

The Home HANDYMAN

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Some like it hot

January has been the hottest month of summer for me so far. I remember that I said it hadn't been overly hot so far in early December; I didn't think then that I would have to swallow my words so soon.

Our office is situated at a home with a lovely big garden, patio and swimming pool. Sometimes during lunchtime or later in the afternoon we walk outside, take off our shoes and put our feet in the pool. Then we talk.

The paving underneath our bums is hot and the sun reflects off the water right into our eyes. We talk about how the cost of fuel is rising at an alarming rate; we are just coming to terms with the latest increase and already we are bracing for the next one. Some economists speak of it hitting the R14 per litre mark. And on top of this we have to deal with e-tolls. The cost of all commodities will go up, while the rand/dollar deteriorates even further.

Then we talk about America. Recently, the temperature in the US alone differed by as much as 77°C between the hottest and coldest. The Niagara Falls froze over and some places recorded close to -30°C. They have been hit hard. It is cold. We do not wish to be there.

We laugh about our situation; it is lekker to be South African. Then we get up and go back to work.

This issue is filled with more DIY ideas, tips, expert advice and projects. Enjoy every page.



Johann Stadler, Editor



*Roelof Strydom,
Assistant Editor*

The Home HANDYMAN

www.homehandyman.co.za

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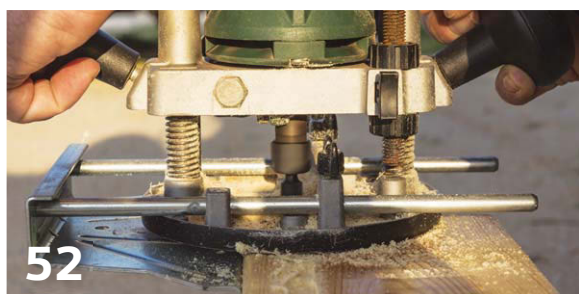
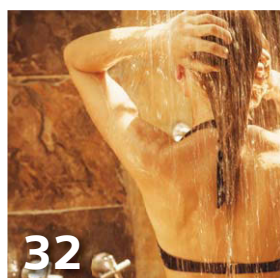
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The Home HANDYMAN PUBLISHING

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New multi sander tool

The new Skil Fox 3-in-1 Multi Sander, which is designed specifically for the DIY enthusiast, is now available. The 250W Fox Multi Sander 7220 combines a random orbit sander, an orbital sander and a multi sander.

The 3-in-1 Multi Sander is ideal for use on edges and corners, large surfaces, curved surfaces and for large scale material removal, thanks to a two-speed setting. The low speed is for controlled material removal in delicate tasks, while the high speed setting is for regular sanding. The Multi Sander also comes with a brake function for the random orbit setting and has a one-screw system for swift and easy changing between the different bases.

It comes standard with an integrated dust box and vacuum cleaner adapter and weighs 1.3kg.



For more information

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

New kid on the block

Makita has added the MTO80E 14.4V Lightweight Lithium-ion Hammer Driver Drill to its Maktec brand. It can drill 10mm holes in concrete, 25mm in wood and 10mm in steel. The mechanical two-speed gearbox makes for speedy drilling in light applications using the high speed mode and, when more torque is needed, the low speed mode is ideal. The drill features 16 torque settings and a drill mode. The hammer drill action chips away at concrete while the chuck continues to rotate, driving the bit into the material. At high speed it produces 0 to 21 000 blows per minute and at low speed 0 to 6 000 blows per minute. The unit weighs 1.7kg, is supplied with a DC1851 charger, which charges the battery in 60 minutes, and two 14.4V (1.1Ah) batteries.



For more information

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

Super bonding

New Loctite Super Glue Power Flex Gel delivers strong, flexible and shock resistant bonding. This product not only offers its well-known super glue strength and fast drying time, but also offers flexibility. The Power Flex Gel has been specially developed with an advanced rubber-infused formula for flexible and shock resistant bonding. Yet, it is still strong enough to hold heavy loads and gets to work in just seconds.

Loctite Power Flex Gel bonds rubber, leather, wood, metal, porcelain, paper and some plastics. The gel dries crystal clear for a seamless end result and is water resistant, which adds to its wide range of applications. It is also solvent-free and boasts a handy anti-clog cap for easy and repeated use.



For more information

Visit: www.loctite.co.za
Tel: 011-617-2400



In the spotlight

You don't need to be groping your way around a dark house when the power goes out, or wonder what goes on outside at night. The Energizer TUFR2 Spotlight is a rechargeable LED light perfect for outdoor use, work and heavy-duty applications. It is plastic with rubber overmold for shock absorption and grip, it offers a bright white LED bulb with 110 lumens, has a shatterproof lens and is hardwearing and impact resistant. Includes AC adaptor and 12V car charger.

Specifications	
Model:	TUFR2
Beam distance:	385m
Cordless:	Easy to carry and hold
Grip:	Pistol grip
Runtime:	About 4 hours
Charge time:	About 12 hours



For more information

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

A bit rusty?

Need to repaint your metal gates or window frames? Oxirite is a direct-to-rust metal paint that can be applied onto rusted surfaces. Due to its special 3-in-1 formula, there is no need for a primer or undercoat and its active anti-rust inhibitors prevent rust formation. Oxirite protects the painted surface against adverse weather conditions for up to five years.

Various finishes are available, including Hammered, Satin, Smooth and Forged. It is available in 750ml cans with selected colours in 2.5 litres. A matt black heat resistant paint up to 600° is also available, which is suitable for applications to braais, fireplaces, etc. There is also a solvent for cleaning brushes and equipment and removing dirt, grime and loose rust from surfaces in 375ml and 750ml.



i For more information

Visit: www.oxiritemetalpaint.co.za
Tel: 011-784-8991

Sharpest tool in the box

Now available, the Small Knife Holder SVM-00 from Tormek can sharpen really small knife blades. Normally they would need to be sharpened freehand, making it a challenge to obtain a consistent shape and almost impossible to control the edge angle.

The new holder works in conjunction with the Tormek Knife Jig SVM-45 and allows you to work with complete control on a much wider range of small knives. You can now sharpen knives of different shapes for whittling, chip carving and detail work. Even folding pocket knives can be sharpened with perfect control.

Since it is the handle of the knife that is mounted in the SVM-00 holder, there is no limit to how small a blade you can sharpen.



i For more information

Visit: www.tormek.com
Tel: 082-375-7386



Electronic spirit level

Made from strong but lightweight alloy and featuring shock-absorbing end caps to reduce damage when dropped, the Stabila type 196-2 Electronic Spirit Level conforms to IP65, which means it is dust- and waterproof. The two digital displays can be illuminated at the push of a button, which makes reading possible in any situation. Display modes include degrees, percent, metres, millimetres, feet and inches, and you can also choose between a fine (0.05) and a rough (0.1) display. If you want to hang something on a wall at a slope of 20°, you punch it in on the spirit level. It will emit a beeping sound every few seconds and, the moment you reach 20°, it emits a continuous beep.

The battery lasts about 150 hours. It is available in 60cm, 100cm and 120cm models.

i For more information

Visit: www.upat.co.za
Tel: 011-624-6700



Accurate measuring

DIY enthusiasts can achieve precise measurements and calculations in seconds using the Bosch PLR 50 Laser Rangefinder. It can measure distances of up to 50m, to within an accuracy of 2mm. It enables you to calculate areas and volumes, as well as distances that can only be measured indirectly using the theorem of Pythagoras ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$).

A protruding balcony preventing direct measurement will not hinder the performance of the Rangefinder, as the laser measurement technology enables the user to make the necessary calculations using only a few control buttons with self-explanatory symbols printed on them.

It is also useful for measuring distances in hard-to-reach areas, both indoors and outdoors. With dimensions of 104mm x 58mm x 36mm, the Bosch PLR 50 Laser Rangefinder fits into any coat pocket and weighs just 180g.

i For more information

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

What about the birds and bees?

We have rather large lawns at the front and back of our house. They look great when cut, but can be an eyesore when allowed to get out of hand. We do not pamper the lawn and the type of grass is unknown, despite your informative article in the August 2013 issue. Various weeds and other species of grass come and go during the year. In the height of the wet season the lawn pushes out the invaders and with regular cutting the result is a beautiful carpet.

We have many visitors on a daily basis. The dandelion, with its yellow flowers, is a strong attraction for honey bees. During early spring, a wild grass seeds profusely and the manikins flock in great clouds to eat their fill. The thrushes can be seen at dawn and dusk very busily doing the rounds. The permanent residents seem to be a pair of wagtails, who bob around all day finding the most delicious worms, moths and other creepy crawlies. The fork-tailed drongo swoops down every now and again to catch some unsuspecting prey or simply to chase the others away. The fiscal shrike perches on nearby trees and has been seen to collect a titbit from the lawn. The most intriguing of our feathered friends must be the hadeda ibis. A family of three methodically roam the lawn sticking their long bills deep down below the surface to emerge with wriggling earthworms.

Watching the antics of all and sundry I got to thinking about the article 'Go for green'. It had stuck in my mind as I had tried to identify the grass types from the article. What bothered me was what had been said regarding the use of herbicides and pesticides. I consulted the article and noticed the warning about danger and keeping it out of the reach of children. I also got the message that



**WINNING
LETTER**

the instructions on the leaflet should be read, but to see if the birds and bees are safe I would need to go to the hardware because the article did not mention this point.

Today's answer to everything seems to be to go commercial. Pests get expensive pesticides and weeds expensive herbicides. Humans must take care of the dangers, but the birds and bees do not get a mention. Wouldn't it have been nice to have learnt what would have happened to the birds and bees that give us so much pleasure? If the pesticides and herbicides do not kill them perhaps they will starve to death because their food chain has been eradicated so that we may have sterile green lawns.

A J Worrall, via email



Winning letter

This month's winning letter comes from AJ Worrall who wins a Makita GA9020K Angle Grinder

Memory games

When I was young I had no problem taking something apart and then remembering how to put it all together again. As the years passed I found that the number of leftover screws, nuts, washers, springs and levers increased exponentially.

I tried making drawings as I disassembled the offending device, but that only had limited success as you end up spending more time drawing than 'repairing' and inevitably you forget something.

That's when my last remaining brain cells and technology in the form of my cell phone came to my rescue. I now take dozens of photographs from different angles and at different stages of disassembly. These images I then download to my laptop and I can simply page through them as I reassemble.

Another tip, one born out of laziness, deals with paint trays. I hate cleaning the paint roller and tray after painting. Now I simply place the tray inside a plastic bag and when I am finished the bag is discarded and I have a relatively clean paint tray.

Bruce Roberts-Baxter, via email



That sucks

I tried to exchange a 220VAC GU10 50W globe with a 5W LED GU10 in a recessed globe holder, but I found that the standard globe suction holder (indicated on the right-hand side in the attached photograph) was too large due to the reduced smooth surface on the LED globe. Attempts to obtain a fit-for-purpose suction holder at the hardware and lighting stores were met with shrugged shoulders or suggestions to stick with the 220VAC globes. I then remembered the suction arrows I used to shoot in my childhood days. I paid a visit to the local toy store where I bought the bow with six suction arrows. The suction cap on the arrow fits the LED globe perfectly. My grandson, however, will now only receive five suction arrows for his birthday.

Graeme McKechnie, via email



A Makita JV0600K Jigsaw

Share your opinion

Send us your views, ideas and opinions addressed 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.





Probe into collapsed Tongaat Mall

An inquiry into the Tongaat Mall collapse in which two construction workers died and 29 were injured, was due to begin in January, *The Sowetan* reported.

"The inquiry will take place during the second or third week of January," KwaZulu-Natal Labour Department spokesman Nhlanhla Khumalo told the newspaper. He reportedly said officials had until the end of December to finalise a report on the collapse of the mall.

The national Labour Department had appointed a presiding officer to head a Section 32 hearing.

A Section 32 hearing is mostly instituted against parties when negligence is believed to have caused occupational injuries and worker death.

According to the newspaper, Ravi Jagadasan was scheduled to appear in a court in February on a charge of contempt of court for allegedly ignoring an order to stop construction. Jagadasan, the director of Rectangle Property Investments, the company which owns the mall, was accused of building the mall without permission from authorities.

Source: SAPA

Ruwag shows Christmas kindness

Ruwag and the DE Group of companies donated R50 000 to underprivileged people over the Christmas period on behalf of all their customers. Pick n Pay Bedworth Park got the hampers ready and added their gift of food to the already generous donation. When Rotary Vereeniging along with staff of Ruwag and the DE Group of companies distributed the goods, smiles and thank yous abounded from the recipients at Eventide, a home for seniors, a halfway house in Van der Bijl, the street children in Market Street, the Rainbow Feeding Scheme at St Luke's Presbyterian Church in Vereeniging, individuals at Mimi Fourie and Sukasambe, a school for disabled children, the Methodist Church in Three Rivers, as well as from 15 individual families in the Vaal.



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

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za



South African PV manufacturer to supply the REIPPP

ARTsolar, South Africa's first locally owned Solar PV manufacturing plant based in New Germany, has been awarded a contract for the supply of photovoltaic (PV) modules in the government's R100-billion Round 2 of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Programme (REIPPP).

ARTsolar's KwaZulu-Natal manufacturing plant, with the latest equipment from Swiss manufacturer Meyer Burger Swiss Solar Systems, is geared to produce 250 000 PV modules or approximately 75MW/year. The modules carry a 25-year generation guarantee and have an estimated 40-year service life.

"This contract, which is the first in the REIPPP to be awarded to a majority South African owned (PV) module manufacturer, is an exciting development for ARTsolar," says Mark Walsh, managing director of ARTsolar. "These PV modules, which are being assembled at the ARTsolar plant in KwaZulu-Natal, form part of the 417.1MW PV component of Round 2 of the REIPPP.

