

31 PAGES OF KITCHEN FIXES & RENO IDEAS

AUSTRALIAN

GROW WINTER HERBS page 114

Handyman

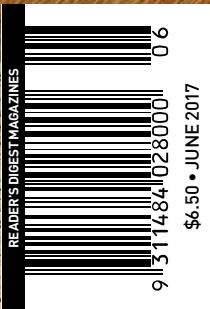
INSTALL
A STATEMENT
SPLASHBACK
CREATE

COMPACT
KITCHEN DESIGNS

A CLUTTER-FREE
CLOSET SPACE

*Storage
hacks*
FOR EVERY HOME

DIY slide-out shelves
page 24





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KITCHEN



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GET THE LOOK

LOVE THE COVER?

Inject warmth into a white kitchen with natural brick, timber and concrete



This family-friendly space is welcoming and warm.

Let natural materials shine as the backdrop to a very modern kitchen and create depth in the space.

Metallic pendant lights pop against the timber tones while a textured pantry and bright book cube add personality.

The mix of modern silhouettes and traditional brick strikes an urban aesthetic that is inviting and warm.



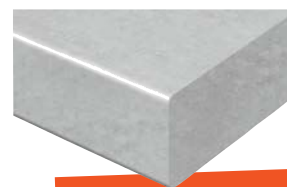
Potato Bar Stool, \$660.
satara.com.au



Mercator 240V Large Zahara Copper Pendant, \$85.
mercator.com.au



Mondella WELS Five-star Black Vivace Sink Mixer, \$229.
mondella.com.au



Kaboodle 600mm Cottagini Cut to Measure Benchtop, \$157 per linear metre.
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THIS ISSUE

HANDY HINT OF THE MONTH



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EDITOR'S LETTER



There's an art to wardrobe storage.

The kitchen is often billed as the hub of the home, but no-one would accuse my narrow U-shaped space of being any such thing! It's functional at best.

And while friends can sit nearby at the dining table to have a wine and a chat while I'm cooking, my kitchen is definitely not a lifestyle space.

I can't be the only one who isn't living the open-plan dream, so in this issue we wanted to share design ideas for small-space kitchens, on page 16.

It's amazing what you can do with a limited footprint, and the clever ways that storage and seating can be incorporated into any space.

If style rather than space is your issue, be inspired by the latest looks in splashbacks, on page 34.

All kitchens, big and small, old and new, need looking after so check out our guide to maintenance, on page 28.

Clutter-free closets

I have a couple of vintage wardrobes in my bedroom that look great but aren't exactly user-friendly. One has hooks instead of a rail, and the other has several tiny, useless drawers.

For this reason, I use the built-in wardrobes in my spare room for most of my stuff, but I feel like I am forever rearranging coats, shoes, bags and suitcases to find that perfect place between accessible and aesthetic.

That's why we sought expert advice this issue, to find out how to make the most of any closet, cupboard or wardrobe. Turn to page 64 to learn the tricks of the trade and streamline your storage spaces once and for all.

Happy DIYing,

Artemis

Product of the month

Clean up with ease after your next reno or DIY project with the Ozito 1250W Wet & Dry Vacuum Kit, featuring a 20L tank, accessories, castors for mobility and three-year warranty (ozito.com.au).

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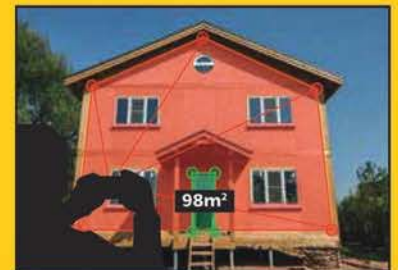
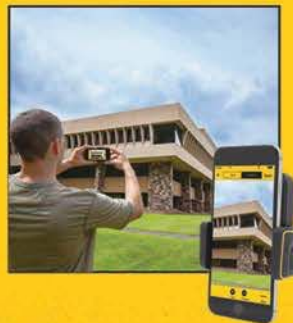
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FAST FACT

Before the invention of the lawnmower in 1830, grass was trimmed by hand with scythes, or by grazing sheep and cattle.

PICTURES (TOP LEFT, BOTTOM LEFT) ISTOCK

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Pick up these essentials to make your life easier around the home



Heat haven

Stay warm wherever you go with the Breville Lavish Velvet Heated Throw, \$130. The detachable controller has three variable heat settings for extra comfort on cold days and the blanket also has an auto-off safety feature.

breville.com.au



Couch cosy

Forget freezing feet with the Nuddle Blanket, \$65. Available in four colours, it boasts openings for arms, pouches for hands and a foot pocket for the perfect snuggle session in front of the TV. It's made of soft polyester coral fleece.

nuddleblanket.com.au

Bed barrier

Keep your mattress pristine with the Adairs Clear Sleep Bamboo Waterproof Mattress Protector, from \$42. It's ideal for preventing stains and provides protection from dust mites and allergens.

adairs.com.au



Sandwich safe

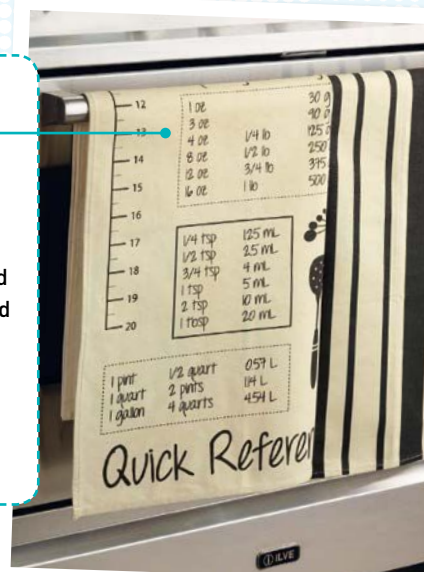
Reduce plastic waste with Bee's Wrap Sandwich Wraps, \$10 each. Made of beeswax, organic cotton, organic jojoba oil and tree resin, they simply need a wash between uses.

beeswrap.com

Baking bible

Make cooking easy with the Conversion Kitchen Tea Towel Set, \$15. One of the cotton tea towels features a chocolate and cream striped design and the other is printed with essential conversions for weights, measures and temperatures to get your recipe right every time.

lorrainelea.com





Shopping scroll

Jot down daily to-do lists or let the whole family add to the shopping list on the George & Willy Daily Roller, \$170. Crafted from powdercoated aluminium, the roller is mounted on the wall. It's available in white or black and the replaceable brown kraft paper rolls are 25m long.

hardtofind.com.au



Room refresh

Fill your home with the fragrance of nature-inspired pure essential oils with the In Essence Aroma Diffuser, \$80. Easy to use and compact, the timber-look diffuser has four time setting modes ranging from 1-6 hours, an adjustable LED light with seven colours and a dimmer.

inessence.com.au

Knife keeper

Stash knives in the Neoflam Bamboo Universal Knife Block, \$50. The plastic insert allows any knife blade or pair of scissors to fit upright inside the block. It features soft-grip rubber feet and has antimicrobial properties for hygienic storage.

zanui.com.au



Table tote

Treat your loved one to breakfast in bed on the Wheel & Barrow Willow Wood Bed Tray, \$60. The sleek design has two cut-outs for easy carrying and measures 54 x 31 x 22cm. >

wheelandbarrow.com.au

Fruit frame

Put fruit on display or store odds and ends in the fun and functional Bed Bath N' Table Wire Pineapple Basket, \$35. Made of metal, it's 31cm high and 18cm in diameter.

bedbathntable.com.au





Leather luxe

Keep leather in tiptop shape with the Hillmark Leather Kleen, \$12 for 250ml. The 3-in-1 formula cleans, conditions and protects leather surfaces and blocks UV rays to help prevent fading. It removes dirt, dust, perspiration and most household spills.

hillmark.com.au



Mattress mate

Refresh your old mattress with the Aroma Wash Protect Mattress Spray, \$17 for 125ml. Containing pure essential oils, it is designed to kill bed bugs and dust mites while you sleep. Eco-friendly, it is made using biodegradable ingredients for a natural solution.

adairs.com.au

Wool wonder

Avoid the hassle of handwashing wool clothing and throws with The Laundress Wool & Cashmere Spray, \$15. This spray-and-leave formula repels pests, removes odours and freshens yarn, with an entirely plant-based formula.

thecookingcompany.com.au



Static stopper

Avoid the annoyance of clinging clothes with The Aromatherapy Co. Therapy Laundry Static Spray, \$10 for 150ml. Spray on freshly washed clothes before putting in the tumble dryer to reduce static electricity.

davidjones.com.au



Fabric friendly

Never pinch fabric again when hanging clothes up to dry with Madame Peg Soft Grip Clothing Pegs, \$23 for 20. They have a unique non-slip pad for delicate garments, are UV resistant and come in a variety of colours.

madamepeg.com.au

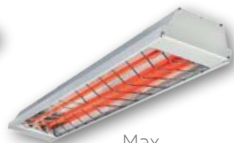
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Williams Cabinets built this sleek kitchen that blends into the space.

SMALL-SPACE KITCHENS

Clever design and imagination can deliver a dream kitchen in a compact package

WORDS SITA SIMONS

There is a general move towards smaller living spaces in urban areas, and also towards economy and efficiency of design.

This push, which comes from European designers leading the way in kitchen design, results in innovative ideas that maximise space.

As this collection of architect- and expert-designed kitchens shows, the size of the floorplan doesn't have to dictate that ideas or design are sacrificed in the modern kitchen. ➤

PICTURE MAY PHOTOGRAPHY

DESIGN TIP

Mixing surface materials in a smaller space has the effect of creating depth, which makes the area feel bigger than it is.



Builders and joiners Keedah used their skills with materials to craft this kitchen.



Interior architects Hearth Studio took cues from European kitchens to create this space.

Single-wall solutions

The single-wall kitchen, where the appliances are all in one line, is good for apartments or small spaces.

One drawback is you can't have the ideal working triangle of the stove, sink and fridge.

Good planning can overcome this obstacle, and with attention to every detail, a limited floorplan doesn't have to be compromised or cramped.

Although most appliances will be within arm's reach, consider the placement of the sink in relation to the dishwasher, ovens and fridge. Also be aware of the clearance spaces the appliances require to ensure safety.

Storage space needs to be used efficiently, and a mix of shelves, drawers in cabinets and vertical cabinet inserts are clever solutions that will maximise space.



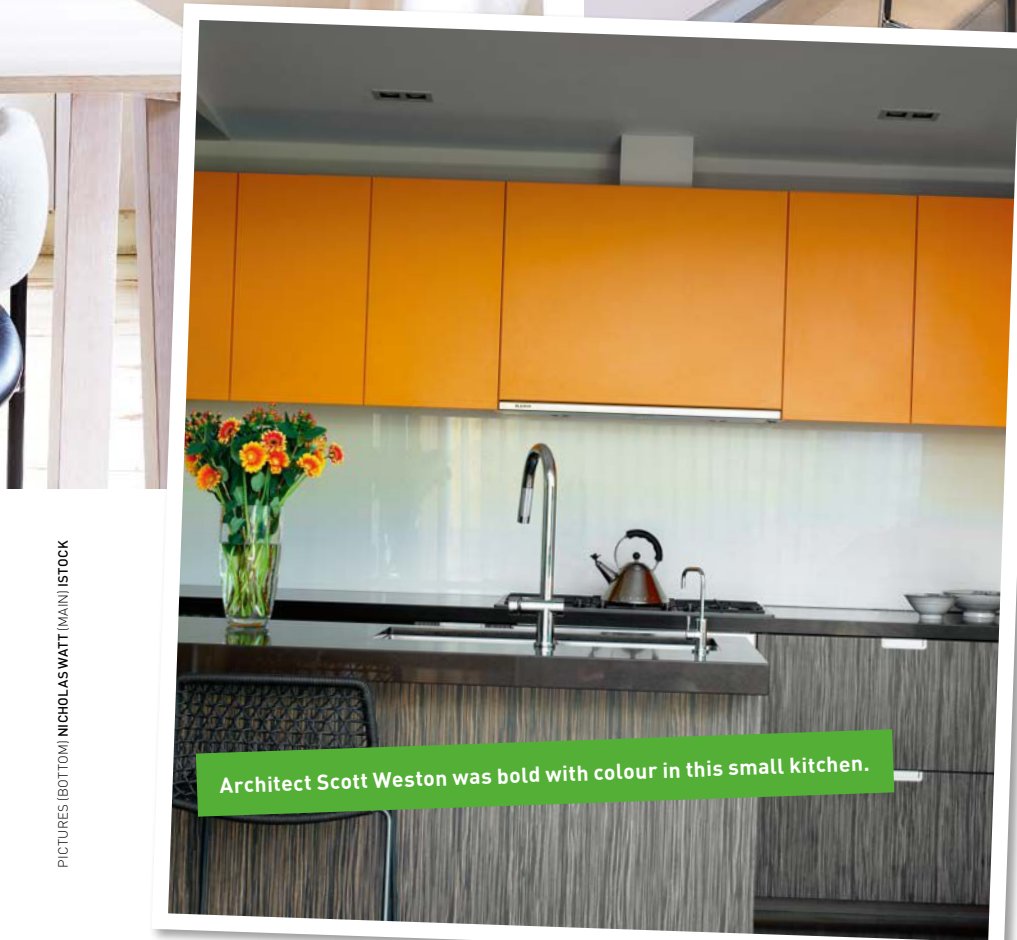
Shots of unexpected colour and decorative wall treatments provide an injection of fun and personality in galley kitchens



TIDY TIP

A compact or slimline dishwasher is not only budget-friendly, but it also helps keep limited surface space free of stacks of dishes.

A breakfast bar does double-duty in a small kitchen by providing seating, bench space and storage.



Architect Scott Weston was bold with colour in this small kitchen.

Take a seat

Finding a way to integrate seating in even the smallest of kitchens is always going to add a great deal of usability to the room that is often referred to as the heart of the home.

Extending a benchtop by about 500mm provides enough space to get your legs underneath and also invites others in to join you.

If the floorplan allows, an island bench is another way to solve the space and storage issues of a galley kitchen.

Bear in mind clearance guidelines for island benches, with 800mm being a minimum requirement for both safety and comfort. ➤

BUDGET TIP

Instead of adding cabinetry, wall- or ceiling-mounted boxes are cost efficient and also quick to fabricate.

Architect Matt Williams used suspended joinery to add form and storage.



Sleek overhead cabinets stop the kitchen from feeling top-heavy.



Vertical storage is maximised in this kitchen by architects MGA1.

Up and over

The space above the benchtop is valuable real estate in a small kitchen and can be well utilised to solve storage constraints. And if well designed, it can add something to the overall aesthetic of the room.

Using simple suspended joinery creates a false wall and a delineation of the kitchen footprint, as well as much-needed shelf storage. It's also an opportunity to bring the warmth of timber into the design.

Building open shelving to ceiling height around all the available wall space maintains an open feeling, where cabinet doors may appear overbearing and heavy.

Keeping the shelves tidy is key in this arrangement, and investing in good-quality and matching storage containers is a good idea. ➤



A dark colour scheme can also be designed to recede into the space.



A seamless all-white design by architect Justin Loe.

The vanishing trick

A kitchen design that integrates seamlessly into the space is a strong trend that signals a move away from separating the kitchen from the rest of the house.

This approach works particularly well in small spaces, creating a visual vanishing trick and providing great

flexibility with the floorplan. If it doesn't need to look like a kitchen, in theory it can be anywhere.

Precision and attention to detail matter here. Sleek cabinetry with no handles minimises visual distraction. Perfect alignment between all elements creates a satisfying calmness and balance in the design. ✨



A fully integrated kitchen is an unobtrusive addition while still having high design appeal



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Slide-out STORAGE

Install drawers to boost cabinet capacity and make kitchen appliances easier to access

PROJECT DANIEL BUTKOVICH PICTURES SUE FERRIS

Bulky, infrequently used kitchen appliances such as slow cookers and food processors can be tricky to store, especially in a small kitchen.

The logical place is out of the way in the back of the cabinet, but this means everything in front has to be taken out to access just one item.

Custom-made slide-out drawers are an affordable storage solution that make kitchen cabinet space much more usable by allowing easy and quick access to equipment.

These two drawers are made from a single 1800 x 595 x 16mm melamine panel, and are installed in the cabinet using two sets of drawer slides.

The drawers are assembled using PVA adhesive and screws, with iron-on melamine edging concealing the cut edges, creating a professional finish.

Each set of slides consists of a pair of drawer runners that attach to the underside of the drawer, plus a pair of cabinet runners that are mounted to the inside walls of the cabinet. ➤

Materials

Melamine panel	\$22
Drawer slides	\$25
Screws	\$4
PVA adhesive	\$6
Melamine edging	\$10
TOTAL	\$67

★
Drawers keep cabinets tidy and prevent having to unpack everything to reach items up the back

These slide-out drawers are ideal for installing in end base cabinets.



DIY TIP

Decide on the items to be stored in the cabinet and use their size and height to work out how many drawers you need to install.

1
DAY

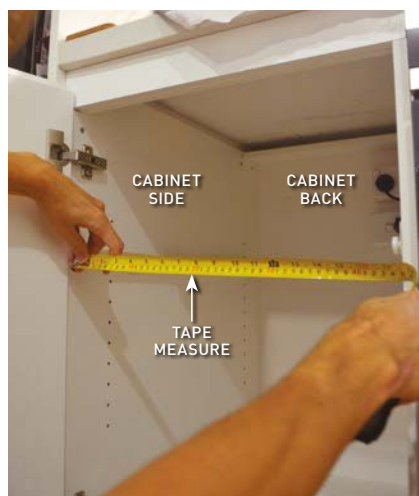
\$67
COST



Slide-out drawers offer more flexibility than adjustable shelves.

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INSTALL THE DRAWERS



1 Measure the cabinet

Use a tape measure to determine the width of the cabinet, then deduct 25mm to allow for the slides and use this measurement to determine the width of the drawer bases. Measure the depth of the cabinet, then deduct 10mm to ensure that the door closes properly.



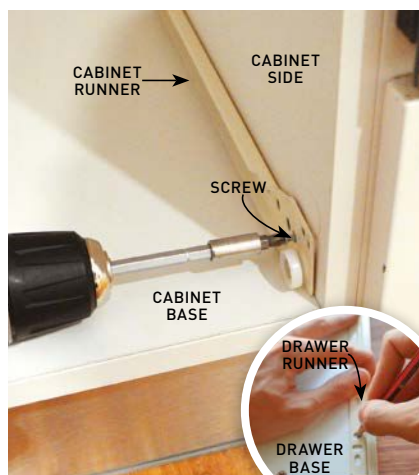
2 Cut the parts

Mark cutting lines on the melamine panel, then use a circular saw and straightedge to cut the bases to size. Cut two 30mm wide strips the same width as the drawer base to make the front and back. Cut two 30mm wide strips 32mm shorter than the length of the base to make the sides.



3 Assemble the drawers

Apply a bead of PVA adhesive along the cut edge of the drawer front, then clamp it to the drawer base flush with the front edge. Drill pilot holes in the base and secure the drawer front to the drawer base using screws. Repeat for the sides and back of the drawer.



4 Attach the slides

Mark the screw holes for the cabinet runners on the inside of the cabinet sides, drill pilot holes, then secure the runners using screws. Align the drawer runners with the drawer front on each side, mark screw holes and drill pilot holes, then attach the runners using screws.



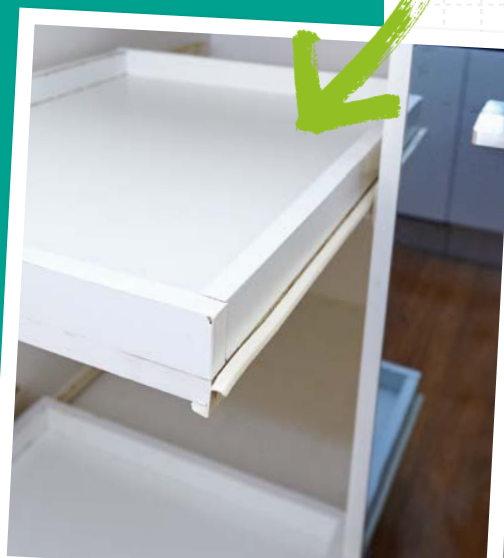
5 Apply the edging

Cut four pieces of melamine edging 20mm longer than the drawer sides, front and back. Position a piece over an exposed edge. Lay baking paper on top, then iron, keeping the iron moving. Trim excess edging with a utility knife held at a 45° angle, then sand smooth. Repeat for the other edges.

Choosing slides

These DIY drawers use Prestige 600mm Drawer Slides, about \$12, which have a load rating of 25kg (itwproline.com.au).

Check the total weight of the contents to determine the correct slides for your drawers. ☺



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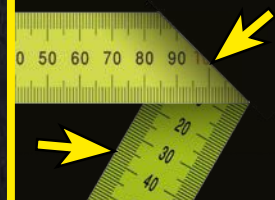
LONGREACH

EXTRA STANDOUT

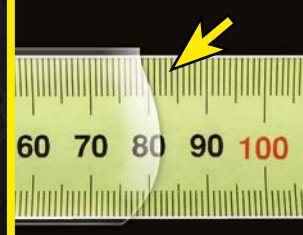
WIDE BLADE 32MM



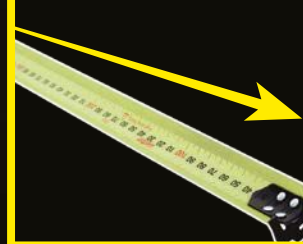
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TIDY TIP

Don't store dishwashing powder under the sink, as it may absorb water and form lumps, leaving deposits on dishes and in the machine.

KITCHEN

MAINTENANCE

Easy ways to keep the hub of the home clean and hygienic plus functioning smoothly

WORDS SITA SIMONS

Packed with appliances and equipment and plumbing and electrical parts, kitchens are one of the most maintenance-needy rooms in the whole home.

They are also generally the most frequently used spaces and are full of perishable food items.

So it's a matter of good hygiene to make sure your kitchen is cleaned thoroughly and that appliances are working properly and efficiently to keep it looking good.

Dishwashers

They get a heavy workout in a busy household, so dishwashers can suffer as much from rust and limescale as they can from grime and food stains.

The manufacturer's instructions will often provide detailed care advice, but regardless of the make or model, it's simple to keep your machine clean.

These basic usage tips will both prolong the life of your dishwasher and keep it performing well.

Routine maintenance

- **SCRAPE** and rinse plates and pans thoroughly before putting them in the dishwasher to help keep the filter clear for longer, and clean the filter regularly.
- **USE** only the types of detergent recommended by the manufacturer and don't overfill the detergent trap.
- **DON'T** overload or stack carelessly. Overlapping plates and protruding cutlery can impede the spray arm.

Expert care

Dishwashers are one of the few appliances in your home that use both hot water and electricity.

So you should never attempt to disassemble, service or repair a broken dishwasher yourself. Always contact an authorised plumber or repair technician.

DIY CLEAN

While you can't service or repair a dishwasher DIY, your appliance will benefit from a thorough clean three times a year.

