

AUSTRALIAN

BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME FROM SCRATCH

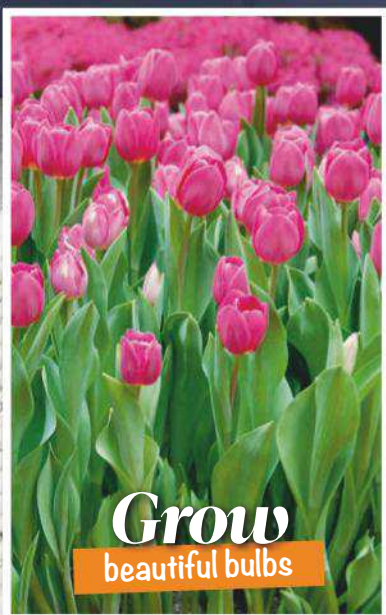
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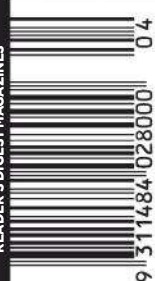
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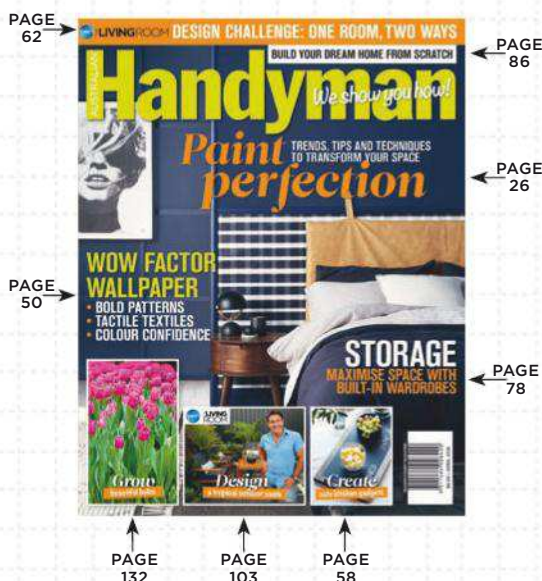


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EDITOR'S LETTER

Having just undergone the arduous task of selecting an exterior paint colour for our house (and ending up with a patchwork of sample pots on the wall that were all close-but-not-quite-right), I know only too well just how important paint is for setting the tone and mood of our indoor and outdoor spaces.

And, once you've managed to find the right hue, it's also one of the cheapest and most effective ways to transform your home.

With our guide to the latest trends in paint (starting on page 26), tips and tricks for achieving a professional finish (from page 44), and reno queen Cherie Barber's impressive paint makeovers (page 38), there's nothing stopping you from rolling up your sleeves, popping open a paint tin and getting stuck in.

We even have a great competition (page 56) in which 10 readers can win a paint accessories set to get them started!

Building from the ground up

There's few of us who haven't at some point dreamt of building our dream house from scratch, but with so many factors to consider, it can seem an arduous feat. Our feature on page 86 details the key elements to get in place to turn your dream into a reality.

Projects to get stuck into

We have plenty of projects for you this month, from building a concrete vanity (page 75), to creating kitchen gadgets (page 58) and installing a built-in wardrobe (page 78). Happy DIYing!



MANAGING EDITOR
ZOË MEUNIER



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PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Summer may be over, but the need to keep your pool area safe and secure is as critical as ever.

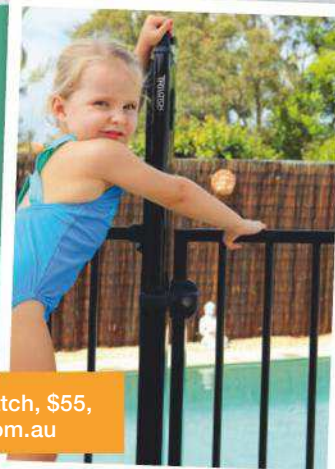
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Brackets for the Kitchen



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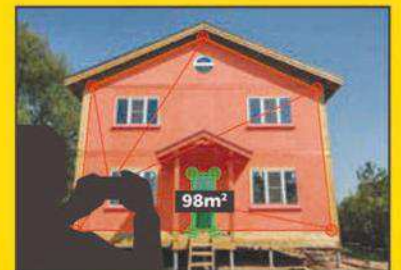
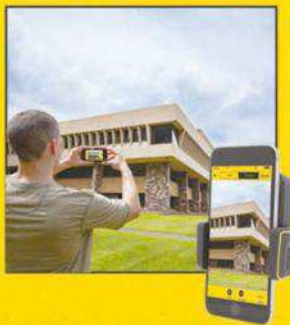
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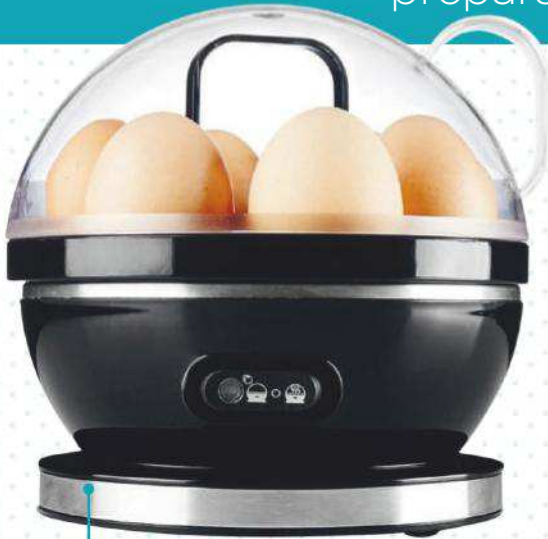
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HANDY STUFF

KITCHEN GADGETS

Pick up these essentials to make all your food preparation and cooking a breeze



Boiling point

Get perfectly done eggs effortlessly with this black automatic Egg Cooker, \$15. It can boil up to seven eggs at a time, with settings to cook them medium-hard, hard or soft, and it plays music or buzzes when the eggs are done.

kmart.com.au

Perfect prepper

Make food preparation faster and easier with this Food Processor, \$49. It features two speeds, a wide feed chute, slicing, shredding and granulating inserts, a kneading tool and an emulsifying disc.

kmart.com.au



Top toaster

Ensure your toast is just the way you like it with this 4-slice Stainless Steel Toaster, \$35, with browning control. You can also make use of its reheat and defrost functions.

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Sparkle time

Save money and create an exciting range of sparkling drinks from the comfort of your own home with the Sodastream Jet Sparkling Water Maker, \$69. This simple-to-use gadget uses CO₂ cylinders to pump carbon dioxide into a specially designed bottle.

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Tight seal

Vacuum seal your food and preserve its freshness and flavours with the help of this Vacuum Food Sealer, \$59. Ideal for saving space in the fridge, it removes air from its specially designed bags.

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Star season

Have fun adding condiments to food with the Star Wars Salt and Pepper Set, \$30. Shaped like Darth Vader and a Storm Trooper, these ceramic shakers are sure to be a hit with *Star Wars* fans.

innovations.com.au



Waste land

Grind food waste with the InSinkErator 46 Food Waste Disposal Unit, \$227. It fits easily under most sinks and grinds food scraps for easy disposal, using less than 1% of your water consumption.

bunnings.com.au



Oil boon

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The Essential Ingredient Cork/Metal Pourer with Spout, \$3. Made from stainless steel and eco-friendly Portuguese cork, it has a stylish design.

essentialingredient.com.au



Smart sharpener

Keep your kitchen knives extra sharp using the De Buyer 'Trium' Three-stage Knife Sharpener, \$100. Made from carbon fibre, it repairs, sharpens and hones knives.

essentialingredient.com.au



Liquid asset

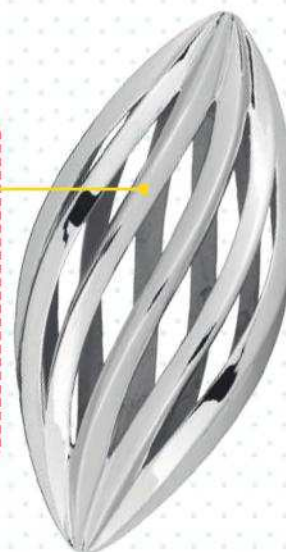
Filter your drinking water using the Stefani 2L Compact Water Filter Jug, \$15. Made from BPA-free plastic, it features a compact design, a four-stage filter cartridge and detachable handles.

bunnings.com.au

Fresh squeeze

Make a fresh glass of juice with style using the Alessi My Squeeze Citrus Squeezer, \$112. Made in Italy from stainless steel, this stylish squeezer will make the most elegant orange juice ever. ▶

petersofkensington.com.au





Ice age

Make ice cubes within eight minutes at your next party using this amazing Ice Machine, \$199. Simply fill the 2L water tank and choose one of the three cube sizes. It includes LED displays and a viewing window in the lid.

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Meal maker

Create your favourite meals, including casseroles, roasts, fondues and fish and chips with the Multi Function Cooker, \$169. It includes a 5L non-stick aluminium bowl, steamer rack and deep-frying basket.

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Hot cuppa

Boil water for your next cuppa with this stylish Euro Kettle, \$39. Made from stainless steel and plastic, this 1.7L kettle has an external level indicator and overheat protection.

kmart.com.au



Posh peeler

Peel most of your fruit and vegies with little effort using the Express Peeler, \$49. Run on four AA batteries (not supplied) or mains power, it includes two spare blades and a blemish remover.

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Cool composter

Turn your vegetable scraps into soil-enriching compost using the Enamel Kitchen Composter, \$40. Holding up to 5.5L of scraps, it can sit on your kitchen bench, as it has a charcoal filter that makes it odour-free.

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Handy Smoke Alarm tips

- Replace your smoke alarm battery once a year when daylight saving begins
- Test your alarm after installing new batteries - simply press the test button
- Clean and vacuum your smoke alarm at least every 6 months - this will help nuisance alarms caused by dust or other contaminants
- Replace your smoke alarm every 10 years



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THIS APRIL...

CHANGE YOUR SMOKE ALARM BATTERY



Smoke alarms provide critical early warning when a house fire starts.

With winter approaching and, with it, the increased use of heating appliances and fires, the Fire Protection Association Australia (FPAA) recommends all Australians change their smoke alarm battery.

Smoke alarms save lives, but not if the battery is flat. So on April 1, which is both April Fool's Day and the end of daylight saving, be sure to replace the battery in all the smoke alarms in your home, as well as cleaning them with a cloth or using a vacuum cleaner.

After replacing the battery, check your smoke alarm is operational by holding down the test button until you hear a loud alert tone.

Smoke alarms should also be tested regularly, usually monthly, to ensure they are operating correctly.

All smoke alarms have a red light that flashes momentarily about every 40-60 seconds to show they are operating, while alarms that have a low battery will emit an intermittent beep or chirping sound. ♦

TIME TO CHANGE THE BATTERY?

Smoke alarms powered by a 9V alkaline battery require you to replace the battery every year – ideally on April 1.

When replacing an existing 9V battery smoke alarm, consider installing a photoelectric smoke alarm with an in-built 10-year lithium battery, which eliminates the need for annual battery replacements.

Alternatively, there are mains-powered or hardwired smoke alarms which are powered by an external power source. These alarms also have a battery back-up for periods of mains power outage.

Many models of alarms have a rechargeable, non-removable battery and do not need replacement. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions to see if you need to change the battery.

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HOLIDAY AT HOME

A dark, poky dwelling is renovated to create a breezy, beachy house where it feels like you're on vacation every day

WORDS SITA SIMONS PICTURES TOM FERGUSON





The living and outdoor areas have a smooth flow, while the palette of whites is punctuated with Melissa's art collection.



Designed for Melissa Bonney, director of The Designory, this light and bright home was a full renovation from the front door through to the sparkling new pool in the backyard, and everything in between.

With a run-down two-storey house already on the site, the challenge was to turn the building into a high-end home in a beach-side suburb of Sydney.

Led by Melissa, the design team redefined new zones for both downstairs and upstairs. This was done to create a haven with a focus on bespoke joinery and natural materials and finishes.

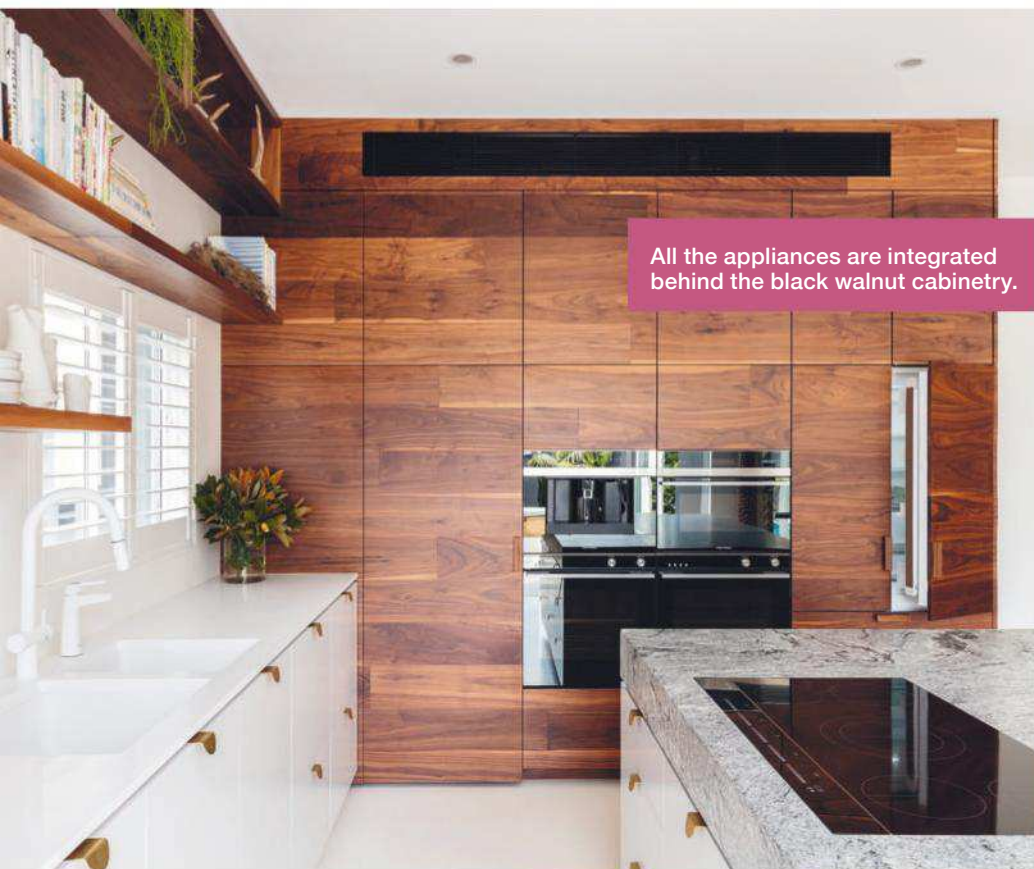
'The property was a rabbit warren of small, dark rooms. The addition of doors, windows and skylights allowed us to gain natural light and connect to the outdoors,' says Melissa.

Upstairs, six small bedrooms would become five well-designed spaces, including the master suite, two bathrooms and an ensuite. ►





A granite island benchtop was custom-built for the home. Darker hues punctuate the light space.



All the appliances are integrated behind the black walnut cabinetry.

Setting the scene

With a view to the pool and outdoor entertaining area, the living room features a striking suspended fireplace, giving the space a focal point.

The walls are finished with a stucco render, creating a textured, icy-smooth and glossy finish. The new windows, skylights and sliding doors now allow plenty of natural light to come in, making the finish really stand out.

As the house was originally designed to feature a palette of fresh whites set against a range of greys, Melissa wanted to bring a fresh element to the kitchen.

‘The kitchen sets a tone for a home, so we brought the warm tones of walnut and brass in there, then throughout the home,’ says Melissa.

‘The wall of American black walnut was created by hand by our joiner, who followed the wood grain against all the cabinet fronts to create a seamless look.’

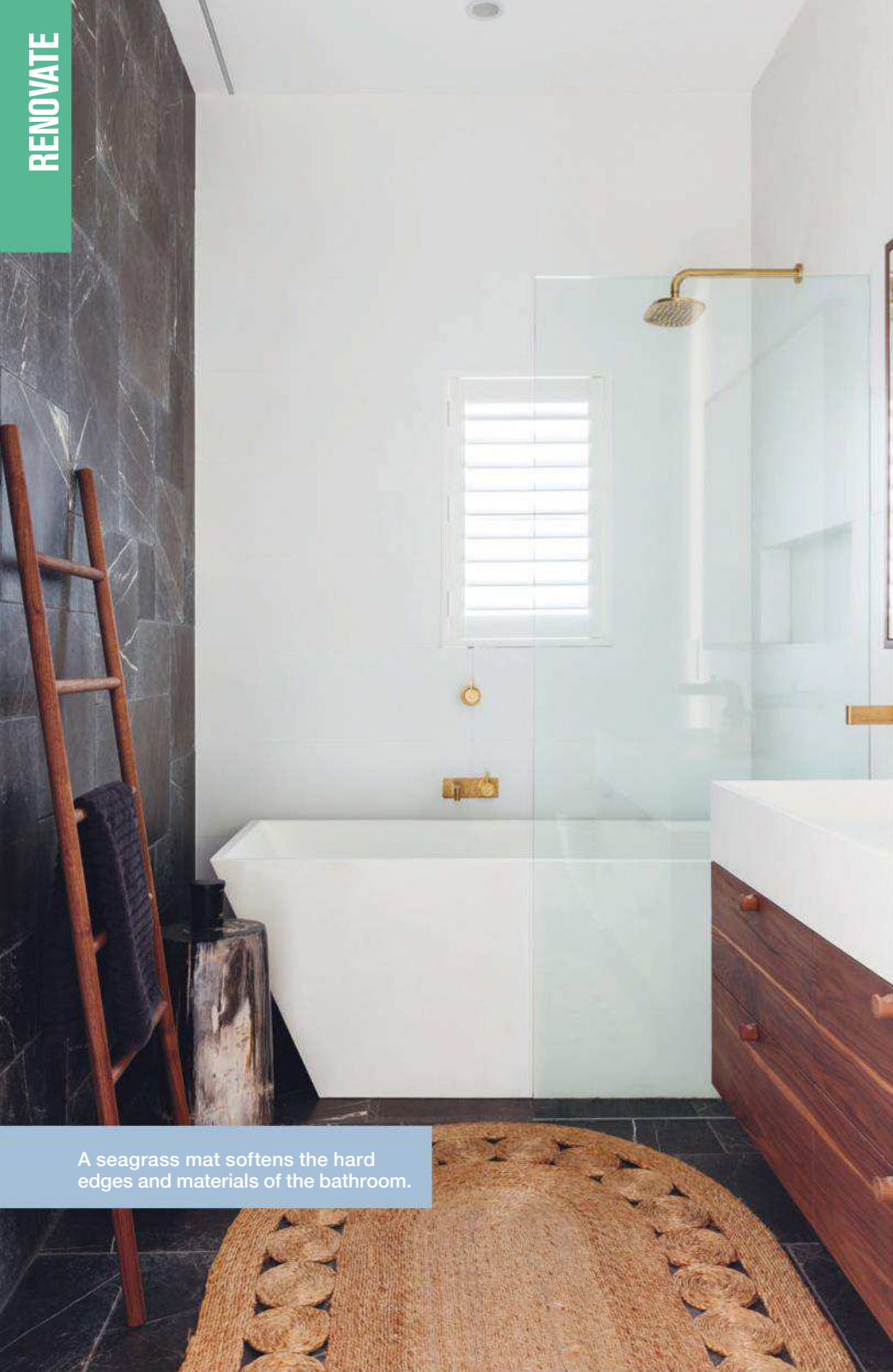
Here, and in the living and dining areas, the full effect of the white epoxy resin flooring is apparent, adding shine, texture and a feel of easy luxury. ►



A dining table off the kitchen makes for easy family living.



The TV is tucked around a corner in the open-plan space to define the different zones.



A seagrass mat softens the hard edges and materials of the bathroom.

Unified bathrooms

A selection of tumbled brass hardware was installed in the bathrooms, adding some texture. Over time, the brass fittings will change patina, adding a softer touch to the bathroom spaces.

'The bathroom designs all used the same tiles and fixtures, so they all had symbiosis,' says Melissa.

'We chose a tumbled limestone laid in a French pattern on the floor and up the wall, with the surrounding space tiled in a simple white tile to carry light and create contrast.'

The custom-made vanities feature a rich walnut, which include generous storage drawers for bathroom linen and a range of cosmetics. ►



KEEPING GROUT CLEAN

- Minimising grout lines and keeping them clean over the years should always be taken into consideration in any bathroom.

Good design, and in particular when simplicity is a key component, relies on clean lines, both literally and aesthetically.

- Large-format tiles require fewer grout lines, but there are also new products on the market that are designed to tackle this issue.

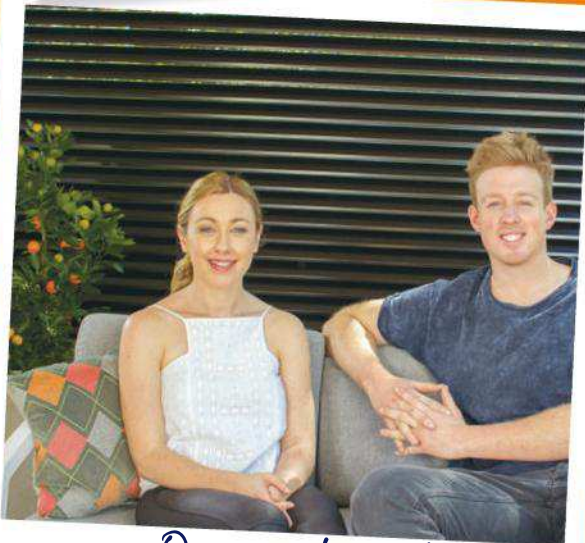
- Coloured grouts can be tinted to match the tile and advances in fabrication mean some products are stain-resistant.



Nick the Naturist pruning his Roses..
sausage anyone!



A rusty shed roof, long grass and
a broken washing line



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& ac unit :)



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The vertical-striped wallpaper defines this cosy boy's room.



Practical and simple design solutions tailored to each child will always work well.



Bespoke bedrooms

Upstairs is all about calm, and the bedrooms are beautifully finished with bespoke joinery, luxurious wool carpet and clever design features such as built-in desks and mini walk-in robes.

‘Storage is extremely important for any home. Having well-designed built-in wardrobes that have the capacity to store everything allows for the space to feel uncluttered,’ says Melissa.

‘Children’s rooms, however, need various storage solutions. We used Muuto boxes under the window to create a kid-friendly-height bookcase. An oversized basket also helps to store toys, allowing for easy play but making cleaning up a breeze.’

For their youngest boy, Melissa chose a Shibori Stripe wallpaper from Milton & King, to help create the illusion of the room having higher ceilings.

‘It’s a strong backdrop, one that will grow with him,’ says Melissa. ►



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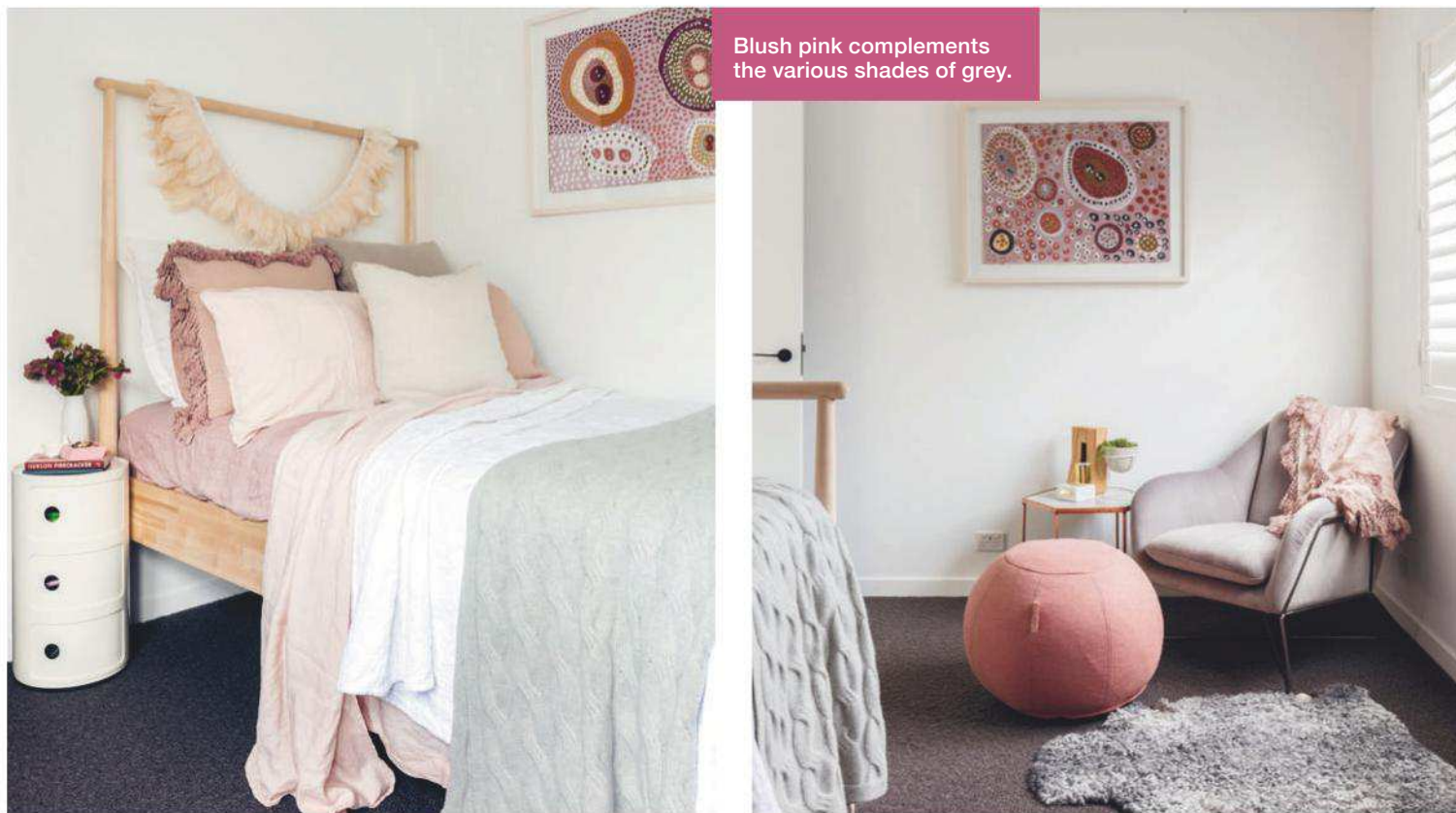


DINING
easyascot (Ascot2700)

A much-loved artwork sets the tone for the soft furnishings.