"The company is committed to providing long-term solutions to the development of the renewable energy industry in support of the South

African government's goal's for the roll-out of renewable energy generation capacity and the development of a local manufacturing complex. PV technology, with long-term cost efficient features, is a reliable and proven source of electricity, which is environmentally-friendly.

ARTsolar, which has made a substantial investment in the latest equipment, adheres to stringent international quality specifications and has implemented a certified training programme for the manufacturing team.

Through the REIPPP initiative, the government aims to procure and install 1,45GW of PV capacity by the end of 2014.

Derek Morgan from the eThekweni Municipality Energy Office says, "We are very excited that ARTsolar has been awarded this contract. This demonstrates the potential solar has for creating real green jobs in the city, while at the same time addressing climate change and energy challenges in the country."

Earlier this year, the REIPPP won the Green Infrastructure Project of the year award at the sixth Global Infrastructure Leadership Forum held in New York.

Source: www.energy.org.za

Man survives DIY accident

A 55-year-old man had a lucky escape after an 80mm-long nail ripped into his skull while he was doing DIY. Mr Yang was admitted to hospital in Nanjing, in China's Jiangsu province, where the steel nail was removed by neurosurgeons.

He did not realise the nail had penetrated his head while he was using a cutting machine when decorating his home on December 29. "The nail that got stuck in the cutting machine flew out when I turned on the machine. It ripped into my head and left a small hole in the skin," said the patient.

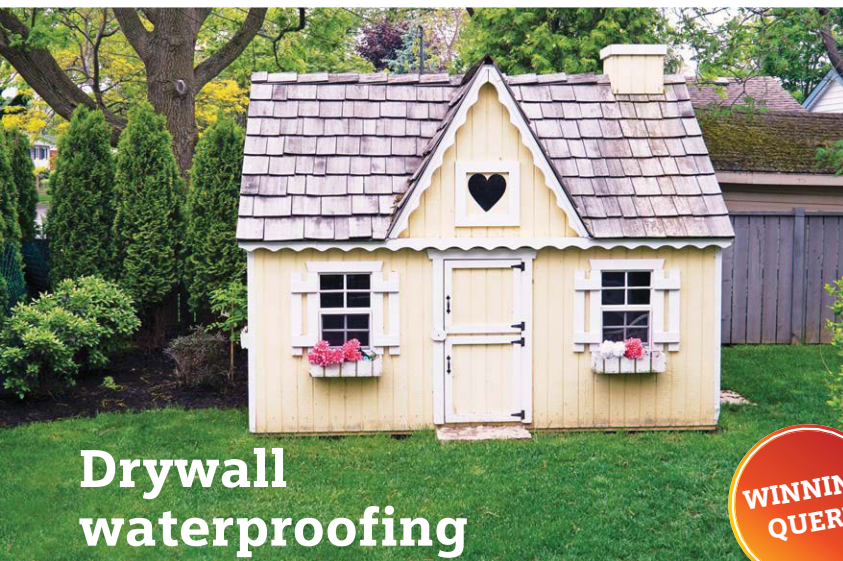
Mr Yang's eyesight has not been affected and it was only when he felt sick and had a CT scan that doctors realised he had a nail embedded in his skull. Luo Liangsheng, a doctor in neurosurgery, said: "The nail penetrated his eye socket and reached the petrosal bone after passing through the middle cranial fossa."

Mr Yang is in a stable condition after his surgery.

Source: www.news.sky.com



Pic: Sky News



Drywall waterproofing

I have a Wendy house and would like to install a shower and wash basin in it. My concern is how to make it waterproof and damp-proof? We have installed drywalling/Rhinolite in the Wendy house.
Dee-Marie Bezuidenhout, Randburg

Farayi Muhamba from Saint-Gobain replies:

Moisture and vapour penetration is the biggest concern in the shower areas. For drywall showers I recommend using Gyproc Moisture-Resistant Board fixed onto the framework. Gyproc Moisture Resistant Board is plasterboard that is specially designed for use in intermittent wet areas. The boards must be sealed using two coats of Gyproc Gypseal. The first coat should be applied before installation of the boards and the second coat after installation of the boards. Ensure that all cut edges are sealed with Gyproc Gypseal. Gyproc Gypseal protects the board from moisture and it also improves its vapour resistance.

It is important to minimise the number of joints in shower areas, so I recommend you install full boards. Always lift the boards 10mm above floor level. The resultant gap should be filled with waterproof sealant. Once sealed, apply waterproofing. Use Weber Waterproof-it Shower Kit for waterproofing. The kit consists of a membrane, a compound and an emulsion. Mix two parts of the compound products with one part of the emulsion to form a paste. Apply the membrane onto all corners and, using a block brush, apply the paste onto the membrane. Using a block brush, apply the paste onto the entire shower surface, including the floor. Allow the surface to dry. Bed the tiles using a Weber-Tylon tile adhesive. For improved colour fastness and waterproofing, mix Weber Grout with Weber Bond-it. Once dry, apply waterproof sealant to the corners.

For further information contact Farayi on 012-657-2800

WINNING
QUERY

Clay tile suppliers

We have moved into a house in Heidelberg, Gauteng and the entire house is covered in 230 x 230 x 20mm clay tiles. We need to replace some of the tiles that have been damaged. Does anyone have any idea where we can locate a manufacturer or supplier of these clay tiles in our region?

Jaco Brand, Heidelberg

Ed replies: In the past, many of the clay brick manufacturers also manufactured clay tiles, but when I spoke to the Clay Brick Association, I was told that none of their members produce clay floor tiles. Van Stone manufactures Cape Quarry tiles, which are concrete reproductions of old handmade clay tiles. The sizes are slightly different to the size you require but they may be able to make them to your size. Contact Olive de Bruin at Van Stone on 012-541-2056/7/8 to enquire.

Split toilet seat

In your July 2013 issue there was a letter from Eric Whittal (East London) with regard to the installation of a toilet pan. The toilet seat shown in the accompanying photograph was split. I would like to know from him where he bought this specific split seat as I have been hunting for one for some time now. A company in Johannesburg makes them, but they come at an exorbitant price.
Rudolf Joubert, by email



Ed replies: These seats are available from Plumblink and are called Crescent Adult Seats. They are sold with nylon or stainless steel hinges and priced around R400 – R460. The toilet seat is imported from France and from what I have found out, this type of seat is no longer manufactured in South Africa, hence the high price. Contact Quinton at Plumblink on 012-991-3565.

Winning query

This month's winning query comes from Dee-Marie Bezuidenhout who wins a Bosch Cordless PSR 14.4 Li-2 Toolbox



Non-slip tiles

I am the owner of a retail business in the food industry and am considering replacing the floor tiles, but need a non-slip tile for the safety of customers and staff. The tile must be able to handle high levels of traffic, water, blood etc. (in the production area). The stores I visit all suggest the tiles they have available are non-slip but I am not convinced. What do you suggest?

Jose Caetano, Centurion

Ed replies: Tile Africa's Contracts Division recommends using a textured porcelain tile with a PEI (Porcelain Enamel Institute) rating of 5. These are made for commercial spaces and will offer slip resistance and are made for high traffic areas such as retail spaces and airports. For further advice, the Tile Africa Contracts Division offers custom specifications and solutions: 011-979-0327.

We would also advise using TAL Epoxy Grout to ensure that



the surface is not penetrated by any microbial elements. The epoxy grout is ideal for food and beverage industries, as well as for hospital installations.

Another option is rubber or vinyl interlocking mats, which are suitable to use in the production area. The PVC interlocking tile is a flexible, solid tile that is easy to install and easy to clean. They are also movable. The interlocking mats have multidirectional drainage patterns and can be hosed down. All these tiles are non-slip. These are available from Matco Marketing, visit www.matcomarketing.co.za or contact them on 011-452-7961/2.

Garden pests

I am an ardent reader of your magazine. I wonder if you could help me with a garden issue. I recently landscaped a portion of my garden, planting a variety of water wise plants, including aloes etc. Within a week of planting I noticed that one night an animal (believed to be a dassie) came visiting and attacked specific plants, burrowing down to the roots. I am surrounded by bush with a river some 500m away. Is there some permanent solution to chasing the animal/dassie away without killing it?

Rob Taylor, East London.

Ed replies: This animal may well be a dassie as it seems that a few suburbs in Gauteng are experiencing the same problems and worse with dassies chasing their dogs and destroying their gardens. Dassies are vegetarians and forage within 50m of their homes and gardens are an excellent source of grass, twigs and leaves.

I can only suggest you try aversion techniques, which means you must make the area they visit smell and sound unpleasant.

Place a children's windmill in the garden, the noise and movement may scare them off.

You can try spraying your plants with hot pepper spray, Tabasco sauce or mist the leaves and sprinkle with black pepper. Plant flowers and shrubs that taste and smell awful, such as these plants that are used to deter rabbits:

- Members of the mint family, including bergamots. Generally, the more fragrant or bitter the leaves, the better.
- Sage (*Salvia sp.*).
- Onions (*Allium sp.*).
- Artemisia, such as *Artemisia Ludoviciana*. The leaves are very bitter and the scent is repellent.
- Verbena – the leaves are bitter.



WIN!

A Bosch PLL 360 Line Laser Level

Ask our experts

Send us your DIY queries and you could win! Send to:

The Home Handyman DIY Queries,
PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010.

Fax: 011-704-3962.

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Remember to include your physical address and telephone number during office hours.

Please note: Queries will be answered in the magazine. Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery once the issue is on the shelf.





Enhance your home's entrance with lights, security and a beautiful doorway

Welcome home

The entrance to your home serves two very different purposes: To make friends and family feel welcome, and intruders unwelcome. To get the right balance is a tricky feat to accomplish – you could end up with an entrance that looks as if it is guarding a high security prison, or you could focus mainly on aesthetics and leave your home vulnerable to criminals.

According to architect Ania King, an entrance is the gateway to your very private and secure space, and it says a lot about your personality and lifestyle. An attractive entry can also serve as a good marketing tool to sell your house if you decide to in the future.

If you are thinking of creating a new entrance or revamping your old one, Ania advises that you follow these steps:

- **Step 1:** Decide what you are trying to achieve. Is it just the aging of the finishes that is worrying you or do you want to make some more significant changes to your home entry? For example, would you like to enlarge the entrance, add some interest and character, create an entrance patio, add a roof over the door, change the lighting to energy-saving, or improve security?
- **Step 2:** Make notes of your needs, arrange them in priority order and group the different trades to be involved.

- **Step 3:** Get quotes, and make a final decision... then proceed.

"If the project is too complicated and overwhelming, I suggest that you ask designers and specialists for the advice," says Ania.

Choosing a door

"I believe that the front door to your home is like an 'eye to your soul'," says Ania. "In one quick glance a person can form an opinion of your persona, outlook and way of life."

When it comes to size, your door should be at least 830mm wide by 2 030mm high, just enough for a single person to walk

through and for most standard furniture to fit through. “The maximum size? The sky is the limit!” says Ania. “For example, a double volume aluminium shop front-type entrance with double doors and side lights would suit a large home with a double volume entrance hall.”

A door can be made from wood or aluminium and glass. For a classic look, solid wood like oak or meranti is great – plain or carved, factory manufactured or hand-crafted by an artist. According to Ania, more modern choices include individually designed glass doors, framed or frameless, on pivots. “Combining two or three different materials can also give a very unique look,” she adds. You can have a door made from your chosen materials in a specific size, but it would have to be specially designed and made to order.



Modern door choices include individually designed doors on pivots

Pic courtesy of Bathroom Bizarre

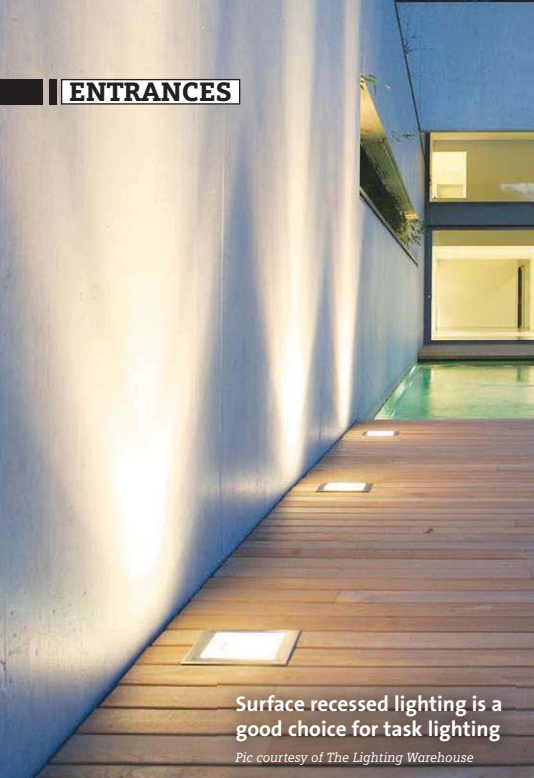


The choices for doors are endless – this is a sandblasted glass door

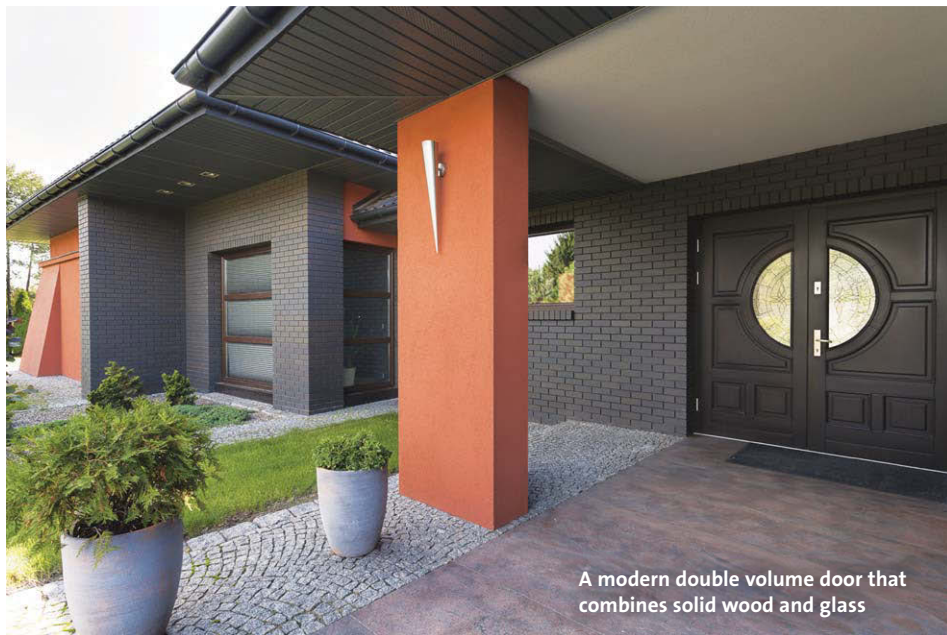
“Uniqueness and individualism is very much in fashion. I like combinations of various materials: Flat painted panels with steel; opaque glass with wood. The choices are endless.” Remember though that the types of materials you use need to suit the style of your home.