- ❶ **LET** the machine fully cool down and dry after a wash cycle.
- ❷ **CHECK** and clean the filters and inspect the interior for any large pieces of debris.
- ❸ **LOOK** in spray-jet holes and around drain holes, and dislodge debris. Check for debris around the spray-jet arms that are connected to the racks and main body of the dishwasher.
- ❹ **WIPE** down the outside frame of the dishwasher and around the door seals with an all-purpose cleaner and a damp sponge.
- ❺ **DIP** a nailbrush or toothbrush in white vinegar and scrub the inside edges where the walls meet the floor, roof and back, continuing to the interior.
- ❻ **POSITION** a glass of white vinegar securely on the top rack. Close the dishwasher and allow it to run through the heaviest cycle available. The vinegar will help clean all the hard-to-reach places. ➤

Benchtops

Generic cleaners do the basics, but different benchtop materials benefit from specific cleaning methods.

For all surfaces, avoid spilling strong chemicals, oven cleaners, oils, paint removers and anything acidic.

If there is a spill, quickly wipe it up with a soft cloth and warm water to minimise potential damage.



TIMBER

Laminated and slab timber benchtops are sealed to make them water resistant, but they still stain easily.

Clean up spills immediately and avoid acid-based cleaners and vinegar, as these can degrade the adhesives used in laminated panels.

Reseal annually to preserve the timber, improve stain resistance and prevent bacteria build-up. Clean with a surface spray or warm soapy water.

Heat and steam can warp timber and damage sealants, so use heat mats or trivets, and protect the surface from steam-releasing appliances such as the dishwasher.



ACRYLIC

Benchtops made from acrylic are seamless and non-porous, with no cracks to harbour bacteria.

This material doesn't absorb odours or spillages, is stain and impact resistant, and also shock absorbent. Cleaning requires just warm water and a mild cleanser.

The main damage to acrylic benchtops comes from contact with hot items and cutting directly on the benchtop, which will easily mark the surface.

Scratches and other minor damage can be buffed out with an abrasive cleaner and a scouring pad. But for more serious cuts and marks, a low-grit sandpaper may be required.



GRANITE

While it's a very durable material, you still need to look after the surface of granite benchtops.

Avoid abrasive cleaners and use water. Wipe the surface dry with a soft cloth after cleaning.

Stone care products do exist, so ask for recommendations from the manufacturer or supplier.



ENGINEERED STONE

Engineered stone benchtops are known for being less porous than granite and other natural stone benchtops.

Generally very resistant to stains, the low absorbency makes these benches very hygienic.

Everyday cleaning entails wiping down with a cloth or paper towel. For tougher-to-remove marks, you may need to use a heavily diluted bleach solution.

Overexposure to strong cleaners and solvents can permanently damage the surface, so be careful to limit use.

Rapid changes in temperature can cause damage, particularly around the edges, which can then chip. Repairs to engineered stone are easier than with natural stone.

LAMINATE

A budget-friendly option, laminate can last a long time with good care.

Scourers and abrasives will quickly damage the surface, as will direct contact with hot items and cutting straight onto the bench.

Wax and polish will dull the natural shine, and acid or alkaline cleaners aren't suitable either.

Warm soapy water and a mild household cleaning spray will remove streaks, grease and spills. Once you've wiped away the dirt, rub with a dry cloth. ➤



PICTURES/ISTOCK



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Splashbacks

Designed to protect the wall behind cooking, food preparation and wet areas, a splashback is also a major aesthetic feature in a kitchen.

It can tend to be neglected in the daily cleaning routine and suffer from a build-up of grease and grime.

Investing a little time maintaining your splashback will help retain the finish and prevent damage.



GLASS

A mirrored or coloured glass splashback has a dramatic impact but is an eyesore when dirty.

Streaks are the main enemy, so experiment with glass cleaners until you find the most suitable one.

For glass, the type of cleaning cloth used is particularly important,

with microfibre or other lint-free cloths working the best.

Never use abrasive cloths or cleaning agents, and use a wet cloth followed by a dry cloth.

If streaks remain a problem, try a white vinegar and distilled water solution and buff with newspaper. Don't use tap water, as it can leave mineral deposits that create streaks.



STAINLESS STEEL

To keep stainless steel shiny and streak-free, clean splashes and spills with soapy water, then use a dry cloth to reduce the need for heavy cleaning, which may scuff this material.

For a deeper clean, make a baking soda and vinegar solution and scrub the splashback gently in the direction of the grain using a non-abrasive nylon scourer.

Rinse thoroughly with a clean, damp dishcloth, then dry with a clean cloth or paper towel.

Stainless steel cleaners don't actually clean the material. They are applied afterwards and leave a film on the surface that helps repel streaks and marks.



DESIGN TIP

Make a feature of a tiled splashback by choosing an unusual shape rather than using the standard square or rectangular styles.

M Maintain kitchen appliances
Visit handyman.net.au/appliances

TILES

Tiled splashbacks are resilient, but it's good practice to clean splashes and spills as they happen and not leave food to settle. This reduces the risk of staining the tile faces and also protects the grout lines.

White or light grout can quickly become discoloured, which will make

the entire surface look unclean. Using large-format tiles means fewer grout lines to keep clean, but if you want a mosaic, consider dark grout.

Clean tiles with a damp cloth or sponge and mild detergent, and wipe to prevent streaks, particularly if the surface of the tile is highly glazed. A daily cleaning routine will deliver the most benefit. ✂



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MAKE *A* SPLASH

Use a splashback to create a standout feature and add personality to kitchens that have a neutral palette

WORDS SITA SIMONS



Splashbacks are an important functional element of the kitchen as they help protect the walls and cabinetry from damage by moisture, heat and oils.

In a stylish modern kitchen, a splashback is also an integral part of the overall design and aesthetic.

Often used to create a feature in an otherwise neutral space, this can be the place to inject some personality and bring the whole look together.

PICTURE: ISTOCK



Textured tiles create depth and interest in a simple all-white kitchen.

Get the look of marble for less by using affordable tiles.



White on white

Trends come and go, but a white kitchen is always going to be the favourite choice for many homeowners.

A splashback can have a great impact in a white kitchen, providing sharp contrast in some cases, or injecting a shot of personality.

Having a white-on-white theme can also be highly effective, and it's here that texture comes into play.

Choosing a small, highly textured tile adds dimension and interest to the area that meets you at eye level. Another strong trend is continuing the benchtop material up the wall.

You can save on the expense of real marble by using stone-look tiles, such as these from Kaboodle (kaboodle.com.au). ➤

Brushed stainless steel in a kitchen gives a subtle shine.



Gold and silver

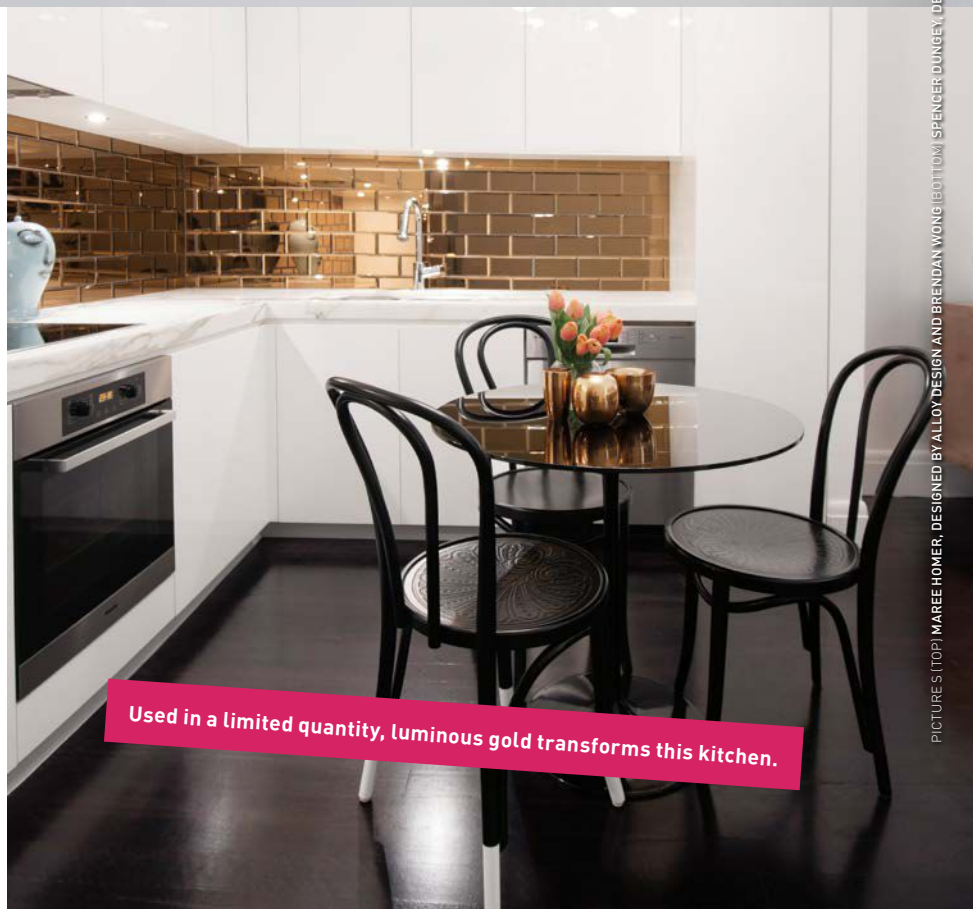
Metallics are massively on trend in interior design, and the quality of colour reproductions and finishes is constantly improving.

Bring a little bling into your favourite family space with a hit of silver or gold in the splashback, and see that a little sparkle goes a long way.

The pared-back shine of brushed steel formed into abstract tiles is a subtle way to reference the trend, as well as being an easy-to-clean, functional option for protection.

The subway tile splashback, which remains a popular choice, takes on the look of gold bars with the application of high-shine gold mirror.

Use a matching tinted grout and you have a standout feature that doesn't overwhelm the space.



Used in a limited quantity, luminous gold transforms this kitchen.



LED mood lighting

The super high-tech kitchen of tomorrow is an exploration of completely personalising the space, and an LED splashback brings an element of that future to the now.

These splashbacks are fabricated by embedding LED lights behind glass. Cool-burning LEDs are energy-efficient and the intensity of the light and colours can be changed to suit your mood or purpose.

An LED splashback can emit a stronger light from the top or bottom that gradually fades into a darker hue, and some are available with textured glass surfaces. >

PICTURE PHILLIP HANDFORTH ARCHITECTURAL, DESIGNED BY BRILLIANT SA

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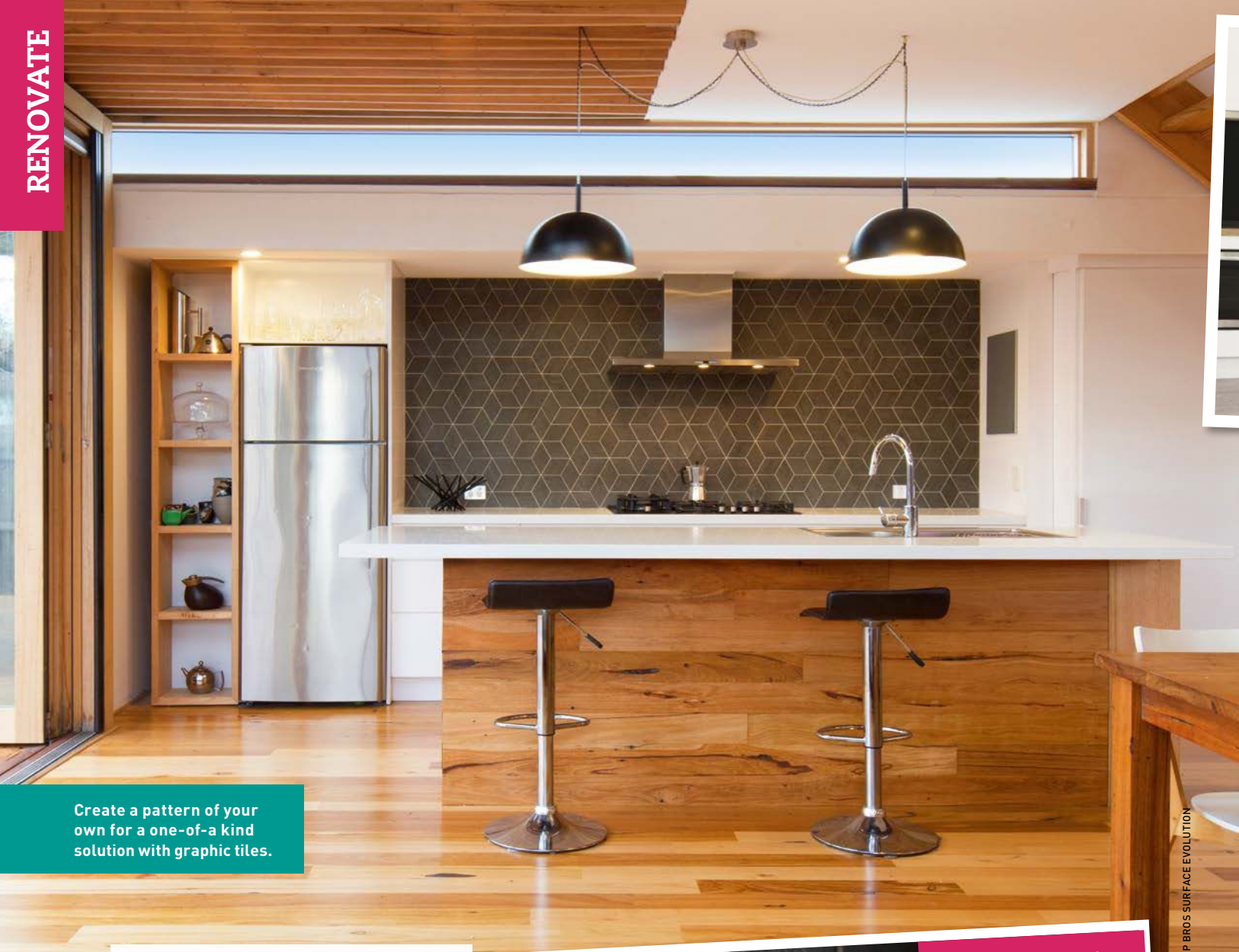


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Create a pattern of your own for a one-of-a-kind solution with graphic tiles.

Graphics and patterns

Tiles are the go-to for splashbacks, but there are plenty of ways to use them that steer away from the norm.

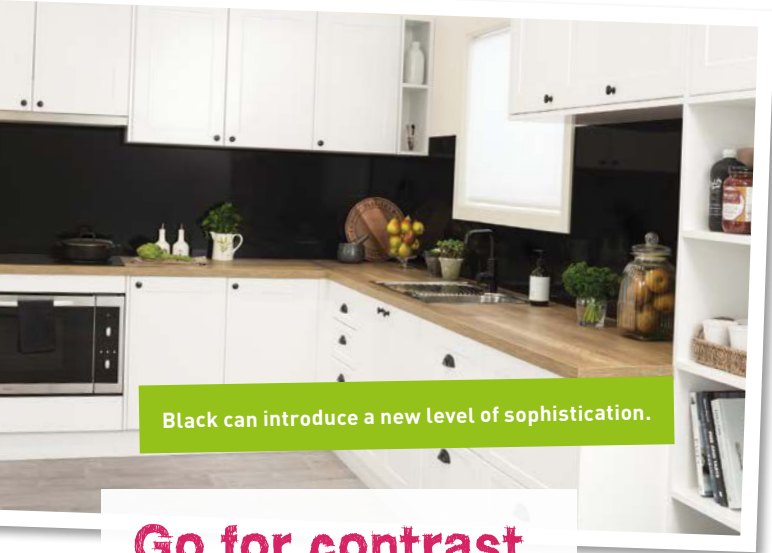
Creating a personalised pattern with geometric shapes is a guaranteed way to make sure you have something unique and suited to your taste.

Lay tiles on a flat surface to work out the pattern and stick within a palette of three colours so as to not overcomplicate. Simple is better.

A chevron-shaped tile laid with contrasting grout can have a strong impact. Also consider tiles that may be more commonly used for floors, such as Moroccan-inspired porcelain, which can be very effective.



Cover a whole wall when using tiles rather than the standard envelope.



Black can introduce a new level of sophistication.

Go for contrast

Very dark colours in the kitchen have been trending for the past few years, and even all-black spaces with a mix of textures have been filtering down from the high-end conceptual kitchens to the flatpicks available off the shelf.

Mixing black and white always works when the balance is right, and the splashback is the ideal place to create the contrast.

Even a traditional-style kitchen can work with black, and creating a seamless look with glossy tiles and black grout gives a sophisticated feel.

Modern black cabinetry can also be softened with the addition of a simple white-tiled splashback, and the theme can be expanded upon with a decorative black-and-white motif on the kitchen island. 🍷



Using the kitchen island to make a decorative statement is fun and unexpected.

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★ READERS' DIY

kitchen reno



Caroline's overhaul

When you're a former head chef, a 1970s small, dysfunctional and dilapidated kitchen can be a special form of angst. Living with it for five years was enough for Caroline Perry.

'There was no bench space and the cabinet doors were falling off. I was cooking at home less and less and couldn't wait any longer,' she says.

As big home renovations were planned, Caroline and husband Darryl decided upon an interim solution.

'Not being faced with big, final decisions meant our expectations were in check and we could make decisions quickly,' says Caroline.

But there were obstacles. Getting gas to the suburban semi took three months. They also planned for a glass splashback, then discovered that the wall behind the tiles was very uneven.



A tight galley kitchen is turned into a highly functional space, fit for a former chef



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Before

Rather than spending more time and money, the couple made a quick decision to retile, and luckily found a tiler to do the job in record time.

A flatpack design was worked into the tight galley layout, so there was no gain in actual floorspace.

All in all, the renovation took just eight days and the improvement has been beyond the couple's hopes.

'Planning the cabinet space, using the corners well, extending to the ceiling, six extra power sockets and having a built-in oven and cooktop have made a huge difference.'

'I thought there would be a lot of compromises, but I was looking around just the other day and thinking there's nothing I'd change,' says Caroline.



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Sika SikaSeal Clear Kitchen and Bathroom Silicone Sealant, about \$10 for 300ml. diy.sikaretail.com.au



HPM 360° PIR Movement Sensor, \$58.

Watch the video 'D.I.Y. wooden cheese board' at bunnings.com.au/diy-advice

Find it at Bunnings

CHEESE BOARD



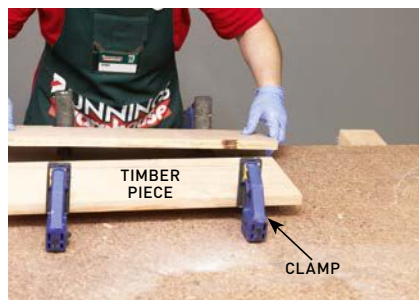
A cheese board is a staple for entertaining and you can make your own from timber.

This cheese board is made from joining two pieces of Tasmanian oak, then cutting it into an octagon, but you could use another hardwood and make any shape you like.

What you need

- 19mm Tasmanian oak
- Clamps
- Builder's square
- Mitresaw
- Adhesive
- Tape measure
- Random orbital sander
- 240 grit sanding pad
- Soft cloth
- Orange oil
- Safety gear

1 2 3



1 Join the timber pieces

Have two timber pieces pre-cut at Bunnings to 185 x 500mm. Run a bead of adhesive down the long side of one piece of timber. Join the two pieces and clamp in position, tightening the clamps. Wipe away any excess adhesive and leave to dry.



2 Cut out the shape

Mark out the largest square possible on the timber board using a builder's square. Cut out the square using a mitresaw. Draw two diagonal lines to find the centre of the board, then use it to draw an octagon. Cut out the octagon shape with the mitresaw.



3 Apply the finish

Sand smooth the surface of the cheese board using a random orbital sander with a 240 grit pad, wiping away any dust. Use a cloth to apply four coats of food-grade oil to the sides and edges of the cheese board to bring out the timber grain, then leave to dry.

Sanding Tools - Sanding Sponges - Sanding Sheets - Mesh - Steel Wool

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★ ORIGINS

Acrylic

DIY TIP

To help avoid splintering, apply masking tape to the splashback before marking the cutting line and use a circular saw with a thin kerf blade.

Acrylic splashbacks provide a seamless look.

Also known by brand names such as Perspex or Plexiglas, acrylic is a plastic material.

Developed in the 1930s as a more durable alternative to glass, acrylic was used for aircraft windows during World War II.

Today, it's sold in sheets and is commonly used for kitchen splashbacks. Available in a range of colours, the streamlined look suits modern homes.

Although they are usually more expensive than tiles, acrylic splashbacks don't need grouting and most can be completed with just one or two pieces.

Other uses for acrylic include furniture, signage and sculptures.

Durable and easy to clean, acrylic is a versatile splashback choice.



Install a splashback

⚙️ **MEASURE** the length of the wall, calculate the pieces required, then mark the dimensions on the acrylic.
⚙️ **CUT** the splashback to size with a circular saw and use a jigsaw to make any cut-outs for power points.

⚙️ **ATTACH** the splashback to the wall using silicone adhesive, supporting it with packers as the adhesive cures.
⚙️ **SEAL** the gaps between the benchtop, walls and overhead cabinets using silicone sealant.



Member profile

@She_Skills



Meg aims to teach women DIY skills to put to use in their own homes.



From teaching ballet and singing and dancing in a Taiwanese theme park to working in a Kalgoorlie mine, Workshop member Meg is clearly up for any challenge.

The multi-talented Meg is as comfortable with a power saw in her hands as she is on the stage, and is now trying to give other women the confidence to DIY.

Meg recently founded She Skills in her home city of Brisbane to teach woodworking and power tool skills to women (sheskills.com.au).

'The mission is to empower women by providing them with the opportunity to gain the skills and confidence to imagine, design and create anything,' she says.

Meg and her cabinet-maker husband, Clint, had often dreamed of having a space where locals could come and work together.

Now, she gets great joy from sharing her skills with others.

'I especially love teaching skills that stretch someone completely out of their comfort zone.'



'The simple art of making something with your own hands can give you immeasurable pleasure'

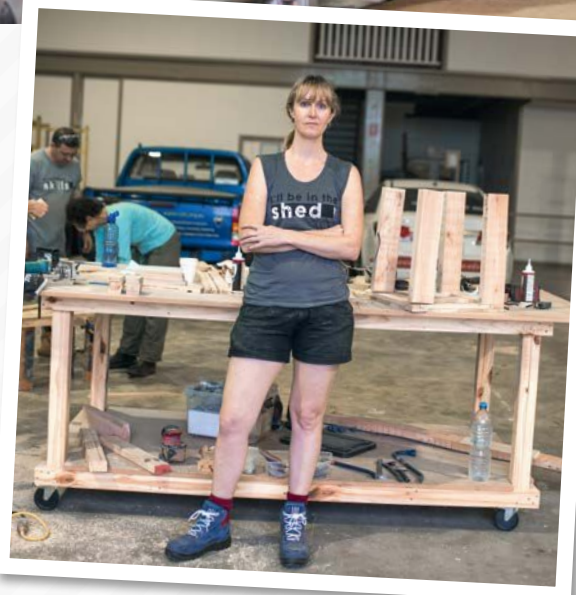
Tools of the trade

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Warehouse, by enrolling in a workshop or short course like Meg's, or asking friends and family members who are familiar with DIY to show you how.

