

The Home

December 2013 • Vol 20 No 12
R31.00 (incl VAT)



HANDYMAN

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ORIGINAL
DIY
MAGAZINE

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- Advantages of cladding
- Installation and sealing tips

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Relaxation guide

The one thing I probably look forward to the most about the upcoming holidays is the quietness after the mad rush. Right now, everyone wants to go away and is working hard to make it happen. Even I can feel the heat, my seat is getting hotter by the day... but this will soon pass. Soon, around 15 December, the amount of cars on the road will start to dwindle, the phone lines will quieten down and I will have peace and quiet, even if it is just for a week or two in this five-week long month. And then I will pack my bags and head off to the coast to relax. 'How?' you may ask.

My step-by-step guide to relaxing this December holiday

Step 1: Once you are on leave, ignore your phone, email and all other means of unnecessary communication.

Step 2: Haul out a beach chair and umbrella, put on a bathing suit (preferably not a Speedo), apply a generous coat of sun cream with an SPF 30 rating or higher.

Step 3: Set up camp with your umbrella and chair at the nearest swimming pool, beach or lawn.

Step 4: Sit back in your chair and read your latest copy of *The Home Handyman*. If possible keep a cooler box with a few cold beers close by.

Project guide



Difficulty: Easy



Estimated cost: As much as the bank manager allows



Estimated time: As long as possible

I, along with Roelof Strydom and the rest of the team, would like to thank you for your support during the year and hope you all enjoy a well-deserved holiday. Have a merry Christmas and a happy new year!



Johann Stadler, Editor



*Roelof Strydom,
Assistant Editor*

The Home HANDYMAN

www.homehandyman.co.za

The Home Handyman is published by Home Handyman
Publishing cc ck2000/036356/23
PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010
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Subscription rates:

SA: R296.00 (incl VAT) for 12 issues

Reproduction: AstraGraphics

Printing: CTP Web, cnr Electron Avenue

and Industry Road, Isando

Distribution: Republican News Agency

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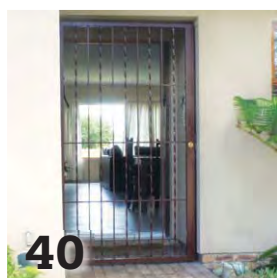
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Great for Christmas

With Christmas in mind, this Bessey DMT Multi-tool set will make a great gift. It consists of a multi-function tool with large shears, a knife with one-hand opening and an LED aluminum flashlight

with batteries.

The multi tool is based around heavy duty shears. The other six tools are a knife blade, saw, file, Phillips head screwdriver, large slotted screwdriver and small slotted screwdriver. It has a strong stainless steel handle with soft cushioned inserts for a good grip.



i For more information

Visit: www.vermontsales.co.za
Tel: 011-314-7711

Strong bond

A new addition to Pratley's adhesive range is Pratley Powda Bond. This DIY adhesive is an instant repair system that can be used as either a two-component or a single adhesive. It cures very fast and can be used to build up thick sections or fill gaps on repair jobs.

The kit contains a special-grade, liquid adhesive and specially formulated black and white powder fillers. The bond cures within seconds and its formulation ensures good penetration of the adhesive through the powder filler and onto the substrate. A great way to see the product's good powder penetration is by adhering an item to a transparent substrate like Perspex.

Once cured, Powda Bond can be painted, sanded or filed and can be exposed to water. It also performs well on certain difficult plastics. Some suggested Powda Bond repairs include damaged car bumpers, cracked pipes, damaged television remotes and swimming pool pump valves.



i For more information

Visit: www.pratley.com
Tel: 011-955-2190

Sander goes unplugged



Makita has added the Random Orbital Sander Model BBO180Z to its arsenal of 18V lithium-ion cordless tools. The

obvious advantage is that it is cordless, but still provides the excellent

performance and is just as powerful as its electric counterpart. It is ideal for finishing wood and plaster surfaces before painting, stripping off old paint and smoothing between finishing coats where necessary. It is an asset when working outdoors and where power is not readily available.

This model is compact in design, with a short height and a lower centre of gravity, which makes for easier handling and more manoeuvrability. The BBO180Z uses the hook and loop system for attaching your sandpaper and has eight holes under the pad for dust extraction that is then collected in the dust bag. The two electronic buttons on the front of the machine provide all the functionality that you will need. The button marked 'O' is the off switch and the button marked 1, 2 and 3 is the speed control. When pushing this button the BBO180Z sander will always default to starting at the fastest speed 3, which will produce up to 11 000 orbits per minute, 2 is medium speed and 1 a low speed.

i For more information

Visit: www.makita.co.za
Tel: 011-878-2600

Multi-angle drill bits

Multi-angle drill bits are ideal for installing mortise locks, hinges and rebates. These bits from Eureka can be used to form channels, cuts, mills and can also rout and make mortise gaps. Whether you need to make straight or angled holes, rebates or countersink, these drill bits enable you to do so with the nine different cutting edges, including straight, forward, backward, sideways and curved.



i For more information

Visit: www.eurekadrillbits.co.za
Tel: 011-471-0800

New cordless tacker

Bosch has launched a lithium-ion-powered cordless tacker. The Bosch PTK 3.6 Cordless Tacker weighs less than 800g, making it ideally suited for DIY projects such as interior decorating and upholstery. Despite being the smallest in its class, the cordless tacker boasts superior strength and durability, thanks to its advanced 3.6V lithium-ion battery technology. With this, the cordless tacker is capable of driving at least 400 staples into soft wood when fully charged.

Additional features of the tacker include an ergonomically shaped handle with soft grip for improved operator comfort, as well as an easy-to-load staple magazine with reload indicator and a LED battery charge level status indicator.



For more information

Visit: www.bosch-do-it.co.za
Tel: 011-651-9600

Monitor your energy usage

The E2 Classic Energy Monitor from Ellies is simple to install and easy to use. A mini current sensor is clipped onto the supply cables. A lead from the sensor is plugged into the energy transmitter, which then wirelessly sends real-time data to the energy monitor. The monitor receives the data and displays the demand in kilowatts of energy being consumed at any given time.

The E2 Classic displays your average energy usage per day, week and month. See the impact of your energy efficient efforts, and then watch your average energy usage reduce. Also download your energy consumption data to your PC or Mac and analyse it with the Efergy elink 2.0 software. View informative graphs, prints or save reports as PDF files. Data may also be viewed using Excel.



The kit contains:

- 1 x E2 wireless energy monitor
- 1 x transmitter
- 1 x mini CT sensor
- Batteries supplied
- 1 x USB cable
- Elink 2.0 software downloaded from Efergy.com

For more information

Visit: www.elliesrenewable.co.za
Tel: 011-493-0344



Three in one

The handy Divar 55 Plunge Saw from Woodster doubles up as a normal portable circular hand saw and can be used instead of a circular saw bench for precise parallel panel sizing.

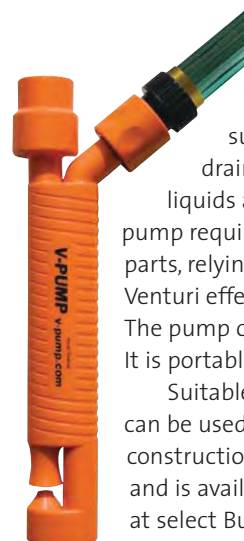
The plunge saw kit comes with the Divar 55 clamping kit and rail joiner, an anti-tilt over kit and 1 400mm guide rail.

For more information

Visit: www.newcopowertools.co.za
Tel: 011-315-1504

Specifications	
Dimensions l/w/h:	340 / 260 / 235mm
Blade diameter:	160mm
Arbor diameter	20mm
Blade speed:	5 500rpm
Max cut 90° w/o guide rail:	55mm
Max cut 45° w/o guide rail:	40mm
Bevel capacity:	0-45°
Close to wall cut:	15.5mm
Weight:	4.8kg
Motor:	230V
Input:	1 200W

Pump it up

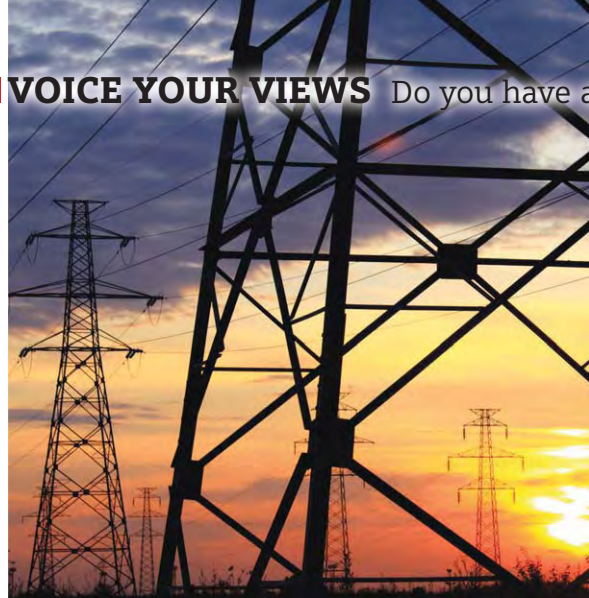


The V-Pump from Intasafety is a submersible water pump capable of draining unwanted water, mud or other liquids at a rate of 4 500 litres per hour. The pump requires no electricity and has no moving parts, relying purely on the water pressure and Venturi effect to create extreme pumping power. The pump connects straight to your garden hose. It is portable, powerful, versatile and easy to use.

Suitable for industrial and domestic uses, it can be used to empty pools, hot tubs, ponds and construction sites and is available at select Builders Warehouse stores.

For more information

Visit: www.intasafety.co.za
Tel: 011-466-2994



Cost of electricity

Unfortunately the editor's reply to electricity prices is totally incorrect. The 61c per kWh has no relevance to consumers. It is far less expensive to supply urban consumers than rural ones with electricity. Logic would tell you that it must be cheaper to supply say 1 000 consumers in a few blocks of flats than 1 000 farmers spread over 2 000km of the Northern Cape. It's therefore cheaper to maintain the network of the urban dwellers as well.

Historically, Johannesburg city generated the bulk of the power consumed in the city with power stations in the city, in Orlando and Kelvin. The government wanted to electrify the entire country and created Eskom. As they wanted city users to help subsidise the cost of the network in the country and to subsidise the cost of new power stations, they did a deal with Johannesburg (and, I think, other cities that had generating capacity). The deal was that the city was not allowed to extend its power stations, but retained the right to distribute the power to its residents. For this it was, and is still, allowed a markup on Eskom bulk price. The city had to maintain the distribution network. This cosy deal has resulted in the electricity markup being the largest source of revenue after rates to the city.

Frankly, the costing argument raised is twaddle. The centralisation of electricity occurred about 85 years ago and the cross subsidisation allowed Eskom to build large power stations and the grid. I am pretty sure a rural consumer today believes he pays more than his cousin in the city. He also sometimes has to pay to bring the power to the farm! Your handyman skills are great, not so your history or economics knowledge!

John Simpson, via email

I have a passion for recycling

In the October 2013 issue, I found the article on the 'Stylish garden bench' most interesting. I believe that it is the duty of respectable publications to encourage recycling. I love the way André converted what was essentially an eyesore into something usable and a thing of beauty for the garden. Personally, I am an 'eternal recycler'. I love converting junk into something of beauty that is useful in the home and, most importantly, for minimal cost.

Luckily I live on a plot and have space to store my 'junk' until I can come up with an idea of what to do with it, much to my daughter's disgust, as she finds my passion for recycling a little disturbing. Some of my more recent projects include a light fitting made from an old flower pot, left over curtain rod and Christmas balls, a braai from an old car wheel rim, bicycle rim and scrap metal as well as a coffee table from some old rotting teak gates (see photo).

I would love to see a regular feature of projects using recycled materials as I am always looking for new ideas and I believe that it would encourage your readers to be more environmentally friendly.

I must admit that your magazine substantially increases my to-do list every month. For instance, thanks to the same issue (Oct 2013), I have found some rising damp that needs repair. I have been toying with the idea of building a gazebo for some time and a pizza oven is a definite must-build. Thank you for keeping me busy around my home.