Important to note: External doors have to comply with new South African National Standard (SANS) 10 400 XA and SANS 204. In order for glass doors to comply with the new regulation you might have to opt for double glazing. For solid wood doors, make sure there are no gaps around the edges causing air leakage. If in doubt, call an architect.

An entrance is the gateway to your very private and secure space, and it says a lot about your personality and lifestyle



Surface recessed lighting is a good choice for task lighting
Pic courtesy of The Lighting Warehouse



A modern double volume door that combines solid wood and glass

Good lighting should form part of your security strategy



Lighting up your entrance

There are many ways you can light up your doorway to create a warm and welcoming, but also secure, entrance. Melissa Davidson from The Lighting Warehouse says that it is critical that the style you choose complements the architectural style and the interior décor of your home for a seamless aesthetic. “The aim is to create a seamless flow between your home’s indoor and outdoor spaces, and as such, the outdoor lighting you choose should match the look of your home’s interiors.”

For example, if you own a contemporary home, then the outdoor lighting you choose should be simple and sleek in its design and choice of materials. For more traditional homes, such as the Provencal-, Tuscan and Georgian-style homes, more traditional outdoor lighting would be a better option – these tend to be larger, more ornate fittings.

To create an effective outdoor lighting scheme, consider the effect you want to achieve. Melissa has this advice:

- **Ambient or background lighting** works whether you want a low-level glow to create a relaxing ambience or full illumination for practical purposes. Recessed ground lights, free-standing posts and poles, floodlights, wall brackets, lanterns, bulkheads, and sphere light fittings are all practical choices for ambient lighting.

- **Accent lighting** highlights specific features for either decorative or aesthetic reasons, such as garden statuary, plants, arches, windows, doorways, water features and signs or house numbers. For accent lighting, install the light fittings a short distance from the chosen feature and angle the beam to shine directly onto it. Ideal fittings for accent lighting include walkover lights, floodlights used as uplighters, wall-mounted spotlights as downlighters, submersible fittings, garden spike spotlights, surface and recessed light fittings.
- **Task lighting** is used to light up very specific areas with a clear purpose, such as lighting steps, pathways, driveways or changing levels. Surface recessed, walkover, drive-over and post fittings, bollards, outdoor table lamps, spotlights and short post lamps are all good choices for task lighting.
- **Lighting and security:** Security lighting should also play a big role in any outdoor lighting scheme. Exterior lights with a passive infrared sensor can improve the security of any outdoor space. The sensor activates the light when it detects movement within a pre-set range, and as such, deters criminals. The sensor can

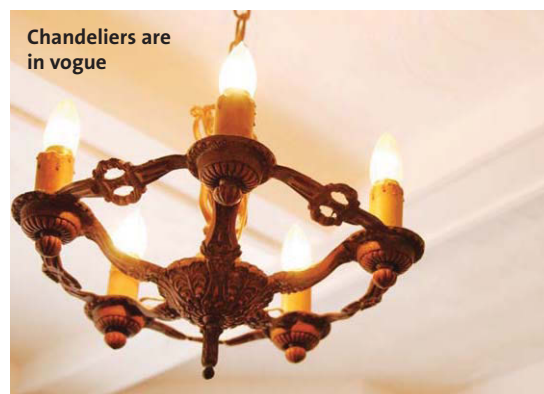
be attached to one fitting, or a remote sensor can be attached to more than a single fitting and when movement is detected at one point, all the selected lights will automatically come on. The latter is especially good for L-shaped areas.



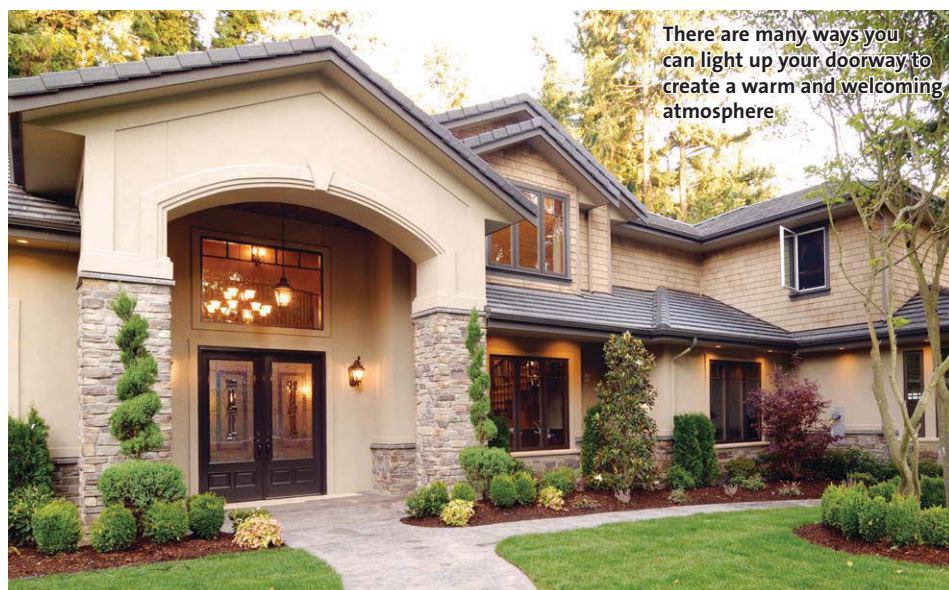
Wall-mounted lanterns create a relaxing ambience



Waterproof garden lights are a great way to light a pathway



Chandeliers are in vogue

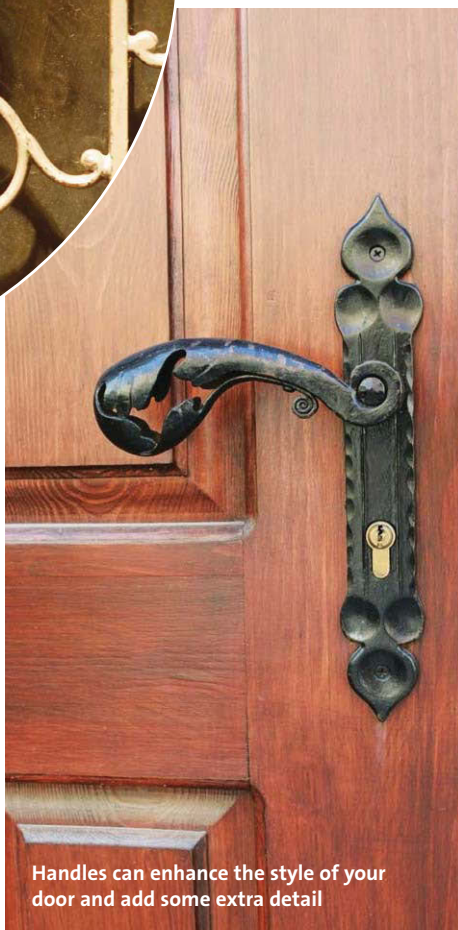


There are many ways you can light up your doorway to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere

Floodlights are also a good security solution – choose fittings with low-cost, energy-saving lights so that they can be left on all night as a deterrent for would-be intruders. Floodlights boast different size beams for different effects, and you can achieve a wide but shallow spread of light, or narrow but penetrating coverage. Daylight globes and fittings with built-in daylight sensors are a must-have for any outdoor space. Globes are switched on automatically by way of a special sensor that detects a loss in light at dusk or early evening. Conversely, in the morning these fittings are switched off, thus saving against leaving outside lights on all day, or when you go away on holiday.



There are many ways you can jazz up the look of your entranceway, including intricate handles and knockers or a water feature



Handles can enhance the style of your door and add some extra detail

According to Melissa, some of the latest trends in lighting outside areas include:

- **Submersible lights:** Ideal for lighting up water features at your entrance. Choose LED globes for a traditional white light, or coloured globes to really pack a colourful punch at night!
- **Recessed ground lights:** Recessed ground lights set in tiled or decking areas, or running up stairs, are attractive and functional. Available with either CFL or LED globes. They fit flush with the floor, so they are unobtrusive, almost unnoticeable during the day – but at night, they light the way.
- **Garden spike lights:** Waterproof garden spike lights are a great way to light the pathway to your front door – and they are quick and easy to install. Available with either CFL or LED globes.
- **Chandeliers:** Chandeliers are very much in vogue this season and the outdoors is no different. They are not waterproof, and so they are only suitable for covered entrance areas. Wrought iron and metal chandeliers are suitable for outdoor applications.



Water features and plants can bring an entrance area to life

Pic courtesy of The Friendly Plant

Securing your door

"Security gates don't have to look unattractive," says Ania. The key, she says, is choosing a design to match the front door, to follow the pattern and enhance the style.

"For example, I am designing a security gate for a modern house. It is 1.2m x 2.4m. The door of the same size will have Duco finish in a stormy grey colour with horizontal grooves and stainless steel ironmongery. The gate will be made out of horizontal polished steel flat bars, following the grooves on door. The contrast of the shiny steel against the matt grey paint of the door and the coordinated lines on door and gate make a unified and elegant statement."

Also available are wooden doors that are reinforced internally with a steel frame. These doors are attractive and functional, eliminating the need for a separate security gate.

Ania adds: "I believe that electronic security systems provide the best protection; alarm systems with door and window contacts, and an intercom system with security cameras."

Design tips

There are many ways you can jazz up the look of your entranceway. "Simple, plain and natural looking finishes are in right now," says Ania. Consider a sandblasted glass door, raw wood, or a high gloss or satin spray-painted finish for your door. For walls and columns, think about shuttered concrete or textured plasters, and for the flooring consider natural sandstone or granite tiles.

Soften your entrance area with plants. Plants should be chosen depending on your climatic zone and exposure to sun and wind. Water wise, indigenous flowers and shrubs will fare better and require less maintenance, according to Ania. Succulents are also a great choice and look great with very little maintenance. Plant them in a collection of pots in varying sizes, or for a modern look, plant up a few large pots with aloes or grasses.

"Water features and fishponds bring an entrance area to life," reveals Ania. Large urn fountains are popular choices, but small wall fountains will also add a touch of glamour.

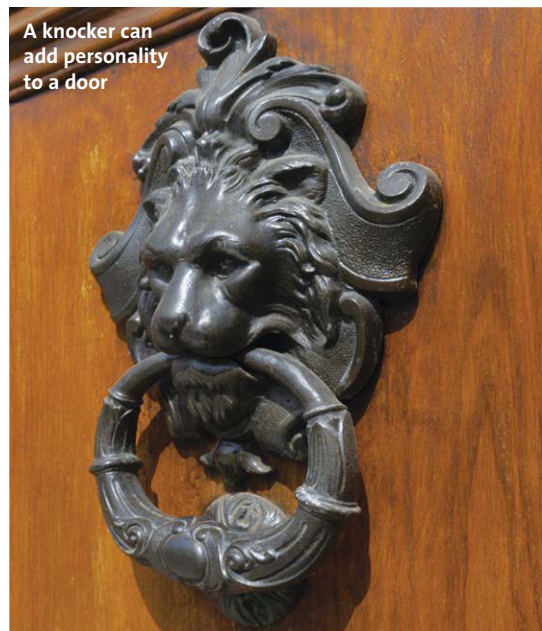
Paying attention to details in your door ironmongery can make an impact too. "Handles can enhance the style of your door and add some extra detail. Go for a simple long pull/push handle on a modern door, or a more intricate, handcrafted knob for a cottage style entrance. Steel plates, knockers, numbers and letter slots can also add so much personality to your door," explains Ania. ✂

Sources:

Ania Wojno Architects, 021 789 0728

Lighting Warehouse, 011 201 2621

A knocker can add personality to a door



Add colour and soften your entrance area with plants

Revive and repair

A paved area in any garden is aesthetically pleasing but should be regularly cleaned and maintained to keep it looking good