To find out more about tools for DIY, visit handyman.net.au/tools.



Join the discussion at Workshop, a fun online community where you can ask DIY questions, share your projects and get tips and inspiration for your home. Sign up now at workshop.com.au

workshopTM

★ BASIC SKILLS

Jigsaw



Curve cutter

For cutting curves, shapes and cut-outs in a variety of materials, a jigsaw is the tool to use.

A jigsaw features a thin blade that moves up and down, with a variety of different blades for timber, stainless steel, fibre cement and even ceramic.

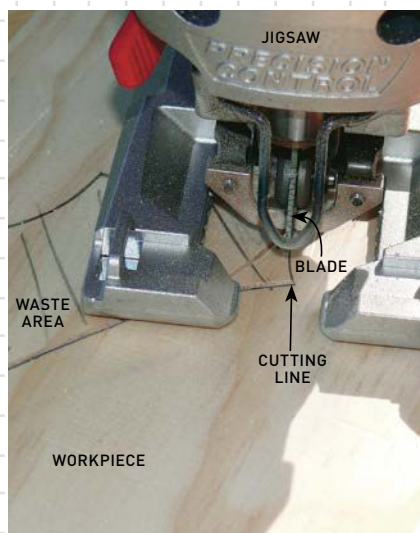
Although less powerful than a circular saw, it is lighter, more manoeuvrable and easier to use.

Fine-toothed blades are ideal for smooth cuts in thin timber, while long, opened-toothed blades are more suitable for thick material. Scroll blades work best for tight curves.

The pendulum action controls how much the blade moves forwards and back as it cuts, with low settings suitable for thin material and high settings ideal for thick, soft timber.



▶ **How to make neater cuts**
Visit handyman.net.au/jigsaw



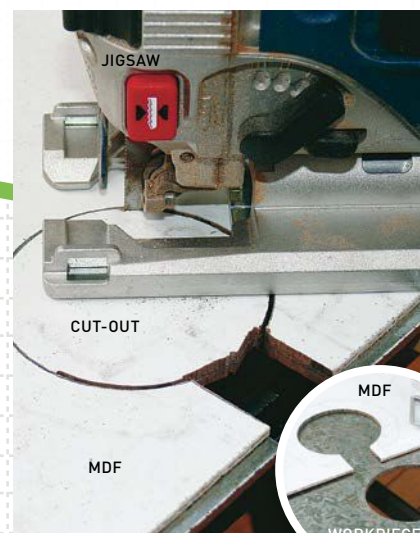
+ CUT COMPLEX SHAPES

Clamp down the workpiece, allowing clearance for the blade and with clamps positioned out of the path of the saw. Cut the material with the blade on the waste side of the cutting line. If required, saw through the waste area to allow better access for the blade, and make multiple cuts to complete tight corners.



+ MAKE BEVEL CUTS

With the power disconnected or the battery removed, loosen the screw that holds the shoe in position, or activate the quick-release lever. Tilt the shoe to the required angle up to 45°. Clamp a straightedge to the work surface and cut slowly, keeping downward pressure on the shoe.



+ PROTECT THIN SHEETS

To ensure neat cuts when working with thin materials, such as sheet metal, laminate or plastic, position the sheet between two pieces of scrap 6mm plywood or MDF, then clamp them together to prevent the sheets from moving. Mark the cutting line on the top sheet, then cut through all the layers.

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PERIOD PIECE

A harbourside apartment full of classic craftsmanship gets a modern makeover that pays homage to its past

WORDS SITA SIMONS PICTURES NICHOLAS WATT

After

The spectacular view is a key element of the final design.

With the waves lapping at the doorstep and a sparkling vista of blue as far as the eye can see, it's no surprise that this penthouse apartment was held by the same owner for more than 50 years.

When architect Scott Weston was briefed to do the modern update, he was met with a treasure trove of quality features and rare craftsmanship that exemplified some of the best post-war era design and finishing.

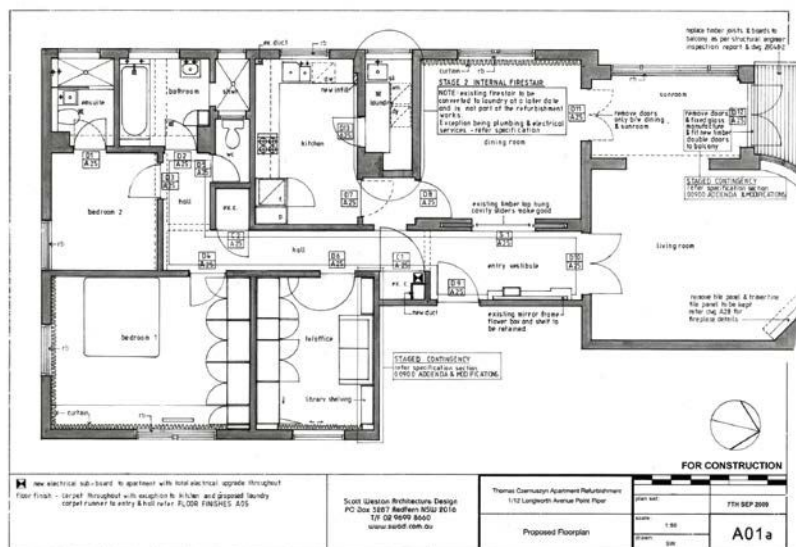
'It was old and worn, and for about a decade had been uncared for, but it was clear someone of great taste and refinement had lived here,' says Scott.

The three-bedroom apartment had been fitted out on-site by furniture maker Paul Kafka, now recognised as one of the most influential designers of the 1940s and 1950s. ➤



An original Paul Kafka credenza stands in the hallway, one of the only ones that could be salvaged.

Before





After

Classic furniture complements a striking glass and art collection.

Before



Update a classic

The brief was to reference the period in a contemporary way and Scott knew how he'd integrate the old and new.

'There was everything to love here, the light, the proportions, the elegant layout. Add to that the new owner's sense of style and it was the attention to detail that would set it apart,' he says.

A load-bearing wall was removed to maximise the view, but there were no other changes to the floorplan.

The renovation hit a troublesome spot when new wiring and services were needed, as this impacted on the neighbours, but went well otherwise.

All of the surfaces were refinished but as strata dictated no hard-surface floors, the floorboards were inlaid with carpet and edged with oak panels.



Intricate artworks

The home features pieces by the Italian painter, sculptor and engraver Piero Fornasetti, which are very collectable.

He was known for his black-and-white designs of classical buildings and the opera singer Lina Cavalieri, often seen on ceramics.

Before



After

The new kitchen references the old, relying on simplicity of form.



As with the original kitchen, which featured a golden veneer, the new cabinets pop with unexpected colour.

Reinvent the past

The new kitchen is striking in its similarity to the old and incorporates ideas Scott is passionate about.

'The simplicity of the original kitchen struck me and it worked perfectly in the space,' he says.

'It had been beautifully designed, so I expanded on that, using modern appliances and the depths and profiles for cabinetry we prefer today.'

The cabinets are laminate and the floor is linoleum, which Scott says often surprises people.

'There's a misconception that these are inferior products, but used in the right way in the right context, they can work brilliantly.'

Laminate comes in a wide range of colours and patterns, and Scott says he uses this to great effect to be playful in his designs. ➤



For retro or vintage style with all the mod cons, use the latest versions of traditional materials

Before

After

The main bedroom is soft and bright, with a spare approach to furnishings.

A bespoke boudoir

The main bedroom had two walls of Paul Kafka joinery. A row of built-in robes along one side and, by the window, a dressing table with mirror, all in lustrous burl veneer.

As with the rest of the home, the joinery was built on-site. Very little was able to be salvaged, but much has been re-created. The new joinery was made from birdseye maple veneer with rich claret interiors.

Apart from the built-ins, the furnishings are minimal, but careful detailing makes the bedroom luxurious in its form and functionality.

A velvet upholstered bedhead against a feature wall of whimsical eau de nil wallpaper is a direct reference to Art Deco palettes and textures. And a round mirror edged in gold leaf enhances the look.

Improve the original

The whole apartment blurs the line between what is original and what is new, and nowhere is this more evident than in the two bathrooms.

The originals were classically Art Deco with pedestal sinks and tiled black dado and skirting lines.

'I always reference the thread of what was there. We came across these fantastic coral-pink tiles and

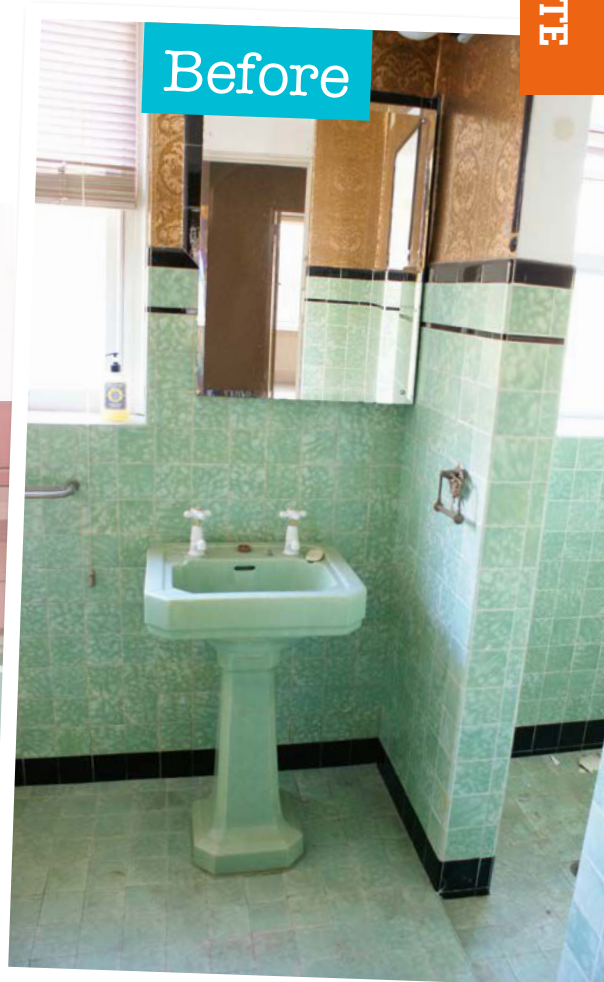
the thought of using them was immediately appealing,' says Scott.

'We even kept the crinkled glass, which is of the era, but also a totally functional way to create privacy without diminishing light.'

Clever storage was added behind the sink mirror and along a mirrored wall, keeping the room uncluttered and allowing the colours and lustre of the tiles to be the focus. ➤

After

The colours are retro, but the fittings are new and luxurious.





A child's room is playful without being overly prescriptive to age.

Space to grow

An area for a child to sleep, play and study was created at one end. A well-executed layout means that separate space can be found, even in a relatively small apartment.

The colour scheme won't date or be outgrown, and the bathroom gets a more neutral treatment while still referencing the original.

Space is maximised by utilising the approach to built-in joinery that is inherent to the imprint of this home.

A king single bed disappears into the wall in a block of navy blue, and a sliding trundle offers accommodation for friends. The whole entry wall, above and on either side of the door, is designed as 600mm deep storage.

'This home gives a deep nod to its past and is an example of refining not reinventing the wheel, so a continuous thread runs through,' says Scott. 🍌

Scott Weston Architecture Design,
Sydney. swad.com.au



ABOVE Built-in joinery is used to create a study area in this bedroom.
BELOW A complementary colour scheme was used in the adjoining bathroom.





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GREEN SPACES

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WORDS BECI ORPIN PICTURES CHRIS MIDDLETON



Position is key for indoor plants, as light levels are very important.

My dream house would have a sunlit room, just for plants. My friend Sally Wilson has one in her inner-city apartment. A small sunroom and balcony are dedicated entirely to her plants.

The first time I spent an afternoon drinking tea in this glorious space, I was ready to move in.

Sally has a great deal of know-how in keeping plants happy, as she works with and writes about plants.

Admittedly, my thumb is not completely black. The more plants I own, the better I seem to get at keeping them alive.

The main thing I have learnt is what plants work where. This has taken some time, having lived in my house for the better part of a decade.

If you live in a rental property, or you're often moving, then deciphering this can be tricky. To help, I have compiled a list of my favourite fail-safe plants that I have successfully kept alive in my home and studio.



Determining which plants will do well in each space can be an ongoing process of trial and error

Overwatering can harm plants as much as underwatering.



Devil's ivy (*Epipremnum aureum*)

I have a few of these around my studio. One particularly huge specimen is growing up a stump and is slowly taking over.

The studio has low natural light but good artificial light, and these just keep on growing.

I occasionally forget to water them, and I only remember when the leaves start to droop. But after a good soak they normally bounce back quite easily.

➤ **LOVES** low to medium light, moderate watering and having its leaves wiped with a wet cloth.

➤ **HATES** nothing. This easygoing plant is ideal for beginners. ➤



Chain of hearts (*Ceropegia woodii*)

Also known as string of hearts and rosary vine, this is possibly my favourite indoor plant. I love the delicate trailing leaves so much.

I have three at home in the bedroom, hallway and sunroom, and they are all thriving in low to good light conditions.

I pay them very little attention apart from admiring their cuteness as I walk past and watering them occasionally, and they just keep going.

➤ **LOVES** any light it can get, but it will grow faster with more light.

➤ **HATES** overwatering, so make sure the pot has good drainage.



This is an edited extract from *Sunshine Spaces* by Beci Orpin (Hardie Grant Books, \$40), in stores nationally. In her fourth DIY book, Beci shares projects inspired by nature (beciorpin.com).



Create a lush indoor landscape by arranging plants at different heights.



Hoya or wax plant

My gran's house had one of those old-school sunrooms, like a covered porch that wrapped around the house.

From memory it was full of the best 70s decor, with large cane chairs, frilly cushions and lots of plants. This is where I came across my first hoya, also known as wax plant.

Hers was a decent size and was covered in pink waxy flowers, and my four-year-old self just could not get my head around how those flowers were actually real, because they looked so fake.

Years later, my head still boggles with this thought, but it's part of the reason why I love hoyas. They come in lots of different varieties, often distinguished by numbers.

I have a number 12 hoya in my bathroom, which is growing rapidly, and a curly rope hoya in my lounge, which is growing very slowly but looks incredible.

➤ **LOVES** the right conditions for each variety. Research before you buy to get the right hoya for you.

➤ **HATES** low light, and won't flower in this environment.

Dracaena (*Dracaena fragrans*)

This is one of those plants that you can literally forget about for months and it will be okay.

I know this because we have one in our warehouse in the staff bathroom, which is only used about once a month, and there it is, still going strong.

I'll give it a little water and it gives me some 'thank you' plant vibes, and then I won't see it for

another month. Our relationship works out great with this set-up.

➤ **LOVES** bright light, but will tolerate any conditions and can handle considerable neglect.

➤ **HATES** overwatering, direct sunlight, too much attention.





Peace lily (*Spathiphyllum*)

I've had many of these over the years and they always fare well.

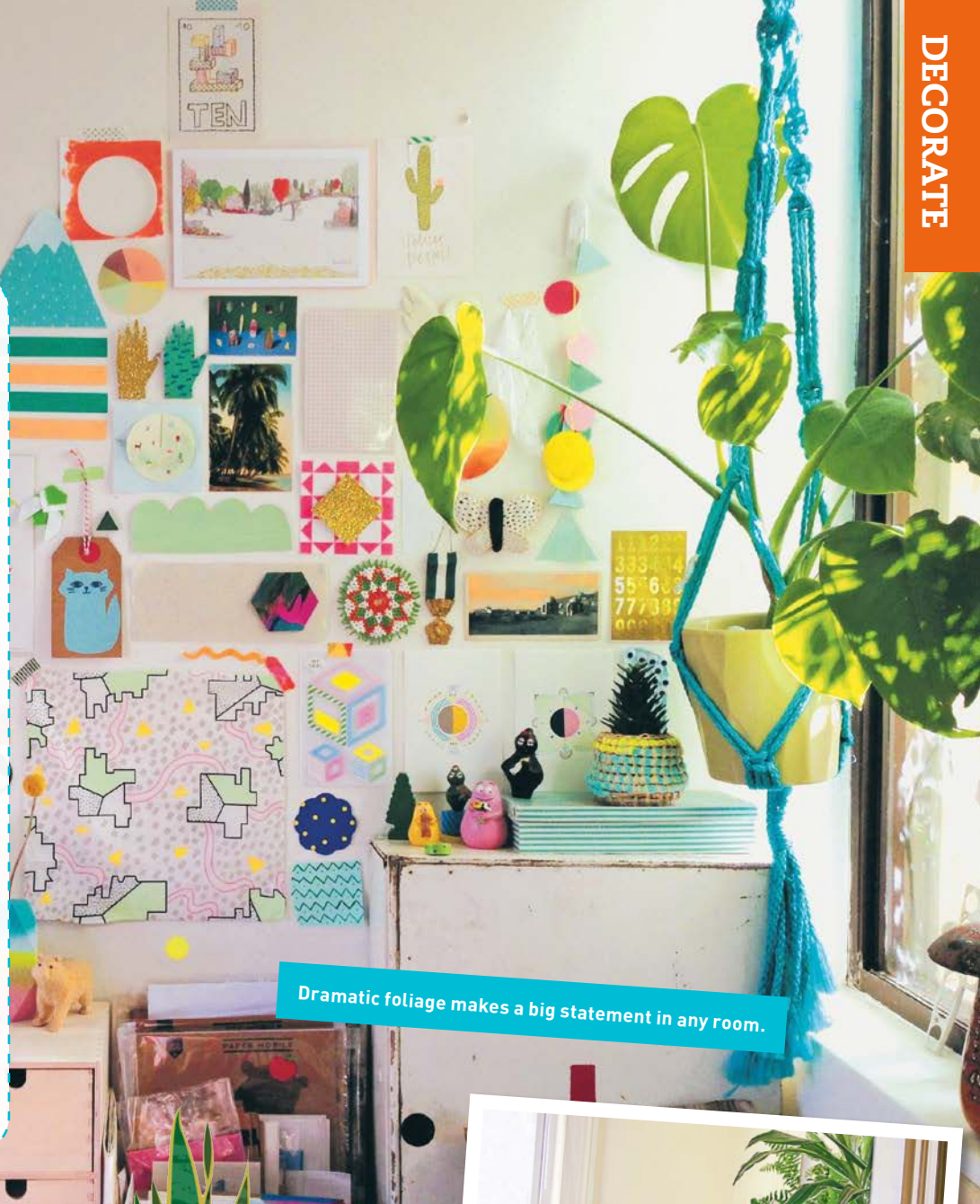
Currently, I have one at home, which has lived in many different locations, including our freezing cold front room, the sunroom and our bedroom.

I just put it anywhere, and when it looks unhappy, I simply move it to a different location. It seems to cope with this nomadic lifestyle pretty well.

It does like to be watered though, but will tell you if it's thirsty with drooping leaves.

➤ **LOVES** weekly watering, and will do best in slightly warm areas that aren't too hot. It will flower in warmer temperatures.

➤ **HATES** not being watered.



Dramatic foliage makes a big statement in any room.

Mother-in-law's tongue (*Sansevieria trifasciata*)

These plants are known for their indestructible nature, but I have killed a few. Now I know this is from overcrowding, as they love a lot of space in their pot.

We currently have one in the windowless bathroom of our doughnut shop and it's going great, so it obviously can deal well with artificial light.

We also have one on our warehouse landing and it's doing okay too, though I think I'll move it



to the warmer surrounds of the office soon. These plants are also great air purifiers.

➤ **LOVES** warm temperatures out of direct sun, but it will do okay in moderate temperatures.

➤ **HATES** too much water, so let it dry out between waterings. Avoid overcrowding in the pot. ➤



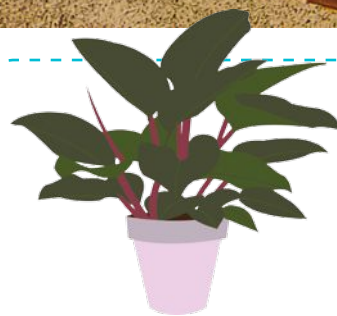


Protect your pets

There are lots of other great indoor plants out there. These are just the ones that have worked best for me.

Also, be aware that some plants are toxic to pets. If this concerns you, or if your pets are particularly partial to eating plants, make sure you do some research first to check what indoor plants are the most pet-friendly.

Avoid plants that are toxic to cats and dogs.



Philodendron

These plants come in many different shapes and sizes. I have a medium-sized one on my studio table, which seems to be getting bigger every time I look at it. It loves the artificial light it gets.

I also have a large one in our warehouse, which was very sad and neglected, but after some intensive care it looks like it's going to make it through.

I have a *Philodendron maximum* in my lounge, which is doing okay, but not loving life that much. I might have to move it.

➤ **LOVES** low-to-medium indirect light, but will do well in artificial light. Enjoys moderate watering and having its leaves wiped down with a wet cloth.

➤ **HATES** direct sunlight.



Rubber plant (*Ficus elastica*)

During my plant-shopping adventures, I never gave the rubber plant a second look until I was given one in a pale pink pot.

The combination of the dark green leaves against the pretty pot had me in awe. Now it's one of my favourites.

At first I put my rubber plant in our low-light lounge room, but after a while the leaves seemed to be dropping off too quickly.

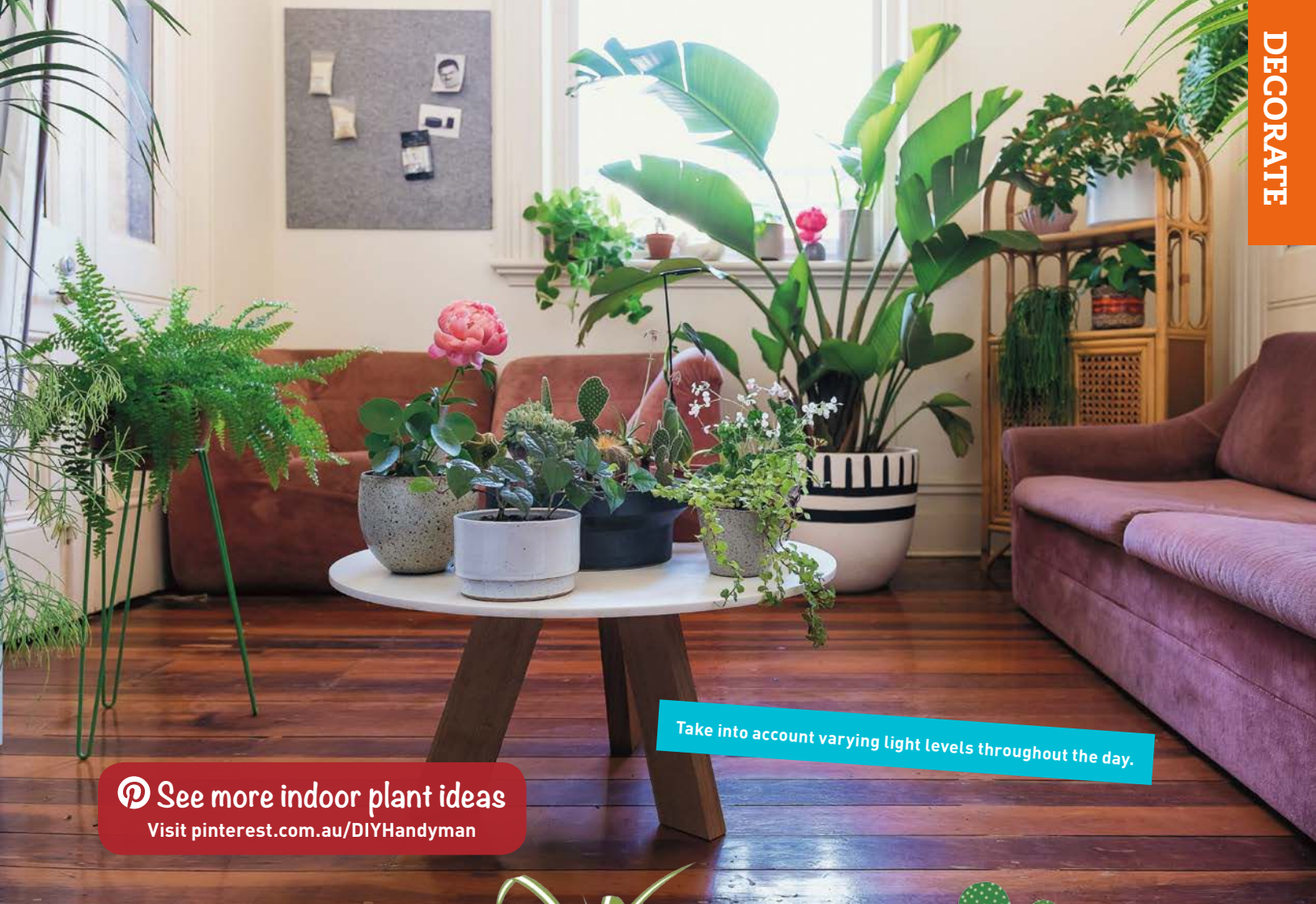
I moved it to a spot in our sunroom, which was warm but with no direct light, and now it's sprouting new leaves like there's no tomorrow.