Blush pink complements the various shades of grey.



Tranquil tones

The master suite located upstairs has a stunning curved battened wall.

'We wanted to make curves a feature, to bring a softness to the box-like quality of the existing house,' says Melissa.

'Not only does it add a beautiful design detail, but it also helps to soften some spaces and divide rooms, while not closing them in.'

The generous bedroom also has a full ensuite bathroom and a balcony.

Soft and tranquil colour palettes are an important factor in the success of a bedroom, and Melissa says it can be

a major task. But taking the time to test colours out, even if only with subtle differences, will pay off in the end.

'Needless to say, you need to double, and sometimes triple-check your colours before you decide which is the best choice for you and your space. We spent plenty of time painting patches in different areas and in changing light,' says Melissa.

Final decisions about your interior palette should always be made while considering other aesthetic elements such as the carpets, rugs, joinery and surface materials. ►



A well-considered master bedroom is a must in a family home, as it's somewhere for the adults to retreat and recharge



Wardrobe Solutions



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Convenient, easy to install white closet rod shelf bracket.

Holds both the rod and a shelf to help organise your closet.

The attractive white finish, elegant design compliments closet décor.

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Located in the
brackets aisle



A concealed study is kept clutter free thanks to custom-designed joinery.



The rumpus room is comfortable and stylish.

Design distinctions

The front of the property has been reconfigured to create a distinct entry point. Another element was to design clever joinery hidden behind a curved wall, allowing for a discrete home office to be tucked away behind it.

An expansive rumpus-cum-media room has also been designed to work as an ideal second living area.

‘When you have children of different ages and with differing requirements, a second living or casual space to watch TV or play games, or simply hang out, is crucial,’ says Melissa.

‘It works for everyone and it can also be a great use of an area with less than ideal light, for instance.’

With the creation of a new laundry, linen and storage area, tucked in under the stair cavity, a previously unused space is made the most of.



A fire pit is a great way to bring everyone together.

Customised elements make each space better suited to meet all the family's needs

The home's outdoor areas are all geared towards providing the best function and appeal, such as an outdoor shower and seating nook at the front.

'We built this as the dream house for our family. We really got it right with this house, for us,' says Melissa.

'It was fully customised at every step so that our time within any space felt calm, organised and relaxed.

'That's what it's all about - creating a seamless space that resonates with all the people living there.' ♦

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Trends come and go, but the process of defining paint palettes for the year ahead may surprise you. Driven by fashion, architecture, design events such as the Maison et Objet in Paris and the Milan Furniture Fair, The Pantone Colour Institute, and even the political mood, what is on offer in the paint tin is a culmination of all these factors.

Although colour theory has been around for many years, today there are countless research studies that explore the connections between colour and our emotions.

And as we spend more and more time at home, our interiors become entwined with how we think, feel and live.

Taking a cue from the all-important Pantone Colour of the Year, Ultra-Violet, the big paint companies are making bold offerings this year. Moving a step on from the violets and sugared tones of 2016-17, Taubmans introduced Black Flame as its colour of the year.

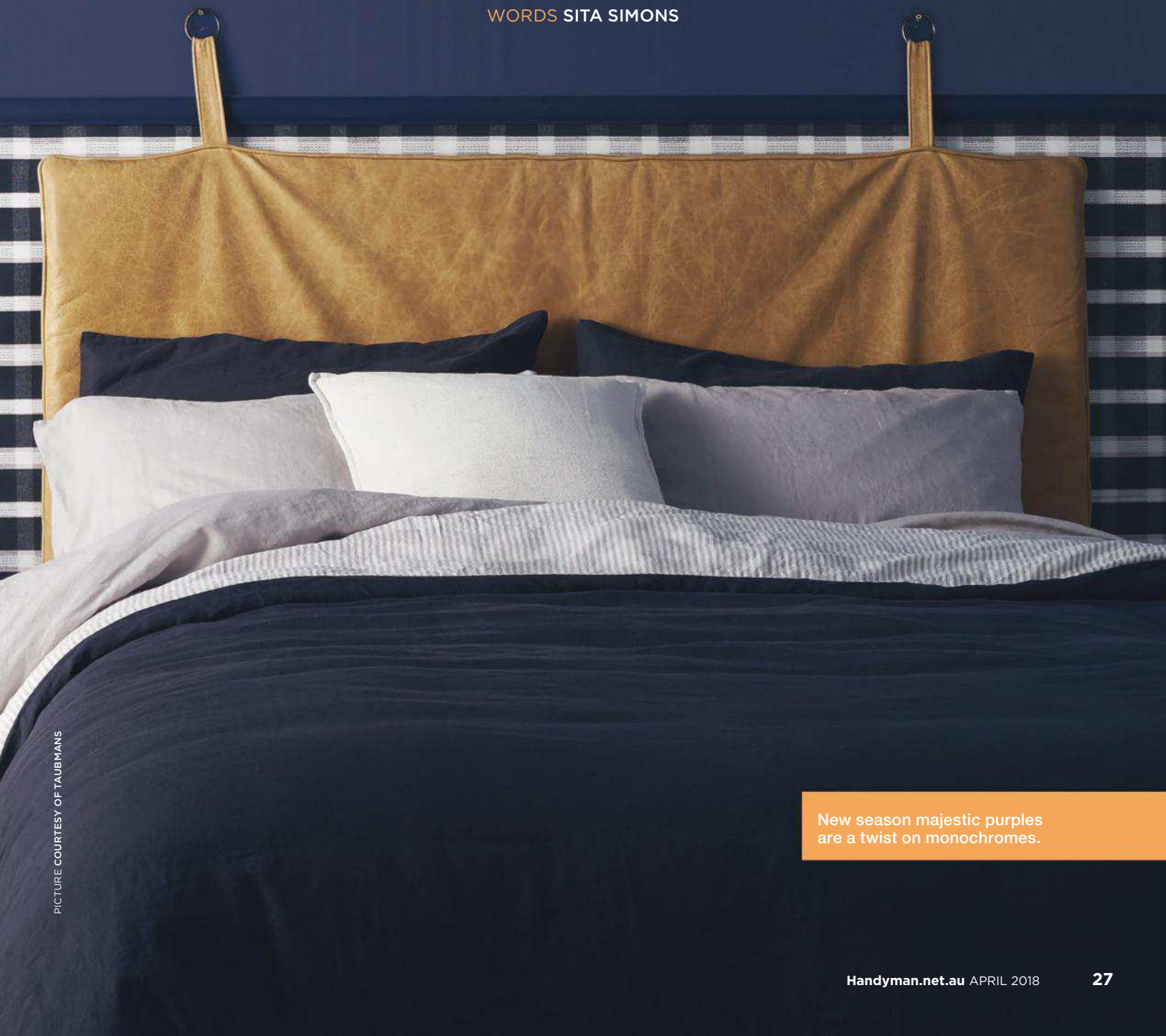
A statement-making black, infused with an undertone of indigo to create a chameleon-like effect, brand manager Fiona King says the dark shade represents a confident homeowner. ►



SHADES OF CONFIDENCE

New colour palettes take a bold turn, as nature-inspired themes remain strong and new purples and darks emerge

WORDS SITA SIMONS



PICTURE COURTESY OF TAUBMANS

New season majestic purples are a twist on monochromes.

A pop of blue is in perfect contrast to arctic whites.



'Taubmans is predicting a trend for simpler interiors rather than a kaleidoscope of colours. Simple and sharp palettes with contrasting blacks and whites will dominate,' says Fiona.

'Black Flame is the perfect base for textured and aged leathers, paired with tans to create a rich look that works in a multitude of environments.

'Using Black Flame with blond and walnut timbers will add contrast, whereas rose gold and black-and-white accents will give a contemporary feel.' ►



Simple palettes with contrasting colours are set to be popular this year



Pink and yellow creates an avant-garde look.



PICTURES COURTESY OF TAUBMANS



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for a soft and fresh look.

Classic navy and white looks great with a modern matt finish.



PICTURES COURTESY OF TAUBMANS

NEUTRALISING NEUTRALS

Neutrals are taking a back seat, but will always be a fundamental part of interior design. Coming trends see a combination of neutrals working in effect as a palette, rather than one singular shade throughout.

'An important thing to understand is to work in a tone of neutrals, rather than a single or couple of colours,' says Fiona.

'When it doesn't work, it's usually because the two whites or the two

creams don't sit well together. Warm whites tend to have a better energy than colder tones.'

The monochromatic theme can also play out effectively with other strong shades, such as deep blue, and yes, even brown. Extrapolating on earthy shades of terracotta, new browns are coffee and chocolate hues, with undertones of red.

'This is not your nanna's lounge room. Paired with neutrals, these colours are strong and rich, and make a total experience of the home,' says Fiona. ►



Choose the right neutrals to pair with rich earthy tones.



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BEFORE



AFTER*

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WELCOME MATT

Capitalising on the recent strong trend for matt finishes, which has been seen everywhere from cars to make-up, Taubmans has engineered a new paint with a superior matt finish, Taubmans Endure Interior.

The product has been in development for a number of years, and addresses the performance and application problems of matt paint.

The new range provides an 8-in-1 multi-benefit protection for interiors across eight crucial performance areas, including wash resistance; stain resistance; scrub resistance; anti-microbial; asthma and allergy friendly; low odour and low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound); mould and mildew inhibition and advanced Nanoguard technology.

'Until now, choosing a paint has meant compromising on one or more

of the key elements of the perfect product. For example, a paint that washes well and doesn't leave any shiny patches may never resist the initial stain, so the mark remains. But with our new premium Endure Interior range, DIY painters can have the lot,' says Fiona. ►



The Endure Interior range uses a new high-performance matt paint.

Matt finishes are set to become very popular.



Brown gets a sophisticated update for new-look interiors.



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- ☑ AN/NZS 1716*

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For correct use, consult 3M Australia on 1800 024 464.

PEACHY PERFECT

The latest colour palette from Dulux is all about increasing the cosiness factor this autumn. Sophisticated earthy shades partnered with light neutrals will star alongside tribal-inspired textured furnishings. It's a layered look, which creates inviting interiors that exude warmth and comfort.

These colours are taking on the softer, nature-loving style, which was exemplified in last year's green trend, and the huge popularity of the 2017 Pantone Colour of the Year, Greenery.

The new Dulux Kinship Palette offers a collection of rich tones, inspired by traditional cultures and folklore. Featuring warm terracotta, russet, soft grey-greens and cosy neutrals with

splashes of red, there's more than a hint of Eastern influence. The palette works beautifully with enduring trends in natural materials, such as timber, stone and raw fabrics.

'This colour palette exudes warmth, but in a sophisticated and contemporary way. It is easy to work with, allowing you to add character with minimal fuss,' says Andrea Lucena-Orr, Dulux colour expert.

'If you're nervous about the idea of introducing deep colours to your space, you needn't be. You'll find that even a small amount of these richer hues against a white or neutral background, in the right spot, can make a big impact,' says Andrea. ►

Shades of terracotta make a warm and rich palette.



THE QUIETEST HAMMER

Save your thumbs and use a construction grade adhesive strong enough to hold polystyrene panels; loose tiles, skirting boards, architraves and trims. SikaBond® Instant Nails Fast will even bond particleboard, plywood, fibre cement and strip flooring to joists. Repositionable for up to 60 minutes after application, it'll fill gaps up to 9mm with no fumes and no worries!



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Watch Brad & Lara's product demos at sikaretail.com.au

Pair your deep colours with a complementary white or neutral that has similar undertones. This will create a sense of balance, allowing the statement colours to enhance rather than overwhelm a space.

'Paint the fireplace surround or create an eye-catching feature wall with one of the bolder colours in the Kinship palette, such as Dulux Very Terracotta or Sassy, and keep the other walls soft and neutral,' suggests The Design Chaser's Michelle Halford.

'Or, for a more low-key effect, pair a muted green such as Dulux Hildegard or Herbalist with a cool white.'

Bold colours easily and quickly invigorate a space, and you don't need to go full-scale. Consider repainting the front door, the edge of shelving, a storage nook or around a doorframe.

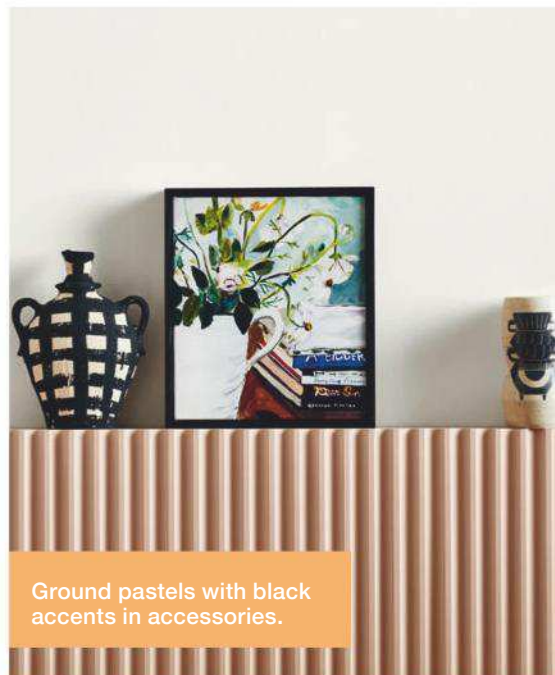
Create a tonal vignette for very little outlay by painting a medley of op-shop vessels in similar shades of the one colour and displaying them on a hallway table or mantelpiece.



Earthy tones, including oranges in peachy shades, will remain prominent design trends

'The one definite with interiors is they're always moving forward. Some trends will remain from one cycle to the next, but closer inspection will reveal that slightly different textures, patterns or undertones are at play every time,' says Andrea.

'Paint is such an easy and affordable way to keep your interiors up-to-date, and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone colour-wise can be incredibly fun and rewarding. Best of all, if a colour isn't what you're looking for, you can easily change it.' ♦



Ground pastels with black accents in accessories.

Layer shades and mix textures for a vibrant living space.



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PAINT POWER

Celebrity renovator Cherie Barber shows it's hard to beat plain old paint when it comes to cosmetic transformations

WORDS AND PICTURES **CHERIE BARBER**

It's cheap, you can easily do it DIY and it's undoubtedly one of the most powerful tools in the renovation kit. I'm talking about paint. In my 25+ years of renovating, I've yet to come across a more effective way to achieve utter transformations on minuscule budgets.

Even if you don't have the finances or time for a full renovation, there are many miracle paint products on the market that deliver overnight transformations.

Tile paint, laminate paint, specialty enamel paint for bathtubs, spray paints to turn white appliances into stainless steel gems... Then, of course, there's just plain old paint in all its colourful guises.



Cherie Barber is the reno expert on Ten's *The Living Room* and owner of Renovating For Profit (renovatingforprofit.com.au).



BATHROOM REVAMP

When I'm doing a low-cost cosmetic bathroom renovation, I rely heavily on paint. In fact, there's even a product to paint floor tiles in high-traffic spaces such as bathrooms – Rust-Oleum Tile Transformations.

And if you've got a pink bath, no worries, you can break out the White Knight Tub & Basin Paint and neutralise that golden oldie with pristine white.

But for this bathroom, I wanted to experiment with something a little

different. So instead of painting all the wall tiles in plain white, I tinted some in White Knight Caribbean Green.

It would have been too much on all the walls, but it created a vibrant hit of colour on just the far wall and the bath tiles. That mirrored cabinet helps light bounce around the room.

Then instead of removing the old floor tiles, which is very expensive once you factor in waterproofing, I simply opted for a floating timber floor. ►

After

Combining a splash of colour with white for the tiles works wonders.



RUMPUS ROOM RENO

This was part of a very ambitious renovation of a house, inside and out, that was done on a total budget of just under \$20,000. This had to allow for asbestos removal and a new bathroom, which didn't leave much in the kitty for an extravagant reno. So my magic weapon was paint.

The owners had originally planned to convert this basement area into two additional bedrooms, but were thwarted in their master plan when it turned out the subfloor area was below the legal height requirements.

So it had been relegated to a pretty uninviting junk area. By clearing out the clutter and spray-painting the ugly brick walls and ceiling rafters white, and giving the bare concrete floor a coat of charcoal-grey paving paint, it suddenly became an oasis of calm, with direct access to the outdoors.

What kid, big or small, wouldn't love hanging out in this den? ►



Before



After

With white walls and ceiling, this basement is instantly brightened.

Before



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After

Painting the facade of this house boosts street appeal.



Before



FACADE FACELIFT

We all know the importance of first impressions. Just think of the last date you went on, any job interview you've sat through, or even just the person checking you in for a flight or at the hotel reception desk.

Your gut probably instantly told you whether you liked or disliked that person – or maybe it was just completely neutral. Not surprisingly, the same goes for the facade of your property. We're talking about street appeal here, and you've either got it or you haven't.

This was one of those forgettable exteriors that wasn't bad enough to repel, it was just plain boring.

The warmth of natural timber for a new entry and garden beds certainly smartened things up, but the rest was pure paint – the roof, gutters, trims and fences in Taubmans Monument, the exterior in Taubmans Tree Bark, and brilliant white to highlight the windows and entry door.

Before



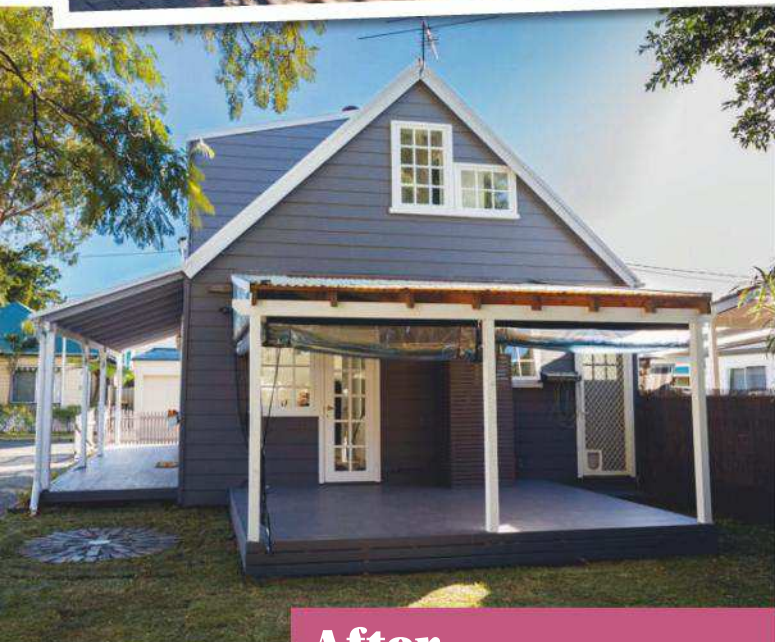
COASTAL COTTAGE CHARM

This gorgeous Cape Cod-style home had all the elements in place, but was let down by the purple and lilac colour scheme.

Using the contrasting hues of Taubmans Ship Grey on the exterior and white on the trims to highlight the cottage's decorative elements, a striking look was created.

With the addition of simple timber fretwork under the balcony, landscaping and some planter boxes with colourful plants under the windows, I was able to restore the original character of this charming home, typical of the coastal suburb in which it is located. ♦

Before



After

Classic coastal charm is created with the contrast of deep grey and bright white.

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blueTM
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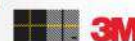


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PAINTING 101

Get a professional finish every time with the right tools and techniques

WORDS ZOË MEUNIER



Anyone can pick up a roller or a paintbrush, but achieving a high-quality finish is not quite so easy. Read on to ensure you have the right tools, preparation and application to get the job done right.

PREP WORK

For a professional result, it's essential to prepare correctly. Remove all furniture from the room, or away from the walls, and remove fixtures such as picture hooks and light switch covers. Open windows to improve ventilation and drying time.

Place drop cloths on floors and over any furnishings that remain in the room. Heavy-duty canvas drop sheets are your best bet, as they can absorb any spilt paint and you won't slip on them in the case of a spill. They can even be washed afterwards, preferably at a laundromat that has large washers and dryers.

Wash walls with sugar soap, or use a small amount of detergent in a bucket of water, to remove dust and grime. If the walls are mouldy, use a bleach solution or mould remover.

Dust off window trims, sills and skirting boards with an old paintbrush. Rinse the walls in plain water to remove any traces of soap and allow time to dry.

If your old paint is peeling or flaking, use a paint scraper to remove the loose paint, then gently sand the surface to remove obvious edges.

Dents or nail holes should be filled with an interior filler while acrylic gap sealant should be used for cracks or gaps between doors and windows. Once set, sand down to a smooth finish, along with any rough or shiny areas on the walls.

Finally, apply painter's tape to fittings, trims and any surfaces that will be challenging to paint around, such as skirting boards and fixed shelving. When applying tape to trims, run a putty knife over it to bond the tape to the surface and prevent paint seepage. ►



STEAM IT OFF

To effortlessly remove wallpaper without endless scraping, the Wagner W15 Steamperfect, \$99 (wagneraustralia.com.au), is an ideal choice. Featuring two steam bars, this safe and convenient steamer allows you to remove complete lengths of wallpaper without chemical additives.



PICTURE (TOP) ISTOCK

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FLEXiO 570

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TOOLS FOR THE JOB

As with all tools, quality counts. Buy the best painting tools you can afford and remember to take good care of them.

PAINTBRUSHES

Good-quality brushes improve with use, as the tips become rounded and any loose bristles fall out.

Cheap brushes usually contain far fewer bristles per given width and bristles tend to fall out more frequently.

Brushes come in a variety of widths. Standard 12mm, 25mm and 50mm brushes are ideal for painting woodwork, while wide 75mm or 100mm brushes are used for walls and ceilings.

Angled cutting-in brushes are perfect for edges, trims and window frames, as the angled tip helps you get close to the edge without getting paint on it.



ROLLERS

Easy to use, rollers spread acrylic paint quickly over large areas. For painting with a roller, a metal or plastic roller tray is also needed. Roller covers come in a variety of fabrics.

- ◆ **FOAM** This applies a seamless finish for cutting close to trim.
- ◆ **MICROFIBRE** With minimal lint shedding, this type suits most surfaces.
- ◆ **LAMBSWOOL** Tough and durable, lambswool has minimal spattering.
- ◆ **SYNTHETIC** This holds a lot of paint on the roller, saving application time.
- ◆ **MOHAIR** Easy to clean, mohair holds paint well thanks to its extra-fine fibre.

A roller's nap refers to its pile length. Use a short 6mm nap for ceilings,

smooth surfaces and high-gloss paints, a medium 12mm nap for walls and flat, low-sheen or semi-gloss paints on uneven surfaces, and a 20mm nap for rough surfaces.

Some new roller covers have a layer of fuzz that can transfer to your walls the first time you load them with paint. To avoid this, wrap masking or painter's tape around the cover, then remove, taking the fuzz with it.

Most rollers have a hollow handle that will screw into a telescopic extension pole so you can reach to the tops of walls or ceilings. Some poles stretch as far as 3.8m, which is very handy when reaching lofty ceilings. ►

HOW MUCH PAINT DO YOU NEED?

Porosity, texture and the base colour of the surface will affect the amount of paint required.

Highly porous and rough surfaces absorb a large amount of paint, especially when priming.

Applying two or three undercoats may be necessary to cover a strong base colour.

Allow for at least two top coats for the best protection against the weather on external surfaces.



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PERFECT WALL PAINT

Apply paint to one wall at a time to prevent streaks and get the best result.

- ◆ **USE** a brush to paint cornices, and around the edges and into the corners of the wall. Pour paint into the roller tray, insert the roller, then push it back and forth on the shallow ridged part.
- ◆ **START** painting with your roller near the top of the wall. Roll upwards, drawing a large M about one square metre in area, then randomly roll strips of paint across it evenly, finishing in

one direction. Start the next area a metre down, lapping into the wet edge of the previous one.

- ◆ **ROLL** near the floor without reloading the roller, smoothing the paint across the wall with long, horizontal strokes as close as possible to taped edges.
- ◆ **APPLY** horizontal strokes around skirting, frames and trim, using a brush. Put masking tape on the floor along the trim to cut a line across the base of the skirting.

Coverage per litre

COATING	COVERAGE
Primer	8-12sqm
Undercoat	10-12sqm
Gloss	14sqm
Acrylic	10-12sqm
Masonry paint	5-10sqm



GET A CLEAN EDGE

It's best to remove tape when the paint is a little wet. But if it has stayed on too long, cut the seal between the wall and the tape with a sharp knife, before pulling away the tape at a 45° angle.



