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AUSTRALIAN Handyman

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AFRICAN VIOLETS
& SPRING BULBS

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FRUIT TREES NOW

MAKE

A TERRARIUM
STEP BY STEP

14 WAYS
TO CUT
THE COST
OF LIVING

Get this floor
in 3 easy steps
page 66

Super storage!

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KITCHEN, WARDROBE & GARAGE



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comfort food



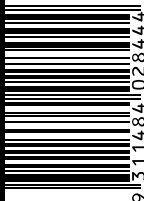
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summer lilies



Winter decks for outdoor living

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Handyman

Super storage!

FOR THE WORKSHOP, KITCHEN, WARDROBE & GARAGE

14 WAYS TO CUT THE COST OF LIVING

MAKE A TERRARIUM STEP-BY-STEP

PLANT

AFRICAN VIOLETS & SPRING BODIES

BARB-ROOT FRUIT TREES NOW

DIY RAZZO TOOLS WORTH \$605

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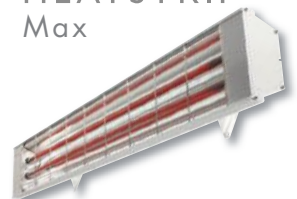
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THIS ISSUE

HANDY HINT OF THE MONTH



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EDITOR'S LETTER



They say a cluttered house is a sign of a cluttered mind.

If this sounds a bit like someone you know, it's easy to fix.

When you can clearly select what is essential, non-essential and rubbish, you can quickly dictate what to keep and what to throw out.

Kitchen makeovers

This issue of *Australian Handyman* is dedicated to helping you get the house in shape with clever and easy storage solutions for the kitchen, wardrobe and workshop.

These projects are quick and simple to install and look fabulous. And now that your mind is less cluttered, you can focus on the things you enjoy.

As the kitchen is the hub of the home, you want to make sure it is as nice as it can be. So we hope you are inspired by our kitchen surface makeover story, on page 28.

Cherie Barber also shows us three kitchens that she's transformed on very tight budgets, on page 42.

And after comparing the before and after pictures, you'll agree what she's accomplished is tremendous.

Welcome to winter

Winter has arrived and we're sharing great ways to enjoy the cooler weather.

There's a refresher on how to clean the barbie to get it ready to make the recipes you'll find on page 89.

And there are gardening projects, such as growing from cuttings and seeds in the greenhouse, on page 100.

And if it's colour you're after, we show you how to grow African violets, on page 116, and force spring bulbs to grow indoors, on page 132.

Enjoy the issue,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL



PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Fusing German engineering and innovation with timeless design, the Hansa Primo Basin Mixer is the ideal choice for any new bathroom.

The premium mixer features water-saving technology, as well as a broad handle range that allows more precise temperature control, helping to avoid scalding.

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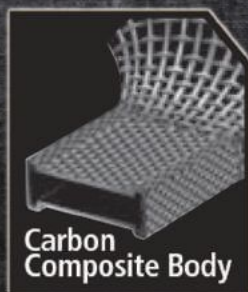
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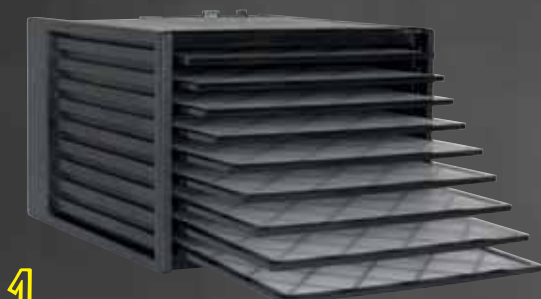


HANDY STUFF

LOWER THE COST OF LIVING

Cut household expenses with these clever home and garden products

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



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SAVE excess fruit for snacks by drying it out in an Excalibur Food Dehydrator, \$499. It has nine trays, an adjustable temperature control and a 26-hour timer. Dry fish, meat and vegetables as well. biome.com.au



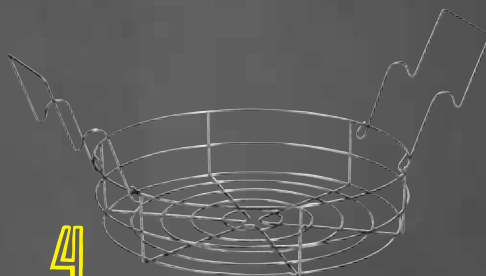
2

AVOID buying bottled water and fill up at home with a Stefani Reverse Osmosis System Undercounter Filter, \$550. Its five-stage filtration system removes 99% of particles, chemicals and contaminants. stefani.com.au



3

TRANSFORM wrinkling fruit into delicious jams with the help of a Tala Jam and Confectionery Thermometer, \$25. It can easily be attached to a pot using the spring clip on the back. davidjones.com.au



4

PRESERVE seasonal produce from the garden with a Ball Mason Home Canning Rack, \$23. With chrome plating to resist corrosion, it converts a stockpot into a waterbath canner to seal jars. ballmason.com.au

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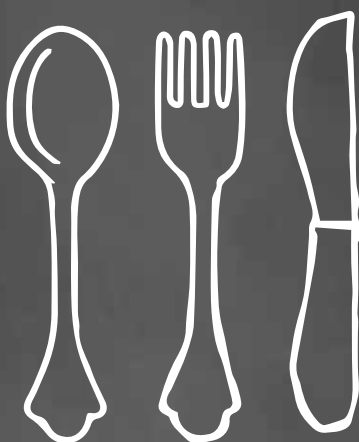
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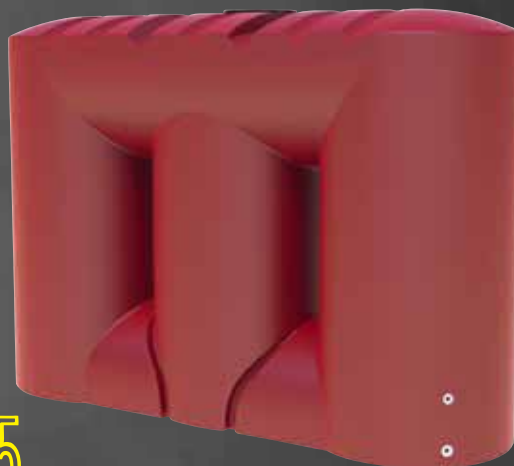
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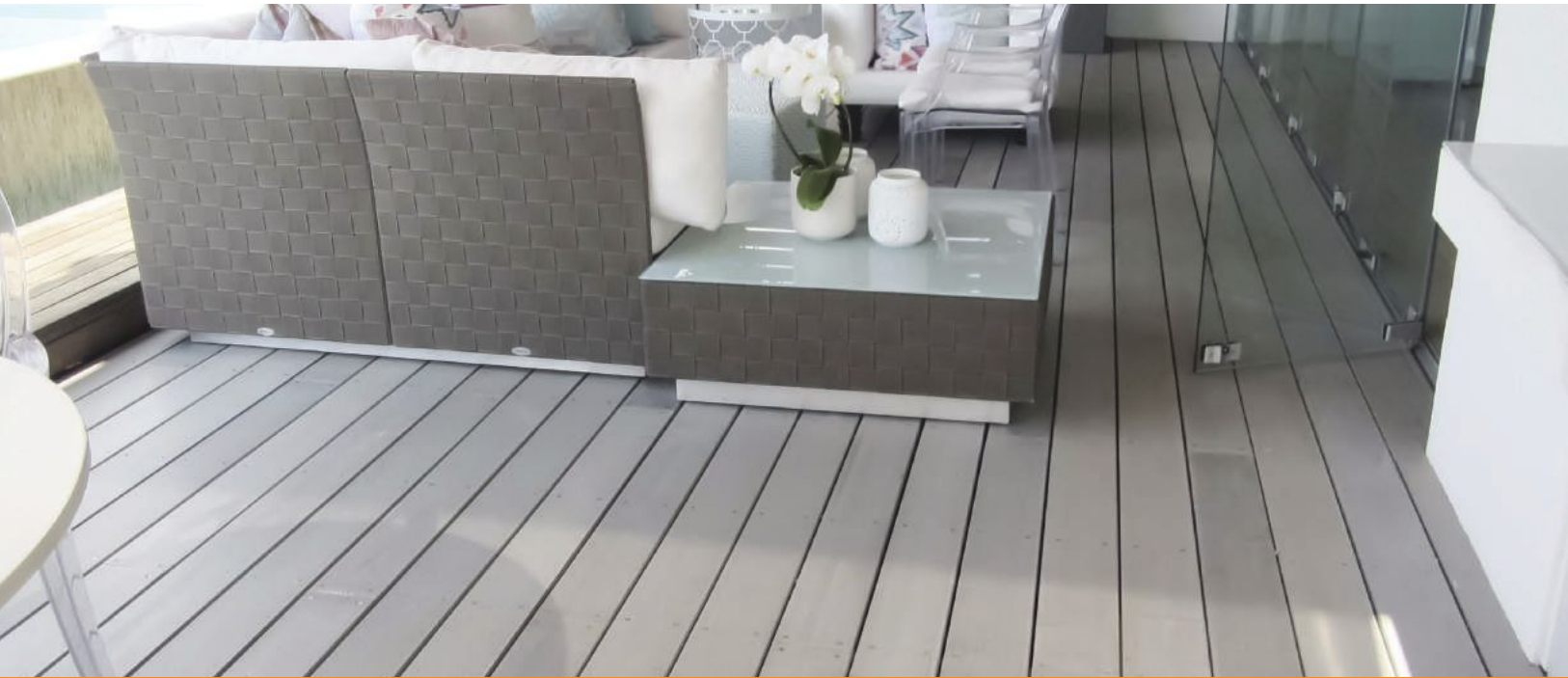
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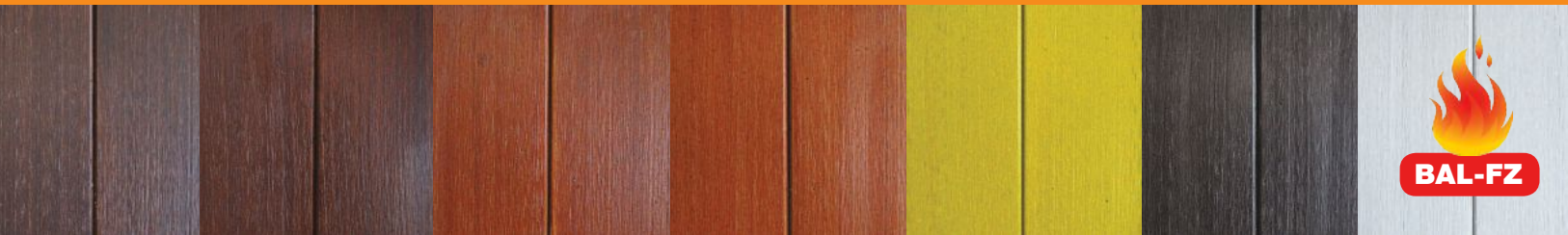


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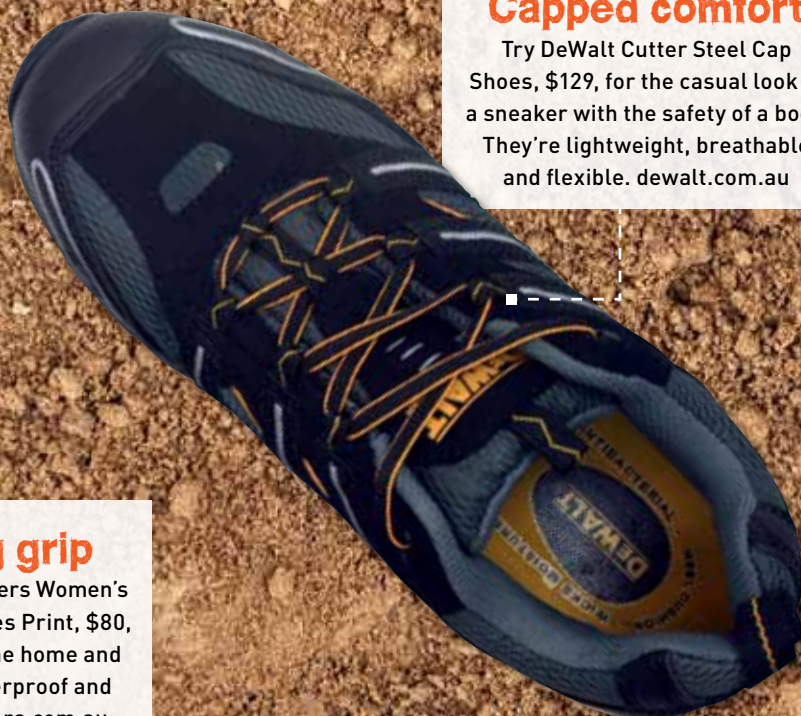
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Keep your feet safe when working around the home and garden with these shoes for DIYers

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



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FOR YOUR INSPIRATION ►►►

GET INTO *THE* CUBE

A single-level house, untouched since the 70s, gets a modernist update without sacrificing simplicity

WORDS SITA SIMONS

ABOVE Located on a hill, the home is surrounded by mature trees and rolling green land. **RIGHT** Sharp angles and jutting features on the exterior align and take on a new perspective, depending on the vantage point.



Set on an 850sqm block, high on a hill, a cantilevered cube is the main feature of this modernist, architect-designed home.

'The site itself was amazing, but the existing single-storey structure didn't do it justice. I wanted to create drama with both the build and the interior,' says homeowner Munro Laing.

He wanted playfulness in form and for the view to be an integral part of the design. And, as they are a family of five, he also wanted lots of space.

But not too much space, says Munro, reflecting a growing move away from huge for the sake of it.

What was to be as big as possible were the windows, and the design was centred around the expanses of single-pane glass that flood the house with light and green outlooks.

'What we didn't want was a big white box, despite the fact that a cube is the dominant feature,' he says. >



Height and light

The original house was a one-storey pavilion, and that footprint remains. Entering via oversized glass doors, the space soars to a double-height ceiling.

A floating staircase with a glass balustrade leads to a mezzanine level and the cube extension. The grandness of the space is emphasised by the use of colour and unexpected features.

An angular recess by the stairs is painted deep aubergine and is reflected opposite on floor-to-ceiling pivoting panels that open to the lounge.

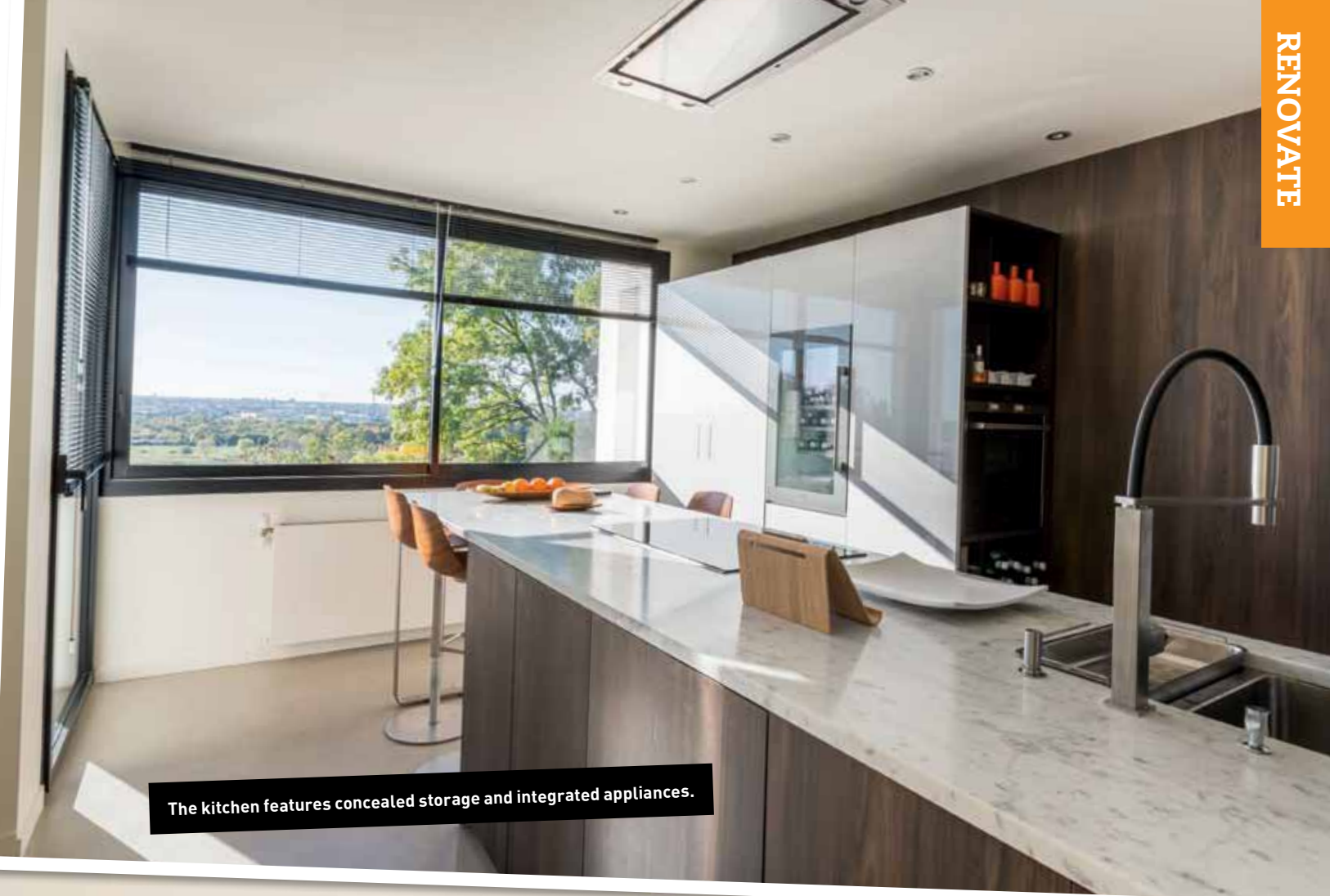
'I just love the sense of theatre when you walk in. And actually the interior is not vast, but the height and light make it feel much bigger.'

'This is something I didn't fully understand about good architecture. It's not just about designing something that looks good, it also has to feel good and work emotionally.'

'We have never felt more at home than we do here,' says Munro.

A grand entrance sets the visual tone and creates a sense of drama in this sleek, modern residence. **RIGHT** The minimalist dining room is visible from the front door and leads the eye to the amazing views outside.





The kitchen features concealed storage and integrated appliances.



Simple and streamlined

The view from the entry is directly into the dining room, a low key and simply arranged space housed in the original single-storey building.

An eight-seater dining table and high-gloss white chairs and storage unit are offset by a wallpapered shelving nook. It ties into the colour scheme and is an unexpected addition in the mostly neutral palette.

The eye is drawn outdoors through the doors and windows to the green landscape and the turquoise pool.

