives us the opportunity to have our children or guests to stay.'

Keen to keep the style rustic and in tune with the original structure, Tineke used reclaimed materials.

'I saw this couch in a magazine and decided to make one. I found the pallets on the internet and made the mattresses from foam and pillowcases,' says Tineke. ➤

DIY TIP

To make a couch like this one, you'll find new or used pallets online for about \$20 or even free.



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DESIGN TIP

Maximise on covered outdoor living and dining areas for entertaining when the interior is short on space.



The table in the outdoor dining area was homemade and the bench an internet find.

H See more unusual homes
Visit handyman.net.au/10-wacky-houses

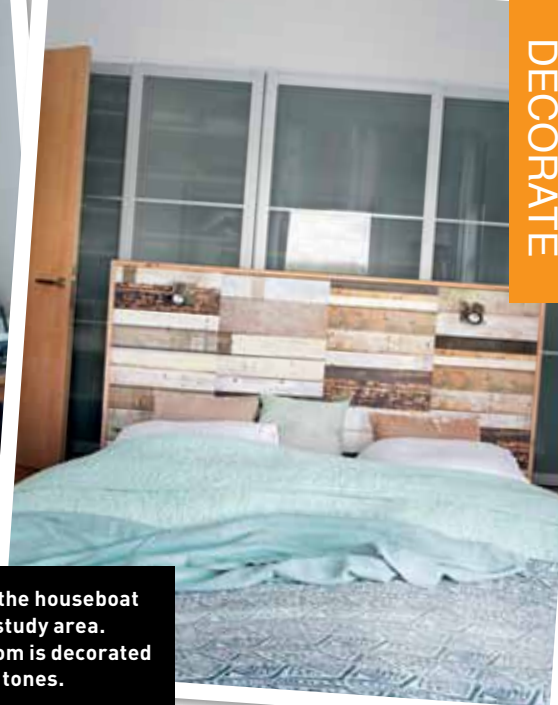


The couple love to furnish their home with beautiful items they find on their travels



LEFT A corner of the houseboat features a small study area.

RIGHT The bedroom is decorated in restful neutral tones.



Flexible spaces

The simple and compact interior of the home is easy to maintain and ideal for the retired couple.

'After having a busy household for so long, this is a peaceful, easy place to live. But what has been a revelation is how much the outdoor areas function as extra rooms,' says Tineke.

When entertaining, the back patio comes into its own. Positioned under a timber pergola, the dining setting is protected from the sun and rain.

Inside, a small study has been created in a corner of the houseboat.

Positioned at the back end of the boat, with no corner windows, is the bedroom. It is restrained in colour to

promote restful sleep, and minimally furnished. The headboard has been covered in timber-look wallpaper to tie in with the rest of the decor.

'Not a day passes that we are not surprised by nature. The sunlight, birds, and everything else that lives on the water make you feel at one with nature and the seasons,' says Tineke. ☺

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OUTDOOR DECOR

Cheer up an alfresco entertaining area with DIY hanging decorations

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH PROJECTS GEMA BENEITEZ PICTURES SUE FERRIS



EXPERT SECRETS

Hanging centrepieces add charm to an outdoor area without taking up extra table space, and can even be used to display candles or plants. Just be sure to take them down during high winds.

Sprucing up an outdoor area can be as easy as hanging a centrepiece above a table or from a tree or pergola.

You can make a colourful and vibrant chandelier using a hanging basket, wire and bead necklaces, and with a couple of coats of spray paint, you can match it to your space.

Bead necklaces are available from party or discount stores. Ensure you have enough necklaces so the wire basket underneath doesn't show. >



Bright and colourful decorations will turn a plain outdoor space into a whimsical and unique family entertaining area

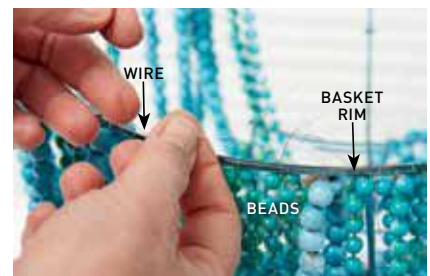


1 2



1 Prepare the beads

Spray-paint the bead strands in two shades of a bright colour. Remove the lining from a wire hanging basket, then unclip the hanger and reattach to a large curtain rod ring. Secure three equal lengths of chain to the curtain ring and add chain clips to the ends.



2 Attach the beads

Use tie-wire to attach a strand of beads to the basket rim, then take the beads under the basket and attach to the opposite side, cutting to length if needed. Repeat to cover the basket. Clip the chains to the rim. Wire bead strands to the rim and the curtain ring.

DIY TIP

To mount the chandelier, drill a pilot hole and secure a threaded hook, twisting by hand and tightening with vice grips.

**BEADED
CHANDIELIER**

Hang a beaded pendant over an outdoor dining setting.

SAFETY TIP

Make sure that both the chain and the rope can support the total weight of the tray, potted plants and candles.

Use coloured plastic chain to contrast with the greenery.

CANDLE TRAY

 Candles and plants are an easy way to add ambience outdoors. Group different-sized candles and pot plants on a hanging tray to create a display of light and greenery.

This tray is made from 19mm pine board and is suspended by two loops of chain. Each chain runs through a shackle attached to a length of 8mm rope secured overhead.

The timber board is edged with punched-metal strapping to create a lip for the tray and give it a touch of industrial chic. ➤



 Use citronella candles to keep pesky mosquitoes and insects away

 Finger-tighten the shackle to allow easy removal.

 Discover more outdoor ideas
Follow us at [pinterest.com/DIYhandyman](https://www.pinterest.com/DIYhandyman)

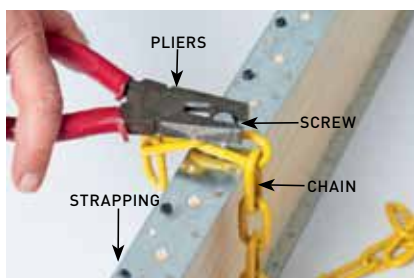
1 2 3



1 Secure the strapping

Cut a 19mm pine board to size, wrap 30mm metal strapping around the edges and cut to length. Position the strapping flush with the board base to create a lip for the top, securing with 25mm flathead nails every 100mm.

TIP Seal the timber with clear varnish.



2 Attach the chain

Measure 15mm in from the ends, mark the strapping and drill 25mm deep pilot holes into the edge of the board. Position the third link from the end of the chain over each hole, securing with M8 x 50mm coach screws and washers. Tighten with pliers.



3 Hang the tray

Attach a shackle to each chain, then thread a piece of rope through the shackles. Secure the rope to a branch, awning or pergola using S-hooks. Add pot plants and a variety of candles.

TIP Use a spirit level when hanging the tray to get a flat, level surface.

TEALIGHT TERRARIUMS

 Decorate outdoors with mini hanging terrariums. They are easy to create using coloured sand, tealight candles, bead necklaces and succulent cuttings.

Spread a 20mm layer of sand in each terrarium, then add a tealight and a succulent. Thread a necklace through the hole in the terrarium and hang it from a branch.

Succulents can survive for a long time without water, and will send out roots eventually. Mist with a spray bottle but don't overwater. 



Spray-paint the bead necklaces before hanging.



The best renovations... start with the right preparation

SANDING SPONGE BLOCK

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CLOCK FACE TABLE

Transform a recycled table into an eye-catching feature piece

PROJECT AND PICTURES MELISSA DARR

The table now takes pride of place on the front porch.

Crafty blogger Melissa Darr knew she wanted to refashion this table, but it took her nearly a year to find the right look.

'The top was in good condition and the whole thing just really needed a good paint,' says Melissa.

After doing some online research, Melissa chose to transfer the graphic of a clock face onto the tabletop, having first spray-painted the legs and surface.

'I just love how it turned out in the end,' she says.

 Get more DIY from Melissa
Follow her blog thewhimsicalwife.com

PAINT THE TABLE

Melissa cleaned the table and removed the top from the base before she began painting.

She decided to spray the top in a gloss white and the legs in hammered silver. Using spray paint meant she could easily get to the hard-to-reach parts.

'The paint is fast drying, so it was finished in an afternoon, which is just what an impatient DIYer likes,' says Melissa.



For a more rustic look, rub harder to remove the wet paper so the image appears worn

Melissa



EXPERT SECRETS

Use an all-in-one spray paint to avoid having to apply both an undercoat and a top coat.



Print the design you are using in mirror image.



Press your print face down onto the tabletop.

Leave the paper to dry for a day before removing.



DESIGN TIP

Allow a few days for the paint on the tabletop to dry completely before transferring the image onto it.

PRINT THE TOP

Having found a design she liked online, Melissa printed it off and transferred the clock face image onto the tabletop using Mod Podge.

This is an easy method that can be used on many different surfaces, such as timber, fabric and ceramics.

➤ **PRINT** your chosen design in mirror image so that it shows in reverse.

➤ **APPLY** a layer of Mod Podge evenly all over the image, then press it face down onto the tabletop.

➤ **SMOOTH** the paper to remove any air bubbles and allow to dry for a day.

➤ **WET** the paper thoroughly, then rub it off slowly, taking care not to rub too hard when working over the printed areas.

➤ **REMOVE** all the paper and allow the tabletop to dry properly.

➤ **SEAL** the surface with more Mod Podge to protect against damage.

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SPRING CLEANING SECRETS

Whip the house into shape with these hints and tips for keeping it spotless

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH

Keeping the house clean can be a challenge, especially when you have a big family, busy job or pets. But spring can give you the motivation to clear out the winter dust and grime.

Working smarter not harder is the key to getting the cleaning done quickly so you can have more time to relax and enjoy the warmer weather and longer days of spring.

Splitting the cleaning into small jobs and knowing a few tricks and shortcuts will let you devote more energy to getting a great result, making your home look like new in no time. ➤



PICTURE THINKSTOCK

KITCHEN

With constant use, the kitchen can quickly become the dirtiest room in the house, but given it's where we prepare food, it has to be the cleanest.

To minimise grime, bacteria and stains, get in the habit of wiping the benchtop and sink after every meal, and giving them a good scrub weekly.

For a big clean, focus on the hotspots like cabinet doors, the rangehood and splashback, using a grease-cutting cleaner, then it's time for the oven and microwave.

Clean the microwave

Microwave a cup of water and a slice of lemon on high for five minutes to steam-clean the inside.

Once the cup has cooled a bit, remove it and wipe away the grime with a damp cloth to leave the microwave lemony fresh.

Remove oven grime

Make an oven cleaner by combining half a cup of baking soda and one teaspoon of salt with enough water to form a paste. Apply to the oven walls with a sponge, then scrub to remove the grime.



DIY TIP

Zap a damp sponge in the microwave for two minutes on high to kill bacteria, but never microwave metal scourers.

GRIME BUSTERS



Glitz Green Borax, about \$10 for 1kg. cleanwithglitz.com.au



Oates Flexible Microfibre Dust Wand, \$14. oates.com.au



Selley's Sugar Soap Cleaning Wipes, about \$5 for 25. selleys.com.au

Microfibre cloths are more efficient at cleaning surfaces than cotton cloths or paper towel. They're also great for picking up dust when dry, plus they're machine-washable



BATHROOM

This room requires special attention, as moist environments create ideal conditions for mould and mildew.

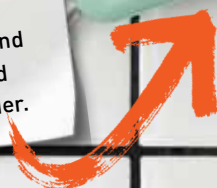
You can make a multipurpose cleaner from three parts water, one part vinegar, the juice of one lemon and a few drops of eucalyptus oil.

For grout, deep-clean with oxygen bleach to make sure your bathroom stays a sanctuary, not a biohazard. >

Wipe off moisture

Keep a squeegee in the bathroom to remove moisture from the tiles and screen after every shower.

This helps prevent mould and unsightly soap scum stains and makes a deep-clean much easier.



Protect tile grout

Clean the tiles and then, using a grout brush, scrub the grout. Apply two coats of sealant to stop water penetrating and causing mould.

TIP RegROUT using a product that contains antimicrobial protection.



Quick fix for that awkward spill



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PETS

Our furry friends aren't the tidiest of housemates, shedding their hair on furniture, tracking dirt through the house and leaving nasty surprises on the carpet for us to clean up.

Keeping certain parts of the house pet-free will minimise their impact, as will regular grooming to remove any loose fur. Invest in a powerful vacuum cleaner and sprinkle baking soda on carpets to kill odours.



1 2 3

AVOID CARPET DAMAGE Act fast after toilet accidents to prevent stains. The longer you wait before cleaning, the greater the risk of long-term damage.

Prevent clogged drains
Most dogs prefer a warm shower over a cold hose in the backyard any day, but the downside is excess hair clogging up the drain. Simply cover the hole with a scourer and the water will go down while the hair gets caught.



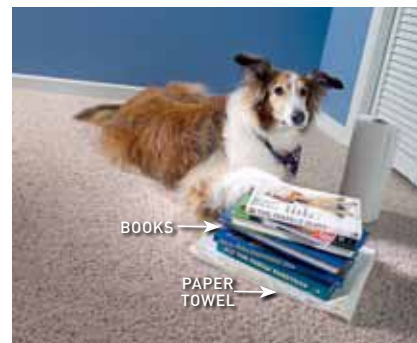
1 Blot the mess

Soak up the urine with white paper towel, avoiding printed patterns that can bleed colour. Press hard to soak up as much as possible, then add about a quarter of a teaspoon of dishwashing liquid to a cup of lukewarm water.



2 Apply soapy water

Soak the area thoroughly using the detergent solution and paper towel, then blot with dry paper towel. Repeat this process at least once. Rinse out the detergent using clear water and blot the carpet dry again.



3 Dry the carpet

Mix one part white vinegar and two parts water, then blot the carpet one last time. Cover the damp area with 20 layers of paper towel and a heavy stack of books. Change the towels until they no longer absorb moisture. ➤



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STAIN ZAPPERS

Life can be messy, and it's inevitable that we'll have spills or accidents on clothing, carpets and other fabrics.

By preparing a handy stain removal kit and having a plan of attack, you can prevent them setting in.



30 Seconds New Generation Outdoor Cleaner, \$20 for 5L. 30secondscleaners.com



Loctite Glue Remover, about \$6. loctite.com.au



Top stain-stopping tips

Avoid permanent damage by following these essential rules.

- ☛ **TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION** as the less time the stain has to penetrate, the better your chances are of removing it before it sets.
- ☛ **BLOT UP** as much of a spill as possible using a cloth or paper towel. Lift off solids with a knife.
- ☛ **KEEP IT MOIST** if you can't clean it immediately, as it's easier to remove a stain when it's still damp. Sponge it with cold water, spray it with soda water and then cover it with a damp towel.

Don't scrub at a stain. Place an absorbent pad underneath and dab it with the remover, working from the outside in to avoid leaving a ring

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS



Milk

Clean immediately with soapy water, soak in diluted vinegar for 10 minutes, then rinse.

Beer



Coffee

Dissolve two tablespoons borax in 500ml water, then dab or soak with the solution.