Keith Savin, via email



WINNING LETTER



▲ A coffee table from some old rotting teak gates

Winning letter

This month's winning letter comes from Keith Savin who wins a Bosch PLL 360 – Self-leveling 360° Line Laser





Educating the masses

I would like to thank you for the back copies of *The Home Handyman* magazine, which I ordered and received. My son gave me a router as a gift for Father's Day and I really had to get some literature on the basics of routing. I was a subscriber in the '90s and have kept all the issues. Great was my surprise when I paged through them and found just about everything about routing that I needed. I now realise what I have missed during all those years that I let my subscription lapse. Thanks for the great magazine.

Nicol Ferreira

WIN!

Share your opinion

Send us your views, ideas and opinions and you could win a prize!

Address your letter to *The Home Handyman*:

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Fax: 011-704-3962

By mail: PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010

Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Please note: Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery once the issue is on the shelf.



Corobrik paves the way for CPUT students

One group chose to produce this round design. They are pictured proudly showing off their completed paving design are from left: A Sogoni, L Ndamase, JX Hlutyana, AG Stiebel, L Roux, SZ Zide, Y Liwani, OP Maritz, S Jacobs, SPP Mkhathswa, A Milisi and U Mkehle

Six hundred Corobrik pavers, 300 clay bricks, ornamental gravel and a selection of planting materials were all that was needed for 80 landscape technology students at the Cape University of Technology (CPUT) to completely transform a 12m x 14m area on their Cape Town campus in just two weeks.

This hands-on landscape installation formed part of the inaugural CPUT-Corobrik Construction Week, which saw students participating in specialised landscape construction lectures, workshops and demonstrations as well as in this exciting project.

Students were encouraged to interact with manufacturers, industry members and professional bodies at the workshops. "The focus of Construction Week was both hard and soft landscape construction, including paving and hard landscape surface treatments like ornamental gravel, tree and groundcover planting and tree staking. Students were exposed to technical construction, which incorporated material and plant specifications, construction detailing and construction drawings and

documentation," says Johan van Rooyen, head of program, Landscape Technology.

Christie van Niekerk, Corobrik manager for the Western Cape, says that although Corobrik had helped deliver lectures for architecture students at CPUT since last year, this was the first time it had contributed towards the training of landscape students.

He says van Rooyen had approached Corobrik for a donation of building materials. "We set up a meeting with him and proposed actually getting involved in the training as well." Corobrik's training co-ordinator Ishmael Rothmam took on the task of compiling lectures while architectural representatives Werner Oelofse and Allistair Cloete assisted with organising and lecturing. The project was judged by registered members of the South African Council for the Landscape Architectural Profession (SACLAP).

Corobrik and CPUT now plan to make CPUT-Corobrik Construction Week an annual event. Construction Week began with a series of lectures on paving techniques, which was facilitated by

Corobrik representatives. Van Niekerk said architectural consultant Allistair Cloete began with a technical and specification lecture on face brick and clay pavers. Students were split into two groups with lectures taking place over two half days in the mornings and afternoons.

The students were then divided into four groups. Each group was required to come up with its own unique design that had to promote Corobrik and the use of pavers and bricks. "Construction Week is designed to encourage skills transfer between students of different year levels. Each group of students was given two weeks and exactly the same amount of construction materials – Constantia Travertine face brick, Meadow and Constantia pavers – to design and construct a 7 x 6m portion of the overall construction area," van Rooyen explains.

He says that Construction Week was inspired by Cape Town winning the 2014 bid as Design Capital. "The challenge was using Corobrik products in a new and exciting way."

Do you have any DIY industry news or views to share?

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Cobra pays tribute to South African heritage

Cobra, a 100% home-grown company and a proud part of South Africa's heritage, has introduced a range of products that pays homage to this legacy. The aptly named Heritage Collection is a stylish range of contemporary single lever mixers inspired by the beauty of the local landscape and the country's abundant fauna and flora.

The Heritage Collection comprises five new product ranges, each of which takes its name from a landmark characteristic of one of South Africa's listed UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The new ranges include Karoo (from the Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape site);

Protea (from the Cape Floral Region Protected Areas site); Baobab (from the Mapungubwe Cultural

Landscape site); Tugela (from the uKhahlamba

Drakensberg Park

site) and Nyala

(named after

the shy animal

that populates

the iSimangaliso

Wetland Park site).

"It is with the preservation of our legacy in mind that we have named our latest collection," explains Shelley Galliver, marketing manager of Cobra Watertech. With the ranges taking their inspiration from nature, there are subtle similarities between the mixers and their namesakes. Karoo is minimalist and clean-cut with a stark beauty, while Protea has soft, curving levers and spouts that mimic petals. Tugela has organic flowing lines and Nyala's triangular form reflects the characteristic head shape of this antelope. The solid Baobab is sturdy; its mixers boasting robust 'trunks'.

Each range features a single lever plain basin mixer, bath/shower undertile mixer, bath/shower undertile diverter mixer and sink mixer with tubular outlet. In addition to these mixers, the Karoo and Baobab ranges also include a raised basin mixer. They all boast Cobra's trademark 'silk turn' feature for smooth operation.

The Heritage Collection has not only been created to celebrate South Africa's heritage, but also to act as a driver for social change within the country's broader community. Designed around the sustainability ethos of the four Cs, namely commerce, conservation, community and culture, a percentage of the net profits generated from the sales of Heritage Collection products will be donated to the Wildlands Conservation Trust. Wildlands focuses on uplifting communities through the restoration of the ecosystems they depend on, creating and sustaining 'green jobs' for unemployed and impoverished community members.



Stihl SA's proud record

Stihl SA has been named the Supplier of the Year at the 2013 Outdoor Power Products Association of South Africa's (OPPASA) AGM. This is the third year in succession that Stihl has won this award and the sixth time overall.

Stihl SA managing director Hayden Hutton is proud of his company's achievement. "This is really fantastic," he says. "Dealers often tell me that Stihl is one of the easiest suppliers to deal with and, in essence, this is what this award is all about."

Hutton says that fundamental to Stihl's philosophy is selling its products through its countrywide dealer network and that the company tries hard to make it as gratifying an experience as possible for dealers to do Stihl business. "Winning the OPPASA award for the sixth time reflects not only Stihl's

ability to achieve this, but also shows our ability to do so consistently, which is the key to our success," Hutton says. "Andreas Stihl's vision was "making it easier to work with nature and in natural surroundings" and we breathe life into this vision when we make it easier for dealers to work with us."

He added that Stihl is also very pleased that a Stihl dealer, Livingstone's Garden Warehouse, won the Dealer of the Year trophy.

Livingstone's managing director David Dunkley says he too is very proud to have won this award for the second time (they won the inaugural award) against more than 80 tough competitors. "The standards in our industry are high and to come out number one is a very meaningful victory," Dunkley says.



▲ Stihl dealer David Dunkley, Livingstone's Garden Warehouse managing director, holding his Outdoor Power Products Association of South Africa (OPPASA) Dealer of the Year trophy, congratulates Stihl SA for being named the OPPASA Supplier of the Year for the sixth time

Parquet flooring adhesive

I need a product to glue 70m² of solid parquet flooring onto a concrete floor where the old carpet was removed. Do you have any suggestions or advice?
Allistair Scholtz

Ed replies: Two products that can be considered for this project are Sikaflex 11fc and Alcolin Polyurethane Sealant.

When gluing solid parquet flooring directly to a concrete floor, there are a few key factors that should be adhered to:

- Polyurethane has strong fumes, so allow adequate ventilation through the working area or wear a protective mask.
- For more information about Alcolin products contact the toll free helpline 0800-222-400 or contact Sika SA on 031-792-6500.**
- The concrete slab should be free of any dirt or debris, so ensure all traces of carpeting are removed and the surface is clean, otherwise you will compromise the adhesive's strength and success of the project.
 - Make sure that the concrete is completely dry before applying the adhesive. Also check the moisture content in the concrete if you suspect damp. You need a dry concrete surface for a successful installation.
 - Using a notch trowel, spread adhesive in the centre of the concrete surface that is to be tiled.
 - Press the parquet floor tile into the wet adhesive. The adhesive must not be allowed to become dry. Move the tile diagonally so it fully slides and penetrates into the adhesive. Verify that the tile is square with adjacent walls as the first tile will determine correct placing of the rest of the tiles.
 - Repeat the last two steps to continue the installation and make sure that you do not stand or kneel on the adhesive or the installed parquet tiles. Work on the bare concrete to prevent shifting or disturbance of the adhesive.
 - You can use a chalk line to properly square the tiles. Hold the chalk line at a 90° angle to the opposite wall and snap it down on the bare concrete floor before applying the adhesive. This will give you a visual marking for lining up the new tiles.

Extending a bedroom wall

I need information on how to install a cabinet in my bedroom. I do not want the cabinet to take up too much space as my bedroom is quite small. I thought of extending the outside wall outwards about a half a metre. This wall pitch is level with the wooden roof trusses; however it does not support the wooden trusses' weight. The wooden trusses' weight is supported by the walls next to them.

I only want to extend the section of the wall that will be used for the cabinet, not the entire wall. Will the wall collapse due to lack of support? Do I need to put a roof on it or can I use lintels and then plaster it? I also need this section to be waterproof. Please advise.

Izak Cameron, by email

Sharl Bennie, our building expert, advises: When making a hole in a wall, it is always better to install a lintel across the top of

the opening, especially if it is



a load bearing wall – which the outside wall of the house definitely is.

You can use a row of lintels and plaster them as a roof over your cabinet, but you must screed the top with a slight angle so that water does not pond on the top. Add a waterproofing admixer into the screed, like Bonding Liquid or PlasterKey, and if you don't want to cover the top with a bit of roofing, you can consider tiling over the top or waterproofing the top. Try and do something that will protrude over the edge like a windowsill does; this prevents the back wall getting marks from water run-off and looking dirty as well as preventing damp on the back wall. I hope this helps.

For more information contact Sharl Bennie on 082-554-1821



Winning query

This month's winning query comes from Izak Cameron who wins a Torkcraft 42 piece Bi-metal Hole Saw Set

Interior door frame

I want to remove an existing steel door frame and replace it with a better quality steel door frame. This is an interior door. How difficult is this? Any tips or tricks are most welcome.

Mahesh, by email

Sharl Bennie, our building expert, advises:

The easiest way to do this is to cut around the frame with an angle grinder. I am not sure if you are familiar with this tool, but be cautious at all times when using it as it is a very dangerous tool to use, especially when working around the top of the door. If there is a lintel at the top of the door, you may have to remove it in order to get the frame out and the new one in.

You must cut from both sides to make sure you cut through the strips that are used to anchor the frame into the wall. You may have to dig around the bottom of the frame to release it from the floor and sometimes there are strips that are screeded into the floor that need to be cut off.

Once the door is free, remove it from the wall, and hopefully the new frame will fit into the opening. Set the door in place, making sure it is square and level and that you have braced the frame in position so that it will not move.

Sometimes builders do not install lintels above a steel door frame, especially on internal walls. This is because they are not normally load bearing walls. If you have removed a lintel, then it is better to install a lintel again after fitting the new frame.

Remember that the foam expands and it will bow the door if you do not place two spacers to retain the size of the doorway

inside the frame. We normally use a piece of brading timber to make a spacer.

Steel frames usually have steel angles at the bottom to stabilise the door frame



and to maintain the gap between the two sides so that it is approximately 812mm for a standard door. This size of 812mm should be maintained from top to bottom as close as possible. I normally put two wood wedges at approximately a third height and at two-thirds height to prevent the door sides from bowing inwards when you use foam, or even if you are filling the sides with building mix. This just makes it easier to hang the door into a frame that is straight and square and it looks neater.

Spend a bit of time making sure the door is square and level and, if possible, even sight the sides to check that there is no twist in the frame. This can be a bit difficult if the door is fitted in a passageway because there is not sufficient space to stand back and sight the sides.

Inject the foam into the gap around the door as per the instructions. You do not have to fill the gap totally since the foam expands and will grow into the space overnight. If you wipe an oily cloth on the exposed edges of the door, the foam will not stick to places you do not want it to stick onto.