Continuing the minimalist look, the adjacent kitchen has a long island bench with storage clad in walnut and topped with Carrara marble. The island extends into a breakfast bar, positioned to take advantage of the views.

A high-gloss cabinet with an integrated fridge provides more storage, so every surface is kept clear, with the oven economically and ergonomically tucked into the end. ➤

Drama and glamour

The living area is a long space that opens off the entrance. The new extension provides a double-height ceiling, accentuated by the pivoting panels that can either close off the room or create a little more privacy.

Munro was concerned that the high ceiling may make the space feel ungrounded or cold.

'I understood we would have the recess under the mezzanine but didn't

anticipate the success of the stone cupboards, which look more like a sculpture than storage,' he says.

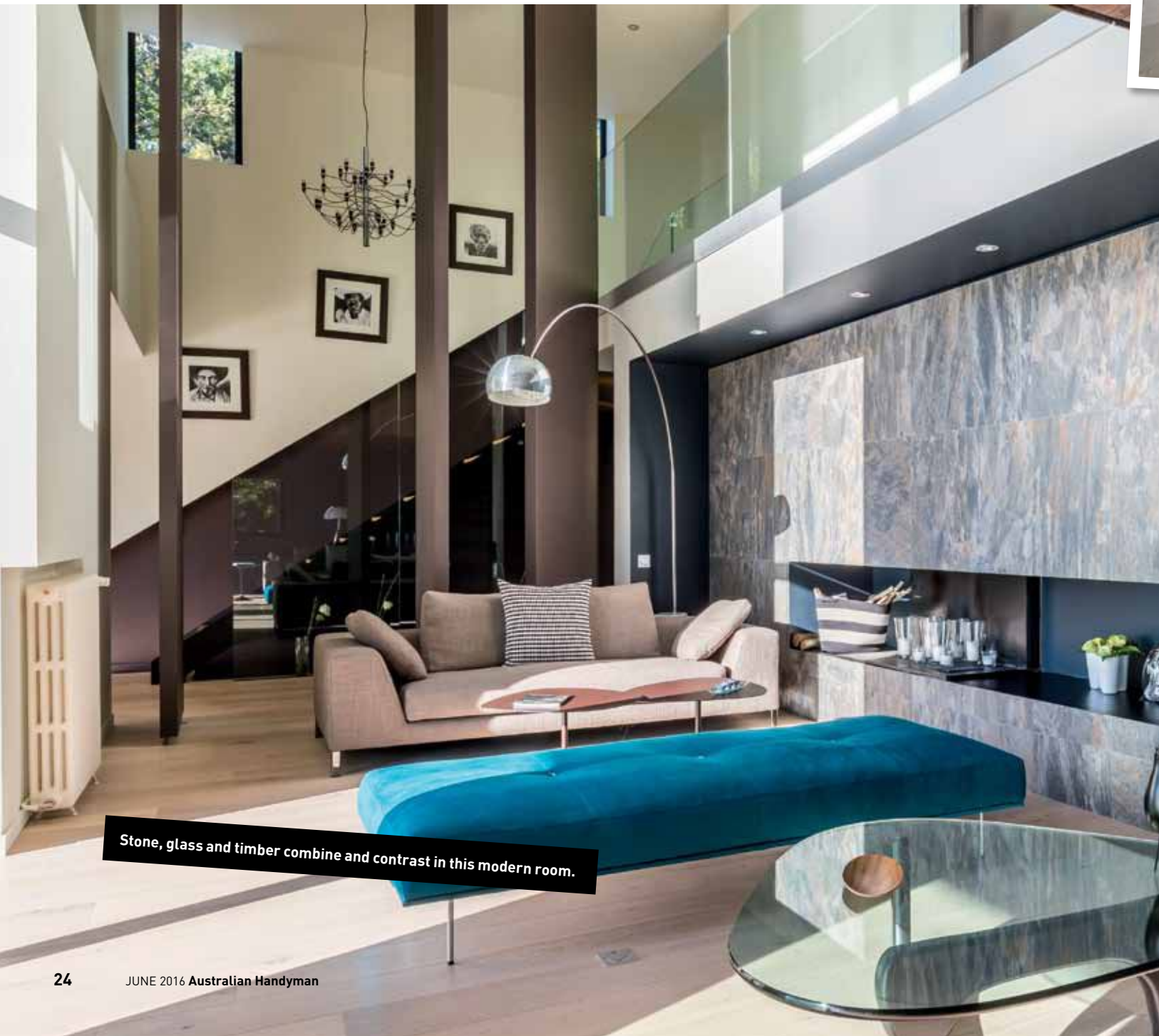
At the other end of the living space, the cantilevered cube forms a low and cosy zone. This area picks up the walnut element from the kitchen as cladding on the ceiling.

Lighting and sound are recessed into the cladding and, in keeping with the intimate feel, the back wall is painted a deep Prussian blue, which

serves to absorb some of the light and add depth to the room.

'I'm so happy with the contrasting materials in the living space. The room really does have many personalities, depending on where you decide to sit and what time of day it is,' says Munro.

Furnishings are few but very well chosen. Comfortable and unfussy in form, they allow for a variety of arrangements and activities without overwhelming the space. ➤



Stone, glass and timber combine and contrast in this modern room.



One end of the living space has a soaring double-height ceiling and is open to the new mezzanine level, which features glass balustrading. **RIGHT** An area with a low ceiling clad in walnut creates a cosy zone at the other end of the open-plan lounge.



A deep blue on the walls adds visual depth in a low-ceilinged space.



Choose an accent colour in a jewel tone to bring out the serenity of a neutral backdrop and natural materials such as stone and timber



The breathtaking view is the focal point in the master bedroom.

Calming and luxurious

The master bedroom, which is more like a parents' retreat, is in the cube. The 70sqm area features stunning views front and back, benefiting from the floor-to-ceiling windows that open onto a Juliette balcony.

'There is little need to go over the top decorating this house, as the view often takes centre stage and the light moves through the day,' says Munro.

A large part of the success of this calming and undemanding home is plenty of storage, and most of it hidden. Clever planning allows for the integration of storage in every room.

Built-in robes look like a partition wall in the bedroom, opening on the

other side to create a dressing room. And further down the hallway, the bathroom is more than just an ensuite.

With a view back up the hill, the green bush creates a scenic backdrop and imbues the bathroom with a sense of privacy and retreat.

A sage green wall is calming and plays into the Scandinavian theme suggested by the gloss vanity and a tribute to a Eero Saarinen tulip table.

The freestanding bath takes in the spectacular view, while an oversized shower makes room for two.

'It's these small details that impact how we feel and function. This is the home we always wanted and the house that fits this site,' says Munro.



The secret to creating and maintaining a simple decorating scheme is to have concealed, built-in storage, and lots of it



Private and practical

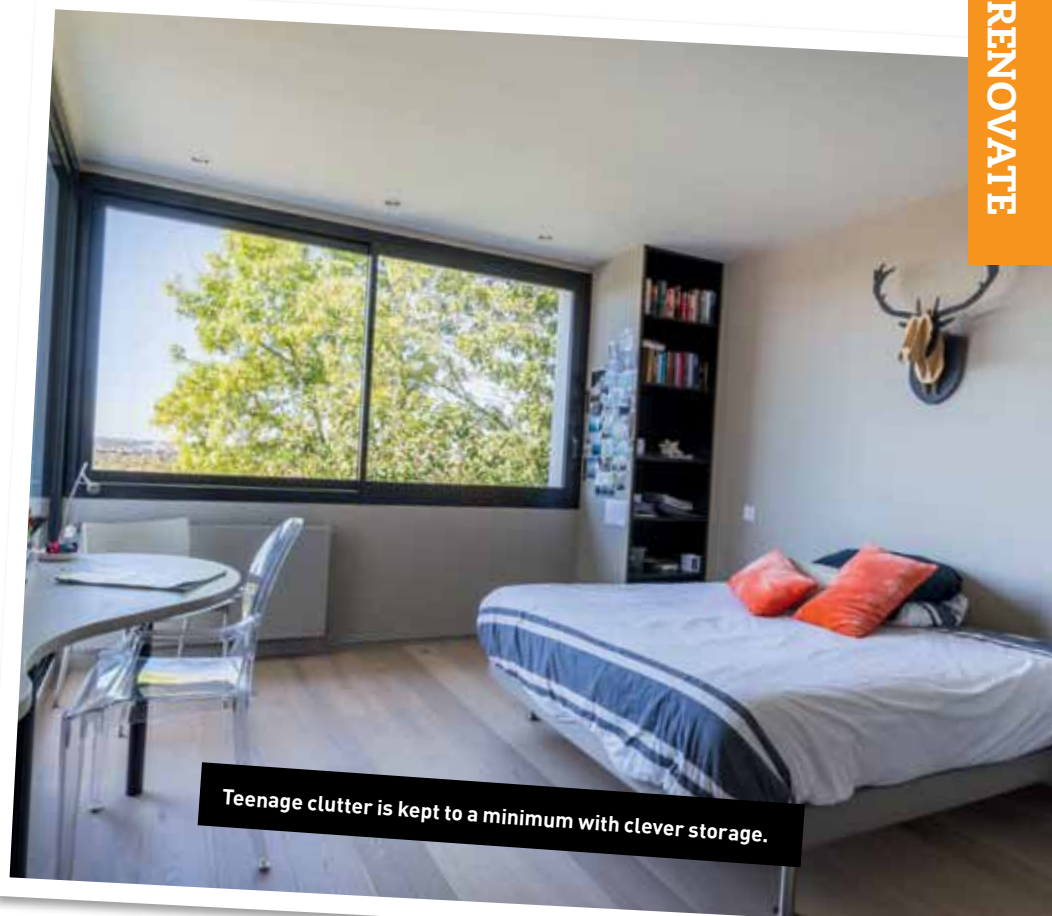
Three bedrooms and a bathroom extend off the cube in a loft space that was part of the original home.

Designed for teenagers, the bedrooms are practical and gender neutral. Earthy colours reflect the outdoor scene and built-ins provide extensive mixed storage.

'Having the kids in a separate part of the house is great for them and us, even more so because they have their own bathroom,' says Munro.

The design approach in the loft is simple, with success dependent on attention to detail, such as the grout lines of the wide-format bathroom tiles aligning perfectly with the vanities.

'It's quite extraordinary to have teenage children and not be living in a certain level of chaos, but this place never feels overwhelmed.'



Teenage clutter is kept to a minimum with clever storage.

Understated luxury, a soothing palette and leafy outlook turn the master bathroom into a haven for relaxation.

LEFT Two floating vanities are a great solution for a shared kids' bathroom.



KITCHEN REVIVAL

Give your dated kitchen a full facelift in just a weekend with these inexpensive and simple surface repairs

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

The kitchen plays a key role in the daily routine of a family, and is also often the hub of a party.

Whether you're looking to update or just repair it, fixing up the kitchen doesn't have to be a hard or expensive exercise.

Making it a showpiece again can be as simple as resurfacing your benchtop, replacing doors or installing a vibrant splashback.

Stainless steel benchtops require regular maintenance.





Create your own stone-look benchtop in just a few hours.



Benchtops

In a busy kitchen, countertops can show wear and tear fast, especially on an island bench. And as a focal point, a damaged island can really make a space look shabby or dated.

Resurfacing kitchen benchtops is a budget-friendly upgrade you can do yourself over a weekend.

To make over a laminate benchtop, replace any peeling edges and give the entire surface a light sand.

Repair any dents, then apply a laminate paint or use a special-effect coating to get the look of stone.



Metal magic

A stainless steel benchtop can add an industrial edge to complement a contemporary design. It can come with challenges, though, as rust and fingermarks can build up.

To remove rust and water spots from the bench or sink, make a paste of one part cream of tartar with a bit of lemon juice in a small bowl.

Apply the paste to the spots and let soak before wiping clean with a cloth dipped in white vinegar. ➤

GET THE LOOK



Rust-Oleum Benchtop Coating System in Diamond White, \$179. rustoleum.com.au



3M Stainless Steel Cleaner & Polish, \$7 for 200g. 3m.com.au

Vinyl is affordable and easy to install, repair and maintain.

Flooring

If your kitchen floor has burn marks, holes or tears, patch the damaged section with a new piece of vinyl.

You can buy a sample piece of vinyl, but make sure it shows any repeat patterns. If you can't match the flooring, find a hidden spot inside the pantry or under appliances and cut out a piece to use.

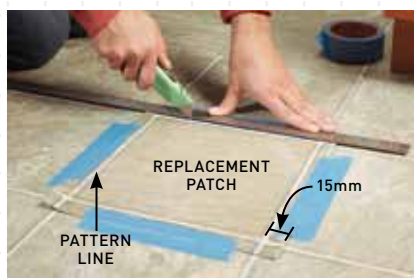


1 2 3



1 Cut the vinyl

Use a utility knife to cut around the damaged area, then loosen the adhesive in one corner using a hairdryer and lift with a putty knife. Cut a patch to match the damaged area, extending it 15mm around the pattern or grout line.



2 Position the patch

Tape the replacement patch over the damaged area with painter's tape and cut through the new patch with a sharp utility knife, following the pattern line. **TIP** Use a ruler to guide the knife to ensure smooth, straight cut lines.



3 Apply the adhesive

Remove the replacement patch and the damaged section and any backing material. Apply a vinyl-flooring adhesive with a small-notched trowel and secure the replacement patch, going over the seam with a vinyl floor sealer.



PICTURES (LEFT) ISTOCK (RIGHT) ALAMY

Acrylic panels add a block of solid colour for a glossy, eye-catching effect. **RIGHT** Mosaic tile splashbacks inject colour and texture into a kitchen.



Splashbacks

Replacing an old one or installing a new splashback can change the whole look of a kitchen.

Acrylic sheets are quick to install and come in a range of colours and patterns.

Tiled splashbacks are classic and easy to DIY. Use subway tiles for a modern look or add colour with a mosaic design. ➤

DESIGN TIP

A mosaic splashback creates instant impact and also adds colour to a kitchen. Using tile sheets takes the job from fiddly to fast.

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Well-maintained timber fits seamlessly into a modern kitchen design.
RIGHT Raw or slightly stained timber cabinets work well in an urban style.



Cabinets

Timber doors show knocks more than high-gloss cabinetry but are easy to touch up, then stain or varnish for a natural finish.

Polyurethane is similar to clear varnish but is easier to apply, making timber doors durable and giving them a medium-level shine.

Before resurfacing timber cabinet doors, remove any handles, then repair cracks, scratches and dents with a filler in a matching colour.

Sand the surface smooth, wipe off the dust, then use sugar soap to clean oil build-up, particularly on cabinets near the rangehood and fridge.

Stain the timber, then use a brush or short-nap roller to apply 2-3 coats of a clear polyurethane, letting it dry and sanding lightly between coats.

REPAIR ESSENTIALS

DIY TIP

Repair minor scratches in timber with a walnut. Just rub it diagonally over the damage, then repeat with your finger to set the natural oils.



Feast Watson Clear Varnish, about \$41 for 1L.
feastwatson.com.au



Cabot's Wood Tone Putty, about \$12 for 250g.
cabots.com.au



A simple fresh coat of paint can bring new life to kitchen doors.



Paint timber doors

To change the style of a timber kitchen, just use paint. White cabinets will give you a country look, while green and blue have a retro feel.

Black is sophisticated, and a gloss finish is sleek and modern. A matt paint works well in an industrial-style space.

To DIY, sand back the doors and drawers to bare timber, prime, then apply two coats of a mould-inhibiting paint. ➤

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Budget revamp

This kitchen had a good layout and new appliances, so homeowner Kate Griffith couldn't justify spending on a reno, but she felt the all-white scheme made it stark and cold. The solution was a DIY makeover.

➤ **REPLACE THE FACE** Paint doesn't adhere well to high-gloss cabinetry, so replace the existing doors. If the cabinetry is in standard sizes, this can be done with flatpacked options.

➤ **CREATE A CONTRAST** Add colour to a neutral backdrop for big impact. Here, the red doors make the stainless steel splashback pop, while the white bench and blinds look fresh. New handles with a modern profile update the look. ✂



Before

After

Red gloss doors replaced the old white ones to add energy and colour to the room.



DESIGN TIP

Use warm colours such as red in the kitchen to create an inviting space that guests will gravitate towards and feel comfortable in.

YOUR EVERYDAY INDULGENCE

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The Villa Rail Shower comes with an ergonomic paddle slider for easy height adjustment and convenient, integrated chrome shelf.

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TECHNOLOGY

Villa Rail Shower
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DORF.COM.AU

5 EASY KITCHEN STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Try these ways to create an organised and more efficient workspace

DESIGN TIP

Keep cabinet interiors looking streamlined by matching new and existing materials when installing extra storage.

When you want additional storage in your kitchen, you don't need to strip out and replace your cabinets.

Instead, you can add dividers, shelves, baskets and racks using just a few materials and basic tools.

All of these solutions will help to keep your kitchen organised and they're budget friendly as well.

1 Add extra shelves

Utilise wasted space and make cabinets much more functional simply by adding another shelf or two.

All you need is 17mm thick plywood or melamine and a packet of shelf-support brackets.



Before

After

Flat cookware is now tidy and accessible by storing it upright.



2 Create a divider

Tidy up cabinets and create easy access to flat pans, boards and trays by storing them upright instead of stacking them up.

Measure and cut a piece of melamine to fit inside the cabinet and serve as a divider.

To attach it, screw a bracket to the face frame of the cabinet floor and one to the back wall. Or you can drive screws through the divider from the shelf above. ➤



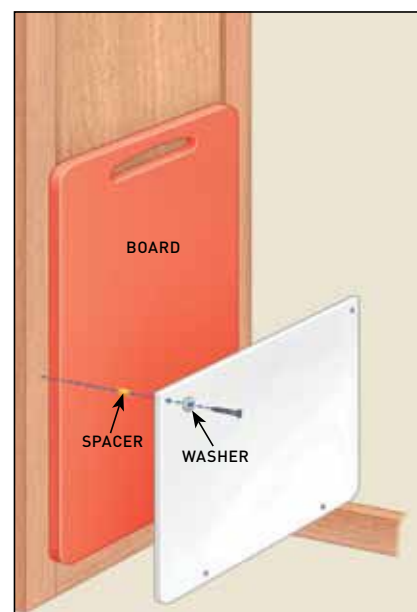


3 Store cutting boards

Create a dedicated storage space for your cutting boards by adding a rack to the inside of a cabinet door.

Cut to size 12mm thick acrylic or plywood, then smooth the edges using sandpaper and round the lower corners with a belt sander.

Use ferrules or timber blocks as spacers and secure the rack with screws and washers.



4 Organise spice jars
Save time hunting through your spice collection to find the right one by reorganising them in simple wire drawers.

Install two of the drawers in a cabinet, then add the spices in matching clear-glass jam jars.

Write the name of the spices on the jar lids and arrange them alphabetically for easy access.