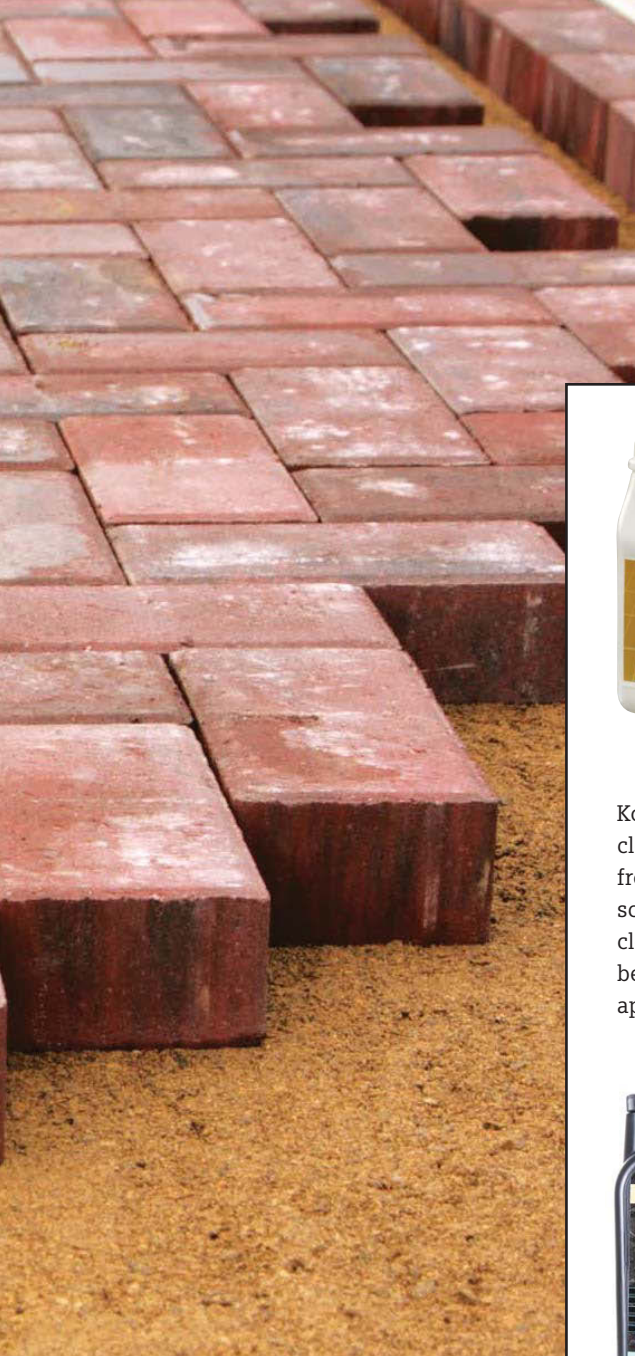
By Gina Hartoog

A beautiful paved driveway, garden path or pool area adds value to your home. Aesthetically, it looks neat and tidy and is pleasing to the eye. Paving is durable, but it is important to remember that it does require some maintenance to keep it in good condition. Paving is exposed to the elements and sand and other debris may build up on the surface. Surface stains can be very unsightly. With a bit of time, effort and the correct products, you should be able to repair and revive the paved areas around your home.

General cleaning and maintenance

New paving or paving in good condition can be cleaned once or twice per year, depending on your personal choice. Some homeowners opt for a thorough clean once per season. Additional cleaning may be required after periods of heavy rain.

Brush off the surface using a stiff bristle broom. If the area is heavily soiled, use a good quality cleaning product that is safe to use on clay or cement pavers. Rinse well with clean water. Use a hosepipe with a



Product spotlight



Woodoc 45 is a waterborne tile and cement sealer to protect unglazed, porous substrates against water ingress, weathering, pollution and general wear. The product can be used on porous substrates such as natural tiles, stone, brick (not face brick), cement, concrete and ornamental pavers. Apply to a dry surface. Available in 1ℓ and 5ℓ (2ℓ and 200ℓ on request).

Konkleen from A.Shak is a concentrated acid cleaner that can be used to remove excess mortar from brickwork as well thin layers of concrete from scaffolding and shuttering. It can also be used to clean brick and concrete paving. Konkleen should be diluted 1:10 with water. Rinse thoroughly after application. Available in 1ℓ.



Easy Clean by Tile & Floor Care (TFC) is a powerful alkaline degreaser and neutraliser. It is formulated to clean floors and tiled surfaces that have been soiled with oils, greases and general grime. It can also be used to neutralise tile and floor surfaces that have been washed with acids. Before sealing paving with Cement Sealer, you must clean the area with Easy Clean. Available in 1ℓ, 5ℓ and 25ℓ.

trigger nozzle set at medium pressure to remove any surface grime – don't use a high pressure washer as it can mar the paving surface. Once the paving is clean, check paving joints and re-grout any damaged areas (see the box on how to replace a paver on page 21).

Stain and surface debris

The surface of clay or cement pavers may become stained. Some stains are tougher to remove than others, but with the correct products, you should be able to

Cement Sealer from TFC is designed to seal clay and concrete paving. The sealer is a penetrating water-based sealer that uses the properties of silicones and acrylics to protect the paver from most stains. The product penetrates the paver and it maintains its anti-slip properties. Cement Sealer can be used for interior and exterior applications. Do not apply the product to a wet floor – wait eight hours after cleaning to apply. Allow to dry for one hour before applying another coat. A third or fourth coat may be required. Use TFC's Quick Clean to maintain the surface. Available in 1ℓ, 5ℓ and 25ℓ.





remove them. Always test the chemical first in an inconspicuous spot. Some chemicals can damage or stain the brick face.

- **Paint:** Apply a commercial paint remover or a solution of trisodium (1 part to 5 parts water). Apply the paint stripper to soften the paint spots, then remove with a plastic scraper. Wash well with soapy water.
- **Rust or iron:** Rusty metal items like garden furniture stored on paved areas may result in the paving becoming stained with dark rust spots. This can be a very tough stain to remove from paving. Corobrick suggests a solution of oxalic acid (1 part to 10 parts water). Undiluted lemon juice may not completely remove the stain, but it will lighten it. You can also try neat white vinegar.

- **Oil:** An oil stain that is treated promptly should not be too difficult to remove. Mop up as much of the oil as you can. Apply very hot water and dishwashing liquid. Scrub with a stiff bristle broom and rinse well.
- **Moss:** This can be particularly difficult to eradicate in very shady or damp areas on paving, like those at the base of guttering or under big trees. Moss has no roots, so you should be able to scrape the sections loose with a stiff bristle broom. First apply a moss killer and allow it to sit according to the manufacturer's guidelines. If you do not want to use a herbicide, sprinkle dry baking soda onto the moss or add a mixture of bleach and boiling water (1:2). Give it time to sit before sweeping with a stiff bristle broom.
- **Weeds and grass:** Remove grass and weeds on paving using weed killer. Apply the weed killer on a sunny day when there is no threat of rain. If the poison is washed off the paving, it may run into flowerbeds and kill the plants. Once the weeds start turning brown, sweep the paving to remove the dead weeds.

director at Woodoc, says that there are as many disadvantages to sealing as there are advantages. "One of the greatest advantages is, of course, that the paving should, after being sealed, be impervious to staining," explains Frikkie. "But one of the greatest disadvantages, in my opinion, is that the paving no longer absorbs water and any water will pool on the surface until swept away or evaporated. A wet surface is a slippery surface and this may be of particular concern around a swimming pool or any other areas subject to foot traffic."

If you decide to seal your paving, Frikkie says that the secret to success is making sure that the surface is correctly prepared prior to applying the sealer. No other sealer or coating should be applied to the pavers. "The easiest way to check is to see if a drop of water will penetrate into the pavers. If water does not penetrate, it is an indication that the pavers were sealed and no other sealer can be successfully applied without first removing the existing sealer. If water penetrates, you can proceed to the second step, which is cleaning the pavers. Clean the pavers with a good degreaser (also available at most hardware stores) and wash thoroughly."

Leave the pavers to dry for at least a week, with good air flow, before applying the sealer. If you live in a damp climate or experience rain during the period, the drying time may be longer. For best results, only apply the sealer once the pavers are completely dry. ✂

Sealing pavers

Once your paving is clean, should you consider sealing it? This is a good question and there is no right or wrong answer. It's optional – you don't have to, but you can.

Frikkie Greeff, managing



Replace chipped or broken pavers



Materials

Replacement pavers, plaster sand/cement mix (50:50), water, spirit level, screwdriver/chisel, paintbrush, mallet/hammer and trowel.

If upon inspection of your paving, you notice any chipped, cracked or broken pavers, You can lift the damaged ones and replace them.



Tip

Tip for sunken paving: Remove the bricks in this area only. Add sand to level the area. Use a piece of hardboard to level the surface. It should be firm before you replace the pavers.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Assemble materials and tools. Mark the pavers to be removed. If the pattern is complicated or pavers are a different colour, make sure you know which colour to replace them with and where.

Step 2: Use a chisel and hammer to break the joint alongside the paver. Once the joint is broken, use a screwdriver to pry up the damaged paver.



Once the paver starts to loosen, it is easy to lift with a screwdriver



Remove any sand or debris from the cavity or the new paver may not be level



If the ground in the cavity is sunken, add a layer of sand and tamp well



Clean away excess using a hose set on medium spray

too high, lift the paver and remove more sand. Once level, tap into place.

Step 5: Prepare the mortar mix (50:50) and grout joints between the pavers using a small building trowel. Use a garden hose set to medium spray and wash off excess mortar. Leave to dry. Dry sweeping is an alternative method for grouting pavers. Mix the sand and mortar and sprinkle the dry mixture onto the pavers. Add a little water and sweep into the paving joints.



Re-grout the new paver and allow to dry completely

Light relief

Skylights are the perfect solution for bringing natural light to poorly lit areas of your home



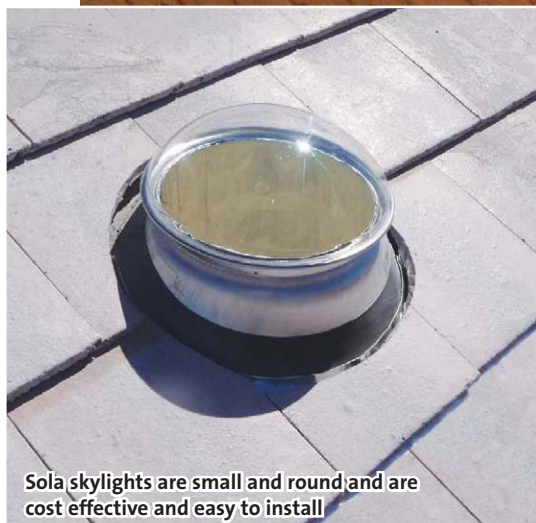
Did you know that a skylight can let in five times more natural light than a window of the same size? “Skylights are a simple but powerful solution for rooms that receive little light, such as south-facing rooms, those with small or no windows or for rooms that lead onto north-facing patios,” explains Clive Fenton, owner of Skybright Skylights and chairman of The Skylight Association of South Africa. “They allow a flow of natural light into a room and so reduce the need for electrical lighting, saving on electricity, and bring a stylish, airy ambience to a space. Well-chosen energy efficient skylights that open and have tinted glass can also help save on heating and cooling costs.”

Types of skylights

These days there are skylights available for just about every situation and every budget, says Clive. They can be installed on flat or pitched roofs and on roofs that are covered with tiles, thatch, slate or corrugated iron.

- **Sola skylights**

Also known as Sola Tubes, Sun Tunnels, Circular Skylights, Inviolite, Sola Flex Skylights, Tube Lights, depending on the manufacturer, these are the small, round skylights that you often see as a ‘bubble’ protruding from a roof. They consist of a skylight that goes on the roof, a flexible or solid duct that runs from the skylight to the ceiling and a diffuser that fits in the ceiling, so you don’t actually look up and out of the tube and see the sky. They are usually made from a type of ‘plastic’ such as polycarbonate. These skylights are cost effective and quick and easy to install. They can be installed by an experienced DIY’er, however I recommend that you use an accredited installer to avoid problems in the future,” says Clive. “They are especially suited to small areas that need a quick boost of light, such as passageways, guest toilets, pantries and walk-in cupboards.”



Sola skylights are small and round and are cost effective and easy to install

“Bear in mind, however, that Sola Tubes work best when the sun is directly over them, so they are more suited for north-, west- or east-facing roofs and they are not very effective on overcast days. Also, because of the diffuser, you lose about 20% of the incoming light, so although they work well for small spaces, they are not suited for larger rooms that need a substantial injection of light,” advises Clive.

- **Professional or conventional skylights**

“Designed for larger rooms, such as bathrooms, kitchens, dining rooms, lounges and bedrooms, these skylights



Conventional skylights are effective at lighting up larger rooms, even on overcast days

are effective in natural daylight and not only sunlight, so they still help to light up a room on overcast days,” Clive explains. Much larger than sola skylights, they are like an extra window, but more effective, and are made of clear materials, such as glass or ‘plastic’, so when you look up you are able to see the sky. They also successfully allow in light on south-facing roofs. They are usually fitted into pitched roofs of 15° or more and come in standard sizes, or you can have the size of your choice custom made, depending on which manufacturer you choose. Conventional skylights come in three basic unit types: Fixed units are installed into a space requiring light, while centre pivot units or top hung units, which can be opened, are used in areas requiring both light and ventilation. A centre pivot skylight is perfect for attics or lofts. Depending on the manufacturer, your conventional



Skylights successfully allow in light on south-facing roofs

Pic courtesy of Skybright Skylights

skylight will come with a pre-made flashing, which helps to make the skylight watertight. It may also have a lead skirt (apron) in front that is moulded into the profile for your tile. They are also sold as DIY units, but it is best to have a professional installation team or roofing specialist install these units. "Rather steer clear of skylight units that require a waterproofing material and bandage (paint) system as these require a lot more maintenance. Insist that the installation team be responsible for the waterproofing of your skylights," advises Clive.

• **Pyramid skylights**

Designed for flat roofs with a pitch of less than 15°, such as concrete slabs, mock slabs and IBR roof sheeting, pyramid skylights can be small square units to long rectangular units with a



Pyramid skylights are designed for flat roofs



Well-chosen skylights can bring style and ambience to a room

Pic courtesy of Skybright Skylights

pitch of between 20-75°. They have a base frame and the pyramid shape is made using glass to glass with silicon butt joints or, in the case of larger or longer units, rafters are used to support the glass. They come in standard sizes, but are more often custom made to fit the hole's size.