The next morning, cut away the excess foam using a hacksaw blade or an old wood saw and then finish off with plaster. Once all is dry, prime the finishing plaster, paint a final coat and then hang the new door.

You will have saved yourself a few thousand rand by doing the project yourself, but it is a lot of work and requires a bit of skill to get the frame straight, level and square. Good luck with the project.

For more information contact Sharl Bennie on 082-554-1821

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Build your dream home

If you are planning on building a new home, look beyond brick for time saving, more cost-effective and greener ways to build

Bricks have been the building material of choice for centuries. Today, with the introduction of new laws relating to better insulation for electricity saving and a move towards greener, more environmentally conscious choices, builders and architects are looking for innovative construction methods. Not only are many of the alternative building methods better for our planet, they're also substantially cheaper than brick and mortar construction, and buildings can be erected far quicker.

Traditional brick building

The history of traditional brick building is an ancient one. Along with wood, bricks are probably one of the oldest building materials, dating back 6 000 years. The very first bricks were made from thick mud and sun dried. The Egyptians made bricks using Nile mud and mixed them with straw and sand for extra strength. The Romans introduced the idea of firing bricks in a kiln. Brick making quickly spread through Europe and continued to develop. Both the Chinese and Aztec civilisations had their own brick making methods.

Although bricks are made from natural materials that are abundant on our planet, older brick yards still use coal fired or wood burning kilns to bake bricks, both of which have a negative impact on our environment. Modern brick making processes are more streamlined and use less energy and

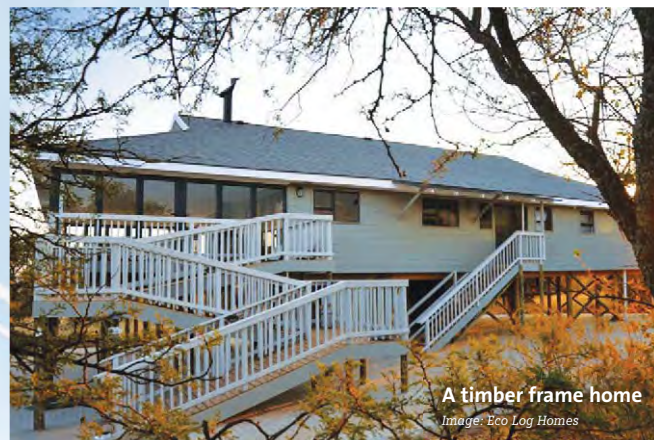


water, but many still feel that our building future lies in finding alternative building methods.

Alternative building solutions

While more sustainable methods of building are at the forefront of new building technology, lower cost and less construction time are two important reasons why people are looking for alternative building materials. While the idea of a cordwood, bamboo house or an earth ship (a home built from used car tyres) may not appeal to you, homes built using a light steel frame structure or an interlocking block system look outwardly the same as those built with brick and mortar. Let's take a look at some of the alternative building methods now available in South Africa.





Timber frame homes

Timber homes are an attractive option for home buyers. While not always cheaper than conventional building, wood is a natural insulator and can help reduce high electricity costs. The timber frame is constructed after the suspended floor is complete. This is followed by the installation of the roof trusses. The roofing material and waterproofing is installed before external wall cladding and waterproofing is completed. After electrical and plumbing first fixes are complete, the house is ready for internal cavity batt insulation and internal cladding.

Sandbag building

The Eco-Beam Sandbag Building System was developed as a solution to low-cost housing. There are three main elements to the sandbag building process. First a framework of timber and metal beams is erected, then geo-fabric sandbags are filled with sand and stacked between the beams. Beams are clad with wire mesh and either plaster, timber or plasterboard. Once complete, the home is waterproof, fire resistant and sound proof. Homes are cool in summer and warm in winter. Sandbag building provides a cost-effective and environmentally-friendly building solution. Building materials are also lighter and therefore cheaper to transport to the site. Construction uses minimal amounts of water and cement and no electricity is needed at the building site.

In sandbag building, geo-fabric bags are filled with sand and stacked between the steel beams

Image: Ecosteps





Homeowners have many different choice options for interior and exterior cladding on a timber frame home



Doors and windows will be installed before final finishes such as ceiling installation, skirtings and cornices. Kitchen and bathroom fixtures and final plumbing and electrical fixes are last to be completed. The homeowner has different options for internal and external cladding. Timber construction has a low impact on the surrounding environment and construction time is reduced. Homeowners considering this type of construction should look for companies that are environmentally conscious and use timber products from sustainable forests.

Interlocking blocks

Interlocking blocks replace conventional bricks. They can be made using a concrete mix poured into plastic moulds and left to dry, or manufactured on site using a soil and cement mix passed through a block-making machine. The blocks are usually dry stacked and, depending on the product used, require little or no mortar during construction. Blocks can be stacked using semi- or unskilled labour and this helps to reduce building costs. Houses built using this method are durable and resistant to

boring insects and fire. Depending on the interlocking block system used, site waste, energy and water usage are reduced. Homes can be built in far less time than brick and mortar structures.

Light steel frame construction

Internationally, light steel frame (LSF) construction is not a new concept, but it has only recently taken off in South Africa, especially for residential homes. Wall frames and roof trusses are manufactured from cold-form light gauge galvanised steel and erected on a concrete foundation or a concrete slab. Cavities are filled with insulating cavity batting. Conduits for plumbing and electrical are installed inside the wall cavity. Various interior and exterior cladding systems may be used and fixed to the frame, including a single-skin brick wall or fibre cement board.

One of the main advantages of light steel frame construction is the reduced construction time. LSF buildings are energy efficient and resistant to termites and other boring insects. Galvanised steel also resists rust and corrosion. Walls are square,

This home was constructed using blocks produced from plastic Stumbeibloc moulds developed by André Esterhuizen and Riedewaan Jacobs

Image: Stumbeibloc



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This light steel frame building was erected onto an existing masonry structure with no reinforcing required to superstructure brickwork or foundations

Image: Everite Building Projects

are 12mm oriented strand board (OSB) or magnesium-oxide sheets. Panels can be used for roofs, floors and exterior and interior walls.

A SIPS building is erected on a foundation designed and certified by a structural engineer. After the foundations are complete, the kit will be developed and a professional team will erect your home. The kit includes SIPS wall panels, a complete roof structure, ceiling, insulation, pre-glazed aluminium windows, doors and first fix electrical conduits that are cast into the panels. Panels are heavily insulated



The finished installation clad with Nutec High Density fibre-cement board

Image: Everite Building Projects



▲ This home was constructed using Structural Insulated Panels – they consist of an insulating foam core sandwiched between two facings

Image: All About Building

Structural Insulated Panels (SIPS) provide a modern, cost-effective building solution for residential home construction

so finishings within the home (such as cupboard installation and tiling) are likely to be faster and more cost-effective. Site waste is also greatly reduced.

SIPS kit homes

Structural Insulated Panels (SIPS) provide a modern, cost-effective building solution for residential homes. SIPS have been used successfully for over 40 years. Panels consist of an insulating foam core sandwiched between two facings. The core may be expanded or extruded polystyrene or polyurethane foam (PUR), while facings

and this eliminates the need for additional insulation. Additional electrical fitting and wiring must be completed by an electrician and plumbing completed by a registered plumber. SIPS building systems are durable, strong and cost-effective as construction time is reduced, saving the homeowner money on labour costs. Panels are also treated to provide protection against termites and SIPS panels are protected against fire by the use of thermal barriers like plasterboard. SIPS buildings are energy efficient and environmentally friendly. ✖

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Using drywall for alterations within your home is far less messy, more cost effective and saves time

Using drywall

Drywall can be used to construct walls or install ceilings in your home. Drywall has a foam gypsum core that is sandwiched between paper liners. Gypsum is a coloured, grey or white sulphate mineral that is found close to the earth's surface. It is mined underground or in quarries throughout the world. Drywall is easy to work with. Even those with average DIY skills should be able to hang drywall. You need to be able to measure accurately and know how to use an electrical drill and spirit level. Once the steel framing is in place and the drywall installed, joints should be sealed with tape and drywall filler. Using drywall for alterations within your home is far less messy, more cost effective and saves time. You don't need municipal approved plans to make an alteration using drywall in the interior of your home.

Contact information

- * All About Building (SIPS), www.allaboutbuilding.co.za
- * Ecosteps (Eco-Beam Sandbag System), www.ecosteps.co.za
- * Eco Log Homes (timber frame), www.ecologhomes.co.za
- * Everite Building Projects (Nutec), www.everite.co.za
- * Hydraform (interlocking block making machines), www.hydraform.com
- * Saint-Gobain Gyproc (Rhinoboard), www.gyproc.co.za
- * Stumbelbloc (plastic moulds for interlocking blocks), www.stumbelbloc.com



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Summer braai build-up

The silly season is here and, like most South Africans, we like to relax and entertain around a braai, so we set out to build a proper clay brick braai

By Johann Stadler and
Roelof Strydom

Although we have no previous building experience, with a little research and mentorship from experienced builders, we knew the best way to complete a successful project was to plan it properly before we got going. The first step is to make sure you know exactly what you want to achieve before starting, then plan, gather the materials and necessary tools and, finally, build some stamina as this is a physically exhausting project to tackle.

Planning

We started by finding some pictures of braais. We found a few we really liked, but we needed to plan for something that was within our experience and fits in

with our outdoor area as well as take into consideration the practical aspect of how we plan to use it.

As with previous projects, we designed our braai using Sketchup, a Google design programme. It works perfectly well; the only problem is you can't work on exact measurements, but rather by layers of bricks. This is because each brick differs marginally in size and although an average joint between two bricks should be 10mm, this will also differ.

Materials

Corobrik was kind enough to sponsor the bricks. They supplied us with the same bricks we used for our pizza oven in the October issue – Montana Travertine, which

are attractive and modern. But, being the rookie builders that we are, we completely overestimated our quantities. We thought we would use 600-800 bricks, but it ended up being 250-300 bricks.

We made the same mistake with the mortar; the only difference was that we underestimated. We initially only got four 40kg bags of building mix, which we quickly supplemented with another eight, and had to add an extra two in the end. We used 14 bags in total. Apart from the building mix, we bought a bag of PPC all-purpose cement. As we don't build faster than the mortar cures, we sometimes had to add a little extra water to the mix and a handful of cement to maintain the bonding quality.

Project guide



Difficulty: Advanced



Estimated cost: ±R4 500



Estimated time: Two full days



Tools

- Wheelbarrow
- Spade
- Trowel
- Level
- Tape measure
- Rubber mallet



Materials

- 250-300 clay bricks
- 14 x 40kg bags of building mix
- One metal braai
- Seven 110 x 900mm lintels



1

Gather all the tools and materials for the job



2

Soak a few bricks in water



3

Mix the mortar thoroughly before adding water

Project photos by Frank Meyer



4

Mix in water until you get a good adhesion mix



5

Proper buttering is necessary for a good bond between bricks

We also bought eight 900mm lintels, which were used for structural support and to bridge the gap between the two upright walls.

When it comes to choosing a braai, you don't have to go with a steel braai insert, however we used one sponsored by Jetmaster. The braai area is 355mm deep and 700mm wide. This is more than enough for the average family. These units were specially designed for smaller gatherings and their versatility makes them a pleasure to use. They also come standard with the outer box, light fitting, charcoal tray, nickel grill, potjie hook and door. The easy-to-use installation and operating instructions came in handy, too.

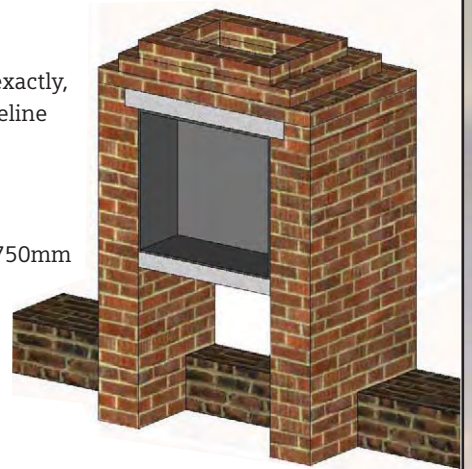
Tools

You will only need basic building equipment for this project. The braai was designed in such a way that we needed to cut very few bricks in half. We were also able to use the lintel in the size it came, and didn't need to cut it. The most important part of this project is getting the sizes perfect and level. For this we used a 600mm and 1 200mm level and a measuring tape. A rubber mallet helped to tap bricks level and straight. A wheelbarrow

Our brick braai plan

It is not necessary to follow our braai plan exactly, but this article should serve as a good guideline for building any braai using bricks.