➤ **LOVES** bright indirect light and moderate watering. A sign of too much watering is when the leaves start to turn yellow and drop off.

These plants can be fickle, but in the right spot they will thrive. Leaves need to be wiped down with a wet cloth.

➤ **HATES** being moved around, cold temperatures and draughts.





Take into account varying light levels throughout the day.

 See more indoor plant ideas
Visit pinterest.com.au/DIYHandyman



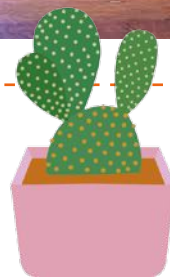
Spider plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*)

This is another plant that thrives on neglect and is easy to grow. We have one in our doughnut shop, where it doesn't get a lot of love, yet keeps on growing.

I had the same plant in my studio for a while, and the lack of light in there almost killed it.

Once it was moved into the brighter light downstairs, it returned to full health.

- **LOVES** well-drained soil, bright light and cooler temperatures.
- **HATES** heat and overwatering.



Succulents and small cacti

I have several different varieties on my lounge room windowsill. I love them because they look like a group of sculptures.

They grow slowly, if at all, and ask for very little attention. You will need to experiment with different varieties to see which ones work best indoors.

Most of them need some kind of sunlight or warmth, but overall they are pretty hardy.

- **LOVES** good drainage and warmer temperatures.
- **HATES** overwatering. ☹️

Find it at Bunnings

MAKE A VINTAGE DISPLAY LADDER

Add character to your interior with this rustic storage solution

Ladders are ideal to use as hanging storage for clothes and blankets in a bedroom or study.

They don't take up much space, and vintage pieces add a unique design element to any room.

Second-hand ladders can be hard to come by, and often command high prices. Instead, you can build a ladder from scratch to fit perfectly in your space, then distress it if you'd like to get the vintage look for less.



Distress the timber to make the ladder look like a well-worn piece

What you need

- 90 x 35mm Tasmanian oak DAR
- 35mm Tasmanian oak dowel
- 75mm bullethead nails
- Tape measure and pencil
- Circular saw
- Drill with 35mm spade bit
- PVA adhesive
- Tape
- Hammer
- Belt sander or rasp
- Sandpaper
- Timber filler
- Putty knife
- Heat gun
- Utility knife
- Stain, wax and rags

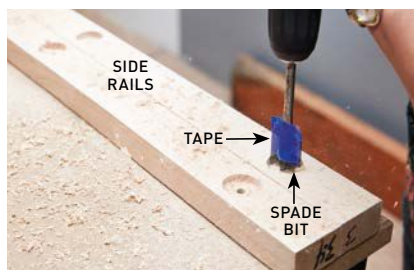
DESIGN TIP

Vintage pieces have more impact when used sparingly, so use only one or two in your interior decorating to make them stand out.



1 Rip the side rails

Use a circular saw to cut two 1500mm lengths of 90 x 35mm Tasmanian oak. Rip each piece to 50mm wide to create the side rails of the ladder. Use the rip fence on your saw for an even cut. Cut five lengths of dowel 300mm long.



2 Drill the rung holes

Mark the rung hole centres on the side rails 325mm apart, with the top and base rungs 100mm from either end. Wrap tape around a 35mm spade bit 10mm from the spurs, then drill the holes. Stop when you reach the tape.



3 Distress the timber

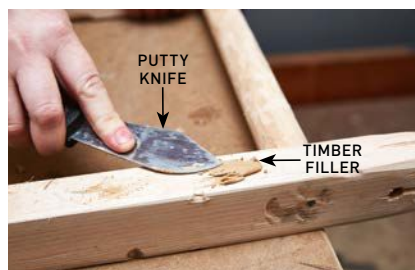
To make the ladder look used, rough up the timber with a belt sander or rasp. Make dents with a hammer, and taper the ends of the timber with a utility knife. Sand the centre of the rungs to make them look worn down.



4 Assemble the ladder

Apply PVA adhesive to the holes, then insert the dowels. Leave excess glue to enhance the vintage look. Secure the rungs with 75mm bullethead nails.

TIP Bend over a few of the nail heads to make it look like an old repair job.



5 Enhance the dents

Use a putty knife to apply timber filler to the major dents, then allow to dry and sand smooth. Use a heat gun to create burn marks on the timber to add to the aged look, focusing on dents, joints and holes.



6 Apply the finish

Wipe on an uneven coat of timber stain using a rag and allow to dry. Apply timber wax to enhance the grain of the timber. Apply white timber filler to create the look of dried paint, then apply a final coat of stain.

DIY TIP

Keep clothes, in particular formal wear and other items not often worn, out of direct sunlight to avoid fading.

Drawers under windows are an excellent use of often-wasted space.



CLOSET MAKEOVER

Organise your wardrobe with expert tips to keep things tidy

WORDS SITA SIMONS

Getting on top of storage and organisation in the home is a constant battle for most.

But the benefits of being tidy extend beyond just looking good, with experts agreeing that it's also beneficial for your wellbeing.

The wardrobe is one area that can get disorganised quickly and can seem like a never-ending process of cleaning only for it to become a disaster again.

Add to this the likelihood that you might be sharing a wardrobe with

someone else and you have a recipe for frequent annoyance.

Wardrobe design expert Sally Hart, owner of the Clever Closet Company (cleverclosetcompany.com.au), is a passionate believer in finding freedom through organisation.

Sally is quick to point out that your wardrobe woes are actually in part design flaws, and every space, whether big or small, can be improved dramatically with just a few simple tricks of the trade. ➤



SHAPE AND SIZE

'A wardrobe, even if designed by an architect, is generally not made specifically for the items it's used for. It may look good, but it's just a big box and it's left to the person to decide how to use it,' says Sally.

This can work in a kitchen where there are many different-sized items that need to be stored, so whatever the space, something will fit in it. But it is not so applicable when it comes to clothes and accessories.

The issue with many wardrobes is that they are made using standard machinery cuts of timber, with shelves and drawers sized 450 x 450mm.

'Everyone's clothes are similar sizes when they're folded, but with the

standard timber cuts, you end up with 1.5 jumpers across and 1.5 jumpers deep, and there is no way of keeping that consistently tidy.'

Sally says to look for increments of 500-650mm for the most practical application, meaning you'll get two jumpers or two T-shirts across.

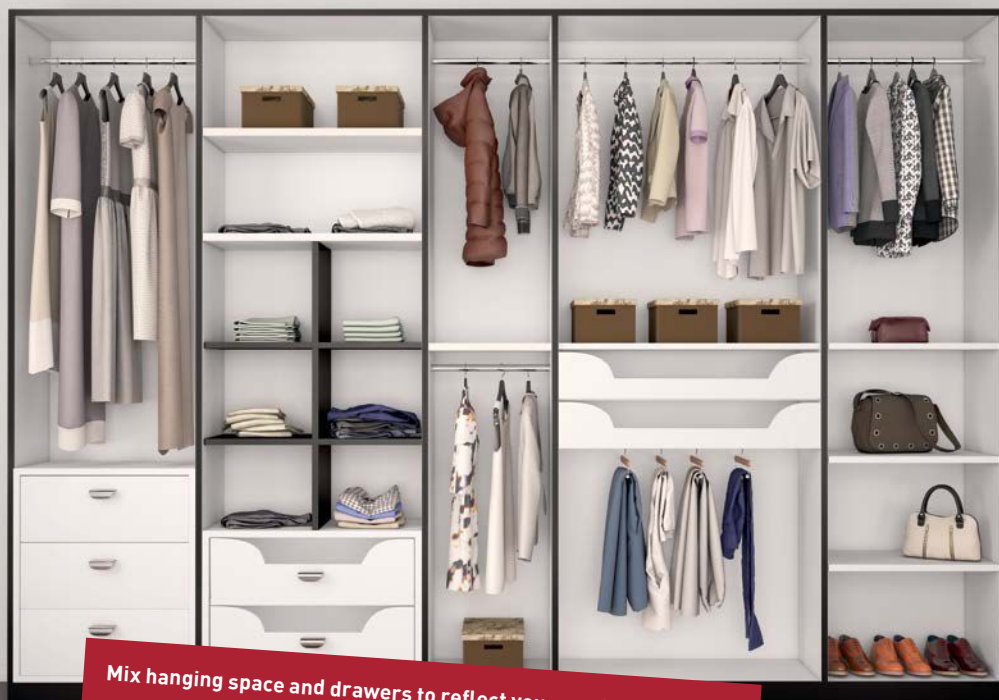
The depth is just as important, as this is how you end up with things becoming lost at the back.

'It's better to have shallow shelves, like with a bookcase, that only fit one item front to rear because you don't have to reach to the back,' says Sally.

'You can then stack your shelving closer together, so you get more usable surface area that remains organised.'



The dimensions of your wardrobe are crucial, as they determine storage capacity



Mix hanging space and drawers to reflect your particular needs.



Smooth and sturdy drawer runners are a must, like these King Slide Drawer Slides, from \$14 for two (bunnings.com.au).

PICTURE (BOTTOM LEFT) ISTOCK



Custom-designed walk-in wardrobes provide a place for everything.

THE BIG TIDY

There's no way to sort out your closets without a thorough edit of everything you have. Knowing what you own is the first step to working out how best to organise it all.

After you've donated or discarded anything you no longer want or need, and if you have space to spare, categorising by purpose and giving each category its own area is a logical and well-organised method.

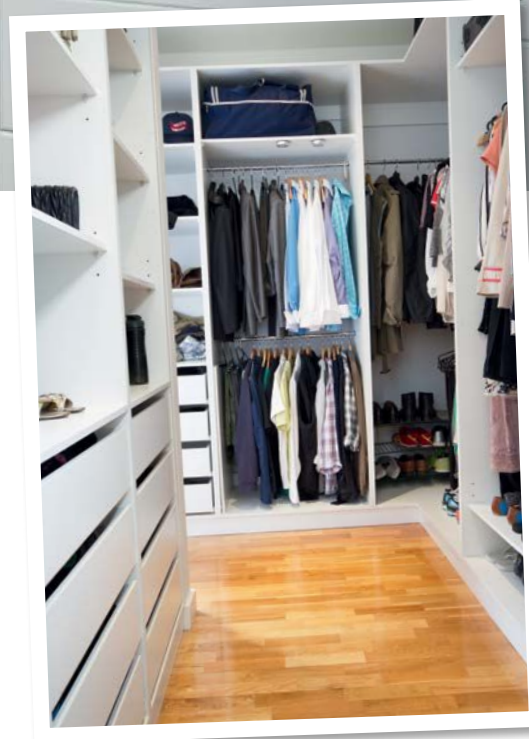
But if you need to maximise or save space, sorting by size is most efficient, particularly when sharing a wardrobe.

'Rather than keeping two separate sides or creating lots of small sections, it's best to combine long and short hanging instead. It's neater and also more logical,' says Sally.

Invest in new hangers for an easy and effective way to neaten everything.

Experts prefer thin-profile flocked hangers because they're more space efficient and suit most garments, the exception being delicate items that may need padded hangers.

Whatever your hanger preferences may be, uniformity is key. ➤





HANG OR FOLD?

There is a golden ratio for most people, and it falls around one-third shelves to two-thirds hanging. Items that need to be stacked should be on shelves, such as jumpers, T-shirts, hats, bags and, wherever possible, shoes.

Another reason wardrobes can fall into disarray is from using the floorspace as storage.

'The floor is hard to keep tidy, so avoid having low shelves and fit the space with hanging storage instead. Place the shelves from waist height upwards, so it's the same amount of storage but more practical,' says Sally.

Shallow shelves mean no grappling for items at the back.



Know your type

When two people are sharing a bedroom and using the same wardrobe, knowing your individual tidy styles helps with keeping organised over time.

'One of you may fold, one may throw. It's better to accommodate

these styles rather than try to change them,' says Sally.

'A thrower is better off with drawers and baskets rather than shelves, so they can throw into something. More sections in which to throw provides more opportunity for long-term organisation.' >



EVOLUTION TOUCH

ONE TOUCH CAVITY RELEASE SYSTEM



THE PERFECT ADDITION FOR CAVITY UNITS



- ✓ HOLDS DOOR IN CAVITY
- ✓ ONE TOUCH TO RELEASE DOOR
- ✓ EFFORTLESS OPERATION
- ✓ NO DOOR HANDLES - JUST TOUCH

The Evolution Touch is magnetised and will hold your door firmly open inside the cavity. The soft one touch action spring loaded release system is effortless. Simply push the edge of the door to release from the cavity unit

EVOLUTION TOUCH
INSTALLATION VIDEO





Finding an efficient way to store shoes will pay dividends.

SHOES AND BAGS

The best solution for shoe storage is on shelves from waist to eye height. Go for adjustable shelves 300-400mm apart, and greater for higher shoes.

'Use a filing cabinet to store your shoes vertically. This way you can use the entire depth of the wardrobe. A bookcase is another option, which is usually deep enough for one shoe. Look for one at least 250mm deep,' says Sally.

Handbags are best on shelves at waist height, but if not practical, use wall hooks. Look for the right radius of hooks so the strap of the bag sits in the hook, not on. Telescopic racks can be good for belts, ties and scarves.

'If you work with the shallow shelving idea, then the back of the door is an ideal storage space. Baskets on shelves can also work for smaller items you want to group together.' 🍷



Dry and fresh

Moisture is the enemy of fabric and we've all taken something out of the wardrobe to find it covered in mould.

The compact and mobile DeLonghi DX10 Dehumidifier, \$299 is designed to collect the surplus moisture in the air (delonghi.com.au).



PICTURES SALLY HART

Meet Wardrobe Solutions

Take control over your space

Choose
between



Two or three
sliding doors



Plain or mirror doors



Drawers and
shelf packs

Practical.

Adaptable.

Affordable.



Bedford
WARDROBE
SOLUTIONS



Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse
bunnings.com.au

Find it at Bunnings

WARDROBE DESIGN

Solve bedroom clutter with these flexible and affordable storage solutions for any space



Multistore Two-shelf
Four Wire Basket,
\$511.

Multistore Rail Unit,
2000 x 750 x 450mm,
\$274.

Multistore Three-shelf
Four Jumbo Drawer
Wardrobe Insert,
\$399.

Multistore
Corner Unit,
2000 x 800 x 450mm,
\$511.

Create a custom closet to suit your specific needs with this broad range of solutions for any home, whether there is an existing built-in wardrobe or not.

When planning your new design, assess which clothes, accessories, shoes and other items need storing.

Take this as an opportunity to refine what you own, selling, donating or throwing out what no longer works for you, saving you from wasting space.

Walk-in wonder

Make the most of the space in your walk-in wardrobe by using an all-in-one modular storage system. It features flexible shelving, meaning you can easily chop and change the design as your needs evolve over time.



Bedford Wardrobe Solutions Deep Drawer, 553 x 220 x 400mm, \$36 each.

Freestanding function

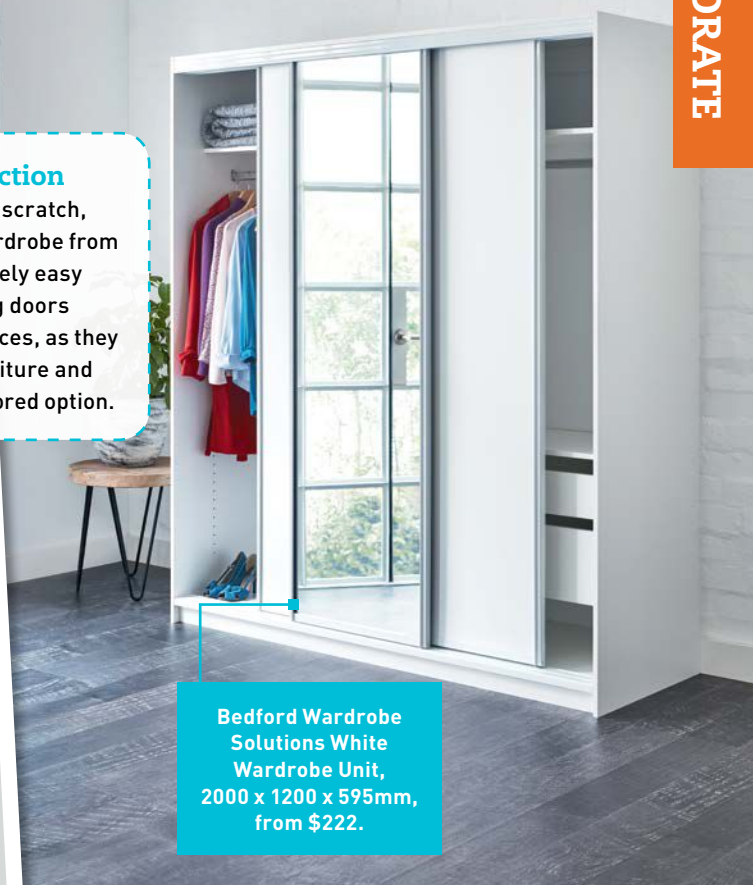
If you're starting from scratch, building a compact wardrobe from a flatpack kit is relatively easy and affordable. Sliding doors are ideal for small spaces, as they won't bump other furniture and are available in a mirrored option.



Sandleford Chrome Tube Rod, 16 x 1200mm, \$4.98 each.

Built-in beauty

Adjusting the layout in a built-in robe is easy with affordable shelving inserts you can install yourself and relocatable hanging rails. Simple-to-build drawers with effortless runners are great for hiding messy items.



Bedford Wardrobe Solutions White Wardrobe Unit, 2000 x 1200 x 595mm, from \$222.

Watch the video 'How to install a wardrobe insert unit' at bunnings.com.au/diy-advice



Humecraft Internal Door, 2340 x 520mm, from \$179.50.

Multistore Wardrobe Insert, 1495 x 450 x 430mm, with adjustable shelf and five standard drawers, \$295.



BUILD A CARPORT

Use a kit to provide a safe shelter for your vehicle in just a weekend

An asset that will add value to any property is covered off-street parking.

Having a shelter for your vehicles helps prevent storm damage and keeps cars cleaner for longer, as well as keeping you dry on rainy days.

While building a garage may be a bit beyond the DIY skills of most people, installing a carport kit over a weekend with a little help is a quick, easy and budget-friendly alternative.

Available in a range of classic designs, including gable and skillion, and varying sizes to cover up to four cars, there's one to suit any home.

PICTURE ALAMY

Plan ahead

A large structure may require approval, so check with your local council before purchasing a kit.

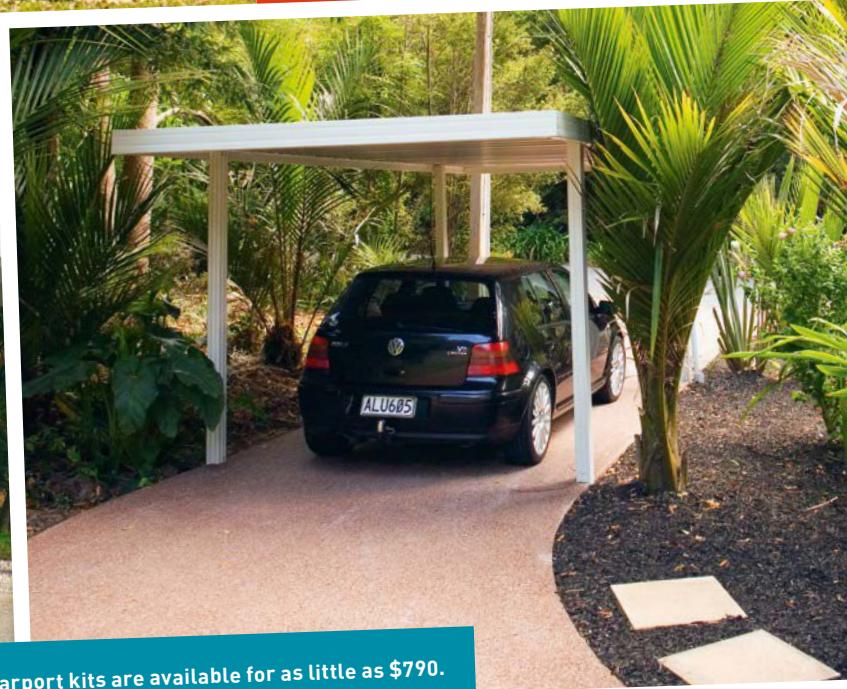
- ✚ When replacing an existing carport of the same size or larger, approval is generally not needed. But if you're in doubt, check with the council.
- ✚ New structures such as carports can be covered by Exempt and Complying Development guidelines, but again, check with the council.
- ✚ Ask the supplier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

SAFETY TIP

If you live in an area that is prone to high winds or storms, you'll need to choose a carport that has a cyclonic rating.



PICTURES ALAMY



Easy-to-assemble single carport kits are available for as little as \$790.



A carport adds value to a property and can easily be built DIY.

Working with kits

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

You'll need extra pairs of hands for the heavy lifting that's required to get the roof off the ground, so make sure you have help at this stage.

Before starting, check that all the parts of the kit are present to avoid any future problems or delays in the middle of the build.

After installation, paint the downpipes the same colour as your roof and fascia boards.

For step-by-step instructions on building a carport from a kit, go to handyman.net.au/carport.