Chocolate

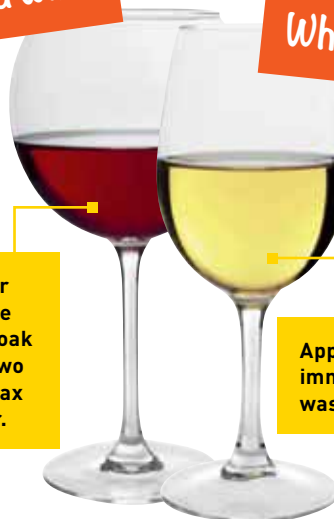


Berries



Dab with vinegar or lemon juice, leave for an hour or two, then wash.

Red wine



White wine

Apply soda water immediately, then wash as normal.

Turmeric



Dab the stain with neat hydrogen peroxide.

Beetroot



Apply soda water at once and, if the stain persists, soak in a solution of two tablespoons borax per 500ml water.

1 2

REMOVE MILDEW AND MOULD Thriving in cold, damp and dark places, like inside wardrobes or behind furniture, mould and mildew leave an ugly stain behind even after removal, so repaint to cover the stain.



1 SCRUB THE WALL using a sponge and a solution of one part bleach and three parts water. Don't worry if the stain doesn't totally disappear.



2 PRIME THE STAIN and surrounding area using a stain-blocking primer. Allow to dry, then apply the top coat to match the original wall colour. 🍷



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Grease

Sprinkle cornflour on the spot, put the fabric between five layers of paper towel, then iron. Soak tough stains in a bucket of water with one tablespoon washing soda and one teaspoon eucalyptus oil.

Cosmetics

Dab the stain with a solution of three parts water and one part cloudy ammonia.

Nail polish

Dab quickly with a damp cloth, then sponge off using methylated spirits.

Rust

Make a paste out of salt and lemon juice, rub it into the stain, leave for 10-20 minutes, then rinse out.

Blood

Soak in cold water. Add a handful of salt to shift really stubborn stains.

Vomit

Scrape up solids, then dab or soak in two tablespoons borax per 500ml water with a dash of eucalyptus oil.

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A young girl with reddish-brown hair, wearing a bright yellow sleeveless dress and patterned sandals, is captured in a dynamic pose as if about to kick a soccer ball. The ball is white with black and yellow patterns and sits on a lush green lawn. In the background, there is a dense wall of green foliage and trees, with sunlight filtering through the leaves, creating a dappled light effect on the grass.

SPRING LAWN TILC

If your grass is suffering from winter wear and tear, there's plenty you can do to get it in shape

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

A cool, shady winter can take quite a toll on even well-maintained lawns so, if yours is still suffering from a case of the post-winter blues, don't feel that you've dropped the ball.

If you understand the underlying problems and apply the right remedies, your lawn will thank you for it.

A little work now will see your patch of grass looking fabulous in next to no time and will set it up well for the warmer months ahead.

Here's our easy guide to getting it lush, green and healthy.



Adam

EXPERT SECRETS

Fertilise your lawn about a week before you apply a topdressing to prime your grass for quality growth.



To aerate smaller lawns, use a garden fork.

AERATING

For soil to support quality plant growth, it needs to have spaces that air, water and nutrients can be transferred through.

This can be hard to achieve in lawns, as the soil is constantly being compacted, so the simple way to fix this is through aeration.

✚ **SPIKED LAWN ROLLERS** are an easy and efficient way to aerate large lawns. Pick up a roller from your local hire shop, fill it with water, then pull it around the lawn.

✚ **GARDEN FORKS** are ideal for small areas. Drive the fork about 50mm into the soil and gently rock it back and forth. Repeat every 50mm across the compacted area.

Work backwards to avoid walking on the aerated parts.



Use the back of a landscape rake to evenly spread the topdressing mix over small areas. For larger areas, use a soil levelling tool.

TOPDRESSING

It wasn't that long ago that the must-do spring chore for the lawn lover was topdressing.

Today, topdressing is really just done to fix lumps and bumps. But that's not to say that giving your lawn a full topdress isn't an option, as the results are well worth the effort.

If you do decide to topdress, feed the lawn about a week beforehand

and only use a specialist mix, which is available in bags from your local landscape supplier.

This mix is generally made up of 70-80% very fine organic matter with river sand.

Apply only a light covering and don't water in the mix until the new growth punches through, as a hard crust may form. ➤



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EASY WEEDING

It's easy to overlook weeds, but they can cause the biggest problems with your lawn by creating dead patches when they suck out nutrients and overshadow your grass.

Many weeds can be adequately controlled through feeding your lawn and regular mowing, but sometimes you need a more direct approach.

MANUAL REMOVAL

This is still the most reliable way to weed the lawn. A variety of modern tools are available to help you weed, or you can use an old-fashioned daisy grubber.

- ✦ **WEAR** gloves while weeding, as some have prickles and others have mildly caustic sap.
- ✦ **PULL** up the weeds, roots and all, to prevent them growing back.
- ✦ **AVOID** shaking the weeds to prevent the spread of seeds.
- ✦ **KEEP** a bucket on hand to toss the weeds into, then dispose of them in your green waste.

SPOT-WEEDING

You can use selective weedkillers to spot-spray lawn weeds or use diluted all-purpose herbicide.

The important thing to remember is that non-selective herbicides will kill or damage all plants, so any overspray onto the lawn will cause harm.

If not using a ready-to-use pack, then there are two easy ways

of applying herbicide to the lawn when spot-weeding.

✦ **BRUSH** on using an old paintbrush or a special-purpose device such as the Yates Zero Weeding Brush.

✦ **SPRAY** on to spot-treat the weeds. There are hooded spray heads available for many spray units, but remember that you're still likely to get a certain amount of overspray.



Try to avoid overspraying when using herbicides.

DIY TIP

You can mow over large weeds but avoid doing so if they've gone to seed, as you'll likely spread the seeds all over the lawn.

SELECTIVE HERBICIDES

The most popular way to deal with weeds in the lawn is by using selective herbicide products, particularly the weed-and-feed type.

- ✦ **ENSURE** they are applied at the correct rate or you will damage the lawn.
- ✦ **CHECK** the product is rated as buffalo-safe if you have a buffalo lawn such as Sir Walter or Palmetto. ➤



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FOOD FOR HEALTH

Want to take the easiest option for caring for your lawn? Simply fertilise with a quality lawn food.

A healthy lawn can often out-compete weeds, killing them naturally, and is more able to repair its own scrappy patches.

If you use a fertiliser with an organic component, you'll also be feeding the soil, not just the grass.

This gradually improves the quality of the soil, which will aid aeration and drainage.

KILLER GRUBS

If you're finding dead areas in your lawn for no reason, then curl grubs could be the culprits.

These are the larvae of a small black beetle that lives and grows in the soil, feeding on the roots and leaves of the grass.

The giveaway that you have curl grubs is when you can grab the dead-looking grass and it comes away from the soil easily.

Use environmentally friendly Eco-Neem to solve the problem.



The Tumbleweed Inground Pet Poo Composter, \$179, uses worms to produce free fertiliser from animal waste (tumbleweed.com.au).



Take care with trees

If they are growing in the lawn, trees can suck up moisture and lots of the nutrients that you are directing at the lawn.

Their roots can also push through the surface and they can cast unwanted shade or drop their leaves on the grass.

It can cause problems from the tree's perspective, too, as the trunk can be damaged by mower bumps and line trimmers.

If you do want to grow a tree in your lawn, create a border that's at least 500mm out from the trunk and mulch this area well.

PICTURE (BOTTOM CENTRE) THINKSTOCK



Keep off the grass!

Dog urine is a great spot-killer of lawns. Urine is high in nutrients, but as it is delivered in a concentrated form, it will scorch the grass and cause dead spots.

This can be avoided by training your dog to keep off the grass altogether or to only use one or two spots in the garden. >

SELECTING A NEW LAWN

There are three main points to consider when replacing a lawn.

➊ **ASPECT** If the lawn is in a sunny position, the soft-leaved buffalo Sir Walter is ideal.

If the area is shady, you will need grass that has a higher shade tolerance. This is sold under codes, such as ST91, which means it has 91% tolerance.

➋ **ENVIRONMENT** Take into account the local climate. Fescue grasses are very tolerant of hot, dry conditions, while Velvetene is ideal in warm, coastal situations.

➌ **FUNCTION** Select a variety to suit your level of wear and tear. Running grasses such as buffalo or kikuyu self-repair to cover bare patches much faster than clumping grasses like fescues.



Did you know?

Here are a few facts and figures that might just make you love your lawn even more.

- ➕ Well-managed turf works effectively as a carbon sink, capturing carbon emissions.
- ➕ A healthy 450sqm lawn can absorb more than 11,000L or 25mm of rain without significant runoff. This reduces erosion and the burden on stormwater systems.

- ➕ The root mass of a lawn acts like a filtration system, trapping excess nutrients and other substances, and stops them reaching waterways.
- ➕ Lawns absorb CO₂ and generate oxygen. A standard 15 x 15m lawn will produce enough oxygen to sustain a family of four.
- ➕ In summer, a healthy lawn will maintain a surface temperature at least 10°C lower than bare soil and other hard surfaces.



Lawn cools the air around it like a natural air conditioner and reduces glare, as it's non-reflective.

Bulk buying

For large jobs, you'll need bulk materials. Talk to your local landscape supplier and explain that you need a turf underlay soil mix.

To calculate the volume you need, measure length by breadth and then the desired depth.

Assuming your area is level, about 20-40mm of new soil is adequate. So an area of 5 x 5m

to a depth of 20mm would need half a cubic metre of soil. Your supplier can convert this into tonnage for you.

You'll need turf delivered in bulk, so check with your supplier about what access they need for delivery, as they often use an all-terrain mini forklift to move the turf to your site.

Also, ensure you have a spot cleared for the delivery. ➤



Make sure you have access for soil to be delivered.

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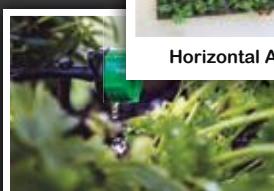
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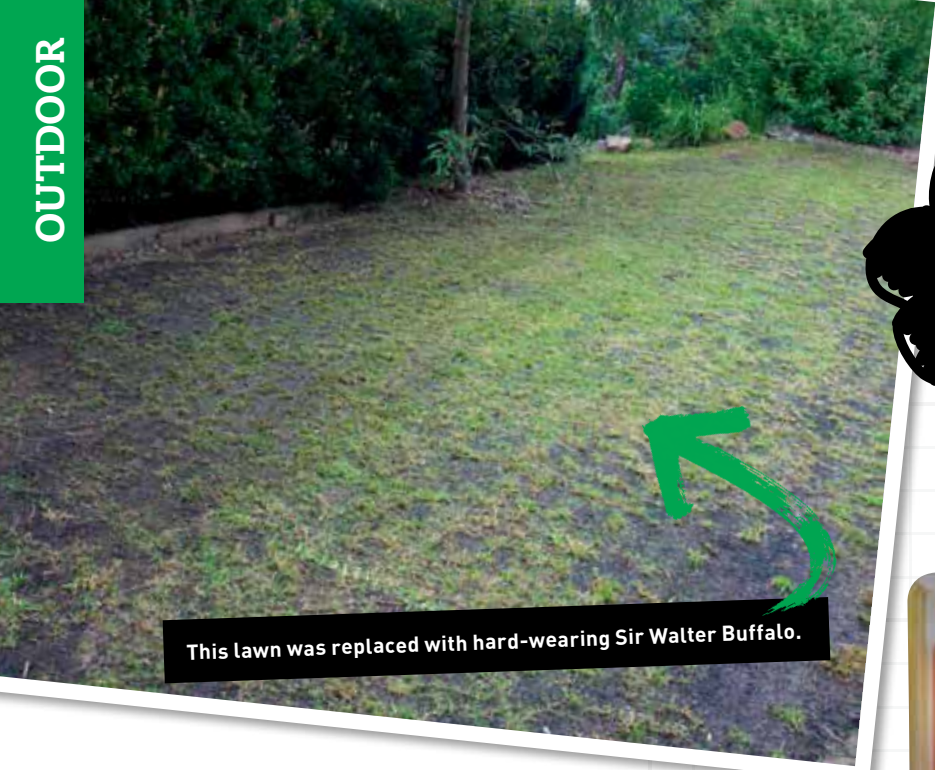
Horizontal Assemble



Blank Canvas - Ready to Create



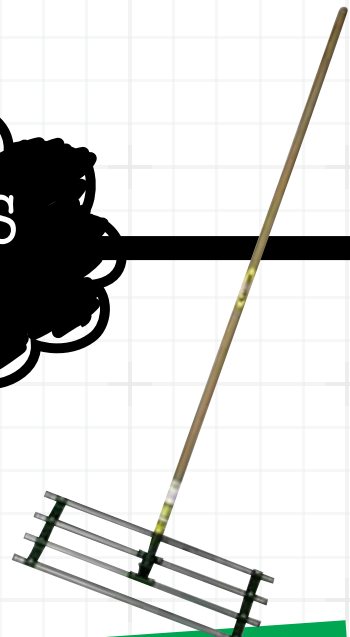
For more information on this product please scan the QR code with your mobile device.



This lawn was replaced with hard-wearing Sir Walter Buffalo.



Eco-Organic Garden Eco-Neem Concentrate, \$20 for 100ml. ecoorganicgarden.com.au



Cyclone Top Soil Spreader, \$65. cyclone.com.au



Gardena Comfort Aquazoom Hose End Sprinkler, \$48. gardena.com.au



Scotts Regular Lawn Builder, \$26 for 4kg. scottsaustralia.com.au

Replace the lawn

Sometimes a lawn reaches a tipping point where it has become too badly worn and you need to do some serious work to get it looking good again.

You can try to refresh a seriously degraded lawn, but you'll likely end up investing more time and money without ever getting a quality result.

The simple fact is that if your lawn has more weeds and bare patches than grass, then it's time to lay new turf to restore it to health.

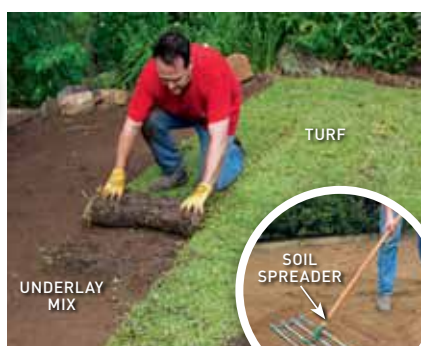
1 2 3



1 Prepare the ground

Remove the existing lawn and weeds, then turn over the soil. Use a landscape rake to collect the waste material and roughly level the entire area.

TIP We hired the Husqvarna TR 430 Dual Cultivator for \$157 for one day.



2 Lay the turf

Spread underlay mix over the area with a soil spreader. Starting from one end and working along a straight edge, lay the turf in a brick-like pattern to help the turf knit together faster. On a slope, lay the rolls across the slope.



3 Apply a fertiliser

Straight after laying the turf, apply a hose-on seaweed tonic, such as Seasol, then use a sprinkler to evenly water the lawn thoroughly.

TIP We used an oscillating sprinkler so the water covered the whole lawn. 🌱

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A man wearing a red t-shirt, blue jeans, and red ear protection is using a line trimmer to edge a lawn. He is standing on the grass, and the trimmer is cutting the edge of the lawn near some green shrubs. A wooden fence is visible in the background.

DIY TIP

Make sure you always use clean fuel in your trimmer and have it serviced on a regular basis.