SPRAY-PAINT FOR SPEED

For a smooth finish that's 10 times faster than using a paintbrush, spray-painting is a highly time-efficient way of painting walls, ceilings, furniture and other projects.

Designed for both indoor and outdoor use, the Wagner Flexio 590 Paint Sprayer, \$249 (wagneraustralia.com.au), features a powerful turbine spray and newly designed nozzle, which allows for fast application, full coverage and easy cleaning. ♦



You can cover about two average-sized walls an hour with a paint roller.

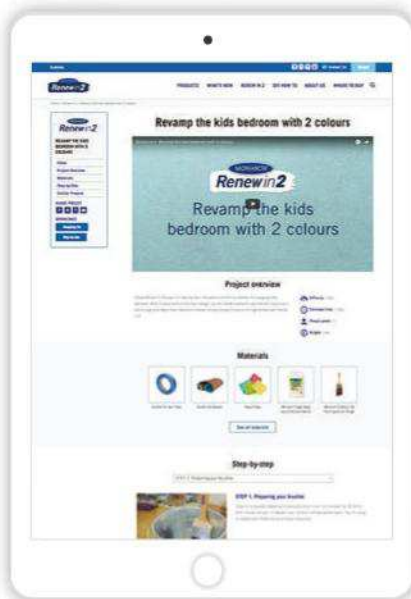


PICTURES (TOP RIGHT) ISTOCK (BOTTOM LEFT) ALAMY

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A touch of Scandinavian whimsy creates depth and playfulness in a child's space.

WOW FOR WALLS

Elevate any space with the bold designs and clever advances of modern wallpaper

WORDS SITA SIMONS

SET THE SCENE

For a room with wow factor, wallpaper could be the very thing you need.

With ever more Australian suppliers stocking a wide range of European and American designs, and a growing collection of local makers, the market is wide open for anyone who wants to add texture, colour and style with wallpaper.

And, they have never been so easy to apply. With most new papers, you apply paste to the wall and not to the paper. And removal is also much easier, with a simple catch of a corner and peel-away function, meaning you can change it to a new design when the mood strikes.

Averaging about \$100 per 10m roll, wallpaper can be cost-effective, too, particularly if your choice is a statement wall or small space.



Graphic prints work especially well when kept within a colour theme for the room. BELOW Simple black polka dots are a good versatile choice for any age or gender.

SLEEPING BEAUTIES

A child's room can be the ideal space for wallpaper. Set the tone by going with whimsical prints to spark imagination, graphic prints to make a statement or classic polka dots for a characterful teen bedroom.

'The bedroom is often the first room people experiment with, because they understand that a successful bedroom is one that feels good and a place in which you want to spend time,' says Sherryl Douglas, director at Gaudion Furniture (gaudions.com.au).

'Wallpaper is an expression of personal taste, and colours, prints and textures on the wall can elevate a neutral space into a private haven that is uniquely yours.

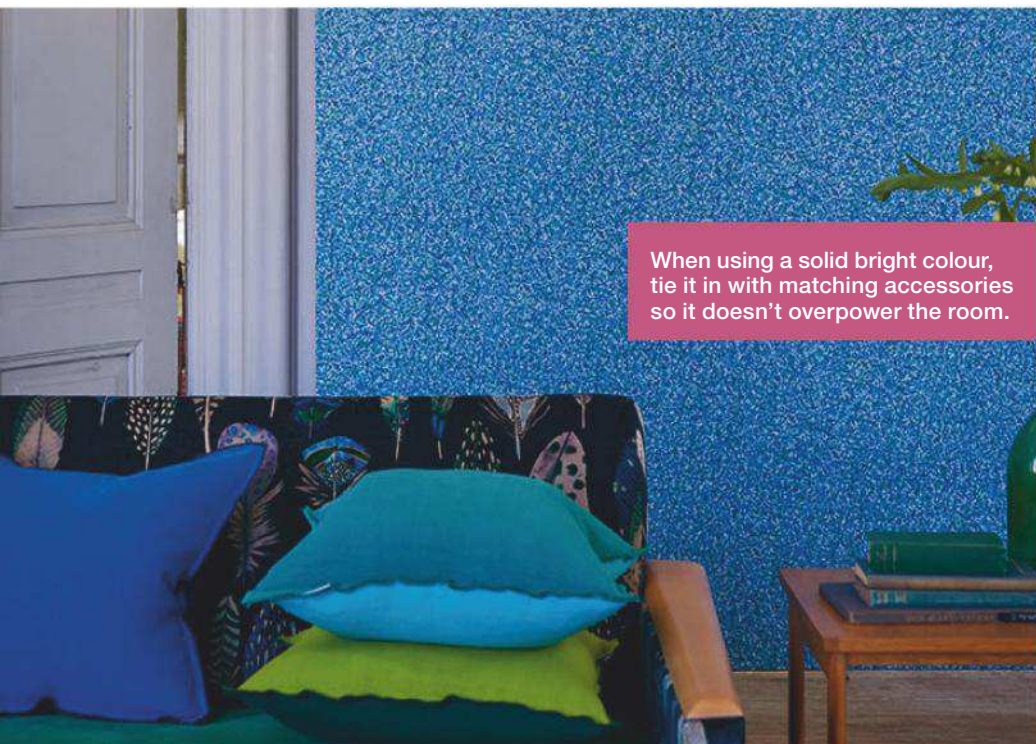
'Even papering just one wall behind a bed can anchor the room and make the rest of the decorating and furniture choices easy,' she says. ►



A bright and colourful repeated print makes a standout feature in a stimulating child's room.

PICTURE (BOTTOM) DYLAN LARK, ASPECT 11 PICTURE (TOP LEFT) DEREK SWALWELL DESIGNER CAMILLA MOLDERS DESIGN PICTURE (TOP RIGHT) HELEN WARD/INWARD OUTWARD PHOTOGRAPHY DESIGNER ALIX HELPS INTERIORS





When using a solid bright colour, tie it in with matching accessories so it doesn't overpower the room.

LIVE IN COLOUR

While we may be regarded as a nation of neutral lovers, some Australians are moving beyond beiges and embracing colour to a greater extent.

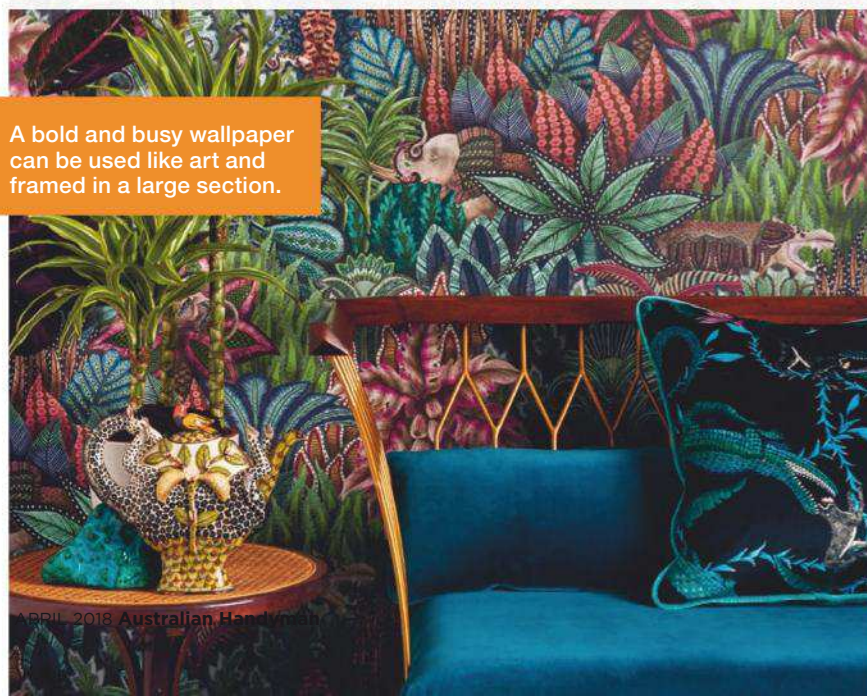
In part due to the popularity of renovating television shows, magazines and social media, the willingness to experiment is being recognised by paint and wallpaper distributors alike.

'Trends from Paris and the USA are moving in the direction of vibrant colour for all rooms, with dramatic jewel tones and even rainbow brights,' says Sherryl.

'It's true to say that there's a wallpaper for everyone, no matter what your taste, but embracing colour is definitely one track to go down with wallpaper.'

'And, if you don't want to go full-on colour, you can introduce texture to the walls in more subdued palettes.'

'Seagrasses have been very popular, as have fabric-feel papers that have light-changing tones, or are shot through with metallic threads. It's a subtle approach that makes the walls of the room play a greater role in the overall decorating theme.'



A bold and busy wallpaper can be used like art and framed in a large section.



Pick a colour theme and then work it back with purposeful declarations and subtle nods, such as this pink stripe and the pink of the flamingoes.





ABOVE In a small space, go for broke with colour and pattern. BELOW Link accessories with the wallpaper for aesthetic harmony.



PICTURE (TOP RIGHT) CLAIRE GRADWELL DESIGNER CLAIRE GRADWELL DESIGN PRODUCT AND IMAGE (BOTTOM RIGHT) COURTESY OF GAUDIONS.COM.AU

TO BOLDLY GO

Stripes, prints and patterns will be very popular over the next few years, says Sherryl. Developments in printing technologies mean that wallpaper is more varied and detailed, as well as more photo-realistic than ever.

Modern wallpapers can look so much like stone, tiles or timber that they have to be touched to find out if they're real.

'My advice would always be to go for it. If you see a colour or print you

love, don't be scared to try using it somewhere in your home.

'Powder rooms can be great for bold choices and add a charming element of surprise and style to what can otherwise be a purely functional space,' she says.

To make the right choices for your home, speak to a specialist who will help match elements of your personality, personal tastes and even hobbies and interests to select the right wallpaper. ❖

Find it at Bunnings

PAPER THE WALLS

Revamp living spaces with new
and improved, user-friendly wallpaper

WORDS MARC MCEVOY



Graham & Brown 52cm Boutique
Grasscloth Natural, \$119 for 10m.



Remember those funny movie scenes where the guy is trying to put up wallpaper and he steps into the glue pot and gets paper strips all over him? It doesn't have to be like that.

In fact, wallpapering these days is quite a simple DIY project. No longer do you have to deal with preparing those messy, sticky rolls.

The new generation of user-friendly papers lets you apply paste directly to the wall, rather than the paper. It also means you can redecorate whenever you want because it is easy to remove.



Graham & Brown 52cm
Superfresco Easy Aura
Grey, \$59 for 10m.



Graham & Brown 52cm
Superfresco Easy Eternal
Chocolate/Bronze, \$59 for 10m.

SOME ADVERTISED PRODUCTS NOT AVAILABLE AT ALL BUNNINGS STORES, BUT MAY BE ORDERED.



Graham & Brown 52cm Superfresco Easy Innocence Grey, \$59 for 10m.

Choose a pattern

Wallpaper transforms a room. It adds character and is a great way to reflect your personality and taste.

It's a good idea to choose a design by hanging samples in several places around the room to see how they look under different lighting conditions.

Bold shapes and botanical patterns are popular in most living spaces, including bedrooms. Large patterns will have the most impact and small geometric designs create a subtle effect.

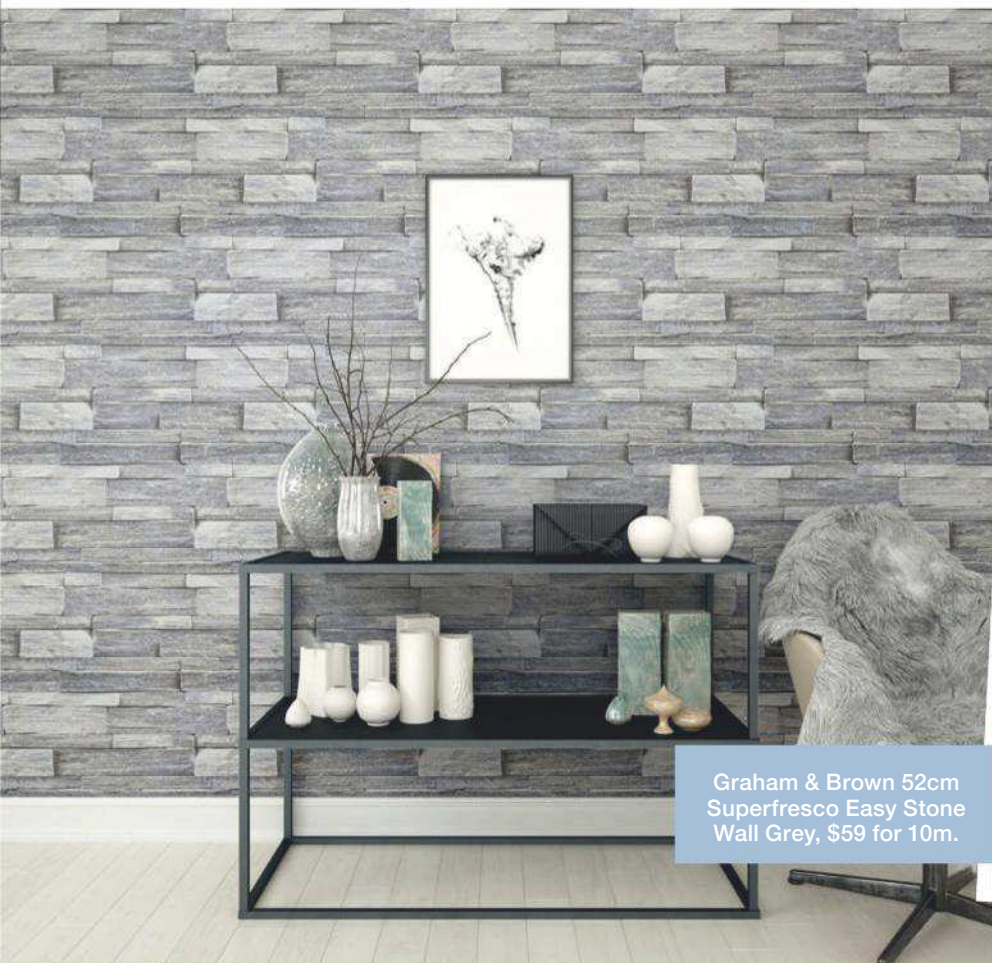


Make a feature wall

Papering a single wall adds interest to a room without overwhelming the space. It will have a huge visual impact, so the colour and pattern need to be chosen carefully.

Usually, it is best to paper a wall that has no windows or doors to avoid reducing the effect of the pattern. Select a wall that your eye is naturally drawn to in a room, especially if it receives suitable lighting.

And, don't be afraid to use wallpaper as a striking backdrop to a key piece of furniture such as a bed or sofa. ♦



Graham & Brown 52cm Superfresco Easy Stone Wall Grey, \$59 for 10m.



**TOTAL
\$1472
IN PRIZES**

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The image displays a variety of Uni-Pro products, including:

- 4 Easy Pour & Store**: A yellow plastic container for paint.
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- The Little Ripper Yellow Stripe**: A package of yellow paint stripes.
- Micro-Fibre 3-Pack**: A package of micro-fibre cloths.
- INDUSTRIAL PAINT WIPES**: A can of paint wipes.
- Genius 7in 1 Tool**: A multi-tool with a yellow handle.
- Uni-Mask 550mm Plastic Drop Sheet**: A roll of plastic drop sheet.
- The Little Ripper High Density Foam**: A package of high density foam.
- Paint Pot**: A yellow paint pot.
- Paint Brushes**: Five paint brushes in their original packaging.

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Roller Sleeves, \$12.98.



Uni-Pro “You Can Do It” 3-pack
230mm Micro-Fibre 10mm Nap
Walls & Ceilings Sleeves, \$14.38.



GET CRAFTY IN THE KITCHEN

Whip up these three fun but functional household items over a weekend

PROJECTS AND PICTURES SUE FERRIS

Whether Scandi chic, industrial style or a touch of vintage glamour is your go-to look, these quirky items will be a cool and practical addition to your kitchen in next to no time.

There's a novel cheese and snack tray that will impress guests and make a great talking point, a clothes peg trivet for your hotpots and a tablet holder made out of a chopping board for when you're rustling up a batch of cupcakes.



EXPERT SECRETS

Save money and avoid wasting paint by buying sample pots of paint at your local hardware store.



CHEESE TRAY

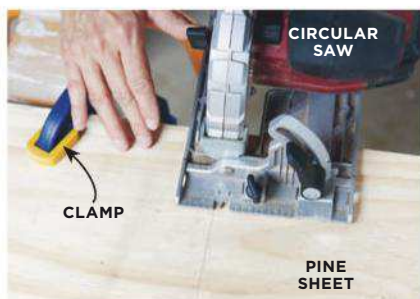
There's something decadent about a cheese board and this easy-to-make server is the perfect way to indulge.

It was stained in a charcoal grey colour and painted in black chalkboard paint so you can add labels, then set with classic black handles.

Add cheese and snacks in serving bowls, as not all chalkboard paint is safe to eat off. Invite friends over and enjoy!

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1200 x 285 x 19mm pine sheet
- Circular saw
- 2 100mm matt-black handles
- Chalkboard paint
- Timber stain
- Clamps
- Paintbrush
- Small paint roller
- Painter's tape
- Rag and gloves



1 Cut the timber

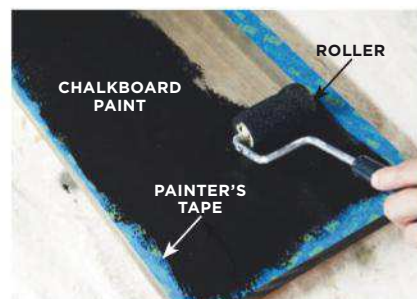
Lay the pine sheet on a work surface and secure using clamps. Measure and mark a 600mm long piece, then cut using a circular saw.

TIP For this project, Claymark Premium Grade Dressed Pine was used.



2 Stain the timber

Apply one coat of the stain to the timber with a paintbrush, then using a rag and wearing gloves, wipe off the excess. For a darker finish, you can leave the stain on for longer or apply another coat, or coats.



3 Apply the paint

Mask off the edges of the board with painter's tape and lightly sand the timber. Apply black chalkboard paint using a small paint roller. Allow to dry. Centre the two handles at either end of the board and screw into place. ►

TABLET RECIPE HOLDER

Repurposing and recycling everyday household items is fun and great for the environment, too. Here, an old chopping board was painted white and combined with a modern techno gadget to give the best of both worlds.

Getting your tablet off the work bench is a major bonus, and this holder makes it easier to read your recipe.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Chopping board, larger than your tablet
- Wooden Scrabble tile holder or picture frame moulding
- Jigsaw
- Clamp
- Timber offcut
- PVA adhesive
- Fine sandpaper, steel wool
- White paint, paintbrush
- Nails



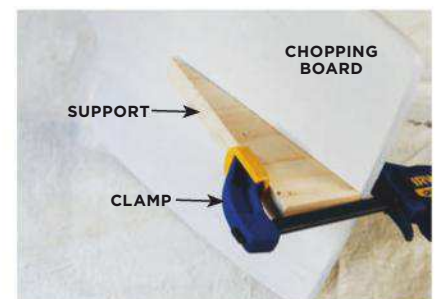
1 Prepare the board

Paint the chopping board on each side in white. Lay on a flat work surface, then lightly sand the edges of the board using fine sandpaper to give an aged look. Then, using steel wool, rub both sides of the board to distress the surface.



2 Make the support

Measure and mark a timber offcut at a 20° angle to create a wedge for a back support, then cut using a jigsaw. Apply adhesive to the cut side of the support, position it on the back of the board flush with the base, then press down.



3 Secure the support

Clamp the support to hold it in position, then allow the adhesive to dry. Attach the tile holder to the front of the board at the base using adhesive and two nails through the back of the board. Paint the support and holder to match the board.

PEG TRIVET

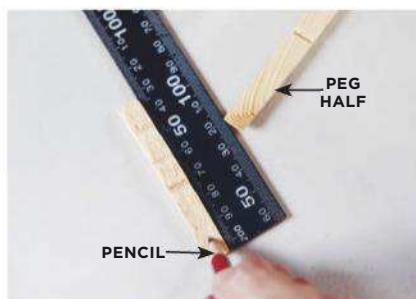
This peg trivet is literally as cheap as chips to make but has a simplicity and style that lifts it to another level.

The humble wooden clothes peg has a classic symmetry that gives it a Scandi-designed feel, and it also transforms from one specific function to another with ease.

For this project, a round shape was formed, but you can experiment with the arrangement of the peg halves to create different patterns. It can also be painted in the colour of your choice.

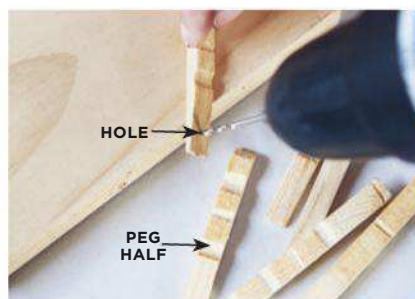
WHAT YOU NEED

- Pack of 100 wooden clothes pegs
- PVA adhesive
- Drill and fine drill bit
- Fishing line
- Ruler
- Pencil



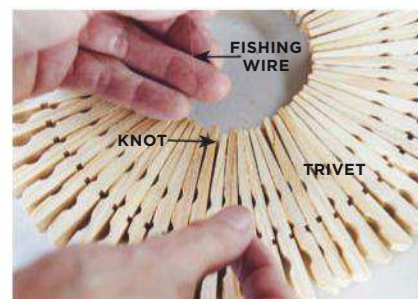
1 Mark wire holes

Take 35 pegs from the pack. Hold one half of a peg in each hand, then gently twist each half to separate and remove the spring. Repeat for the remaining pegs. Measure and mark 10mm from the tapered end of each half with a pencil.



2 Drill the holes

Drill a hole in each peg half at the mark using a fine drill bit. Thread fishing line through the hole in each peg half, with the notched sides all facing the same direction, then apply a small amount of adhesive for extra hold.



3 Form the shape

Lay the threaded peg halves on a flat work surface, then gently pull the fishing line tight to form a round shape, adjusting the peg halves as needed to create an even surface. Tie the fishing line in a knot to secure. ♦



DESIGN CHALLENGE:



ONE ROOM, TWO WAYS

Reno stars Kyal and Kara Demmrich and design expert James Treble put their stamp on a lacklustre apartment



After years of renting, Juni bought her first apartment, but it could not be more removed from the cosy, light feel she wants.

The front door opens directly into the living room, limiting space, and the TV connection is by the balcony so she's left with the TV blocking the door. On top of this, her furniture doesn't suit.

Updating this space is the challenge for *The Living Room* design teams Kyal and Kara Demmrich and James Treble.

First, they must each come up with a custom build to battle the lack of entryway and create a great space for Juni to greet and welcome her guests.

Then, both teams must add light and colour to the apartment using meaningful pieces from Juni's life.

Before starting, the teams painted the walls with Taubmans Endure in Tenacity, a fresh yet warm tone. They also moved the TV antenna socket to make the door to the balcony accessible.

Before



After

Kyal and Kara open up the space using simple lines.



KYAL AND KARA'S BUILD

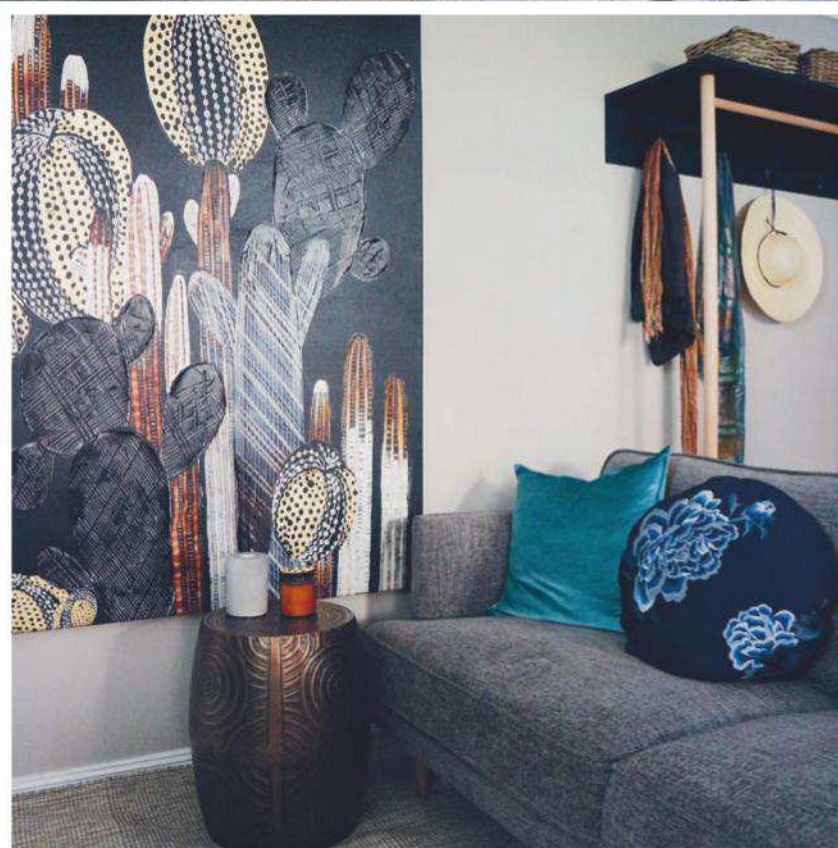
So that Juni and her guests have somewhere to put their shoes and coats, Kyal and Kara decide to build a storage unit for the entryway.