TOP PICKS



Bosch Blue 18V Cordless Angle Grinder, \$153, skin only.
bosch-do-it.com.au



Ryobi One+ 18V Hammer Drill Kit, \$239.
ryobi.com.au



Absco Sheds 6 x 6 x 2.25m Colorbond Gable Roof Double Carport, \$3915.
absco sheds.com.au



Ramset 16 x 110mm Galvanised DynaBolt Plus Hex Nut Bolt, \$4.
ramset.com.au

★ READERS' DIY

Outdoor project

Jennie's carport addition

When she moved in with her husband, Jennie Murray realised they would need more protected parking than the existing single garage.

They decided to add a carport themselves, but the space needed considerable work before they could begin building their new structure, as it had a steep slope.

'We built a retaining wall, then moved the Colorbond fence and gate in line with the back of the house,' says Jennie.

The site was levelled and covered with riverstone pebbles, and bamboo screening was installed.

'The project cost us just \$1500 using timber and Colorbond roofing.'



The carport meant a second car could be parked under cover.



Before

WIN \$300

Send us photos of your DIY project for your chance to win \$300 and have it published in *Australian Handyman*. Take high-resolution before and after photos, plus one of yourself, then submit them online at handyman.net.au/win.



AUTO OVERHAUL

Maintain your car inside and out to prolong its life and get the most from your investment

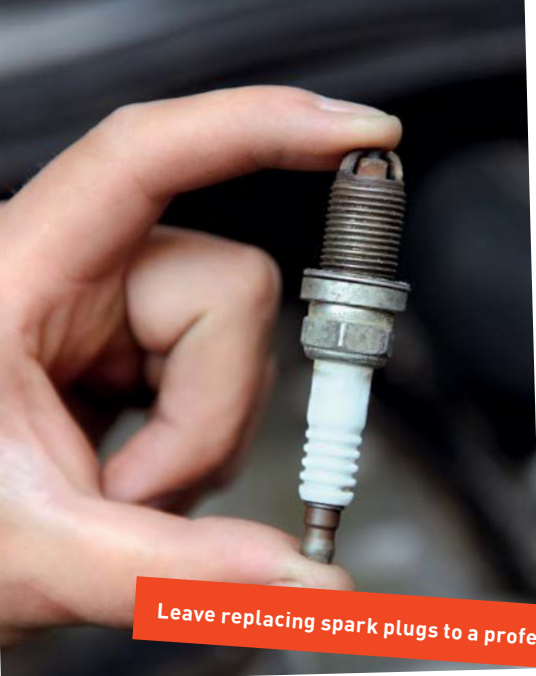
WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

In the hustle and bustle of daily life, it's easy to skip servicing your car regularly, as it can seem like a simple place to cut costs.

But servicing and cleaning will save you in the long-term, as doing both will maximise the life span of a vehicle and ensure you get top dollar if you decide to sell it.

Properly maintaining a car also ensures any potentially dangerous wear on key parts is caught early.

PICTURE: ISTOCK



Leave replacing spark plugs to a professional.

Expert essentials

To keep your car in top shape, you should ideally schedule a service at least every 5000km or six months.

This includes a safety inspection, where a mechanic can catch any potentially dangerous wear or faults, as well as preventative maintenance and an oil and filter change.

While there's plenty of car care you can tackle yourself, there are key things you need to leave up to a mechanic.

Spark plugs are one such thing, as using one that isn't specifically designed for your car can result in catastrophic engine failure.

Ancillary oils and fluids are part of automatic transmissions, a manual gearbox, differential and power steering and braking systems. Most should be replaced every two years by a pro.

A drive belt needs to be tensioned correctly and should be left to an expert. One that slips will wear quickly and a break can damage the engine.



If in doubt, ask an expert before making repairs yourself to ensure your safety

SAFETY TIP

If a radiator has overheated, don't open it for several hours. Wear gloves and use a thick cloth to avoid third-degree burns.



DIY details

There are several simple fixes and checks every car owner can tackle to cut repair costs and extend engine life.

⚙️ **TYRE PRESSURE** is easy to check and top up at your local servo, and may need adjusting if towing heavy loads.

Check your car manual for optimal pressure, as an underinflated tyre may wear faster or increase fuel use.

⚙️ **ENGINE OIL** is best checked a few minutes after turning off the engine. Pull out the dipstick, then wipe it before

reinserting it and checking if the oil registers in the middle of the markings.

Top up if below this level with an oil recommended in your car manual.

⚙️ **RADIATOR COOLANT** removes waste heat from the engine and prevents corrosion. Replace periodically, checking if your car uses Type A or B. If you see floating black specks, see a mechanic.

⚙️ **WINDSCREEN WIPERS** will need to be replaced if they cause streaking or are cracked or worn. ➤

Windscreen wipers

Frequent use of wipers will speed up deterioration due to dirt and grime, and they can also harden over time and become ineffective.

It's a good idea to replace them every six months or 10,000km.

TOP PICKS



Selleys RP7 Multipurpose Lubricant, \$8 for 400g. selleys.com.au



Kinchrome Digital Tyre Pressure Gauge, \$24. kinchrome.com.au



Projecta 12V Battery Charger, \$27. projecta.com.au

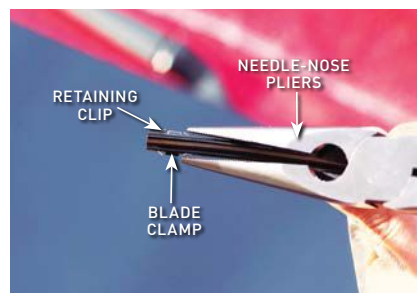
1 2 3



1 Measure the blades

Pull the arm back from the glass, then double up a bath towel to protect your windscreen. Measure the length of the original worn-out wiper blades.

TIP Measure both the driver's side and passenger's side as one is often longer.



2 Remove the blades

Pivot the blade until the base of it flips upwards. Pinch together the retaining clips near the end of the refill with needle-nose pliers, then start to pull the blade until the clips slide under the blade clamp. Slip out the blade.



3 Replace the blades

Insert the new blade into the same end you removed the old one from. Ensure it's held between the clamps and that the retaining clips click into position. Pivot the arm back to face down and release. Repeat for the other wiper. ➤

SAY HELLO TO THE PUMPED-UP NEW-LOOK ISUZU MU-X



GO YOUR OWN WAY IN THE 3-LITRE, MORE TORQUE, 6-SPEED ISUZU MU-X

With refined styling inside and out, the new-look, pumped-up Isuzu MU-X is a stand out performer on or off-road. With the legendary Isuzu 3-litre turbo diesel engine, a beefed up 430Nm of torque and an intuitive 6-speed transmission. Coupled with a Terrain Command 4WD system and 3.0 tonne braked towing capacity*, the 7-seat MU-X is all you need to pump up any adventure. GO YOUR OWN WAY!

Discover the Isuzu MU-X at your Isuzu UTE Dealer or isuzuute.com.au



GO YOUR OWN WAY

*3.0 tonne braked towing capacity on all MU-X models when fitted with an optional genuine Isuzu UTE tow bar kit. *5 years/130,000km whichever occurs first, for eligible customers. Excludes accessories. >The Capped Price Servicing Program ("CPS Program") applies to Eligible Vehicles with a Warranty Start Date on or after 1/1/15 at Participating Isuzu UTE Dealers only. The 5 years Capped Price Servicing covers the first 5 Scheduled Services for 16.5MY and later vehicle models for up to 5 years/50,000km (whichever occurs first). CPS Program is subject to change. For full terms & conditions and current pricing visit isuzuute.com.au/service-plus.



Wash and rinse your car in sections so suds don't dry on the paintwork.

Facade finishes

Cleaning the exterior of your car keeps it in good condition. Try these ways to tackle some of the trickier issues.

✚ **CLEAN** mag wheels with dish soap, as they have a clear coating on them that can be damaged by some cleaners.

✚ **REMOVE** tar from paintwork by covering it in margarine for a few hours then wiping off with a damp cloth. For large, stubborn areas, dilute one part eucalyptus oil with four parts kerosene or petrol and apply with a cloth.

✚ **RESTORE** discoloured headlights by applying a mix of toothpaste and warm water with a wet sponge, then rinse.

✚ **WASH** windscreens, which can become cloudy. Clean using an ammonia-free spray, as ammonia can damage the interior of your car.

✚ **WATCH** for acidic bird droppings and tree sap, which damage the paintwork. Always wash off as soon as possible.



Brake dust can accumulate on car wheels, so clean well to avoid corrosion occurring over time

TOP PICKS



Ozito 110W Buffer Polisher with Re-usable Bonnet, \$35.
ozito.com.au



Kärcher High Pressure Car Cleaning Brush, \$80.
kaercher.com.au



DTA Australia Large Foam Sponge, \$5.
dta-aus.com.au



Mechanix Tyre Foam, \$5 for 400g.
mechanixtough.com.au



TIDY TIP

Wash your car once a week to avoid cloudy windows and damage to paintwork caused by dust, bird droppings and tree sap.

Polish leather and vinyl to protect them from heat and UV damage.
BELOW Regular vacuuming will keep upholstery looking good.



Immaculate interiors

While most people know the basics of cleaning their car, a few common issues may leave them stumped.

- **FABRIC SEATS** are at risk of stains, so protect your seats by using a seat cover. In the event of a mark, sponge or spray it with dry-cleaning fluid, then apply warm water and vinegar. Rinse and repeat until clean.
- **AIR CONDITIONER VENTS** can accumulate dust. Clean with a foam

brush or paintbrush. Use a vacuum cleaner to remove the dust from the brush so it doesn't settle elsewhere. Use this technique to clean all of the interior buttons and knobs.

- **CORROSION BUILD-UP** can occur on a battery terminal and cause damage. Disconnect the cables, then sprinkle bicarbonate of soda on the terminals before scrubbing well with a wet toothbrush to clean. ✔



Un-Du Sticker, Tape & Label Remover, \$11 for 30ml. timbermate.com.au



Diggers White Spirits, about \$8 for 1L. recochem.com.au



Ryobi One+ 18V Cordless Hand Vacuum, \$59, skin only. ryobi.com.au



Britex Upholstery Cleaner, \$10 for 500ml. bunnings.com.au

ICONIC BRANDS

As a nation of inventors, Aussies have a long history of creating products that have stood the test of time



Australia has a sterling international reputation when it comes to well-known, highly-regarded brands built upon integrity, quality and innovation.

The proof is in the pudding, of course, with several iconic Aussie companies having now been in business for several decades, and some having even cracked a century.

Trusted brands Sutton Tools, Hills and Cyclone have consistently created long-lasting quality products, a simple fact that deserves to be celebrated.

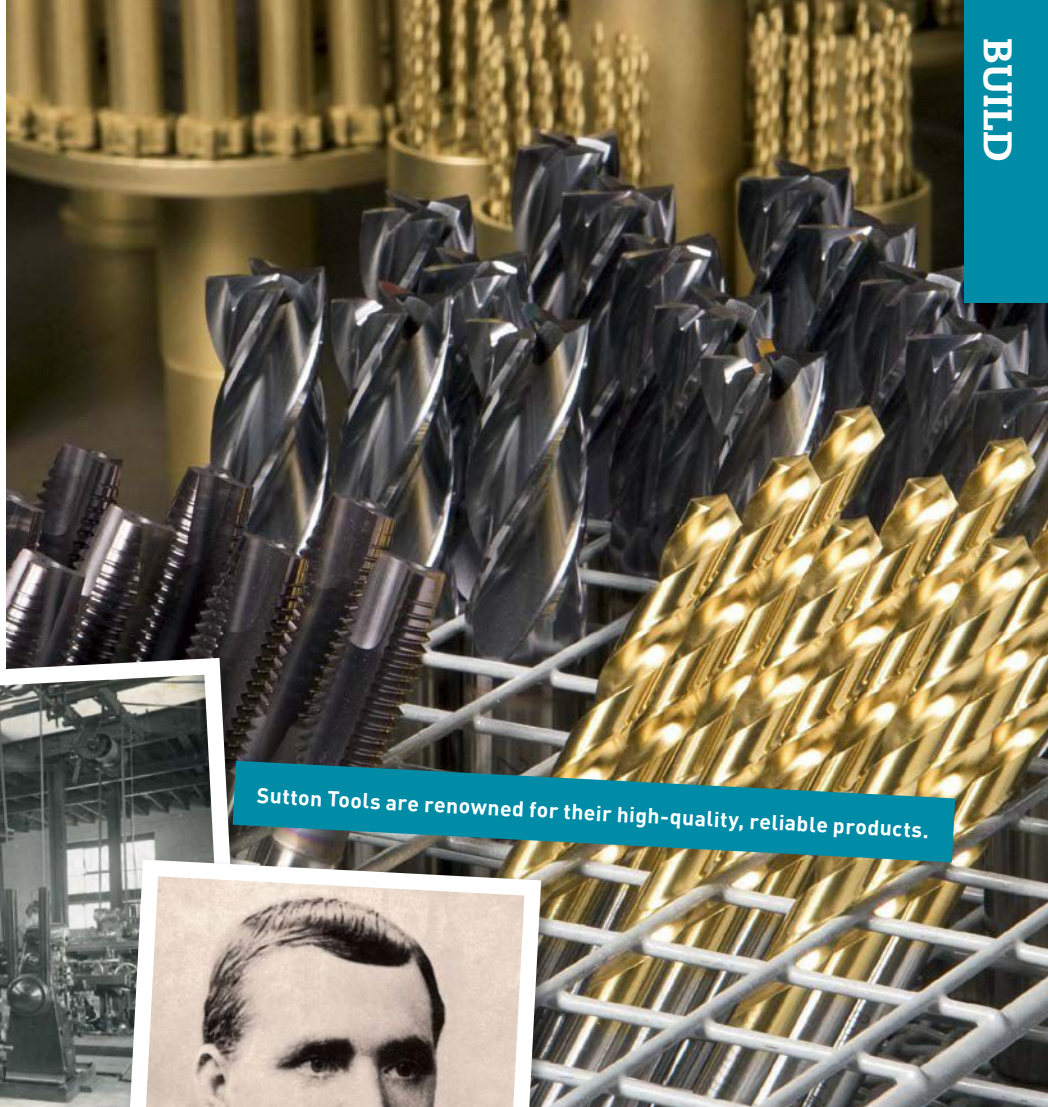
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SUTTON TOOLS

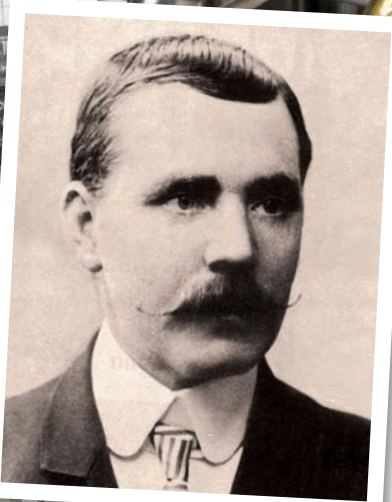
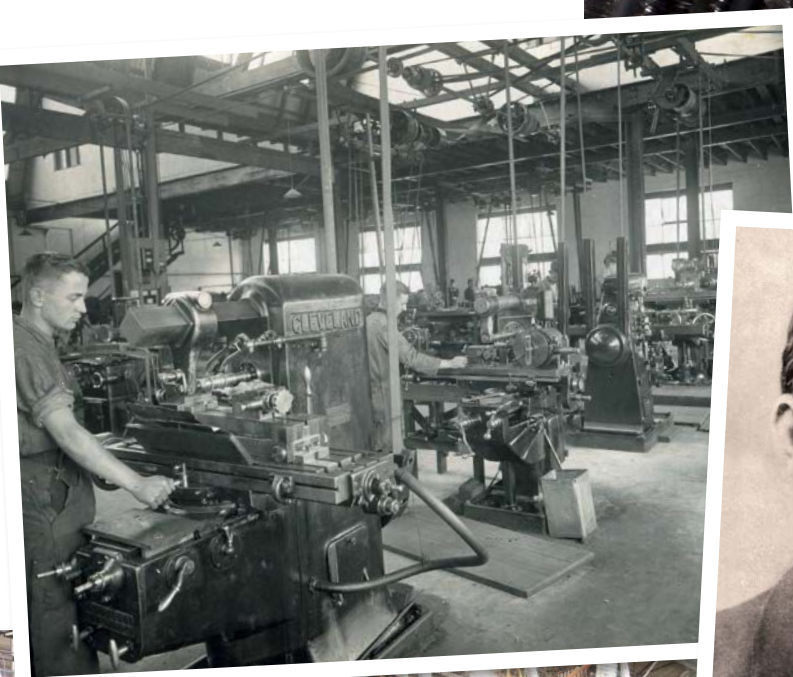
With a century of producing quality power tool accessories and cutting tools, Sutton Tools is one of Australia's most respected companies.

The third generation of Suttons to run the brand, brothers Jim and the late Bill, were inducted into the Victorian Manufacturing Hall of Fame Honour Roll in 2010.

Today, the family run business uses its specialised industrial experience to make quality tools for the DIYer.



Sutton Tools are renowned for their high-quality, reliable products.



British immigrant William Henry Sutton founded Sutton Tools in Australia in 1917, after helping with the war effort in the UK



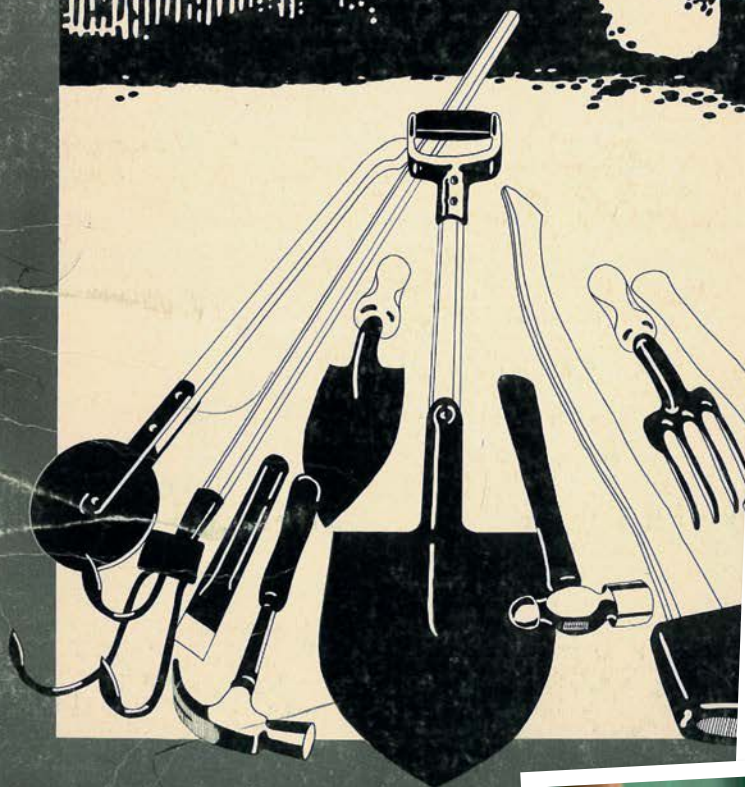
Fast facts

- ⊕ Sutton Tools employs 350 people worldwide and produces 15,000 product lines.
- ⊕ Started in 1917, it's celebrating 100 years with special edition drill bits (suttontools.com).
- ⊕ Still family owned, it's run by the fourth generation of Suttons. >

CYCLONE FORGINGS

Cyclone Forgings Pty. Ltd. A Member of the Cyclone Group of Companies

Hand & Garden Tools Catalogue



CYCLONE

Since the early days when its focus was manufacturing fencing and gates, Cyclone (cyclone.com.au) has been loved by Aussies. The strength and beautiful designs of its products meant they were a hit country-wide.

More than 100 years old, Cyclone has now expanded to make gardening tools, garden hoses and insect screens.

An environmentally conscious company, Cyclone aims to reduce waste and maximise recycling. ➤



Designed to stand the test of time with heavy use, Cyclone products come with a lifetime guarantee



Fast facts

- ✦ Started in 1898 as Cyclone Fence & Gate Company, it made wire fencing for beehives.
- ✦ Manufacture of its digging tools takes place in a plant in Wonthaggi in Victoria.
- ✦ Australian spotted gum and BlueScope steel are used to make its garden tools.



The handles on Cyclone shovels are made of spotted gum.

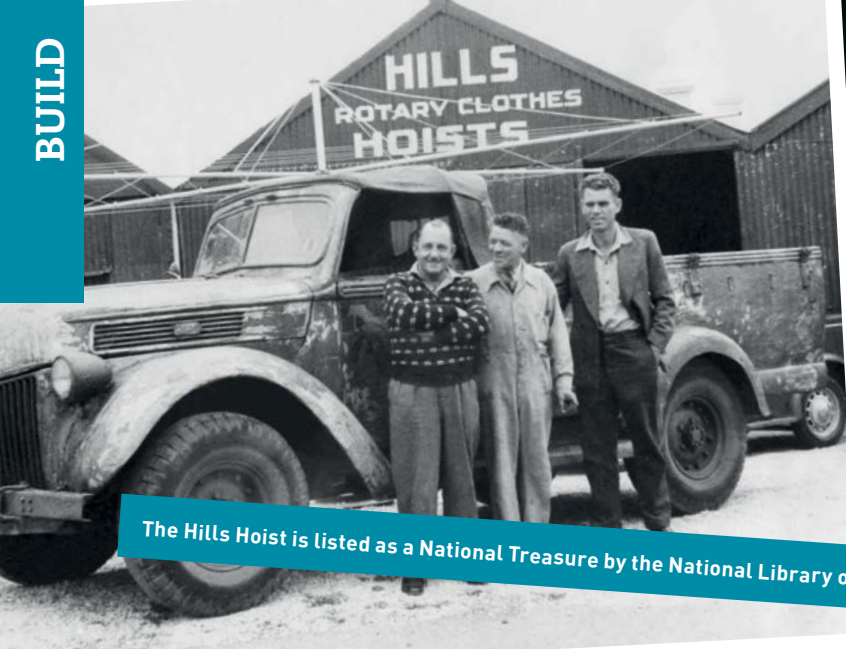


Built to last a lifetime

Cyclone's iconic range of shovels and spades are manufactured in Australia using sustainable Spotted Gum timber handles with boron & titanium treated Bluescope Steel blades. Backed with a lifetime guarantee, Cyclone means durability you can trust.

www.cyclone.com.au

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse



The Hills Hoist is listed as a National Treasure by the National Library of Australia.

HILLS

A classic icon, the Hills Hoist has been swung on by many generations of Aussie kids. Originally made from old welded pipe in 1945, the rotary clothes line has since been refined to suit modern household needs.