LINE TRIMMER BUYER'S GUIDE

Take the hard work out of tidying up the lawn by choosing the right edger for your needs

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

Back when Dad did the lawn, the edges were laboriously finished off with a spade, and trimming around tricky spots was done with hand shears. Today, we just reach for our trusty line trimmer.

Whether battery, electric or petrol driven, line trimmers have in many respects revolutionised lawn care.

Simple to use and available for a variety of prices, from budget to top shelf, there's a trimmer to suit your needs whether you have a tiny lawn or an acreage.

Here we look at a selection of the range on offer and provide a few tips on using a trimmer. ➤

USING A TRIMMER

1 Best technique

A trimmer cuts with the last few millimetres of the line, so don't push the head into the area you're trimming, just let the ends do all the work.

2 Spindle check

Check the trimmer before every use to make sure everything is tight and clean, and that there is no material trapped around the head spindle.

5 Head rotation

Know the direction of rotation of the head. If yours spins anticlockwise, it will cut best on the right-hand side, and vice versa.

3 Long grass

With long grass, swing the trimmer in a pendulum-like motion and don't cut too much at once. Reduce the height and depth progressively with a few passes.

4 Line thickness

Refill the head with quality line of the recommended diameter. If it's too thin, it will snap easily. If it's too thick, it may not feed correctly in auto-feed or tap-and-feed heads.

PICK THE POWER SOURCE

With electric trimmers, you just plug them into the mains and off you go. Efficient, quiet, lightweight and easy to handle, they're ideal for small lawns.

Battery-powered trimmers are quiet, convenient and lightweight, and have many of the benefits of electric models with the added bonus of being cordless.

Modern battery technology means these models are more than up to trimming small- and medium-sized lawns. But when it comes to cutting power and run time, petrol wins out.

Nowadays, petrol-driven line trimmers are much quieter and more efficient than those of the past, and they also have much lower emissions.

Petrol trimmers are available in two-stroke and the more powerful four-stroke models.

BATTERY



The Ryobi One+ 18V 305mm Line Trimmer Kit, \$209, uses the versatile One+ battery system and has a telescopic shaft that can be set up for maximum comfort in use.



There are no concerns about storing and mixing fuel with battery-powered trimmers



For serious trimming, the Victa 40V V-Force+ Trimmer, \$449, is your go-to tool. It has a 350mm cutting path and turbo-boost feature for extra grunt (victa.com.au).



Featuring a bump-feed line spool, the Ozito 36V 300mm Li-ion Line Trimmer, \$279, offers excellent ergonomics through its adjustable length shaft and handle (ozito.com.au).

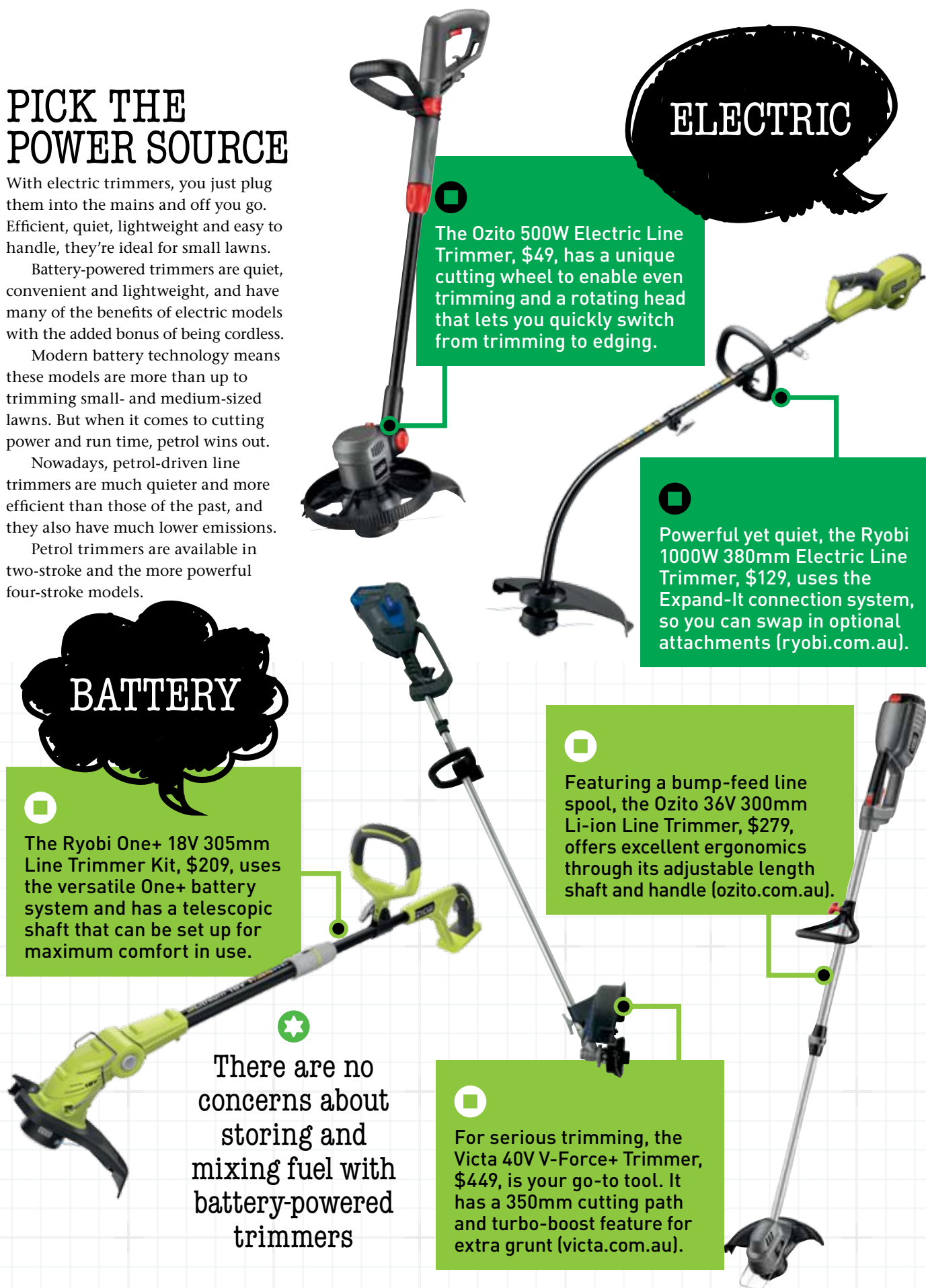


Powerful yet quiet, the Ryobi 1000W 380mm Electric Line Trimmer, \$129, uses the Expand-It connection system, so you can swap in optional attachments (ryobi.com.au).



The Ozito 500W Electric Line Trimmer, \$49, has a unique cutting wheel to enable even trimming and a rotating head that lets you quickly switch from trimming to edging.

ELECTRIC



WHAT YOU NEED

1 VISOR COMBO For a higher level of protection from flying material that may be kicked up, consider investing in this professional-grade earmuff and medium-impact polycarbonate full-face visor combo.

2 SAFETY KIT To get you going, the basic kit from Unisafe has all the protection you need.

It includes earmuffs, safety goggles and a disposable dust mask, which is useful when you are trimming in dry conditions.

3 GARDEN LEAD You'll need a good-quality, outdoor-grade extension lead. If using a corded electric trimmer, plug it into a powerpoint that is protected with a safety cut-off. 

STAYING SAFE

There are a few safety rules to bear in mind when using a line trimmer.

Always wear ear and eye protection, and you may also find that wearing gloves makes it more comfortable.

Keep animals and other people, especially children, at least 10m away to avoid any injury from flying material.

To reduce fatigue, make sure you take a break every 15 minutes.

Protector Earmuff and Full Face Visor Safety Kit, \$40. scottsafety.com.



UniSafe Three-piece Safety Kit, \$17. scottsafety.com



HPM 15m Garden Extension Lead, about \$28. hpm.com.au



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CYCLONE TOOLS

The first step to getting the backyard into shape is having the right tool for the job, and the range of garden gear from Cyclone is ideal for any outdoor project (cyclone.com.au).

Cyclone is giving away three prize packs, worth \$520 each, containing all the tools pictured on the right.

To enter, go to handyman.net.au/cyclone and tell us your best gardening tip in 25 words or less. Entries close 28/10/15. See the website for terms and conditions. Winners will be announced in the February 2016 issue.

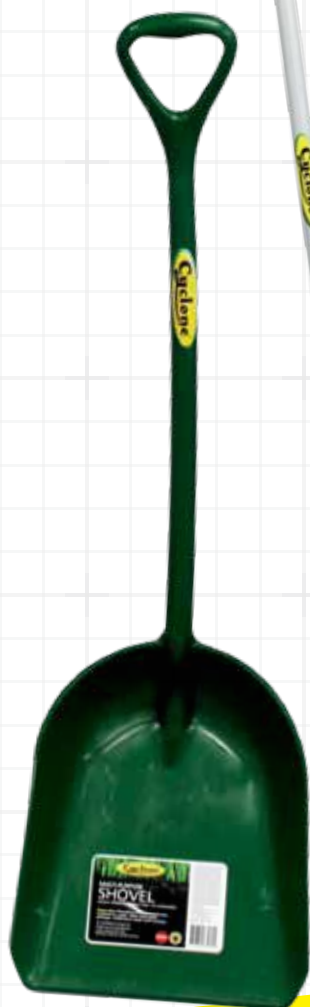


PICTURE: ALAMY

Win the ultimate garden tool prize pack from Cyclone!



Great Aussie Superake, \$25.



Multi-purpose Single Piece Shovel, \$49.



Post Hole Digger Pincer, \$83.



Long Handle 16-tooth Landscaper Rake, \$37.



Sculpt Telescopic Ratchet Bypass Lopper, \$87.



Sculpt Telescopic Wavy Edge Hedge Shears, \$70.



Ergo Heavy Duty Bypass Pruner, \$59.



Short Timber Shaft Garden Spade, \$44.



Super Splitter 2kg Axe, \$69.

Enter now at handyman.net.au/cyclone

POOL FENCING

Blend good looks with safety by installing a run of clear glass panels poolside

PROJECT AND PICTURES STUART SCOTT STYLING MINDY BAILEY



Before

After

With a frameless fence, the pool is integrated into the rest of the yard.

Glass fence panels

Everton has several glass pool fencing systems that are easily installed DIY (everton.com.au).

For this site, we used fully frameless glass panels slotted into stainless steel mini posts.

The glass panels are 1200mm high and come in widths ranging from 300-1300mm.

You'll need to buy the hinges and a gate latch separately.

3
DAYS\$4138
COST

A backyard pool provides hours of summer fun, but it is worth remembering that you have a legal obligation to keep it safe and secure.

The main way to do this is to install a pool fence, preventing kids from having unsupervised access.

But many fences can make a yard feel smaller, splitting the space into two, as the old fence did here.

We chose to replace the old pool fence with frameless glass panels from Everton, which slot into stainless steel mini posts for a streamlined effect.

We secured the posts to new concrete footings using galvanised anchor studs and chemical adhesive.

It took three days to install the new fence, including pouring the concrete and installing the panels, and cost just over \$4000. ➤

SAFETY TIP

Glass panels are heavy, so avoid damaging yourself, or the panels, by ensuring you have an extra pair of hands to help.



DIY TIP

Slip a few lengths of pool noodle or pipe insulation over the edges of the glass panels to protect them during installation.

Clean and clear, the glass border allows for unrestricted views of the pool.

LEFT You may need to excavate an area of the yard to lay concrete footings.

Preparing the site

Concrete can be expensive if bought by the bag, so it's best to buy a ready-to-pour mix that can be delivered to the site in a mixer truck.

Order more than you think you'll need before you start the job so you don't end up running out before finishing. Use the remaining concrete to fix up any other DIY jobs that need doing.

Before digging the trench for the footings, be sure to prepare properly.

Consider where plumbing and electrical pipes or other obstructions may be buried, and Contact Dial Before You Dig to find the locations of underground utilities (1100.com.au).

Check with your local council to guarantee compliance for the pool fence, and take the necessary steps to ensure the site remains safe and secure throughout the build. ➤

Materials

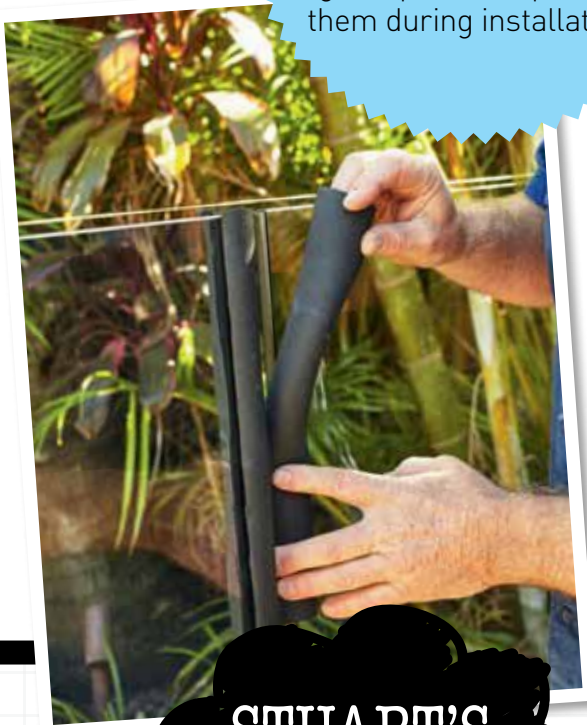
Fence panels	\$1464
Mini posts	\$1428
Trench mesh and bar chairs	\$94
Concrete 600 x 400mm	\$480
Travertine tiles	\$192
Hinges, latches and installation kit	\$226
M8 x 110mm anchor studs	\$128
Chemical adhesive	\$68
Mortar and Bondcrete	\$20
Tile adhesive	\$38
TOTAL	\$4138

Laying the tiles

The concrete was left to cure for a week then Travertine tiles were laid on a waterproof mortar screed to prevent them cracking.

Apply a 10:1 Bondcrete and water mix to the concrete to create a waterproof membrane.

While still wet, apply a mortar slurry made using a 10:1 water and Bondcrete mix. Let it cure for a day, then lay the tiles.



STUART'S PICKS

Ramset Chemset M8 x 110mm Anchor Studs, \$8 for a four pack, and UltraFix Plus Silicone, \$34 for 300ml. ramset.com.au



Dunlop Floor Tile Adhesive, \$38 for 15kg. dunlopdry.com.au

The DIY pool fence that's ready for summer.

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INSTALL THE FENCE



1 Prepare the trench

Set a level stringline using stakes or pegs to mark the fence line and excavate a 400 x 400mm trench. Position reinforcing mesh on bar chairs in the trench. Overlap lengths of mesh and tie together with wire.



2 Make the footings

Pour the concrete, agitating the mix so it settles well. Trowel the surface to an even finish, use the stringline to check for level, then let it cure for a week. To determine the best tile layout, mark the fence and gate panels on the concrete.



3 Lay the tiles

Flick a chalkline to mark the edge of the tiles. Mix the tile adhesive and spread over the concrete with a 10mm notched trowel. Lay the tiles, using a spirit level and straightedge to get them straight and level.



4 Set out the posts

Mark the ends of the fence line, flick a chalkline in between, then set out the panel positions with equal gaps. Mark the post positions 150mm in from the panel edges and use a mini post at each position to mark the hole centres.