Waterproofing of pyramid skylights is vitally important and should be left to the installation team or professional waterproofing company. "The skylight company should provide a certificate with a three to five year guarantee against any leaks, and with regular maintenance, the waterproofing can last up to 20 years or longer," says Clive. Some pyramid skylights have base frames that have an overhanging frame system, alleviating the need to waterproof the skylight to the main existing waterproofing. These are well suited to patios where floor tiles are installed.

Installation

"Simply speaking, if you want a professional job go to the specialists," advises Clive. It is advisable to choose a company that is a member of The Skylight Association of South Africa and which has been in business for a long time as they will have a lot of experience. Ensure that you receive a Certificate of Conformance as building inspectors may ask to see this. Discuss what company your architect or builder wants to use before building commences and ensure that you are happy with their credentials. "Properly installed skylights don't leak," says Clive. "The reason many homeowners have had problems with leaking skylights is because of poor installations. Remember the saying 'penny wise and pound foolish'. Also use a professional skylight company when repairing a skylight," Clive adds. Most companies give a guarantee of between one to five years on their installation, while some, like Skybright Skylights, offer a 15-year guarantee.

Sola skylights usually take two to three hours to install while conventional skylights may take between one to three days to fit. This is because conventional skylights are usually installed between exposed beams or trusses. In the case of larger skylights, cutting and re-bracing of the trusses may be required, which will increase the cost of the installation. In existing homes, the installation includes fitting the skylight into the roof, flashing (waterproofing) it, boxing down to the ceiling, fitting a beading between the vertical and the

A skylight can let in five times more natural light than a window of the same size



Centre pivot skylights which can be opened are perfect for loft rooms

Where to install skylights

Kitchens

A bright, airy kitchen makes a pleasant working environment and adds value to a home, however many kitchens are set at the back of houses and face south without large windows to let in natural light. Conventional opening skylight units in a kitchen are popular and let out food smells and heat – particularly useful in open-plan homes.

Lounges and dining rooms

Most living areas in modern homes have large windows, which allow in sufficient light. However, in older homes, south-facing homes, or those with covered patios that block the light from living areas (see 'Patios' below), you may wish to brighten up your living areas by installing conventional skylights.

Patios

Covered patios often reduce the amount of natural light reaching the living areas that they lead from, so installing skylights on the patio will help with the amount of light entering the living areas. In order for enough natural light to reach the adjoining rooms, skylights above the windows and sliding doors need to be the same length as the door or window and between 900-1 000mm wide.

Bathrooms

Usually situated on the south side of homes, bathrooms mostly have small high windows, allowing little light inside. Conventional opening skylights will make a huge difference and will also let out steam and moisture.

Dressing rooms

Often set between the bedroom and the bathroom with no natural light source, dressing rooms usually require electrical lighting. Sola skylights are ideal for adding natural light in small dressing room areas.

Entrance halls and passages

Conventional skylights will give your entrance hall a bright, welcoming feel, which is important as this is the first impression visitors have of your home. Passages are usually dark and lights are often left burning there. Conventional skylights will suit passages in a home with a low pitch roof where the depth from the roof to the ceiling is relatively low, while sola skylights are great for passages where the house has a steeply pitched roof and where the depth is over 2.5m between the roof and the ceiling.

horizontal ceilings and painting the boxing. Depending on where the skylight is positioned in the roof and in which room, the pitch of the roof will determine the depth of the boxing from skylight to ceiling level. This will also determine the cost of the installation. The deeper the boxing, the more material is required and the longer it takes to do the installation. When it comes to new skylights and alterations, the installation team may be requested to install the skylight and the boxing, leaving the builder to do the ceiling work, which includes completing the Rhino, lighting and painting.

Care and maintenance

"Very little maintenance is required on skylights. However, regularly inspect your skylight to ensure there is no damage to it or the flashing – particularly those on concrete slabs," advises Clive. "As most companies offer a guarantee of five years on the waterproofing, it is advisable to get the company out after five years to do an inspection." ✖

Sources:

Skybright Skylights, www.skybright.co.za

The Skylight Association of South Africa (SASA),

www.aamsa.co.za



RENTAL AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT MADE this
BETWEEN:

Your home, or ours?

Know what's expected of you if you let out your property or are a tenant leasing property from a landlord

By Gina Hartoog



Whether you have a property that you let out to tenants or you rent property from a landlord, it is important to understand everyone's rights and responsibilities before you sign a lease.

Legally speaking

Rental properties are governed by various Acts in terms of the law. The Rental Housing Act [No. 50 of 1999], the Consumer Protection Act [No. 68 of 2008] and the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (PIE) govern rental agreements.

The Rental Housing Act came into effect in August 2000 and was set up to regulate the relationships between landlords and their tenants. It makes various provisions which safeguard both tenant and landlord. General requirements from both parties are set out in the Act and provide a sound base for the lease agreement. The Act also makes provision for Rental Housing Tribunals to

be set up in all provinces to resolve various disputes between tenants and landlords. The Act defines a landlord as one who owns property or his legal agent.

The Consumer Protection (CPA) also makes provision for rentals. In terms of the Act, a tenant is allowed to cancel his lease by providing 20 business days' notice to the landlord. The CPA also states that a written lease agreement must be in plain language that a consumer with average literacy skills can understand.

The PIE Act prohibits unlawful eviction, but does give landlords legitimate recourse to expel tenants in breach of their contracts. Procedures set out in the PIE Act must be properly followed by the landlord before any eviction can legally proceed.

Lease agreements

A lease is a contract entered into by the tenant and the landlord. Although the Act does allow for verbal agreements, leases in writing are preferable. A written agreement



Maintenance and repairs to plumbing and hot water cylinders fall under the landlord's obligations



must be signed by both parties. All requirements by both parties should be clearly set out in the lease. Before a lease is signed, the landlord or his/her agent can conduct an employment check, credit checks and possibly ask for reference from a previous landlord. Proper screening of tenants before the lease is signed can prevent unnecessary problems later on.

Lease periods can be set up for any period, although most landlords offer a six- or 12-month lease. A written lease must indicate the name of both the landlord and tenant as well as the property address. The rental amount must be clearly stated. If water and electricity costs are included or excluded in the lease amount, this must be stated.

Avoid grey areas and clearly specify all responsibilities for both landlord and tenant in the lease. If the tenant would like the carpets cleaned or the unit painted, this should be stated in the lease, preferably within a stipulated time period. The landlord can also request in the lease that the

tenant clean all carpets and blinds before vacating the unit. A receipt for this should be provided. All supplied fittings and furnishings should be listed.

Before the lease is signed, prior to the tenant moving in, the landlord, his or her agent and the tenant should do a joint inspection of the property to check for any defects or damages. These can be listed and attached to the lease as an annexure.

If either party does not uphold his or her obligations in terms of the lease, they are in breach of contract and legal action can be taken. Also note that in any agreement which states 'one calendar month' in terms of notice, this must be given on the first of the month. Should the notice be given after the first, the tenant is responsible for the rental until the end of the next month.

The landlord's responsibilities

The law states that the landlord must ensure that the property is in a condition that is reasonably fit for living. The landlord must place the tenant's deposit in an interest bearing bank account and provide the tenant with a receipt for all rent payments received. Rent charges must be reasonable in terms of the property.

Landlords should also respect the tenant's right to privacy. Inspections of the property can only be made with a reasonable amount of warning from the landlord to the tenant. No increases in the rent amount may be enforced during the lease term. Negotiations for an increase in rental can only be done before a new lease is signed. It is the responsibility of the landlord to swiftly attend to urgent repairs to the property. This is also in his or her best interest as prolonged repairs may cause more damage and end up being more costly. Maintenance and repairs to plumbing and hot water cylinders fall under the landlord's obligations.

Tenants' rights and responsibilities

The tenant is legally responsible to ensure that rental monies are paid on time. The tenant agrees to use the property only for its purpose in terms of the agreement. No property may be sub-let by a tenant

without permission from the landlord. The tenant also agrees to ensure that after the rent period is complete, the property remains in the same condition prior to occupation, with reasonable wear and tear. No alternations may be done without permission of the landlord. The landlord may also state in the lease that the tenant give a written list of all items that need to be fixed to walls with bolts, nails or hooks – or he may request that no nails or hooks are hammered into walls. Should a tenant cause unintended damage to the property during the lease period, he or she should consult the landlord before hiring a contractor to make repairs.

Other obligations for the tenant as set up in the lease must be fulfilled. These may include maintenance of the garden, guttering, swimming pool (chemicals etc), electrical systems, sewerage systems, electric fencing and others as required by the property.

Tenants are legally not allowed to withhold rental payments. If you have a

dispute with the landlord, which cannot be amicably resolved, keep your payments current and approach the Rental Housing Tribunal in your province for assistance.

Lease ends

Once the lease ends, the landlord and/or his agent can arrange to inspect the property to record any damage within three days before the lease ends. Deposit and interest received can be used in lieu of monies owed by the tenant or to replace lost (for example, keys/gate remote) or damaged items. The tenant has the right to inspect receipts for all replaced items. Any monies remaining after these expenses are covered must be paid over to the tenant within 14 days. Should the property be in good order, the full amount should be paid over within seven days and this includes the interest earned on the money. ✖

Source:

Information courtesy of Marc Fauciglietti, Seeff, Edenvale, 011-409-5900 or 083-948-7100

The tenant is legally responsible to ensure that rental monies are paid on time



Holes a plenty

A drill is probably the flagship tool for any DIY'er and a cordless drill provides you with all the benefits of an electric drill plus a whole lot more. Cordless drills are powerful, efficient and best of all you can take them anywhere without having to worry about a cable. Here are some options

By Roelof Strydom

What to look for

- Buy a cordless drill that is powered by lithium-ion battery technology. These batteries are smaller and lighter than nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd) and nickel-metal hydride (Ni-MH) batteries. They also don't suffer from the dreaded memory effect and don't self-discharge. Always have two or more batteries, so that when the one is flat, you can continue working with another one.
- Cordless drills have keyless chucks, therefore choose one that's easy to tighten and loosen, but still gives superior clamping power.
- Look for a drill with a two-speed gearbox; high speed for drilling and low speed for screwdriving.
- The drill you choose should have a range of clutch settings that is easy to change.



Tip

An adjustable clutch separates electric drills from cordless drill/drivers. A cordless drill with various clutch setting gives you control so you don't strip or over tighten a screw.

Triton T12 Drill Driver

The Triton T12 Drill Driver has a two-speed gearbox, which includes 17 torque settings plus drill. It puts out 22Nm at 400rpm in low gear and 5Nm at 1 300rpm in high gear. It has a detachable 10mm keyless chuck. Included are two batteries and a charger



Available from:	www.tritontools.com
Weight:	1.18kg
Voltage:	12V lithium-ion; 1.5Ah
Recommended retail price:	R2 499

Festool Cordless Drill T15+3

With its two-speed gearbox, the Festool Cordless Drill T15+3 reaches an idle speed of 450rpm in low gear and 1 500rpm in high gear. The maximum wood and metal drilling diameters are 35mm and 16mm respectively, while the maximum torque is 27Nm (wood) and 40Nm (metal). It has a keyless chuck with a 1.5mm to 13mm chuck range. Included are two batteries and a charger.



Available from:	www.festool.co.za
Weight:	1.5kg
Power cord length:	14.4V lithium-ion; 3.0Ah
Recommended retail price:	R7 570

Makita DHP454ZK Impact Drill/Driver

With its two-speed gearbox, 16 torque settings plus drill and maximum torque of 80Nm, this Makita drill driver is a powerful machine. Its no-load speed is 400rpm in low gear and 1 700rpm in high gear, and it can deliver up to 6 000 impacts per minute in low gear and 25 500 impacts per minute in high gear. It has a keyless chuck and is able to drill 65mm holes in wood, 16mm in masonry and 13mm in steel. The battery and charger are sold separately as they are interchangeable with other Makita tools in the LXT range.

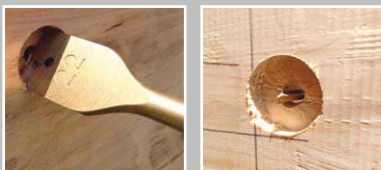


Available from:	www.makita.co.za
Weight:	2.4kg
Voltage:	18V lithium-ion; 3.0Ah
Recommended retail price:	R2 159

Technique: A perfect hole every time

Spade bits

Spade drill bits tend to cause breakout when they exit the hole, but there is a simple way to prevent this from happening. Drill until you see the tip of the spade bit protruding from the hole, then remove the entire bit from the hole and start drilling from the back again. This way you will end up with a perfect hole without any breakout.



Drilling into masonry

It is imperative to keep the drill and drill bit straight when drilling into masonry because if the drill sags, the bit sits skew inside the hole and then makes the hole slightly bigger than it should be. Then, when you place a wall plug in the hole, you'll notice it sits loose. The problem comes when you hang something, like a shelf, onto the wall – chances are it will come crashing down in a few months' time because the wall plug can't anchor itself inside the hole.

Drilling into thick steel

To make drilling easier, use some cutting fluid to cool down the drill bit when drilling into thick steel. This will extend your drill bit's lifespan as the extreme heat caused by friction causes drill bits to blunt quicker.

Bosch PSR 18 Li-2 Cordless Drill/Driver

This Bosch cordless drill/driver with 10mm keyless chuck can be purchased with two batteries and the charger, or the drill alone can be purchased as the batteries are interchangeable with the other tools in the lithium-ion range. It has a two-speed gearbox with no-load speeds of 400rpm and 1 340rpm respectively and has 10 torque settings plus drill. It has a maximum torque of 46Nm and can drill up to 35mm holes in wood and 10mm holes in metal.