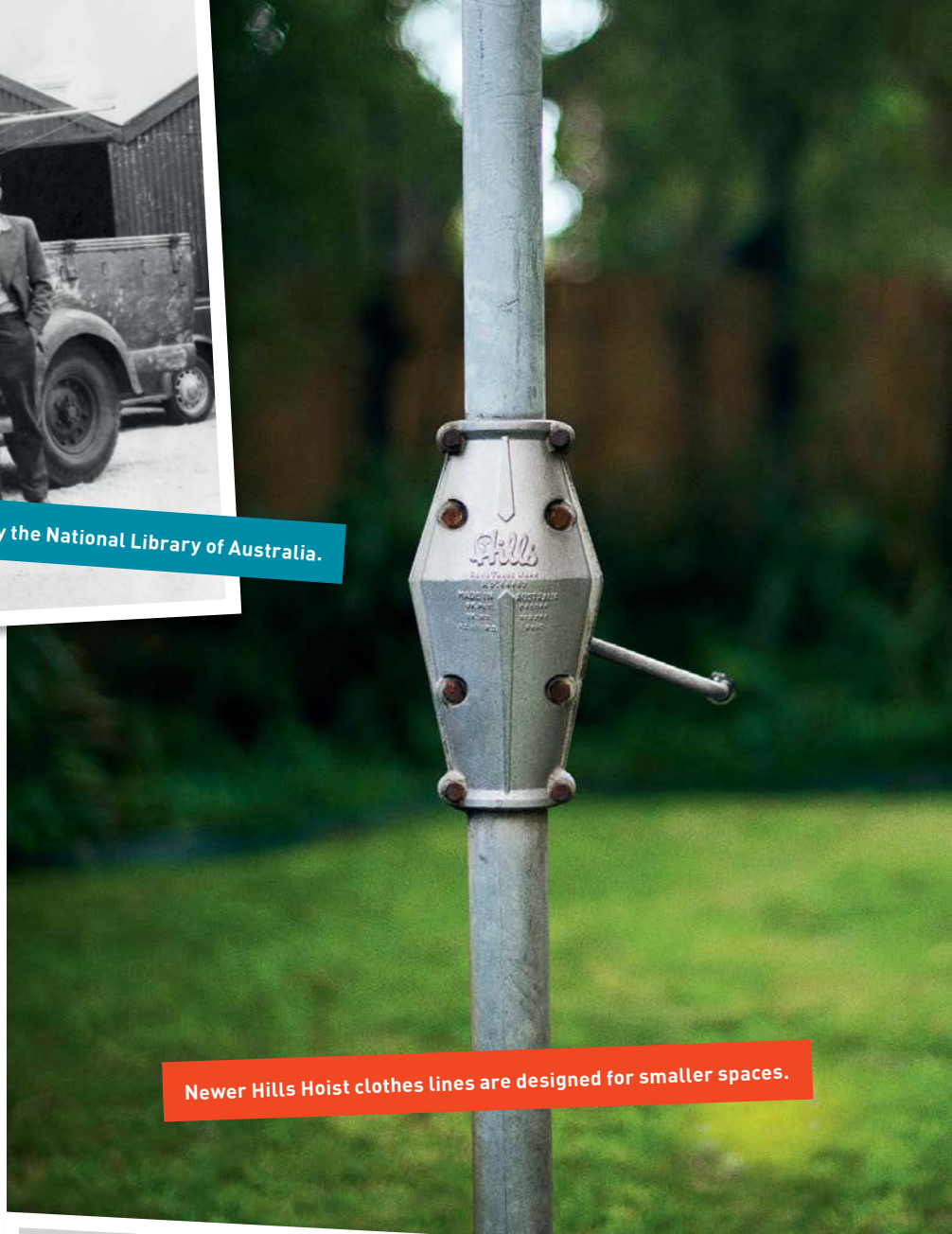
Responding to smaller yards and homes, Hills (hillshome.com.au) began producing retractable, folding frame and portable clothes lines, and has branched out with watering products, ironing boards and garden sprayers. 🌱



The slim retracting Hills clothes line won gold at the 2014 Australian Good Design Awards

Fast facts

- ✦ Invented In 1945 by Lance Hill, in the 1950s and 1960s the Hills Hoist became a must-have.
- ✦ After coming up with the design for his wife, Larry started Hills with his brother-in-law.
- ✦ Now Hills designs a wide variety of products for the home, laundry and garden.



Newer Hills Hoist clothes lines are designed for smaller spaces.



suttontools



100 YEARS OF PROVEN QUALITY

Purchase our 100th anniversary drill set and you could **WIN!**
Competition details at www.suttontools.com/celebrating100Years/

Available at
BUNNINGS
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Find it at Bunnings

What's new

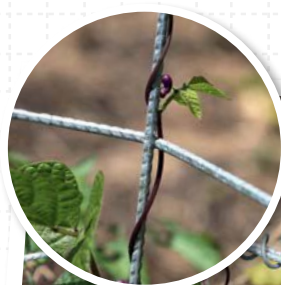
Pick up the best new products for home and garden instore



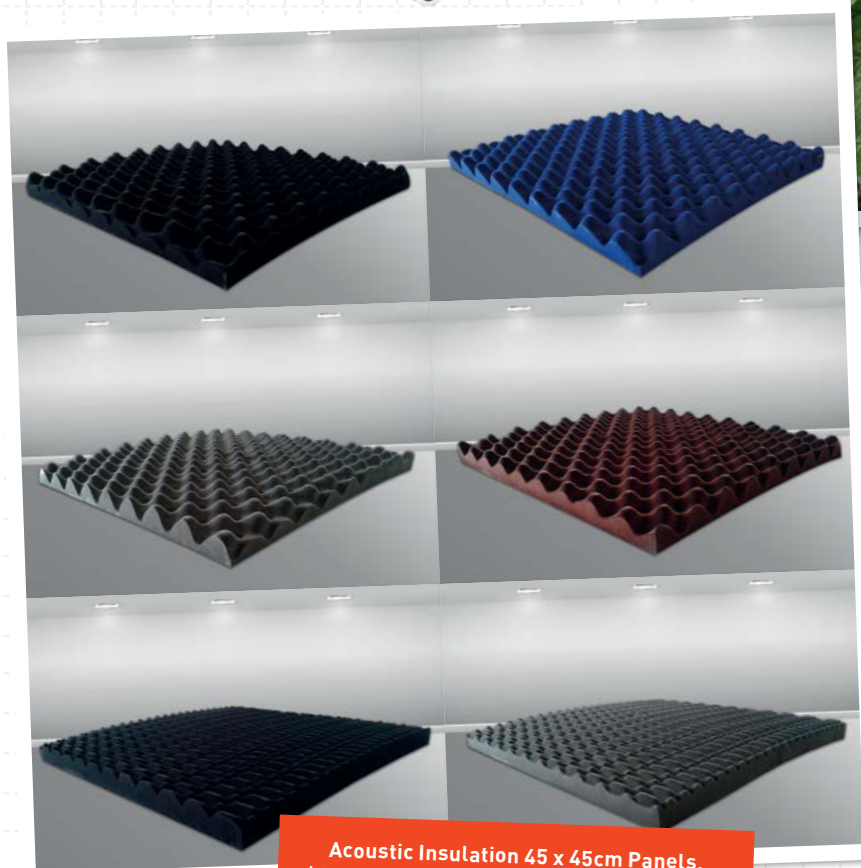
Set up supports for small trees and shrubs with Whites Garden Twists, \$2.99 for two.

GROW TIP

Ensure fruiting plants, such as peas, beans, and cucumbers, have a frame to support and protect their vines for a healthier crop.



Grow a crop of climbers on the Grip and Grow Freestanding Plant Trainer, \$35.



Acoustic Insulation 45 x 45cm Panels, \$24.95 each, are available in 3.5cm or 3cm height options and a range of colours.



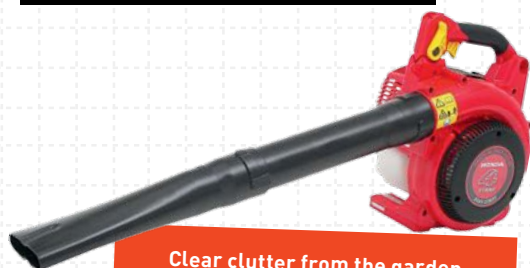
Secure heavy timbers with Buildex Landscaping Screws, from \$1.35 each, available in a range of sizes.



- ① Wash the dog with the flexible White ABS Handspray, \$18.98.
- ② Upgrade the laundry sink with the Chrome Handspray, \$39.98.



Give old furniture a new finish using Rust-Oleum Aerosol Chalked Paint, \$15.90 for 340g, for an ultra-matt finish in a broad range of colours.



Clear clutter from the garden with the easy-to-start Honda 25CC Four-stroke Leaf Blower, \$499.



Keep turf in top condition with the Honda 21" Self-propelling Mower with Clip Director Mulching, \$799.



Tidy the yard with the powerful Honda 25CC Four-stroke Straight Shaft Brushcutter, \$499.



Turn wasted wall space into tool storage with the Montgomery Five-shelf Shelving Unit, \$39.98.

Entertain around the Decofire Orbis Fire Pit in Natural Cement, \$239, all year round, as it doubles as a coffee table with the addition of the lid, \$89.



Keep the lawn looking good

Give the grass a little TLC now so it will be lush and green come spring

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

It's good practice to mow in the morning to allow cut leaf blades to heal before evening dew forms.



The lawn, just like virtually everything else in the garden, slows down during winter.

This is hardly surprising with cold, possibly even icy nights, cool soil and shorter days providing less of the sunlight that's so essential for growth.

It all means that there is the very real potential for your lawn to end up looking the worse for wear.

But with a little bit of warming winter work, you can have it ready to bounce back to life in spring.



MOWING

There's a high chance you'll only need to mow about once a month, or even less, during winter in many regions.

This is partly because most of the turf grasses we grow are warm-season grasses, meaning their main growth period is in the warmer months.

The big questions are how to tell if you need to mow and how to cut.

When it comes to timing, it's fairly simple. If the lawn looks a bit shaggy and feels too spongy underfoot, it's time to fire up the mower.

And how much to cut? The fact is that you can keep your mower at the same height year-round.

Leaving grass at a regular length over winter means it has a good leaf surface to make the most of the reduced sunlight. The grass will also provide more effective insulation for the roots.

It's a good idea to switch from mulch-mowing to mowing with a catcher, as finely cut lawn clippings can be slow to break down, leading to fungal problems and dead patches.



Don't mow when the grass is wet or the soil too damp, and ensure your mower is clean and dry before you put it away.



Cleaning the filter of your mower is an easy DIY job to keep it running efficiently.

Maintain the mower

There's no better time to give your mower a little attention.

It's wise to have it professionally serviced once every 12-18 months, but there are a few simple things you can do DIY in between.

✦ **GIVE** it a good clean up all over, paying particular attention to underneath the deck.

✦ **USE** the cleaning port if your mower has one. With the mower set high and on the lawn, click on

the hose, put the mower on full throttle, turn on the water, then run it for about 30 seconds.

✦ **CLEAN** the air filter, dust it off or replace if necessary. Also check the filter seals.

✦ **DISCONNECT** the spark plug lead and check that the blades are clean and sharp. Use a file to remove any bumps or burrs and, if they're very damaged or blunt, replace. ➤



Set the mower blades to the same height as you would at any other time of year

WATERING

It's easy to forget about watering in winter. We tend to be more aware of water when it's warm than cold, but an extended dry period in winter can leave your lawn parched and suffering.

Watering at this time of year can be tricky. The main reason for this is it takes longer for water to dissipate or be used by the lawn, so it can stay damp for too long, which leads to fungal problems. Here are a few tips.

➤ **CHECK** the soil to see if it feels dry before you water it.

➤ **REDUCE** your normal watering duration by half. If you water for 20 minutes in summer, then make it about 10 minutes in winter.

➤ **MAKE** the best use of rainfall by applying a premium soil wetter.

➤ **APPLY** a hose-on product fortified with seaweed to nurture your lawn and soil while you water.



Always apply fertiliser in between mows.



Water in the morning to allow the lawn to dry thoroughly before a long, cold night.

FEEDING

It wasn't long ago that feeding the lawn was something we only talked about in spring and early summer.

But with increased understanding of how turf grows and soil functions, plus advances in fertilisers, feeding in the cooler months is considered a very worthwhile practice.

While lawns aren't growing fast, they do need extra energy reserves to repair damage caused by cold weather and to maintain their strength.

The soil also needs to be considered when it comes to feeding. The myriad

microorganisms in the soil convert the nutrients you apply as fertiliser into ones that grass can consume.

So it's important to keep these soil workers healthy by providing them with organic components, such as a seaweed tonic.

If using a granulated fertiliser, make sure it's slow release and apply about half the recommended dose. Or use a cool-season formulation fertiliser.

To nurture soil, water in regular fertiliser with a seaweed tonic or use an organic-based fertiliser.



Broadleaf weeds spread and cause bare patches in your lawn.

WEEDING

Your lawn may have slowed down for winter, but the weeds haven't. Many lawn weeds are actually annual plants, so their mission in life is to grow and produce seeds at this time of year.

As lawn weeds, particularly the broadleaf types, grow and spread, they tend to smother the surrounding grass and cause dead or bare patches when they die off in spring.

In small-to-medium sized lawns, hand-weeding is often the best option. You'll find the weeds are lush and green and easy to spot and pull out.

Difficult weeds and larger lawns may need an application of a selective herbicide. Just make sure it's a product formulated to be safe for winter use and your lawn type.

Moss is quite common in lawns in winter and, in most cases, is not a concern. But it can be an indicator of underlying problems such as compacted soil and poor drainage.

You can easily eradicate moss with a few applications of sulphate of iron, but any issues with drainage may need to be physically improved.

Common lawn weeds

Watch out for these weeds and remove them as soon as possible to help keep your lawn lush and healthy.



Bindii

⊕ **BINDII** Probably the most annoying of lawn weeds with its painful prickles, bindii is actively growing now.

Winter grass



⊕ **WINTER GRASS** This is a very conspicuous winter lawn weed, as it tends to be bright green and stands well above the lawn.



Moss

⊕ **MOSS** Unsightly and common in winter, especially in damp, shady areas, moss can be a sign of an underlying soil problem. ➤



Improving drainage

You can improve drainage by opening up the soil with a garden fork.

Drive in the fork to a depth of about 100mm all over the affected area of lawn, then rake in washed river sand to keep the holes open and free draining.

If there are more serious drainage problems, it may be necessary to install surface or subsurface drains to carry away the excess water.



Make sure shrubs and fallen leaves or other debris aren't shading the grass.

LET IN LIGHT

The single biggest favour you can do for your lawn during winter is to make sure it is getting every bit of sunlight possible.

Sunlight is necessary for grass to photosynthesise and produce energy in order for it to remain strong and healthy through the cooler months.

It also keeps the soil warmer, which in turn allows important microorganisms in the soil to stay more active and help feed the lawn.

Here's how to make sure your lawn gets sufficient sunlight.

➕ **CUT** unwanted branches from trees or shrubs that are shading your lawn.

➕ **RAKE** any fallen leaves and twigs from the lawn regularly. 🌱



DIY TIP

Use the mower like a vacuum for leaves. Put on the catcher, set the blades a bit higher than the grass, then run over as if you're mowing.

ADAM'S PICKS



Seasol 2L Ready To Spray For Lush Green Lawns Twin Pack, \$20. seasol.com.au



Fiskars 4 Prongs Xact Weed Puller, \$74. fiskars.com.au



Scotts Everydrop Premium Hose-on Soil Wetter, \$17 for 1L. scottsaustralia.com.au



Scotts Lawn Builder + Organics Lawn Food + Soil Improver, \$18 for 1L.



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'Spacious yet cosy, stylish yet casual, modern yet timeless'

@Isobel

'A big kitchen with plenty of storage, and a large outdoor entertaining area'

@darylhewston

'Spaces that blend indoors with outdoors, with plenty of light'

@Joker

FAST FACT

63%

of Workshop members prefer a single-level to a two-storey home.

Share your pics

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Workshop is a fun online space where you can ask DIY and gardening questions, share photos and videos of your projects, get tips and inspiration for your home and much more.

To join the discussion, sign up at workshop.com.au

workshop™

GROW TIP

Plant clumping, not running bamboo, to avoid it taking over the yard or spreading under the fence into the neighbouring property.

After

The private courtyard is now the ideal space for alfresco entertaining.



FROM CLUTTERED TO CLASSY

Sprucing up this yard and adding designer touches creates a modern entertaining area

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERIE BARBER



This small, scruffy backyard would be dramatically improved by simply decluttering and trimming back the unruly greenery.

But with the backdrop of bare brick, half-painted palings and mismatched trellises, the space would still be rather charmless.

Plus, with low fences and the neighbours so close on each side, the courtyard is lacking in privacy.

So with just a few deft touches, I'm going to turn this untidy patch into a stunning outdoor entertaining area.

The reno challenge

Tidying up the overgrown yard is the first step in this transformation.

Installing privacy screening is essential for creating an entertaining space or backyard sanctuary. I'll use a combination of off-the-shelf and natural solutions to screen the area.

A timber deck that occupies half of the courtyard will be the focal point. And with the addition of a modern outdoor setting, this offers the ideal place for alfresco dining.

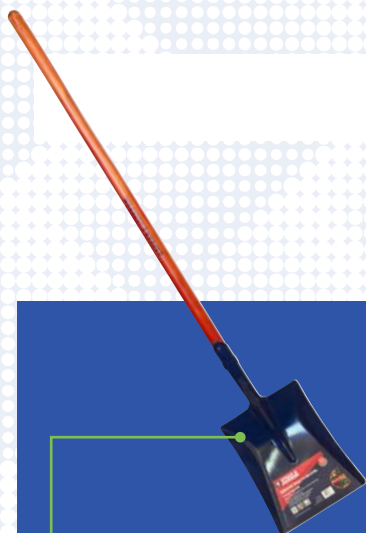
The rest of the yard gets a lush new lawn, giving kids a place to play while being easy to maintain, which is perfect for a busy lifestyle. ➤

ABOUT CHERIE

Cherie Barber is a full-time renovator, public speaker and a regular on the popular Network Ten show *The Living Room*.

Her company, Renovating For Profit, teaches people the best ways to renovate their property to add value (renovatingforprofit.com.au).

SIX STEPS TO SUCCESS



Spear & Jackson Square Mouth Long Handle Shovel, \$20. spearandjackson.com.au

Level the yard

First comes the obligatory trim and declutter. The grass is so patchy and overgrown that the best option is to pull it up entirely.

Removing the turf takes the yard back to bare earth, giving us a level blank slate to work with.



Good Times 1113 x 555mm Merbau Modular Decking Panel, \$79. goodtimesdecking.com

Install a deck

It's no good having an outdoor setting that sinks into soft grass, so I'll need to build a deck. To soften the modern palette of greys and blues, I'll go for the warm tones of merbau timber.

Shadecloth could also be added to provide sun protection.

ENDLESS DUSK

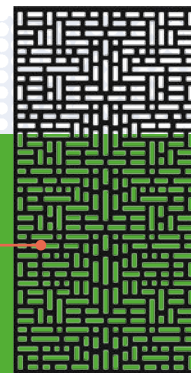


Dulux Weathershield Masonry Matt Paint in Endless Dusk, \$72 for 4L. dulux.com.au

Paint the walls

If money were no object, I would render the house, then paint it. But to keep costs down, I'll simply paint it in modern light grey, including the exposed pipe.

I'll use a crisp white for the door trim, deep-blue paving paint for the bare concrete and charcoal blue for the back trellis.

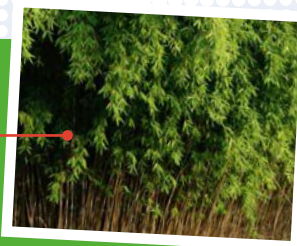


Matrix 2410 x 1205 x 7mm Charcoal Tessellation Screen Panel, \$159. designflow.com.au

Add privacy screening

Privacy is always a priority in an entertaining area, so I'll install simple screening panels and decorate them with wall art.

This immediately solves the problem of prying eyes, and also neatly blocks out the next-door neighbour's clutter while creating a designer feature wall.



Fargesia Bamboo, 200mm, about \$30, from nurseries.

Plant the greenery

For the rear screen, I'll choose the soft, lime green fronds of bamboo. Mature plants provide instant camouflage for the high trellis and a soothing backdrop for outdoor mealtimes.

To finish off the garden beds, I'll add a layer of woodchips to prevent weeds from taking over.



Sir Walter Buffalo Turf, about \$6 per 0.5sqm. sirwalter.com.au

Lay new turf

The finishing touch is a healthy cover of freshly laid turf. For a family home, it gives kids or the pet a place to play, and transforms the once-overgrown backyard into a tidy, modern space. ☺

The all new *Savannah* planter Collection



The innovative wood plastic hybrid planter that revolutionises gardening as we know it. Durable, weather resistant and lightweight, The Savannah fuses natural timber styling with sheer convenience. For small spaces or large, balconies or backyards, we're perfecting planter design for today's gardener.

Available in Grey and Natural in assorted styles and sizes at select Bunnings Warehouse stores.



tuscanpath.com.au

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

INSTALL A GREENHOUSE

Provide the ideal winter growing solution for cuttings and seedlings

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

Would you like to have your seedlings ready to plant as soon as the cold weather passes or be able to strike cuttings and grow them with ease?

All of this and more is possible if you install a greenhouse. While many gardeners dream of having one, they're often put off by the perceived difficulty, lack of space and the potential expense.

But a greenhouse doesn't have to be hard, huge or a budget crusher. We show you how to install one using a kit and look at some of the uses.



Why add a greenhouse?

One of the main uses of a greenhouse is for propagation. The warm, humid environment they create is ideal for striking plants from cuttings and growing from seed.

This allows you to grow more of your own plants instead of buying them, and when you grow your vegie garden from seed rather than punnets, you will save money.

Across the cooler months, the warm environment is especially useful, as you can grow frost- and cold-sensitive plants, such as tomatoes, to an advanced stage, ready to plant when the last frost has passed in spring.

It is also the ideal place for growing exotic plant varieties, as sub-tropical, and even certain tropical plants, will thrive in the greenhouse environment.

Assemble a kit

Measuring 2m wide and 2m long, this NaturalLife Walk-in Greenhouse, \$157 (tuscanpath.com.au), is easy to install and the ideal size for smaller backyards. ➤

The basics

There are a few things to consider when installing a greenhouse.

- **AVOID** putting it where it gets full summer sun, unless you plan to add shade cloth over the top.
- **POSITION** it away from windy spots.
- **ENSURE** the floor has good drainage.
- **MANAGE** the ventilation. You need to find a balance between gentle warmth, humidity and fresh airflow.
- **CONTROL** any pests or diseases promptly, as they can spread rapidly in the closed environment.

▶ Watch the video online

Visit handyman.net.au/easy-greenhouse

INSTALL THE GREENHOUSE



1 Lay the weedmat

Choose a location which is protected from intense sun and prevailing winds and on reasonably level ground. Lay down weedmat to cover an area a little larger than the greenhouse footprint, then secure with weedmat pins.



2 Pour the mulch

Position a straightedge along each edge of the weedmat, then spread mulch to evenly cover the surface before removing the straightedge.

TIP We used a fine grade pine bark, but you can also use gravel.



3 Assemble the base

Unpack the greenhouse kit, then separate the parts and check they are all there. Lay down all of the parts for the base around the edge of the site, then assemble them, pushing all the joiners firmly together.



4 Make the sides

Assemble the side frames and the shelf frames. As you reach the top of each frame or section, push firmly on each joiner to make sure the tubes are securely seated. Position the shelf racks over the frames.



5 Assemble the roof

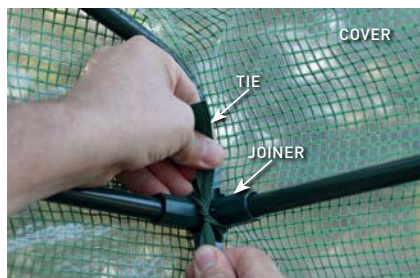
Assemble the roof frame sections, fitting them into the top side joiners before adding the centre ridge rods to stabilise the frame.