REstored 450mm Chrome Side Fix Sliding Cabinet Basket, \$59, from Bunnings.



Before

After

The spices are easy to find now they are organised in drawers.



5 Install a knife rack

House knives in a safe place by installing a knife rack inside a cabinet door.

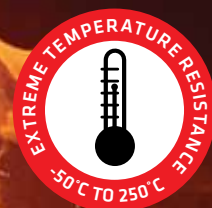
To make it, run timber offcuts across a tablesaw on edge to cut kerfs, adjusting the blade height for different knife widths. Also cut a thin strip to act as an end cap.

Glue and clamp the kerfed offcuts together, then sand the rack until the joints are flush.

To mount it on the door, use two 35mm screws and washers. 🛠️



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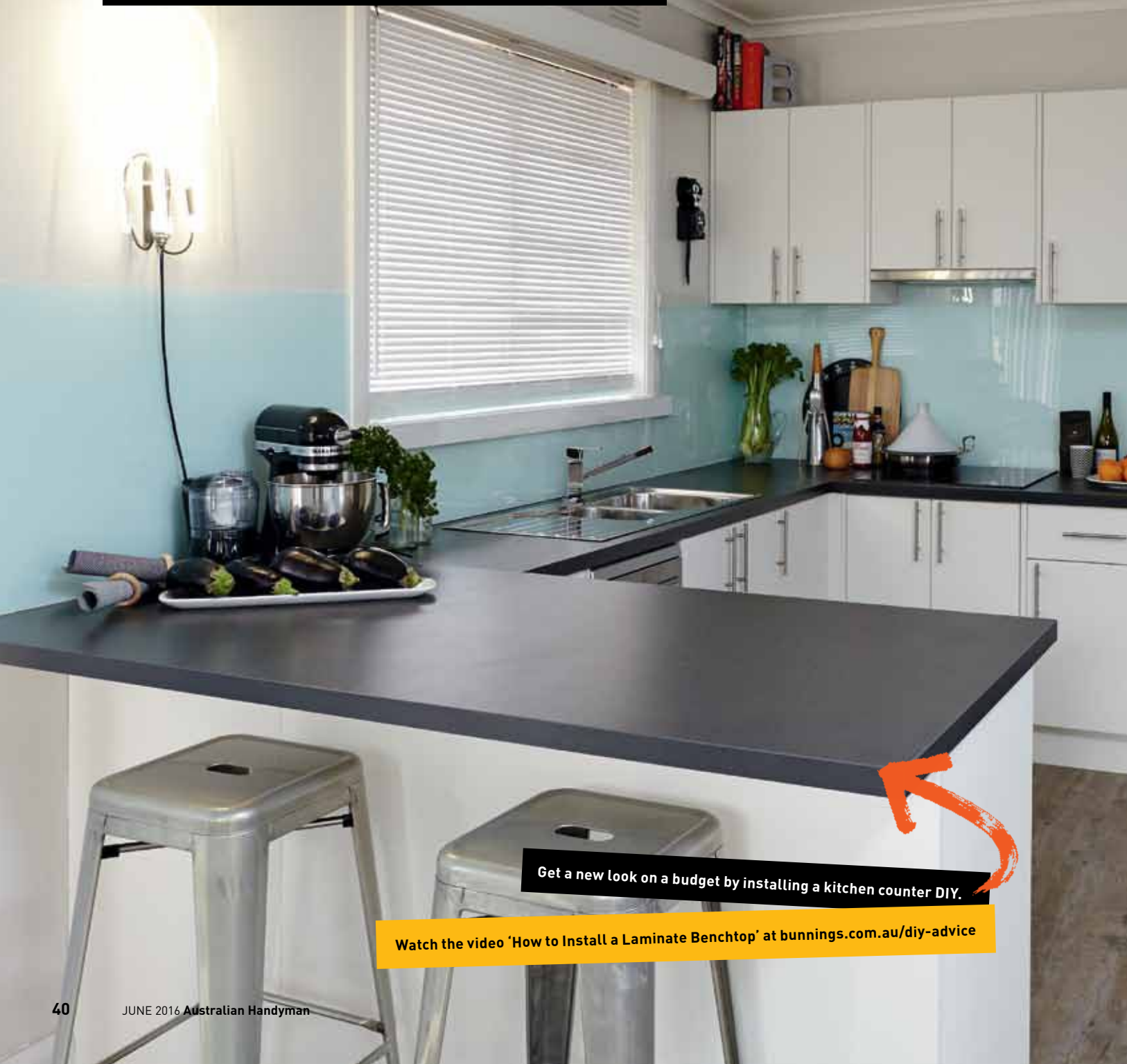
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Brand-new benchtop



Get a new look on a budget by installing a kitchen counter DIY.

Watch the video 'How to Install a Laminate Benchtop' at [bunnings.com.au/diy-advice](https://www.bunnings.com.au/diy-advice)

DIY TIP

Laminate is an affordable and durable benchtop material that is easy to cut and install, making it ideal for DIY installation.

Join and install a laminate bench to give the kitchen a modern update

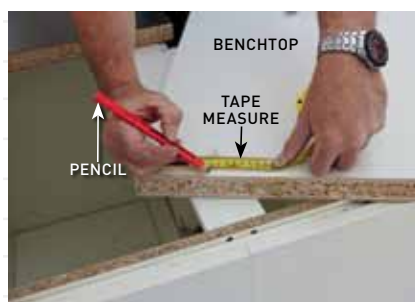
Laminate benchtops are durable and come in a wide range of designs and colours, making them ideal for any kitchen. They're also easy to install DIY.

Benchtops are available in lengths of up to 2400mm and will need to be

measured and cut to size before they are attached to the cabinets.

Most kitchens require multiple benchtop sections, which are joined underneath for a smooth finish.

TIP You can order laminate benchtops cut to size at your local Bunnings.



1 Mark the joins

Lay the benchtop sections in position on the cabinets and from underneath mark where they join. Turn the sections over and line up the marks. Measure and mark out the drill points on the underside of the benchtops, according to the manufacturer's instructions.



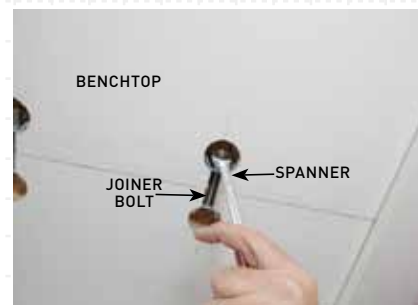
2 Drill the holes

Drill holes in the underside of the benchtop with a Forstner bit, using masking tape to mark the depth. Use a handsaw to cut two grooves 10mm apart between the hole and the edge of the benchtop. Make a channel by tapping out the waste with a chisel.



3 Mount the brackets

Drill pilot holes in the centre of the back panel of each cabinet at the top, then attach the brackets using screws. Drill guide holes in the horizontal braces at the front of each cabinet. Position each benchtop section the right way up on the cabinets.



4 Join the benchtop

Apply PVA adhesive to each side of the joint, install the joiner bolts and tighten using a spanner. Secure the benchtop to the rear brackets with screws. Use the guide holes at the front to drill pilot holes in the benchtop, then secure with screws. 🛠️

What you need

Drill
Forstner bit
Tape measure
Carpenter's square
Pencil
Handsaw
Spanner
Chisel
PVA adhesive
Benchtop joiners
Safety gear



**\$2333
COST**

BUDGET KITCHEN TRANSFORMATIONS

Save money when revamping the hub of the home, whether it's a cosmetic reno or a major overhaul

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERIE BARBER

After

Modern colours lift the mood and the splashback creates an impact.

Before

Kitchens can be notoriously expensive to renovate, especially once you've factored in new appliances, cabinets, benchtops, splashbacks and flooring, not to mention tradies' fees.

There's also the inconvenience of having your kitchen out of action for

weeks, and the inevitable dirt and dust that comes with a major reno.

These makeovers demonstrate what can be achieved by thinking outside the box. By building on what is already there, or just updating the colour scheme, you can transform the kitchen on a modest budget.

Update the surfaces

When a kitchen is structurally sound but just outdated, you can achieve miracles for next to nothing. Start with specialty paint, then complement it with a few strategic updates.

In this kitchen, the cabinets were painted with white laminate paint, while the benchtop was painted dark grey and sealed with a gloss top coat.

The old wall oven would have clashed with the new look, so it was replaced for \$500 and the wall was

reconfigured to fit the microwave. The brown rangehood was modernised with stainless steel appliance paint.

Thankfully, tiles are cheap and come in wonderful patterns, so a new splashback was installed to create a modern look for less than \$350.

Self-adhesive flooring transformed the base of the breakfast bar for only \$55, and a new coat of paint, feature lighting and micro venetian blinds completed the transformation. ➤

GET THE LOOK



Dulux Duramax Stainless Steel Finish Spray Paint, \$20 for 300g. dulux.com.au



Taubmans Endure Low Sheen White Interior Paint, \$40 for 1L. taubmans.com.au



White Knight White Laminate Paint, \$50 for 1L. whiteknightpaints.com.au

**\$5000
COST**

After

The new kitchen is more spacious with smarter storage options.

GET THE LOOK

Johnson Tiles 300 x 100mm
Taupe Gloss Ceramic Wall Tile,
\$36 for 40. johnsontiles.com.au

Zone Interiors Long Island PVC
Venetian Blind, 1500 x 1200mm,
\$80. zoneinteriors.com.au

Bellini 600mm Stainless
Steel Electric Oven, \$619.
belliniappliances.com.au

Marquee Three-drawer
500mm Base Cabinet,
\$99. bunnings.com.au

DIY TIP

Installing cabinets and laminate benchtops DIY can save money, but you'll need to call in the professionals for any plumbing and wiring.

Start from scratch

If you have to gut a kitchen, it doesn't mean you need to pay top dollar for a new one. Hunting for bargains can shave thousands of dollars off your budget.

This kitchen was beyond saving, so the whole lot had to go, including the lino floor. Underneath, there were pine floorboards in near-perfect condition, so it was a great base to work with.

A new flatpack kitchen was found online for \$1500 and a pantry was added to boost storage. The breakfast bar was permanently removed to provide a more open-plan space.

New stainless steel appliances and a tiled splashback were installed to modernise the kitchen, while the walls were patched up and given a fresh coat of paint throughout. ➤



Always ask yourself what components can be retained or recycled

Before



\$6700
COST



After

A layout change improved the kitchen and created more space.

Before

Change the layout

This kitchen reno required thinking outside the square, as it was flipped at right angles and moved to an otherwise dead space in the entry.

It was a key part of a major renovation of this small warehouse studio, as it allowed the floorplan to be changed to turn the space into a one-bedroom apartment.

To reduce costs, the cabinets were retained and expanded to create the new kitchen.

And almost all the new fixtures and fittings were bargain buys.

The biggest purchase was the LED under-bench lighting at \$600, a necessity for both task lighting and a dramatic effect.

A great addition for a small apartment, the new long benchtop created a breakfast bar, while the faux-brick tiles, picked up for \$90, make a fabulous focal point in an otherwise plain kitchen.

The plumbing and electricity had to be relocated, but the cost was justified, as the reno delivered \$39,000 in profit at sale time. ➤

The cabinets were retained and relocated to save money.



STEAL THIS STYLE

Use feature lighting and a DIY designer splashback to add wow factor and create a modern look when on a tight budget.

**Cherie Barber,
Renovating For Profit**

GET THE LOOK

Kaboodle 900mm Mayonella Laminate Benchtop, \$267 per metre. kaboodle.com.au

Mondella 440mm Rococo Square Undermount Sink, \$209. mondella.com.au

Decor8 400 x 100mm Stacked Stone Wall Cladding in Burnt Sienna, \$7. decor8tiles.com

Everdure 600mm Stainless Steel Dishwasher, \$549. everdure.com

kaboodle.com.au

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Customise a closet

Install drawers and shelving DIY
to maximise wardrobe storage

WORDS AND PICTURES MELISSA DARR

For five years, crafty blogger Melissa Darr put up with a less than user-friendly walk-in robe in the master bedroom. It had ample hanging space, but that was about it.

'There wasn't much in it, so we lived with stuffing our clothes into a little tower of drawers,' says Melissa.

After doing more important reno jobs, such as the kitchen and bathroom, Melissa had the time to take on the wardrobe.

'I was tired of living with a dysfunctional closet, so the first step was to decide what we wanted from the space.'



Building storage is a big carpentry job,
so tailor off-the-shelf options instead

Melissa



EXPERT SECRETS

Assess what needs
to be stored, then
design a closet to suit
your actual needs.

CREATING THE CLOSET

Melissa's goal was to increase drawer and shelving space in the wardrobe without it turning into too big a job.

'I wanted something pre-made that we could customise to fit our space and that was easy to install,' says Melissa.

After researching different options, they decided to go with Clever Closet by Handy Storage (handy-storage.com.au).

Melissa and her husband Bevan measured the wall, worked out the best configuration and costed the parts. They worked around powerpoints, as hiring an electrician would blow the budget.

Several sketches and a couple of trips to Bunnings later, they had a final design, and the planning meant that the installation took only an afternoon. >

Before



Wardrobe wishlist

Melissa created and stuck to a design brief for the new closet.

- ✚ Fittings that were simple and easy to install and customise.
- ✚ A design that didn't block the natural light from the window.
- ✚ Lots of open shelving drawers.

After

The new closet storage system is super organised and streamlined.



Get more DIY from Melissa
Follow her blog thewhimsicalwife.com



Custom vs standard

'There are two ways you can go with Clever Closet. You can buy a pre-packaged system to fit into an area or you can tailor the parts to suit your needs, which is what we did,' says Melissa.

'What I loved was that we could install open wire shelving next to the window and not block out the light.'

'While the Clever Closet system is a little more expensive than buying melamine wardrobe inserts, it's worth spending the extra money.'

'It can be completely customised, there are no bulky cabinets, and it is super simple to install.'

'With all our clothes now so easy to access, there is no more need to rummage around or make a mess.'

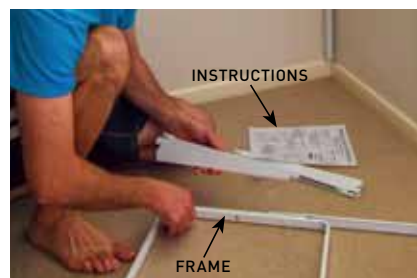
DESIGN TIP

Go for symmetry when designing a closet system with open shelving to create streamlined storage that always looks tidy.



1 Install the hang track

Mark the top of the closet system and secure the horizontal hang track, checking for level with a spirit level. Hang the wall strips vertically from the hang track, checking for plumb. Secure the strips with screws.



2 Make the frames

Build the sliding basket frames for the drawers, following the manufacturer's instructions. Install the shelf brackets in the wall strips, then add the wire shelves and engage the locking clips, working from the top down.



3 Add the drawers

Secure the sliding basket frames to the wall strips with screws, leaving enough room in between so they run smoothly on the tracks and keeping them clear of the ground. Slide the drawers into the frames. ✂

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between



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Plain or mirror doors



Drawers and
shelf packs

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Affordable.



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Find it at Bunnings

Household storage

Organise the family home with affordable and flexible solutions

Kid's room,
from \$269



Living room,
from \$92

Hide messy DVDs and spare electronics in baskets.

Kitchen,
from \$742



Clever storage is essential in every room of a busy family home. A well-planned system will keep the house tidy and efficient.

Adjustable shelving and clear drawers or jars are ideal for busy rooms prone to change, such as the pantry, office and the kids' rooms, as they're flexible solutions with great visibility.

Basket inserts conceal clutter while freestanding wardrobes are great for providing plenty of room for clothes.



Open shelving
gives easy
access to often
used items

Sort the pantry with
a well-planned
adjustable shelving
system and clear jars.

LEFT Keep the kids' toys tidied away in clear mesh baskets.
BELOW Mount a shelf to the wall of the bathroom to store toiletries.

Bathroom,
from \$38

TIDY TIP

Fit out wardrobes with shoe or belt racks to store accessories and you'll prevent clutter, plus provide extra visibility to save time.

Home office,
from \$953

Hang frequently used items on a pegboard for easy access.

Bedroom,
from \$1345

A mirrored door's dual functionality keeps a room uncluttered.



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via your
smart
device

Light is perfection

Complete the look with OSRAM

For perfect kitchen lighting choose OSRAM's NEW LED SUPERSTAR Downlights. A dimmable range of MR16 and PAR16 LED lamps is also available from Bunnings. For a more dynamic lighting solution take a look at OSRAM's LIGHTIFY™ — smart, connected lighting controlled via your smart device. Find out more at www.o4osram.com.au/lightify



LED SUPERSTAR
DOWNLIGHT



LED SUPERSTAR PAR16
& MR16 advanced range

OSRAM LIGHTIFY™



Tunable White
PAR16



Gateway



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MAKE *A* MINISCAPE

Create landscapes under glass with this step-by-step guide to terrarium gardening

WORDS CLEA CREGAN PICTURES RICH MACDONALD



A glass vessel filled with plants, rocks and soil, a terrarium is a tiny garden that mimics a real landscape, bringing nature inside.

Easy and low-maintenance, you don't need a green thumb to become a terrarium gardener. And there's no right way or wrong way to make one.

Experiment with containers, plants and decorations and see what happens. Use these projects as a guide and add your own creative twists, or improvise with plants readily available to you.

Either way, the range of terrariums on these pages will inspire you to give miniscape gardening a try. ➤

Building your landscape

The process for planting a desert or forest terrarium is generally the same. It is important to have all of your elements ready to go before starting and to give yourself enough time.

Assembling a terrarium can take between 20 minutes and two hours, depending on the complexity of your project. Make sure you thoroughly wash, clean and dry the glass vessel.

Lay out the equipment and inspect your plants, checking that they look healthy and are free from any dead leaves or pests and diseases.

Arrange your plants in the order you'd like to plant them. Once you're happy with the layout, you can begin.

The step-by-step instructions on the opposite page illustrate the basic steps in terrarium gardening, and can be adapted to any of your projects.



 See more terrarium designs
Visit pinterest.com/DIYHandyman

Tiny gardens



Design your own
living sculptures
and miniature
green worlds to
enjoy year-round



This edited extract is from *Miniscapes* by Clea Cregan (Hardie Grant Books, \$25), available in stores nationally.

CREATE A TERRARIUM

1 Start with a clean glass container. Spread crushed gravel or pebbles on the base, to one-fifth of the height.

2 Cut a piece of butcher's paper a bit smaller than the container and position on the gravel or pebbles.

3 Press moistened sphagnum moss tightly around the inside edge to prevent any soil dropping through.

4 Sprinkle in 4 tablespoons of horticultural charcoal, then add a 50-70mm layer of soil.

5 Add more soil in some areas to make a mound and create variations in height.

6 Remove the plants from the pots. Scrape excess soil from the rootballs and trim any roots longer than 50mm.

7 Dig holes, position the plants and fill in with soil, firming it down to remove any air pockets.

8 Put tall plants at the back and small at the front. Wash down the sides and water the plants with a spray bottle.

9 Finish the miniscape with feature rocks, decorative stones, pebbles, crystals or figurines. ➤

MINISPHERE

Air plants don't require soil, as they use their roots to anchor themselves to rocks and branches.