- Distance between the two outside walls: 1 200mm
- Distance between the two inside walls: 750mm
- Front to back: 820mm
- From ground to first lintel: 775mm (9 bricks)
- From first lintel to second lintel: 675mm (8 bricks)
- Braai area depth: 595mm (double wall backing: 225mm)
- From top lintel to top of the chimney: 245mm (3 bricks)
- Overall height: 1 865mm



6

Keep the distance between the two walls consistent



7

Try to maintain a 10mm joint between bricks



8

Use a rubber mallet to knock bricks level and square



9

Constantly check your levels



10

Make sure the levels of the lintels are also perfect

was used to haul the materials closer and we mixed the mortar in it with a shovel. You also need a trowel, but hands are a useful tool for those less familiar with using a trowel.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Using tape or chalk, mark the exact spot where you want to build your braai. Then mix a batch of mortar. Gradually add water and mix to an even paste consistency. Place a few bricks in a bucket of water.

Wet bricks prevent water from being absorbed too quickly, leaving you with dry mortar. This is especially helpful if you are a slow builder like us.

Step 2: Place a generous amount of mortar on the foundation with your trowel and place your first brick in place. Tap it lightly with a rubber mallet to get it straight and square – check with a level.



11
The braai is placed on top of the lintels



12
Three lintels are necessary for this braai, plus another one on which to build the back wall



13
Also keep the vertical levels perfect



14
This is the back of it so far

Build the two walls simultaneously so they mirror each other. This way you can check each layer of bricks with a level between the two points. The first layer is extremely important as it forms a steady foundation to build on, so make extra sure it is perfect.

Step 3: Lay your bricks one by one, starting with two next to each other at the front. On the next row, lay a row of single bricks lengthways over the two bottom bricks. This creates the staggered effect you see in bricklaying. It is important to butter (the process of putting mortar on a brick) each brick carefully to create a strong bond between bricks. As you progress upwards, level each row of bricks from front to back, from bottom to top and the two walls together. Also make sure the inside measurement stays 750mm apart and the outside measurement stays 1 200mm.

Step 4: Once you have completed the ninth row, stop the brickwork. Lay an even course of mortar on the inside row of bricks and lay three 110 x 900mm lintels from the front to back. This will be the platform for the metal braai. Place one lintel right at the back;



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15
You do not have to fill the holes in the bricks



16
A perfect level at the top of the structure



17
Position the top lintels and start your chimney



18
Using a bit of guesswork, we got the front to look like this



19
Ready to step the sides with a generous amount of mortar



20
A stick held the space for the light fitting wire



21
The last brick laid and the project just about complete

this will serve as the bridge on which you will build the back wall.

Step 5: Position the metal braai, making sure it is level, and start building the braai into your brickwork. The first outer layer of bricks will hide the unsightly lintels sticking out on the side. Initially we started off with a single wall, but soon realised it wouldn't work, so we continued with a double wall until it was in line with the top of the braai (eight bricks). We constantly checked that it stayed level and square and maintained the 750mm and 1200mm distances.

Step 6: Actually, in the end, the brickwork was about 30mm higher than the top of the braai, so we filled in this gap with mortar to level it with the bricks and left it to dry properly overnight. Before we

shut down for the night, we cleaned the wheelbarrow, the building tools and any excess mortar from the brickwork.

Step 7: There was space behind the braai for three lintels to be placed on a bed of mortar. We decided to fill the entire gap as this would make up the foundation on which to build the chimney.

Step 8: We used a single row of bricks to cover around the edges of the lintels, but faced them outwards to create a decorative border (see the picture in photo 11).

Step 9: The next challenge was to build the chimney front. We decided on three rows of bricks, each stepping evenly upwards. The first row had four bricks, the second had three and the last one had two.

Step 10: The chimney was exactly one brick length wide, so we built one brick wide on each side and made a mirror image of the front just behind the chimney.

Step 11: We then pushed a stick into the light fitting hole and moved it around so it was sticking out exactly between two bricks. This was to leave space for the electrical cable and the stick was pulled out later.

Step 12: And finally, to round off our short chimney, we stepped the side with bricks on a generous amount of mortar to get



22
Clean the brickwork while the mortar is still wet



23
The end result

the bricks exactly level. A good clean-up of the brickwork and surroundings then completed our project. ✖

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From ordinary to extraordinary



If you are planning to give your home's interior or exterior walls a facelift, and tiles and paint are not quite what you had in mind, why not consider cladding

By Roelof Strydom

Cladding a wall with natural stone or synthetic materials instantly transforms the wall by creating an attractive focal point and adding some texture. Cladding adds aesthetic appeal, but has other benefits as well – it also improves the wall's thermal and sound insulating properties. Take a look at the following cladding options for your home.

Natural stone cladding

Travertine

Travertine comes in a great variety of colours and is prized for its many different styles and finishes. Johlene Lourenco, project manager at Clad it Cape Town, explains that the natural texture and subtle tan and ivory colours of travertine can be used to create a sophisticated design element for a wall. "The stone is cut and supplied in modular dimensions, allowing you to create your own particular artistic vision with easy and predictable installation," she says. Travertine is ideal for highlighting feature walls and can also be used around

fireplaces to create an attractive focal point. It is best suited to interior use, but can be used externally provided that it is sealed.

Marble

This natural stone is known for its magnificent lustre and durability. White Pearl marble is perfect as an attractive splashback or even a feature wall thanks to its sparkling pearly white colour and subtle streaks of grey. Johlene explains that marble is best suited for interior use.

Sandstone

"Sandstone is a layered stone that combines consolidated quartz and grains of sand bound together over thousands of years," says Johlene. She notes that the beauty of sandstone lies in its rich texture and great variety of earthy colours. African Dune sandstone is a neutral and textured riven strip that's ideal for splashbacks, feature walls as well as around braais and fireplaces. It also has variations of ivory and beige.

ideal for highlighting fireplaces. Limestone is best suited for interior use or enclosed outside areas. It is also sold in free lengths, so a mixed arrangement of stones can be created.

Quartzite

This is one of the hardest natural stones available. It is not only impressively durable, but also boasts a velvety texture and a wide variety of colours ranging from dark grey to warm copper, silver and white. The mineral elements locked within the stone give quartzite its characteristic sheen while flecks of quartz add sparkle. Quartzite adds depth and shine to any interior or exterior area.

Lavastone

Lavastone can be used to create contrast and interest in interior and exterior spaces due to its volcanic chalky texture and charcoal colour. Johlene explains that it can be used for splashbacks, around fireplaces, on water features and in hard landscaping projects.

Slate

This is a bold and chunky cladding product. As a sedimentary stone, slate is composed of wafer thin layers compacted to a durable hardness. It is strong, hardwearing and luxuriously tactile. Slate offers a robust alternative for walls and is available in a wide variety of shades, ranging from



Pic courtesy of Rockwood Gauteng

Limestone

This stone has a luxurious texture and a consistent colour that's suited to all contemporary living spaces, explains Johlene. For example, French Vanilla limestone is a pale hardwearing stone characterised by tan and honey brown colours. It has a smooth surface that is



Natural stone quartzite cladding

Pic courtesy of Natural Stone Warehouse

Due to the cladding stones' weight, the rougher the wall, the better the cladding will adhere to the surface

sombre hues to bright variegated colours. "Slate can be used with equal appeal both indoors and outside," says Johlene.

Installation

Planning on cladding a wall or two? Before you go ahead and start cladding, there are a few things to consider, like the condition of the wall. If the wall you want to clad is smooth, you need to roughen the surface. You can do this by using a chipping hammer or a small angle grinder to chip or grind random patches into the wall. This will help the cladding stick to the wall. Due to the cladding stones' weight, the rougher the surface, the better the cladding will adhere to the surface. Remember, after chipping the wall you need to remove all the dust and loose material.

If the wall you want to clad is a face brick wall or if the raw brickwork is exposed, there is no need for any preparation. The raw bricks are rough enough and you can clad straight onto them.



Sealing

Johlene explains that all natural stone types are porous and in their natural state they are susceptible to stains and dirt, therefore they require at least two coats of Alcolin NC120 silicone sealant. This sealer is available in a 5L tin from most hardware stores and covers approximately 20m².

The stone will absorb the sealer and form a barrier against natural elements and dirt. The sealer has a matt finish and will not change the colour or texture of the stone. Before the sealer can be applied, the cladding must be completely dry and clean. Johlene notes that when the sealer is applied on interior surfaces, a respirator should be worn by the person doing the application to prevent them from inhaling the fumes. Also remember to open up lots of windows so that the area is well ventilated.

The first coat of sealer should dry in about 30 minutes whereafter the second coat can be applied. "After two coats of sealer have been applied, the stone will be sufficiently sealed and in future the cladding can be hosed down, if required," says Johlene.

Benefits of natural stone cladding

- Instantly adds value to a property.
- No maintenance is required.
- Hides unsightly surface cracks.
- Covers areas affected by damp where paint often peels.
- Modernises exterior face brick walls.
- Can be used to cover Vibracrete walls.
- Highlights specific areas of the home, for example fireplaces, braais and water features.
- Offers timeless elegance and long-term durability as it is a natural product.
- Each batch has unique stone characteristics.

Synthetic wall cladding

If you want to clad your home's walls, but don't have the budget to do so with natural stone, there is a cheaper alternative known as Rockwood cladding. According to Janine Wiese from Rockwood Gauteng, "Rockwood cladding provides DIYers with



a decorative wall covering that's quick and easy to install." Unlike other wall coverings, such as tiles and natural stone cladding, which require each individual piece to be cemented onto the wall, Rockwood cladding comes as panels that slot together like a jigsaw puzzle.

"Each panel is constructed from industrial strength polyurethane and thanks to the all weather coating, which protects the panels from water and UV damage, they can also be used for exterior applications," says Janine. This lightweight and hardwearing cladding option is an exact replica of brick, slate, wood or rock finishes. Apart from adding an additional layer on top of your home's existing walls, thus enhancing the aesthetics, it also acts as a thermal insulator and an acoustic board. Additional benefits of Rockwood

are that it is fire retardant, doesn't melt or serve as a combustion base. It's guaranteed to not perish as a result of weather conditions, acids or salt water.

This is a DIY friendly cladding option, so no expert is required to do the installation.

Benefits of Rockwood cladding

- Easy and economical to install – no mess, no fuss.
- Extremely lightweight.
- Requires no expensive artisan or builder to install.
- No stone-by-stone cementing.
- Looks like the real thing.
- It acts as insulation.

If you're a one-man team, you'll be glad to hear that these panels are easy to handle and work with due to their light weight (each panel weighs 4-7kg). The panels can easily be cut with a small angle grinder or even a jigsaw. Each panel is designed to fit together like a puzzle, making for effortless installation.

Rockwood cladding is available in six brick cladding varieties, eight slate designs and colours, two wooden finishes and eight unique stone panels.

Installation

Step 1: Measure the surface to be covered and calculate the number of panels needed.

Step 2: When starting to work, cut one side of the panel to get a completely straight edge.

Step 3: Fit the panel to the wall and drill through the panel directly into the wall using a 6mm drill bit. Put the screw into the wall plug and place both into the hole in the panel. Push and screw them in until the panel is securely fixed. Use as many screws per panel as needed.

Step 4: Repeat the installation procedure with the other panels, which are designed to fit perfectly into each other.

Step 5: Once the entire wall is covered with the panels, fill the joints and screw holes with an acrylic sealer like Alcolin Acrylic Sealant or Den Braven Acryl-W. The reason for using acrylic sealant is because it is flexible and paintable.

Step 6: When all the joints are filled, remove any irregularities with a fine brush. Once the sealant is completely dry, which will take about 24 hours, paint the joints and screw holes with the special paint to give it a perfect finish.