5 Drill the post holes

Use a masonry bit to drill 6mm holes to 80mm deep for the post holes, then a 10mm masonry bit to widen the holes to 10mm by 100mm. Drill into the tiles with the hammer action off, turning it back on to drill into the concrete.



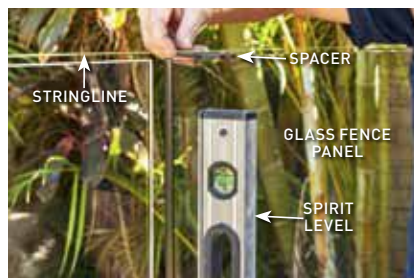
6 Set the anchor studs

Clean the holes using a bottle brush and compressed air. Position a post, inject UltraFix Plus and wind in each Chemset anchor stud, leaving 10mm protruding. Remove the post and clean if needed. Repeat for each post.



7 Install the panels

After an hour, secure the posts using washers and nuts. Set the panels in the posts, align with the marked positions and check the spacing. Ensure the rubber insert is seated correctly. Use the Allen key to clamp the panels securely.



8 Level the panels

Set a stringline to check the alignment of each panel using a 5mm spacer. To adjust, loosen the bolts in the post and insert packers underneath to align the panel with the stringline. Check each panel for plumb and level.



9 Fit the latch

Attach the hinges to the hinge panel and release the spring tension. Position the gate, pack underneath to align the hinges, then secure. Re-tension the springs so the gate shuts firmly. Attach the latch on the pool side of the gate. 🛠️



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POOL SAFETY

Having a swimming pool is a fantastic luxury, but along with the enjoyment you receive comes the responsibility of ensuring your friends and family remain safe.

Aluminium fencing is a popular choice for pool surrounds, as it is low maintenance and quick to install.

Latches must also be fitted to secure the area. Check with your local council for their requirements, as they may do inspections to see what fencing and latches have been installed.

When designing the area, consider ways to incorporate the fencing so it doesn't restrict your entertaining space. Also take into account what you'll add, such as seating, a barbecue and plants.

Look at the direction of the sun to plan where light and shade will fall. ➤

Install a new fence to suit the surrounds and provide privacy



SAFE LATCH

Keep kids secure by installing the new MagnaLatch Alert Safety Gate Latch-Alarm with an electronic alarm (ddtechglobal.com).

Key lockable, it offers flashing LED lights and an audible beep whenever a gate is opened or left unsecured, followed by a second beep if the gate is left open.

The unit ramps into full alarm mode if the gate is left unsecured for more than 15 seconds.

The MagnaLatch Alert Safety Gate Latch-Alarm beeps when the gate is left open.

DIY TIP

It is a legal requirement in Australia for every pool to be surrounded by a safe, properly installed fence.



Make sure children are supervised at all times when playing in the pool

Life vests help kids gain confidence in the water while keeping them safe.



ADD STYLE

If you are about to install new aluminium pool fencing or have an existing fence, you can now create a designer finishing touch with Protector fence toppers.

Available in three different designs, they can simply be glued or screwed in position.



1200 x 2400mm decorative fence toppers from Protector Aluminium, \$35 each. protectoraluminium.com.au

Aluminium pool fencing is easy to install DIY.



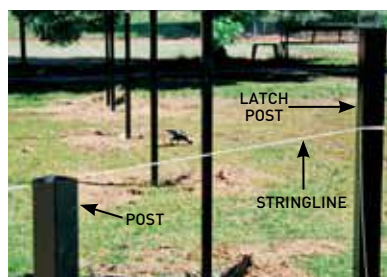
PICTURES TOP THINKSTOCK BOTTOM PROTECTOR ALUMINIUM

INSTALL THE FENCE



1 Excavate the post holes

Clear the area and run a stringline low to the ground, using a fence panel as a spacer to mark the post holes at 2500mm centres. Excavate the holes with a power auger, 600mm deep and 200mm in diameter.



2 Position the posts

Set a stringline for the post tops. Allow a gap of up to 100mm below and 50mm above each panel, with the latch post 300mm above the gate. Position the posts in the holes and fill with concrete, sloping for runoff.



3 Secure the panels

Slide the panel brackets over the top and base rails, raising them into position on temporary blocks. Use a spirit level to check the panels are level, then secure the brackets to the posts with self-drilling Tek screws.



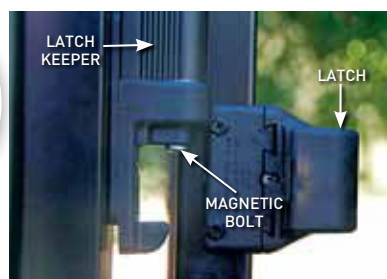
4 Cut the panels

If the fence needs to negotiate an angle other than 90°, change the direction of the fencing by cutting the ends of the panel rails using an angle grinder with a cutoff wheel. Touch up the ends with spray paint.



5 Hang the gate

Attach the self-closing hinges to the outside of the gate using Tek screws, 80mm from the top rails and level with the base rail. Space the gate evenly, using a torpedo level to check the gate is level.



6 Attach the gate latch

Secure the latch at least 1500mm above ground level, closing the gate with it in position. Tap in the post caps, then adjust the springs on the hinges so the gate will automatically close from any open position. >

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Ozito 800W Swimming Pool Pump, \$229.
ozito.com.au



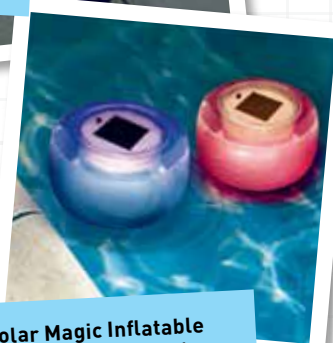
Poolscape Pool Trainer, with harnesses for adults and kids, \$269. poolscape.com.au



Diggers DIY 0.25m² Fibreglass Repair Kit 1, about \$22. recochem.com.au



Naturpanel Kosciusko Exterior Screen Project Panel, \$55.
naturtec.com.au



Solar Magic Inflatable Floating Pool Light, \$15 for two, from Bunnings.



Sika Transparent Pool Silicone, \$17 for 300ml.
aus.sika.com

DESIGN TIP

Creating a shaded area by the pool provides additional space to relax and enjoy the surrounds, while avoiding sunburn.



Absco Sheds 1.52 x 1.52 x 1.49m
Pool Pump Cover, \$497.
abscosheds.com.au



Kaleido 3m Yellow Pattern
Umbrella Canopy, \$70.
kaleidoumbrellas.com.au

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GROW TIP

Choose evergreen plants for a poolside garden, as deciduous trees will constantly be dropping foliage into the water.

After

Timber, paint and lush greenery have helped create a modern backyard haven.

Before

FROM BLEAK TO BEAUTIFUL

A dated pool area becomes a comfortable and relaxing resort-style sanctuary

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERIE BARBER



There's definitely something quintessentially Australian about a backyard pool.

It's not just about being a respite from the Aussie heat, it's also a focal point for barbies, weekend get-togethers and hours of fun for the kids.

This pool looks in good shape, but it lacks the resort feel that a little creative landscaping and a shaded entertaining area will deliver.

With a modern update, it will become a relaxing retreat that its owners would proudly show off to the neighbours.

The reno challenge

With uninspiring surfaces and minimal furniture, this pool is not somewhere you would want to spend your summer afternoons.

The paving surrounding the pool is faded, the garden looks scraggly and there's no outdoor furniture except for a couple of deckchairs.

The main ways this pool will be improved is with decking, paint and low-maintenance plants, with a barbecue and table added in to boost entertainment credentials. ➤

FREE VIRTUAL 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 free makeover.

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

SIX STEPS TO SUCCESS

1 PAINT THE FENCE

There isn't anything glamorous about a timber paling fence, and even less so when the construction posts are on your side.

The first step is to remove the garden bed around the perimeter and spray-paint the fence for colour consistency and a smarter look.



Ozito 400W Power Paint Spray Gun, \$40. ozito.com.au

4 COLOUR THE PAVERS

With the poolside lounge area now sorted, it's time to revamp the fringes.

The pool surround and pavers can be painted using a non-slip paving paint that is designed for wet areas.

Using a dark grey will ensure a cohesive and colour-coordinated design.



Berger Jet Dry AquaTread Textured Finish Paving Paint, \$100 for 2L. bergerjetdry.com.au

2 BUILD A DECK

Uniformity is important in any design and especially here, where the aim is to create a clearly defined outdoor area with a barbie and furniture.

The warm tones of merbau will be used for the new deck and for timber screens that will frame the area.



Good Times 1113 x 555mm Merbau Modular Decking Panel, \$89. goodtimesco.com.au

5 REVAMP THE GARDEN

To avoid overhanging branches dropping leaves into the pool, I'm going for minimalist landscaping.

Tropical-looking cordylines and natural river pebbles in the beds give a restful outlook.

A vertical garden creates a lush focal point on the bare white wall of the house.



Holman GreenWall Vertical Garden Kit, \$69. holmanindustries.com.au

3 ADD A SHADE SAIL

Shade is necessary in any outdoor area but is very important poolside, where it's easy to lose track of time.

A dark grey shade sail will tie in nicely with the charcoal-sprayed fence.

If the budget allows, a timber pergola is an alternative, but it will need to comply with council regulations.



Coolaroo 5 x 3m Extreme Rectangle Shade Sail in Charcoal, \$177. coolaroo.com.au

6 FENCE THE POOL

There are very strict rules around pool fencing, but they differ depending on where you live and the age of the pool, so check what regulations apply for your situation.

A frameless glass safety fence enclosing the exposed edge of the pool would be the best solution for this property. ☑



Everton 1200 x 1000 x 12mm Glass Pool Fence Panels, \$94 each. everton.com.au

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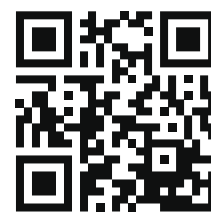
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CALM WATERS

Add a bubbling fountain to the garden using a large decorative pot

A water feature can turn any garden or courtyard into a soothing and tranquil place, as the sight and sound of running water creates a relaxing atmosphere.

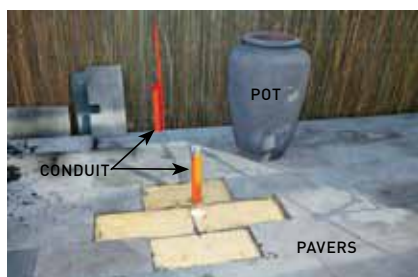
This fountain is made from a large pot, which adds wow factor without taking up too much space.

To make it, you'll need a pot of your choice, a water feature conversion kit, waterproofing membrane, a pond pump and submersible silicone, plus a shovel to excavate the area.



The water will flow gently over the lip of the pot, creating a calming trickling sound.

INSTALL THE WATER FEATURE



1 Prepare the area

Decide on a position for the water feature, then remove any pavers or turf. Bury heavy-duty conduit beneath the area to allow the pump cord to run to a nearby outlet, selecting conduit that is wide enough for the pump plug.



2 Seal the pot

Apply two coats of waterproofing membrane, such as bitumen paint, to the inside of the pot. Start from the top of the rim and work towards the base, allowing each coat to dry for several hours before applying the next coat.



3 Dig the sump hole

Use a shovel to excavate the area where the sump will sit to a depth equal to the height of the sump. Compact the soil beneath the sump to provide a stable base and use a spirit level to ensure that the sump sits level.



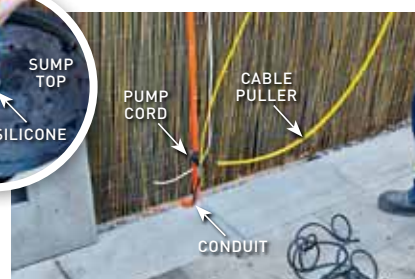
4 Install the pump

Remove the top of the sump and position the pump inside the support chamber. Feed the pump cord through the chamber side hole, then position the pump and support in the base of the sump, clicking it into place.



5 Attach the sump top

Connect the pump attachment to the pump and feed the other end through the sump top. Attach the flange to the top of the pump attachment, then apply silicone around the flange and position the pot on top.



6 Prepare the cord

Secure the end of the power cord to a cable puller using electrical tape and pull it through the conduit. You may need a qualified electrician to install an outdoor powerpoint nearby if you don't have one already.



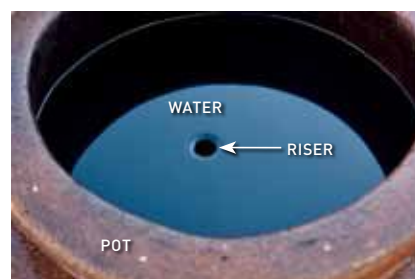
7 Attach the riser

Secure the riser tube to the flange inside the pot. The top of the riser should sit about 75mm below the rim of the pot to keep it constantly below the water level, preventing splashes and the pump from drying out.



8 Drill the sump holes

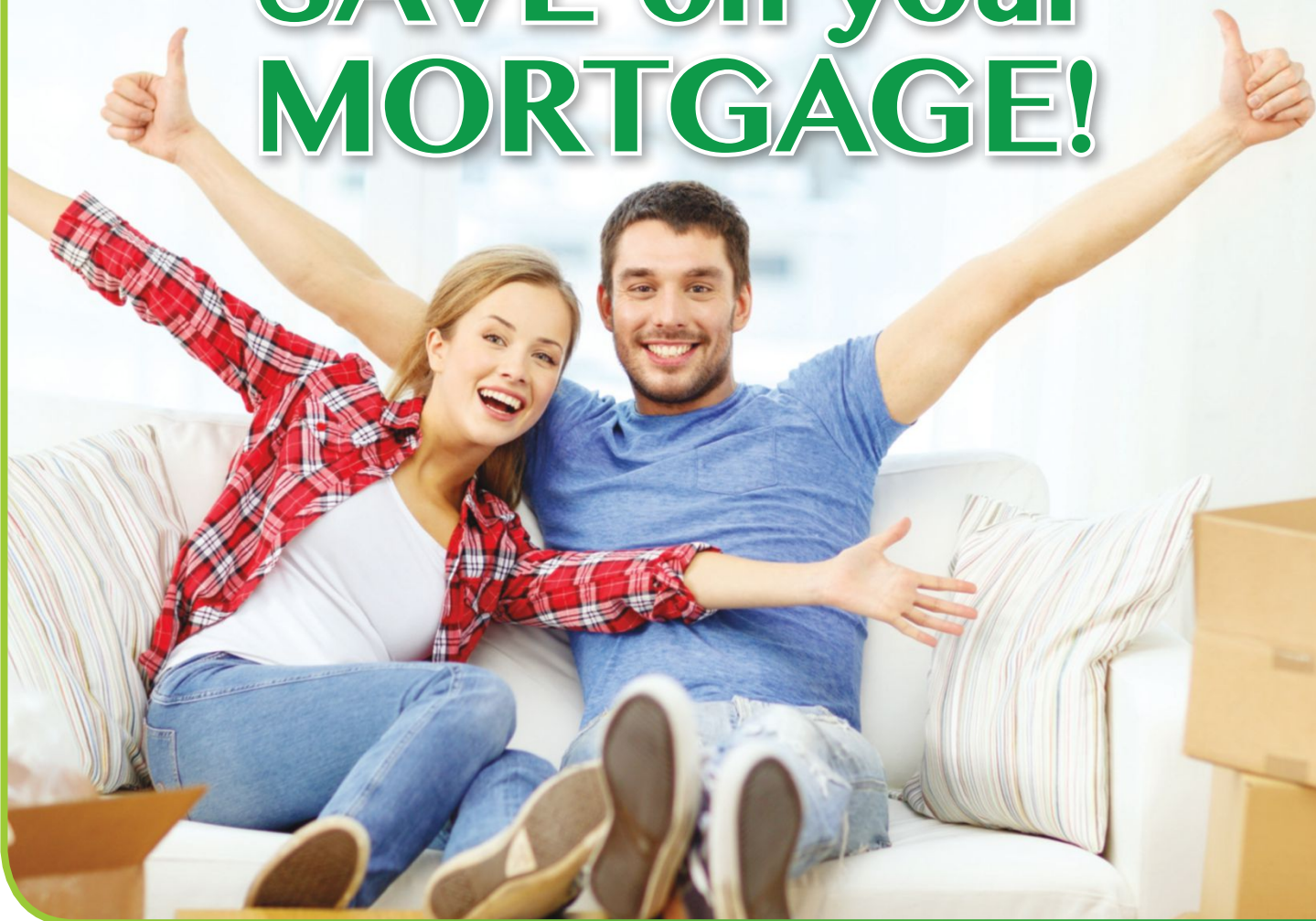
If the base of the pot covers the original sump drainage holes, drill new holes in the sump top to allow water to re-enter the sump. Ensure that all plastic waste is removed from the holes to avoid clogging the pump.