Soak air plants in a bowl of water for 30 minutes. Drain the plants and shake off any excess water, as they may rot if they hold extra moisture for too long.

Pour grey stones into the orb. Add glass pebbles around the front, then arrange the air plants. Add coral, shells, a sea urchin and starfish.

Attach fishing wire or string to the glass loop at the top of the orb, then hang it.

Air plants don't need soil so are lightweight for hanging.



Guidelines

- Give it a position in bright, indirect sunlight.
- Remove the plants and soak in water once a week for 30 minutes. Spritz with water using a spray bottle in the warmer months.
- Curled leaves indicate that the plants are not getting enough water.



What you need

- 15cm glass tealight orb
- ¼ cup decorative grey stones
- ¼ cup glass bead pebbles
- 1 *Tillandsia stricta*
- 1 *Tillandsia ionantha* 'Rubra'
- 1 *Tillandsia ionantha* v Mexico
- 1 *Tillandsia ionantha* 'Peach'
- Small handful of coral rubble
- Handful of small shells
- 1 dried sea urchin
- 1 dried starfish

PITCHER PERFECT



Carnivorous plants like moist, boggy conditions and get their nutrients from capturing and digesting insects.

Pour gravel into the fishbowl and gently shake to create an even layer. Sprinkle charcoal over the top. Mix the peat moss and sand and add half.

Remove the plants from their pots, gently scrape away any excess soil

from the rootballs, then arrange in the centre of the bowl. Cover the roots with the extra soil and firm it down.

Put large rocks and pebbles in between the plants. Add the live moss around the inside edge, then water the plants thoroughly using a spray bottle.

Keep it in a cool spot with lots of bright, indirect sunlight.

What you need

35cm glass fishbowl
3 cups gravel
½ cup horticultural charcoal
1 cup peat moss
1 cup horticultural sand
3 *Sarracenia x umlaeftiana*
'Pitcher Plant'
2 large rocks
Handful of black river pebbles
1 cup live moss

Drop an insect into the traps of these plants once a week.



Guidelines

- Use distilled water, as these plants are sensitive to chemicals in tap water. In summer, pour ½ a cup onto the soil once a week.
- Pitcher plants have a dormant winter period where the leaves die back.
- If plants start reaching to one side, rotate the bowl. ➤

SHE SELLS SEASHELLS

What you need

- 35cm concrete-based hurricane lamp vase
- 2 cups gravel
- ½ cup horticultural charcoal
- 2 cups African violet potting mix
- 1 *Syngonium* 'Neon'
- 1 *Hypoestes phyllostachya* 'Pink Polka Dot'
- 1 *Hypoestes phyllostachya* 'White Polka Dot'
- 1 *Saintpaulia ionantha* 'African Violet'
- 1 dried sea fan
- 1 cup grey decorative pebbles
- 1 cup coral rubble
- Handful of seashells
- 1 dried sea urchin
- 1 dried starfish

Shells and coral give a wonderful beach effect to a terrarium.

Pour gravel into the vase, but don't go above the concrete base, so the drainage layer isn't visible. Gently shake to create an even layer. Sprinkle the charcoal evenly over the top.

Add three-quarters of the potting mix and create a mound in the centre. Plant the sea fan at the back. Remove

the plants from their pots and scrape away the soil to show the rootballs.

Put taller plants at the back and smaller towards the front. Firm down the remaining soil over the roots.

Add decorative pebbles and coral around the inside edge, then the shells, sea urchin and starfish. Water the plants well using a spray bottle.

Guidelines

- ✦ Position in indirect light.
- ✦ Slowly pour ½ cup water directly onto the soil every 7-14 days, depending on the season and climate.
- ✦ Keep the soil moist in between waterings but not soaking wet.
- ✦ Replace any plants that outgrow their environment.



You can buy dried sea materials from an aquarium shop.

PRICKLY PEAR

Cacti and succulents come in different shapes, colours and sizes. A tall vessel protects fingers from spiky leaves.

Pour the black stones into the vase and gently shake to create an even layer. Sprinkle the charcoal evenly over the top. Add three-quarters of the potting mix to the container.

Remove the plants from their pots and gently scrape away the soil, so you are left with the rootballs.

Put small plants around the inside edge and tall in the centre. Firm down

the remaining soil to cover the roots. Place large rocks and river pebbles in between the plants.

Add a section of cream gravel, then an area of grey pebbles and dark grey stones. Water the plants thoroughly using a spray bottle.



What you need

- 35cm pear-shaped glass vase
- 3 cups small black stones
- ½ cup horticultural charcoal
- 4 cups succulent potting mix
- 1 *Gymnocalycium mihanovichii* 'friedrichii' 'Moon Cactus'
- 1 *Haworthia fasciata* 'Zebra Plant'
- 1 *Pilosocereus azureus* 'Columnar Cactus'
- 1 *Aloe longistyla*
- 3 *Lobivia silvestrii* 'Peanut Cactus'
- 2 *Echeveria glauca*
- 1 *Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri* 'Easter Cactus'
- 5 large rocks
- Handful of black river pebbles
- ¼ cup cream gravel
- ¼ cup light grey pebbles
- ¼ cup dark grey stones

Cacti create a low-maintenance landscape with impact.



Guidelines

- Give it a spot with bright, indirect sunlight.
- Slowly pour ½ cup water onto the soil once a month in winter and every two weeks in summer.
- Wear garden gloves when handling cacti.
- Let the soil dry out between waterings. 🌱



TIN CAN PLANTER

Make a one-of-a-kind hanging display using old food containers

To make this rustic hanging planter, all you need is an old bicycle rim, with the spokes removed, and an assortment of old containers.

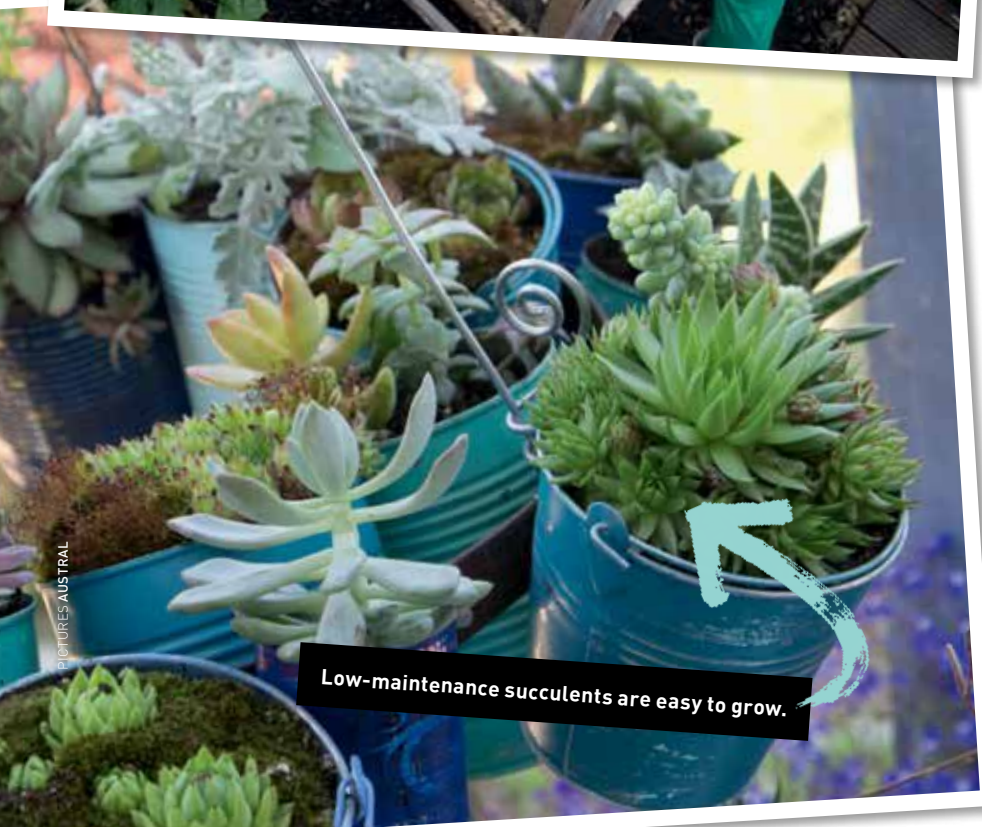
For a hanger, four lengths of 3mm wire were wound around the bicycle rim at equal intervals, then twisted together at the top to form a loop.

As a decorative effect, the wire was twisted at the rim to create a spiral.



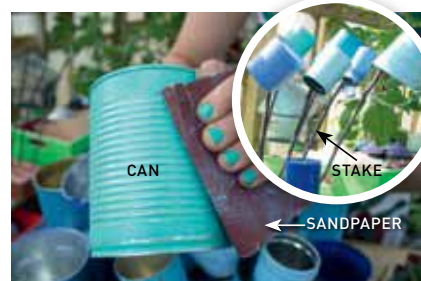
The exposed metal surfaces will weather to make the rustic planter look aged

Position the cans at random angles for an informal look.



Low-maintenance succulents are easy to grow.

1 2 3



1 Paint the cans

Remove the labels, then wash and dry the cans thoroughly. Position them on stakes and apply spray paint, using three or four similar colours. When dry, lightly sand the cans to expose the metal on the ridges.



2 Make drainage holes

Use a 4mm metal drill bit to make a drainage hole in the base of each can. Drill hanging holes in the side of the cans by sliding them onto a 90 x 45mm timber offcut and drilling two holes 20mm apart, 40mm below the lip.



3 Attach the cans

Thread a length of wire through the two holes in the can, then wrap each end of the wire around the bicycle rim and twist the ends together to secure. Position the cans on both the inside and outside of the rim.

GARAGE REVAMP

Overhaul the workshop by adding storage and resurfacing the floor

PROJECT AND PICTURES STUART SCOTT

Often a dumping ground for everything from sports gear and broken appliances to car parts, most garages have little room for tools.

This poorly organised workshop was taken over by clutter and had become unusable, with no space to work.

We cleared it out and revamped the space with a fresh paint job on the walls and a new-look floor, using a coating system that took just a weekend.

The junk was thrown out and purpose-built cabinets and lockers were introduced, as well as a workbench and wall-mounted tool storage.



A pegboard above a workbench keeps hand tools organised and easy to access



Adding storage

One of the main considerations when redesigning a garage is where to put everything. This is when storage systems become essential.

In an area of the home that's often short on space, it pays off to think vertically by installing tall cabinets and multi-tiered shelving units.

We added a range of storage systems from Ultimate Storage and Ryobi that keep the workshop organised and uncluttered, and provide security.

A number of heavy-duty Zenith SureHooks, designed to hold anything from rakes and brooms to bikes and ladders, were also installed to turn the walls into extra storage zones. ➤

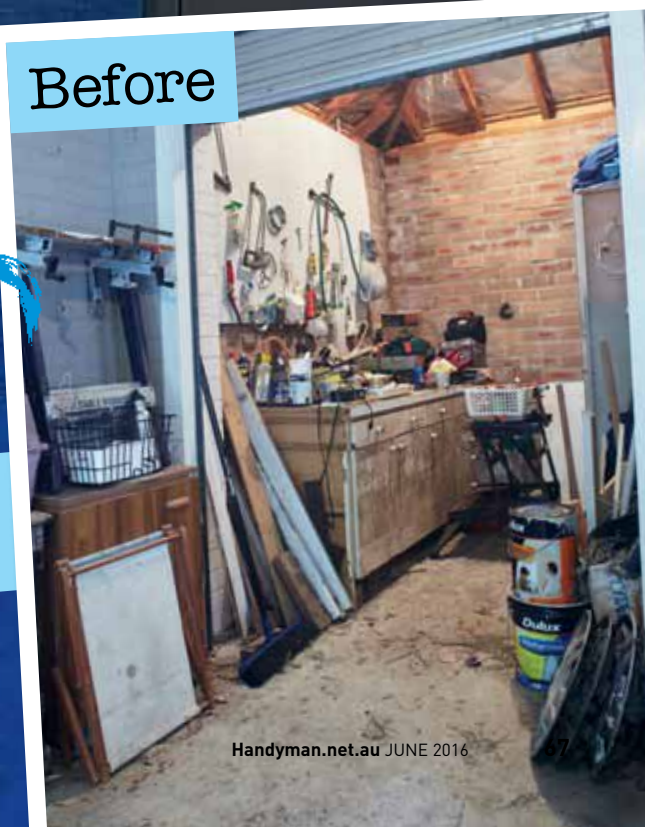


SAFETY TIP

Lockable cabinets and drawers keep any dangerous items out of reach of children and expensive tools safe from thieves.

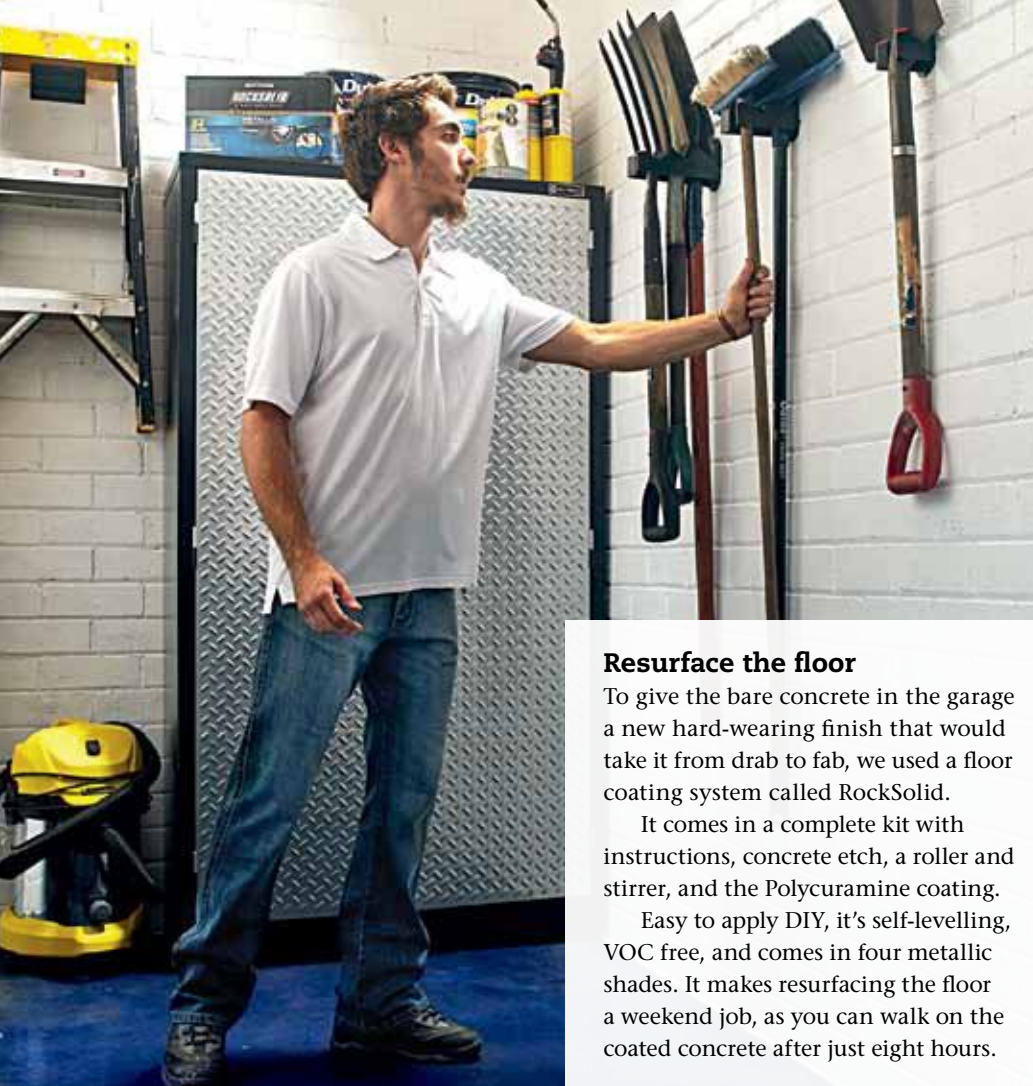


Before



After

Clever storage tames the former clutter and the new floor transforms the space.



Resurface the floor

To give the bare concrete in the garage a new hard-wearing finish that would take it from drab to fab, we used a floor coating system called RockSolid.

It comes in a complete kit with instructions, concrete etch, a roller and stirrer, and the Polycuramine coating.

Easy to apply DIY, it's self-levelling, VOC free, and comes in four metallic shades. It makes resurfacing the floor a weekend job, as you can walk on the coated concrete after just eight hours.

STUART'S PICKS



Rust-Oleum RockSolid Metallic Floor Coating Kit in Brilliant Blue, \$230. rustoleum.com.au



Dulux Wash & Wear Semi Gloss Paint in Vivid White, \$72 for 4L. dulux.com.au

1 2 3



1 Clean the area

Wash the floor with a hose or pressure washer. Using a degreaser, scrub the floor surface and walls with a stiff bristle brush. Rinse thoroughly once the whole area has been scrubbed and wait for it to dry before etching.



2 Etch the concrete

Mix the etch in a watering can. Wet the floor lightly and sprinkle the surface with the etch. Scrub the floor thoroughly with a stiff bristle brush, repeating until finished, then rinse the floor and allow it to dry fully.



3 Paint the floor

Mix one pouch of the floor coating, adding tint and anti-slip if desired. Pour it in 100mm x 1.5m ribbons and work it in 1.5sqm areas, rolling out the paint in an M/W pattern. Repeat until the floor is fully covered.



The walls were painted white to brighten the space.

Paint the walls

In a windowless workshop, white walls help reflect light into dark corners, improving visibility for working on DIY projects and other jobs.

This gloomy garage had both painted and raw brick walls, so before coating the concrete floor, we gave them a new finish. We primed and painted the walls white, using a semi gloss as it is easy to wipe clean.

The new paint brightened up the workshop and also helped prevent any potential brick dust or flaking paint from the walls falling onto the new floor coating as it cured. ➤



Always paint the walls before replacing or resurfacing a floor



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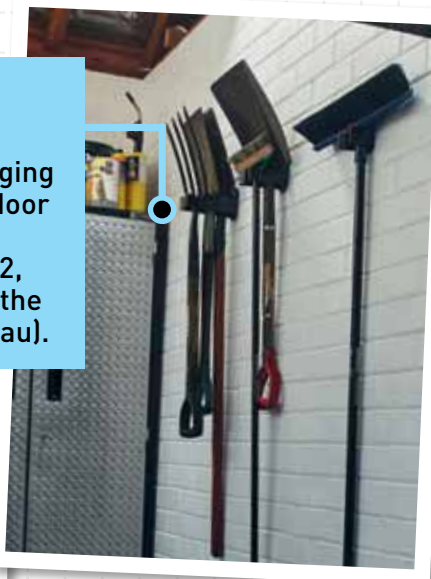
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Safe, secure and spacious, the Ultimate Storage Tall Cabinet, \$449, provides plenty of room for locking away your workshop gear (ultimatestorage.com.au).