Available from:	www.bosch-do-it.co.za
Weight:	1.3kg
Voltage:	18V lithium-ion; 1.5Ah
Recommended retail price:	R2 199

Upgrade those bits

Drilling into a host of materials requires specialised drill bits:

- The Alpen Diamond drill bit allows you to easily drill into a variety of tiles such as porcelain and ceramic, and even glass, marble and granite.
- Titanium bits like the Eureka Titanium drill bit are stronger than HSS black bits. They also last about five times longer than HSS black bits.
- The Ruwag Wood Brad Point drill bit has a centring tip and two spurs, which make drilling holes for dowels easy.



DeWalt DCD785M2 18V XR

Li-ion Compact Hammer

Drill/Driver

This drill has a no-load speed of 600rpm in low gear and 2 000rpm in high gear. It has 14 torque settings as well as a hammer action, which can deliver up to 10 200 beats per minute in low gear and 34 000 beats per minute in high gear. Chuck capacity ranges from 1.5mm to 13mm. Maximum torque is 60Nm and it is able to drill 38mm holes in wood and 13mm in both metal and masonry.



Available from:	www.dewaltpowertools.co.za
Weight:	1.88kg
Voltage:	18V lithium-ion; 4.0Ah
Recommended retail price:	R5 159

Skil 2244MA Cordless

Drill/Driver

The two-speed gearbox can reach no-load speeds of 375rpm and 1 400rpm in low and high gear respectively while putting out maximum torque of 36Nm. It has 15 torque settings plus drill and a chuck capacity ranging from 0.8mm to 10mm – it is able to drill up to 30mm holes in wood and 10mm in metal. Included are two batteries and a charger.



Available from:	www.skil.co.za
Weight:	1.2kg
Voltage:	14.4V lithium-ion; 1.3Ah
Recommended retail price:	R1 499

Chance of showers

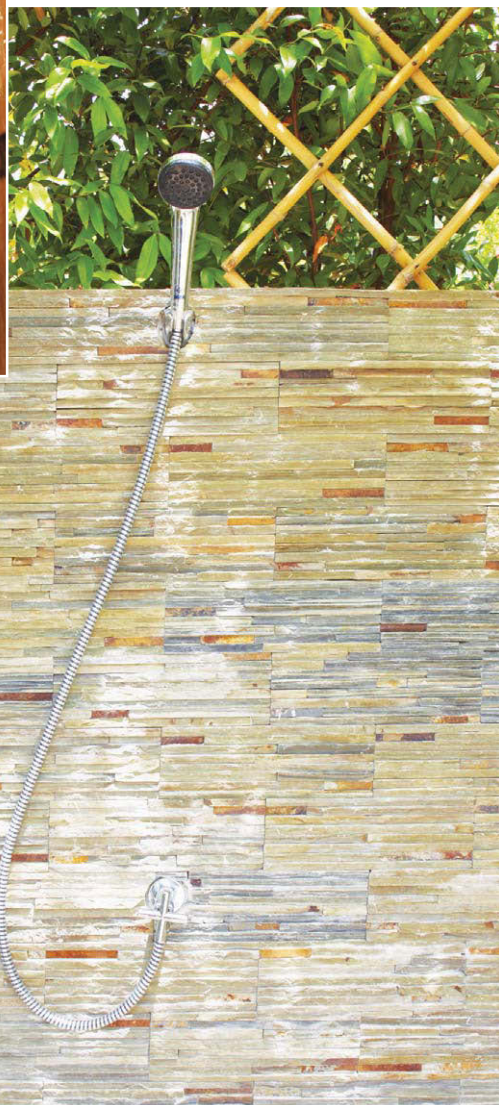
The concept of having an outdoor shower has grown in popularity over the years and it is now considered a functional extension of the home

Showering outdoors can be a therapeutic experience that connects you with nature. If you live at the coast, you can rinse the sand from between your toes after a long day at the beach or simply wash away the day's stress under the stars.

Liza Watermeyer, retail and display coordinator at Tile Africa, says what's great about taking your showers outdoors is that it need not cost you an arm and a leg and the actual shower can be used as an essential feature in your garden, next to the pool or adjacent to the house.

Summer provides the perfect excuse to fit an outdoor shower, but there are some important considerations to think about before installing one. The first aspect you need to think about is where the water supply will come from. This is important, as an outdoor shower will likely use the plumbing of the home and this also means that it will probably be positioned within close proximity to the house.

Should you not choose to use the plumbing of the home for your outdoor shower then your next option would be to use a garden hose, which you can hook up to a shower fixture – this will only be a cold water facility and will not be suitable for use when it's chilly outside.





Liza shares a few pointers that will help you make the most out of your outdoor shower installation:

- **Evaluate the function:** What is your outdoor shower for? If all you want is a quick rinse, then you may be able to get away with minimal plumbing work. However, if you intend bringing indoor conveniences outdoors, you need to consider upgrading your hot water system, especially if you like to linger under the spray.
- **Examine the conditions:** Natural elements can take their toll on an outdoor shower, so it's important to get fixtures that will endure salt, sand and sun. Use materials that are both rot and mildew resistant and carefully seal the area where the outdoor shower joins the house. You also need to waterproof under the tiles up to shower rose height, which is important to remember if you're using tiles as a backing for the shower.
- **Design the drain:** Soap and shampoo residue can clog up drainage systems and they also threaten natural vegetation, so you need to consider the environment. Also note that if you're building on soil that drains slowly, you'll need more than just a simple opening in the floor.



Mosaics are great as they are long lasting and create a textured floor surface that is less slippery

Fit a French drain, which directs water underground or into the main waste line.

- **Slope the floor:** Make sure the floor slopes towards the drain outlet so that the water drains completely. Lay a mortar bed and build the gradient into the mortar. Once this has cured, apply a waterproofing system and let it sit. When this has cured, you can start with the tile installation.
- **Choose the tiles:** Avoid smooth and polished tiles, rather choose textured

tiles. Mosaics are great as they are long lasting, create a textured floor surface that is less slippery, and you can design your own unique motif.

- **Remember the plumbing:** This is especially important when building a new home as you need to run the plumbing through the wall to share with your outdoor oasis. Outdoor showers are further proof that exteriors of homes are no longer areas that are only used occasionally; they are functional extensions of the home.

Source:

Tile Africa, www.tileafrica.co.za

Natural elements can take their toll on an outdoor shower, so it's important to get fixtures that will endure salt, sand and sun

Lighten up

Apart from providing light, a lamp can also be a stylish addition to a reading or bedside table

By André Gous



Tools

- Angle grinder
- Drill
- 6mm drill bit
- Tape measure
- Welding machine
- Welding electrodes
- Pliers
- Bending machine or jigs



Materials

- 3070mm of 8mm thick round bar
- Twin-flex electrical wire
- Electrical on/off switch
- Three-prong wall plug
- Light fitting
- Light bulb
- Paint
- 6mm nut and bolt
- One 65mm metal cap

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: After cutting all the necessary pieces for the lamp, begin its construction. Start with the two 500mm round bar lengths, which will be utilised for its feet. Bend each 500mm length into what resembles the number '6'. Remember to match the two with each other.

Step 2: Turn your attention to the two 800mm round bar lengths from which you will construct the lamp's body. Take one of the pieces and bend one of its ends into a scroll. Curve the remaining part of the round bar. The second 800mm length gets the same sized scroll as the first 800mm length in one of its two ends. The other end also gets a scroll, but a bit smaller. Once finished, it should resemble the letter 'S'. See photo 2.

Step 3: Start welding the various parts together. First, place the two scrolls that will be used for the lamp's feet together, as shown in photo 3, and weld together.

Step 4: Place the two remaining pieces together, as shown in photo 4, and weld together as well.

Step 5: Weld the body of the lamp onto the feet (see photo 5). Make sure the lamp's body and feet are square with each other before welding, otherwise the lamp will be skew.

Step 6: Drill a 6mm off-centre hole in the metal cap. Next, weld the cap onto the top



1 Bend the scrolls for the feet



2 This will be the lamp's body



Cutting list

- One 470mm length of 8mm round bar
- Two 800mm lengths of 8mm round bar
- Two 500mm lengths of 8mm round bar

Project guide



Difficulty: Intermediate



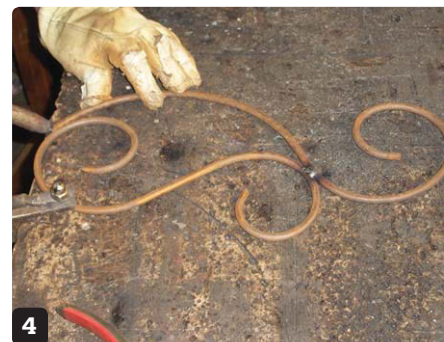
Estimated cost: R120



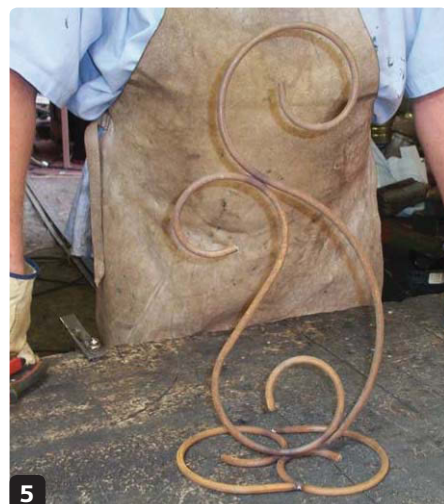
Estimated time: Half a day



3 Weld the feet together



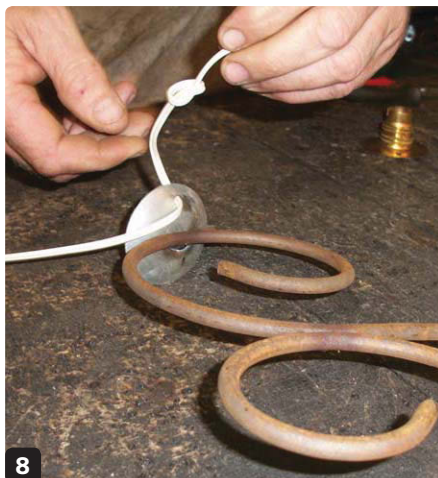
4 Weld the lamp's body together



5 Weld the body onto the feet and make sure it is square



6 Drill a 6mm hole in the metal cap



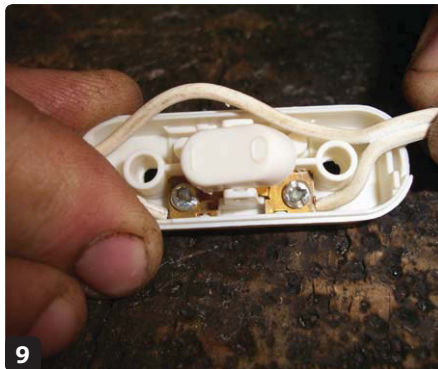
8 Feed the electrical wire through the hole in the metal cap



10 Connect the wire to the light fitting



7 Weld the 470mm length of round bar onto the back of the lamp's body



9 Install the on/off switch



11 Transfer the hole in the light fitting's base plate to the metal cap

of the lamp, ensuring that the hole in the cap is perpendicular to the lamp's body.

Step 7: Place the lamp on its side so that the hole in the cap points upwards. Take the remaining 470mm piece of round bar and weld it onto the back of the lamp's body. This will be used to hide the lamp's wire.

Step 8: Feed Twin-flex electrical wire through the hole in the cap and make a knot in the wire about 50mm from the end. The knot will keep the wire in place as well as ensure it is long enough when you need to connect it to the light fitting. Depending on the colour you want the lamps to be, choose the colour of the Twin-flex wire accordingly.

Step 9: Determine how long you want the lamp's electrical wire to be and cut it to

size. Depending on where you want the on/off switch, separate the two wires from each other and cut only one of the wires. Next, remove the insulation from the two ends and connect them to the on/off switch (see photo 9).

Step 10: To connect the wire to the light fitting, you first need to disassemble it. Next, feed the wire through the centre hole of the light fitting's base plate. Separate the two ends and remove the insulation. Then connect the ends to the light fitting by means of the screws. Finally, reassemble the light fitting.

Step 11: Place the light fitting on top of the metal cap and use a marking pen to transfer the position of the hole in the light fitting to the metal cap. This is the hole without the electrical wire. Drill a second 6mm hole in the metal cap.

Step 12: Use a 6mm nut and bolt to secure the light fitting to the metal cap.

Step 13: Use a hot glue gun to stick the Twin-flex electrical wire onto the 470mm length of round bar to give the lamp a neat look. Then connect a three-prong wall plug to the other end of the wire.

Step 14: Give the lamp a coat of paint, add a lampshade, screw in a light bulb and you are ready to spread some light. ✂



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



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How to install laminate flooring

Find out how to install laminate flooring;
a great upgrade to any room

By Gregg Cocking



Tools & Materials

In order to install laminate planks quickly and in a professional manner, you should use the right tools.

You will need:

- Laminate flooring packs
- Underlay for laminate flooring
- Adhesive tape
- Wood glue
- Spirit level
- Rubber hammer
- Hammer
- Chisel
- Measuring tape
- Saws
- Pry bar

When moving into our new home, we weren't the greatest fans of the carpeting, which at that stage was already slightly stained and starting to become tacky, even after numerous professional companies had tried to remove the stains. So, after a year of putting up with them we eventually took the plunge and had the three bedrooms fitted with laminate floors.

After much consideration we decided to go with 8mm Country Oak from Floors Direct. And this is how we did it.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Before you even begin you'll need to acclimatise your new laminate flooring in the house for 48 hours. Humidity and the temperature in a house can affect all types of installations (not just cheap flooring). Take off any plastic wrapping and leave the boards to acclimatise. When you do get to work, start by emptying the rooms of any furniture and pulling up the carpets.