9 Fill the water feature

Add water to the pot and sump, ensuring the water level in the sump is higher than the pump. With the pump on, the water will flow over the lip into the sump. Replace pavers and cover the sump with pebbles. 🌊

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LIGHT THE WAY

Illuminate a backyard or entry using solar powered LED lanterns and spotlights

Smart lighting is the key to creating an outdoor area that can be used in the evening as much as it is during the day. And solar lights can help you illuminate your garden without any big power bills.

These types of lights are powered by internal batteries that are charged up by sunlight using either built-in or remote solar panels. They need at least eight hours of sun a day for optimum performance. ➤

SOLAR LANTERNS

To light up a path or garden, use solar lanterns. Insert the stakes into the ground or mount them on a flat surface.

Once switched on, the lights will activate automatically at dusk and turn off again at dawn.



Lytworx Stainless Steel LED Solar Spotlights, \$7 each.

Improve home security

Motion-activated solar spotlights turn on when they sense movement. They help improve security, especially when you're away, and are useful for accessing outdoor areas at night and when arriving home after dark.

SENSOR SPOTLIGHTS



Lytworx 21-LED Motion Activated 600 Lumens Solar Security Light, \$50.



Lytworx Stainless Steel Motion and Light Activated LED Security Light, \$20.



Lytworx 6-LED White Motion Activated 100 Lumens Solar Security Light, \$30.



Lytworx 6-LED Motion Activated 120 Lumens Solar Security Light, \$30.

Lytworx 48-LED Blossom Tree Solar Stake, \$16.



Lytworx White LED Solar Fairy Lights, \$11 for a pack of 100.



DECORATE WITH LEDS

Fairy lights can be strung along a fence, hung from eaves or draped over a tree or shrub.

They can be set to flash or glow constantly, making them ideal for parties, backyard barbies and other occasions. ☺

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Woodhouse Weatherproof is a complete range of Primed and H3 Treated products, designed for use in outdoor construction. Whether it be a new pergola, adding handrails to a deck, cladding an extension or adding the finishing trim to your project, there is a product to meet your construction needs.

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GARAGE DECLUTTER

Hook, hang and hide away your tools to tidy up the workshop and keep things in good order

WORDS AND PICTURES STUART SCOTT

Are you spending more time finding your tools than actually using them? If so, maybe you need to grab the bull by the horns and get organised. It may be easier than you imagined.

We overhauled this garage with a range of quick solutions, completing the job in just a day for less than \$850.

To tidy up the bigger items, such as ladders and bikes, we used heavy-duty Zenith SureHooks that are designed to hold just about anything.

A versatile Ryobi Four-piece Tool Blox modular storage system that can be stacked or wall-mounted was ideal for storing many of the tools.

And with everything in its place, we finished off the space by giving the concrete a coat of floor paint. ➤

SAFETY TIP

Installing hooks makes it safe and easy to corral awkward items like bikes, ladders, wheelbarrows and garden tools.



Group like items
so they're easier
to find when
reorganising your
garage workshop

Before





After

This messy garage space now looks clean, tidy and organised.



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HANG UP

Tools and other items can cause damage if they fall off the wall, so you need to use high-strength hooks that guarantee security.

Zenith SureHooks, from \$10 to \$17 each, are inexpensive, look good and can be used to safely hold anything from ladders to bikes (itwproline.com.au).

The notched prongs on the holders flex open to take the tools before snapping closed to safely retain them for as long as needed.

LIGHT ON

Grab the Ryobi One+ 18V Hybrid Shop Light, \$99, skin only, for the ultimate in workshop lighting (ryobi.com.au).

Powered by a Ryobi One+ battery or 240V extension lead, the two folding LED lights can be set up in various ways.

There are lots of mounting and hanging options, so hands- and cord-free lighting can be provided wherever it is needed.



Check the weight rating when buying hooks, as they will differ depending on their size and shape



STORE IT

The Ryobi Tool Blox storage system, \$399, provides flexible storage space for all your tools.

The doors have gas lifts, while the drawers are on steel roller mechanisms.

Ideal for stowing tools in the extensive One+ range, this

storage unit is made from durable steel and plastic.

Individual modules can be added separately to expand the size of the storage space.

Team it with the dedicated Roller Base with lockable castors, \$60, and it all becomes mobile. >



Refresh the floor

To finish off and freshen up the space, the floor was given a coat of White Knight Ultra Pave Garage Floor Paint, \$80 for 4L (whiteknightpaints.com.au).

This oil-based paint has been specifically designed to withstand the wear and tear a garage floor suffers and will keep looking great for many years to come.

It has great adhesion to bare concrete and previously painted surfaces, excellent coverage and resists general scuffing and marking. 🟢



If you have a new concrete garage floor, allow 12 weeks for it to cure before painting



APPLYING THE PAINT

Follow these easy steps for painting the garage floor.

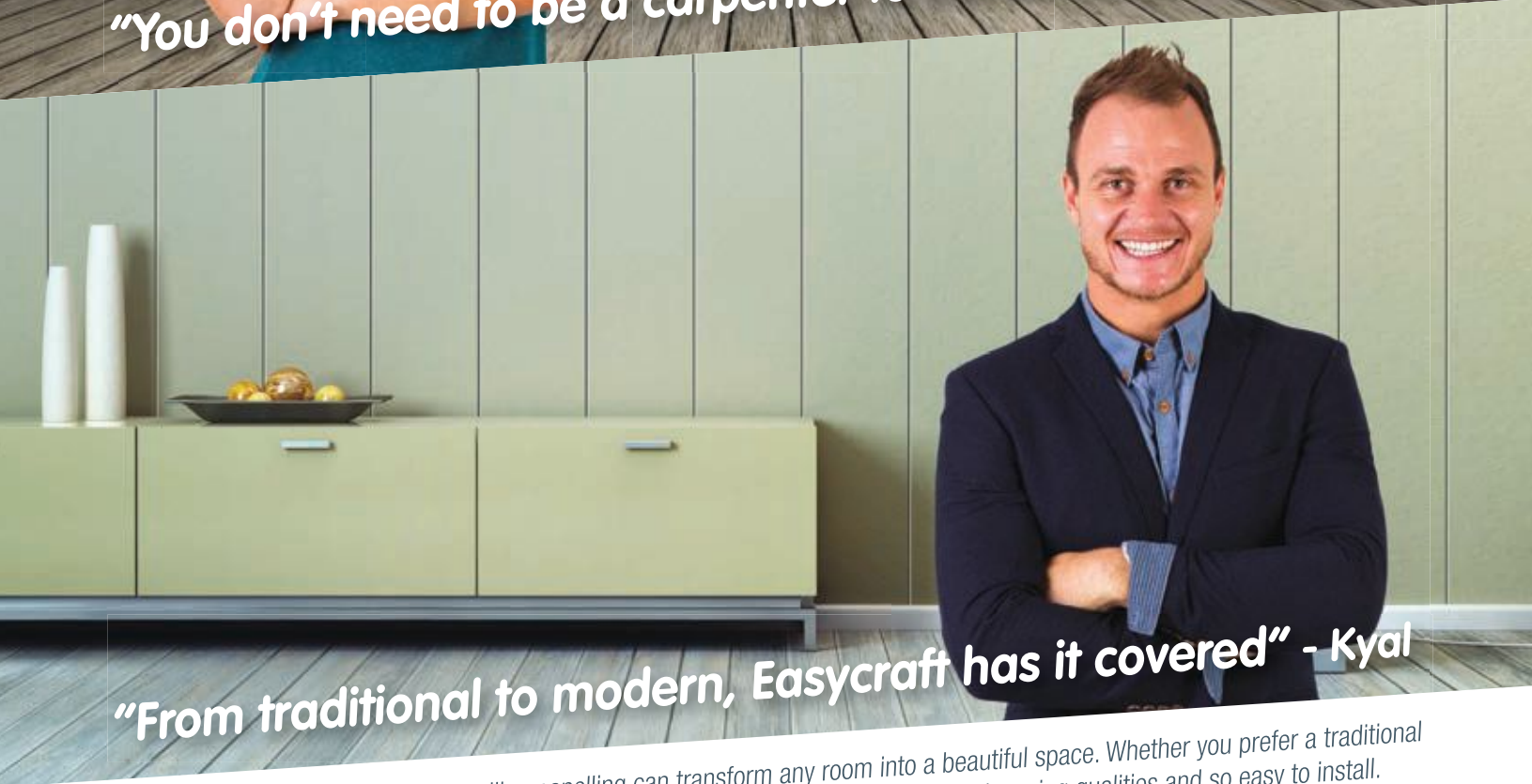
- ➊ **SCRAPE** off any loose and flaking paint with a wire brush and sand any glossy surfaces.
- ➋ **CLEAN** the floor with a pressure washer and allow to dry for a day.
- ➌ **TEST** the paint on a small area of the floor to check it's compatible with the old coating. Allow to dry for 24 hours and if it does not adhere, remove the old paint.
- ➍ **APPLY** the first coat of paint using a paintbrush or roller.
- ➎ **LEAVE** to dry for 16 hours, then apply a second coat.
- ➏ **ALLOW** a week to fully dry.



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DIY TIP

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Cook up cutlets with the Matador Titan Six-burner Cast Iron Grill Smart Barbecue, \$1299.



Sizzle sausages on the Matador Artise Grill Smart Hooded Barbecue, \$749.



Build a buffet on the Mimosa Nebraska Cement Table, 2000 x 1000 x 750mm, \$1499.



Take a seat on the Mimosa Nebraska Cement Bench, 1800 x 400 x 450mm, \$699.



Sear a steak using the Matador Boss Four-burner Hooded Barbecue, \$699.

GARDEN CARE



Nourish and nurture the garden with the new range from Scotts.

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- ② Scotts Pure Organic Hose On, \$15.99 for 1L.

Wipe out weeds with the Tough Round Up Ready To Use Weedkiller, \$19.50 for 1L.



Fix and fasten screws quickly with the Ryobi 18V Brushless Drill Driver Kit, \$269.



Help roots establish on your new lawn with the Munns Buffalo Booster Turf Starter Fertiliser, \$13.98 for 1.5kg.



Green up growth on a wall with the Richgro Vertical Garden Planting Mix, \$6.48 for 15L.



Clear the courtyard of garden debris with the Ozito 30cc Petrol Blower, \$99.



Shape shrubs using the Ozito 18V Lithium-Ion Power X Change Hedge Trimmer, \$109 including battery.



Trim back turf with the Ryobi 175cc Ryobi Lawn Mower, \$389, with a Subaru engine.

Suck up spills with the Ozito 1250W Wet & Dry Vacuum Cleaner with Power Take Off, \$99.

Clean without chemicals using the Karcher SC1 Premium 1200W Hand Held Steam Cleaner, \$129.



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Henkel

Do now

- + GROW passionfruit in your backyard, page 128.
- + DESIGN and plant a scented landscape, page 136.
- + CREATE colourful potted displays DIY, page 142.

Flowers to sow

Plan for late summer colour now by sowing seeds that will start flowering from 16 weeks.

- + BEDDING BEGONIAS
- + GAILLARDIA
- + GERANIUM
- + DAHLIA
- + ASTER

Gaillardia



Vegies to grow

Sow these vegetables direct in garden beds now for delicious crops from early to mid summer.

- + CLIMBING BEANS
- + DWARF BEANS
- + CARROT
- + SQUASH
- + ZUCCHINI

Squash



This month

Spring is in full swing so get sowing and growing for a lush landscape



WHAT'S IN COLOUR

✦ **TULBAGHIA 'MILKY WAY'** looks great in rockeries and along paths, and is part of the Border Stars range. Bred to be tough, 'Milky Way' is hardy and tolerates both dry and wet conditions.

Featuring evergreen grass-like foliage and pale pink flowers from spring to late winter, it's ornamental year round, growing to 40cm high and spreading to 60cm.

This clump-forming perennial has low water needs and is easy to grow, requiring minimal maintenance.

✦ **TELOPEA 'ESSIE'S GIFT'** is a unique, compact form of waratah. It's a winner in small gardens as a low-growing hedge and also does well in containers.

It puts on a display of beautiful deep-pink blooms on short stems during spring, which look fantastic in cut flower arrangements.

This Aussie native likes fertile, well-drained soil and has low water needs once established. Give it deep soaks in long dry periods, and a feed in autumn and spring.



Tulbaghia 'Milky Way'



Telopea 'Essie's Gift'

To-do list

Get to work planting and maintaining the spring yard.

- ✓ **SOW** marigolds, petunias and other summer-flowering annual favourites.
- ✓ **PLANT** container-grown roses and keep well watered until established.
- ✓ **TAKE** leaf or stem cuttings from cacti and succulents and pot them up.
- ✓ **WEED** vegie beds regularly and mulch to prepare for warmer weather.
- ✓ **SHAPE** lavender by picking flowers and deadheading.
- ✓ **CHECK** for fruit tree pests but don't spray if in flower, use methods like fruit fly traps and hand-picking.
- ✓ **STAKE** tall perennials for support and tie in climbers.
- ✓ **LAY** rolls of turf or sow new lawns and reseed damaged patches.
- ✓ **CLEAN** existing ponds of weeds and algae and plant up new ones. ➤

NEW SEEDS

A year ago, Johnsons Seeds gave Aussie gardeners a range of exotic edibles to grow and eat, and this spring they've added four new exciting varieties.

You can now plant an Asian and a Turkish eggplant, a Thai tomato and okra in the vegie patch.



Johnsons World Kitchen, about \$5.
johnsons-seeds.com.au

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trellis & mesh

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bricks & fences



HOW TO

GROW CLIVIAS FROM SEED

Once their skin has turned bright red or yellow clivia seeds are easy to collect and grow, but they'll take at least three years to flower.

1 2

**1 Skin the berries**

Trim the seed head using secateurs. Wearing gloves, remove the berries and rub off the skin and flesh to reveal the pearl-like seeds. Remove the near transparent seed skin and discard any seeds that are wrinkly or spongy.