A simple solution for hanging larger items such as outdoor tools, Zenith SureHooks Garage U Hooks, from \$12, can easily be attached to the wall DIY (itwproline.com.au).



The Ryobi ToolBlox, from \$90 for a one-drawer cabinet, is a flexible storage system that can be customised by adding extra drawers and cabinets (ryobi.com.au).



Available in a range of sizes, from 20-160L, the Ezy Storage Bunker Heavy Duty Tub, from \$14, offers a tidy home for garden equipment and tools (ezystorage.com).



With castors for mobility and a compact, space-saving design, the Ultimate Storage Five-drawer Under-bench Tool Chest, \$389, is the ideal solution for a small garage. ✎



Find it at Bunnings

SHELVING SOLUTION

Maximise garage storage to keep tools and equipment tidy.

For an organised garage, you need ample space to store power tools, garden equipment and bulky items such as sporting gear.

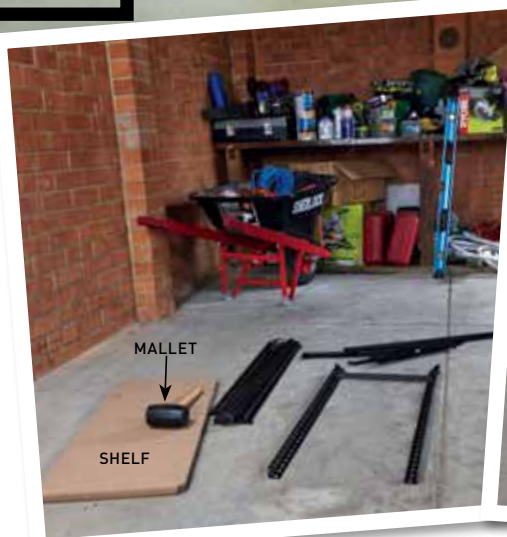
If your garage is short on storage, a sturdy shelving system is the best place to start. DIY shelving kits are available in a range of sizes and configurations for any garage.

Assembling no-bolt, snap-lock shelves is simple, and they can be built in less than half an hour. The only tool required is a rubber mallet.

The position of each shelf can easily be changed to accommodate items of different sizes.

Use large transparent storage tubs to keep things such as cleaning supplies organised and easy to access.

Store heavy items on lower shelves to avoid accidents and keep bulky but lightweight items up high.



1 Prepare the area

Measure the height and width of the area where the shelves will go to ensure there is enough space for the size of shelf you are building. Working on a stable, level surface, lay out all the parts in position to make assembly easier.



2 Assemble the shelves

Starting at the base, gently tap the horizontal bars into holes in the legs to create the frame. Insert the support bar in the centre, then position the timber shelf on top. Repeat for the rest of the shelves, ensuring they are level.

Opening the door with a remote control takes the hard work out of parking.

Automatic entry

Install a door opener to access the garage at the push of a button

Struggling to pull up a garage door is the last thing you want to do after a long day at work, especially if it's pouring.

An automatic garage door isn't just a luxury. It also improves the security of your home and adds value, while making it simpler and easier to park or access your garage.

Installing an automatic garage door opener can often seem like a complex and costly undertaking, which is why many homeowners end up putting it off.

But if you use a DIY door opener installation kit from Chamberlain (chamberlaindiy.com.au), it is a straightforward job that can be finished in just an afternoon.



Chamberlain PowerLift Plus Sectional Garage Door Opener, \$347.



Chamberlain HandyLift Deluxe Garage Roller Door Opener, \$347.



DIY door basics

With models designed for both sectional and roller doors, it's easy to choose a product that suits your door.

⚙️ **AFFORDABLE OPENERS** start from just \$249, they suit all major door brands and come with full installation instructions so are easy for DIYers to set up.

⚙️ **EXISTING DOORS** don't need to be replaced, as long as they are in good working order.

⚙️ **QUICK INSTALLATION** allows your garage door to be completely automated in under two hours.

⚙️ **SAFETY MECHANISMS** include an automatic reversal system that stops and retracts the door if it is obstructed while closing.

⚙️ **MANUAL RELEASE** means the door can still be opened during a power failure, allowing you to enter and exit the garage.

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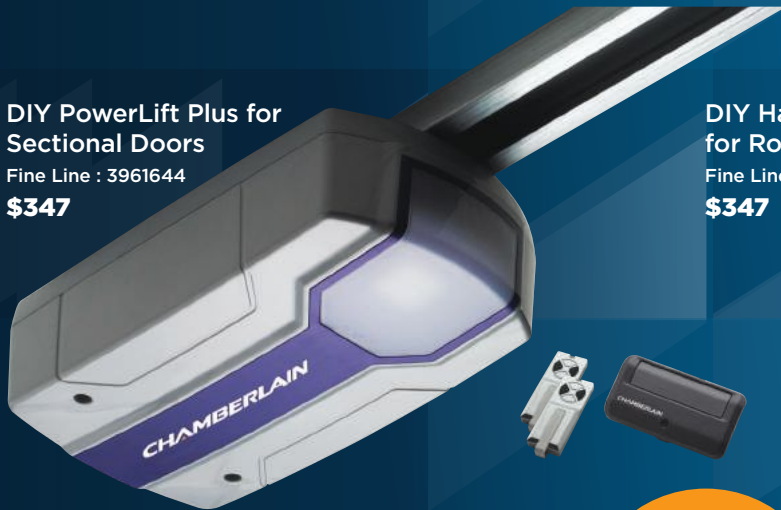


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Entertainment area makeover

Lay a level deck on a sloping tiled slab using adjustable pedestal feet to completely transform an old patio

PROJECT AND PICTURES STUART SCOTT

3
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COST**After**

The new deck provides a beautiful space for year-round outdoor living.

Before

This outdoor area had needed a full overhaul for some time to replace the tired-looking patio and make the most of the space.

The existing slab was stable but had been laid with a large amount of fall, giving the floor an uneven slope.

Instead of pulling up patio tiles, the new deck was built on top of it at the same level as the house, creating a seamless flow from indoors to out. ➤



Build the deck

The major challenge with this build was how to lay a new deck with low clearance that was insufficient for a normal bearer and joist design, and could handle the 170mm site fall.

The solution was to use Builders Edge Pedestal Feet, from Bunnings. They fit directly under the joists, eliminating the need for bearers, and come in three sizes of 25-40mm, 35-60mm and 70-170mm.

Each stirrup has an easy-to-use helical screw you unwind or tighten to get the joist level, making it simple to build a level deck on a sloping site.

Made from bulletproof plastic, the pedestal feet have an extremely high load-bearing capacity, won't rot and won't obstruct subfloor drainage or ventilation, which is essential on a deck with low clearance.



If you don't want to demolish an old patio, just lay a deck over it



DIY TIP

To predrill and countersink in one easy step when laying new decking boards, use a Powers Smart-Bit, from hardware stores.

1 2 3



1 Secure the joists

Engage the joists over the house bearer, then level with the pedestal feet spaced at the recommended intervals. Attach the pedestals to the joists with screws. Use a spirit level and stringlines to level and align the joists. Secure each deck joist to house joists with a batten screw.



2 Add the blocks

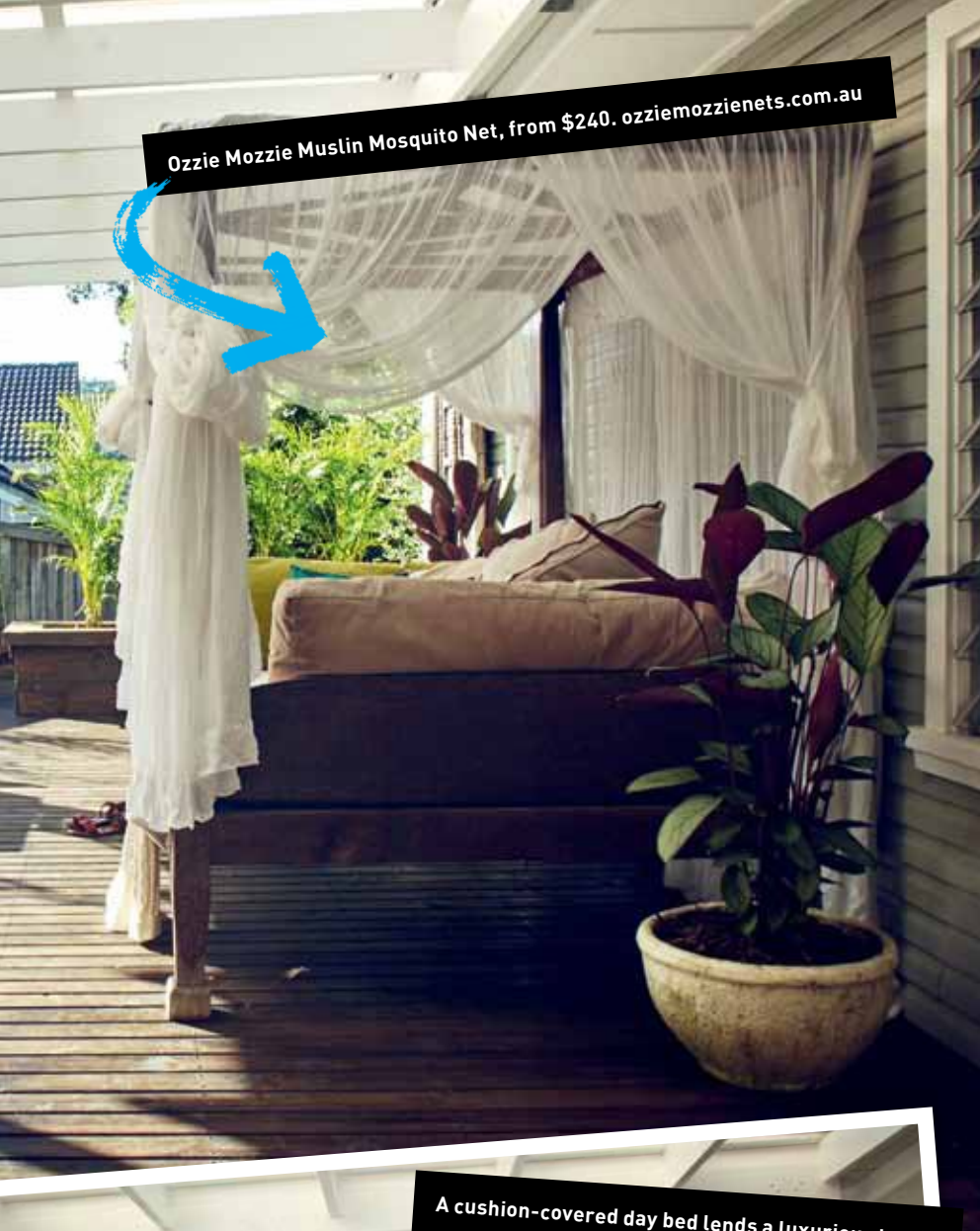
Measure the space between deck joists, cutting four blocks of 90 x 45mm pine for each. Offset and secure each block between the joists, 5mm below the top of the joists, using two batten screws at each end. Check for level, adjusting the pedestal feet as needed.



3 Lay the boards

Working from the house outwards, lay the deck boards. Use a 5mm packer to space the boards, leaving a 10mm gap at each end. Secure the boards with two screws at each joist. Check for any errors as you go, adjusting the spacings to make sure you get a good fit. ➤

Ozzie Mozzie Muslin Mosquito Net, from \$240. ozziemozzienets.com.au



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Materials

Pedestal feet	\$881
Structural pine	\$573
Pine decking	\$987
Pine sleepers	\$507
Timber and deck stain	\$210
Galvanised batten screws	\$156
Square decking screws	\$220
TOTAL	\$3534

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Built-in garden beds add greenery to the deck area.

DESIGN TIP

Think about the orientation of the deck and the direction the sun moves during the day when positioning furniture and plants.

Creating a new space

After the new decking boards were laid, raised planter beds were created at one end using Ironwood Sienna treated pine sleepers from Carter Holt Harvey (chhwoodproducts.com.au).

The timber deck and planters were allowed to settle and weather for about four weeks, then finished with Feast Watson Black Japan Timber & Deck Stain (feastwatson.com.au).

The deck received two coats after a light sand, but the planter only required a single coat to achieve the desired rich dark-chocolate shade. ➤

GET THE
LOOK



All the styling accessories are from Rust (rustonline.com.au).

- ① Mason jars, \$49 each. ② Large basket, \$89. ③ Tania Wursig cushion, \$150. ④ Foot stool in green, \$135. ⑤ Peonies, \$15 per stem. ⑥ Watering can, \$149. ⑦ Candle holder, \$29.

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Before

After



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Oiling a deck

Decking boards finished with oil should be cleaned and re-oiled twice a year to keep the timber well protected.

If decks aren't refinished on a regular basis, the surface will start to become rough and it will appear discoloured and dirty.

To refinish, wash the deck, then apply two coats of quality oil, picking one that resists abrasion and doesn't fade in UV light.

TIP Stained decks need sanding and re-staining every two years.

Before

After

Freshly oiled, the deck is ready for winter.

H Find out how to plan your deck
Visit handyman.net.au/perfect-deck

1 2 3



1 Clean the boards

Sweep the deck with a stiff-bristled broom, then hose down the boards. Apply deck cleaner to a square metre at a time, choosing a product that suits the timber and the finish.

TIP The cleaner is activated by water.



2 Scrub the surface

Use a stiff scrubbing brush to work the cleaner into the timber, then leave it to soak for 15 minutes without letting it dry completely. Hose down the area to rinse, then clean the rest of the deck and allow to dry.



3 Finish the deck

Apply two coats of decking oil using a lamb's wool applicator with a long handle for an even finish. Leave the oil to dry between coats and use less for the second coat, as the timber won't absorb it as easily.

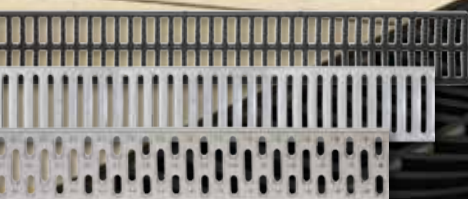
PICTURES LEE DASHIELL

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EXPERT SECRETS

Do this easy DIY job once every couple of years to protect timber from rot and keep it looking fresh.

Quick *AND* easy timber fix

Restore worn and weathered exterior surfaces in three simple steps

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



Before

Exterior timber can start to look weathered after a few seasons of being exposed to our harsh Aussie conditions.

This built-in bench seat, clad in treated-pine decking boards, was looking worn out and unwelcoming.

To spruce it up and extend the life of the timber, we gave it a clean, sand and stain in just 30 minutes.

Bringing timber back to life is a simple three-step DIY job, requiring only basic equipment. Depending on the size of the surface, the only power tool needed is a sander.

DIY TIP

Use water-based oils to restore weathered timber, as they're easy to apply, give a good finish and clean up is simple.

ADAM'S PICKS



Cabot's Aquadeck Natural Exterior Decking Oil, about \$70 for 4L. cabots.com.au



30 Seconds Outdoor Cleaner Concentrate, \$13 for 2L. 30seconds.com.au

1 2 3



1 Clean the area

Thoroughly clean the area, brushing away any dust or dirt from the surface of the timber. If the timber is soiled or mould is present, treat it with an exterior surface cleaner and allow it to dry thoroughly before sanding.



2 Sand the timber

Use a belt sander to sand the timber. If the surface is very badly weathered or the old stain is difficult to remove, start with coarse-grit sandpaper, progress to medium-grit paper, then finish with fine-grit paper.



3 Apply the stain

Wipe down the timber to remove the sanding dust before applying two coats of a suitable exterior finish.

TIP We used a water-based oil in a natural finish, but you can use tinted stains to get a different look.

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EACH



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- 1 Large Tool Bag, \$30. 2 18V Lithium Ion 1.5Ah & 3.0Ah Battery Packs and Fast Charger, \$109.
- 3 Cordless Jigsaw, \$70. 4 Brushless Drill Driver, \$99. 5 Cordless USB Power Station, \$20.
- 6 Cordless Detail Sander, \$50. 7 Cordless Grass Trimmer, \$79. 8 Cordless Blower, \$69.
- 9 Cordless Grass Trimmer & Shear, \$79.

ozito



Competition commences 26/05/16 and ends 22/06/16. Open to Australian residents aged 18 years or over. Drawn at the Promoter's office at 10am on 23/06/16. Winner's name published on the Promoter's website. Prizes: 5 kits, valued at \$605 each, containing: 1 x Brushless Drill Driver, \$99; 1 x Cordless Detail Sander, \$50; 1 x Cordless Jigsaw, \$70; 1 x 18V Lithium Ion 1.5Ah & 3.0Ah Battery Packs and Fast Charger, \$109; 1 x Cordless USB Power Station, \$20; 1 x Cordless Grass Trimmer & Shear, \$79; 1 x Cordless Grass Trimmer, \$79; 1 x Cordless Blower, \$69; 1 x Large Tool Bag, \$30. Authorised under NSW Permit No. LTPS/15/08262, ACT Permit No. TP15/07468, SA Permit No. T15/1657. Promoter: Reader's Digest (Australia) Pty Ltd (ABN 81 000 565 471), 80 Bay St, Ultimo NSW 2007 Australia. See readersdigest.com.au for full Terms and Conditions.

CLEAN THE BBQ

Make sure your gas grill is ready to use year-round

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAM



1 Dismantle the barbecue

Lay newspaper, then remove the hotplate, grills and flame diffusers, keeping any volcanic rocks that are in good condition. If possible, remove the burners by pushing them back to dislodge them from the valves. Burners may also be secured with a split pin.



2 Clean the burners

Spray heavy-duty barbecue cleaner on the grill and hotplate, allowing it to penetrate before wiping clean and washing off. For stubborn spots on the grill and baked-on grease on the flame diffusers, scrub vigorously using a wire brush.



3 Wipe the inside

Use heavy-duty barbecue wipes to clean all internal surfaces, paying particular attention to any build-up on the sides and in the corners, as this can ignite at high temperatures. Wipe any fat and cooking residue from the underside of the hood.

Barbecues can be enjoyed in all seasons, so a maintenance check midyear is essential to ensure yours is always ready to be fired up.

To get it into shape, clean off any greasy build-up on the grills, hotplates

and the inside of the hood, wiping the residue onto newspaper to discard.

Remove and clean all the internal parts, including the flame diffusers and the grease tray, and clean out the body using wipes or soapy water.