They use 600 x 19mm pine boards for shelves and 40mm and 19mm oak dowels for vertical legs.

1 After measuring and marking the boards and dowels, Kyal cuts them with a mitresaw and then rounds off the shelf edges with an edge trimmer.

2 Kara spray-paints hooks in midnight blue, which will tie in with their other styling accents. These will be added at the top of the unit for hanging coats.

3 To assemble the unit, the pine boards are screwed together to make the shelves. Holes are drilled in each, and the dowels inserted and secured. ►



KYAL AND KARA'S DESIGN

The dining table is replaced by Kyal and Kara with one that warms up the space. It has a rustic timber look and the blue legs tie in with their build.

To help create a designated area for relaxing and watching TV, they place the new couch on a large textured rug.

Kara chooses a large artwork, which creates a statement in a small space. To position it, Kyal measures from the top of the frame to the string, then transfers these measurements to the wall.



A tip for filling an empty nook in your home is to work in groups of three. In one area, Kara hangs a photo by Juni's brother, a lamp is added to give height and ambience, and a plant provides greenery and volume.

Kyal and Kara add pops of colour and texture to complete their look. ►



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JAMES'S BUILD

To create definition between the entry and living area, James makes a decorative slatted screen to separate the two zones using 65 x 32mm DAR Tasmanian oak. Its beautiful grain gives his build a refined look.



1 For the vertical slats, James measures and cuts nine lengths of timber to size, then marks the spacing on his base and top plates using a slat offcut.

2 He then drills pilot holes in the base and top so the slats won't split when attached. He straightens the slats with an angle square before securing them.

3 To enhance the grain and give a lovely finish to his statement piece, James coats the slats with a walnut stain and allows the screen to dry.



JAMES'S DESIGN

By choosing an L-shaped modular sofa, James maximises seating in the small space and, at the same time, helps create zones in the room.

This re-zoning provides the space to give Juni her own study nook, so that her new dining table can be kept solely as an area for eating and entertaining.

James's timber screen creates a sense of privacy between the front door and the main living area. The vertical posts also give the illusion of adding ceiling height and space.

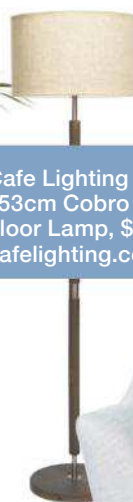
Finally, James adds a shelving unit into an otherwise empty corner, where Juni can display her treasures and where guests can put their shoes in beautiful cane baskets. ♦

TOP PICKS



Rouge Living 545mm Kendrik Table Lamp, about \$100. rougeliving.com.au

Golden Cane Palm – *Dypsis Lutescens*, 250mm, about \$50. bunnings.com.au



Cafe Lighting 153cm Cobro Floor Lamp, \$263. cafelighting.com.au



Carlisle Chaise RHF Madrid Mist, \$2499. earlysettler.com.au



White Knight Squirts Paint & Prime in Gloss Midnight Blue, about \$8 for 310g. whiteknightpaints.com.au



Clunes Occasional Chair, \$399. earlysettler.com.au

Bayliss 225 x 155cm Beige Denmark Pure Wool Rug, \$240. baylissrugs.com.au

BEDSIDE CHARM

Add a touch of comfort and elegance with these bespoke bedroom beauties

PROJECTS AND PICTURES MELISSA DARR



Melissa

EXPERT SECRETS

Always remember to measure twice to decrease the chance of errors and to get a precise fit.

The bedroom is the space where we open and close the day. So, whatever lies ahead, it's a great idea to begin the day in a beautiful way surrounded by your favourite pieces.

Crafty blogger Melissa Darr decided to turn her attention to achieving bedroom style with a bespoke hanging light and an upcycled bedside cabinet for a retro-made-modern look.

'A modern and tasteful light fixture will certainly add charm and character

to any room. I searched high and low for a special light fixture without any luck so I decided to design and create my own,' she says.

Melissa took a simple angle bracket and attached saddle clips to thread through the light cord. She chose a decorative vintage globe and copper shade to add warmth.

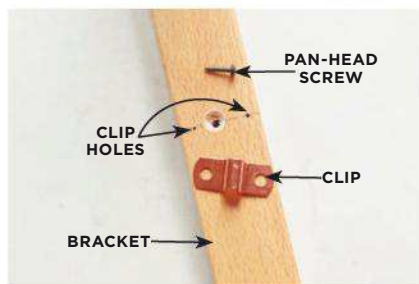
These simple projects will transform any space into an inviting, chic nook on a cost-friendly budget.



Hang light features on either side of the bed for symmetrical elegance

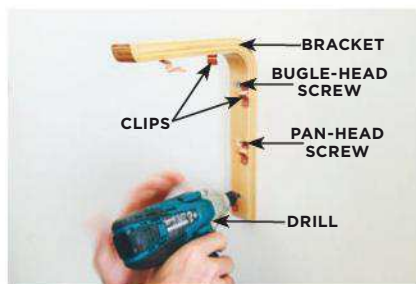
WHAT YOU NEED

- 175 x 200 x 19 x 15mm varnished plywood angle bracket
- Plug-in pendant light
- Vintage filament bulb
- 6mm copper saddle pipe clips
- 4g x 9mm pan-head screws
- 14g x 75mm bugle-head screws
- Drill and drill bits
- Pencil



1 Drill pilot holes

In the long section of the bracket, drill three centred, evenly spaced pilot holes for the bugle-head screws to attach to the wall. Mark two holes each side of these holes, and along the top of the bracket, for the clips, then drill pilot holes. Secure clips on one side with pan-head screws.



2 Mount the bracket

Locate the wall studs. Mark the position of the bracket and pilot holes on the wall, then predrill holes. If securing the bracket into plasterboard, not a wall stud, plasterboard anchors are needed to hold the weight. Line up holes and secure with bugle-head screws.



3 Attach the light fitting

Thread the electrical cord through the top clip and finish securing with a second pan-head screw. Repeat the process down the entire length of the bracket, making sure the cord is taut as you go. Insert the light bulb and plug into the socket to test. ►

HANGING LIGHT FEATURE



Get more DIY from Melissa
Follow her blog thewhimsicalwife.com

CABINET REFRESH

After

Cladding, hairpin legs and brass knobs give this cabinet a much-needed facelift.





Melissa wanted to restore style and sophistication to this dated cabinet. The plan was to give it new cladding and metal feet for a contemporary look.

She used Cabot's Water-based Interior Stain in Brazilian Roast for the drawer fronts, which contrasted well with the cladding in Dulux Vivid White, adding metallic accents with the hairpin legs in gold spray paint.

For the cladding, Melissa used 6mm MDF board cut to a size to suit her cabinet, but this can easily be adapted to suit your own project.

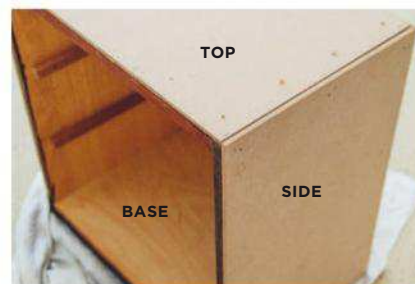
WHAT YOU NEED

- 6mm MDF board
- PVA adhesive
- Circular saw, drill, clamps
- Orbital sander and 120 grit sanding discs
- 120 and 240 grit sandpaper
- Hairpin legs, brass knobs
- Paint scraper
- Timber putty
- White acrylic paint
- Timber stain
- Foam roller
- Clear acrylic spray paint
- Gold spray paint
- 25 x 1.25mm bullet-head nails
- 10g x 35mm galvanised wafer-head screws



1 Prepare the timber pieces

Lay the MDF board on a flat work surface and secure with clamps. Measure and mark 470 x 295mm for the top and the base, and 460 x 295mm for each side. Use a circular saw to cut the pieces. Cut the base off the cabinet using a circular saw.



2 Attach the cladding

Drill pilot holes in the MDF pieces to prevent them splitting. Apply adhesive to one MDF side piece and to one cabinet side. Press the side piece into position, then secure with nails. Repeat the process for the other MDF side, and the top and base pieces.



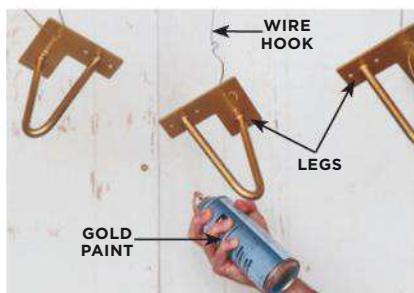
3 Prepare for painting

Apply timber putty over the nail heads using a paint scraper. Allow to dry, then sand with an orbital sander. Apply three coats of white paint to the cladding and top and base of the cabinet frame. Let dry between each coat. Apply two coats of the clear spray to protect it.



4 Re-stain the drawer fronts

Sand the drawer fronts to bare wood with an orbital sander. Sand the handle recesses with 120 grit sandpaper. Apply stain, let dry for 10 minutes, then remove the excess with a damp cloth. Let dry. Sand with 240 grit sandpaper. Apply a second coat if needed. Apply clear spray.



5 Spray the legs

To make sure you get good all-over coverage, hang the legs from wire hooks. Apply a coat of gold spray paint to the hairpin legs, then let dry. Apply a second coat for an even finish. Once dry, turn the cabinet upside down and secure legs in position with screws.



6 Add the knobs

Measure and mark the position of the knobs. Drill a pilot hole in each drawer front and secure the knobs using the supplied screws. Rub an old candle on the side edges of the drawers and the runners to help the drawers open and close more easily. Insert the drawers. ❖

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Watch the video 'How to paint plywood' at bunnings.com.au/diy-advice

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HOW TO PAINT PLYWOOD

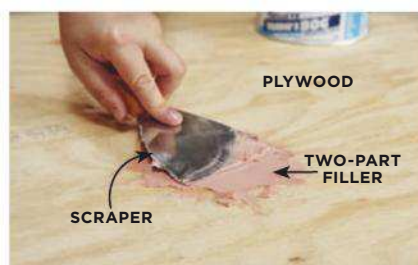
Plywood is an easy and versatile material to work with because it's strong, pliable and can be used for all kinds of DIY projects.

But to get the finish you want, it's important to know how to stain or paint it properly. Here, we take you through the steps to prepare and paint plywood to get a smooth, even finish.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Plywood
- Two-part timber filler
- Orbital sander
- Paint and paintbrush
- Paint roller and tray
- Painter's tape
- Scraper
- Dustpan brush
- Drop sheet
- Gloves
- Earmuffs
- Dust mask

1 2 3



1 Repair the holes

Wipe away debris from the plywood surface with a dustpan brush. Fill any holes using a two-part timber filler. Apply with a scraper. Work fast, as the more filler you use, the quicker it hardens. If you're fussy about the edges and don't want to see the end grain, apply filler there as well.



2 Sand the surface

Once the timber filler is dry, wear your protective gear and give the surface a light sand with the orbital sander to make a smooth surface. Wipe away excess dust with the dustpan brush. Use painter's tape to mask any areas, such as the edges, that you don't want painted. This prevents splatters and smears.



3 Paint the plywood

Place a drop sheet in your work area to keep it clean. Stir the paint well. Apply a primer if needed, then apply the first coat in the direction of the plywood grain for a smooth, even finish. Allow to dry before applying more coats in a crosshatch pattern. Sand lightly between coats. Wipe away any dust. ♦



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Transforming Lives™

BUILD A CONCRETE VANITY

Recycle simple farm materials to create a rustic washstand

PROJECT AND PICTURES **STUART SCOTT**

In a previous issue of *Handyman*, contributor Stuart Scott showed how he breathed new life into a 1920s dairy with the aim of preserving the rustic quality of the building while creating a modern functional space.

Part of those renovations involved installing a new bathroom that included a washstand made from recycled farm materials.

An exposed aggregate counter was built to go on top and support an old copper wash basin. Here, we show you how he made it. ►



Stuart

EXPERT SECRETS

When buying aggregate, wash a handful in water to get an idea of how it will look when polished.

This unique washstand adds character to the historic property.



Recycled materials combine with an easy DIY job to create this vanity.



When polished, the off-white quartz reveals a variety of colours

To make the 750 x 450 x 50mm countertop, a mould was built using a melamine sheet and the junctions were sealed with silicone to prevent leakage and create a pencil-round profile to the edges of the finished top.

Stuart then made a concrete mixture comprising 3 parts 10mm off-white quartz aggregate, 1.5 parts white brickie's sand and 1 part off-white cement. After setting the mixture in the mould, it was cut and polished to create the rustic-looking surface.

Once polished, the off-white quartz reveals a variety of colours from blues and pinks to clears, whites and some earthy tones.

You'll need an orbital sander and a range of specialised polishing pads of varying coarseness to suit.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 2 10kg bags 10mm off-white quartz aggregate
- 20kg bag white brickie's sand
- 20kg bag off-white cement
- 1L concrete and paving sealer
- Reinforcing mesh
- 1800 x 595 x 16mm melamine sheet
- 300g grey silicone sealer
- 10g x 50mm stainless steel decking screws
- Orbital sander
- Polishing pads 5in Flex C Set + additional 2 x 50 grit cutting pads
- Saw
- Masking tape
- Metal scraper
- Rubber mallet
- Paintbrush

POLISHING PADS

The pads used are available from Stone Tools (stonetools.com.au) in Velcro-backed discs with grits from 30-40 through to 3000.

Get a few extra of the coarse-grit discs to get through the initial cutting before you start working up through the

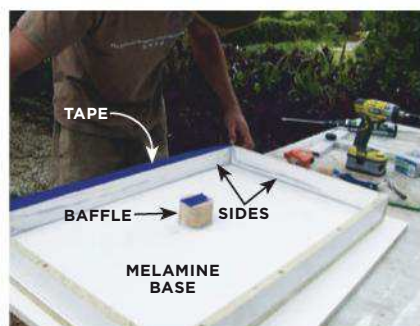
finer grits, until your desired level of polish is achieved. The cutting can be done wet or dry, but to cut wet, an air-powered sander is needed.

Or you could consider buying a dedicated wet/dry polisher, also available from Stone Tools.

DIY TIP

When fitting the edges, drill a 3mm pilot hole, then a 10mm recess hole to 10mm deep. Tape recessed holes so they don't fill up with concrete.

MAKE THE COUNTERTOP



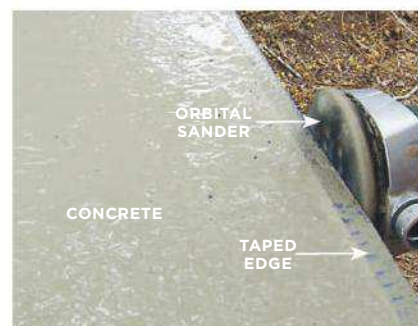
1 Make the mould

Cut the melamine to the size of your top, plus 32mm. Cut 50mm-wide strips of melamine for the sides. Assemble the mould with recessed 50mm decking screws. Tape the edges to protect them. Mark the drain position and secure a 75mm baffle for this with a screw. Seal junctions with silicone, then smooth.



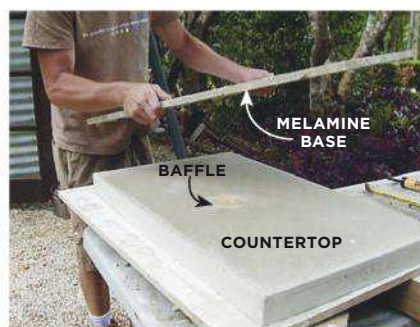
2 Pour the concrete

Mix enough concrete to pour the top in one batch using a ratio of 3 parts aggregate, 1.5 parts sand, and 1 part cement. Fill the mould about halfway. Cut the mesh to fit, leaving a 50mm gap around the drain. Position the mesh in the mould and level using a trowel. Finish pouring the concrete.



3 Work the mixture

Be careful not to make the concrete mix too wet or too dry. You should be able to work the mix into the mould without difficulty. Work the mix in well with a trowel, then vibrate the entire mould with an orbital sander to release any air bubbles. Allow the concrete mix to cure for 48 hours.



4 Release the mould

Remove the tape and screws. Gently release the edges of the mould, using a metal scraper and rubber mallet if needed. With help, carefully turn the mould over and remove the melamine base. Allow to dry for a further 24 hours before removing the baffle for the drain.



5 Polish the surface

Begin polishing with an orbital sander or polisher. Start working with the coarser grits to expose the desired amount of aggregate. Continue with the finer grits until the desired level of gloss has been achieved. Take care along the edges and corners.



6 Apply the sealer

If any air bubbles are still present, fill them with a grout mixture before or during polishing. Once you're satisfied with the surface, rinse it well with clean water, allow it to dry thoroughly, then apply two coats of sealer to the front, back and sides. ♦

BUILT TO ORDER

Free up floor space and create a seamless modern look with an open-plan built-in wardrobe

PROJECT JESS COX PICTURES STUART SCOTT



The guest bedroom of this house had become a repository for stray odds and ends that didn't have anywhere else to go. While there was space in the room dedicated for a built-in wardrobe, it was missing flooring and had some exposed studwork.

The solution was to create a large, open-plan wardrobe and shelving unit extending the width of the wall. Two rows of racks provide ample hanging space for clothes while upcycled drawers house fabrics and craft essentials.

The shelving uses concealed battens, which makes it strong enough to hold books, along with baskets for folded clothes or other knick-knacks.

The entire unit is trimmed with hardwood, rip-cut to fit from spotted gum decking boards. The project took about four days, from studwork and framing to lining the unit and fitting the shelves and trim. The trim was sealed with two coats of hemp oil. ►

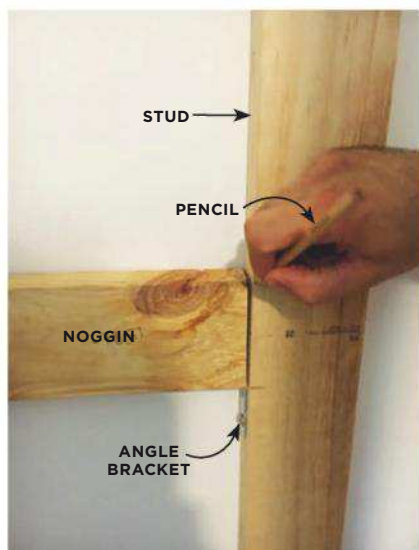
WHAT YOU NEED

- Circular saw
- Drill and bits
- Cordless screwdriver
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Builder's square
- Spirit level
- Hammer
- Ratcheting spanner
- Sash clamps
- PVA adhesive



Before work began on the wardrobe unit, the subfloor space was packed with flooring.

BUILD THE WARDROBE



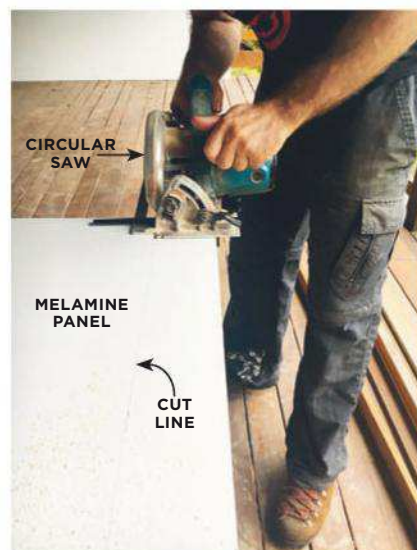
1 Assemble the framing

Locate the studs on the back and side walls. Using 90 x 45mm pine, cut the unit studwork to length with a circular saw. Secure with 60mm screws. Mark position of shelves, then attach noggins between the studs for the shelves, using angle brackets and 25mm screws.



2 Make the partition

Make a central partition by securing four horizontal lengths to the vertical studs at front and back of the unit. Use half-housing joints where these meet the top plate of the partition. Make the joints by making parallel cuts with the saw and chiselling out the waste.



3 Cut the melamine

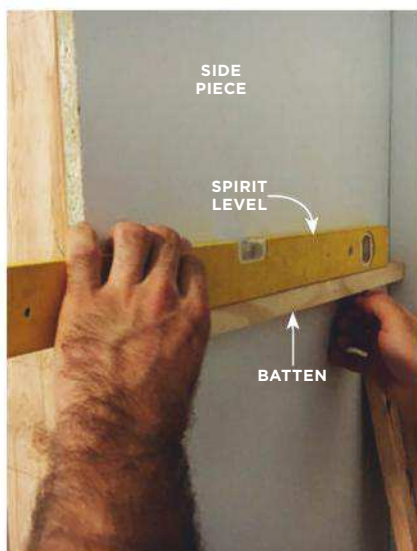
Measure the internal dimensions of the unit. Mark measurements for the backs on 2400 x 1200 x 16mm melamine, and the tops, bases and sides on 2400 x 595 x 16mm melamine. Cut with the saw. Build the lining as a box inside the space, starting with the base piece.



4 Attach the lining

Fit the back piece to the studwork with 60mm screws, shimming if necessary to keep plumb. Attach the sides, checking they're square. Fit the top piece and secure with 60mm screws.

TIP As noggins will be hidden, mark their position on the front studs.



5 Secure the shelves

For the battens, rip-cut 42 x 19mm DAR pine in half, then cut to length. Attach battens to the sides and back with 60mm screws. Check level. A shelf on the right divides the wardrobe and five shelves on the left are 400mm apart. Attach shelves to battens with 30mm screws.



6 Attach the trim

Use saw to rip-cut 86 x 19mm spotted gum decking to make 40mm-wide trim. Attach with nails to the front shelf edges and internal sides to disguise battens. For the top, external sides and central partition, cut 135 x 19mm spotted gum to fit. Secure with nails on small trim. ►

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE (mm)	No
Structural pine framing timbers		
Studs	2400 x 90 x 45	8
Noggins	2400 x 90 x 45	6
Top framing	2400 x 90 x 45	4
White melamine panels		
Backs of unit	2400 x 1200 x 16	3
Sides and top of unit	2400 x 595 x 16	5
LHS shelves, top and bottom	1800 x 595 x 16	7
RHS shelf, top and bottom	1200 x 595 x 16	3
DAR pine		
Battens	1200 x 42 x 19	8
Spotted gum decking		
At least 2400mm long, to trim shelves	86 x 19mm	7
At least 2400mm long, to trim framing	135 x 19mm	5

FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
8g x 25mm button-head screws	Framing
Angle brackets 50 x 50 x 40mm 50 x 50 x 20mm	Framing
10g x 60mm timber screws	Studwork, lining to framing, battens to framing
10g x 30mm timber screws	Shelves to battens
30 x 1.6mm bullet-head nails	Trim, drawer runners



Hardwood timber is valued for density, sustainability and character



MAKE THE BUILT-IN SHELVES

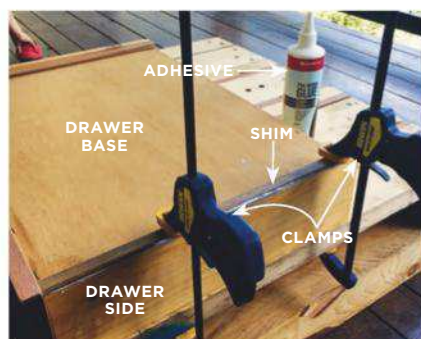
Built-in shelves were created to house drawers recycled from an old chest.

This was an easy DIY job, but some of the drawer fronts sat at different heights.

On two of the drawers, the runners on either side needed shimming to make all the drawers appear level.

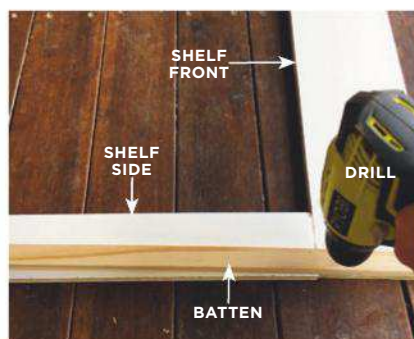


These recycled chest drawers glide on runners instead of slides.



1 Mark drawer positions

Measure and mark the position of the drawers in the unit. Fit a central divider in the bottom shelf with 30mm nails. To level drawer fronts where needed, apply adhesive to attach shims to the runners on either side. Clamp shims to the runners and allow to dry.



2 Build shelf supports

As these drawers are too narrow to attach slides, make shelves for drawers to glide on, comprising a front and two sides, from leftover melamine and pine battens. Attach with 30mm timber screws. Attach guides on top of each side of the shelves with 30mm screws.



3 Secure the shelves

Attach shelves to the internal sides and central divider of the built-in unit using 60mm screws and a ratcheting spanner. Check level. Trim the shelf fronts and the central divider with hardwood rip-cut to width to hide the shelves and battens. Attach with nails. ♦

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BIT OF EXTRA MONEY
FOR THAT RENOVATION
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Watch the video 'How to install a wardrobe insert unit' at bunnings.com.au/diy-advice

Find it at Bunnings

WARDROBE REDESIGN

Restore order to your bedroom storage with these stylish easy-to-assemble solutions

It's so easy to let your wardrobe look like a jumble sale, with dresses and scarves falling off coathangers, and jumpers and pyjamas jammed into a limited number of shelves.

The solution can be installing a larger wardrobe, but not everyone has the luxury of the extra space that's needed.

Simple wardrobe systems, such as the Flexi Storage range shown here, utilise all the available space with a sleek, stylish design.

They're made from easy-to-assemble modular units that include a variety of shelf and drawer arrangements to suit all needs and tastes, including storage for shoes and accessories.



Choose from many possibilities to expand your storage space.