**2 Sow the seeds**

Fill small pots almost to the top with seed-raising mix and gently push a few clivia seeds into the surface, leaving about half exposed. Water in gently and position the pots in a warm spot. Don't overwater.

BOOST GROWTH

Get the garden going with a dose of all-purpose fertiliser.

New to the Seasol range this spring, PowerFeed Organically Enriched Plant Food with Troforte Technology is safe to use on all plants, including natives, and also works as a soil improver.

Mix this granular food into soil or potting mix and water in thoroughly to promote growth and boost flowering and fruiting.

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Lightly feed new plants and those in spring growth.

- + FRUIT TREES
- + CAMELLIA
- + AZALEA
- + CITRUS
- + ROSES



Azalea

Prune now

Trim spring-flowering shrubs after they have finished blooming.

- + FLOWERING PEACHES
- + EVERGREENS
- + FORSYTHIA
- + HIBISCUS
- + ACACIA



Forsythia

Harvest now

Pick vegies and greens that were sown during winter.

- + SILVERBEET
- + ASPARAGUS
- + BEETROOT
- + CABBAGE
- + FENNEL >



Fennel

BOOK CLUB



Meredith



Mandy

When you team up a great Aussie gardener and top food writer, the result is *The Produce Companion* by Meredith Kirton and Mandy Sinclair (\$50, Hardie Grant Books).

This beautifully illustrated guide is full of practical advice on how to grow and harvest fresh food. It also teaches you how to store and preserve produce, and features over 100 recipes.

Following her bestselling book *The Edible Balcony*, about growing fresh fruit and vegies in the inner city, Indira Naidoo is back with *The Edible City* (\$45, Lantern).

Focusing on urban green spaces across the country, the new book is full of inspirational stories about how to grow food on a community level and includes 40 garden-inspired recipes.



Indira



Leanne

Antony

Go on a journey with two foodies through one of the world's most diverse regions in *East: Culinary Adventures In Southeast Asia* by Leanne Kitchen and Antony Suvalko (\$40, Hardie Grant Books).

Featuring stunning pictures of food, people and places, this book is packed full of recipes that will bring the feeling and flavour of the East into your kitchen. 🍴



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VERSATILE HOOP HOUSE

The boys from the Little Veggie Patch Co build a sturdy all-weather backyard planter in less than three hours

PROJECT MAT PEMBER AND DILLON SEITCHIK-REARDON

Dillon and Mat made this planter using apple crates.



THIS IS AN EDITED EXTRACT FROM THE LITTLE VEGGIE PATCH CO DIV GARDEN PROJECT'S BY MAT PEMBER AND DILLON SEITCHIK-REARDON

The Little Veggie Patch Co has been helping people grow food at home since 2008.

They started by installing raised beds, then released a range of seeds (littleveggiepatchco.com.au).

In this project from their latest book, *DIY Garden Projects*, Mat and Dillon show off their talent for repurposing unassuming materials.

'Salvaging and upcycling is all about unlocking the potential in a discarded item,' says Mat.

'Take the apple crate, for example. It started as a storage bin, yet we have used them as raised garden beds, chook coops, sand boxes and cubbyhouses.

'Trench mesh bars, typically used in concrete work, have become our staple trellising material.' ➤

Materials

Newspaper or tarp
3 x 4m lengths of 20mm electrical conduit
Spray paint
Crate
12 x 25mm U-brackets
Drill set
40 x 25mm timber screws
Bird netting
1.83 x 2.5m sheet of heavy-duty clear plastic
Household stapler and staples
Staple gun and staples
2 x 1.2m medium wooden dowels
Twine or string
1.83 x 2.5m piece of shade cloth

1

Lay out a tarp or some newspaper on the ground. This will be the foundation of your paint workshop.

2

Electrical conduit comes in a generic PVC grey that speaks more to a building site than a peaceful garden, so lay the conduit out on the newspaper or tarp and spray paint it with two coats of your favourite colour.

3

While the paint is drying, prepare the crate by attaching three sets of U-brackets on the opposite sides of the crate. Fix these at each end and through the centre. Fix a corresponding row below.

4

Two U-brackets above and below will keep the conduit from wiggling from side to side.

5



ABOVE Slide the conduit into the U-brackets and bend over the top to the opposite side.
RIGHT Bend the conduit in-line to create an extended hoop structure like an old-school polytunnel.



Salvaging and upcycling is all about unlocking the potential in a discarded item

6





Screw in a few 25mm timber screws along the edge of the crate. These will be used to hold your netting in place.

A simple solution

'We discovered the usefulness of electrical conduit while trying to sort out the problem of crappy pre-made net structures for our crates,' says Mat.

'Everything we had found before was confusing and impractical. Products inevitably had too many separate parts and would turn to twisted tangles of PVC and netting under even the slightest hint of wind.'

Electrical conduit is a sturdy yet flexible poly tube used for house wiring. Thus, the conduit hoop house was born.

'Like the best things in the garden, it is simple, sturdy and inexpensive.'

'This easy hoop structure can transform into a greenhouse using bird netting or shade cloth.' ➤



8

Throw bird netting over the top to get a sense of how it fits.

9

Stretch the netting at the base and pull it taut. The screws will do a good job holding it in place and will ensure it's not too fiddly or time-consuming.

Now it's time to build a greenhouse. Cut thick construction plastic into a long strip 1.2 x 2m. The width should match that of your crate and the strip should be long enough to reach the other side.

10

11

Fold the plastic over on itself, making a loop on one edge. Apply a liberal amount of staples, using a household stapler.

12

13

ABOVE Feed a timber dowel through the loop of plastic that you just made. This will provide a little weight for your greenhouse attachment and prevent the plastic from blowing off.

RIGHT Use a staple gun to attach the non-dowel edge of the plastic midway up the side of the crate. >

Care For Your Garden... Naturally

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Care for your garden and the environment this spring with the Richgro Beat-A-Range of natural products.

If you want to get rid of bugs in your garden use Richgro Beat-A-Bug®, a naturally based insect spray using actives such as garlic and chilli, which you can use on your fruit, flowers and vegies.

Protect your garden from annoying weeds naturally with Richgro Beat-A-Weed® Natural Weedkiller. It is fast acting and highly effective.



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The greenhouse is now ready for action. Unroll it and spread the plastic over the top. Notice how the dowel anchors the system.

14

15

When not in use, the plastic can be rolled up on itself and tied to the side with twine or string.



This is an edited extract from *DIY Garden Projects* by Mat Pember and Dillon Seitchik-Reardon of The Little Veggie Patch Co (\$45, Hardie Grant Books).

Full of ideas for spaces big and small, projects range from quick and easy, such as a self-watering milk carton planter, to large jobs like a cubbyhouse made from recycled apple crates.

16

The shade cloth is built exactly the same as our plastic cover. Cut to the appropriate dimensions and attach a 1.2m dowel or timber length to one end.

Use a staple gun to fix the non-dowel end of the cloth to the opposite side of the crate to the plastic. It can now be extended or stored away according to your needs. ☺

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Whether eliminating weeds, controlling pests, or fertilising your garden, Nylex sprayers are a vital addition to any home.

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Passionate about PASSIONFRUIT

Give this popular fruit the right growing conditions and you'll be rewarded with a bountiful harvest

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

An extremely vigorous vine, passionfruit (*Passiflora edulis*) is native to South America, and is the national flower of Paraguay.

It has striking white and purple flowers that are produced before the fruit, and the vine climbs by means of tendrils that twine around a support.

The fruit, which can be purple, red or golden, is full of goodness and low in kilojoules. It contains vitamin C, B vitamins riboflavin and niacin, plus fibre, iron, phosphorus and potassium.

It is delicious whether used to top a pavlova, served with ice-cream or added to salad dressings or fruit salad.



Cheryl

EXPERT SECRETS

Passionfruit vines only perform well for about five years and then they have to be replaced, so have another one growing to take over the space when you remove the existing one.

There are types of passionfruit that have flowers and no fruit.

White lightning

Where to grow

Passionfruit grow best in subtropical to temperate areas and, while adaptable to cooler zones, they need protection from frost. Plant new vines in spring, except in the tropics where they should be planted in the dry season. Vines grown in tropical areas are often short-lived due to heavy rain and root diseases. The golden passionfruit is the best choice for the tropics.

Golden passionfruit

PROVIDING SUPPORT

Fast-growing passionfruit vines are great for creating quick screening on post and rail fences.

Existing sunny fences, chicken coops and sheds in the garden can be transformed by draping them with a vine. Attach wire or trellis to fences to help them climb.

Make your own trellis by putting up two posts, each 2m high and about 2m apart, in a north-south direction. Run three wires between the posts at the top, centre and base.

When first planted, you may have to train it up the support by tying the vine to the base wire.

Once the vine has reached a height of about 1m, you can nip out the centre shoot, which will encourage side branching.

The flowers and fruit appear in spring in temperate zones and also in autumn in warmer areas.

If any greenish fruit drops to the ground, it's worth tasting to see if it's ripe.

CARING FOR YOUR VINE

Given the right growing conditions, a passionfruit vine is easy to grow.

- ❖ **POSITION** the vine in full sun with protection from the wind.
- ❖ **SOIL** must have good drainage to prevent root rot, as passionfruit is very susceptible to this. It is a heavy feeder, so add well-rotted manure or compost to the soil before planting.
- ❖ **FEED** in early spring and autumn with a controlled-release plant food for flowers, or a citrus food. Water the soil thoroughly before and after.

- ❖ **MULCH** around the plant, as this helps retain moisture in the soil, avoiding the area near the stem.

- ❖ **WATER** regularly and deeply, especially in dry weather. The passionfruit vine has an extensive and shallow root system, so soak a wide area surrounding the vine.

- ❖ **PRUNE** in early spring by about one-third. Remove any dead wood and cut back wayward shoots to promote new growth. Prune so air can circulate through the foliage. ➤

TIME TO HARVEST

About 12 months after planting passionfruit, the fruit starts appearing. Let it ripen on the vine to fully develop its sweet flavour.

When ready, the fruit will drop off, or it can be picked when it's fully coloured and easily pulls free from the vine.

You can freeze the pulp in ice trays or place the fruit in a bag and refrigerate it for a month.

Instead of chopping the fruit in half, cut off the top and eat it like you would a boiled egg with a spoon. This will ensure you don't lose any of that delicious juice.

In the kitchen

There are lots of ways you can include passionfruit in your everyday eating.

- ✦ **SQUEEZE** the pulp onto cereal or yoghurt.
- ✦ **MIX** it into smoothies.
- ✦ **ADD** the pulp to an olive oil and balsamic dressing to enhance green salads.
- ✦ **FREEZE** in popsicle moulds to make a healthy treat.
- ✦ **TEAM** passionfruit with pork and seafood.
- ✦ **ADD** it to an apple or mango crumble.
- ✦ **USE** it to make jams.

PROBLEM SOLVER

EXCESSIVE SUCKERS

CAUSE If the graft is damaged or there has been root disturbance, suckering can come from the blue passionfruit rootstock. The leaf looks different, and is a blue-green colour.

FIX IT Remove the suckers at once. If a grafted vine dies, carefully remove all the root system to prevent growth from the roots.

PASSIONFRUIT VINE HOPPER

CAUSE This insect sucks sap from the plant, causing the leaves to wilt and the flowers or fruit to drop.

FIX IT Hose them off, or you can use a pyrethrum-based spray.

SMALL BUMPS ON THE STEMS

CAUSE Scale.

FIX IT Scrape off with your nail or spray with horticultural oil.

FLOWERS BUT NO FRUIT

CAUSE This can be the result of a lack of pollinating bees or the weather being very hot, very cold or raining at flowering time.

FIX IT Pollinate flowers by hand using a dry paintbrush to transfer pollen to the female parts. Prune excessive growth to expose the flowers and plant bee-attracting plants such as borage nearby.



Blue passionfruit



Grown from grafts

Most passionfruit, such as 'Nellie Kelly', have been grafted to help prevent problems with fusarium wilt and other soil-borne fungus diseases.

Other grafted types include 'Panama Gold' and 'Panama Red'.

Plants are usually grafted onto the extremely hardy blue passionfruit (*Passiflora caerulea*) or golden passionfruit (*Passiflora f. flavicarpa*), a disease-resistant rootstock that will not sucker.

Certain varieties are grown from seed, and 'Purple Giant' and 'Purple' are the most common.



Share your fruit and vegie photos
Post a pic to Instagram and tag @HandymanMagazine

WILTING SHOOTS

CAUSE Fusarium wilt.

FIX IT Remove the vine and do not add it to the compost. Plant a variety that has been grafted onto golden passionfruit.

FLOWERS AND FRUIT DROP AND LEAVES FALL AT THE VINE BASE

CAUSE Lack of water.

FIX IT Water regularly and deeply.

TINY HOLES IN THE FRUIT

CAUSE Fruit flies lay their eggs underneath the skin of the fruit and the hatching larvae then feed their way to the centre, causing the fruit to rot.

FIX IT Use a fruit fly bait early in the season to detect fruit flies. Destroy the infested fruit immediately, but don't put it in the compost. ➤

30
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Serves 8

This light, almost fat-free whisked sponge is ideal for late summer, when raspberries are particularly sweet. The kids will love it.

Raspberry and passionfruit sponge roll

Ingredients

340g fresh raspberries
30g icing sugar, sifted
4 passionfruit
3 large eggs
115g raw caster sugar
110g plain flour
1 tablespoon tepid water
Extra 24 (about 100g)
fresh raspberries
Sprigs of fresh mint

Method

1 SET aside half the raspberries. Put the remaining raspberries and icing sugar in a bowl and crush lightly with a fork. Cut the passionfruit in half, scoop out the pulp and stir into the crushed raspberry mixture.

2 PREHEAT the oven to 200°C. Grease a 23 x 33cm Swiss roll tin and line with baking paper. Put the eggs and caster sugar in a large bowl. Beat with an electric mixer until very thick and pale, and the mixture leaves a trail on the surface when the beaters are lifted out.

TIP If using a hand whisk or rotary beater, set the bowl over a pan of almost boiling water, ensuring the water doesn't touch the bowl.

3 SIFT half the flour over the egg mixture and gently fold in with a large metal spoon. Sift over the remaining flour and fold in with the tepid water.

4 POUR the mixture into the prepared tin and shake it gently so it spreads evenly into the corners.

Bake for 10-12 minutes or until the sponge is risen and golden, and springs back when pressed gently.

5 TURN out onto a sheet of baking paper that is slightly larger than the sponge. Peel off the lining paper. Trim the crusty edges of the sponge with a sharp knife and make a score mark 25mm from one of the shorter edges to make the sponge easier to roll up.

6 SPREAD the crushed raspberry mixture over the hot sponge, leaving a 10mm border all round. Scatter over the reserved raspberries. Roll up the sponge from one short edge and place, seam side down, on a serving plate.

7 SERVE warm or cold, cut into slices. Decorate each serving with extra raspberries and a sprig of mint.

Passionfruit jam

Ingredients

24 passionfruit
1 cup water
Juice of 1 lemon
1.1kg sugar

Method

① **WASH** the passionfruit, cut in half, scoop out the pulp and set aside. Put half the shells in a bowl, cover with water and leave overnight.