Regular maintenance prevents rust and prolongs the life of your barbecue

▶ Watch the DIY video online
Visit handyman.net.au/clean-bbq

ADAM'S PICKS



Fat-sorb 100% Natural Mineral, \$10 for 5L, from Bunnings.



BBQ Buddy Heavy Duty 250 x 300mm BBQ Wipes, \$5 for 12. bbqbuddy.com.au



Selley's BBQ Exterior Clean & Shine, about \$8 for 250ml. selleys.com.au



Uni-Pro Heavy Duty Rust & Paint Removal Brush, \$6. unipro.com.au



Simple Green Heavy Duty BBQ & Grill Cleaner, about \$7 for 567g. simplegreen.com



4 Lubricate gas spindles

If a brass spindle is stuck, spray it with a penetrating oil such as WD-40, then tap lightly to deactivate the safety mechanism if needed. To prevent water getting into the gas system during maintenance, cover the gas valves with duct tape.



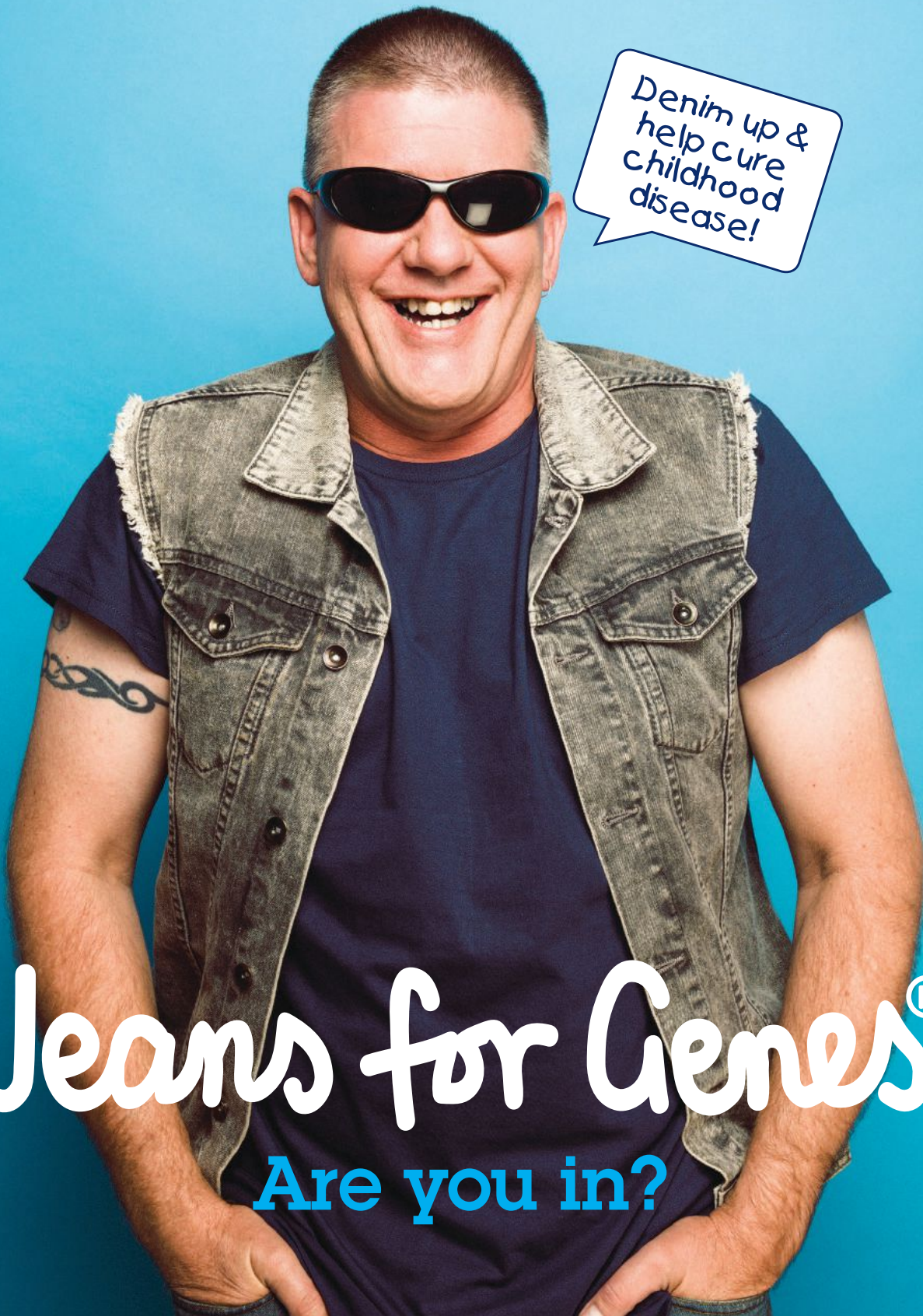
5 Reline the grease tray

If using volcanic rocks as the flame diffuser, spread a single layer over the tray. Line the grease tray with aluminium foil and spread a thin layer of fat absorber or washed sand over the tray to catch drips. Replace it at regular intervals to prevent flare-ups.



6 Clean the exterior

Wipe down the outside of the hood and all other external surfaces using heavy-duty barbecue wipes, then spray with barbecue surface cleaner and wipe clean. This adds a protective coating to the non-cooking surfaces to help keep them cleaner for longer.



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Thai chilli chicken skewers

Pepper steak
with leek mash

Spicy steak on garlic toast

Glazed pork kebabs

GET

grilling

Fire up the barbie and whip up these easy recipes for lunch or dinner

The cool weather doesn't have to mean the end of barbecue season, as it's just as easy to grill during winter as it is in summer.

There are outdoor lighting and heating options available for any space, so there's no reason that your barbecue and entertaining area should be wasted for half the year.

So invite a few friends over for an alfresco dinner and delight them with these barbie recipes. >

Portobello
mushroom
burgers



Spicy steak on garlic toast

Serves
4

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1½ teaspoons chilli powder
- ¾ teaspoon dried or fresh chopped oregano
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ⅔ cup (150ml) spicy tomato-vegetable juice
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 cups canned corn kernels
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 1 small red capsicum, seeded and diced
- 370g well-trimmed flank steak
- 1 loaf Italian bread, 250g, halved horizontally, then halved crossways
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and halved

Method

1 COMBINE the cumin, chilli powder, oregano and black pepper in a small bowl. Put the vegetable juice and lime juice in a measuring cup. Stir 2½ teaspoons of the spice mixture into the juice mixture.

2 PUT the corn, spring onion, capsicum and ½ cup (125ml) of the juice mixture in a medium bowl. Stir well to combine. Refrigerate until serving time.

3 OIL a hotplate or grill rack lightly and, with the hood closed if using, preheat to high. Rub the remaining spice mixture onto each side of the steak. Cook over direct heat for about 4 minutes on each side for medium-rare, or until cooked to your liking. Remove the steak from the barbecue and allow to stand for 10 minutes, then thinly slice across the grain, on the diagonal.

4 GRILL the bread, cut side up, over direct heat for about 30 seconds or until lightly toasted. Rub the toasted side of the bread with the cut garlic and brush with the remaining juice mixture. Grill, cut side up, covered with the hood if using, over indirect heat for about 1 minute or until lightly browned. Serve the steak on the toast with the corn relish on the side.

Thai chilli chicken skewers

Serves
4-6



Ingredients

- 6 skinless, boneless single chicken breast fillets
- Small bunch of fresh coriander
- 1 garlic clove
- ½ cup (125ml) light olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Thai-style sweet chilli sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 4 tablespoons medium-dry sherry
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Garnish**
- Lime wedges
- Fresh red chillies

Method

- ① **CUT** the chicken into 2-3cm cubes and put in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Set aside.
- ② **CHOP** enough coriander finely to give about ¼ cup. Peel and finely chop or crush the garlic.
- ③ **COMBINE** the chopped coriander, garlic, olive oil, chilli sauce, sesame oil, sherry and sugar with the chicken and toss well. Leave to marinate for 5-10 minutes.
- ④ **PREHEAT** a hotplate or grill rack to medium-high heat. Thread

the chicken onto 4-6 skewers, then cook over direct heat for 5-6 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through.

⑤ **PUT** the marinade in a small saucepan over medium heat, then reduce the heat and simmer until it has reduced and thickened.

⑥ **ARRANGE** the skewers on serving plates and spoon over the sauce. Garnish with the lime wedges, remaining coriander sprigs and fresh chilli, then serve. ➤

AUSTRALIAN

On sale 23 June

Handyman

NEXT ISSUE

RENOVATE

Transform a living room with new lighting and a paint job.

PLUS Budget bathroom surface makeovers.

DECORATE

Install a home office in any room to suit your space and needs.

PLUS How to revamp a filing cabinet.

OUTDOOR

Build a brick fire pit in the backyard for winter entertaining.

PLUS Screen out the neighbours DIY.


 Serves
4

Ingredients

- 650g lean boneless pork
- 12 dried apricots
- 2 small zucchini (about 125g), thickly sliced
- 2 small red or white onions (about 125g), cut into quarters

Marinade

- 4 tablespoons finely shredded orange marmalade
- 2 tablespoons orange juice or sherry
- 2 tablespoons wholegrain mustard
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme or oregano

Glazed pork kebabs

Method

1 MAKE the marinade by melting the marmalade in a small saucepan over low heat for 1-2 minutes. Stir in the remaining marinade ingredients and set aside to cool.

2 TRIM any fat off the pork and cut the meat into 4cm cubes. Put in a large bowl, pour over the marinade and stir well. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

3 OIL a hotplate or grill rack lightly and preheat to medium-high heat. Thread the pork, apricots, zucchini and onion alternately onto 4 metal skewers. Cook the kebabs over direct heat, turning and brushing with the reserved marinade, for about 12-15 minutes or until the pork is cooked through. Serve immediately. ➤

Portobello mushroom burgers

Method

- 1 **COMBINE** the oil and 2 tablespoons of the vinegar in a clean plastic bag. Add the onion slices, turn to coat, then seal the bag. Set aside to marinate for 30 minutes.
- 2 **PUT** the garlic, basil and the extra 3 tablespoons oil in a small bowl. Stir to combine. Brush over each side of the mushroom caps and set aside.
- 3 **BRING** the honey and remaining vinegar to the boil in a small saucepan. Cook for 5 minutes or until thickened, then set aside.
- 4 **COVER** a hotplate or grill rack with foil and preheat to medium heat. Drain the onion and discard the marinade. Cook the onion and mushroom over direct heat for 10-12 minutes, turning frequently. Layer the lettuce, tomato, cheese, mushroom and onion on the roll bases. Drizzle with the honey and balsamic sauce and add the roll tops.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup (60ml) olive oil
- 6 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 4 slices onion, 6mm thick
- 1 teaspoon crushed garlic
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- Extra 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 portobello mushroom caps
- 1 tablespoon clear honey
- 4 lettuce leaves
- 4 slices tomato
- 125g mozzarella cheese, cut into 6mm slices
- 4 bread rolls or baps, split



Serves
6

Serves
4

Pepper steak with leek mash

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons mixed or black peppercorns, coarsely crushed
- 4 fillet steaks, 2.5cm thick (140g each), trimmed of fat
- 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- Chopped fresh parsley, to serve
- Steamed green beans, to serve
- **Leek and mustard mash**
- 900g floury potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 200g young leeks, finely shredded
- ½ cup (125ml) hot milk
- 1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
- 1½-2 tablespoons butter
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

- 1 **COOK** the potatoes for the mash by putting them in a saucepan and pouring over boiling water to cover by 5cm. Bring back to the boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 15-20 minutes or until the potatoes are very tender.
- 2 **SPREAD** out the peppercorns on a plate, then press the steaks into them until they are coated with peppercorns on all sides. Set aside.
- 3 **HEAT** the oil for the mash in a non-stick frying pan over medium

heat. Add the leek and cook, stirring constantly, for 3-5 minutes or until tender. Transfer to a plate lined with a double thickness of paper towel to drain.

- 4 **DRAIN** the potatoes when tender, shaking the colander or sieve to remove any excess water, then return to the pan. Pour over the hot milk, then mash the potatoes until completely smooth. Add the leek, mustard and butter, and season with salt and pepper

to taste. Beat well to mix, then cover to keep warm.

- 5 **OIL** a hotplate or grill rack lightly, then preheat to high heat. Cook the steaks over direct heat for 3 minutes on each side for rare, 3½ minutes for medium-rare, 4 minutes for medium, and 5 minutes for well-done.

- 6 **SPOON** a mound of leek mash onto each warmed serving plate. Add the steaks and sprinkle with parsley. Serve immediately with the steamed green beans. ✓

DESIGNER HOUSE NUMBER

Create a piece of landscape art to give your home kerb appeal

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

They serve an important function, yet house numbers are often overlooked as a design feature.

So make yours stand out to make sure visitors and delivery people can find your place every time.

We created a house number that can't be missed, and doubles as a piece of modern landscape art, by using a simple concrete casting technique.

Cut a plywood mould, mix up a batch of coloured concrete and pour it over letters or numerals. We used 200mm high characters, so if smaller characters are used, bear in mind some raised sections may be too fragile.

You can easily adapt this technique to create other pieces of garden art. Just make sure you work on a surface that can support the load of the concrete. Or lay a tarp and work on the ground.



Take this concept to the next level and include a house number block in a new boundary or retaining wall



Mixing concrete

Dry-mix sand and cement in a wheelbarrow in a 3:1 ratio, using a bucket to measure it out. We used a 9L bucket.

Add the oxide and continue to dry-mix, ensuring the colour is consistent. Add water, blending as you go, until it is a consistency just short of pourable.

Off- and real-white cement allow you to create bolder colours without grey undertones. >

ADAM'S PICKS



Zenith 8-10 x 50mm Treated Pine Countersunk Head Screws, \$6 for 50. itwproline.com.au



Sikabond TechGrip Multipurpose Polyurethane Glue, about \$18 for 500g. sika.com.au



Australian Builders 318 Black Oxide Powder, \$10 for 750g. bpsaust.com



Adelaide Brighton Type HE Brightonlite Cement, about \$10 for 20kg. adelaidebrighton.com.au

SAFETY TIP

Always wear safety breathing and eye protection when handling and mixing any cement-based products.

2
DAYS

\$130
COST

Make a landscape statement with a DIY house number block.

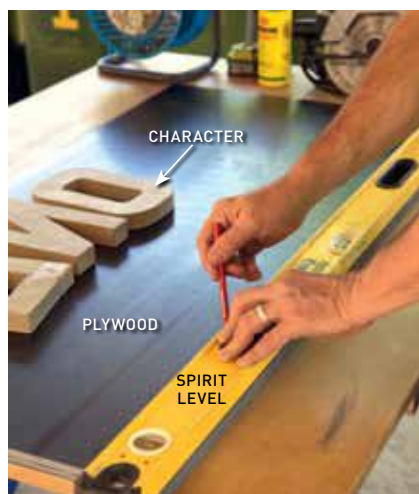
Materials

Papier-mâché characters	\$5
Form ply panel	\$65
Timber screws	\$6
High-strength adhesive	\$18
Washed beach sand	\$16
White cement	\$10
Black oxide	\$10
TOTAL	\$130

▶ See how to create this block

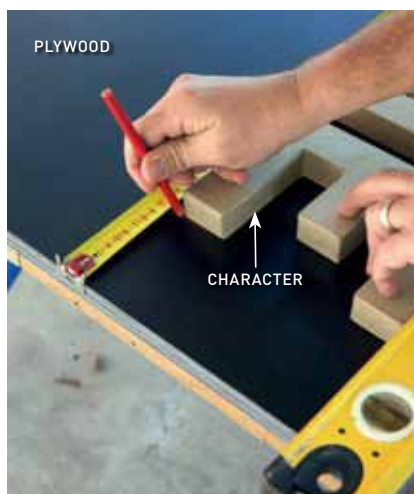
Watch it at youtube.com/HandymanMagazineAU

MAKE THE BLOCK



1 Mark the plywood

On a flat surface, mark a 690 x 315mm base, two 690 x 140mm sides and two 340 x 140mm ends on plywood. Mark one edge of the ply as the top and, with the base edge as the starting point, draw a line for the characters using a spirit level. The base of the mould will create the face of the finished block.



2 Position the characters

Position the characters, remembering they must read backwards, then mark their locations on the plywood. They should be 50mm in from the edges to avoid cracking and about 30mm apart. **TIP** We used 200mm tall papier-mâché characters, but to create letters DIY, cut them from plywood with a jigsaw.



3 Make the box mould

Use a circular saw to cut along the marked lines on the plywood for the mould base, sides and ends, using a guide to maintain a consistent cut. Position the side panels flush with the base, clamp and secure with screws. Position the ends and secure to the base and sides with screws.



4 Secure the characters

Apply a generous amount of adhesive to the back of the characters and position carefully, remembering they must read backwards. Carefully wipe off any excess adhesive and position the mould in the sun to dry. **TIP** Use a quick-drying adhesive suitable for smooth and porous surfaces.



5 Add the concrete

Mix the concrete, then tint using oxide powder, ensuring the consistency is just short of pourable. Add it to the mould, pushing it around the characters and into all four corners. Add the remaining concrete, firming it down, then trowel off the surface. Cover with plastic and leave overnight to cure.



6 Remove the mould

Once the concrete is cured, remove the screws and side panels. Carefully roll over so the mould base faces up. Starting from one end, pull off the base slowly and gently. Don't attempt to lever the base off, even if it offers a lot of resistance. Remove the characters from the face of the concrete block. ✔

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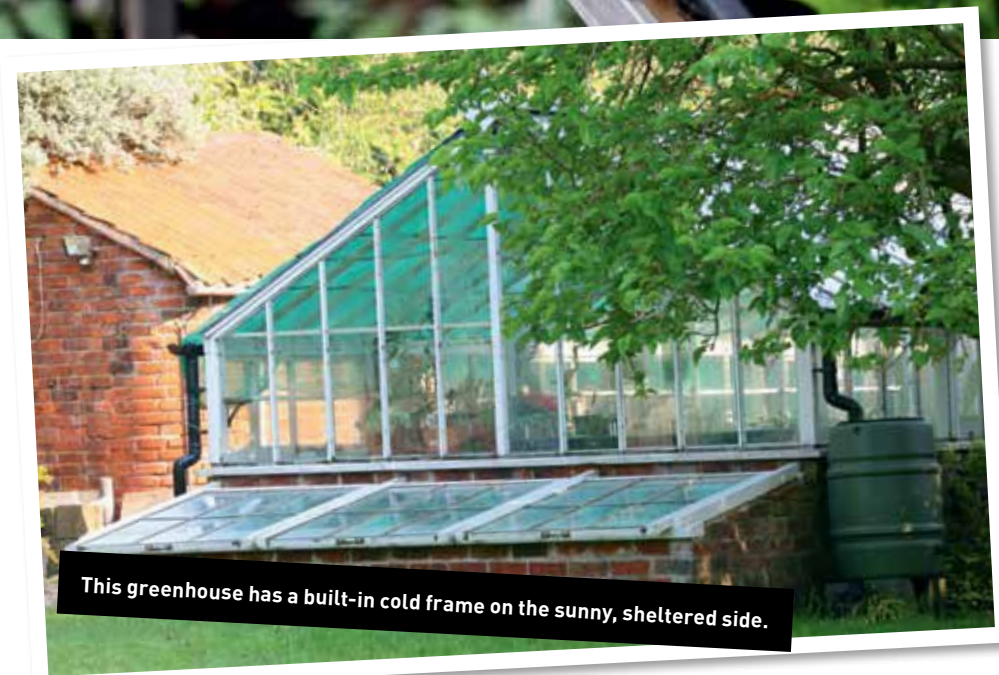
WINTER GREENHOUSE PROJECTS

Provide a cool-season home for plants
and for growing from cuttings and seeds

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



Plants can thrive through the winter in a protected environment.