Janine explains that Rockwood panels create such an authentic appearance that there is no detectable difference between natural stone cladding and Rockwood cladding. ✖

Sources:

Clad it Cape Town, 021-558-9461,
www.claditct.co.za

Rockwood Gauteng, 083-441-9474,
www.rockwoodgauteng.co.za



Pic courtesy of Rockwood Gauteng



Instant green carpet

Instant lawn is a quick and ideal way to create an unbroken carpet of green in your garden. Richard Erasmus of Lawnpro explains its benefits

When it comes to planting a new lawn in your garden, there are three choices, depending on available budget: instant lawn, planting seedlings or sowing seed. Instant lawn is the ideal solution for planting in areas where a new lawn needs to be established quickly, such as in new gardens where building operations have destroyed certain areas of lawn, in places where flower beds have been made smaller, or even in areas where your lawn has died due to incorrect maintenance practises or diseases.

Benefits

The benefits of planting instant lawn normally outweigh the costs. With instant lawn, the coverage is immediate if executed correctly, whereas seedlings can take up to six weeks and seed between eight to 12

weeks to cover an area satisfactorily. This instant coverage is a major advantage, especially if you have pets and are not prepared to wait for seed to germinate and cover your barren piece of earth.

Types of lawn

Almost all lawn types that are used on residential lawns can be purchased as instant lawn. This includes cynodon, LM (Berea), St Augustines (buffalo), kikuyu and even cool season grasses. The rolls or blocks that you purchase may vary in size, but as a norm the lawn is sold per square metre.

Kikuyu and cynodon lawn species are generally planted in sunny areas, although there are certain cynodon subspecies that will grow well in semi-shaded areas. LM and St Augustines grass can be planted in both sunny and semi-shaded areas although



St Augustine grass is usually planted in subtropical climates where there is little to no frost or extreme cold weather. Cool season lawns are planted in semi-shaded areas as well as areas with extremely dense shade. Warm season grasses, like kikuyu, LM, St Augustines and cynodon, should ideally be planted during spring and summer. Cool season lawns are normally planted during autumn and early spring.

If you already have kikuyu lawn growing in areas that receive good sunlight and you want to plant a lawn that will grow well in semi-shaded areas nearby, rather plant a lawn like LM or St Augustines (if you are near the coast). The shape, size and colour of the leaves of these two grass types are similar to that of kikuyu and therefore they will blend better with your existing grass than, for example, cool season lawn.

It is always advisable to purchase instant lawn from a reputable supplier. If you buy a few square metres from a vendor next to the road, the most important thing about any lawn is that it must be in a similar condition as it would be if it were already growing in your garden. The leaves must not be dried out and the soil must be damp.

In some cases, you will find that instant lawn is planted in a clay-based soil. This is to ensure that the lawn binds together and that it can be laid in a brick-like pattern. Lawns that are planted in a sandy soil are extremely difficult to handle and might disintegrate when you plant them. Weeds are not much of a concern at this stage as you can always control them once the lawn has settled. Just make sure to use the correct herbicide before spraying against weeds.

How to plant instant lawn

Step 1: Remove all existing lawn and weeds from the area. Where there is a lot of existing grass or weeds, you might need to spray a non-selective herbicide in order to kill the existing plants. This will prevent weeds and unwanted grasses from growing through your newly planted lawn.

Step 2: Turn the soil using a pitch fork and make sure to break all the clumps of soil so you have a fine planting bed. If necessary, you may need to add some organic material to the planting bed. Clay soils may require an application of superphosphate at a rate of 50g per square metre and gypsum at a rate of 500g per square metre.



1



2



3

1: Remove the existing plant material from the area to be planted

2: Prepare the planting bed by breaking up any clumps and levelling the soil

3: Apply superphosphate at a rate of 50g per square metre and gypsum at a rate of 500g per square metre to clay soil before planting



4: Lay the new lawn in a brick like pattern

5: Roll the planted lawn using a flat roller

Step 3: Make sure the area that you want to plant is level or that it follows the contours that you want your lawn to grow in.

Step 4: Lay the instant lawn in a brick-like pattern. Make sure that the sods fit snugly against each other.

Step 5: You may need to use a top dressing just to fill in the gaps between the sods to ensure that you have an even medium for the lawn to grow in and to prevent unevenness in the lawn. Do not apply top dressing over the entire lawn. You will need as much of the leaf area as possible to be exposed to sunlight in order for the process of photosynthesis to take place.

Step 6: The final step is to roll the planted lawn using a flat roller. Note: Cool season grasses should not be rolled as this will damage the leaves of this fine lawn and can lead to the loss of grass.

Caring for your lawn

- Keep your newly planted instant lawn damp but not soaking wet for the first two weeks after laying.
- Depending on the type of soil you have, you may need to water on a daily basis. Sandy soils may require water more often than clay soils. Make sure you do not overwater the lawn. There should be no visible puddles of water on the lawn.
- Do not mow your lawn for the first two weeks.



- Although your newly planted lawn may still look a bit uneven, avoid applying top dressing over the lawn for at least the first two months.

Troubleshooting

There are a few factors that may result in instant lawn turning brown. The most common is that the grass was harvested incorrectly or too soon. Each field has its own unique growth cycle and this has to

Keep your newly planted instant lawn damp but not soaking wet for the first two weeks

be considered. The best way to avoid this happening is to purchase your lawn from a reliable source.

Secondly, the lawn must get just the right amount of water. Your instant lawn should never have a coarse feel to it. If the lawn is hard and feels crunchy when you walk on it, this is a good indication that you need to water it more often.

If the lawn turns yellow or brown, but you are sure that you gave it enough water and the leaves are not crunchy, it might have a common lawn disease. The easiest way to identify a disease is to look for brown spots on the leaves. If you find spots on the leaves, do not apply any more fertiliser to the lawn. The application of nitrogen might encourage the disease to spread and may result in you losing your entire new lawn. It is recommended that you contact a lawn specialist for assistance. ✂

Source:

For more information, contact Lawnpro on 0800-20-38-38 or visit www.lawnpro.co.za

Safe paint disposal

When it comes to paint disposal, it is critical that it is done in a way that won't cause pollution to drinking water or soil. Paint can become an environmental hazard if incorrectly disposed of

In South Africa, paint is often mixed with general waste stream (rubbish bins) or chemicals from paint equipment and gets washed into storm water drains and ends up finding its way into natural waterways. It is thus recommended that anyone working with paint develops a cleaning system and keeps the environment in mind when needing to dispose of leftover paint.

Solvent-based paint has an unopened shelf life of more or less 15 years. However, it is best to use paint within a year after purchase. If you can stir the paint, it is probably still good to use. If the paint has been standing for a long time, test it first to see if it is still usable. Stir the paint and brush some onto a newspaper. If there are lumps, the paint can no longer be used and should be disposed of properly.



Cleaning system

Developing a cleaning system and being mindful of the environment when disposing of paint can offset some of the damage that has already been done. A good cleaning system is based on using two containers in which brushes, rollers and other equipment are first washed and then rinsed.



Hint

Alternative uses for leftover paint

There are plenty of ways to reuse leftover paint. You can either store it for future use or donate it to a school or charity.

Waterbased paint

Once you have finished with a painting project, wipe or squeeze off excess paint from your brushes or rollers onto an absorbent material such as old rags, newspapers or cardboard.

Allow the absorbent material to dry and dispose of it with normal waste.

Wash paint equipment in a disposable container, such as a 20-litre or similar



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Wash paint equipment in a disposable container rather than under a running tap to save water

container, rather than under a running tap to save water. Cover the container with a lid and let it stand overnight. Put the washed equipment in a second container filled with water for a second rinse.

By the next morning, the paint solids will have settled at the bottom of the first container and the clear water can be used to water the garden where it can be absorbed into the ground.

Solvent-based paint

When using solvent-based paint, it is recommended that you also use the second container system as explained for water-based paints. However, instead of using water, you will use mineral turpentine.

Once you have cleaned and rinsed the paint

Tips for safely storing paint

- Always mark each paint can by writing down the colour, name and code if the label is not clear anymore. Also write down the room or surface it was used for.
- Dab a bit of paint onto each can to show the colour inside for easy identification.
- Keep it out of direct sunlight or other heat sources that will speed up the paint's deterioration.
- Store your paint in a cool and dry place, off the ground or concrete floors to keep metal cans from rusting.
- Use a rubber mallet or place a block of wood on top of the lid and hammer the wood block to close the lid firmly.
- To create an even tighter air seal, cut a plastic bag into a circle larger than the opening of the paint container and use it to cover the opening under the lid.
- To save space, store small amounts of leftover paint in jars or smaller containers. Paint lasts longer in full containers where it is in contact with less air.
- Wipe all paint residue from the groove or rim of the container before closing it. This will make it easier to open the lid when you need it again. It will also prevent air from going in as the lid will fit more tightly.

equipment, allow the first container to stand for at least 24 hours. Because the paint is solvent-based, it will take longer for the paint solids to settle and to give a clear solvent base.

Do not pour the clear solvent (turpentine) onto the ground. Use the clear solvent to top up the second container or decant it and keep it for future use.

Avoid areas near rivers and lakes

To safely dispose of the residue of the paint solids, scrape it out the bottom of the container onto absorbent material. Allow it to dry and then place it in a plastic bag and dispose of it with normal waste.

Alternatively, you could take it to the nearest council landfill. ✖

Source: Information supplied by www.plascondiy.co.za



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Make it sparkle

Is your swimming pool's water losing its sparkle? Consider replacing your swimming pool's filter sand with a 21st century cationic filter medium



Clinobrite from Pratley is a specific type of zeolite mineral that is a direct substitute for filter sand and reduces your swimming pool chlorination costs. It does this by removing unwanted ammonia from the pool water, thereby reducing the swimming pool's chlorine consumption. Unlike grains of sand, which have a smooth surface, Clinobrite grains are rough, enabling it to attract and trap fine dirt particles and algae onto its surface and not just between the grains like ordinary sand. A Clinobrite pool filter can remove 40-50% more physical dirt than a sand filter, leaving your pool clear and sparkling.

Dudley Pohl from Clinobrite gives a step-by-step demonstration on how to change your swimming pool's filter sand.

The average sized pool filter tank will use two 25kg bags of Clinobrite, but just to be sure speak to your filter tank supplier regarding the size of your pool's filter and the number of bags that should be used.



1 Remove the filter lid



2 Remove the old filter sand



3 Fill the tank halfway with tap water

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Loosen all the screws that secure the lid to the tank to enable its removal.

Step 2: Remove the old sand from the filter. There is no easy or quick way to do this and all you can do is to use your hand and remove the sand a handful at a time. You won't be able to remove every last grain of sand, but try and remove about 95% of the old sand.

Step 3: Fill the filter tank halfway with tap water.

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**CLINOBRITE IS A DIRECT SUBSTITUTE
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A Clinobrite pool filter can remove 40-50% more physical dirt than a sand filter



4 Add the first bag of Clinobrite



5 Set the pump valve to 'backwash' for five minutes



6 After the five-minute backwash cycle, set the pump valve to 'rinse' for two minutes



7 Add the second bag of Clinobrite



8 Do a backwash water clarity check

Step 4: Slowly add one bag of Clinobrite to the tank and then close the lid and secure it with all the screws.

Step 5: Set the pump valve to 'backwash' for five minutes, and then set it to 'rinse' for a further two minutes. This will remove any fines generated during transport.

Step 6: Remove the tank's lid for a second time and add the second bag of Clinobrite.

Step 7: Replace the tank's lid for the final time and repeat step 5.

Before you switch the pump valve to the 'filter' cycle, do a backwash water clarity check. When you're happy that the water is no longer cloudy, you can go ahead and switch the pump valve to the filter cycle.

Regenerating Clinobrite

Unsaturated Clinobrite never stops working. It absorbs ammonia from pool water on a 24-hour basis. Consequently, over time, the Clinobrite will become saturated with ammonia and needs to be regenerated. It is recommended that you regenerate

every six months to a year in order keep Clinobrite's ammonia removal capability optimal. The time between regenerations can vary depending on bathing loads. You may have to regenerate more often with higher bathing loads or during frequent thunderstorm activity. Use a good quality ammonia test kit to continuously monitor your pool's ammonia levels. Clinobrite will still maintain superior mechanical filtration to ordinary sand even if you choose to never regenerate. The regeneration of Clinobrite is an easy process:

Step 1: Switch off the pool filter pump.