TIP You may find it is easier to stand on a small stepladder for this process.



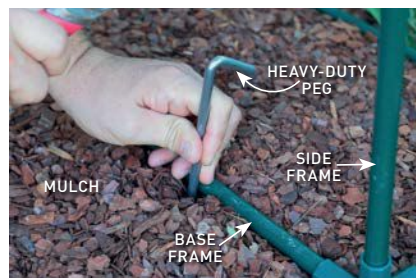
6 Install the cover

Unfold the plastic cover carefully, then unzip the front door. At this stage, you may need help. Working from the front, feed the rear of the cover over the roof frame first, then work the cover towards the rear.



7 Secure the cover

Firmly knot the small ties located in the internal corners of the greenhouse cover around the joiners or frame tubes. This prevents the cover from moving around on the frame or blowing off in windy conditions.



8 Peg the frame

Use the guy ropes and pegs supplied to hold down the greenhouse securely, positioning the guy ropes at each external corner of the cover.

TIP We decided to use heavy-duty tent pegs to secure the greenhouse.



9 Add the plants

Position the larger, heavier plants on the floor of the greenhouse and use the shelves for smaller, lighter pots. The top shelves are ideal for seed trays.

TIP Water the plants well when the weather is particularly hot.

Grow rose cuttings

At rose pruning time, don't waste those rose canes, use your greenhouse to grow a few new bushes.

DIY TIP

Test if a rose stem is suitable for striking by snapping off a thorn. If it leaves a woody rather than a green spot, it's ideal to use.



1 Take the cuttings

Take cuttings about 100-150mm long and at least as thick as a pencil using secateurs, then de-thorn the cuttings. Fill a pot with a suitable propagating mix and use a pencil to make holes in the mix to half its depth.



2 Prepare the cuttings

Dip the cuttings in a root-promoting or striking gel, then push into the holes, firming down the mix. Put in the greenhouse and water well. Label with the date and variety, if known.

TIP Use honey as a DIY striking gel. ➤



Remove the cover when the weather warms up and new shoots appear.



GROW TIP

Lift the plastic bottle cover off the cuttings every few days to refresh the air and decrease the humidity a little.

Strike cuttings

Create an instant greenhouse to grow plants. All you need are secateurs, propagating mix, honey and a clear plastic bottle cut in half.



1 Take the cuttings

Take 100-150mm long semi-hardwood cuttings, then use secateurs to trim the leaves by two-thirds to prevent dehydration. Fill a pot with propagating mix, then use a small stick or pencil to make holes to half the depth of the mix.



2 Plant the cuttings

Dip the cuttings in honey, then push into the holes, firming down the mix. Water well. Position the base half of the bottle over the cuttings, then put in a warm spot out of direct sunlight. Keep the mix moist but not wet.



Different types

It's easy enough to become confused with the types of greenhouses, so here's a run-down of the basic differences.

➤ **GREENHOUSE** This type is made of clear or opaque glass or plastic. Fully enclosed, it has adjustable ventilation to control heat and humidity but has no additional heating.

➤ **HOTHOUSE** Made of clear or opaque glass or plastic, a hothouse is fully enclosed with adjustable ventilation.

A hothouse will have additional heating, especially during winter, and in the warm months is used like a greenhouse. It is most commonly used in cold areas or by commercial growers.

➤ **SHADEHOUSE** Most often used in warmer climates, a shadehouse refers to just about any structure covered with shadecloth to filter sunlight.

It may have shadecloth on the roof only, or some or all sides. A fernery is an old-school version, where lattice-like slats were used to create shade. ❌

ADAM'S PICKS



Coolaroo 1.83 x 5m Prepacked Weed Control Mat, \$10.
coolaroo.com



Whites Outdoor Weed Mat Pins, \$11 for a pack of 20.
whitesgroup.com.au



Whites Outdoor 7 x 215mm High Strength Tent Pegs, about \$12 for a pack of 10.



Richgro Natural Pinebark Mulch, \$10 for 40L.
richgro.com.au



NaturalLife 69 x 49 x 160cm Four-tier Premium Greenhouse, \$43.
tuscanpath.com.au



SEE THE WORLD



Mexico



Sustainable style

North of Acapulco on the Pacific coast of Mexico, the Playa Viva boutique hotel attracts those in search of a restorative retreat totally in tune with nature.

In addition to luxury rooms, an ocean-front treehouse perches among the palm trees.

Its open, bi-level structure is textured and honey-coloured, with exposed timber beams, bamboo screening and minimal furnishings. Energy and hot water are both solar powered.

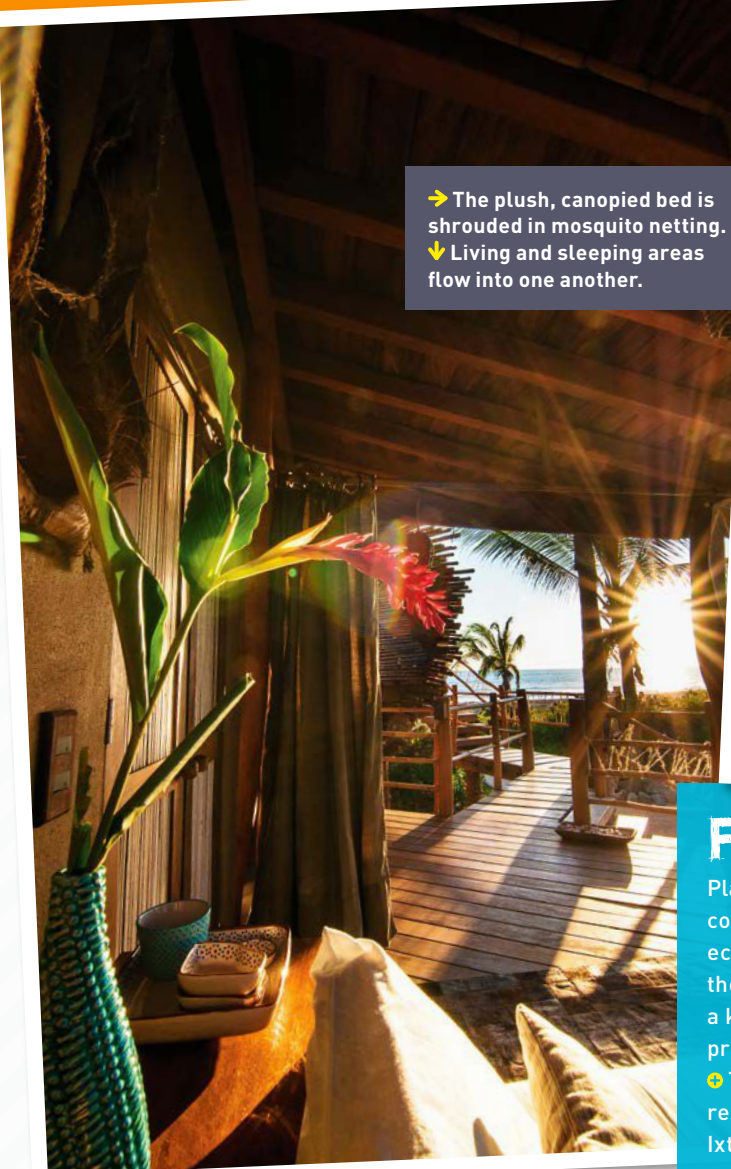
Designed by Chicago-based studio Deture Culsign, noted for its sustainable building strategies and ability to visually intrigue, the treehouse commands glorious views and is close to forests and mangroves teeming with wildlife.



Palm trees and natural building materials merge in this treehouse



↑ Close to the oversized curved doorway, a two-person floor hammock affords picturesque views of the sky and ocean.
↪ Local, responsibly harvested hardwoods and bamboo are used throughout, and the neutral-toned furnishings are comfortable and casual.



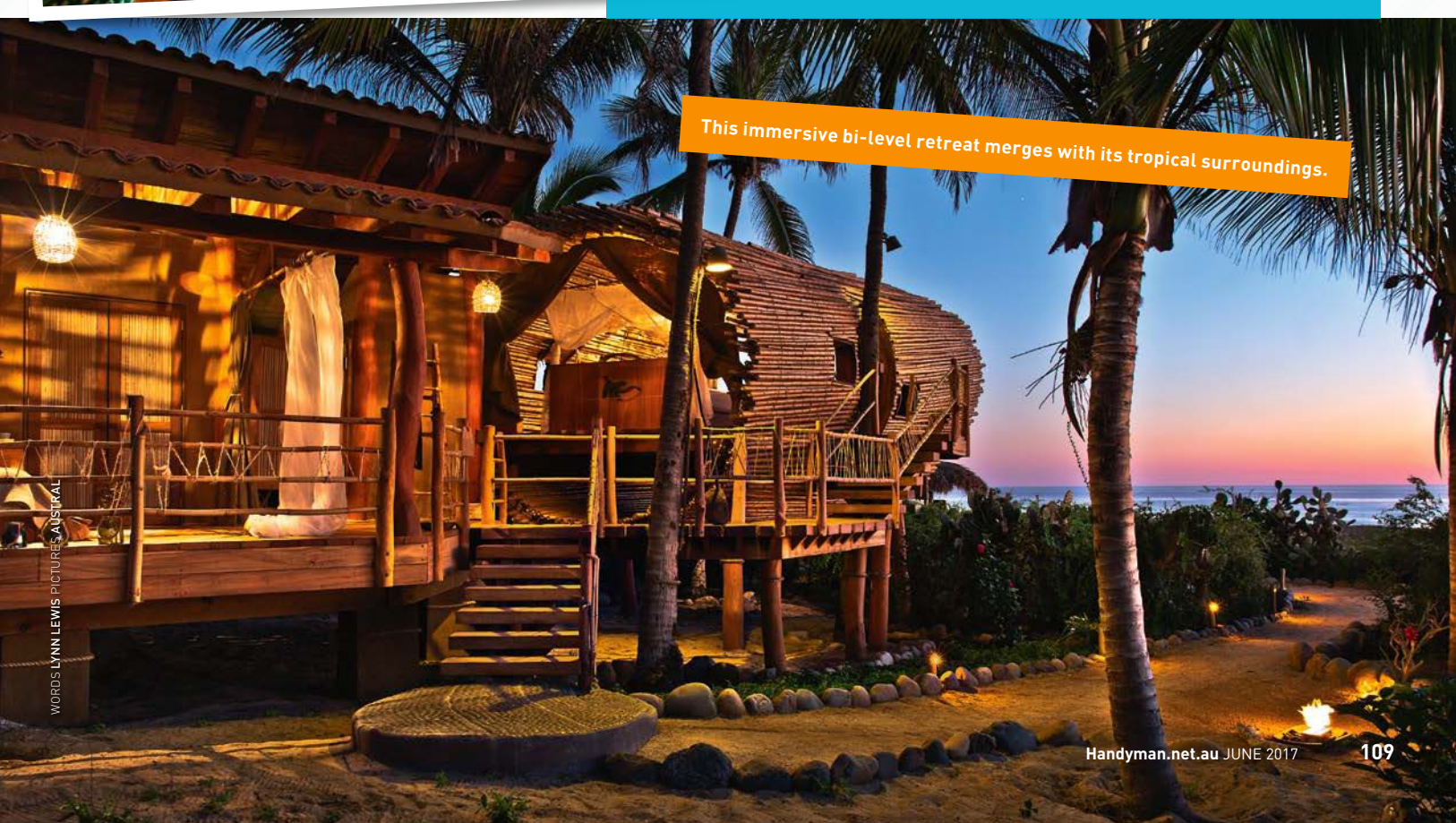
→ The plush, canopied bed is shrouded in mosquito netting.
↓ Living and sleeping areas flow into one another.



Fact check

Playa Viva is an environmentally conscious resort featuring eco-luxury rooms. It includes the treehouse suite, which has a king-sized bed, day bed and private bathhouse (playaviva.com).
→ The Pacific coast beachside resort is about an hour's drive from Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo International

Airport, and is situated 1.4km from the 200 motorway that runs from Acapulco to Zihuatanejo.
→ A restaurant, spa centre, turtle sanctuary, outdoor swimming pool, gardens and terraces are all on-site.
→ Activities include yoga classes, bicycle riding, hiking, scuba-diving, cultural classes and wildlife viewing.



This immersive bi-level retreat merges with its tropical surroundings.



This month

There's still plenty to keep you busy in the backyard, even during winter



Do now

- + GROW these herbs to add flavour to winter dishes, page 114.
- + COLOUR up the garden by planting pansies, page 120.
- + PROTECT frost-prone and sensitive plants, page 124.

Flowers to sow

Get these in the ground, except in cold zones, for blooms from 10 weeks.

- + CANDYTUFT
- + GYPSOPHILA
- + GODETIA
- + LINARIA
- + LARKSPUR



Candytuft

Vegies to grow

Plant now to harvest crops from midwinter to early spring.

- + ASPARAGUS CROWNS
- + ENGLISH SPINACH
- + LETTUCES
- + MUSTARD GREENS
- + PEAS

English spinach



WHAT'S IN COLOUR

✦ **MAGICAL DAYBREAK** *Nandina domestica* 'Monfar' has glossy green foliage year-round, topped with rich copper-toned young leaves. In summer, white flowers appear above the foliage to add extra interest.

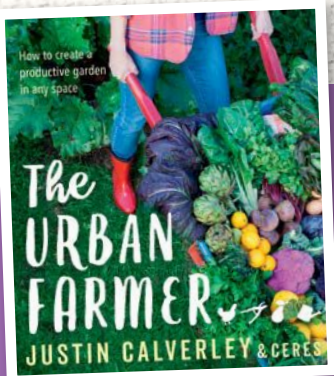
This low-care evergreen shrub has a bushy habit and grows up to 50cm in height and spreads to 50cm.

Give it a spot in full sun or part shade in damp, well-drained soil. It is frost tolerant, once established, and needs no pruning.

Magical Daybreak is ideal for informal hedging and mass planting, or makes a great feature plant for small gardens. It can also be grown in pots.

Information courtesy of Plants Management Australia (pma.com.au).

Magical Daybreak



BOOK CLUB

The Urban Farmer by horticultural expert Justin Calverley and CERES (ABC Books, \$40) shows that you don't have to live in the country to develop a sustainable existence.

Growing your own fruit and vegies, raising hens and even keeping bees isn't out of reach for city dwellers in any space, whether it's a small backyard, courtyard or balcony.

To-do list

Tackle these jobs now that winter has arrived.

- ✓ **PLANT** new roses in cold zones, adding a thick layer of mulch around the base to protect young stems.
- ✓ **KEEP** an eye out for interesting bulbs and summer-flowering perennials in nurseries.
- ✓ **CLEAR** debris, weeds and leaves from garden ponds.
- ✓ **GET** rid of bindii in lawns before they seed.
- ✓ **DIVIDE** and replant established clumps of daylilies in subtropical/tropical climates.
- ✓ **ADD** edging around the lawn for easier mowing. ➤

POT UP BROAD BEANS



Broad beans take up a lot of space, so if you don't have a big backyard or your sunniest outdoor area is a deck or balcony, they can easily be grown in a large container.

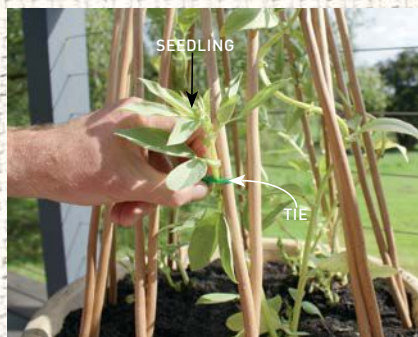
The beans will need support as they climb, and an expandable bamboo teepee is ideal for this purpose.

TIP You can also use bamboo or garden stakes tied into a teepee shape.



1 Sow the seeds

Fill a large pot with premium potting mix for vegetables and gently firm it down. Add the support by pressing the expandable teepee into the mix, then sow the seeds around the legs of the teepee, spaced 150mm apart.



2 Tie the stems

As the beans grow, tie the stems onto the teepee, using adjustable wire ties or nylon stockings. Thin out the seedlings if the pot gets crowded and allow the mix to dry out in between waterings. They'll be ready to pick in 12-22 weeks.



Plant prop

Make it easy to support your growing plants with the Eden TeePee Plant Support, which comes in three sizes, 90cm, \$18, 120cm, \$23, and 150cm, \$28 (edenbrand.com).

This bamboo support helps train a plant into the required space, which makes it easier to manage. It provides protection from the elements and holds up the foliage to the light to help increase photosynthesis.

Bees and other beneficial insects will also gain easy access to pollinate the flowers. 🐝



Feed now

Give flowering plants and winter vegetables a boost.

- + SASANQUA CAMELLIAS
- + WINTER VEGETABLES
- + BULBS
- + MAGNOLIAS
- + HELLEBORES

Hellebore



Prune now

Cut back fruiting trees ready for new spring growth.

- + APRICOT
- + CHERRY
- + PEACH
- + PLUM
- + APPLE

Peach



Harvest now

Pick vegetables to make warming soups, casseroles and stews.

- + BROCCOLI
- + CABBAGE
- + LEEK
- + PARSNIP
- + POTATO

Leek



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GROW

winter herbs

Plant these edibles so they're close at hand to flavour hearty casseroles and stews

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Now is definitely the time to be eating lots of comfort food, such as slow-cooked casseroles, roasts, stews and soups. And the best herbs to flavour these dishes all grow well during winter.

Perennial thyme, rosemary, sage and bay are the indispensable winter herbs that cooks can't live without.

They marry well together, or they can be used individually in dishes. Add a little parsley to the mix and you have the flavouring ingredients you need for all your winter warmers.

If you're short on space, or have just a balcony or courtyard, you can still grow them, as they will thrive in containers as well as garden beds.



Make a bouquet garni

Bay, parsley and thyme are essential ingredients of the traditional bouquet garni, which is French for garnished bouquet.

A bouquet garni is added to casseroles, soups, stews, sauces and stock for flavouring.

To make, take three parsley stalks, one sprig of thyme and one bay leaf, then tie together using cooking string.

Immerse in the pot and remove when the dish is cooked.



Cheryl

EXPERT SECRETS

The best time for harvesting herbs is in the morning, when aromatic oil concentrations are at their highest.

Protect herbs naturally

When growing edibles, it's healthier to use natural methods to get rid of insect pests in the garden.

✦ **TREAT** insects such as mites, mealy bugs, scale, whitefly and aphids with remedies made from low-toxic or potassium soap-based sprays.

✦ **TACKLE** leaf-eating caterpillars with *Bacillus thuringiensis*, sold as Dipel. This naturally occurring bacteria will slowly kill most offenders.

✦ **CONTROL** insects, including caterpillars, thrip and leaf-miner, using an insecticide containing

spinosad, a substance that is derived from a soil fungus.

✦ **TRY** plant-based rather than petroleum-based oils to smother insects such as mites, aphids, mealy bugs, whitefly and scale.

✦ **USE** pyrethrum in a spray bottle to target pests while sparing beneficial insects. It breaks down quickly and has a low toxicity.

✦ **ENCASE** an infested plant in a small plastic bag, tie it around the base, and pull the whole plant out. Or you can just cut off the affected stem. ➤

RIGHT A beer trap will attract slugs and snails. You can also recycle a margarine container. **BELOW** Pick off larger pests such as caterpillars by hand.



Portable planter

The Stone Art Ella Pot from Tuscan Path makes a great herb or veggie planter if you are short on space or have poor soil.

Constructed of a durable stone composite, the planter is designed to replicate the texture and appearance of real stone, but without the weight.

It comes in black, white and taupe in two sizes, 35 x 34cm, \$45, and 45 x 45cm, \$94, to suit any garden style (tuscanpath.com.au).

WHAT TO PLANT

Grow your own herbs so they're handy when you need them, instead of having to make a special trip to the corner shop or supermarket.

1 Bay

The bay tree has dark-green leaves and features lemon flowers in spring, followed by black berries in autumn.

It can be trimmed to shape and grows well in a large pot. If left unclipped in a garden bed, it will form a small tree.

- ✦ **GROW** in well-drained soil in a sunny spot. Feed in spring with old cow manure, a complete fertiliser or Dynamic Lifter to promote growth. Bay tolerates frosts down to about -5°C. In very cold areas, plant in a pot and put under cover in winter.
- ✦ **PICK** the leaves fresh as needed, or freeze or dry them.

In the kitchen

- ✦ **USE** in soups, stews and slow-cooked casseroles.
- ✦ **ADD** to spaghetti bolognese and beef bourguignon.
- ✦ **FLAVOUR** vegetable and chicken stock with bay leaves.
- ✦ **ENHANCE** the taste of custards and rice puddings with a leaf.

In the kitchen

- ✦ **TOP** soups with crisp-fried sage leaves.
- ✦ **PARTNER** sage with duck, potatoes and pumpkin.
- ✦ **USE** as an ingredient in stuffings.
- ✦ **ADD** the flowers to dishes to make a pretty garnish.

2 Sage

An attractive perennial with grey/green leaves and purplish-blue flowers, sage reaches about 900mm high.

✦ **GROW** in a sunny position in well-drained soil. Cut off the finished flower stalks in spring to keep the plant bushy and encourage more leaves to grow.

Feed in spring and summer with a complete plant food.

✦ **PICK** the leaves when needed. Sage leaves keep their flavour well when dried.

3 Thyme

Perennial thyme makes a great edging plant and also loves pot culture.

There are many varieties, but common thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*) is the most popular. The small leaves are highly aromatic and pink flowers cover the plant in spring.

Lemon thyme has a mild lemon taste and 'Pizza' thyme leaves smell of a blend of thyme and oregano.

✦ **GROW** in well-drained soil in a sunny spot. Don't overwater and feed in spring and summer with a soluble plant food.

Cut back in spring after flowering to encourage new leaves. Replace plants every 3-4 years or propagate new plants by division in spring.

✦ **PICK** fresh stems as you need them, leaving behind tough, woody parts. Remove the leaves from the stems before using.

Common thyme



COOKING TIP

Fresh and dried bay leaves don't break down when cooked, so it's best to remove them from a dish before serving.



In the kitchen

- + **ADD** to soups and stews.
- + **COMBINE** with egg dishes.
- + **ADD** parsley to tomato sauces.
- + **PARTNER** with mushrooms.
- + **USE** parsley as an ingredient in Middle Eastern tabouli, Mexican salsa verde, French persillade and Italian gremolata.

4 Parsley

This herb is a biennial and when established, you can pick the leaves for many months.

You can grow flat-leaf parsley, which is also known as continental parsley, or curly leaf parsley.