Step 2: Once the carpets are up, the undercarpet needs to come off too – depending on the original installation you



1 One of the rooms with its old carpet



5 Remove any debris to prepare the room for the self-levelling compound

may find clumps of carpet stuck to the glue on the floor – these obviously need to be removed too, and a chisel often works quickest.

Step 3: Use a hammer and pry bar to remove any excess wood from the floor.

Step 4: Once the carpets are removed there shouldn't be any debris or dirt on the subfloor (many people who know how to install laminate flooring all insist on this). Check to make sure that the floor is level, otherwise a screed may need to be put down to level the floor.

Step 5: Unfortunately for us, our floors were far from level. A screed is a thin layer of cement mix laid over a floor surface. Screeds are usually used to create a smooth, even surface ready for further floor coverings. Laying screed over a large area can be quite difficult, however the use of a self-levelling compound helps to achieve an even, level finish.

Step 6: Mix the self-levelling compound according to the instructions listed on the package. The mix starts to set after about 15 minutes, so if you have a larger floor area, divide it into sections and only mix enough for one section at a time.

Step 7: Spread the self-levelling compound over the floor, starting from the corner furthest from the door.

Step 8: Leave the compound to cure completely before walking on the floor or applying any additional floor coverings. Refer to the instructions on the label for required drying time.

Step 9: We decided to leave the floors to cure fully over the weekend. We cannot emphasise enough the importance of the preparation stage, otherwise you could



2 Time for the carpets to be ripped out



6 Mix the self-levelling compound well



3 Everything comes out down to the raw concrete floor



7 Pour the compound on the raw floor



4 Use a pry bar to remove the nailed wooden strips from the floor



8 Work your way through the room



9 One room done



10 Lay the plastic underlay



11 Use a sharp knife to cut the underlay



12 Install the boards parallel with the natural light

constantly face issues, such as increasing gaps between the laminate boards, bumps or even cracks.

Step 10: Lay the plastic underlay, ensuring that there are no gaps.

Step 11: Use a craft knife to cut the underlay.

Step 12: The direction in which you start laying the laminate flooring is important. Usually the laminate boards are installed in such a way that the rows are parallel with the light from your windows. Nevertheless, it is not wrong to install the laminate planks starting with the longest wall of the room. Note that the first row should be started with a full board. This is important as this way the boards will be properly locked together and you will waste fewer materials.

Step 13: Note that you should leave a 10mm clearance along each wall, door or any other obstacle as the laminate tends to expand over time. The easiest way to do this is to use small pieces of laminate flooring, which should be used as spacers.



13 You should leave a 10mm clearance along each wall



14 Remember! Measure twice, cut once

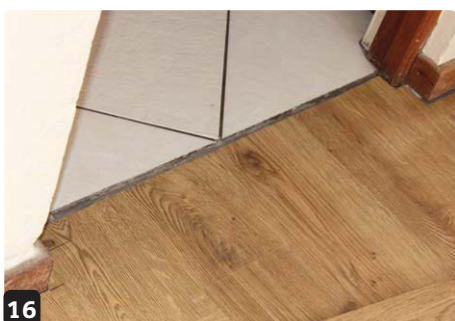
Tips

- The quality of your saw blade is essential for a good cut, so do not use dull blades. The replacement of the blade must be done according to manufacturer's instructions, using safety gloves and only after the tool is unplugged.
- The most important aspect is to get the first row extremely straight. If this doesn't happen, then the installation of the laminate flooring will be compromised. Make sure the first rows are properly aligned, the joints are perfectly sealed and there is no gap between the laminate boards.
- Do not apply too much force when clicking the laminate boards into place as you risk damaging the grooves; just try to connect them progressively. Make sure there is no gap between the planks, otherwise tap them gently to close it.
- If by any chance two planks are not joined properly, then you have to unlock them carefully and repeat the procedure until you get the desired result. Do not use laminate boards that are damaged as in time their flaws will enhance.
- Connect the rows together with great care. Tilt the row at about 45° and connect it to the flooring. Next, the laminate flooring requires a light tap with a mallet in order to secure the connections.
- When installing the last row of laminate flooring, slide the last planks at an angle, and then use a pry bar to lay them into place. Make sure there's a 10mm space between the last row and your wall for your expansion gap.
- Always read the instructions for your specific brand of flooring. The above steps are the general steps and some particular types and/or brands of flooring may have special instructions for their installation.



15

A quality saw guarantees a quality cut



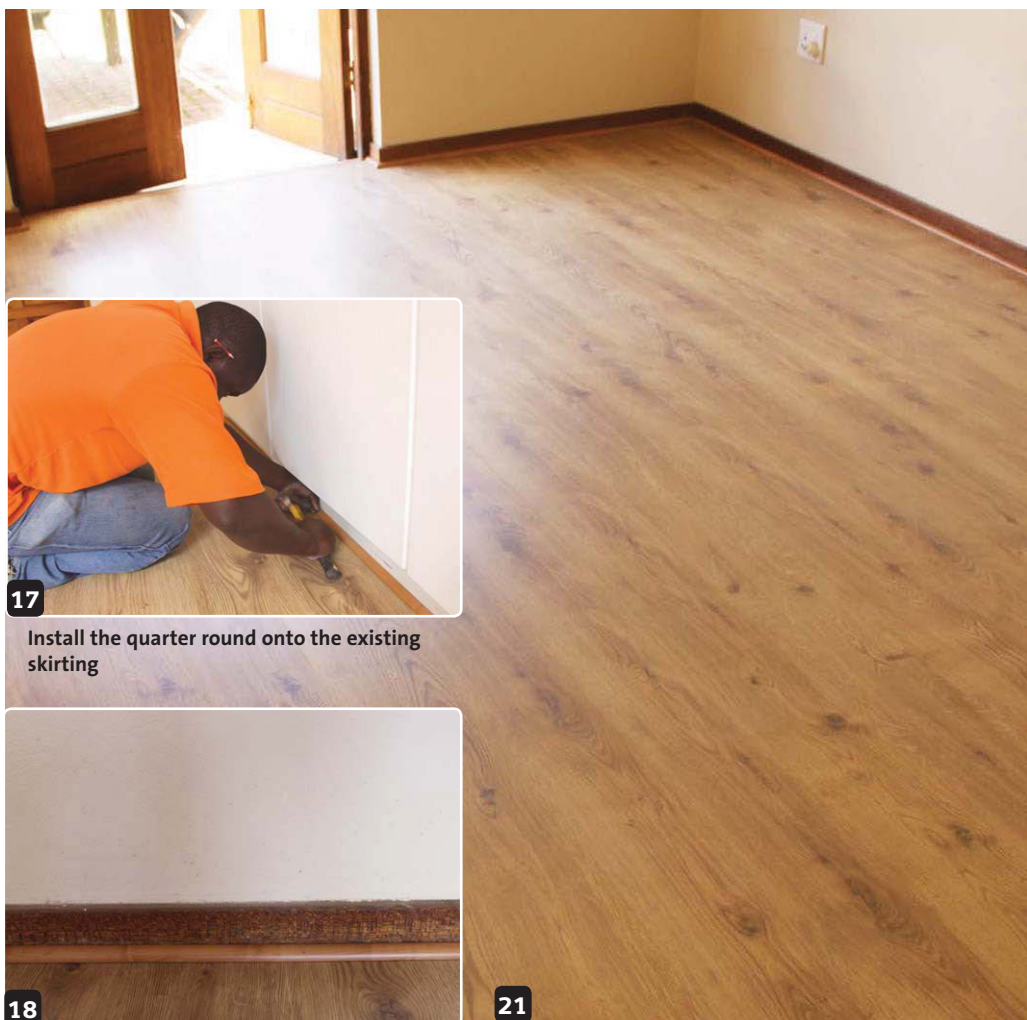
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Reaching the end of the room

Step 14: Issues may arise especially alongside walls or openings as you might find irregularities there. In order to make a proper cut, you need to take correct measurements. The first step is to turn the laminate board with the tongue pointing towards the wall. If you have a saw with downward oriented teeth, place the board with its face up, otherwise lay it with the top face down. Pay attention to the fact that when doing that, you should also use the spacers. If you overlook this aspect, you will get a laminate board that is too large, and you will find it impossible to lock it into position. The next step is to recreate the cutting set-up to obtain a good, straight cut.

Step 15: Cut the board according to your measurements. The distance between the last row of laminate flooring and the wall, minus the spacer, should be greater than 50mm.

Step 16: Once the measured and trimmed boards are in place at the door opening, install the quarter round onto the existing skirting. At each door opening, cut to size and install an aluminium reducer, the same



17

Install the quarter round onto the existing skirting



18

This is what it should look like

21

This is a job well done in one of the rooms



19

Install an aluminium reducer at each door



20

Do this with silicone

colour as the quarter rounds that were installed.

Step 17: Because of the screed as well as the height of the floorboards, one of our doors needed 100mm to be trimmed off it so that it could open and close without obstruction. After carefully measuring, we used a circular saw to trim the door. ✂

Sources: www.laminateflooringreviews.net, www.howtospecialist.com



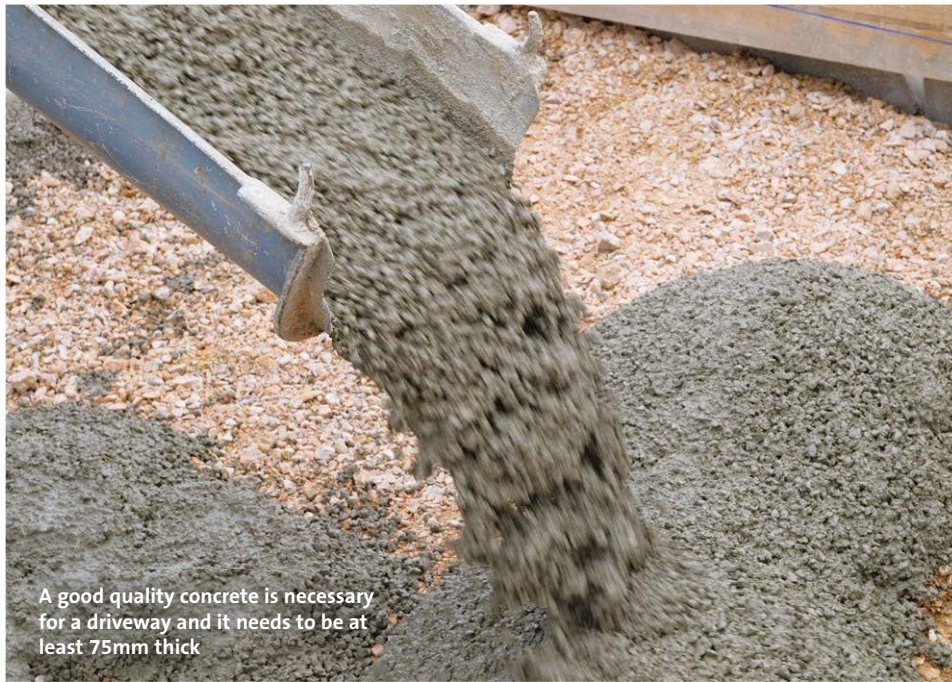
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A door needed to be shortened after the floor height changed a bit

Concrete solution

There are many materials that can be used to construct a driveway, but concrete is strong, easy to use and requires little maintenance





A good quality concrete is necessary for a driveway and it needs to be at least 75mm thick

Formwork

Forms should be provided to retain the fresh concrete. Steel forms or wood, nominally 35mm x 75mm, with at least the top edge planed, are suitable. The forms are held in place by stakes (on the outside) at about 1m intervals. They must be set firmly and accurately because the concrete is finished flush with the top edges. Forms should be given a coat of form oil or whitewash before use to prevent the concrete sticking to them.

Materials for concrete

You will need cement, sand and nominal 19mm stone. Cement should comply with SANS 50197-1. Store cement in a dry place, on timber or sheets of plastic or iron to keep it off the floor. If it contains lumps that cannot be crumbled easily, it is old and should not be used. Protect the sand and stone from contamination.

Concrete mixes

Each batch of concrete should consist of one bag of cement, 80 litres of sand, 80 litres of stone and enough water to make a workable mix.

For every cubic metre of concrete, you will require 7.7 bags of cement, 0.62m³ of sand and 0.62m³ of stone. When ordering materials, allow for approximately 10% waste. (Note: 1 000 litres = 1 cubic metre).

Mixing and placing the concrete

Measuring the sand and stone

Wheelbarrows and 10-, 20- or 25-litre drums are useful measures. Make sure they are clean because oil, fertiliser, sugar etc. will harm the concrete.

A builder's wheelbarrow holds 65 litres when filled and struck off level with the brim. Drums hold approximately 10% more than their nominal capacity when filled and struck off level with the brim. The capacity

Laying your own concrete driveway is cost-effective and relatively easy and, if done correctly, it will stand the test of time with very little maintenance.

When starting out, bear in mind the driveway will be carrying vehicles, so a good quality concrete is necessary and it should be at least 75mm thick. And, to prevent nature causing random, unsightly cracking, joints should be provided across the driveway at intervals of 2-3m. Also, the surface of the driveway should have a cross-fall so that water can drain off it and the driveway should slope away from the garage for at least a metre so that the garage is not flooded when it rains.

Preparation

The ground below the driveway must be firm and stable to ensure that it does not settle unevenly at a later stage and the base must have the same slope as the driveway to keep the thickness even.

Start by removing all roots and vegetable matter, and, preferably, the topsoil. Then trim the base to the required levels and slopes. Next, check that the surface is uniformly firm. Soft areas and any fill used to make up the levels should be tamped down with, for example, the end of a gum pole. If a large area has to be compacted, rent a suitable compactor from a plant hire shop.