Step 2: Unscrew the lid from the filter tank.

Step 3: Drain the water completely from the filter tank.

Step 4: Add a solution of brine (10% salt solution or 1kg rock salt per 10 litres water) over the Clinobrite filter medium so that the Clinobrite is fully submerged in the salt solution.

Step 5: Leave the Clinobrite to soak in the salt solution overnight.



9 Secure the lid on the tank again and set the pump valve to the 'filter' cycle

Step 6: In the morning, screw on the filter tank lid and turn the pump valve to the 'backwash' cycle and backwash for five minutes.

Step 7: Select the 'rinse' cycle for a further two minutes.

Step 8: Turn the pump valve back to 'filter' cycle. The Clinobrite is now fresh and ready for more ammonia removal. ✂

BRIGHT IDEAS

Readers share their time saving, space saving or innovative ideas

Guide those screws

I spent the long weekend with a good friend of mine and picked up the following tip when driving screws with an electric drill. He uses a clothes peg to loosely guide and hold the screws he is driving. This prevents the usual 'grass burns' on one's fingers. I thought it was neat.

Koos Rautenbach, Dalbridge



Paint with pantyhose

WINNING LETTER

I recently played around with an idea; instead of applying varnish to wood with a paintbrush, I used pantyhose.

I was fed up with the streaks and lines that get left behind when using a paintbrush. I rolled up the pantyhose and folded it inside to form a soft cloth which I then dipped into the varnish and applied it to the wood.

This allowed me to apply small amounts of varnish at a time and left no streaks, lines or blotches.

Once the first coat of varnish dried, I sanded it lightly with some fine steel wool and then applied the second coat. After applying a third and fourth coat (again sanding the surface lightly in-between coats) and that dried, the surface looked like it had a thin piece of glass on top of it.

Jan-Hendrik, via email



Congratulations to Jan-Hendrik who wins a Makita MT080E Li-ion 14.4V Cordless Hammer Drill

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Safe and secure

Metal security gates are an economical choice for homeowners who are looking for increased security protection for their dwellings

Security is a priority for most homeowners. If you're looking for a way to beef up the security of your home, a security gate might be the answer. They come in a variety of decorative styles and colours, so finding one that will fit your décor or architecture should not be a problem. If the opening where your security door needs to be installed is not a standard size, you can have a security gate custom-made off site then brought to your house for installation.

Installing a gate is not difficult, but it certainly helps to understand the details in order to select and install your gate without any problems. Be sure that you have the right tools to properly install your security gate and also ensure that you get a helper; this is not a one-person job. The door will be heavy and difficult to handle alone. Also make sure to always wear protective eyewear when working with power tools.

The hardest part of installing a security gate is to position it correctly in the opening before any hardware is attached. The easiest way to do this is to prop up the gate on some scrap boards or bricks until it roughly fits the opening. Some final adjustments can be made by inserting some shims between the boards and the bottom and sides of the gate.



1 Our custom designed security gate was delivered to site in its final state



2 Measuring and marking is of vital importance – get a helper to hold the gate in place and examine the placement

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Our custom designed security gate was delivered to site in its final state, painted in our colour of choice. We didn't want to use anything less than 38mm square tubing for the framework as a 25mm square tube can be bent upwards from the bottom corner (the same side as the locking device). The square tubing on the framework was cut at 45° at the corners and then welded together – a 115mm grinder was used to smooth the welds to give a decent finish. The inserts, both vertical and horizontal, were made from 12mm solid square bar.

Step 2: Measuring and marking is of vital importance – get a helper to hold the gate in place and examine the placement, making sure that the gate fits properly and you are happy with the position before proceeding.

Step 3: Mark the top plate where the hinges of the security gate will be welded. Then, with a helper, ensure you drill straight and level in the right spot. Make sure it is all level before proceeding any further.



3 Mark the top plate onto which the hinges will be welded



4 Drilling straight and level in the right spot is essential



5 Make sure that everything is level before proceeding



6 We used 8mm x 75mm coach screws with plugs

Step 4: The gate was heavy, so a heavy-duty solution was needed to support its weight. We used 8mm x 75mm coach screws with plugs (we don't generally use rawl bolts as they tend to often break the mortar inside the wall if they are over tightened).

Step 5: As with the top plate, when fitting the bottom plate, accuracy is essential. Also, power tools not only enable you to perform the job quicker, they ensure that the plates are secured firmly to the wall. Use a helper and a spirit level to ensure that the gate is



7 Fit the bottom



Fully installed security gate

The hardest part of installing a security gate is getting it into the correct position

at the right height for the hinges to be attached. Check the alignment on both sides.

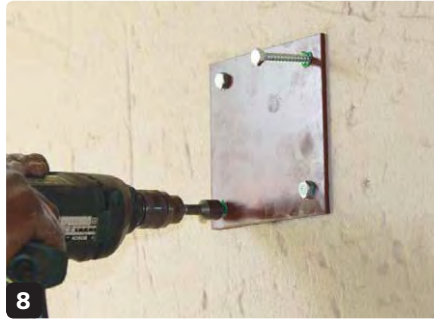
Step 6: Weld the bottom hinge to the gate and to the wall plates (make sure you wear the appropriate safety gear). We used industrial butterfly hinges.

Step 7: Cut the angle iron to size – it will serve as a ‘stopper’ for the security gate. Drill the holes through it in place so that it can be secured to the wall. The hinges which are now in place can be welded as a security method. This means they can never be removed again with a socket or spanner, only with extreme force.

Step 8: Prior to installing, make sure that the angle iron is level and square. Once done, a semi-circular cut needs to be made in the angle iron to accommodate the key for the lock.

Step 9: Install and secure the angle iron to the wall. Then paint the hinges and wall plate to match the gate.

Step 10: To accommodate the lock, we used an angle grinder to create an opening in the angle iron and the brick beneath it. Once again, measuring is of utmost importance for this step. After that, clean out the recess to ensure that the lock will fit securely.



8 Tighten the screws



9 Use a helper and a spirit level



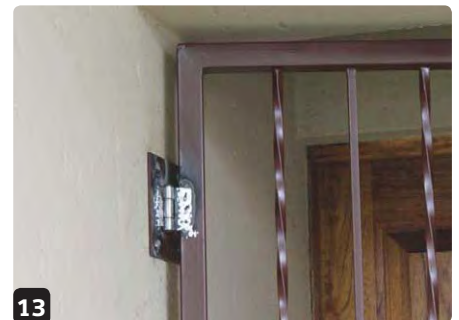
10 Weld the bottom hinge to the gate and to the wall plates and then the top hinge



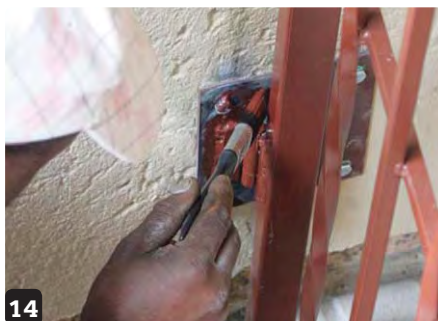
11 Cut the angle iron to size



12 Drill holes through the angle iron so that it can be secured to the wall



13 The hinges now welded in place



14 Paint the hinges and wall plate to match the gate

Step 11: We cut a short piece of round bar and welded it on the entrance side of the gate. The reason for this is that with the round bar blocking the lock, potential burglars cannot simply cut through the lock with an angle grinder.

Step 12: We then touched up the paint where necessary. We used a Gripcoat paint, which has a primer and paint in a quick dry (QD) form. Now we are all secure – our security gate keeps people out... and the kids in. ✂



15 Make sure that the angle iron is level and square



16

We had a semi-circular shape cut into the angle iron to accommodate the key



17

Install and secure the angle iron to the wall



18

To accommodate the lock, we used an angle grinder to create an opening in the angle iron and the brick beneath it



19

Clean out the recess



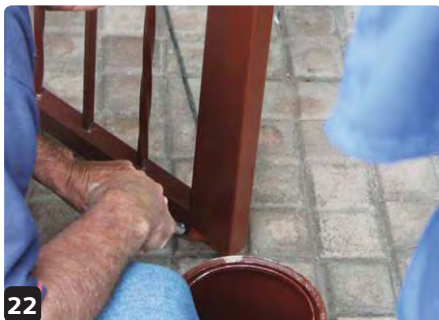
20

We cut a short piece of round bar



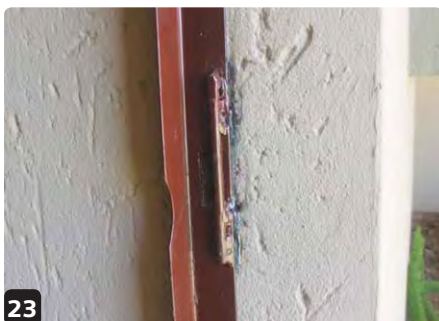
21

We then welded it on the entrance side of the gate



22

We touched up the paint where necessary



23

A close-up of the lock recess



Security gate checklist

There is a list of factors that you should check when installing a security gate in your home.

- Consider what type of gate is best for installing in your home. Take into consideration other peripheral reasons before you install a security gate. In most cases, the gate will become a permanent part of your home. Make sure the security gate fits in with the architectural style of your home and ensure that the colour you select is also a harmonious choice; a security gate may be a necessity for the safety of your family, but it need not be an eyesore.
- If you have children, childproof gates are the best choice – these can also be used to secure entry to swimming pools, which can be very dangerous for children, as well as keeping children indoors if your home is situated close to busy roads.
- Make sure that you use a quality locking mechanism. If you're really feeling up for a challenge, a key-coded locking system can be incorporated.



Difficulty: Easy



Estimated cost: ±R300



Estimated time: Half a day

Rolling in the deep

Find out how to make your own spike roller for aerating your lawn

By André Gous



1
Roll two rings from the 800mm lengths of round bar

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Bend two rings out of the two 800mm lengths of 8mm round bar. Make sure that the two match. Once you are satisfied that they are a perfect match, weld the ends of each ring together.

Step 2: Take a ring and place it on your workbench or a piece of paper. Now you have to divide the ring into eight equal parts. Draw the lines of the segments onto your workbench or the piece of paper so that you can use it as a reference for the second ring. You have to transfer the markings from your workbench or the paper to the ring itself. Do this with both rings and ensure the markings on ring number 1 match those of ring number 2.

Step 3: Place one of the two rings on your workbench. You need to weld the eight



2
Divide the two rings into eight equal segments



4
Weld the second ring onto the other ends of the round bar lengths



Cutting list

- Two 800mm lengths of 8mm round bar
- Eight 380mm lengths of 8mm round bar
- Eight 115mm lengths of 8mm round bar
- 44 x 20mm pieces of 6mm round bar
- One 470mm length of 20mm pipe
- One 430mm of 30mm pipe
- One 470mm length of 30mm x 3mm angle iron
- Two 200mm lengths of 30mm x 3mm angle iron
- One 700mm of 30mm x 3mm angle iron

380mm lengths of 8mm round bar onto the ring. The marks you made on the ring in step 2 serve as the positions for these eight lengths. Use a square or, as in this case, a Magswitch 90° angle to ensure the eight lengths are perfectly 90°.

Step 4: Weld the second ring on top of the eight round bar lengths.

Step 5: Next you need to get the axle in place. To do this, weld four pieces of round bar onto each side that suspends from the outer rings to where they keep the axle



3
Weld the eight 380mm lengths of round bar onto one ring



5
Determine the length of the short pieces of round bar that will keep the axle in place



6
Weld the short pieces of round bar onto the outer rings

in place, but first you need to determine the length of these eight pieces. To do this, measure the diameter of a ring. Now take that measurement and divide it by two to get the radius. And because the diameter of the pipe used is 30mm, you need to subtract 15mm (because there is a piece of round bar on both sides of the 30mm pipe) from the radius to get the length of the eight pieces of round bar.