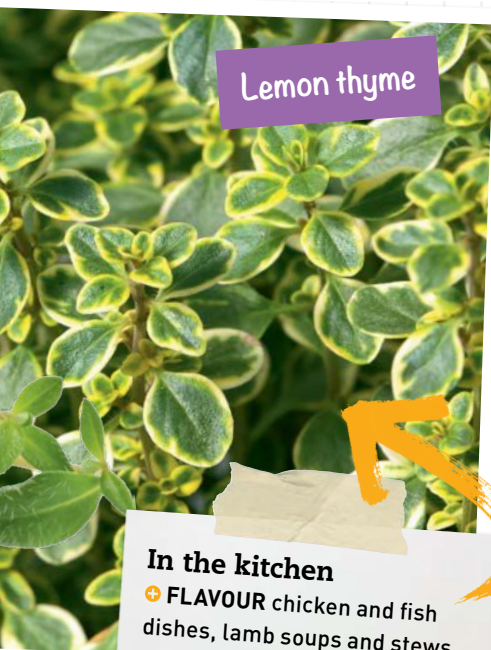
Seedlings are available in nurseries throughout the year.

+ **GROW** in a sunny position. Parsley has a long taproot and likes soil that

is enriched with compost or manure. Fertilise monthly with a soluble plant food. Regular watering will encourage more leaves to grow.

+ **PICK** sprigs of parsley as soon as the plants are established and branching freely. The more you pick, the more prolific the growth will be in the middle of the plant.

Parsley is best used fresh, but it can also be frozen.



Lemon thyme

In the kitchen

- + **FLAVOUR** chicken and fish dishes, lamb soups and stews with common thyme.
- + **PARTNER** lemon thyme with fish and chicken.
- + **ADD** 'Pizza' thyme to cheesy Italian dishes.
- + **COMBINE** anchovies and tomatoes with thyme leaves.
- + **FRY** mushrooms in a little butter with thyme leaves.

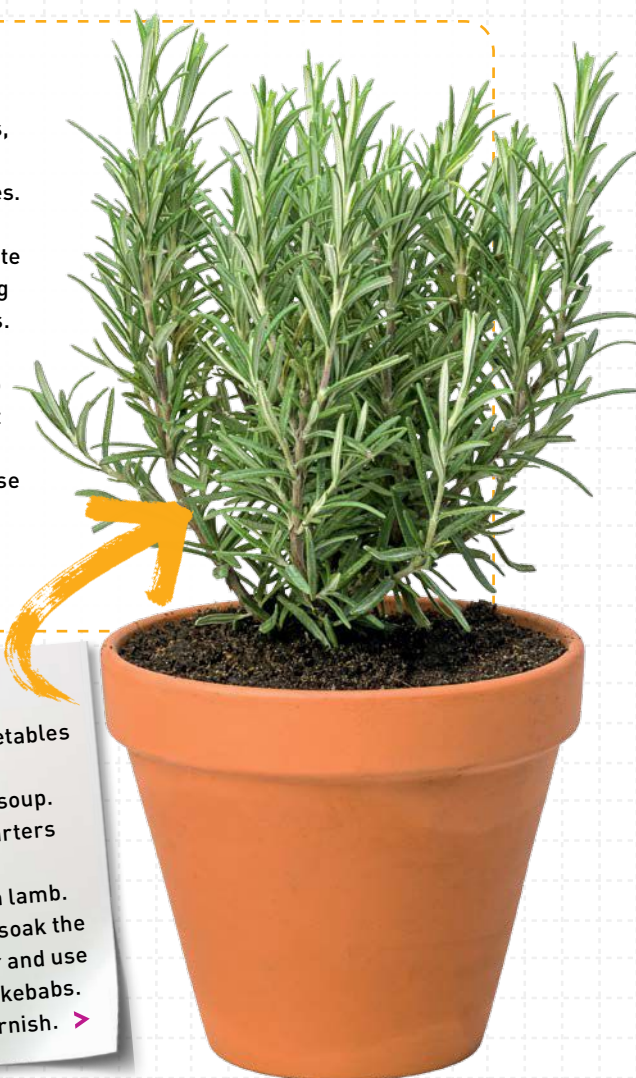
5 Rosemary

A native to Mediterranean hillsides and coastal areas, rosemary produces lots of blue flowers that are irresistible to bees.

It reaches a height of about 1.8m and is ideal for pots. Prostrate cultivars can be grown in hanging baskets or used as groundcovers.

+ **GROW** in a sunny position in well-drained soil. Add dolomite to the soil before planting and don't overwater. Feed in spring with a three-month, controlled-release fertiliser. Prune after flowering.

+ **PICK** fresh leaves as needed. Excess leaves can be frozen.



In the kitchen

- + **SPRINKLE** over roast vegetables and oven-baked tomatoes.
- + **ADD** rosemary to tomato soup.
- + **COMBINE** with lemon quarters for stuffing chicken.
- + **PARTNER** rosemary with lamb.
- + **STRIP** leaves off stems, soak the stems in water for an hour and use as skewers for prawns or kebabs.
- + **USE** the flowers as a garnish. ➤



Serves 6

Bay leaf sweet baked custard pots

PREPARATION TIME 10 minutes
COOKING TIME 50 minutes

Ingredients

2 cups (500ml) milk
8 bay leaves, fresh or dried
3 large eggs
½ cup (110g) sugar

- 1 **HEAT** the milk and the bay leaves in a large saucepan over a low heat. Simmer for 10 minutes to infuse the flavour.
- 2 **PREHEAT** the oven to 150°C. Place a large roasting pan in the oven and half-fill with boiling water to make a bain-marie.
- 3 **BEAT** the eggs with the sugar in a large bowl using electric beaters or a whisk. Gradually pour over the hot milk, beating continuously.
- 4 **STRAIN** the mixture into six ½-cup ramekins or ovenproof cups or dishes. Rinse any milky scum off the bay leaves and choose six attractive leaves, poking one into each ramekin.
- 5 **ADD** the ramekins to the bain-marie carefully and bake for 40 minutes or until the centres are no longer wobbly and liquid looking. Serve warm, or chill overnight before serving cold for a stronger bay leaf aroma.

RECIPE TIP

You can use bay leaves in all kinds of cakes and custards. The subtle flavour adds a hint of nutmeg and citrus.



Bay leaves have been used in traditional English cooking for centuries

Serves 4



Braised chicken with thyme mushrooms

PREPARATION TIME 15 minutes

COOKING TIME 45 minutes

Ingredients

1kg boneless, skinless chicken thighs, halved
Olive oil spray
Freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
250g button mushrooms, trimmed
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 tablespoon plain flour
½ cup (125ml) white wine
2 cups (500ml) salt-reduced chicken stock
3 fresh bay leaves

8 sprigs fresh thyme
3 wide strips orange zest
Juice of 1 orange
Leafy salad and crusty bread, to serve

1 PREHEAT the oven to 180°C. Trim the fat from the chicken thighs, spray each lightly with olive oil and season with pepper. Heat a non-stick frying pan, then brown the chicken in batches over a medium heat. Transfer the chicken to an ovenproof pan or casserole dish.
2 REDUCE the heat in the frying pan to medium-low, add the olive oil and heat for 30 seconds. Add the mushrooms, cook for 2-3 minutes or

until the mushrooms are tender, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds.

3 SPRINKLE in the flour, then stir for 1-2 minutes so the flour coats the mushrooms and the flour browns lightly. Add the wine and stock, scraping up any residue from the base of the pan. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture boils. Pour over the chicken and add the bay leaves, thyme and orange zest and juice.

4 COOK for about 30-35 minutes or until the chicken is tender. Stir once or twice during the cooking time, adding a little more stock or water if needed. Serve the chicken with salad and crusty bread. 🍴

Plant pretty PANSIES

Add winter colour to garden beds or pots with these long-flowering beauties

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Like everything, plants go in and out of fashion. But one plant that hasn't moved from the fashion merry-go-round is the pansy.

Viola x wittrockiana, the pansy we know, was bred from two English hedgerow plants, *Viola tricolor* and *Viola lutea*, around 1830.

The success of this cultivar resulted in the production of hundreds of new cultivars in bright colours with large blotches on their petals.

There are many different cultivars in a range of sizes, colours and styles. Some feature mixed colours with the traditional marking of a face on the petals while others have whisker marks.

You can also buy plain-faced pansies in one colour or their close cousins, the small but abundantly flowering violas.



PICTURES ISTOCK

DIY TIP

The more you pick pansies, the more flowers they produce, so put them in small vases and use them to decorate indoors.

Grow in beds

Pansies are short-lived perennials, but they are generally grown as annuals.

You can plant seedlings, as there is always a huge choice of varieties in nurseries during the cooler months, or they can be grown from seed.

✚ **PLANT** seedlings in a sunny spot in free-draining soil, adding manure or compost to the soil before planting.

In hot climates, pansies appreciate some afternoon shade.

✚ **MULCH** with lucerne hay or sugarcane to retain moisture in the soil and protect the roots.

✚ **FEED** monthly with a soluble plant food for flowers.

✚ **WATER** regularly to ensure an abundance of flowers.

✚ **SOW** the seeds from midsummer to the end of autumn in most areas, and in autumn and spring in cold regions.

Add the seeds to punnets filled with seed-raising mix and keep the mix damp by encasing the whole punnet in clear plastic wrap.

Put the punnet in a well-lit but shaded position. Germination takes between 21 and 28 days. ➤

Did you know?

The common name pansy is derived from the French word *pensée*, which means thought. This is because people traditionally sent pansies to their loved ones to remember them by.

Another view is the flower resembles a human face and when it nods forwards, it looks like it is deep in thought.



A container brimming with dainty violas looks striking.

Grow in pots

Potted pansies look beautiful and will produce flowers for many months.

Always start with a premium potting mix, fertilise fortnightly with a soluble plant food for flowers and water regularly to encourage the blooms to grow.

TIP Try the Plentifall Series of trailing pansies that spread over the side of the container. Colours include yellow, lemon, blue, white and purple.



All in a name

The original wild pansy (*Viola tricolor*) had small yellow, white and purple flowers and was found growing in English hedgerows and meadows. It was widely used as a medicinal plant, most often in its dried state.

For such a modest flower, it's attracted some bizarre common names over the centuries.

These include heartsease, Johnny jump up, love in idleness, kiss her in the pantry, herb constancy, Jack jump up and kiss me, three faces in a hood, tickle my fancy, two faces under the sun and peeping Toms.

In the kitchen

Fresh pansies make gorgeous cake and biscuit decorations, and they can also be frozen in ice cubes and added to drinks.

Toss a few through a green salad for an interesting and attractive finishing touch.

Only eat pansies that have been organically grown, without the use of chemical pesticides.



PICTURES ISTOCK (TOP RIGHT) ALAMY

Design ideas

Here are a few ways to grow pansies in garden beds or pots.

- ✦ **GROW** in clumps of 3-5 plants in garden beds or plant them en masse among other flowers.
- ✦ **PLANT** in wide pots, hanging baskets, strawberry pots and window boxes.
- ✦ **POSITION** a large pot of pansies near the front door to welcome you.
- ✦ **DECORATE** the outdoor entertaining area with containers of pansies.

Watch for snail and slugs, as pansies are among their favourites.



How to dry and press pansies

Pansies are easy to dry and also keep their colour, and you don't need special equipment.

You can attach the dried flowers to plain notepaper or small boxes to dress them up, or create your own greetings cards or gift tags.

✦ **PICK** your favourite pansies early in the morning when it's coolest, then cut off the stem just below the petals so the pansy will lie flat.

✦ **PLACE** a piece of paper towel on an open page of a thick, heavy book.

✦ **ARRANGE** the pansies on the paper towel, making sure the petals don't touch. Top with another piece of paper towel and carefully close the book.

✦ **PUT** in a warm dry spot for 3-6 weeks, checking occasionally to see if they have dried. When dry, remove the pansies you want to use, leaving the rest in the book until needed. 🌸



SURVIVING FROSTS

How to help your plants cope during the colder months

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS



With careful planning, frost-prone gardens will thrive through winter.

Cool-climate gardens have great qualities, but they also come with frosty mornings.

Certain plants cope with frost naturally by avoiding it and entering a dormant phase in winter. Many perennials die down and their roots rest under the soil, and deciduous trees and shrubs lose their leaves.

Frost harms plants by causing ice crystals to form in the cells. This makes water unavailable to plant tissues, disrupting the movement of fluids.

The leaves of frost-damaged plants appear water-soaked and eventually they shrivel and turn brown.

It is often early autumn and late spring frosts that can catch gardeners unawares, so it's worth being prepared.



Various plants can be affected by frost when young, but toughen up as they age



Protect plants

Here are a few easy ways to keep sensitive or frost-prone plants safe.

- ✦ **WATER** around the plants, not the leaves, the night before a light frost. During the night, the wet soil releases moisture into the air, which raises the temperature and keeps plants warmer.
- ✦ **AVOID** feeding plants until after the last frost to prevent a flush of tender growth that can be damaged by cold.
- ✦ **MAKE** a teepee with stakes tied with string or wire and cover with shadecloth. You can also use bed sheets or sacks.
- ✦ **CUT** clear plastic bottles in half, make a few ventilation holes and place over seedlings at night.
- ✦ **COVER** small frost-tender plants with an inverted bucket or flowerpot at night until the frosts are finished.
- ✦ **LEAVE** frost-damaged leaves and stems on the plant to help protect from further frosts. Prune the damaged parts in spring when frosts are over.
- ✦ **MOVE** potted plants to an undercover area in early autumn.

Take stock

When a frost falls, check which areas of your garden have been worst hit. Low-lying areas can become frost pockets and it may take longer for the frost to disappear compared to other parts of the garden.

Use this knowledge to position plants appropriately and only put frost-hardy varieties in the bad areas.

If you want to grow tender species, plant them near north- or west-facing walls, which will absorb heat during the day and release it at night. Taller frost-hardy shrubs can help provide protection for more tender species.

Use frost cloth that is designed to protect plants from damage, such as Coolaroo Frost Cloth, \$11 for 20m (coolaroo.com).

DIY TIP

Set up frost protection in advance so you won't be caught by an early frost, and don't remove the protection until late in the season.

Choose carefully

If you live in a frost-prone region, select plants that can tolerate it. Don't be tempted by a beautiful plant that you will have to try to keep alive in winter. Shop locally, as nurseries usually only sell plants that will thrive in your area.

JUN

What's on this month

Head down to your local Bunnings this June to get some advice for your next D.I.Y. project



3
[SAT]

4
[SUN]

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY WORKSHOPS

Make something fun



10
[SAT]

11
[SUN]

GARDEN WORKSHOPS

Learn how to plant and care for your garden



10
[SAT]

11
[SUN]

SAVE ENERGY AND WATER WORKSHOPS

Get advice on how to save this coming winter



17
[SAT]

18
[SUN]

BASIC D.I.Y. WORKSHOPS

Learn how to master the basic workshop skills

Workshops held at warehouses only. If you live in South Australia, speak to a team member or visit bunnings.com.au/yourstore for details about our great one-on-one D.I.Y. workshops.

GARDENING WORKSHOPS

Whether you're starting a new garden or tidying up an old one, our team members have the right advice to help you complete your next project.



3
[SAT]

4
[SUN]

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

DANIEL
TEAM MEMBER



BUNNINGS
warehouse

OUR POLICY
LOWEST PRICES ARE JUST THE BEGINNING...

AUSTRALIAN

On sale 22 June

Handyman

NEXT ISSUE

BUILD

How to create a cosy and stylish winter deck to extend the outdoor living season.

PLUS Give outdoor furniture a makeover.

OUTDOOR

How to plan and lay a concrete driveway, and effective ways to eliminate winter pests.

PLUS Plant roses and grow potatoes.

DECORATE

How to use paint to get the designer look DIY and create walls with depth and colour.

PLUS Lighting design ideas for every space.

POP QUIZ!

Name that SPUD

How many of these potato varieties can you identify?
The answers are at the bottom of the page

1

2

3

4

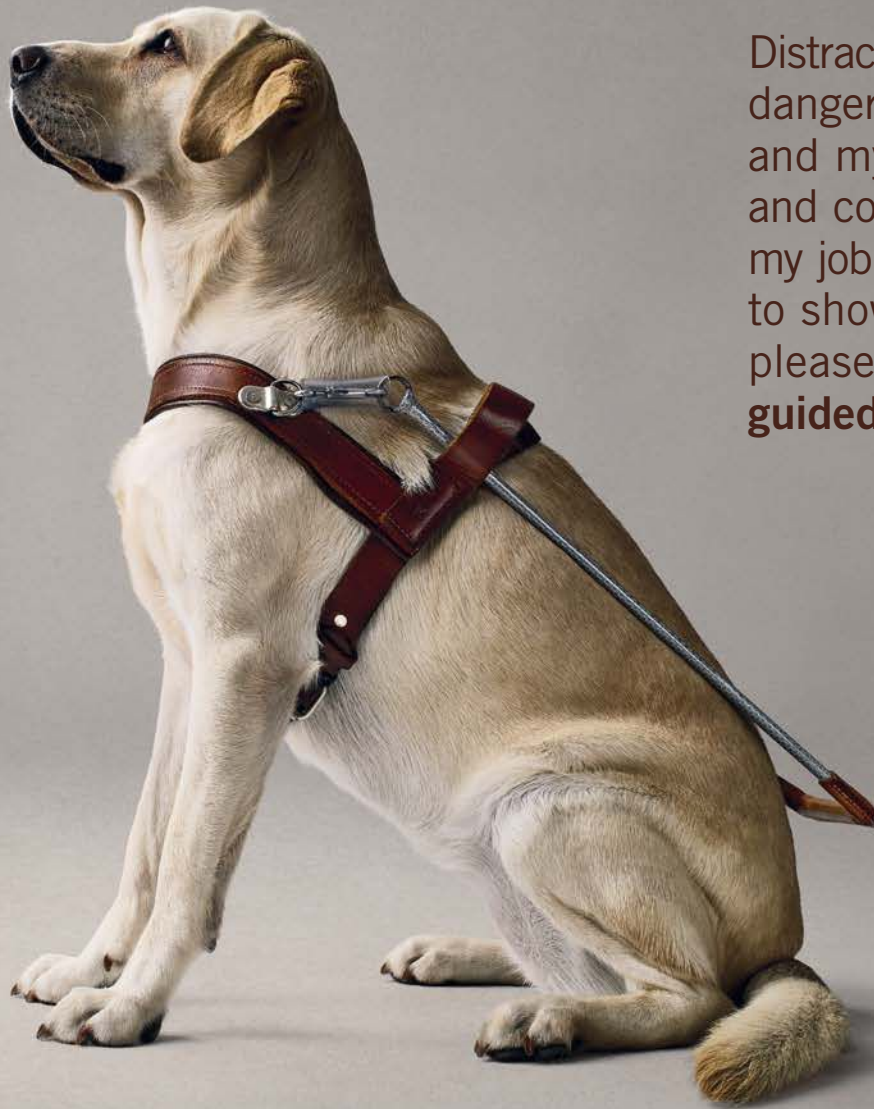
5

7

8

6

ANSWERS 1 PONTIAC 2 PINK FIR APPLE 3 COLIBAN 4 RED DESIREE 5 KIPFLER 6 BINTJE 7 SEBAGO 8 NICOLA



Distractions can be dangerous to me and my handler, and could cost me my job. If you want to show me love, please do it at guidedogs.com.au

I'M WORKING
RESPECT
MY UNIFORM

Guide Dogs
NSW/ACT

people who know & love timber

porta

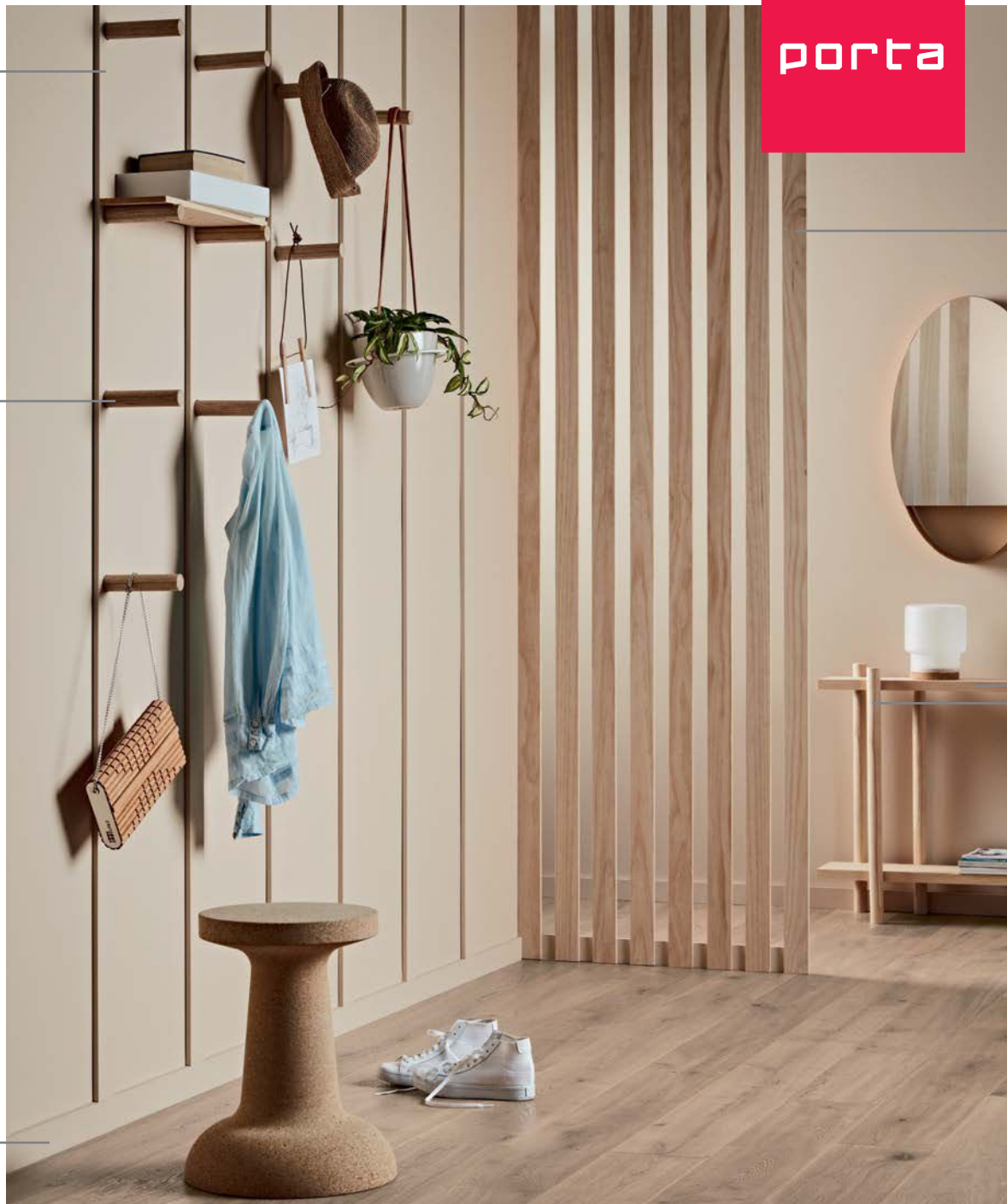
DAR-6512 (Dressed All Round)

DOW-32 (Dowel) in Tasmanian Oak

DAR-6512 (Dressed All Round)

DAR-6512 (Dressed All Round) in Tasmanian Oak

DAR-19030 (Dressed All Round) in General Purpose Pine
DOW-40 (Dowel) 1.2m in Tasmanian Oak



Take your project to the next level with timber mouldings.

Available from Bunnings Warehouse
and major timber & hardware outlets.

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