② **TRANSFER** the soaked shells and water to a pan and boil for about 30 minutes or until the insides of the shells are tender. Drain the water, scoop out the soft pulp inside and discard the shells. Chop up the pulp.

③ **PUT** the soft pulp, reserved pulp and cup of water in a pan and bring to the boil. Add the lemon juice and sugar, stir until the sugar dissolves and boil rapidly to setting point. ➤



PICTURE (MAIN) ALAMY

Transfer the finished jam to sterilised, warm jars with airtight lids using a jug or wide-necked heatproof funnel to minimise drips.

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Passionfruit and honey zabaglione

Ingredients

4 ripe passionfruit
1 tablespoon boiling water
90g honey
4 large egg yolks
2 teaspoons lemon juice

Method

1 CUT each passionfruit in half and scoop the pulp and seeds into a sieve over a large heatproof bowl. Sieve the fruit thoroughly, then trickle the boiling water over the seed mixture in the sieve and scrape again with a spoon. Scrape any pulp from underneath the sieve into the bowl. Discard the seeds.
2 HALF-FILL a saucepan with boiling water and bring to a simmer. Add the

honey, egg yolks and lemon juice to the bowl with the passionfruit juice, then whisk well with electric beaters. Set the bowl over the pan of simmering water and continue to whisk until the mixture is pale and thick, and leaves a trail when the beaters are lifted out. This will take about 10 minutes and the mixture will look like a slightly soft, whisked sponge mixture when ready. Keep the water barely simmering, don't allow it to bubble too fiercely or the eggs will cook and separate.

3 REMOVE the bowl from the pan and continue to whisk for 1 minute. Spoon, ladle or pour the zabaglione into four small glasses and serve immediately.

Serves 4



Serve this dessert with whole fresh strawberries and Savoirdi or sponge finger biscuits as they are also known.





Serves 4

It's hard to beat this creamy concoction for a quick and easy dessert, and serving it with almond bread or biscotti adds a crunchy texture.

Passionfruit fool

Ingredients

200ml pouring cream
2 tablespoons icing sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
160ml passionfruit pulp
8 almond bread or biscotti,
to serve

Method

① **WHIP** the cream, icing sugar and vanilla extract in a bowl using electric beaters until soft peaks form.

② **FOLD** most of the passionfruit pulp gently into the cream mixture using a large metal spoon or rubber spatula, reserving a little for decorating, taking care not to stir too vigorously or you will spoil the texture of the cream.

③ **SPOON** the mixture into four 160ml glasses. Drizzle over the remaining passionfruit pulp. Serve immediately with the almond bread or biscotti.

TIP This dessert can be made up to two hours ahead and chilled. ✨

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THE SCENTED GARDEN

Grow sweet-smelling plants in the garden
to enjoy their perfume and boost your mood

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

PICTURE GETTY IMAGES

Nothing is more enchanting than walking into a garden and being greeted with the heady scents of fragrant plants.

And it's not just an olfactory experience, as research shows that certain scents can help us to relax emotionally and physically.

In addition, aromatherapy theory claims that particular fragrances can even improve our mental state.

So if you want to feel good and chill out in your garden this spring and summer, think about adding a few perfumed plants.



Even the most colourful and well-designed garden is lacking an essential ingredient if it offers no perfume

What's in a smell?

Our response to perfumes is personal, so while you may love the scent of roses, your partner may be partial to citrus.

Fragrance preferences that can influence mood and behaviour are determined by learned and emotional associations, research shows. This means that if you like or dislike a particular smell, it could be as a result of the experiences you've had.

Adding fragrant flowers

There are many different ways to weave scented plants into your garden scheme.

✦ **MINGLE** the aromas of different plants in a particular part of the garden.

This could be a blend of tropical scents like frangipani, gardenia and stephanotis or a relaxing pocket filled with lavender, roses, lemon balm, carnations and citrus.

✦ **POSITION** them around your favourite garden seat to help you unwind.

✦ **WELCOME** guests with perfumed plants alongside the front garden path.

✦ **CREATE** a delightful outdoor living area by growing scented climbing plants over a pergola.

✦ **FILL** pots with perfumed flowers.

✦ **USE** night-scented types around entertaining areas for a special touch.

✦ **PLANT** them under windows or near doors so the perfume wafts indoors.

✦ **ADD** plants to raised beds to bring the fragrance closer to nose level. ➤





Maintain the look

Keep your fragrant plants looking good and ensure they pack a perfumed punch.

- ✦ **DEADHEAD** flowers regularly to encourage more blooms.
- ✦ **PLANT** in soil enriched with compost or cow manure.
- ✦ **FEED** regularly with a fertiliser for flowers and fruit.
- ✦ **MULCH** with lucerne hay, straw or sugar cane to prevent weed growth and retain moisture.
- ✦ **WATER** often in hot weather, especially plants in pots.

NATIVE PICKS

Many of our native flowers have strong perfumes. The eucalyptus needs no introduction and the gentle smells of wattle are always appreciated.

Native frangipani (*Hymenosporum flavum*) is a good garden tree with intensely fragrant cream flowers.

Boronias are synonymous with perfume, especially *B. megastigma* and *B. heterophylla*.

Bulbous *Crinum pedunculatum* has a soft scent, mint bushes such as *Prostanthera lasianthos* make their contribution, and the dainty climbing *Jasminum suavisissimum* and *Hoya australis* are kind to the nose.

Certain native plants also have fragrant foliage, and top of the list would have to be lemon-scented myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*).

Chinese star jasmine



Rangoon creeper



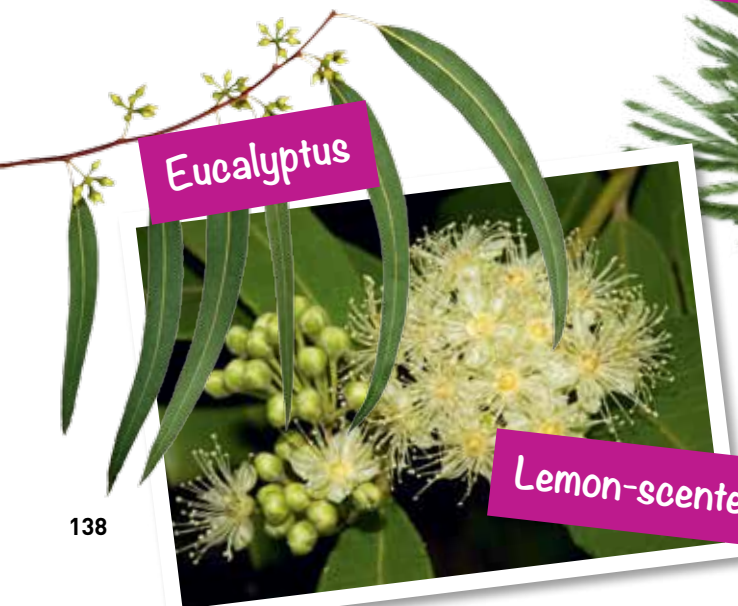
Sweet pea



Wattle



Eucalyptus



Lemon-scented myrtle

The leaves of lemon-scented myrtle can be used to enhance the flavour of cooking



TOP CLIMBERS

Perfumed climbers have myriad uses. Grow them over an archway to create a delightful entrance or on a pergola over the entertaining area. Or use them to brighten up bare walls and fences.

Choose from Arabian jasmine (*Jasminum sambac*), *Beaumontia grandiflora*, Chinese star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*), chocolate vine (*Akebia quinata*), Chilean jasmine (*Mandevilla laxa*), Rangoon creeper (*Quisqualis indica*), poet's jasmine (*Jasminum officinale*), jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), *Stephanotis floribunda*, sweet pea, some climbing rose cultivars and wisteria.

FRAGRANT FOLIAGE

The leaves of various plants can be just as fragrant as the flowers.

Position plants with scented foliage by entrances or pathways so you can touch them as you pass.

The foliage of scented-leafed geraniums (*Pelargonium* cultivars) release a strong fragrance when touched, which makes them popular in gardens for the visually impaired.

Combine them with lavender and rosemary in sunny garden beds.

Lemon verbena (*Aloysia triphylla*) has lemon-scented foliage, as the name suggests, and can be grown in pots.

Scented-leafed geranium

Lavender

Lemon verbena

Lawn thyme

Sweet alyssum

Corsican mint

GROUND LEVEL

Scented groundcovers planted between stone steps, courtyard pavers or bricks in paths provide perfumes underfoot.

When walked on, thyme exudes a wonderful fragrance. Try woolly thyme (*Thymus pseudolanuginosus*) or lawn thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*).

The heat of pavers appears to accentuate the perfume of sweet Alice or alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*).

Lawn chamomile, especially the cultivar 'Treneague', is ideal for paths, while Corsican mint (*Mentha requienii*) likes damp, shady areas. It has a lovely peppermint-like smell, particularly when its leaves are crushed. ➤



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SEASONAL SCENTS

SPRING

To fill the garden with perfume in spring, choose from these varieties.

✦ **TREES** Native frangipani, eucalyptus, magnolia and citrus.

✦ **SHRUBS** Night-scented jessamine (*Cestrum nocturnum*), *Choisya ternata*, gardenia, lavender, lilac, magnolia, mock orange (*Philadelphus coronarius*), murraya, port wine magnolia, roses, wattle, *Rondeletia amoena*, *Rothmannia globosa* and *Viburnum X burkwoodii*.

✦ **ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS** Cottage pinks (*Dianthus plumarius*), night-scented stock (*Mathiola bicornis*), stock, sweet pea, sweet William and sweet rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*).

✦ **BULBS** Daffodil, freesia, hyacinth, jonquil and lily-of-the-valley.



Lilac



Cottage pinks



Hyacinth

Four o'clock plant



Did you know?

The four o'clock plant (*Mirabilis jalapa*) acquired this common name because its flowers open late in the afternoon and close in the morning. They also open up on cloudy days.

Mirabilis means wonderful, and the plant is also known as the marvel of Peru, as it is native to tropical parts of South America.

SUMMER

For perfumed summer-flowering varieties, select from these.

✦ **TREES** Frangipani, dwarf apple (*Angophora hispida*) and golden champaca (*Magnolia champaca*).

✦ **SHRUBS** Gardenia, frangipani, roses, heliotrope (*Heliotropium arborescens*), angel's trumpet (*Brugmansia*) and night-scented jessamine (*Cestrum nocturnum*).

✦ **ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS** Flowering tobacco and four o'clock plant (*Mirabilis jalapa*).

✦ **BULBS** Lilium and tuberose (*Polianthes tuberosus*).

Rose



Angel's trumpet

Queen of the night



Evening stars

Position night-scented plants close to outdoor entertaining areas so you and your guests can enjoy their delightful fragrance.

☛ **MOONFLOWER** (*Ipomoea alba*) is a perennial climbing plant that grows up to 6m high. Its huge white blooms unfold at dusk with a delicious scent. Position in a sunny spot and mulch to keep its roots cool.

☛ **NIGHT-SCENTED JESSAMINE** (*Cestrum nocturnum*) is a spreading shrub with one of the most pervasive night scents, growing to 3-4m high.

☛ **FLOWERING TOBACCO** (*Nicotiana sylvestris*) has tubular flowers borne in clusters above the foliage.

☛ **SWEET ROCKET** (*Hesperis matronalis*) has fragrant mauve or white blooms that are held in large clusters on 90cm tall stems.

☛ **MURRAYA** is a shrub with flowers that exude an orange blossom smell.

☛ **BELLE DE NUIT** (*Epiphyllum oxypetalum*) is an epiphytic cactus with intensely scented flowers. Plant it in a hanging basket at nose level.

☛ **QUEEN OF THE NIGHT** (*Selenicereus grandiflorus*) is an odiferous cactus that blooms at night. It has giant flowers, a climbing habit up to 3m and is ideal for frost-free areas. 🌵



Sweet rocket



Night-scented jessamine



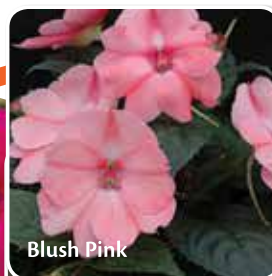
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CRAFTY CONTAINERS

Boost colour in the garden by transforming everyday items into novelty plant holders

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

Gardening in containers is a very rewarding way to get growing. It also has many advantages over planting in garden beds.

You have a lot more control over the growing conditions and you can place them in handier locations, such as close to the kitchen door, which is especially useful for herbs and vegies.

And your garden is portable, so if you move house, it can go with you.

There is a huge range of off-the-shelf choices for pots and container garden systems but, sometimes, you just can't find that special something.

Here are a few ideas to get your creative juices flowing and help you assemble your own designer planters.



1 2 3



1 Drill drainage holes

Clean the boots thoroughly in slightly soapy water using a scrubbing brush, then rinse and allow to dry. Carefully drill two drainage holes in the sole of each boot using a drill fitted with at least a 10mm bit.



2 Spray the boots

Apply painter's tape to the tags, side panels and sole edges. Wearing gloves, apply stain blocker to each boot. Allow to dry, then spray one boot in orange. Apply another coat, if needed. Spray the other boot in lime.



3 Add the plants

Carefully remove the painter's tape and half-fill each boot with potting mix, pushing the mix right down into the toe areas. Add the plants and backfill with potting mix. Water in and add more mix, if needed.

POTTED BOOTS

It's easy to get attached to your old gardening boots and saying goodbye can be hard once they're worn out.

But with this project, you get to keep your boots for years to come by converting them into planters.

We sprayed them in orange and lime, but you can choose any colour. ➤

DIY TIP

When spraying, move the can in a smooth sweeping motion and be careful you don't overapply the paint.

You can use any suitably sized plants you like for this project.

ADAM'S PICKS



3M ScotchBlue 36mm x 55m Painter's Tape, \$15.
scotchblue.com.au



Zinsser Cover Stain Primer-Sealer Stain Killer, \$21 for 396g.
rustoleum.com.au



Rust-Oleum 340g 2X Ultra Cover Paint + Primer in Gloss Real Orange and Key Lime, \$11 each.

MUG PLANTER

Ideal for beautiful bloomers by the front door to greet guests, this project uses mugs mounted on a timber board to form a series of small planters.

The top third of each mug needs to have a straight surface so they can be mounted on the back board.

Our board measures 140 x 20mm and we left a half-cup width between each mug, with the handles to the side, and a mug width at each end.

To make it stand out, we used Dulux Weatherboard Gloss tinted in Charcoal Essence to paint the board.

SAFETY TIP

It's important when using diamond core bits that you wear gloves and suitable eye and ear protection.

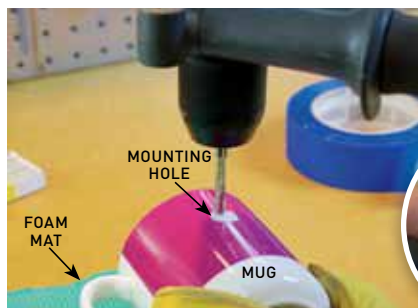


1 2 3



1 Cut the back board

Measure and cut the back board to length using a circular saw, then mark the mug positions, drilling screw holes. At each end, drill and countersink screw holes for mounting. Sand, undercoat and paint the board.



2 Attach the mugs

Mark the position for a mounting hole a third of the way down the back of the mugs. On a stable, shock-absorbing surface, such as a firm foam mat, drill a 6mm mounting hole, then an 8mm drainage hole in the base of each mug.