Step 6: Once you have cut the eight pieces of round bar, you can weld them in place. Place the roller on one of its sides. Place four of the pieces of round bar inside the rings. You can place the 30mm pipe in place as well, but don't weld the round bars onto it just yet. Start by welding the round bar



Tools

- Welding machine and welding electrodes
- Tape measure
- Angle grinder
- Safety glasses
- Chalk
- Square



Materials

- 5 560mm of 8mm round bar
- 1 550mm of 30mm x 3mm angle iron
- 430mm of 30mm pipe
- 470mm of 20mm pipe
- 880mm of 6mm round bar



Hint

If you want to aerate the ground deeper, you need to make the spikes longer. You can also use heavier material if you want the spike roller to be heavier

pieces in place onto the outer rings and make sure they are 90°. Once the first four are in place, turn the roller on its other side and weld the remaining four pieces into place.

Step 7: You will note that the 30m length of pipe is 50mm longer than the length of the roller. To weld it in place, place the roller on its two rings (in the rolling position) and place the length of pipe in-between the four pieces of round bar on each side. Position the pipe so that 25mm protrudes from each side. Once that is done you can weld it in place.

Step 8: Take the 20mm diameter pipe and slide it into the 30mm diameter pipe (the axle). You will see that the 20mm pipe is 50mm longer than the 30mm pipe. Once again position it so that 25mm protrudes from each side.

Step 9: Weld the two 200mm pieces of 30mm x 3mm angle iron onto the outer ends of the 470mm length of 30mm x 3mm angle iron. Then weld the two remaining ends of 200mm lengths of angle iron onto the 20mm pipe.

Step 10: Take the 700mm length of angle iron and cut one of its ends at 45°. Weld this end onto the centre of the 470mm length of angle iron. Weld an offcut piece of pipe onto the other end of the 700mm length of angle iron to serve as a handle.

Step 11: Weld the 44 spikes onto the eight lengths of round bar.

Step 12: If needed, sand the roller to remove any rust and other loose material and then give it two coats of paint. ✖



Contacts

For more information on this or other metalworking projects, contact André Gous on 082-303-4830, 011-824-4995, email: metalandhome@telkomsa.net or visit www.metalandhome.co.za



7 Position the axle correctly and weld it onto the four round bar pieces on each side



9 Weld the 200mm angle iron pieces onto the outer ends of the 470mm length of angle iron



11 Cut one end of the 700mm angle iron at 45° and weld it in place in the centre of the 470mm angle iron



13 The roller now just needs some spikes



8 Slide the 20mm pipe into the axle



10 Weld the entire bracket onto the outer ends of the 20mm pipe



12 Weld a piece of pipe onto the other end of the 700mm angle iron to serve as a handle



14 Weld the 44 spikes onto the roller



Take-away welding

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Get cracking on your pond

Does your fish pond have a leak? We look at how to repair cracks and waterproof the pond before reintroducing fish and plants

A pond is a worthwhile asset in your garden. It makes an attractive focal point and will also encourage wildlife to visit and perhaps make their home there. When planning a pond, a good rule of thumb is to make sure the size you choose fits in with the size of your garden. Large ponds are overpowering in small spaces, but a well-placed smaller pond can have a big impact.

Concrete is a durable material and a popular choice for a garden pond. If you are planning on building a concrete pond, remember to add a suitable waterproofing cement admixture. This will help to make the concrete more impervious to water. Once the job is complete you can paint on a suitable fish-friendly waterproofing compound before water and fish are introduced.

Your pond should always be water wise. Never allow fountains or waterfalls to splash out large amounts of water every day. If you suspect a leak, always attend to it quickly.

Cracks and leaks

Water from your pond will evaporate, but a very noticeable drop in the water level usually indicates something a little more sinister. If the water level drops quickly, then subsides, check the area directly above the waterline for cracks. Look for obvious cracks, small hairline cracks along the sides or signs of moisture or small pools of water in the cracks (if there has been no rain). Some cracks are easy to spot, while others can be more difficult to locate.

Removing fish and plants

Once the crack or cause of the leak has been identified, you can plan the repair and source your materials. Unless the crack is fairly close to the edge, you will have to drain the pond. Remove all fish and plants and store them safely while the work is in progress.

Fish and plants should be stored separately in plastic basins or buckets. Add water from the pond to these containers before adding the fish – do not use water



from the garden hose! Containers should be at least 30cm deep and have a good surface area for oxygen exchange. Use a net to scoop out the fish and gently lower them into the prepared containers. These must be covered with netting and placed in a shady part of the garden or patio. If you have koi or a large amount of fish, you may have to make an alternative arrangement for them during the repair. Any remaining water in the pond can be bailed or siphoned out. You can also use an old wet/dry vacuum cleaner.

Waterproofing solutions

There are different products that can be used for waterproofing a concrete pond.

Latex or acrylic products

Acrylic waterproofing compounds can be brushed on to a clean, sound surface. It provides a flexible, waterproofing



Repairing the crack

- Inspect the crack. Smaller cracks or hairline fractures can be successfully repaired with a quality waterproofing compound. For large, deep cracks, first make the repair with a concrete mix, then apply waterproofing compound.
- Remove any loose material from the area. Use a hammer and chisel to pry smaller pieces loose, then give the area a good scrub down with a wire brush.
- For a deeper crack, make a V-shaped channel along the crack line – into the solid concrete. Make the channel at least 2cm deeper than the actual fracture. This gives a good key for the new mix.
- Mix the concrete and add a waterproofing admix. Apply with a plasterer's trowel. Smooth over and leave to dry as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Once completely dry, clean and sound, apply a waterproofing compound to the entire pond as per the product you select. Adhere to the instructions regarding the number of coats of product you must apply. Allow adequate drying time between coats. After the final coat, allow the coating to cure. Wash and rinse the pond thoroughly before replacing your plants and fish.

membrane and can be used to bridge hairline cracks. Coatings are available in different colours. Latex waterproofing compounds provide a flexible watertight seal. These products usually dry quickly, but adhere to curing times stated by the manufacturer before adding water and fish.

Rubberised bitumen products

These are suitable waterproofing products for concrete ponds, including koi ponds. Make sure the surface is clean and sound before applying the product. It should be brushed on to the surface to provide a durable seal. Always adhere to the manufacturer's instructions regarding curing times. Rinse well before introducing your fish.

Polyurethane or silicone sealants

These are suitable for sealing brick, stone or concrete. Some products can be brushed on, while others are applied with a caulking gun. Always make sure that the product you select is suitable for underwater use and safe for fish. Polyurethane sealants perform well in harsh weather conditions where they provide a durable, flexible seal. Silicone will also remain flexible but is more suited for sealing jobs around the pond pipes or fittings. Products are available in different colours. ✕

An average bandsaw will cut well with a great blade, but the finest bandsaw will disappoint you if it has the wrong blade

Band of blades

The most important part of any bandsaw is the blade and having the right one, whether you are using an inexpensive home shop bandsaw or the finest industrial grade bandsaw, is very important.

Most people tend to mount a 50 tooth alternate top bevel (ATB) combo blade on their table saw and leave it there until it needs re-sharpening. This blade will effectively mitre, rip, cross cut and do just about anything you need it to do. But it doesn't work that way with a bandsaw as the blades are much more specialised.

Bandsaw blades perform a very demanding job. The back must be soft and pliable to flex around the wheels of the bandsaw at several hundred rpm, yet the teeth must be hard enough to resist dulling while cutting.

Blade material

The most common bandsaw blades are made of carbon steel, and are the least expensive. They are sharp, cut well when new and are available in a variety of widths and tooth forms. Their main disadvantage is that they dull very quickly, particularly when used for demanding applications, such as re-sawing.

- **Spring steel** is most often associated with the cheap, stamped out blades found on new bench top bandsaws. It is soft and flexible, which allows it to flex around the small diameter wheels of bench top saws, but, because spring steel is so soft, it doesn't hold an edge for very long.

- **Bimetal blades** are actually two steel ribbons that are welded together – the back is composed of soft flexible steel and the blade front, where the teeth are milled, is made of much harder, high speed steel. This creates a relatively inexpensive blade with longer wear than ordinary carbon steel blades. The cobalt steel teeth of a bimetal blade are said to be able to withstand 650°C, which is much more than the 400 degree Fahrenheit that damages the teeth of a carbon steel blade. Another advantage is the strength of its spring steel back, which allows for greater tension and increases the beam strength of the blade. The difference between carbon and steel blades is that each carbide tooth is individually brazed onto a strong, flexible, spring steel blade back. In fact, the recommended tension for a carbide blade is almost twice that of carbon steel, giving carbide blades much greater beam strength. The carbide teeth are precisely ground on the face, top and both sides, which results in

truer, more precise cuts. Although the carbide blade is more expensive, it will typically outlast carbon steel 25 to 1 and carbide can be re-sharpened.

Blade width and thickness

Thickness is related to width – as a blade gets wider it gets thicker, giving the blade greater beam strength and stiffness. Because of the additional stiffness, wider blades need more force to reach the recommended tension, which means they can only be used on bandsaws with frames strong enough to provide the necessary tension. Also, wide blades have a minimum wheel diameter they can flex around without breaking.

Several factors can reduce the beam strength of a blade, including if the blade is dull, if the workpiece is very thick, if there is insufficient tension, if the feed rate is too great or if the blade has the wrong type of teeth for a job.

Tooth form

Tooth form refers to the design of the tooth and gullet, specifically the tooth size, shape and rake angle. The three commonly known blade forms for cutting wood are the regular, skip and hook.

- **The regular tooth form** has evenly spaced teeth for smooth, precise cutting. These blades have more teeth and the 0 degree cutting angle scrapes the wood surface clean. This combination of features leaves a smooth surface, making them a great choice for sawing curves.
- **The skip form** 'skips' every tooth. They have fewer teeth and larger gullets than regular tooth
- **The hook tooth** is an improvement on the skip tooth. The hook form has large gullets and teeth like that of a skip blade, but the teeth have a positive rake angle that makes them cut more aggressively. Due to the more aggressive nature, hook blades have less feed resistance than skip blades and almost seem to feed themselves. They are a great choice for re-sawing and ripping thick stock. ✂

blades. The large gullets can efficiently carry the sawdust away from the kerf, allowing them to cut faster. They also have a 0 degree rake angle that scrapes the wood away cleanly, but because they have fewer teeth, they don't cut as smoothly as regular blades. Skip blades are best suited for re-sawing and ripping thick stock, and work well for cutting softwoods. The only problem with skip tooth blades is that the more efficient hook tooth blade has outmoded them.





A woodworker's diary

The mighty C-clamp

Denis Lock shares his ideas, experiences and passion for woodworking as he describes the use of the mighty C-clamp



1 Laminating three pieces of 60mm x 20mm stock

Which tool is used the most in your workshop? Is it your router, jigsaw, orbital sander or drill/driver? Without a doubt, the tool (I guess I should say tools) that is used the most in my workshop is the humble C-clamp. I use C-clamps to laminate pieces of wood to give thicker pieces. A common example is laminating two pieces of 3mm plywood to give a 6mm drawer bottom. Another is laminating three pieces of 60mm x 20mm

stock for a square table leg. I use C-clamps to attach a variety of jigs to my stationary power tools. I use C-clamps to hold pieces of wood steady while using hand or portable power tools. And I use C-clamps to hold components together while screwing or gluing.

Over the years, I have fine-tuned my approach to these clamping activities. Wherever possible, I use the clamp with the handle and thread pointing downwards



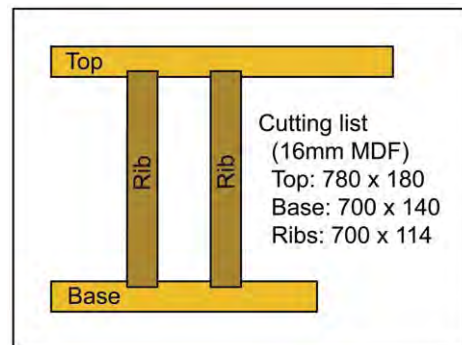
like F-clamps, which have a deeper throat, but are unwieldy, so I had to find another solution.