This greenhouse has a built-in cold frame on the sunny, sheltered side.

Large or small, permanent or just seasonal, a greenhouse can be the ideal solution for cool-season gardening.

The way a greenhouse works is simple, with the structure providing protection from the cold and trapping available natural sunlight and warmth that's often in short supply in winter.

Using a greenhouse also makes it easier to control other aspects of plant care, such as watering.

This means you can keep plants that prefer warmer conditions alive and healthy during the cooler months. You can also make use of the protected environment to get a head start by growing from seed ahead of time.



Protect plants

In temperate regions, we generally talk about greenhouses or glasshouses, but different types of structures can be used, depending on the climate.

- ⊕ **GREENHOUSE** This structure is covered with high-strength polycarbonate or glass and protects and insulates plants from temperature extremes, while still allowing light through.
- ⊕ **HOTHOUSE** In cooler regions or some commercial situations, greenhouses are often heated and are referred to as hothouses.
- ⊕ **COLD FRAME** This is a mini greenhouse that is usually low to the ground with a hinged top.

Traditionally, in cold climates, the frame is attached to the rear of a hothouse and left unheated.

Seedlings or cuttings can then be raised in the hothouse and, as the warm season approaches, moved to the cold frame for hardening off before being planted in the garden. >

Use hardwood cuttings

We generally think of growing from cuttings only during the warm months when growth is vigorous but, using a greenhouse, you can grow a range of plants from cuttings in winter.

The type of material you need to propagate from is all-important.

In the warmer months, you'll strike cuttings that are either soft-tip, which are the new vigorous, non-flowering

growth tips, or semi-hardwood shoots, which have started to become rigid but still retain a bit of flexibility.

In winter, hardwood is the best material to propagate. These are stems that are thoroughly rigid.

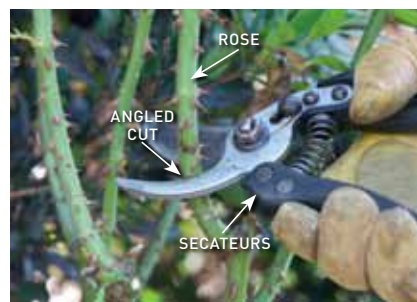
The success rate with hardwood cuttings is usually much higher than with other cutting types, although they take longer to establish.

DIY TIP

To see if rose stems are suitably matured, break a thorn off sideways. If it is mainly brown, not green, underneath the stem it is ready.

Hardwood cuttings should be shooting come spring.

1 2 3



1 Take the cuttings

Take cuttings that are rigid, about as thick as a pencil and at least 100mm long, but no longer than 200mm. Make clean cuts at a right-angle on top and sloped on the base, so you don't get the top and base mixed up.



2 Trim the cuttings

De-thorn the cuttings and trim them as required, making a fresh-angled cut at each base. Add propagating mix to a pot, making 50mm holes in the mix. Dip the cuttings in root hormone gel, then insert in the holes.



3 Label the cuttings

Firm the propagating mix down around the cuttings, top up if needed, then water in. Add a label with the name of the plant and the potting date. Keep the pot in the greenhouse out of direct sunlight.



Using a specialised mix is crucial for raising cuttings.

GROW TIP

Top choices for winter hardwood cuttings are roses, especially older varieties, hydrangeas, fruiting figs and grapes, and wisteria.

Pick the right potting mix

Cuttings and seeds have very different growth requirements to mature plants, and to maximise success you need to use the right potting mix.

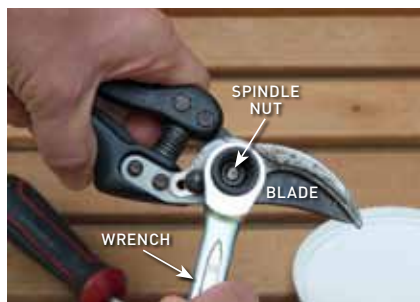
You need a mix with very good drainage, yet adequate moisture, an

appropriate, gentle balance of nutrients, and lots of small spaces between the particles so new roots can take anchor.

Only a specialised propagating mix or a seed and cutting potting mix will provide these ideal conditions.

1 2 3

CUT CLEANLY When taking cuttings, you need to make very clean cuts. If your secateurs are blunt, they'll crush the stem, making it hard for the plant to grow roots. It's also more likely that rot or fungus will penetrate your cuttings and cause them to fail.



1 Dismantle the secateurs

Use a wrench to remove the spindle nut and washers. Put them in a dish in the order they came off so they aren't muddled when reassembling. Remove any screws or nuts that are securing the blade to the handle or body.



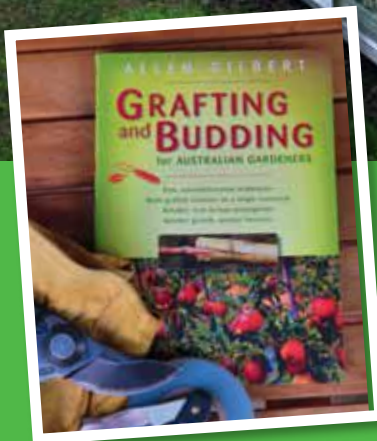
2 Sharpen the blade

Wash and dry all the parts. Work the blade over a sharpening stone, then flip it, laying it flat on the stone and rubbing it in a circular motion to remove any burrs. Sharpen again if the blade won't cut a piece of paper.



3 Clean the secateurs

Use steel wool to clean any surfaces with excess dirt or rust. Wipe all parts clean and reassemble the secateurs, ensuring that you do not over-tighten the spindle nut. Lightly spray with lubricant, then wipe off any excess. ➤



Propagate like a pro

If you want to take your plant-growing skills to the next level, Allen Gilbert's *Grafting and Budding For Australian Gardeners* (Hyland House, \$30) is the ideal guide.

The ultimate way to grow plants like a professional is through budding and grafting, and this book will show you how.

A horticulturist, Allen walks you through the techniques needed to master the art, from creating your own multi-grafted fruit trees or roses to turning one favourite plant into a whole garden filled with them.

Raising seeds in winter

It's no secret why nurseries always manage to have beautiful annual seedling vegetable and flower plants to sell at just the right time of year. It's because they use greenhouses.

If you're a regular veggie or flower gardener, a greenhouse can allow you to have your own seedlings ready to go when the weather is right.

This means you can grow your tomato seedlings in late winter ready for the last cold night or frost to pass.

Growing from seeds much earlier in the season like this will save you money, as you won't have to worry about buying punnets.

You can also grow seeds on a smaller scale in windowsill trays.



Raising seeds in single-cell trays makes planting easy.

PICTURE (MAIN) ISTOCK

GROWING IDEAS

Small enough to fit on the top of a table, Mr. Fothergill's Vegetable Garden Starter Kit, \$17, can house seeds or cuttings and is ideal for kids (mrfothergills.com.au).



For a mini greenhouse on a budget, cut the base off an empty, clear plastic bottle and place it over cuttings or seeds, making sure it is kept out of direct sunlight.



An old egg carton makes a great container for growing seedlings. When they're ready to plant out, cut up the sections and plant the carton, cardboard and all.



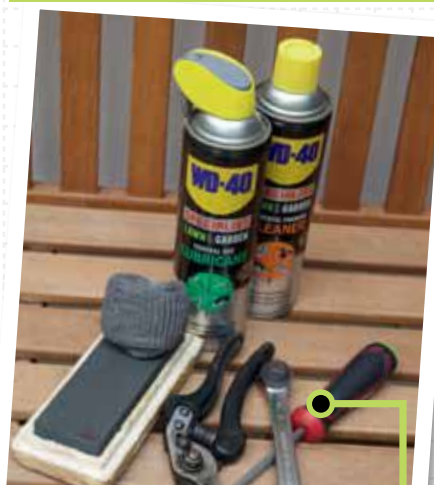
The Naturallife Four-tier Premium Greenhouse, \$49, is a collapsible solution for courtyards and balconies, and is easily stored away in summer (bunnings.com.au).



Refillable and easy to use, the Sunflower Windowsill Greenhouse Kit, \$9, from Mr. Fothergill's, contains 12 jiffy pots that can be planted into garden beds intact.



WD-40 Specialist Lawn & Garden Powerful Foaming Cleaner, \$5 for 400g, and Lubricant, \$9 for 400g, make outdoor equipment care easy (wd40.com.au).



Harden off seedlings before planting them in an open bed by placing them in a sunny but protected position. Bring them into the greenhouse if a very cold night is expected.



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What's new

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SAFETY TIP

To protect your packages and personal information, replace an old mailbox with a larger, more secure lockable model.

- 1 Receive daily deliveries in the streamlined Stanton Mailbox, \$199.
- 2 Make mail arrive in style with the lockable Rialto Mailbox, \$379.

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Stay safe while working up high with a Gorilla Extension Ladder Bubble Level, \$13.



Get measurements right with an Empire 8m Stainless Steel Tape Measure, \$30.



Skip spills with a Gorilla Paint Tin Hook, \$10 for two, to hold 4L cans on an extension ladder.



Tuck away tools in a Trojan Tool Chest/Trolley Combo with two Bluetooth speakers, \$499.



Block bugs with the Pillar Products Tropix Pleated Flyscreen Charcoal Door, \$279.

Conceal a closet or home office with Pillar Products Villa Folding 85 x 203cm Bamboo Door, \$149.



Handyman

BUYER'S GUIDE

Take the DIY option for your home improvement projects by choosing the best tools and equipment from our market round-up

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Handyman BUYER'S GUIDE

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This month

Winter is here, but there's still lots you can do in the garden

Flowers to sow

Get planting now, except in cold zones, for blooms in mid-spring.

- + DELPHINIUM
- + DIANTHUS
- + LARKSPUR
- + STATICE
- + LUPIN



Delphinium

Vegies to grow

Sow seeds in all climates for crops from late winter and into spring.

- + ASPARAGUS CROWNS
- + SPINACH
- + LETTUCES
- + SHALLOTS
- + PEAS



Peas

Do now

- + ADD colour indoors with African violets, page 116.
- + PLANT lilliums for a stunning summer showcase, page 126.
- + CREATE out-of-season displays with spring bulbs, page 132.

WHAT'S IN COLOUR

✦ **VIBURNUM 'ANVI'** This frost-hardy evergreen has a dense growth habit, making it a great hedge, screen or feature shrub in beds. Featuring large flowers up to 12cm across, it reaches 4m high and spreads to 3.5m.

Flowers completely cover the bush in winter and through to late spring, followed by deep purple-blue berries. Use both the flowers and berries in vase arrangements.

'Anvi' has low-to-medium water needs, but for optimum results grow it in moisture-retentive soil. Prune it to the required shape or size after the berries are finished.



BOOK CLUB



Take inspiration from some of Australia's most amazing gardens without leaving home.

Country Style Gardens, edited by Victoria Carey (Harper Collins, \$40) showcases stunning landscapes and their creators, plus has expert planting guides for every climate and season.

To-do list

Winter is officially here and there are lots of jobs to do for the new season.

- ✓ **PLANT** dormant cane fruits and grapevines.
- ✓ **CHECK** for cabbage caterpillars, and spray.
- ✓ **PROTECT** vulnerable plants from frost.
- ✓ **WATER** indoor plants less and drain saucers.

- ✓ **DIVIDE** and replant herbaceous perennials in mild weather.
- ✓ **SERVICE** lawnmowers, and clean and sharpen garden tools.
- ✓ **CONTROL** bindii weeds in lawns before they seed.
- ✓ **TRANSPLANT** shrubs, trees and roses in temperate zones. >

PLANT PANSIES

When you buy winter annuals from the garden centre, they're often quite tender because they've been grown in greenhouse conditions.

Planted outside, they're vulnerable to snails and slugs, as their leaves and stems haven't toughened up. So help protect them at planting time.



Colour up the winter garden with pretty pansies.



1 DIG planting holes, position the plants and fill around with soil using a hand trowel, firming down by hand. Lay mulch to help keep the soil warm.



2 SPRINKLE snail and slug pellets loosely around the plants, keeping clear of the leaves. Rain can dissolve the pellets, so reapply as required.

Prune now

Cut back dormant deciduous fruit trees in temperate and cool zones.

- + APRICOT
- + CHERRY
- + PLUM
- + APPLE
- + PEAR



Cherry

Harvest now

Pick vegetables to make winter soups, stews and bakes.

- + BRUSSELS SPROUTS
- + CAULIFLOWER
- + BROCCOLI
- + CARROT
- + POTATO

Broccoli



Make leaf mould

Fallen leaves block sunlight from getting to the lawn, so use a blower vac to collect them. But don't just add them to the compost, make nutrient-rich leaf mould instead.

Pile up the leaves and wet with the hose. In 6-12 months you'll have a rich mulch and in 1-2 years a nutritious soil conditioner.

TIP Shred big or thick leaves so they rot faster. ♻️

Ryobi 36V Cordless Blower Vac, \$259. ryobi.com.au



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Raising African violets

Give them the right care and you'll find these indoor favourites are easy to grow

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Among the world's most popular flowering indoor plants, African violets (*Saintpaulia ionantha*) will flower for months if given the right conditions, adding brilliant colour indoors.

They belong to the Gesneriaceae family and there are about 20 species in the *Saintpaulia* genus.

While the original flowers were purple-blue, there are now many cultivars in a range of colours and bicolours. They can bear double flowers and the petals have either smooth, fringed, ruffled or frilled edges.



Cheryl

EXPERT SECRETS

An excess of leaves often causes a failure to flower, so remove every third leaf and a few small ones in the crown of the plant.

Help them thrive

Native to a tropical climate, African violets grow best in temperatures ranging from 15-24°C. Cold conditions can stop growth, but it will increase when the weather warms up.

✦ **POSITION** Give them a well-lit spot that doesn't get direct sun, or just a little early morning sun. Turn the pots regularly to ensure even growth.

✦ **SOIL** Use a potting mix specially formulated for African violets and plant in small pots, as they prefer to be slightly root-bound.

✦ **WATER** When the top of the soil feels dry, water with lukewarm water. The best way is to add water to the saucer and let the plant soak up the moisture.

Remove the saucer after about 30 minutes, when enough water has been absorbed. Don't stand the plant in water for too long. In cool weather, allow the potting mix to just about dry out before watering.

✦ **FEED** Give them specially formulated African violet food every four weeks, except during the winter. ➤



Make sure African violets get lots of light or they won't produce flowers and the foliage will turn yellow

GROW TIP

Correct watering is the key to success. Water spilt on the leaves will turn them blotchy while overwatering will cause crown rot.



TAKE CUTTINGS

African violets grow easily from leaf cuttings and it is an inexpensive way to increase your collection.

There are two methods of propagating these plants, either in potting mix or water.

Take cuttings from a plant you already have or share leaves from different cultivars with your friends.



Transplant new plantlets into their own pots when 25mm high

Propagate in potting mix



1 Cut the leaves

Select 1-3 healthy mature leaves from the centre of the plant and cut off with a 25mm long stem using secateurs. Trim the bases with an angled cut. Fill a small pot with seed raising and cutting mix.



2 Plant the leaves

Make a hole in the mix with a pencil and insert the stems so the leaves are above the mix, ensuring they don't touch. Water lightly using a mist spray and position the pot in a well-lit but shaded spot.

Propagate in water



1 Take a cutting

Choose a healthy mature leaf from the centre of the plant with a 50mm long stem. Make an angled cut at the base of the stem. Select a container that will support the leaf above the rim.



2 Add the leaf

Fill the container with water to cover the base of the stem and add the leaf. Wrap the container in foil to help root development and prevent algae growth. Transfer to a small pot when roots form.

New plantlets will form around the base of the leaf in 4-10 weeks.

Windowsill wonders

African violets like humidity, which is why they can be grown successfully on bathroom or kitchen windowsills.

Standing the pot on a saucer filled with damp pebbles will increase the humidity, as will growing a group of African violets in the one spot.

A light and humid windowsill makes an ideal home.



CHERYL'S PICKS

Did you know?

In 1892, the District Commissioner of Tanganyika, now Tanzania, Baron Walter von Saint Paul-Illaire, who had an interest in botany, sent seeds of a plant he'd discovered to his father in Germany for study.

He handed them to the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen, Hanover.

The flowers from these seeds acquired the genus name *Saintpaulia* after the Saint Paul-Illaire family, and received the species name, *ionantha*, because of their similarity to the garden violet. 🌸



Scotts Osmocote Professional African Violet & Cyclamen Mix, \$7 for 10L. scottsaustralia.com.au



Manutec Garden Care Products Soluble African Violet Food, \$8 for 250g. manutec.com.au



Blooming delicious

Plant fruit trees for fabulous flowers in spring and fresh fruit in summer

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

One of the great delights of summer has to be the succulent stone fruits, such as peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots and all the amazing hybrids in between.

Many of these, and others such as apples and even nut trees, are actually pretty easy to grow at home in the garden, in courtyards or in pots.

They also come with a beautiful spring surprise, as they put on an incredible flower display, adding real wow factor to your backyard.

PICTURE/ISTOCKPHOTO

Plants with benefits

Flowering fruit trees are an excellent landscape choice and, as a bonus, have many sustainable advantages as well.

Being deciduous, they provide leafy summer shade while letting the sun and warmth stream through in winter.

Many are the perfect size for today's smaller gardens, most are tolerant of a wide range of conditions and they're also very hardy once established.

As they lose their leaves in one big autumn drop, they're quite tidy for the rest of the year. The fallen leaves make a great addition to your compost heap.

Their beautiful spring-flowering display is followed by delectable fruit in summer and throughout autumn.



Lots of fruit trees benefit from an annual prune, so check the label for details

Espaliered along a wall, these pears make a striking design feature.

BREEDING MATTERS

Most fruit trees used to be literally as tall as a house but, today, grafting and hybridising has given us designer trees to suit any situation. The size description only relates to the tree, not the fruit, so a dwarf or miniature tree will still bear full-sized fruit. Here's a selection from Fleming's Nurseries (flemings.com.au).