1 Flexi Storage 3-door Wardrobe Frame, \$430. Flexi Storage Sliding Wardrobe Door in White, \$67.50. Flexi Storage Sliding Mirror Wardrobe Door, \$103.

2 Flexi Storage Sliding 3-door Wardrobe in White, \$430. Flexi Storage Sliding Wardrobe Door in White, \$67.50. Flexi Storage Sliding Wardrobe Door in Gloss White, \$128. Flexi Storage Sliding Wardrobe Door in Oak, \$67.50. Flexi Storage Sliding Wardrobe Door Mirror, \$103. Flexi Storage 2 Shelves in White, \$24. Flexi Storage Medium 3-drawer Insert in White, \$129. Flexi Storage Large 3-drawer Insert in White, \$149.

3 Multistore Wardrobe Insert, 1495 x 450 x 430mm, with adjustable shelf and five standard drawers, \$295; Humecraft Internal Door, 2340 x 520mm, from \$179.50.

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

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

6 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.



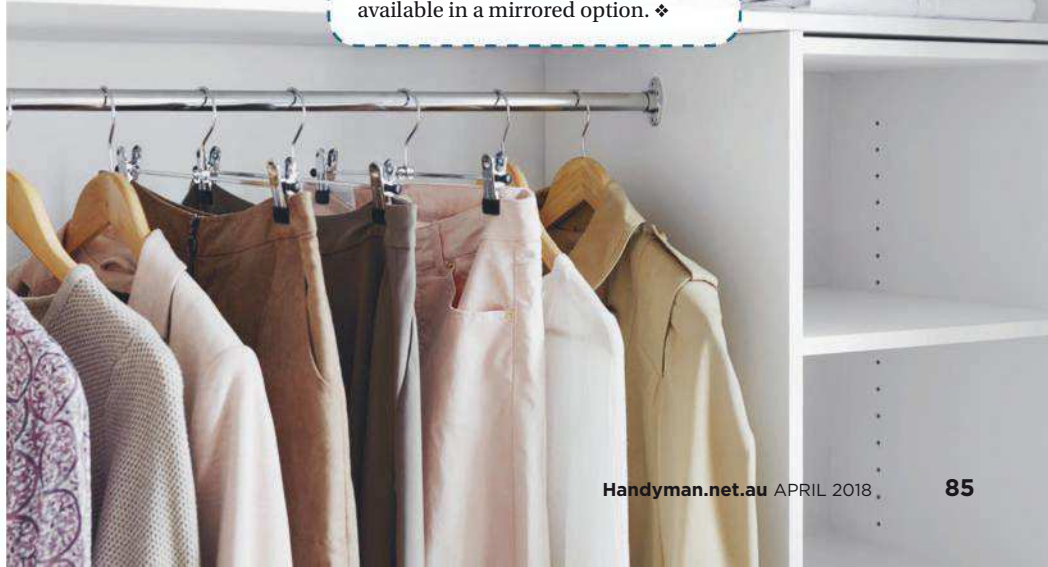
5

Freestanding function

If you're starting from scratch, building a compact wardrobe from a flat pack 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. ♦



6



FROM THE GROUND UP

Use these five easy steps to ensure you lay the foundation for success when building your own home from scratch

WORDS DONYALE HARRISON

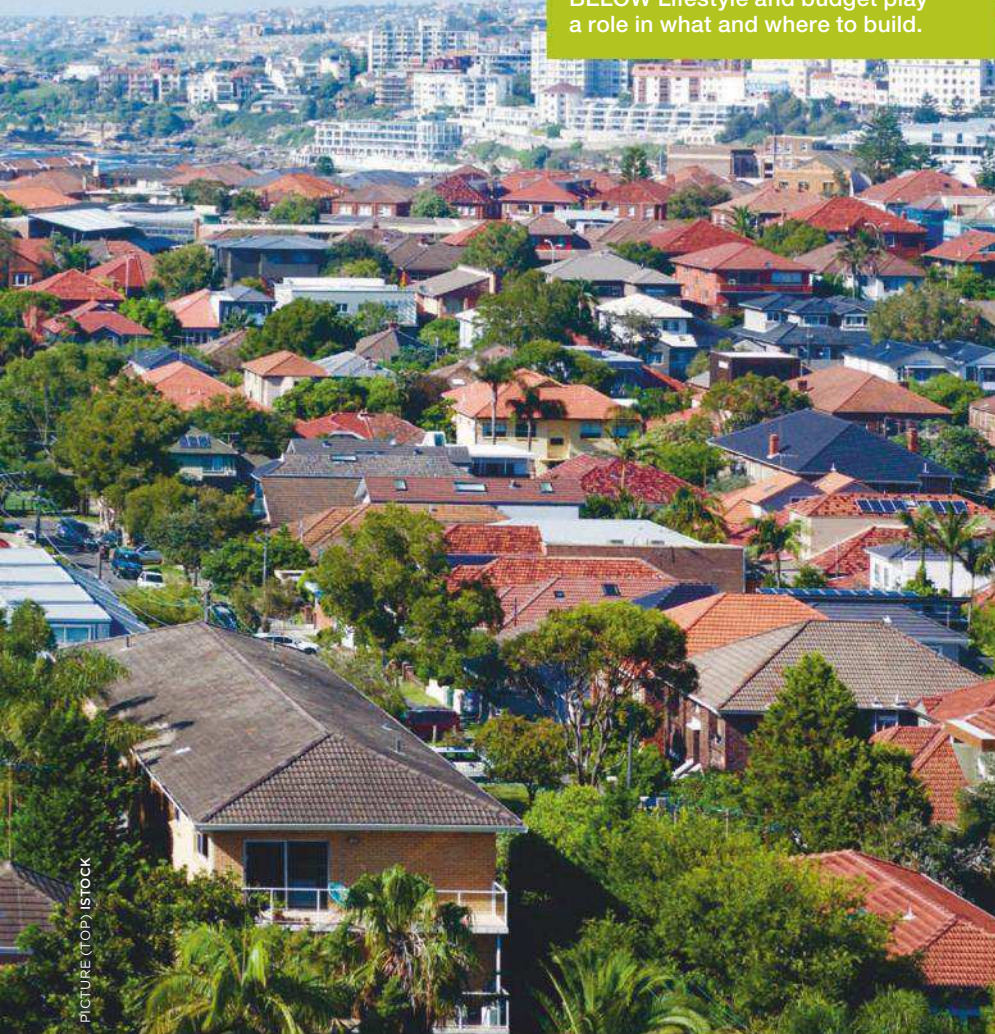


PICTURE STOCK

It's a big life goal for many of us, but building your own home can be slower, more stressful and more costly than expected. These steps will help you maximise the fun of the experience and minimise the stress.

Think about all the following points as interacting. Knowing what sort of house you want will help you choose your site. Being up-to-date on regulations will guide you in whether you need a specific design, and so on.

ABOVE A difficult site can be more economical due to less buyer demand. **BELOW** Lifestyle and budget play a role in what and where to build.



PICTURE (TOP) ISTOCK

1. CHOOSE YOUR SITE

Factors such as slope, exposure, soil stability and bushfire and flood risk will rule many aspects of the build, including cost, materials, footings and height.

Start with an onsite analysis. You can often get a free consultation from a builder or designer, but to get detailed advice on everything from overshadowing to breezeways, it's worth paying for a full report.

Look for advice on preparing the site for building, council restrictions and higher building costs for slopes – more for side to side than back to front.

Building on the site of a previous house can save on works. Knocking down an old house is usually cheaper than a renovation and these sites often have better amenities than greenfield releases.

Also factor in the local council's services and facilities, plus lifestyle concerns, including transport and proximity to places you regularly visit.

Local councils are also a great source of information about planning conditions, soil types and previous land usage. These important considerations can help guide your selection. ►

2. KNOW THE REGULATIONS

The levels of building regulations around Australia can seem intimidating but just require patience to navigate.

Start with your local council, which is responsible for your development application (DA). Knowing what's allowable for your site and designing accordingly will make the process smoother. Before you submit a DA, talk with your future neighbours about your plans and address any of their concerns.

There are multiple building approvals throughout the process. For a full list, search 'standards' on the Housing Industry Association website at hia.com.au.

Your council can advise about what's needed and can supply building surveyors – also called certifiers – who are up-to-date with local government requirements. Most builders include approvals in their contract.

Home warranty funds exist in all states and territories for owners' protection if something goes wrong with the completed building, or if your builder disappears. Remember to check that your builder has a certificate of insurance for your specific project.

For new homes, stamp duty is often charged at a concession rate, especially for first-home buyers. See your state's revenue or treasury website for online calculators. You may benefit from the First Home Owner Grant, so check out your eligibility at firsthome.gov.au.



Spending time and effort understanding levels of building regulations now can save you frustration and money later



3. CONTROL YOUR BUDGET

There are hidden fees to consider, such as soil and contour testing, and possible land registration and services connection. Talk with your council and builder or designer about the cost of extras before you finalise your design.

Many contracts omit things such as driveways, landscaping and floor treatments. Either include these items specifically or have a separate budget.

Most people are usually great at setting an initial budget but can often

make poor decisions on where to cut back if there is an overspend.

The most expensive thing to fix later is improving the performance of a house. A big new bath is easy to install in a few years but better insulation isn't. Spending more on sustainable features initially can save you enough money to pay for the update down the track.

Talk with your designer about planning ways to add extra space if the needs of your family grow.



PICTURES ISTOCK

4. PICK YOUR PLAN

Most homes begin with an architect or a building designer, or as a project or kit home. Each has distinct advantages.

If you have specific needs, a registered architect can deliver a result that best manages either a difficult site or special requests, including mobility issues or carbon-positive buildings.

While architect-designed buildings are often the most expensive, a small budget can get its best results with careful architecture using clever materials.

To find an architect who can meet your needs, plus general tips and a costs guide, check Archicentre Australia (archicentreaustralia.com.au).

An accredited or registered building designer (mydesigner.net.au) can also

create a site-specific building. They often have more hands-on experience and are particularly good at engineering solutions and tricky sites.

In addition, they often offer more practical designs with more of a focus on meeting local regulations, though building designers can be innovative, and architects can be practical, too.

Project and kit homes offer the greatest cost security. These standard designs allow for volume purchasing, so represent excellent, low-risk value.

Project homes are sold as a package, including building, while kit homes allow you to project-manage the build or be an owner-builder. They come flat packed or as partly assembled modules.

While your ability to customise is more limited, most companies have a wide range of options and you can physically walk through model homes to see what works for you.

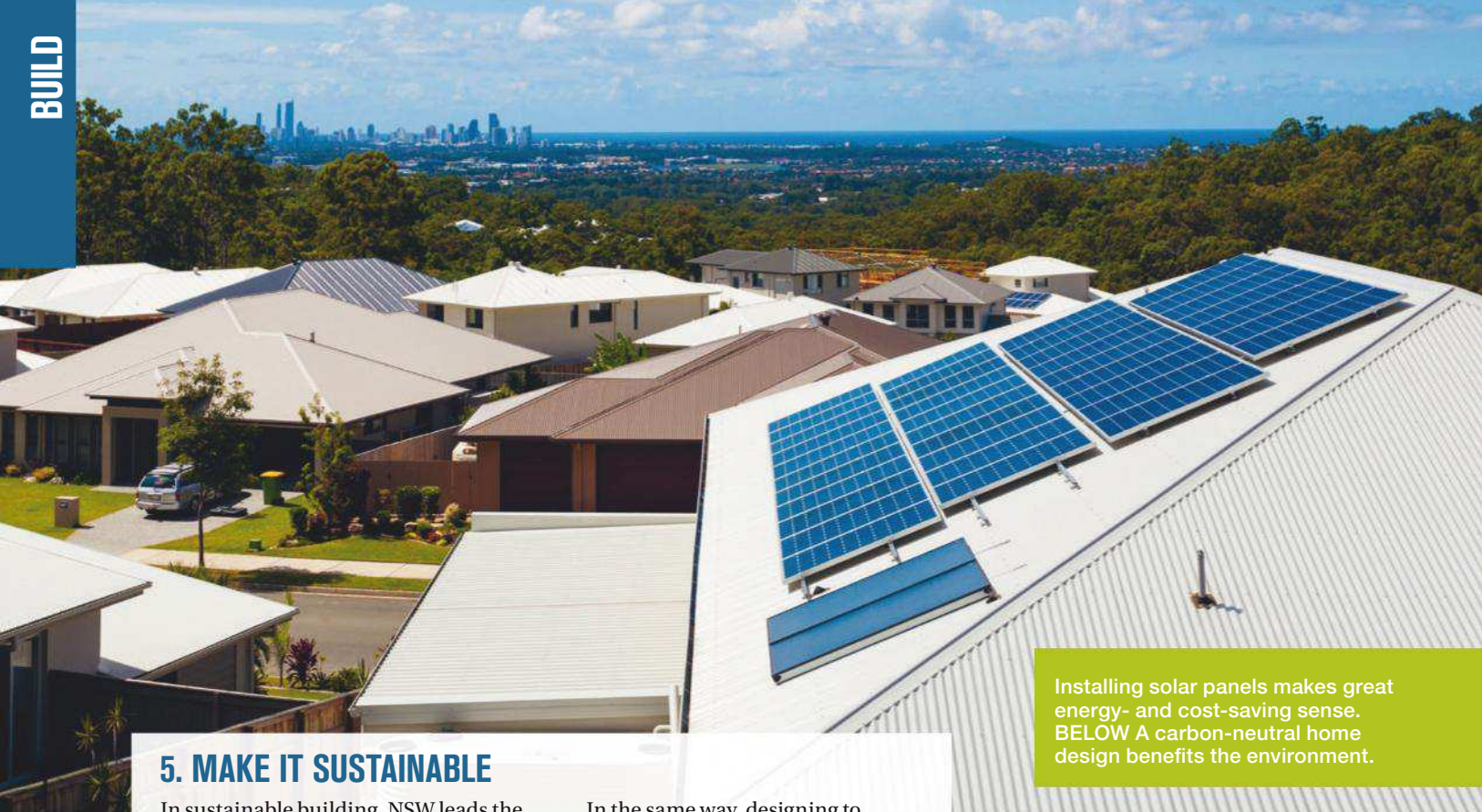
Some of these homes are world-class, including the recently revived classic design by mid-century builders Pettit + Sevitt (pettitandsevitt.com.au).

Be realistic about your building involvement. The most economical option may be earning a salary while employing builders who work more efficiently than you.

But any jobs you can do effectively will save funds and keep you in touch with progress. Even tidying up after builders knock off is valuable. ►

Despite customisation limitations, project homes are a good option.





Installing solar panels makes great energy- and cost-saving sense. BELOW A carbon-neutral home design benefits the environment.

5. MAKE IT SUSTAINABLE

In sustainable building, NSW leads the way with BASIX (basix.nsw.gov.au), an index that sets targets for water and energy use, plus thermal performance.

Other states are following suit. Despite a higher initial cost, the money is quickly returned in lower running costs, especially given the high power prices in Australia.

More than cutting energy bills with extras such as photovoltaic systems, sustainable homes are also pleasant spaces to live in, with passive heating and cooling systems and access to natural light.

In the same way, designing to retain water onsite creates a landscape that attracts wildlife and supports a good garden.

Your Home (yourhome.gov.au) is packed with advice on sustainable design, and many architects and designers focus on sustainability.

There are even kit and project home companies offering carbon-neutral or better designs. If you have an existing design, you can measure its energy efficiency at the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (nathers.gov.au). Aim for a minimum of seven stars.

COMPILE A BRIEF

Start planning long before you build. Compile a brief with all the things you need, want or love, plus those that you don't.

Bundle whatever inspires you into an album you can share with designers and builders – magazine articles, photos from open houses, videos, material samples and sketches.

If you admire a designer's work, visit as many of their homes as possible and talk to

the owners. You'll come away with ideas, recommendations, and sometimes warnings.

Take note of what does and doesn't work in your current house. Love your sunroom? Give the new house one, too.

Always tracking dirt in from the garden? A mudroom or a sheltered patio where you can change boots will solve that.

Now's the time to create the home life you want. ♦



PICTURES/ISTOCK



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Swann's Smart Security Cameras put you in charge of your home security. They are 100% wire-free and run on rechargeable batteries making installation a breeze. The Smart Security Cameras let you watch and hear over what you love in full HD, indoors or out, day or night. True Detect™ technology senses warm moving objects, like people and cars, recording clips and sending push notification to your smartphone. It's **wire-free, worry-free** home security.



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HOW TO BUILD AN OUTDOOR SHOWER

Install a simple outdoor shower connected to your garden hose

An outdoor shower is a useful addition to your outdoor living area during the warmer months, especially if you've been gardening all day or just returned from the beach.

Here, we show you how to build a shower that attaches to your garden

hose using copper pipe and simple push-fit connectors.

We've attached this shower to a stud behind a feature wall made from corrugated iron sheeting secured to a timber frame. The hose is concealed behind the base of the wall.

WHAT YOU NEED

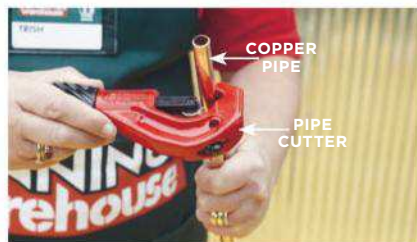
- ½in copper pipe
- 2 ½in copper male connectors
- ½in copper elbow
- 2 ½in copper female lugged elbows
- 20mm brass gate valve (tap)
- Brass garden hose connector
- Thread seal tape
- Tape measure, pencil
- Drill and 16mm spade bit
- Pipe cutter
- 3 saddle clips
- 30mm galvanised screws
- Hand shower
- Garden hose
- Safety glasses

1 2 3



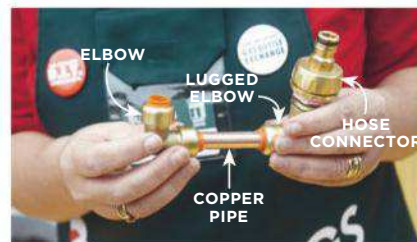
1 Seal fitting threads

Seal all the fittings using waterproof thread seal tape. Wrap the tape around the fitting thread at least three times to help seal the joints, stop leaks and make it easier to tighten the attachments. Drill a hole with a 16mm spade bit through the base of your wall for the hose fitting.



2 Cut copper pipe

Measure and mark a length of copper pipe to fit through the base of the wall, leaving several centimetres at either end to secure the attachments. Attach the pipe cutter on that mark, rotate it around the pipe, then tighten the cutter. Repeat this process until the pipe is cut.



3 Join hose fitting

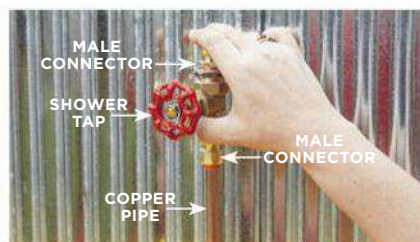
Secure one end of this short copper pipe to a female lugged elbow joined to the garden hose connector. Insert the pipe through the hole at the base of the wall. Secure the elbow to the other end of the copper pipe. Attach the fitting to the wall with a saddle clip.





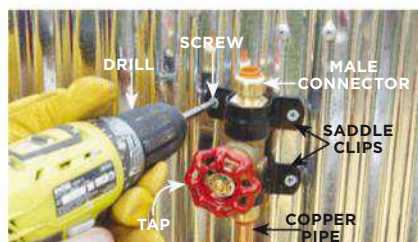
Watch the video 'D.I.Y. outdoor shower' at bunnings.com.au/diy-advice

4 5 6



4 Position shower tap

Measure and mark the position of the shower tap on the wall and fit male connectors either side. Mark a length of copper pipe at this height and cut it with the pipe cutter. Insert the pipe into the elbow at the base and attach it to the base of the shower tap.



5 Secure saddle clips

Position two saddle clips around the two male connectors on either side of the tap and secure them to the wall with screws. Mark the copper pipe at the height you want for the showerhead. Cut it with the pipe cutter. Attach it to the top male connector joining the tap.



6 Attach the showerhead

Attach a female lugged elbow to the top end of the copper pipe. Secure it to the wall using screws. Attach the end of the shower hose to the elbow and secure the showerhead into its holder. Now you're ready to enjoy showering in the great outdoors. ♦

RECYCLED RUSTIC TRIM

Use your excess tongue-and-groove flooring to make precision hardwood skirting boards and architraves

PROJECTS JESS COX PICTURES STUART SCOTT

You know the problem – you ordered more mixed hardwood floorboards than you needed and now you have to deal with the leftovers.

For this project, a quick rip-cut of the boards to remove the tongues and grooves provided enough high skirting boards and hardwood trim for the windows. This avoided having to pay full market price.

The owners of this house chose mixed red and blond hardwood boards in two sizes, 80 x 19mm and 130 x 19mm, for the new floors in two rooms.

The leftover wider 130 x 19mm boards became the skirting and the narrower 80 x 19mm boards were used on the window and door architraves.

All you need for this job are enough boards of the same width. It's a good idea to keep this in mind when ordering your hardwood flooring initially to save extra delivery costs. ►



Before

The rooms had custom-built blackbutt sliding doors and windows. New hardwood floors were laid, using feature-grade timbers in reds and yellows.

Fit around frames

Before installing skirting boards, fit the architraves around the doorframes, as your skirting will finish at the edge of a door's architrave, not the doorframe.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Circular saw
- Drill and 1.5mm bit
- Hammer
- Sliding bevel
- Measuring tape
- Mitresaw
- Timber filler
- Tung or hemp oil
- 30 x 1.6mm bright steel bullet-head nails
- Pencil

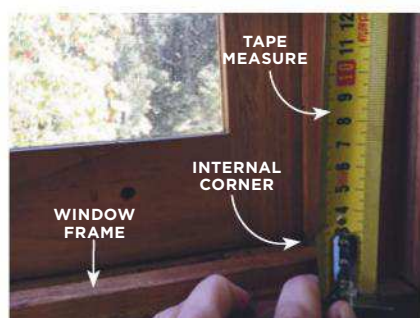
After

The trim on the windows, doors and skirting sets off the striking colours of the hardwood flooring.



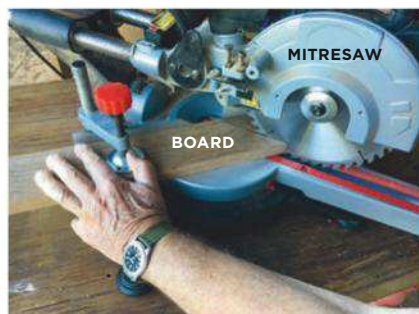
MAKE THE ARCHITRAVES

It's a good idea to measure all your flooring offcuts before measuring the dimensions of the windows and doors. You can then determine which board can be used in each position.



1 Determine the dimensions

Measure the dimensions of all frames. Use a sliding bevel to mark a diagonal line across each corner. If the doors and windows were installed flush with internal walls, add a setback line 20mm from the internal corner. The position of the internal corner of the architrave is where the diagonal and setback cross.

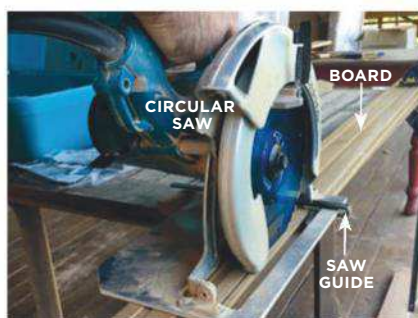


4 Cut the mitre

Cut a 45° angle on one board end using a mitresaw. With the board overlapping the edge of the frame, hold the mitred end against the diagonal line, either using the setback line or the half-groove as a guide. Make a mark at the other end where the timber crosses the diagonal line.

Hardwood decking is also a great choice for making architraves.

There are several varieties of timber to choose from, including spotted gum, ironbark and blackbutt.



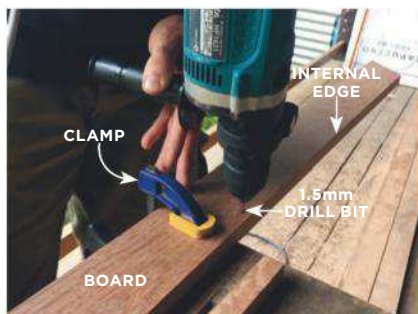
2 Rip-cut the boards

For windows and doors set flush with walls, invert a board between two sawhorses. Measure the tongue's width and set the circular saw guide to this width. Rip-cut the board to remove the tongue. On the other side, measure the distance to the groove, reset guide and cut the board. Repeat for other boards.



3 Remove the grooves

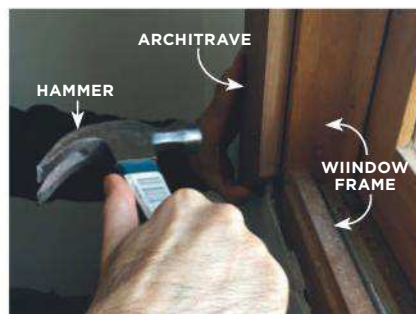
If the frames sit proud of the wall, remove just the underside groove. Part of the board will then overlap the frame while still sitting flush to the wall. To do this, set the circular saw cutting depth to 10mm (enough to cut off the underside of the groove), and set the guide to 5mm to cut flush with inner edge of the groove.



5 Secure the architrave

Clamp the board, then use the mark to cut the second mitre. Drill pilot holes along the internal edge of the architrave using a 1.5mm drill bit. Reposition each piece on the same side of the frame and secure with bullet-head nails.

TIP Have spare drill bits handy, as they can break easily in hardwood.