This is shown in photo 2. I call them clamping stands. The length of the stand base is equal to the bench width. One stand is clamped to the end of the bench as shown in photo 3. The two short sides of the top and one of the long sides overlap the base by 40mm. This is to provide clearance so that clamp handles can point downward. One stand is clamped to the end of the bench as shown in photo 3. The second stand can be clamped anywhere along the bench. This results in very flexible clamping positions.

The stands are made from 16mm MDF. The ribs are let into shallow (3mm) grooves in the top and base (see figure 1 – adjust the 700mm dimension to suit your bench). Each joint is held with four 30mm x 4mm screws (see photo 2). Position the screws about 60mm from the end of the ribs in order to avoid delamination, which can happen when screwing into the edge of MDF. Drill 2mm pilot holes before driving the screws for the same reason. The double rib gives a very stable construction.

or inwards. It hurts when you bang your knuckles against a clamp sticking up in the air. To facilitate this clamp orientation, the top of my workbench extends beyond the substructure by 40mm around its entire periphery. This gives me 6m of flat and straight clamping surface (photo 1 – note all the handles are pointing downwards). This works well with pieces of wood up to about 80mm wide. Beyond this, the throat of a 100mm C-clamp is not deep enough. I don't

Figure 1: End view of clamping stand



Dado jig



The ribs you see in the photos were cut from completed exercises done on my pattern routing courses. The routed arcs are not part of the stand's design.

Some examples of the stand's uses are shown in photo 4 to photo 7. Photo 4 shows an aluminium fence clamped to a piece of pine. The fence will guide a router to trim the rough-cut edge. Photo 5 shows the set-up to rout a dado. In photo 6, the clamping stands are used to secure a dovetail jig. Photo 7 shows the stands being used to hold a piece of MDF that is being pattern routed. The pattern is attached to the underside of the workpiece. In addition to securing the material being machined, the clamping pads raise the material to a more comfortable working height. This is how the height of the stand was determined. Change the height of the stand to suit your workbench and stature. In each case, one stand is clamped to the edge of the bench. The second stand is positioned to accommodate the length of the workpiece.

Make yourself a pair of these clamping stands. I guarantee that you will find them useful in a variety of clamping situations. ✂

5



Dovetail jig

6

To avoid injury I use the clamp with the handle and thread pointing downwards or inwards, wherever possible



Pattern routing

7

MAKE A KITCHEN GADGET COMPETITION

Design & make a metal or wooden Kitchen Gadget & **WIN** great prizes



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The Home Handyman magazine will sponsor supplementary prizes of gift vouchers, storage binders and subscriptions

Design brief:

- Readers are invited to design and construct a useful kitchen gadget – it must be functional but there is no restriction on creativity. Let your imagination run wild or play it safe, that's up to you. Ideas include pot stands, spice racks, recipe bookstand, paper towel holders, salt and pepper shakers, breadbin, bread board but the list is endless.
- The kitchen gadget can be made from any type of wood, man-made boards (i.e. medium density fibreboard) and/or metal. Use any materials for the accessories and the finish which will enhance the aesthetics of your handiwork!
- The kitchen item should not exceed 500mm (w) x 500mm (h) x 500mm (d).

Judging criteria

The kitchen gadget will be judged in two categories – "Innovation and Craftsmanship" with three winners in each category.

- Innovation will look at creativity, taking into account, imagination, originality, resourcefulness and functionality.
- Craftsmanship will be judged according to: • Quality of craftsmanship • Degree of difficulty • Joinery • Overall finish

How to enter

All entries must be constructed between 30 September 2013 and 25 February 2014. Closing date: 25 February 2014
See page 56 for entry form and competition rules or visit www.homehandyman.co.za or www.makita.co.za

BOOK SHELF

Viv Martin from Hardware Centre reviews the latest in woodworking literature

Turning Green Wood

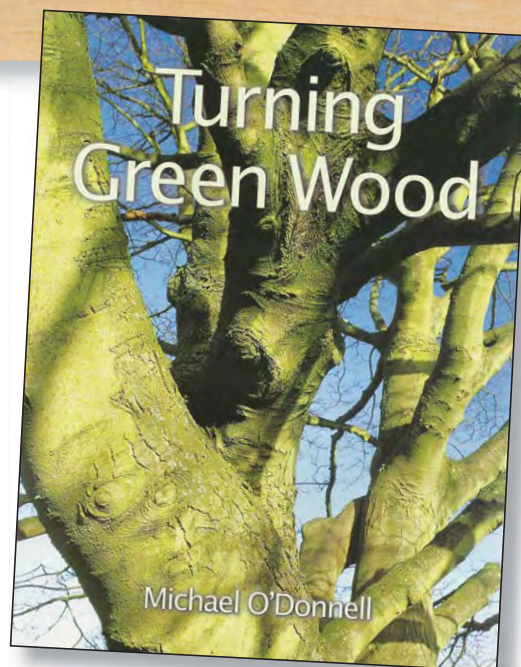
Author: Michael O'Donnell

Publisher: Guild of Master Craftsmen

Have you ever noticed a pile of wood on a pavement from a freshly cut tree disappear virtually overnight? Well, I can guarantee that if it was a sought after wood type, fellow woodturners were loading their cars and bakkies. Hence the choice of book for this review: *Turning Green Wood* – an inspiring and thought-provoking guide to the art of turning delicate bowls and goblets from freshly felled, unseasoned wood.

Michael O'Donnell, one of the exponents of 'green' timber, explains how to harvest and store timber and how to make the best use of the grain pattern and other properties.

'Green' turnery can be made so delicate that it is virtually translucent and thickness can be gauged by shining a light through it as you work. Using clear text and spectacular photographs, this 135-page paperback book demystifies the techniques.



For more information,
contact Hardware Centre
on 011-791-0844 (Randburg)
or 021-421-7358 (Cape Town)

MAKE A KITCHEN GADGET COMPETITION

See page 55 for prizes and design brief information

maktec
by Makita

Makita

Competition rules

- This competition is open to all South African citizens except employees of Home Handyman Publishing, Rutherford and its associated brands and their immediate families.
- The entries must be constructed between 30 September 2013 and 25 February 2014. No items made before this date or shop-bought items will be accepted.
- Two entries per participant allowed.
- Closing date for entries is Tuesday 25 Feb 2014 (expect for entries delivered in Cape Town or Durban. To make allowances for shipment to Johannesburg, these entries must be delivered ONLY on Tuesday 18 Feb 2013 between 9am and 4.30pm).
- Prizes cannot be extended, transferred or exchanged for cash or other product.
- All entries must be accompanied by a completed entry form which is on this page or use the form on www.homehandyman.co.za or www.makita.co.za.

Delivery of entries

- Entries must be securely packaged to avoid damage in transit.
- Remember to attach the entry form with your full contact details on it. Please write 'Make a Kitchen Gadget' clearly on the packaging item.
- Post to: The Home Handyman magazine, P O Box 650484, Benmore, 2010.
- Or hand deliver to:
The Home Handyman, 10 Cypress Ave, Bryanston Ext 3, Randburg, 2191 OR
87 Linksfield Road, Dowerglen, Edenvale 1609. (Hand deliveries weekdays between 8am – 5pm only) OR Rutherford/Makita/Maktec branches in Cape Town and Durban. (Deliveries ONLY accepted on Tuesday 18 Feb 2014 between 9am and 4.30pm).
- Rutherford Cape Town Branch: Cnr. Van Riebeeck and Jan Smuts, Beaconvale, Parow. Tel: 021 932 0568
- Rutherford KZN Branch: 12 Halifax Road, Pinetown, KZN. Tel: 031 717 6400

Judging

- Judging will take place at the publishers' offices in Randburg on Monday 3 March 2014 and all entries including the winning entries will be displayed at Hobby-X, Coca-Cola Dome, Randburg which is on 6 – 9 March 2014.
- The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners will be notified telephonically before 6 March 2014 and arrangements will be made for receipt of prizes. Winning entries will be featured in the magazine.

Entry Form:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No: _____

Cell: _____

Email: _____

Declaration: I hereby declare that the entry submitted for this competition is entirely my own work and that I adhered to all the rules of the competition as stipulated.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

General

- Entries and prizes can be collected at Hobby-X, ONLY on Sunday 9 March 2013 or from the address you delivered your entries to. Entries via Rutherford/Makita/Maktec branches will be returned to respective branches for your collection on Tuesday 25 March 2014 between 9am and 4.30am ONLY.
- By signing the entry form you agree to having your entry photographed for publication in *The Home Handyman* magazine.
- Whilst everything possible will be done to ensure safe handling of all entries, please note that neither *The Home Handyman* nor Rutherford nor any of their employees will be held responsible for damage or loss of the entries.

For further info go to www.homehandyman.co.za or contact
Tel: 011-462-5645 or Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

The Woodworker's Corner has been turned into a bragging space



◀ Denis Lock demonstrates how to level a butcher's block cutting board at the East Rand Woodworker's Association Annual Fair in September

Woodworking associations

Woodworking associations' details are available on our website at www.homehandyman.co.za

Please send us pictures of your projects. Write a caption with your name, inspiration, type of wood, etc. and send it to editorial@homehandyman.co.za



▲ Denis Lock and his wife Jeannette display the finished butcher's block

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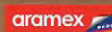


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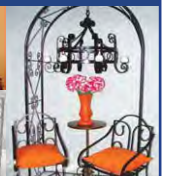
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How to varnish a beard

Reuben the Screwman turns down his own expert advice and turns an easy job into a disaster

One Saturday morning on my way back from the 702 studios, a cloud as dark as peat was hanging over me. One of those dreaded tasks that has been on the 'to-do' list since the Dead Sea was alive. One or two, or maybe six, of the beams that hold the fascia boards in place were badly in need of a coat of varnish, but had now gone way beyond that stage, and needed serious resurrecting.

One of the boards had slipped down and was hanging at a very precarious angle. The plan was to bolt a fresh piece of pine onto the badly weathered beam, followed by two coats of varnish. Now if there is anything I hate more than two hours of root canal, it is painting. It is for that reason that most of my 'paint jobs' turn into an epic saga of misfortune. I can never wait for the first coat to dry, or I try and circumvent the very important undercoat, with disastrous outcomes. Which brings me to yet another 'let's-learn-from-our-mistakes' moment.

The five-litre tin topples towards me and I start swimming upstream in a tsunami of dark varnish

New beams cut, tools in hand and a five-litre tin of varnish, I am off to do what us 'DIY Gurus' do on a Saturday. First faux pas: I do not remove the offending fascia board before attaching the new beam to the rotten one. A slight bump with my shoulder and down it comes with a mighty crash, breaking into a hundred pieces. The task has just taken on a whole new meaning. I will have to order a new board on Monday, but in the meantime I can carry on with replacing the old beams and the dreaded varnishing.

Faux pas number two: I do not follow my own advice that I so readily give on air, "Always decant your paint into a smaller container when painting; it makes it easier to manage when working at heights." Once again, I skip the three minutes it might have taken me to decant, but rather take the risk by putting the five-litre tin on top of the ladder. I guess you know where this is leading, and you are so right.

With brush in hand, I start my climb up the ladder. Right on cue, the five-litre tin topples towards me and I start swimming upstream in a tsunami of dark varnish. In an instant, my grey beard has turned a dark shade of brown, knocking off a few years of my age and later a few years of my life. I spent the rest of the day washing my beard in turpentine. This action is questionable, to say the least.

Well, as the old saying goes, "Every dark cloud has its silver lining". I discovered something very interesting by default, or is it 'de fault I made'. Should you spill an oil-based paint on paving (not a practice I would recommend), don't panic; very quickly grab a hosepipe and squirt the paint with a strong gush of water. The paint lifts and floats on top of the water like an oil slick. Then squirt it onto the soil next to the paving and lift with a spade... as simple as that. Better still, spend the three minutes it might take to decant and avoid this rather overrated experience.



▲ Reuben washing his beard in turpentine

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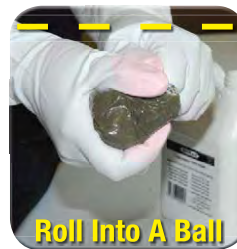


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