Miniature

The Trixie 'Pixzee' Peach bears masses of full-sized fruit but only grows to 1.5 x 1.5m. It fruits well in cool to warm temperate regions and is even suitable for large pots.



Columnar

Fruit trees with a columnar form, such as Ballerina Apples, are ideal for narrow beds or where space is at a premium. They only reach a little over 3m tall and 60cm wide.



Low maintenance

The Pixie Crunch Apple reaches a tidy size of 4 x 4m and has been bred to resist apple scab, making it easy to care for and an ideal choice for the home gardener. >

Pollination

Many fruit trees do best growing in the company of other suitable fruiting trees, as it increases their pollination and, in turn, the fruiting rate.

Check the labels before buying, as some are self-fertile but others perform best with specific varieties nearby.

This doesn't mean you need a huge garden, as you can buy double-grafted plants with two or more varieties combined to maximise pollination.

You can also use duo or trio planting techniques and put multiple trees in one planting hole.



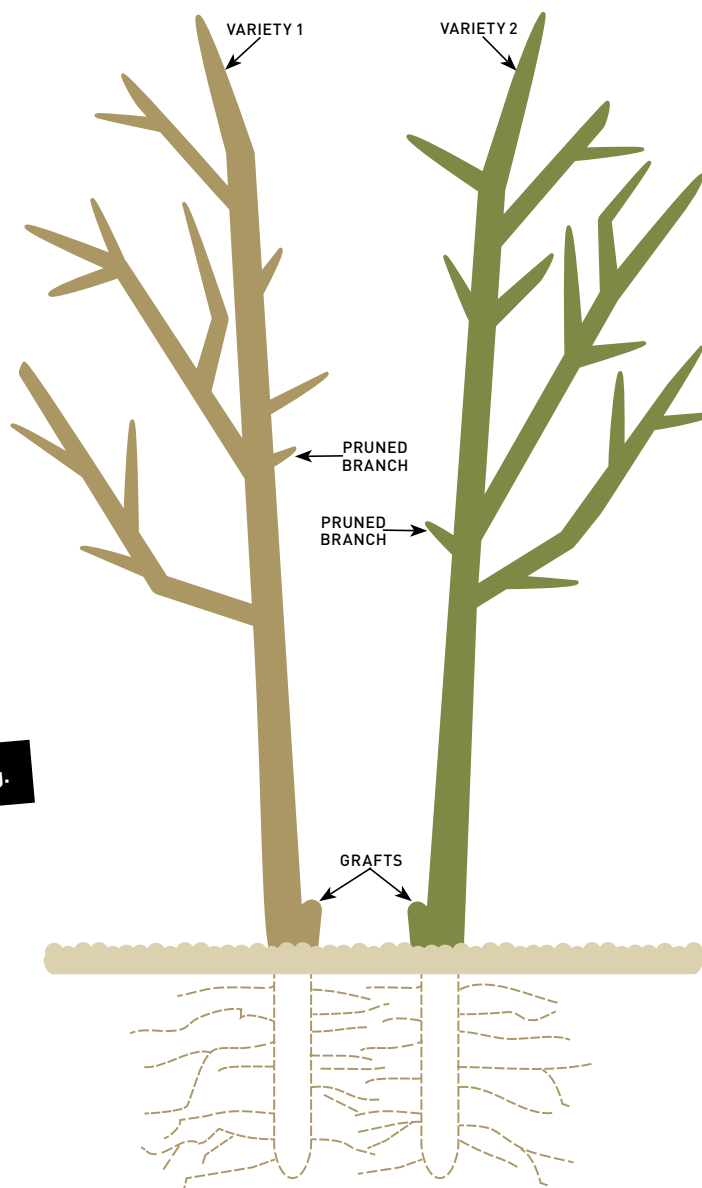
Granny Smiths like
the company of
Pink Lady apples



Apples are usually the last of the fruit trees to bloom in spring.



MULTIPLE PLANTING



Grow a duo or trio

Is your garden small, but you fancy a couple of different trees? Does your preferred tree need a partner to assist with pollination, but you don't want to lose too much yard?

There is an amazingly simple solution, called multi-planting.

Following the regular steps for planting, dig a slightly larger

hole and place 2-3 compatible varieties back-to-back, leaning a little outwards, then prune any inward-pointing branches.

This technique is suitable for apples, cherries, almonds, apricots, nectarines, peaches, pears and plums. The smart idea is to combine varieties that will cross-pollinate to improve your harvest.

Chilling out

For trees to flower well and set fruit afterwards, a certain level of chill hours, or chill units, are needed.

These units are a rather complex calculation of the number of hours below 7-10°C and over 14°C necessary while the plant is in its dormant stage.

Don't get too concerned about chill units, but ensure that any varieties you plant are matched to the typical chill hours for your area. There are varieties

that are classed as low chill, so ask your local nursery expert for advice.

Here are a few chill unit averages to give you an idea of the differences around the country.

Gold Coast (Qld) 200, Stanthorpe (Qld) 1000, Port Macquarie (NSW) 400, Sydney (NSW) 450-550, Orange (NSW) 1100, Frankston (Vic) 650, Wangaratta (Vic) 800, Perth (WA) 500-600, and Hobart (Tas) 900. ➤

The Trixie miniature pear is self-pollinating and will only grow to 1.5 x 1.5m.



In cool regions, many crab apples produce excellent fruit for preserves.

Bagged fruit trees

Fruit trees are available year-round in pots but across the cooler months, when they've lost their leaves and are dormant, many are sold as bagged, or bare-rooted, stock.

These trees will be field-grown and when sap flow slows right down for winter, they are lifted, their roots are pruned and cleaned and they are then placed in specialised soft bags with a quality potting mix.

BUDGET TIP

You'll find bagged plants are generally cheaper than those in pots, as the freighting, handling and care costs are all lower.



1 2 3



1 Dig a planting hole

Carefully remove the tree from the bag and shake the mix from the tree roots, pruning damaged roots with secateurs. Put in a cool, shady spot. Dig a planting hole twice as wide as the root spread.

TIP Use a post hole auger for digging.



2 Add the tree

Make a small mound of soil in the centre of the hole and position the tree, so the graft, or bud union, is 20-30mm above what will be the finished soil level. Backfill the hole, ensuring the gaps between the roots are filled.



3 Water in well

Create a water well by mounding up a low wall of soil, then apply a quality controlled-release fertiliser for fruit. Water well. Add mulch, keeping it clear of the trunk, then water. Prune lightly to compensate for the lost roots.



Tips from the tree guru

Wes Fleming, from Fleming's Nurseries, has been in the fruit tree business his entire life and is widely recognised for his knowledge and expertise.

Here, he shares his top three tips for fruiting success.

1 ENSURE the soil is broken up well when digging a planting hole to allow the roots to establish and grow quickly in the spring.

2 PRUNE the tree. Don't worry about being too hard on it, as not pruning it will be more detrimental. Always prune a bare-rooted tree.

3 WATER the tree consistently through spring to get it going and help it establish. A large bucketful a week should do it.

Continue to water as the weather hots up in summer, again with a bucketful a week, then let nature take care of the rest.

With a little TLC, peach trees will yield an abundant crop around much of the country.

Did you know?

The *Prunus* group is considered to produce the most spectacular of the spring blossoms. Ideal for small to medium gardens, this genus includes peaches, plums, apricots, cherries and almonds. 🍑



Share photos of your fruit tree

Post a pic to Instagram and tag @HandymanMagazine



Grow luscious liliums

Get them in the ground now
for a dramatic summer display

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

There are plenty of reasons to grow liliiums. They look and smell sensational, they're suited to informal and formal gardens, they make exquisite long-lasting cut flowers, and you can plant them in containers.

They're available in a wide range of colours, including red, white, pink, yellow and orange. They

also come in a mixture of two or three colours and some feature spots.

Liliums are very easily cultivated and, once planted, they will flower repeatedly for years.

Considered to be one of the oldest domesticated plants, there are about 80 recorded species in the genus, which are mostly native to North America, Asia and Europe.

TIDY TIP

Watch out for the pollen on the stamens, which the plants freely release, as it can stain clothing and furniture.

How to plant the bulbs

The bulbs are available in winter and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. If you can't plant them at once, store them in the crisper in your fridge.

The lilium bulb is made up of fleshy overlapping scales, which are actually specialised leaves. Unlike daffodil bulbs, they don't have a protective fibrous outer coat.

One adage for growing liliiums recommends keeping their heads in the sun and feet in the shade.

A spot with morning sun is ideal, especially in hot climates, and they can be grown in full sun in cool climates. Plant lilium bulbs in a rich and moist but free-draining soil.

✦ **DIG** a planting hole twice the length of the bulb. Add a mixture of well-rotted compost and a nine-month controlled-release fertiliser to the hole.

✦ **COVER** with a 20-30mm layer of topsoil, then position the bulb. ➤

Select a pot that will be in proportion with the height of the lilies.

GROW TIP

Avoid the Taiwan lily (*Lilium formosanum*), as it has become an environmental weed from Queensland to Victoria.

Looking after lilioms

Once planted, lilioms are best left undisturbed for many years. If you need to lift the bulbs because the clump is overcrowded, dig them up in late autumn or early winter when dormant and replant immediately.

✚ **FEED** Established clumps need feeding twice a year in winter and again after they've flowered.

✚ **WATER** The soil must be kept moist.

✚ **MULCH** Keep lilioms continually mulched, especially during summer to keep the bulbs cool.

✚ **MAINTAIN** Cut off the stems in late autumn when the foliage turns brown to produce new foliage in spring. Watch for snails and slugs on new growth.



Pick the blooms as the buds are opening, cutting halfway down the stem so the bulbs continue to develop for next year's display



Lilium lancifolium

百合

bǎi hé

hundred meetings

Did you know?

We've all heard of the saying, 'gild the lily', and it's really no surprise it implies that any attempt to improve upon perfection is foolish.

It is generally believed this saying was a quote from the Shakespeare play, *King John*. But the true quote is actually '...to gild refined gold, to paint the lily...'

The first known use of 'gild the lily' dates back to 1928. Most likely a misquotation from the play, it stuck and is still used today. ➤



In the kitchen

The orange tiger lily can be eaten, and the buds and bulbs are often found in stir-fries in China. The bulb tastes similar to a potato and can also be added to soups and casseroles.

TIP All other liliums are poisonous to people and animals.



Tiger lilies not only look striking, they're also edible.

WHAT TO GROW

Oriental lilies

Popular cut flowers, these lilies can have wavy petals or double flowers. All sweetly perfumed, they come in a wide range of colours and grow up to 1.1m high.

LA Hybrids

Breeding has crossed Asiatic hybrids with *L. longiflorum*. Called LA Hybrids, they feature vigorous, fragrant flowers in various colours and reach a height of 500-800mm.

Tiger lily

This lily bears spotted orange blooms, and cultivars come in shades of pink or yellow. Tiger lilies (*Lilium lancifolium*) grow to 1m or more and like cool climates.

Christmas lily

Also known as a November lily, *Lilium longiflorum* produces up to 10 waxy, sweetly scented white flowers on each stem. It tolerates some lime and grows up to 800mm.

Asiatic lilies

Available in a range of colours, Asiatic lilies are very hardy plants and will multiply quickly in the garden. They grow to a height of 500-800mm.

The Madonna lily

The flowers of the Madonna lily (*Lilium candidum*) are pure white with golden anthers. Unlike other lilies, it likes slightly alkaline soil. It grows to about 1.5m high. 🌱



Oriental lily



LA Hybrid



The Madonna lily



Tiger lily



Asiatic lily



Christmas lily

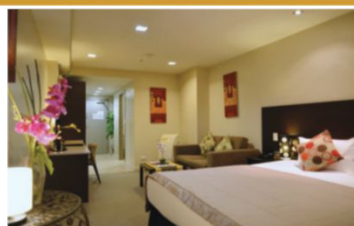


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BRINGING *BULBS* INDOORS

Fill your home with beautiful spring colour during winter

WORDS ADAM WOODHAMS

You don't have to wait until winter is over to see your spring bulbs begin to flower.

Using a process known as forcing, you can grow plants indoors, out of season.

Most often used to grow fragrant hyacinths, the technique is just as effective with almost any other bulb.

We used a clear cylinder vase and large glass beads to force paperwhite bulbs, but you can use just about any type of container or growing medium.

Here's how to create a gorgeous indoor showcase of blooms.

GROW TIP

Water beads make an ideal growing medium for forced bulbs, and come in various colours. Pre-soak, drain, then add the bulbs.



Easy bulb care

As foliage starts to appear, add a small amount of controlled-release fertiliser and position the container in filtered light, but not direct sunlight.

As the bulbs grow, prune off any dead leaves and flowers. Once flowering has finished, plant the bulbs outdoors in a bed or pot.

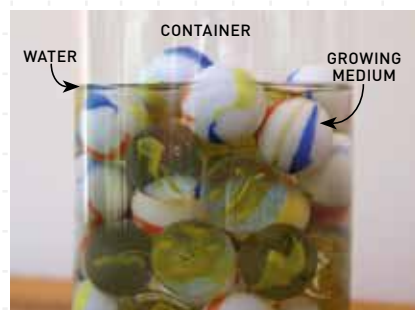
1 2 3



1 Chill the bulbs

Put the bulbs in a paper bag, marking their name on the outside. Put them in the vegetable crisper in the fridge and leave for 3-10 weeks.

TIP The later in the season you bought the bulbs, the less chill time they'll need.



2 Add growing medium

Fill the base of the container with the growing medium, such as glass beads, gravel or pebbles, to about a quarter or a third of the depth of the container. Fill the container with water to just below the top of the beads.



3 Position the bulbs

Remove the bulbs from the fridge and stand them root-down on the growing medium, pushing them in until the base of each bulb contacts the water. Position the container in a cool indoor spot, ensuring the water is kept topped up.

FORCING FLOWERS

The process of forcing involves pushing the bulb to throw out its foliage and burst into bloom without planting it in soil.

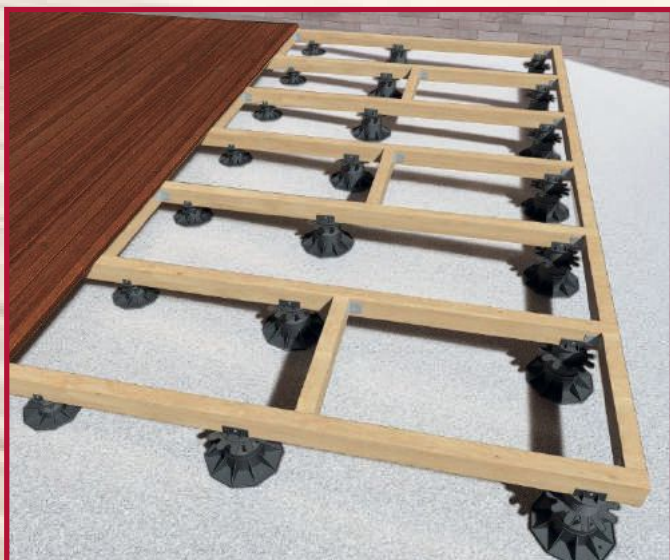
Quality bulbs should store enough energy to produce next season's flowers, regardless of how or where they are grown.

What you need

Quality bulbs
Leak-proof container
Marbles, gravel or pebbles
Controlled-release fertiliser

HEIGHT ADJUSTABLE PEDESTAL FEET

For substructures for timber deckings



Creates raised timber and paved floors on balconies, podiums and roof tops.

- + Allows for positive drainage and air ventilation
- + Height adjustable
 - big feet: 70 – 170mm
 - small feet: 35 – 60mm
 - mini feet: 25 – 40mm
- + Easy mounting
- + Easy levelling
- + Resistant to UV, weather and heat
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 - small & mini feet ≥ 200 kg



Screw with drill tip for fixing the foot to the floor joist



base plate to be bedded on compacted ground

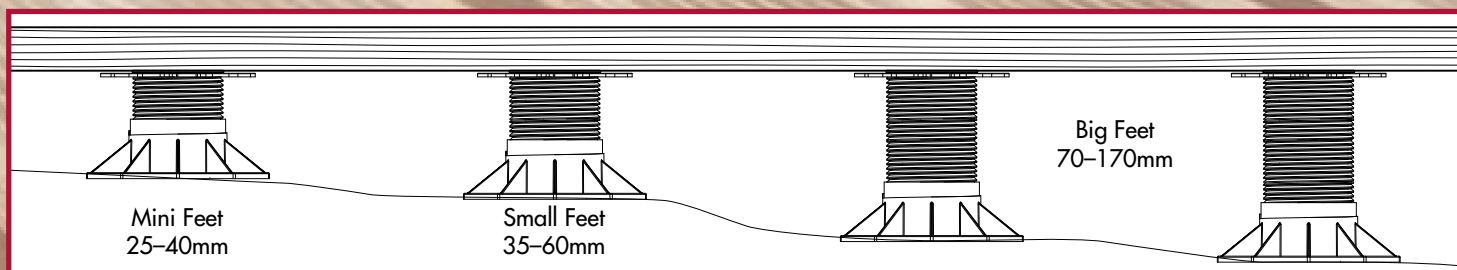


stop for the floor joist

support for the floor joist freely rotatable (except Minifoot)

adjusting wheel

load-bearing thread



What's on this month

FREE Kids' D.I.Y. Workshops

» Saturday 28 May WALL ART Make your very own decoration to hang at home	» Saturday 11 June WALL ART Make your very own decoration to hang at home
» Sunday 29 May NATURE Get creative with nature for a living masterpiece	» Sunday 12 June GAME MAKERS Create your own fun with the game makers workshop
» Saturday 4 June WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY Find out how to save energy around the home	» Saturday 18 June DRESS-UPS Design and create a wearable masterpiece
» Sunday 5 June WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY Find out how to save energy around the home	» Sunday 19 June ANIMAL CRAFT Make your own special craft of your favourite animal

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

FREE Adult D.I.Y. Workshops

» Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May GARDENING Learn about growing herbs, plants and vegies
» Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 June SAVE ENERGY AND WATER AROUND THE HOME Discover new products and energy-saving tips
» Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June TILING AND PLASTERING Learn how to tile and plaster at home
» Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 June INDOOR PROJECT Get project advice from expert team members

For more information on other instore events or to book, visit bunnings.com.au/yourstore



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POP QUIZ!

Name these *dogs*

Can you identify these canine breeds?
The answers are at the bottom of the page



10



ANSWERS 1 ROTTWEILER 2 PAPILLON 3 SHETLAND SHEEPDOG 4 LABRADOR RETRIEVER 5 STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER 6 PUG 7 PAPILLON 8 BEAGLE 9 SIBERIAN HUSKY 10 AUSTRALIAN CATTLE DOG

PICTURE BACKGROUND/ISTOCK

A CUT ABOVE 

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