6 Repair the gaps

Repeat the process for the remaining pieces of architrave. After securing the architrave with 30mm nails, fill any gaps at the corners with timber filler of a matching colour, then finish the surface with tung or hemp oil.

TIP If you need more than one piece for a side, use board end laps for a neat fit. ▶

Interior & Exterior Fillers

For all repair, patch or filling jobs around the home, big or small



Earl's Wood Hardener

- Water-based • Non Toxic

Earl's Wood Hardener penetrates into soft rotted wood fibres, restoring them to near original strength.

USE FOR: Repairing wood rot effected exterior fences, decks, furniture, door frames, windows and so much more.



Waxstix

Wax Touch Up Crayons

Waxstix are so easy to use and so handy for quick repairs to scratched or damaged timber.

USE FOR: Floating floor and furniture scratches.



Timbermate

Woodfiller - 4 in 1

- Wood Putty • Edge Filler
- Crack Filler • Grain Filler

Water based interior filler with no latex, acrylic or solvent added.

Non-shrinking, non-sinking, non-cracking and won't fall out.

USE FOR: Timber flooring and all interior woodwork repairs.



Earl's MultiFill

Multi-Purpose Interior & Exterior Filler

- Pre-Mixed ready to use.
- Fine Filler, spreads easily.
- Long shelf life, no waste.
- Will not shrink, sink or fall out.
- Sands easily, will not clog sandpaper.
- No acrylic, latex or solvents, VOC free.
- Paintable for interior & exterior use.
- Australian made.

USE FOR: Repairing decking, fascia boards and plaster boards.



Agnew's Water Putty

Multi-Purpose Filler

- Simply mix with water to use.
- No waste.
- Dries hard - drill saw or sand.
- No shrinking or cracking.
- Australian made.

USE FOR: Floor leveling, patching and filling wood, plaster and concrete.



Earl's Powder Putty

Multi-Purpose Interior & Exterior Filler

- Just mix with water.
- No waste.
- No shrinking.
- Won't crack and fills to any depth.
- Australian made.

USE FOR: Repairing wood, concrete, masonry, steel, plasterboard and cement sheets.



Porion

Flexible Exterior Filler

- Repairs • Patches • Fills

Porion is a flexible filler that can be used for repairs to decks, rotten timber and masonry.

USE FOR: Repairing wood, concrete, weather boards & patching render.



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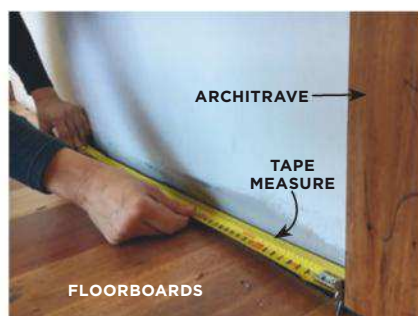
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warehouse

MAKE THE SKIRTING

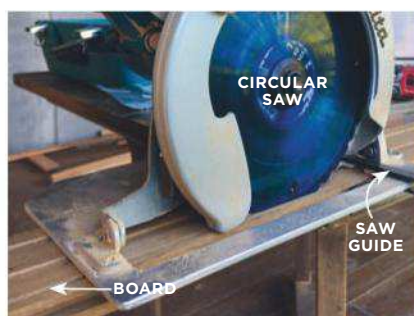
Now that the architraves for the door and window frames are in place, it's time to fit the skirting boards.

If square, modern edges aren't your style, you could consider using a router to profile the top edge.



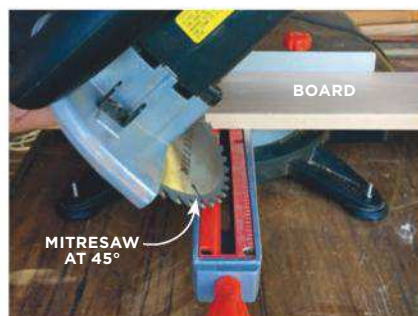
1 Measure the room

Measure up the room dimensions for the trim, with an allowance of 100mm at either end for cuts, and then set aside boards for each wall. To minimise the number of joins, try to use the whole length of boards, where possible.



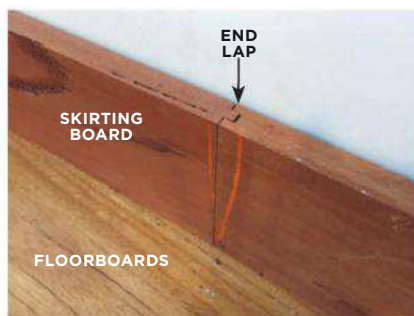
2 Rip the boards

For the skirting, repeat the rip-cutting of boards to remove the tongues and grooves, setting the circular saw guide to about 8mm. Keep the end lap in position until you work out which pieces of flooring will sit against each wall.



3 Cut the corners

Using a mitresaw angled to 45°, cut an internal corner at the end of a board. Position in the corner of the room and mark the cut on the other end. Where the skirting will butt against architraves, make straight cuts, not mitres.



4 Secure the skirting

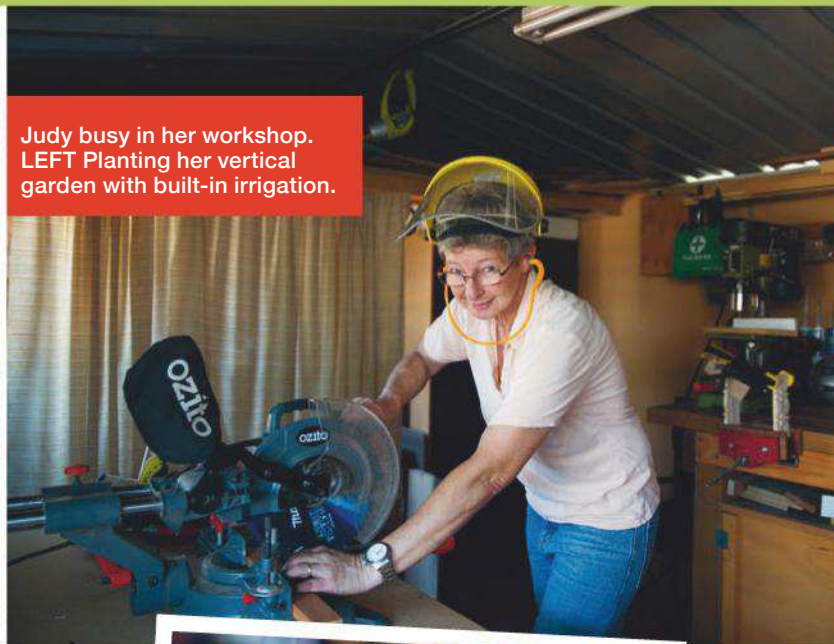
Where the wall is longer than a single board, use the end lap to make a neat join. When skirting is in place, mark the position of wall studs on skirting, drill pilot holes and secure with bullet-head nails. Finish with tung or hemp oil. ❖



ABOVE Make use of the existing end lap for straight joins.
BELOW Mitre the edges of the boards at the internal corners.



Judy busy in her workshop. LEFT Planting her vertical garden with built-in irrigation.



Workshop member Judy Kelly lives in country NSW near the Victorian border, and says she has always been a hands-on person thanks to time spent on her grandparents' farm.

'To be able to sit back and say "I made that or I fixed that" gives you a sense of achievement,' she says.

Judy also considers her DIY projects a continual learning process.

'It stretches your imagination and challenges you. It makes you think outside the box and you end up with something you are proud of,' she says.

A very popular vertical garden with a built-in watering system is just one of the many projects the talented Judy has shared on Workshop in recent months.

'The internet is a great source of knowledge. I browse if I want to learn how something is done or how it works. I also picked up a lot from my grandparents and my dad,' says Judy.

'It was just natural to get in and have a go at things, whether it be shifting irrigation pipes or helping to paint the house.' ♦



'The best piece of DIY advice I have ever received is just to believe in yourself.'

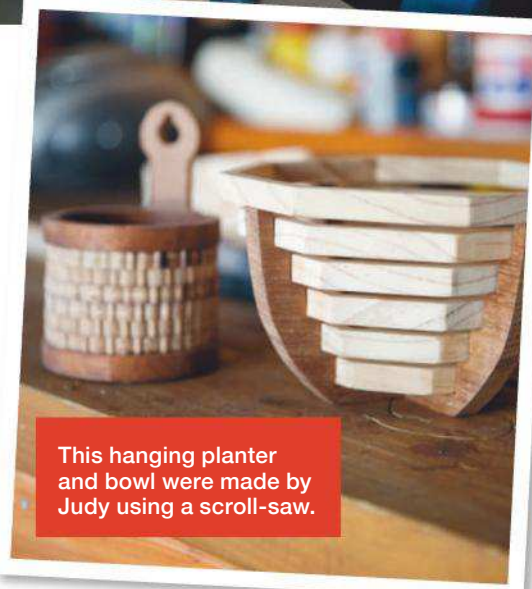
CRAFTING WITH WOOD

Judy enjoys working with wood and has made an array of practical items, including a wooden chopping board.

Wooden boards have become a popular alternative to serving

trays for presenting food at home and at cafes.

A combo chopping board and serving tray is easy and quick to make DIY. To find out how, visit handyman.net.au/board-tray.



This hanging planter and bowl were made by Judy using a scroll-saw.

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

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Fix anything that can be wrapped permanently with Bondall FiberFix 3cm Repair Wrap, \$8.80.



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Protect your home exteriors and outdoor furniture with Feast Watson Exterior Stain & Varnish, \$56.90 for 1L.



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Reach up to 3.3m with the heavy-duty industrial Rhino Dual Purpose Aluminium Step/Extension Ladder, with 150kg capacity, \$119.

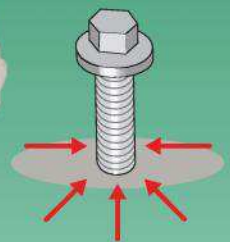
SAFETY TIP

When using an extension ladder, don't work on anything directly above you. Set the ladder to one side and a little higher.

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After

TROPICAL TRANSFORMATION

Garden guru Jamie Durie turns a tired and small backyard into an oasis perfect for entertaining



Lorena and Simon are newlyweds and looking to create space around their home where they can relax and spend time entertaining family and friends.

Having recently returned from their honeymoon in Fiji, the couple want to incorporate a tropical feel as a reminder of the chilled island vibe they enjoyed so much.

By building a new deck and pergola, installing some clever camouflage and choosing lots of lush tropical plants, horticulturalist and landscape-designer Jamie transforms an ordinary backyard into an outdoor retreat where they can entertain to their heart's delight. ►

Before





- 1 Ekodeck 137mm x 23mm x 5.4m Greystone Composite Decking, about \$72. ekologix.com.au.
- 2 Lattice Makers 180mm x 1500mm Black Bamboo Screening, \$93. laticemakers.com
- 3 Mimosa 9-piece Timber Avani Setting, \$1499. bunnings.com.au

DECK AND PERGOLA

The backyard of the house is turned from patchy lawn into a relaxing entertaining area with an eco-friendly deck, from Ekodeck. This style of decking is low maintenance and doesn't require oiling or painting, as it is water resistant.

Made from over 90% reclaimed timber, bamboo and recycled plastic, it looks like timber but is less likely to splinter, cup or warp.

As the deck faces west, a pergola is installed to help keep the new entertaining area nice and cool in summer. The roof of the pergola is sloped back to the house to allow for drainage, but will also let in a lot of natural light. Choosing bamboo sheets for the roof to create shade also helps reinforce the tropical theme.

The pergola is then finished off with a coat of grey paint, and a new dining setting completes the picture.

After

Once a blank canvas, the yard now has multiple places to relax.



After

The new bamboo screens reinforce the tropical theme.



ON THE SIDE

At the side area of the house, Jamie creates a space for Lorena and Simon to sit and relax by including a gorgeous timber lounge setting. By using pavers here, this also forms a practical pathway from the side entry to the backyard.

He also adds greenery to the space by planting no-mow mondo grass amongst the pavers on the pathway. This mondo grass is sure to be a winner because, as the name suggests, it will never need mowing!

Before



ADDING GREENERY

After taking care of overgrown hedges in the front of the house, Jamie sets about introducing plants to the backyard.

The new bamboo screen roof on the pergola provides much-needed shade for the tropical microclimate, where plants such as Boston fern in

hanging baskets and wall-mounted Staghorn will thrive.

Then, using a selection of other easy-care varieties such as golden cane palm, orange jasmine, bird of paradise and mondo grass, Jamie turns a dull, drab backyard into an at-home tropical paradise. ►

CUNNING CAMOUFLAGE

Making the most of the backyard involved making eyesores disappear with some creative camouflage ideas.

1. Air-con cover-up

Using off-the-shelf primed timber, *The Living Room's* Kyal Demmrich builds a frame with louvred sides to ensure good ventilation for the air-conditioning unit.

Once in place, he adds shelves above the box, creating space to display plants. After it is painted in the same grey as the decking, the air-con unit fades from sight, replaced with a beautiful and functional way to highlight plants.



- 1 SpecRite 90mm x 19mm KD Select Grade Merbau Decking, about \$5 per linear metre. bunnings.com.au
- 2 Whites Outdoor 1800 x 900mm Oxy-Shield Bamboo Screen Panel, \$145. whitesgroup.com.au
- 3 HPM 12V Black Pondlights, \$83 for four. hpm.com.au

Before



After

Clever carpentry provides the perfect place to display plants.



After

An attractive timber screen conceals the unsightly tank.



2. Water tank screen

While useful, the water tank and clothesline are not visually appealing features. Jamie conceals this area by using a very simple-to-install screen.

Screen Up posts are secured in place and timber slats and spacers are slotted in, each end finished with a cap.

The great thing about this system is you can adjust the width of your screen to suit your space, then simply cut your timber slats to match.

By adding a path to the clothesline, more plants, and golden cane palms to mask the tank, Jamie totally transforms this once dreary corner.

3. Back fence block-out

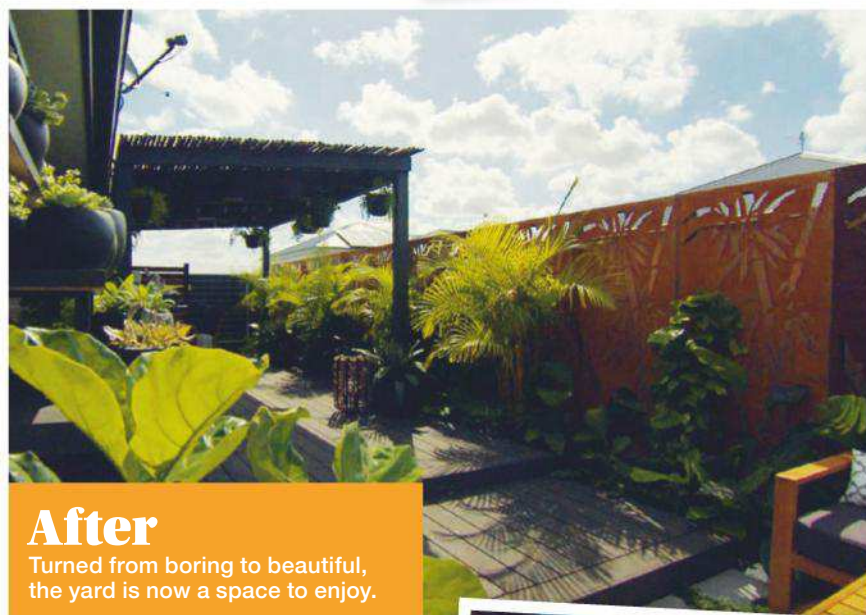
To tie the fence line into the tropical theme, Jamie paints the fences to match the deck. The colour ties in nicely with the tropical plants, as it gives the plants depth and really makes them pop.

A new frame is built along the fence, to which Oxy-Shield decorative screens from Whites are then attached.

Before they are put up, waterproof halogen lights are installed by an electrician. When turned on, they will shine through the beautiful laser-cut bamboo designs of the screens to create a warm tropical glow.



Before



After

Turned from boring to beautiful, the yard is now a space to enjoy.

The screens are made from specially formulated steel, which is designed to have rustic tones but without the inherent degradation of regular steel.

They also oxidise and form a surface that is resistant to corrosion and flaking, as well as developing a rich, earthy patina that will work beautifully in Lorena and Simon's new garden. ❖



Before

GRIME BUSTERS

Remove dirt and stains from your outdoor areas to create fresh-looking spaces this autumn

WORDS MARC MCEVOY



Nature shows little mercy on outdoor surfaces such as patios, paths and decks. The cumulative effects of rain, sun and wind can be very damaging.

And then there is the added grime we leave from entertaining and general foot traffic. Throw in mould, mildew, moss, algae and lichen and you can end up with unsightly and slippery surfaces, none of which are particularly easy or quick to clean.

The pressure washer is a valuable tool for getting rid of these substances and the stains they create. But, some surfaces, such as pavers, concrete, tiles and timber boards, do require extra cleaning agents.

PAVERS

Pressure cleaning is the most efficient way to clean hard surfaces such as paving. Begin by rinsing the area

with a garden hose to remove rocks, leaves and dirt, and other debris.

Start the pressure cleaner on a low setting so it doesn't damage the pavers and disturb the sand between them. If using the nozzle, hold it 30cm from the surface. Otherwise, use the patio surface cleaner attachment, which reduces splashing.

If stains remain after pressure cleaning, pour a mixture of water and dishwashing liquid over the surface.



Start your pressure washer on low to clean decks and pavers.

SAFETY TIP

Wear safety glasses or goggles and ear protection together with full-cover footwear when you are using a pressure washer.

Brush the pavers with a stiff broom or brush. Rinse it away with a hose or use a pressure washer.

Follow this process for cleaning concrete or brick paths and driveways.

If any sand in the gaps between the pavers is dislodged while you are cleaning, pour fresh sand over the pavers and use a broom to sweep it into the spaces. To finish off, if the surface of your pavers needs protection, apply a sealant. ►

TOUGHER CLEANERS

◆ HOUSEHOLD BLEACH

Cheap but strong smelling, this requires protective clothing and lots of water to rinse. Take note that bleach can damage plants. Dilute one part bleach to two parts water (1:2). Apply, leave on for 30 minutes, then scrub with a stiff broom.

◆ POOL CHLORINE

This is effective with little scrubbing needed but is toxic smelling. Wear protective gear. It can damage plants. Dilute with water 1:4, pour over pavers, leave for 30 minutes, then scrub with a stiff broom.

◆ HYDROCHLORIC ACID

Efficient and requiring little scrubbing, this is a strong chemical, so use lots of water to rinse. It can damage plants. Dilute with water 1:20 and scrub with a stiff brush or broom.

◆ SUGAR SOAP

This is alkaline, so not as smelly or as harsh on plants as acid or chlorine. It requires a lot of scrubbing. Dilute with water 1:1 and scrub with a stiff brush. Rinse. Repeat if needed.



Hold the nozzle of your pressure washer about 30cm from pavers.

OUTDOOR TILES

To clean outdoor tiles, follow the same process as used on pavers, but take extra care with sandstone, slate, travertine and limestone. Set the pressure washer on a low pressure to avoid damaging the surface.

Begin by saturating the grout joints with water. You can use any of the tougher cleaning solutions on tiles as you would on pavers, but it's a good idea to start with detergent or sugar soap mixed with water, since they are less harsh on the environment and don't expose you to strong chemicals.

The water-detergent mixture must remain on the surface for 5-15 minutes to penetrate and emulsify the dirt. Remove the waste and detergent by rinsing with water.

TIMBER DECKS AND WALLS

To clean timber decking and fences or walls, use a pressure washer on a low setting. Jets of water can damage soft timber and masonry walls when held too close. You can treat timber decks and walls with specially formulated timber-cleaning products, too.

Make sure you remove any build-up of material between decking boards, as this can stay damp and start rot. Pressure washers and garden hoses can also force water to penetrate around door and window frames and into some weatherboard structures.

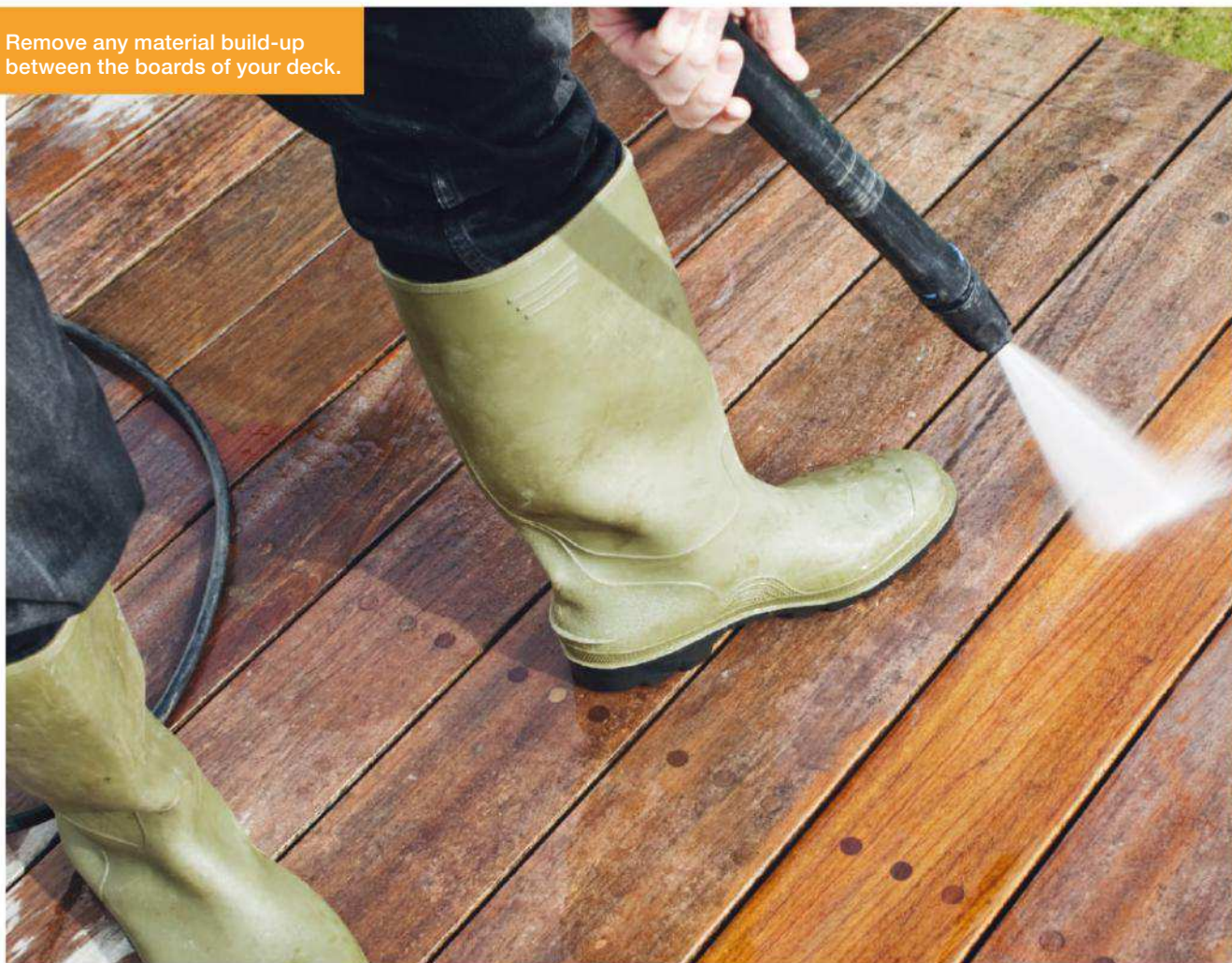
You can avoid this by fitting a rotary brush to the pressure washer instead of increasing the pressure to get rid of stubborn dirt, or clean by hand using an outdoor detergent-based cleaner.

For a deck, once it's dry, the surface will most likely need to be re-oiled or sealed, and you may have to replace any popped nails or screws. ►



**Regular cleaning
of your deck
is a good idea,
as even heavy
rain won't clear
hard-to-budge dirt
and debris**

Remove any material build-up between the boards of your deck.



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ROOF TILES

Most roof tiles are made from either terracotta or cement, and need to be cleaned when you can see a build up of moss, algae or lichen. To start, wash the tiles with water using a hose, then apply an anti-fungal solution with a hand sprayer.

Some solutions do the job over time with the help of wind and rain. For others, wait a few days for the moss, algae or lichen to die, then clean the tiles with a high-pressure washer set at 3000psi (pounds per square inch).

Hold the nozzle about 30cm from the tiles. Start from the top and avoid walking on wet areas, so you don't slip.

If you have a water storage tank, disconnect it first so that the chemicals from the roof don't end up causing damage to your garden.

GUTTERS

Keep your gutters free of leaf litter and other debris to ensure they function

Keep roof tiles in good condition by cleaning them as needed.



SAFETY TIP

Take safety precautions when working on a roof. Wear non-slip boots and use a safety harness, or install safety rails to prevent falls.

and don't overflow when it is raining. Cleaning open gutters is an easy job using a brush or leaf blower.