3 Secure the board

Attach the mugs to the board using buttonhead screws and washers, then tighten with a socket wrench and driver bit or right-angled screwdriver. Add potting mix and the plants. Mount the board, securing with screws.



Drilling into porcelain

The only way to safely drill into porcelain is with a diamond core bit, which comes in various sizes.

The drill must be run at a low speed and should never be set to hammer mode. Apply only moderate pressure, letting the bit do the work. Keep it wet by dipping it in cool water at least every 20 seconds.



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GROW TIP

Water in new plantings with a diluted seaweed tonic to reduce transplant shock and help them establish faster.

FLOWER TOWER

To make a three-tier planter, like ours, you'll need five different-sized pots. The top two visible pots are glued to support pots positioned upside down.

Each visible pot should be a size or two smaller than the one it sits on and the decrease in sizes should be even.

The pots that sit inside are hidden by potting mix and allow the bases of the visible pots to be positioned 20-30mm into the potting mix.

1 2



1 Attach the pots

Apply adhesive to the base of the first support pot. Position the second-tier visible pot upside down and secure the first support pot to it, with the drainage holes aligned. Repeat for the next tier of pots. Allow the adhesive to dry.



2 Add the plants

Position the second-tier glued pot arrangement in the base pot and add potting mix. Repeat for the top tier of glued pots. Add the plants to each tier.

TIP For larger towers, assemble them where they are to be positioned. 🌱

What you need

- ✦ Five different-sized pots
- ✦ Exterior grade landscape construction adhesive
- ✦ Quality potting mix
- ✦ Plants

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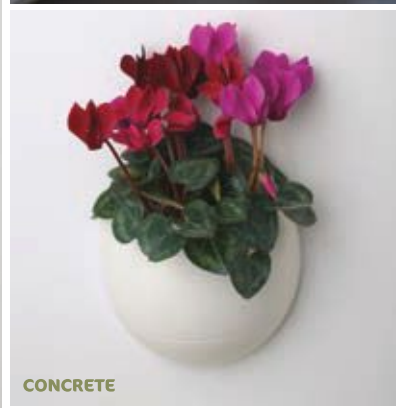
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GROWING UP

Add a vertical dimension to your garden to increase the available space

Creating a vertical wall garden is a great option if you have limited space but still want to grow herbs, vegetables, flowers, vines or even succulents in the backyard.

There are commercial kits available at the hardware store, or you can build your own.

Plan the purpose of the wall, decorative or edible, then choose the plants to get the look and the result you want.

A wall garden acts as a lush decorative feature and offers shade for an outdoor area.



ABOVE Salad vegetables, like climbing tomatoes, will thrive against a vertical backdrop.
BELOW Surrounding a doorway with greenery softens the look and gives it an air of mystery.



Train Ceylon spinach up a trellis and pick off the flowerbuds to keep the shoots producing.

Climbing plants

In a small space, train productive climbers over frames, trellises or poles, or create a wall garden, to increase the growing area and maximise your harvest.

Tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, peas and small pumpkins can all climb and are ideal for tiny yards.

Frames and trellises for growing can be easily made from wire mesh,

timber, lattice or even wire stretched between two upright posts.

The climbing frame can also have multiple purposes. You can curve two frames together to form an arch that doubles as a shaded seating area and provides protection to nearby plants.

Supports range from hardwood or bamboo stakes to a purpose-built metal climbing frame. ➤

Plants can be grown in pots and arranged in rows on a wall-mounted frame.

GROW TIP

Position larger, leafy varieties at the base so they don't block the sunlight from reaching the plants underneath.

Wall gardens

There are a number of commercially available systems for making wall gardens. You can also attach plastic pots or troughs to a wall-mounted frame and plant each pot individually.

Make sure you keep each pot moist and fertilise with a liquid foliar feed.

Many vegetables will grow well in a wall garden, but how successfully depends on where it is located and the level of care it is given.

Edible wall plantings can include loose-leaf lettuces, leafy greens, Asian greens, trailing herbs like marjoram, oregano, rosemary and thyme, and hanging crops such as strawberries. ➤



When space is limited in your garden and you're looking for a spot to grow vegetables and herbs, go up

Remember to keep each plant moist and fertilised when growing in pots.



ABOVE Different chilli plants in this garden help to establish a bank of colour.

BELOW Flowers, herbs and leafy green vegetables combine to great effect.



PICTURES OASIS HORTICULTURE

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Design ideas

Your imagination is the limit when it comes to vertical gardening. Arrange matching pots in geometric patterns, or suspend hanging baskets from wall hooks instead of from overhead.

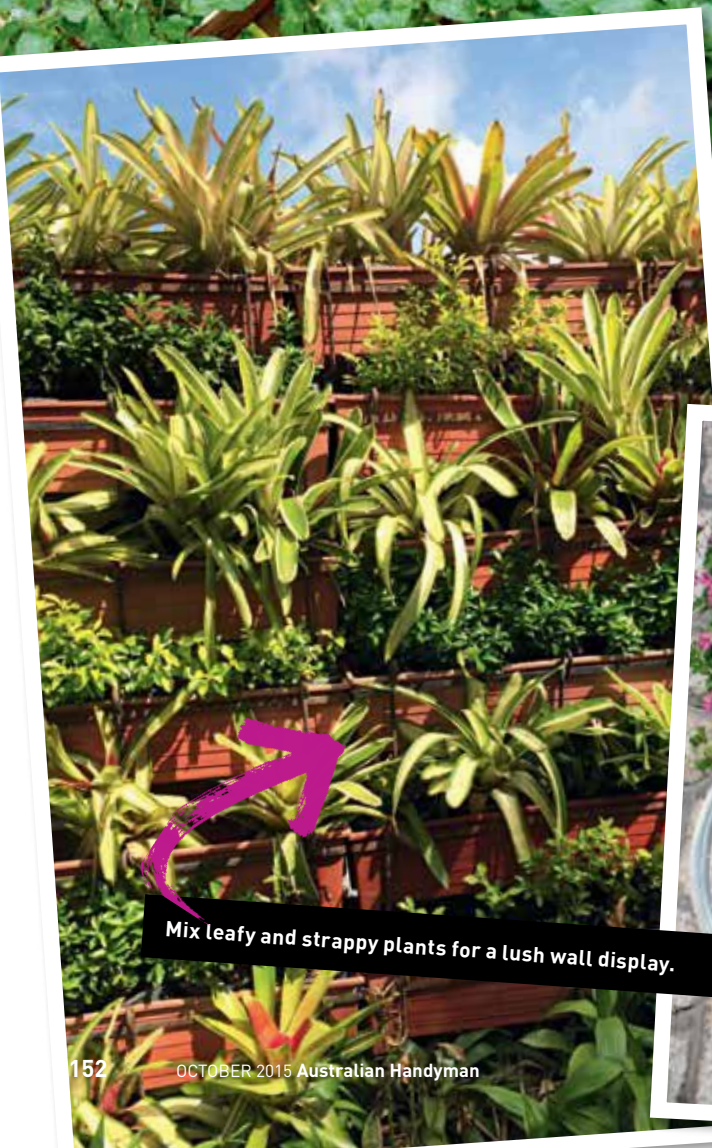
Use lengths of bamboo as organic planters, or drill drainage holes in PVC guttering to use it the same way.

Identical troughs stacked in rows make a wonderful wall display, or use a bike as a combination plant holder and art installation. You can also build plant towers from rings of wire mesh lined with weedmat. ➤

TOP RIGHT Similar pots arranged in columns make an effective wall display.

ABOVE Bamboo offcuts can be used as organic planting troughs.

BELOW A preloved bike is a quirky plant holder.



Mix leafy and strappy plants for a lush wall display.

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Line pallets with weedmat to hold the soil then plant them up.

Hang troughs from a pallet attached to a wall.

Build a pallet planter

A timber pallet is easily upcycled into a vertical garden. Just use 2-3 sheets of weedmat to line two sides and the base, leaving the top open and folding over the edges to prevent fraying.

Secure the lining using nails or a staple gun then position the pallet upright, securing to a vertical surface with the appropriate fasteners.

If you're positioning it against a wall or fence, add a waterproof barrier in between so the moisture

from the pallet garden doesn't cause any damage.

Fill with a good quality potting mix and add compost to boost its water-holding capacity, as the pallet planter will dry out quickly.

Water the mix well and top up until the soil level is stable. Plant with a combination of trailing and upright varieties for the best effect.

TIP Build a fence of pallets and paint to suit your outdoor decor. 🍷



Water and feed a pallet planter regularly, adding a slow-release fertiliser at the top so the nutrients will flow down



PICTURES ALAMY, THINKSTOCK

Let your garden grow UP!

New

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New Richgro Vertical Garden Planting Mix is the perfect product to boost the growth of your vertical garden, hanging basket and rooftop garden.

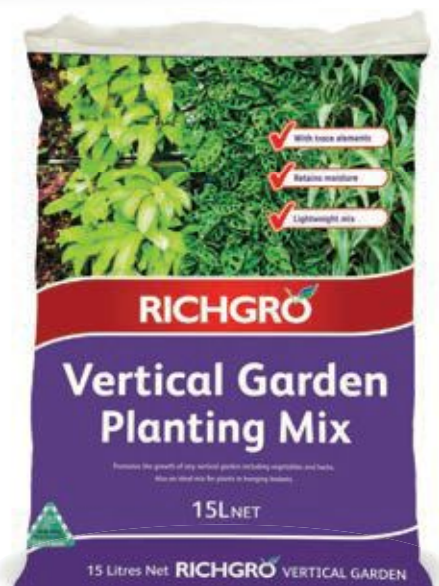
It has been formulated using the finest available ingredients including coco peat to retain moisture, perlite to keep the mix light and trace elements for plant health. This mix has also been pH adjusted to provide optimal growing conditions to let your garden grow UP!

It is suitable for most plant varieties including vegetables and herbs.



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PLANT WALL

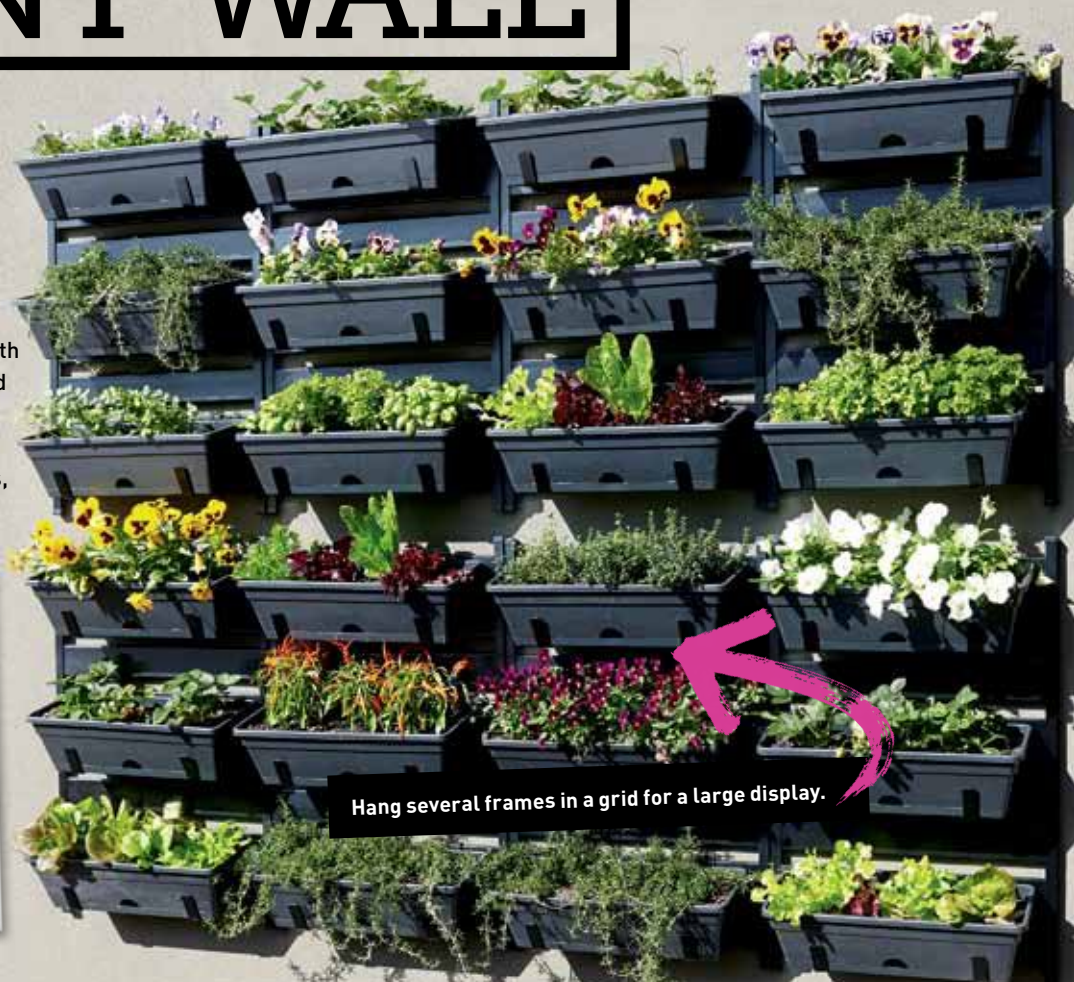
Brighten up a bare exterior wall in a day by installing an easy-to-DIY vertical garden and filling it with colourfully planted troughs.

A wall garden is the ideal way to bring greenery into a small space, such as a courtyard, and to get the job done fast, use a kit that comes with a frame that attaches to the wall and hooks to hold the planter troughs.

A vertical garden is a great way to grow seasonal herbs and annuals, but make sure to water it regularly, as pots can dry out quickly.

Materials

Vertical garden kit
Wall plugs
Hammer drill
Screws
Pencil
Tape measure
Spirit level



Hang several frames in a grid for a large display.

1 2 3



1 Measure the wall

Choose a location on the wall for the vertical garden, ensuring it gets enough sunlight and a tap is nearby to make watering with a hose easy. Use a tape measure and spirit level to measure up and mark the wall.



2 Secure the frame

Position the frame to mark the screw holes on the wall. Use a hammer drill to make the holes, cut wall plugs to size, then insert in the holes. Insert the screws in the wall plugs, then hang the frame securely on the screw ends.



3 Hang the planters

Once the frame is secure, hang the supplied planter hooks on it. Fill the planters with potting mix and plants, then water in well. Position planters on the hooks so they're held securely and make sure they're evenly spaced.



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» Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 OUTDOOR PROJECT Gain useful skills to help you tackle all those outdoor projects	» Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 NATIONAL WATER WEEK Learn handy water-saving tips to use around the home and garden

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FREE Kids' D.I.Y. Workshops

» Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 FOOTY FEVER Make something special to support your favourite team	» Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 WATER SAVING Learn about all the fun and different ways to save water around your home
» Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 GROW YOUR OWN How to plant vegetables and tips for growing them at home	
» Saturday 17 DRESS UPS Have some fun and get creative with dress-up activities	
» Sunday 18 GAME MAKERS Create your own fun and games with the game makers workshop	

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Put old coffee grounds to good use as plant food. They're packed with nutrients that acid-loving plants love. Save them to fertilise rosebushes, azaleas, camellias, rhododendrons and evergreens.

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FEEDER

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