Debris can still build up, even if your gutters are fitted with gutter guards. Remove the guards before cleaning. They are usually secured with brackets and screws. ✦

Glitz Glass Multi-purpose Cleaner, \$4 for 400g. pascoes.com.au



Chemtech Brick, Tile & Paver Cleaner, \$27 for 1L. chemtech.net.au



Cabot's Deck Clean, about \$39 for 4L. cabots.com.au



UniSafe High Performance Ear Muffs, \$245. bunnings.com.au

Gerni 2.1kW Super 145.3 Plus High Pressure Cleaner, \$599. gerni.com.au



30 Seconds Roof Treatment Concentrate, \$38 for 5L. 30seconds.com.au



Sabco 450mm Bulldozer Chemical Resistant Broom, \$37. sabco.com.au



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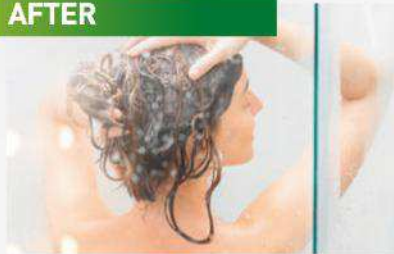
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*Pictures shown are a dramatisation for illustration purposes only.

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SPRUCE UP THE GARDEN

Spend time tidying up outdoors now to reap the rewards in winter and spring

WORDS ADAM WOODHAMS

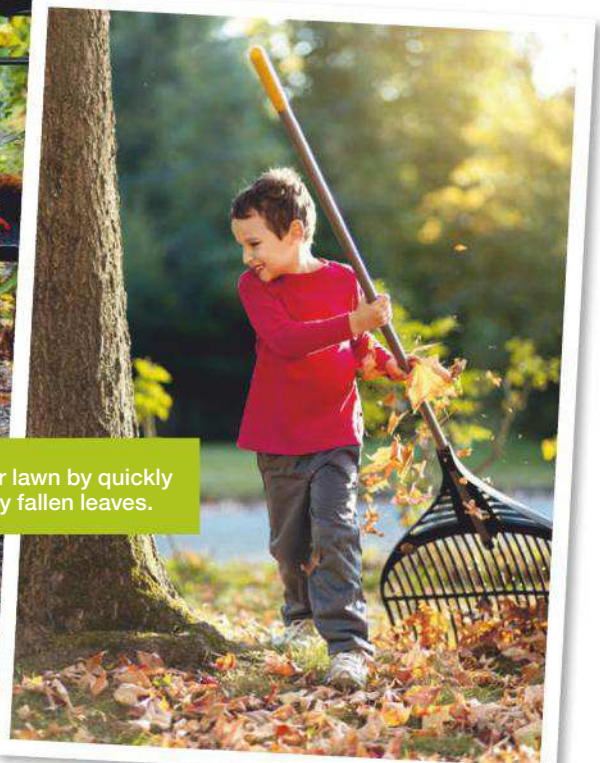
The days are becoming shorter, the mornings nipper and there's a hint of colour in the deciduous trees. Autumn has arrived!

There's no doubt that your garden will have taken a pounding over summer. The combination of weather and wear and tear can leave everything looking tired. The natural temptation may be to leave little jobs until later, but the task that takes 10 minutes now can become a major chore in spring.

So enjoy the awesome autumn weather and get cracking on a tidy-up.



Care for your lawn by quickly raking up any fallen leaves.



PICTURES IStock

REPLENISH NUTRIENTS

Plants and soil chew through a lot of nutrients over the warmer months, which your plants use for growth, flowering and damage repair, so these reserves need replenishing.

Your soil also needs care, as many soil microorganisms use nutrients, consuming a lot of the fertilising material you add to the soil and converting it into elements your plants can consume, and so providing a balanced feed for plants.

Here are a few ways that you can give your garden a boost now.

♦ **APPLY** a premium controlled-release fertiliser. This is the most efficient way to feed, as the right balance of nutrients will be released as plants need them.

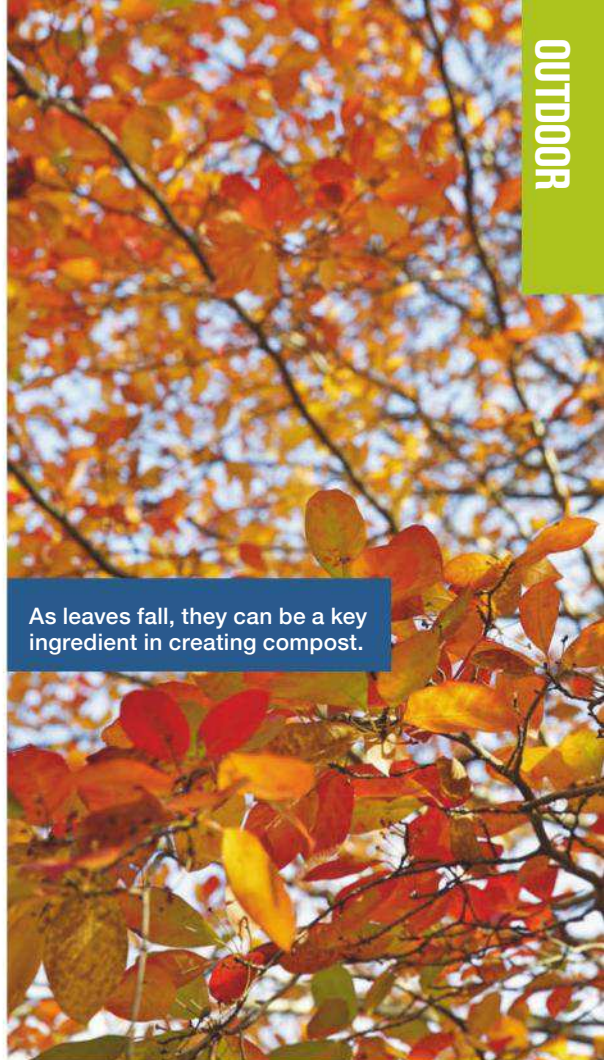
♦ **GIVE** your plants a fast boost with a quick and easy liquid feeding, but remember that most liquid fertilisers need to be reapplied regularly while plants are actively growing.

♦ **ADD** a soil and plant tonic. Products made with seaweed have a long history of improving plant health and building overall strength. Perfect for recovery from a long hot summer, they also provide a boost for soil microorganisms.

♦ **SPREAD** compost or composted manures. This is the ideal way to give your plants a light feed and really enrich your soil quality. Use a landscape rake to fluff up the soil surface, spread manure or compost around generously, then rake again before watering well. ►



As the weather cools, it's time to replenish your soil and give plants some TLC



As leaves fall, they can be a key ingredient in creating compost.

ADAM'S PICKS



Cyclone Super Garden Rake, \$23.
cyclone.com.au



Victa Swift Start 27.6CC Blower Vac,
\$279. victa.com.au



Scotts Osmocote Boost + Feed Liquid Fertiliser, \$18.



Scotts Lawn Builder + Wetting Agent Fertiliser, about \$36 for 4kg.
scottsaustralia.com.au



Seasol 2L The Seaweed Solution For Lush Green Lawns, \$20 for a Twin Pack. seasol.com.au

PRUNE AND TRIM

After a spring and summer of growth, many plants are in need of a haircut. Anything that's looking shaggy should get a light trim, but if it's very overgrown, it's still okay to prune hard.

But be aware of what you are pruning. Winter- and spring-flowering plants shouldn't be pruned, as you'll likely cut off next season's dormant and developing flower buds. Avoid pruning any of the camellias and spring blossom trees such as flowering and fruiting cherries, apples and peaches.

It's important to take your climate zone into account, too. If you're in an area prone to early frosts, hold off or new growth may be damaged.

The rough rule of thumb? If it's not deciduous and it's looking tired or untidy, then give it a haircut.

- ♦ **DEADHEAD** shrubs and plants such as agapanthus.
- ♦ **REMOVE** sun-damaged foliage.
- ♦ **TIDY UP** climbers that have spread.
- ♦ **RESHAPE** hedges and topiary.
- ♦ **TRIM** out any dead wood, diseased or damaged branches. Look at plants that are congested with internal and crossing branches, then thin them out.



PUT LEAVES TO WORK

Don't look on the autumn carpet of leaves as a nuisance, as it's nature's own recycling process and gives you a load of very useful material.

Add leaves to your compost or set up a temporary compost cage. Just make sure you balance dead leaves – brown material – with equal amounts of green material – lawn clippings, kitchen veggie scraps and plant prunings.

Also, switch your blower to vacuum mode and you'll find the collected shredded material makes a great mulch.



REVIVE THE LAWN

Autumn is a critical time for grass care, as lawns are often very worn and weary after summer. If not given attention now, they can be seriously damaged by a harsh winter, leaving you with dead patches and thinning areas when spring arrives.

- ♦ **FEED** the lawn with a premium controlled-release fertiliser, using either a specific autumn-winter blend or a normal variety at half rates.
- ♦ **APPLY** a hose-on seaweed tonic.

- ♦ **AERATE** any dead patches or compacted areas with a garden fork. Drive the fork into the soil 50mm deep at 50mm intervals, gently rocking back and forth over the area.
- ♦ **RAKE** leaves as they fall to maximise sunlight falling on the grass.
- ♦ **APPLY** a soil wetter suitable for lawns if the soil seems dry or is repelling water.
- ♦ **OVER-SOW** in warmer regions using a suitable lawn seed to fix bare patches if needed. ♦





What's trending

Workshop Talk & Tips

Join the discussion

GETTING RID OF WEEDS

FAST FACT

Workshop members are almost split down the middle when it comes to winter barbies, with 57% happy to fire up in the colder months, while 43% prefer to cook snags indoors.

'Put newspaper down over the soil around your plants and cover it with mulch, so the weeds have a harder time growing through your garden beds.'

@Kate68

'Remove the seed heads carefully, then dig deeply with a tool to get all the roots.'

@greygardener

'The best measure for lawn weeds is preventative - keep your lawn well-fed and healthy.'

@Adam_W

SHARE YOUR PICS



@Rodney



@woodalwayworks



@RobPegley



@WoodenGregsWood

workshop™

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.

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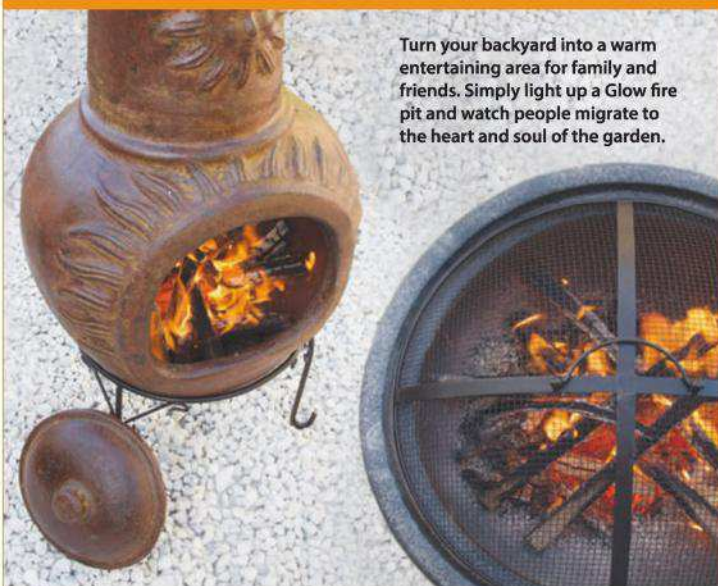
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THIS MONTH

Prepare the garden for winter and get planning for next spring

Do now

- ◆ **GROW** trees that will put on a spectacular display in autumn, page 127.
- ◆ **PLANT** bulbs for drifts of colour in spring, page 132.
- ◆ **ADD** powerhouse edibles to the vegie patch for a bountiful crop in the colder months, page 138.

Godetia

FLOWERS TO SOW

Get these seeds in the ground for flowers from just 12 weeks.

- ◆ **GODETIA**
- ◆ **CANDYTUFT**
- ◆ **FORGET-ME-NOT**
- ◆ **BELLIS**
- ◆ **NEMOPHILA**

Spring onion

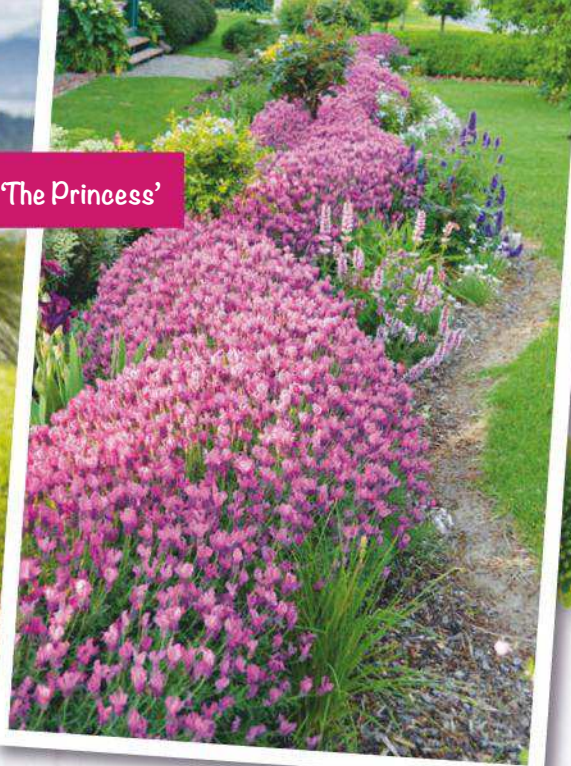
VEGIES TO GROW

Plant edibles for late autumn and winter crops.

- ◆ **MUSTARD**
- ◆ **SPINACH**
- ◆ **LETTUCE**
- ◆ **RADISH**
- ◆ **SPRING ONION**



Lavendula 'The Princess'



WHAT'S IN COLOUR

Lavendula 'The Princess' features lovely silver foliage and masses of bright pink bracts that sit atop dark-pink flowers and will add vibrant colour and beauty to your garden.

The flowers are delightfully fragrant and provide a stunning display from autumn through to early summer.

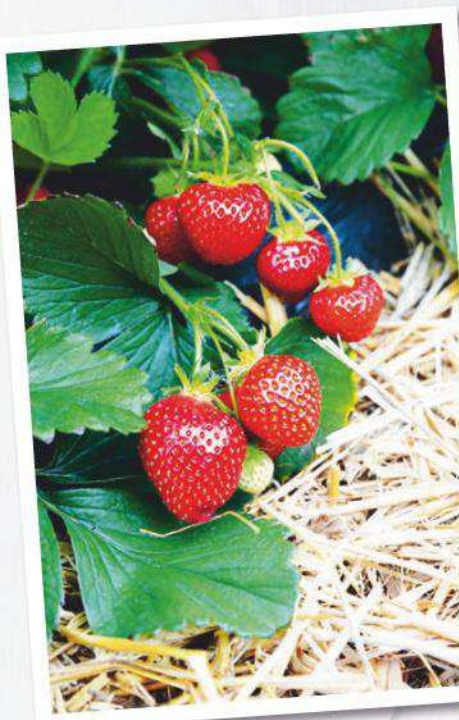
'The Princess' has a very compact and mounded growing habit, reaching up to 70cm high and spreading to 70cm. It is ideal for waterwise gardens and for planting along pathways, at entrances

and in entertainment areas. It can also be used as a low hedge plant and looks great in containers.

Plant 'The Princess' in full sun in well-draining soil. Trim back to two-thirds of its size to keep it in shape and boost growth, and apply a slow-release fertiliser.

Water requirements are low once established, but give it an occasional deep watering in extended hot periods.

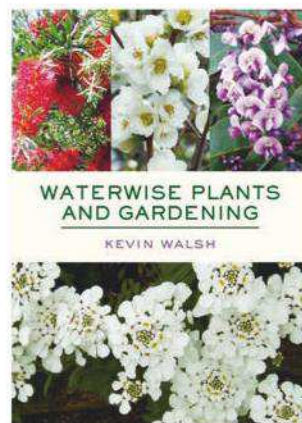
Information courtesy of Plants Management Australia (pma.com.au).



TO-DO LIST

Here are a few jobs to be getting on with this month.

- ♦ **COLLECT** fallen leaves and add to the compost heap.
- ♦ **PLANT** strawberries in all climate zones unless frosts are severe.
- ♦ **TAKE** bougainvillea cuttings to propagate in subtropical and tropical areas.
- ♦ **CHECK** for pests on roses and vegetables and treat.
- ♦ **DIVIDE** bearded iris and polyanthus, then plant out.
- ♦ **TOP UP** mulch around trees in cold regions to get rid of weeds and grass.



BOOK CLUB

Waterwise Plants and Gardening by Kevin Walsh (New Holland Publishers, \$35) is a comprehensive guide to creating a garden that is waterwise, resilient and low-maintenance.

From large trees and shrubs to small bulbs and groundcovers, the book showcases 400 dry-tolerant plants, along with photos, easy-to-follow diagrams, and growing and care advice.

There are also details on choosing the right plant for a particular situation. ►

PRUNE A HYDRANGEA

A common mistake when growing hydrangeas is not pruning them. If they are not pruned, the plant will continue to grow but, as a result of competition between branches for water and nutrients, the size of the flower may be smaller.

The best time to prune hydrangeas is in April or August, after they have finished flowering.

They can be cut back pretty hard if needed, but in temperate climates it is best to take the plant back to one-third of its size.

Prune back the plants to about seven buds below the flowerhead, or lower if you want your plant shorter.



1 REMOVE any stems from the base that are large, old, dead or diseased. The green stems growing from the old wood are where it was pruned last season.



2 MAKE a cut on the diagonal using secateurs just above two plump buds on a stem. These buds send up new shoots and flowers the following season.

BAG IT UP

Looking for a sturdy bag to use for your autumn clear up? A Tuscan Path Mr Tidy Premium Pop Up Garden Bag, \$22 (tuscanpath.com.au) is the answer.

The Mr Tidy bag is ideal for collecting all your garden waste, as it's reusable, strong, durable and made of tear-resistant polyester and PVC. It simply springs up to use and then collapses down for easy, mess-free storage.

It measures 580 x 660mm and has a holding capacity of 175L.

TIP This garden bag can also be used as a laundry bag or for storing kids' toys. ♦



Cymbidium orchid



FEED NOW

Apply fertiliser to boost growth and encourage blooms.

- ♦ GARDENIA
- ♦ CYMBIDIUM ORCHIDS
- ♦ CHRYSANTHEMUM
- ♦ HIBISCUS
- ♦ DAHLIA

Fuchsia



PRUNE NOW

Trim perennials and deadhead plants that have flowered.

- ♦ PELARGONIUM
- ♦ HYDRANGEA
- ♦ FUCHSIA
- ♦ ABELIA
- ♦ FRANGIPANI

Apple



HARVEST NOW

Pick late crops and fruit during April.

- ♦ PUMPKIN
- ♦ APPLES
- ♦ BEANS
- ♦ BROCCOLI
- ♦ KIWIFRUIT

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this Easter!



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*SAVINGS BASED ON 11 ISSUES PER YEAR AT THE RETAIL PRICE OF \$6.50 PER ISSUE

FALLING FOR AUTUMN TREES

Transform your garden into a blaze of fiery scarlets and rich russets, bright crimsons and vivid purples

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Plant with autumn in mind and reap a colourful reward.

As the light softens and the days grow shorter, autumn is one of the most beautiful and sensational times of the year. In cool and temperate climates, gardens start to glow with deep and vibrant tones.

Deciduous autumn trees are a good investment year-round. They provide shade in summer, fabulous colour in autumn, then allow the winter sun to shine through as they gradually lose their leaves. Plus, some have the bonus of flowers or fruit in spring.

And they're not just for big backyards, as there are lots of wonderful small- to medium-sized trees with colourful autumn foliage that are suited to the modern small garden.

Autumn is a great time to plant a shrub or tree, as it will have a chance to send out and establish its roots, rest over winter, then power away in spring. ►



CHOOSE A TREE

Most trees that are grown for their autumn foliage like cool and temperate climates. Make sure the tree you have chosen will grow well in your climate.

If it is out of its climate range, it may not be able to cope with extremes of moisture or temperature. A tree that doesn't belong in your soil or climate will never be healthy.

It's also best not to overplant trees. In small gardens, only one tree may be all that is needed. Keep in mind the mature height and width of the tree you are planting.

PLANT YOUR TREE

1 SOAK the tree well in its pot prior to planting. Dig a planting hole that is 2-4 times wider than the root ball and the same depth as the pot.

2 PLACE one hand on top of the potting mix and invert the pot to remove the plant. Check the root ball and gently tease out any matted roots.

3 POSITION the plant in the hole so the top of the root ball is at the same level as the surrounding soil. Backfill the hole, gently tamping down. Form a depression around the trunk to direct water down to the roots.

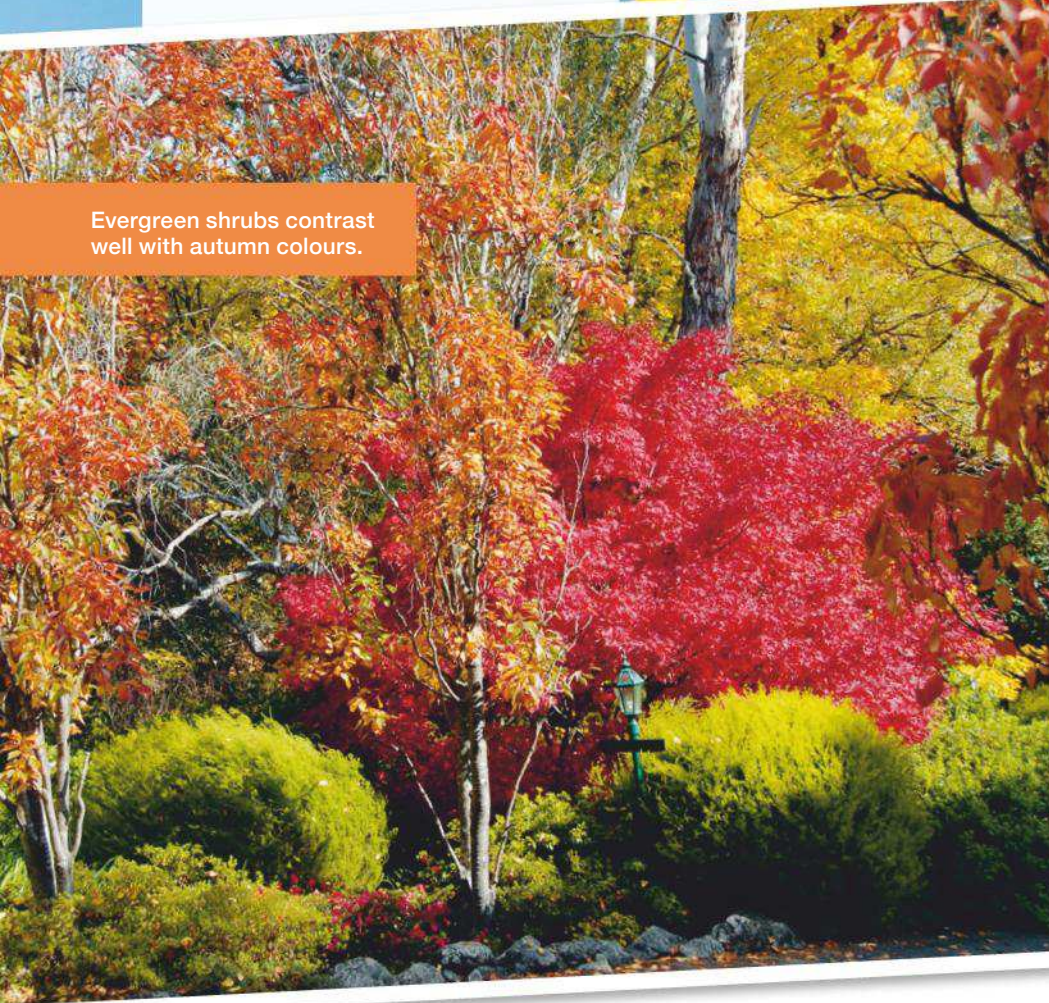
4 WATER in thoroughly, adding more soil if needed. Wait 30 minutes, then water thoroughly again.

TIP Use a liquid seaweed treatment such as Seasol to promote root growth and help the tree recover from planting.

BARE-ROOTED TREES

If you buy a bare-rooted tree during winter, keep its roots covered and moist, out of sunlight and drying wind.

When planting, trim off any damaged roots and place the tree on a mound of soil in the planting hole. Finish off as for a potted tree.



Evergreen shrubs contrast well with autumn colours.

Did you know?

Trees are good for your mind and body and even the environment because they are intrinsically tranquil. They absorb noise, reduce glare and purify the air. They also help to filter water, store carbon dioxide, prevent erosion, combat salinity and provide shelter and shade.

Autumn's rainbow ranges from pale yellow to deepest red.

GO FOR GROWTH

♦ **FOOD FOR THOUGHT** Mark in your calendar to fertilise trees in spring and again in summer with a complete plant food. Apply the fertiliser at the drip line, which is the outer extent of the tree's leaf canopy, as this defines the tree's feeding roots.

♦ **WATER WORKS** How you water your tree determines the depth at which the roots grow. Water thoroughly and

deeply, as this encourages the roots to travel deeper into the soil so that the tree can survive dry periods.

Once your tree is established, a long, deep watering once or twice a week is much better than a daily sprinkle.

♦ **MULCH MATTERS** It's best to mulch around your tree while keeping the area around the trunk free from mulch. This helps retain moisture in the soil.

The vibrant autumn leaves can rival the colours of the lovely spring flowers.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

The natural bending and swaying of young trees in the wind actually promotes more root growth and helps develop a more resilient trunk.

The only reason to stake may be if a tree is top heavy, such as a weeping tree.

In this case, add temporary support by placing several stakes around the outskirts of the root ball and securing loosely with figure eight ties made of flexible material, such as budding tape or hessian. ►

TEN OF THE BEST

Japanese maple

Hundreds of cultivars of *Acer palmatum* are available and most boast leaves in vivid autumn colours. There are a multitude of leaf shapes, colours and varying growth forms to choose from.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH Depends on the cultivar

Flowering cherry

Prunus serrulata cultivars are most-often chosen for their breathtaking spring-blossom displays, but in cool to cold climates, the foliage creates a spectacular vision of yellow, orange and scarlet in autumn.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH Depends on the cultivar

Gleditsia

A hardy tree, *Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Elegantissima' has fern-like, bright-green leaves that turn yellow in autumn. It thrives in moist, fertile soil in a sunny position, and tolerates urban sites, air pollution and saline soil.

♦ HEIGHT 4-5m WIDTH 3m

Persimmon

Diospyros kaki is a small tree with glossy leaves, edible fruit and striking autumn foliage. There are astringent varieties such as 'Dai Dai Maru', which remain bitter until they soften, or non-astringent varieties such as 'Fuyu'.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH 5-8m

Crabapple

Malus ioensis 'Plena' is one of the most beautiful crabapples, featuring masses of fragrant, double soft-pink and white flowers. Its leaves turn orange and dark-red in autumn. It likes a sunny spot in slightly acidic, well-drained soil.

♦ HEIGHT 6m WIDTH 4.5m

Chinese pistachio

Pistacia chinensis features dark-green foliage that turns yellow, orange and scarlet in autumn. It likes a moist, fertile soil but will tolerate sandy, dry conditions, and is a good medium-sized tree for all climates, except the tropics.

♦ HEIGHT 6-8m WIDTH 6m

Crepe myrtle

Lagerstroemia cultivars have beautiful late-summer flowers in a variety of colours, from white through to red, plus attractive bark that looks good during winter after its yellow autumn leaves fall.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH Depends on the cultivar

Redbud

Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy' has a low-branching habit and pink spring flowers. The heart-shaped leaves turn a brilliant yellow and orange in autumn. It likes a sunny to part-shaded position and acid or alkaline soil.

♦ HEIGHT 6-7m WIDTH 5m

Parrotia

A beautiful tree, *Parrotia persica* boasts rich autumn colour and unusual flowers, consisting of red stamens during late winter. Suited to medium-sized gardens, it has an attractive branching habit and ornamental bark.

♦ HEIGHT 5-7m WIDTH 5m

Taiwan cherry

A graceful tree, *Prunus campanulata* features red late-winter to spring flowers and bronzy-red autumn foliage. It flowers best in full sun but tolerates a little shade, as well as warm climates and coastal conditions.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH 6-8m ♦

BRIGHT BULBS

Switch on the colour next spring with these unfailing favourites

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERYL MADDOCKS

One of the greatest things about gardening is the sense of ritual it brings. Everything is cyclical, so there's always something to look forward to and celebrate. Right now, it's bulb planting time again.

These fascinating, inexpensive and dependable plants are almost foolproof. All the work has been done for you – the bulb itself is a food storage organ and already contains the flower embryo before it's even planted so flowering is practically guaranteed.

And, with good care and attention, many will settle in, multiply and flower in your garden, giving you pleasure for several springs to come.



Cheryl

EXPERT SECRETS

Mark the position of bulbs in beds to avoid disturbing them when they're not in bloom.

Plant in beds

Bulbs are hardy and, once planted, need minimal care to keep them blooming every year.

- ◆ **ADD** cow manure or compost to the soil before planting.
- ◆ **PLANT** in free-draining soil in the right position. Most bulbs require some sun to enable them to store food for the following year's flower display.
- ◆ **DIG** a hole to the required planting depth, as indicated on the packet.

The rule of thumb is to plant a bulb twice as deep as it is high.

- ◆ **PLACE** the bulb in the hole so the pointy side faces up and the flat base, where the roots will form, faces down. The exception to this is ranunculus, which is planted with its claws pointing down. Fill the hole with soil.
- ◆ **MULCH** with lucerne hay or sugar cane to help retain moisture in the soil and suppress weeds.

- ◆ **FEED** in early spring with a fertiliser formulated for flowers and fruit and again after flowering. Avoid fertilisers high in nitrogen.
- ◆ **WATER** regularly during the flowering season and while the leaves are green.
- ◆ **LET** the foliage die down naturally so food can be stored in the bulb. Remove the flowers when finished.
- ◆ **DIVIDE** the clumps every 3-4 years to avoid overcrowding.

Grow in pots

A pot full of miniature daffodils, elegant tulips, Dutch iris or fragrant hyacinths will brighten up gardens or courtyards.

♦ **PLANT** in a container that has good drainage. Select deep pots if you intend to plant large bulbs, such as daffodils or tulips.

Shallow pots suit small bulbs, such as grape hyacinths or hoop petticoat daffodils.

♦ **FILL** the container with a premium bulb potting mix to the planting depth of the bulb.

♦ **PUSH** the bulbs gently into the potting mix, positioning them about 30mm from the side of the pot to prevent them getting too hot. Bulbs in pots can be planted close together.



♦ **COVER** the bulbs with potting mix to about 25mm from the top of the pot.

♦ **PLACE** in a sunny position but try to keep the pot out of direct sun, as most bulbs like cool potting mix.

♦ **MULCH** with lucerne hay or sugar cane to the top of the pot.

♦ **FEED** when growth starts with a fertiliser for flowers and fruit and again when in flower.

♦ **WATER** regularly until the leaves die down, keeping the mix moist but not wet.

♦ **ALLOW** the foliage to die down naturally, then remove bulbs from the container. Store them in a dry position for replanting next year. ►



Hyacinth

Fragrant hyacinths are available in shades of blue, white, lemon and purple. Plant in pots and take them indoors when the plants are in flower.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool and temperate climates.

STORAGE TIP

Keep bulbs that need a cold winter to flower, such as hyacinths and tulips, in a paper bag in the fridge for 6-8 weeks before planting.



Ixia

These starry flowers are borne on tall 30-40cm stems, above grass-like leaves. Colours include pale green, bright pink, orange, cream and lilac. They are great for naturalising.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in cool to subtropical climates.

DIY TIP

Plant annual seedlings, such as pansies, on top of your bulbs in containers to maintain interest before the bulbs flower.



Anemone

Available in shades of blue, white and red, anemones make great cut flowers and will last over a week in a vase. As the stems develop, they need regular watering and feeding.

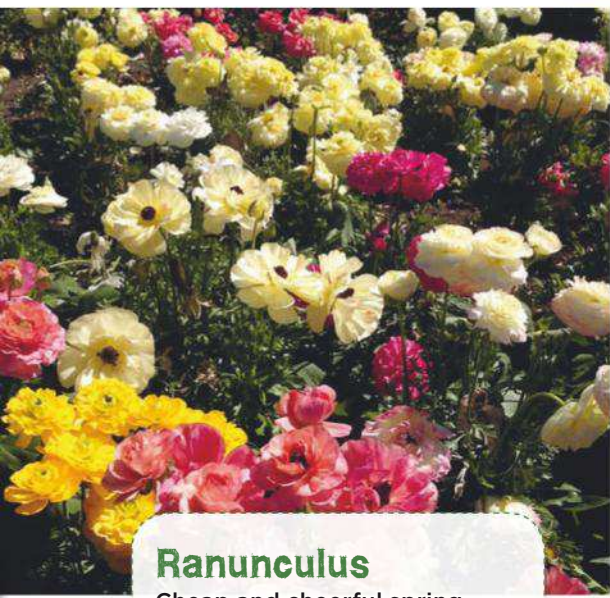
♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in all climates. Treat as annuals.

Dutch iris

The blue, purple, yellow, white and bicoloured flowers of Dutch irises are excellent for picking. Grow them in clumps in garden beds or large pots.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool to subtropical climates.





Ranunculus

Cheap and cheerful spring bulbs with red, yellow, orange, pink or white flowers, these are great to use as cut flowers and can be grown in pots. They need protection from wind.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in all climates. Treat as annuals.



Tulip

Ideal for garden beds and pots, tulips come in a wide range of colours, including deep purple and almost black. Bicolours are also available and there are cultivars with frilled petals.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in cool climates.

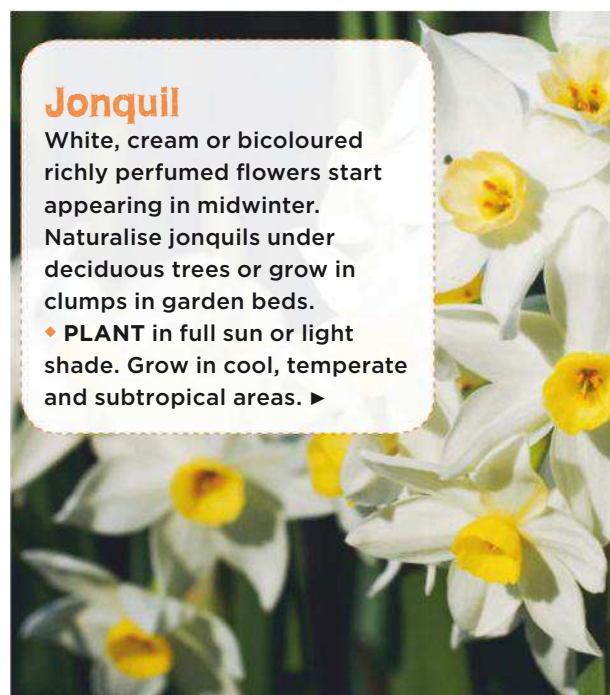
Warm-climate tips

If you want to grow tulips and daffodils in temperate climates or in regions with wet or humid summers that will rot the bulbs, they need to be lifted and stored.

After the foliage has died back, lift the bulbs from the ground, shake off the soil and store them over summer in a cool, dry and airy spot.

In February, place the bulbs in the crisper section of your fridge for 6-8 weeks or until the weather cools.

In warm areas, plant bulbs three times as deep as the bulb is high, with the pointy end facing up. Deeper planting will protect them from heat as well as provide strength for the stem.



Jonquil

White, cream or bicoloured richly perfumed flowers start appearing in midwinter. Naturalise jonquils under deciduous trees or grow in clumps in garden beds.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or light shade. Grow in cool, temperate and subtropical areas. ►

Freesia

Many freesias have perfumed flowers. They are hardy and easy to grow. Colours include blue, white, red, purple, yellow and bicolours.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun to light shade and grow in cool to subtropical areas.





Bluebell

Drought-tolerant and easy to cultivate, bluebells are ideal for naturalising in woodland areas. They come in shades of pink or white as well as blue.

♦ **PLANT** in semi-shade or shade and grow in cool or temperate climates.



Grape hyacinth

Great for planting en masse under deciduous trees, lots of tiny blue flowers appear on dainty stems. They are ideal for pots and drought-tolerant.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool and temperate climates.



Daffodil

These popular, hardy bulbs are available in yellow, white and bicolours. They look stunning naturalised under deciduous trees, planted in clumps or grown in pots.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in cool and temperate areas.

How to display

- ♦ **GROW** daffodils, jonquils, freesias and ixias in your lawn but wait until the leaves die back before mowing.
- ♦ **POSITION** bulbs beneath deciduous trees where they will receive winter sun.
- ♦ **PROLONG** the flower show by planting drifts of bulbs with different flowering periods. Start the display with winter-flowering

jonquils, followed by bluebells, which look great mixed with white or yellow daffodils.

- ♦ **CHOOSE** hardy bulbs such as ixias and freesias for those plant-and-forget, dry situations.
- ♦ **PLANT** perfumed hyacinths in terracotta pots and bring indoors while in bloom.
- ♦ **ARRANGE** miniature daffodils in shallow pots for an elegant look.



Starflower

Often called the poor man's bluebell, *Ipheion uniflorum* will grow in much warmer areas than bluebells. Plant in pots or en masse in clumps.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool to subtropical areas. ♦

APR

What's on this month

Head down to your local Bunnings this April for some great advice on your next D.I.Y. project



7

[SAT]

8

[SUN]

GARDENING D.I.Y. WORKSHOPS

Learn how to make your green thumb work harder with these essential tips.



14

[SAT]

15

[SUN]

TILING AND PLASTERING D.I.Y. WORKSHOPS

Save money by learning these handy skills.



21

[SAT]

22

[SUN]

BASIC D.I.Y. WORKSHOP SKILLS

Great all-round advice on expertly completing those odd jobs around the house.



28

[SAT]

29

[SUN]

QUICK REFRESH, REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE D.I.Y. WORKSHOPS

Master those simple tasks.

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TAN
TEAM MEMBER

GARDENING D.I.Y. WORKSHOPS

Tips to make your outdoor areas thrive.



7

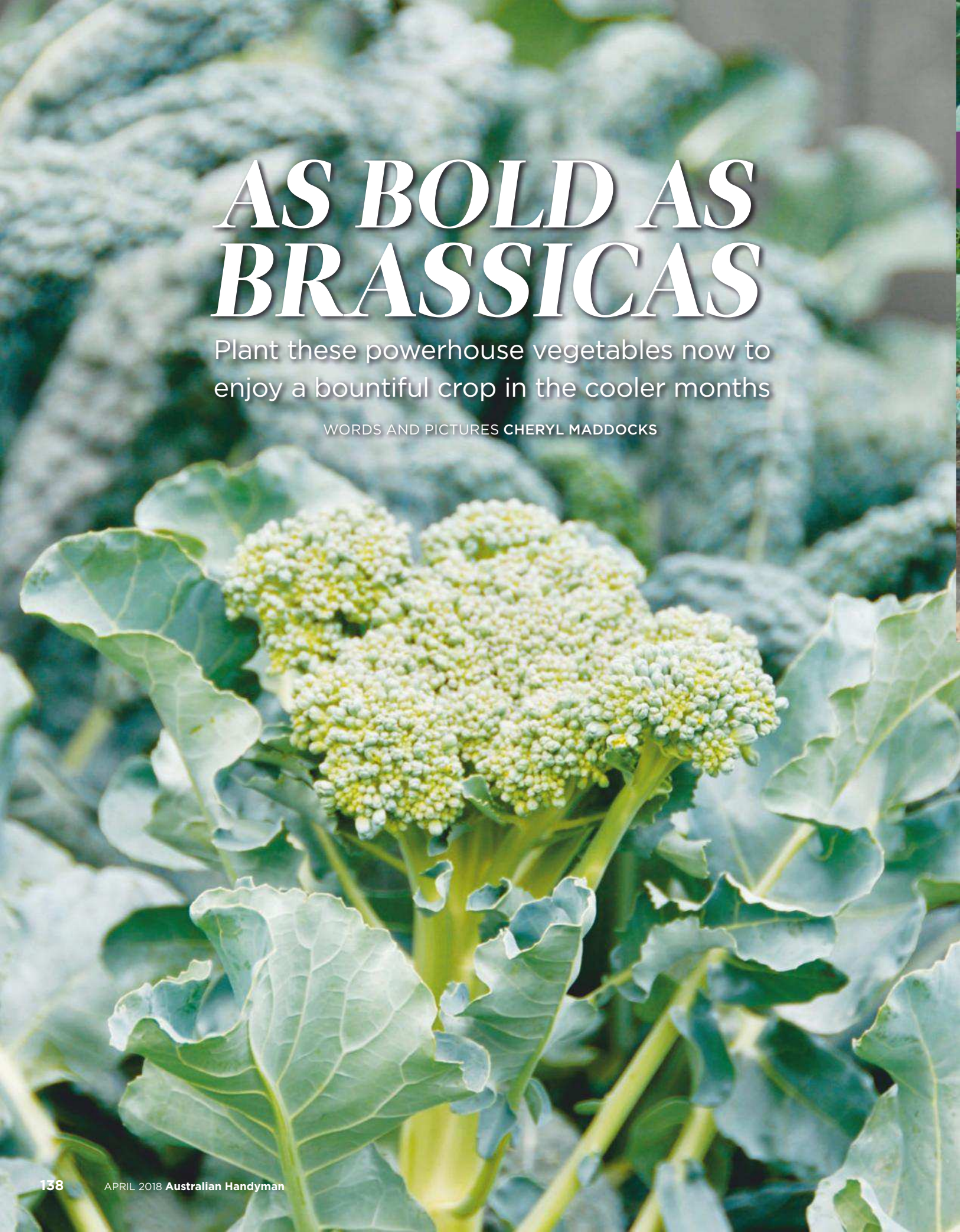
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AS BOLD AS BRASSICAS

Plant these powerhouse vegetables now to enjoy a bountiful crop in the cooler months

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERYL MADDOCKS

Autumn is the time to start planting your winter vegetable patch.



Nutritional powerhouses of the cool-season vegetable patch, the Brassicaceae family, commonly known as brassicas, comprises many familiar crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, kale and brussels sprouts.

Brassicas are said to contain anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-cancer and detox-support nutrients. Research also suggests that the star component in this family is the phytochemical sulforaphane, which plays a major role in helping to prevent cancer.

They are ready to be planted now and will grow throughout the cooler months. You can grow your own from seeds or buy seedlings from your local nursery. Here, we show you how.

Prepare healthy soil

Healthy soil is full of essential worms and microscopic organisms that provide an excellent start for your brassicas.

Before planting, remove finished autumn crops and get rid of weeds, along with their roots. Dig over the patch with a fork or spade, incorporating any remaining mulch into the soil. Break up clods until the soil is crumbly.



Next, dig in lots of organic matter such as compost, poultry manure, Yates Dynamic Lifter or cow manure. Do this on a seasonal basis before planting any new crops. Organic matter adds structure to the soil, helps retain water and slowly releases nutrients.

Test your pH

It is a good idea to test the pH of your soil every couple of years. Most vegetables like a soil with a pH of about 6.5. Soil can slowly become acidic through continual fertilising and you can rectify this with dolomite, garden lime or a liquid lime. ►



Cook with kale or use it raw in green smoothies.



Good preparation is the key to a healthy crop, so remember to check the soil's pH and adjust if needed



Help them thrive

Give brassicas the right care and attention for a bountiful supply.

♦ **POSITION** in full sun and provide protection from the wind.

Sheltered vegetable gardens yield up to 50% more crops compared to those in windy conditions. If you have to plant in a windy spot, make a windbreak with shade cloth fastened to posts.

♦ **FEED** at least monthly with a complete soluble plant food. Be sure to always water the soil before and after adding fertiliser.

♦ **MULCH** with lucerne hay, straw or pea straw. Mulch lightly during winter to allow the soil to be warmed.

♦ **WATER** regularly in the morning at ground level to keep brassicas succulent and tasty, and prevent fungal diseases. Don't let the soil dry out.



Protect your vegetables from pests using eco-friendly techniques.

Pest solutions

Caterpillars

These plant devourers will chew through brassica leaves on young and old growth. Small seedlings may be eaten entirely.

♦ **FIX IT** You can control most varieties with Yates Nature's Way Caterpillar Killer, which contains natural bacteria that kill the larvae once ingested.

Snails and slugs

These pests will munch on most vegetables. Look for holes in leaves, as well as shiny streaks on foliage and slime trails.

♦ **FIX IT** Add beer to a small container to make a beer trap, then sink it into the ground. Or use environmentally friendly snail and slug pellets.

Good soil is essential for the best results and a high yield.

HOW TO TRANSPLANT SEEDLINGS

Give your brassicas a good start by correctly transplanting the seedlings from the punnets. They are ready to be moved to a garden bed when they reach 75mm high.



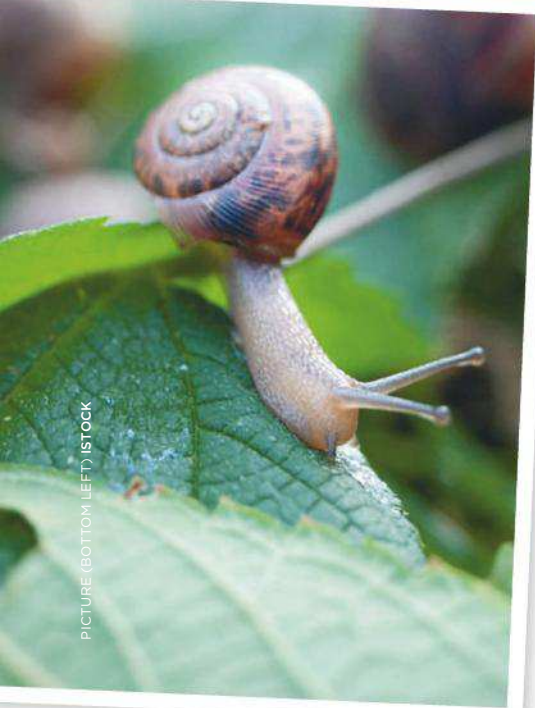
1 Dig planting holes

Water the punnet and squeeze the sides to loosen the seedlings. Remove from the punnet, taking care not to damage the roots. Dampen the soil, then dig a hole 70-100mm deep, checking it is wide enough to fit a seedling.

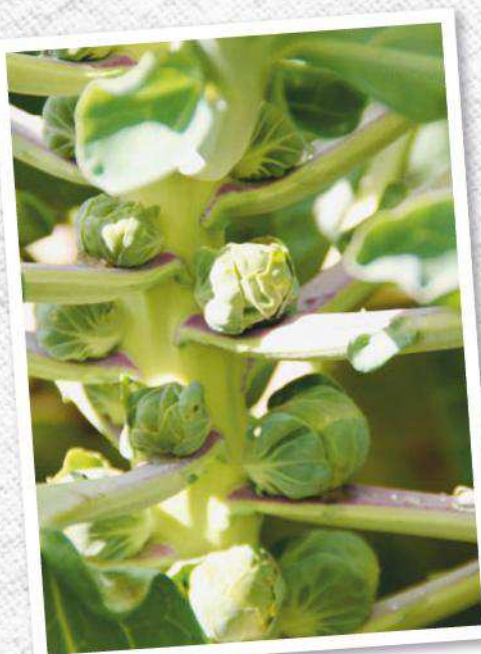


2 Establishing the bed

Position a seedling in the hole, pressing down the soil around it. Repeat making the holes, spacing them at the required distance apart. Plant the remaining seedlings. Water with a seaweed concentrate to help avoid transplant shock. ►



PICTURE (BOTTOM LEFT) ISTOCK



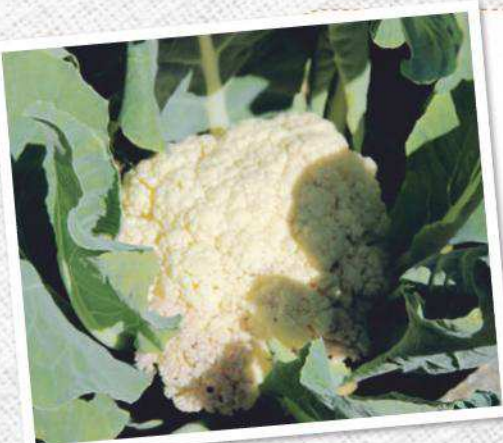
Brussels sprouts

These cabbage-shaped sprouts form in the leaf axils of the main stem and love cool weather. They don't form heads in hot climates.

Plant seedlings 600-750mm apart, as they need room to grow.

Harvest progressively from the base to the top, picking with a downward and sideways action. Sprouts are ready to harvest 4-5 months after planting.

- ◆ **SLICE** thinly and stir-fry with garlic and soy sauce.
- ◆ **COAT** in olive oil and roast for 30-40 minutes, shaking regularly, and top with pecorino cheese.
- ◆ **SUBSTITUTE** for cabbage to make coleslaw with a twist.
- ◆ **BLANCH** and place in a baking dish, cover with bechamel sauce and bake in a moderate oven until golden and bubbling.



Cabbage

Delicious raw, pickled, steamed, boiled or stir-fried, you can grow cabbages with globe-shaped or conical heads, crispy Chinese cabbage or red cabbage.

Sow the seeds successively in punnets to extend the harvest.

Harvest small heads when firm, leaving the rest of the crop in the ground until needed.



Broccoli

Choose from large-headed or sprouting varieties like broccolini.



- ◆ **SHRED** to make sauerkraut, which is healthy for your gut.
- ◆ **WRAP** your favourite filling in blanched cabbage leaves, and serve with hoisin sauce.
- ◆ **STIR-FRY** mushroom, beef strips, chilli and sliced cabbage in soy sauce. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Seeds can be sown in punnets until the end of autumn.

Harvest large-headed broccoli when tightly packed and before flower buds open. Cut on a slant 10cm down the main stem. New shoots will grow in the leaf axils. Harvest sprouting varieties with a long stem, which can be eaten.

- ◆ **MAKE** a soup with broccoli.
- ◆ **STIR-FRY** broccolini with beef and ginger. Season with soy sauce.

Kale

This vegie is high in fibre, vitamins A, C and K, folic acid, calcium, potassium and iron, making it one of nature's superfoods. It also contains omega-3 fatty acids.

Kale likes the cold, and cool weather actually sweetens the leaves. Harvest just before use for more flavour. Young leaves are best for salads.



- ◆ **BOIL** or steam, then squeeze lemon juice over the top.
- ◆ **USE** kale to make a risotto with cheese and pine nuts.

Cauliflower

This vegetable is high in vitamin C and also contains potassium, folic acid and fibre.

Cool weather is required for the edible white flower head to form. Harvest when the head is tight and solid. You can start harvesting while young to extend the harvest.

Protect the heads from sunlight and discolouration by breaking the outside leaves to cover them.

- ◆ **COMBINE** cauliflower with fresh ginger to make a soup.
- ◆ **COAT** in oil, then bake in the oven. Top with parmesan.
- ◆ **ADD** to macaroni cheese.
- ◆ **DIP** pieces in egg and flour, deep-fry, then serve with aioli. ❖

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