Place the concrete making sure there are no gaps along the forms or in the corners



To prevent nature causing cracking, joints should be provided across the driveway at intervals of 2-3m

can be checked by filling the container with water measured from a 1-litre bottle or jug.

Mixing the concrete

Mix the concrete on a clean, smooth, hard surface, such as a steel sheet or a concrete floor. Spread the sand in a layer about 100mm thick and pour the cement over it. Thoroughly mix the two until the colour is uniform.

Add water slowly and continue mixing until the consistency is rather like a thin porridge. Then add the stone and mix it in thoroughly. The concrete must be able to stand in a heap, but must settle quickly if prodded with a spade. Do not make the concrete too sloppy or too dry.

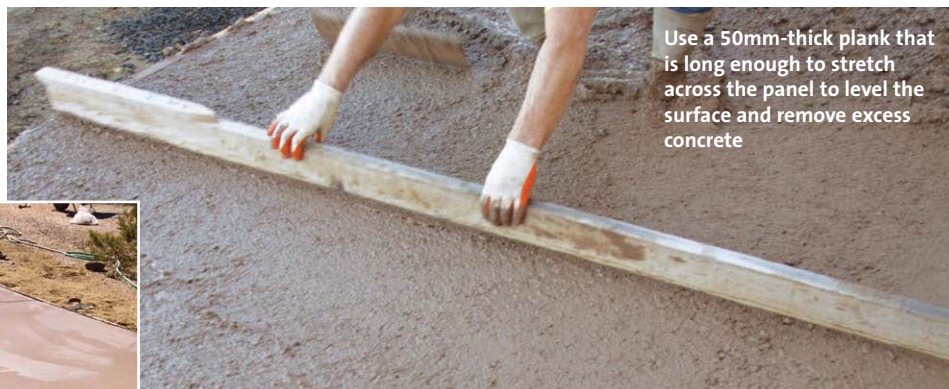
Placing the concrete

Moisten the ground before placing the concrete. There should be no free water on

the surface when the concrete is laid. Each panel must be completed in one operation. Place the concrete in the panel so that it stands about 25mm above the forms. Make sure there are no gaps along the forms or in the corners.

Use a 50mm-thick plank that is long enough to stretch across the panel to compact the concrete. If a handle is fixed to each end of the plank, the job will be easier.

First, use a chopping motion to compact



Use a 50mm-thick plank that is long enough to stretch across the panel to level the surface and remove excess concrete

the concrete. When free water appears on the surface, the concrete has been compacted sufficiently.

Now, resting the plank on top of the formwork and

using a sawing motion, work it gradually from the one end of the panel to the other to level the surface and remove the excess concrete. Fill any hollows if necessary and wood float to an even surface. The concrete can be lightly brushed with a soft broom once it has started to harden. Use an edging tool to round the edges of the panel.

Joints

If mixing is done by hand, it will be possible to lay one or maybe two panels (2.75 x 3.0m) in a day. If a concrete mixer is used, more panels can be laid.

To form joints, it is suggested that alternate panels (i.e. numbers 1, 3, 5 etc.) be laid on the first day. The cross forms are removed and the in-fill panels (numbers 2, 4 etc.) laid against the hardened concrete the next day or later.

If large quantities of concrete are ordered from a ready-mix supplier, plan the job carefully so that the concrete can be placed, compacted and finished before it hardens. In this case, joints can be formed by pressing a blade about 3mm thick about 20mm into the concrete before it has hardened.

Remove the blade and drop a piece of bituminous felt (Malthoid) or heavy-duty plastic sheeting, cut to size, into the groove.

Protection and curing

It is essential that concrete be prevented from drying out. If there is any delay between placing and finishing off the concrete, it needs to be protected especially in dry, windy weather. Covering with plastic sheeting is recommended until finishing occurs. For the concrete to develop strength it should be kept damp for an adequate period after placing. Damp curing should be continued for at least 10 days in warm weather and 14 days in cold weather. Once the surface texturing is complete, the recommended curing procedure is to cover the work with plastic sheeting that is kept in place with a thin layer of sand or soil over it and stones, planks, pipes or gum poles along the edges to stop the wind getting under the sheeting.

The driveway can be used by pedestrians after one day, by cars after about five days and by other heavy vehicles after 10 days. ✖

Source:

Cement and Concrete Institute, contact 011-315-0300 or visit www.cnci.org.za

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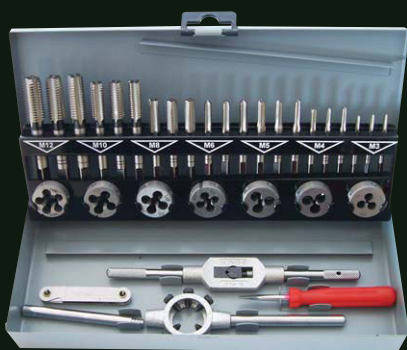
BRIGHT IDEAS

Readers share their time saving, space saving or innovative ideas

Keep that workbench in tip-top shape

So you've just cleaned and made your workbench's top smooth. Wouldn't it be great to keep it in that condition? The solution is as close as your nearest sheet of Masonite. Cut a top cover for your workbench and fix it to the top with screws, nails or staples, but don't stick it down. The next time you spill adhesive or paint on the surface, or when it's marred by nicks and dents, simply remove the Masonite and install another piece.

Edward Potgieter, Phalaborwa



Congratulations to Tony Cronje who wins a 32-piece HSS tap and die set in a steel case from Vermont

Holes for cupboard hinges

WINNING LETTER

Need to drill pot hinge holes for cupboard doors? Getting the correct angle and depth with a Forstner bit can sometimes lead to costly mistakes. A solution is to do the following: Take a 42mm piece of PVC pipe, cut it approximately 110mm long and then cut a slit into it. Fit the Forstner bit into the drill and tighten the chuck. Slide the PVC pipe over the Forstner bit and tape the top section so that it's tight around the drill's base. Use a scrap piece of wood and drill a test hole. Fine-tune the action by altering the bit depth in the chuck until the correct depth is achieved. Now you can drill holes of equal depth in the cupboard doors. It is important that the bottom of the PVC pipe is square, so take care when cutting as it should be perfectly straight.

Tony Cronje, via email



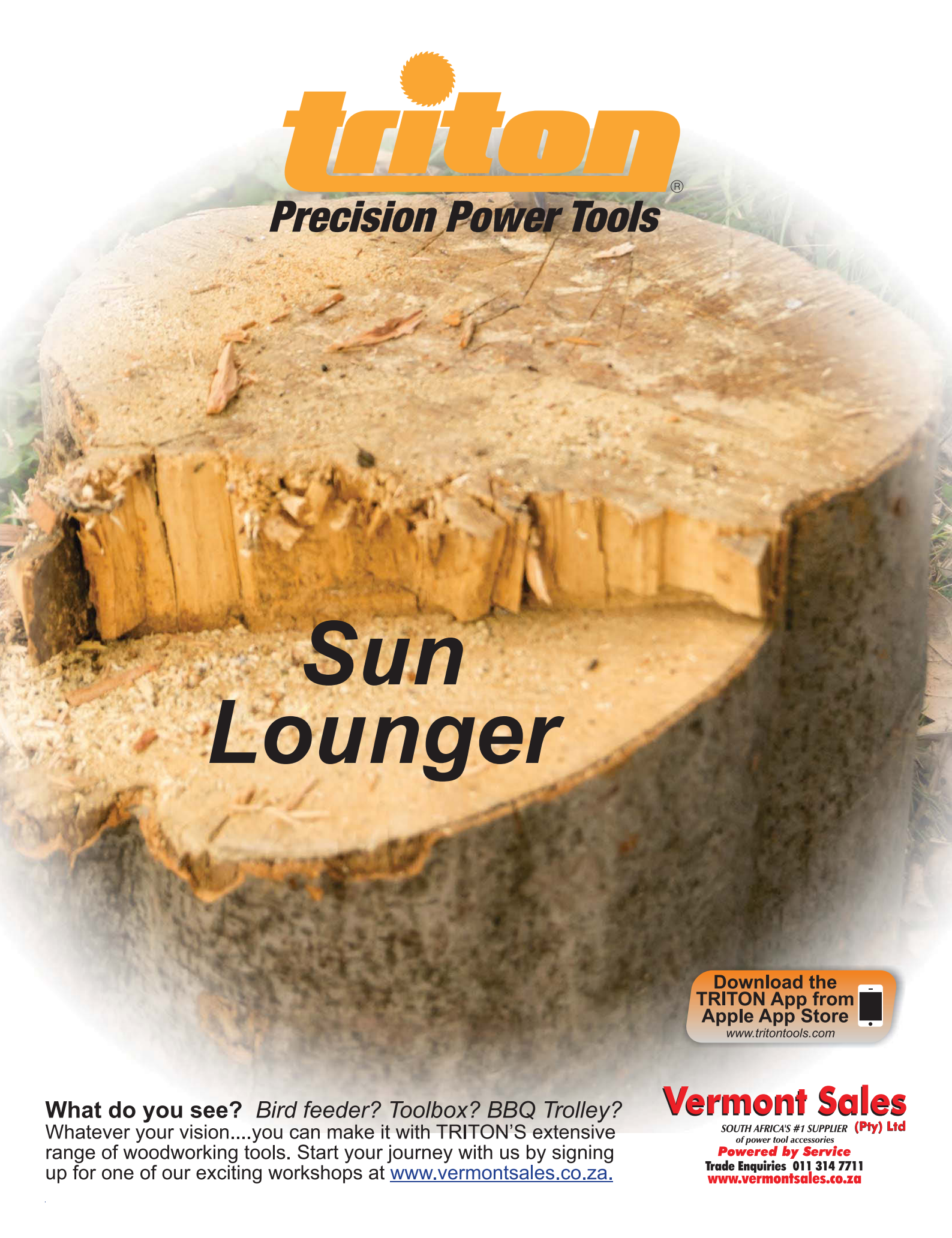
WIN!

Share your ideas!

A Tork Craft BJ02 900W Biscuit Joiner

Send your bright ideas to *The Home Handyman* 'Bright Ideas', PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010 or email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za. Please include your phone number and physical address during office hours.





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Screwed on the right way

Until the Industrial Age, screws were expensive, handmade items. In later years, machinery was developed that made the price of screws reasonable

Most woodworkers have a love/hate relationship with screws and screwdrivers. They work well, but it seems like cheating (if you are a purist when it comes to woodworking). Screws exert a lot of force, but that force is concentrated in two rather delicate areas, the tiny bit of metal where the thread extends from the shank and the interface between the driver and the head. When things go wrong, these weak links fail, which is usually the result of trying to force a screw to do something it wasn't designed to do, using the wrong tool or using the wrong technique.

Think of screws as clamps. As the threads bite into one piece of wood, the head pulls the other piece tightly to it. If done correctly, they look neat and are strong. Never try to force-feed screws without first drilling a pilot hole. Instead of neat screws, the wood particles will be torn and crushed as the screw finds its way through the wood. This damage continues beyond the screw, and the surrounding wood will start to split. The trick is to get

the pilot holes the right size so that the threads hold securely without the shank damaging the surrounding wood.

There are a couple of other bad things that can happen as a result of not drilling a pilot hole, or drilling a pilot hole that's too small. If the threads engage in the upper piece of wood, it can prevent the two pieces from pulling together. When attempting to force the pieces together by applying more pressure on the driver, the threads can be stripped, or in harder woods, the screw head can be damaged and snap right off.

Drilling a pilot hole

The pilot hole, the clearance hole and the countersink can be drilled in one step with a special pilot hole bit, but first you need to understand the details of the pilot hole. You want a larger hole, the size of the screw head, to countersink the screw head.

Choose the right diameter drill bit by holding the bit behind the screw. You should be able to observe that the screw threads are wider than the bit, and the bit is about the size of the shank.

Set the depth of the countersink by holding the bit beside the screw and setting the end of the tapered bit just short of the point of the screw.

Choosing screws

Screw diameters are specified in millimetres. For most woodworking applications, 3mm is the smallest and 5mm is the largest. The best general-purpose size is probably 3.5mm, but for attaching hardware to wood, smaller 2.5mm screws are often used.

The right screw length depends on the thickness of the pieces being joined and the orientation of the parts of the joint. Ideally, the screw should be twice the thickness of the piece being attached. For example, a 6mm drawer bottom or cabinet back should be held in place with a 15mm screw. For thicker pieces, like 16mm cabinet parts, a 30-40mm long screw is sufficient.

Longer screws introduce the problems of drilling the pilot hole deep enough and of keeping the hole straight so the screw doesn't come out the far side of the wood.

Types of screws

If you are working with softer woods, it doesn't make much difference what type of screw you use. In harder woods, you are better off spending a little more on screws that are designed and manufactured as wood screws. Drywall screws are rather brittle and their small diameter gives them only marginal strength.

In harder woods, you may need to use a lubricant to make driving easier and to prevent the screw from snapping. You can use a piece of beeswax or a bar of soap.

Different finishes, some purely decorative and some that offer corrosion resistance, are available for the metal in screws, but for most interior applications, the extra expense isn't warranted. Brass screws for hardware require special handling as the soft metal is easy to damage. Use a steel screw of the same size to cut the threads, then replace it with the brass screw, and don't use a power driver on brass.

The slotted screw head was the only choice until about 100 years ago when the development of automobile assembly lines created the need to drive more screws in less time. If the tip of the screwdriver isn't centred perfectly over the head of a slotted screw, the driver tends to slip sideways from the slot as it turns. If you're driving screws by hand, this isn't that much of a problem; you simply centre the driver by eye or by feel as you start to turn it. With a power-driven screwdriver, however, the slightest misalignment or resistance will send the driver sideways out of the slot. These screws are only good for decorative purposes.

If it weren't for a business deal that went sour and one man's stubbornness, the Phillips-head screw might never have come into existence. In 1908, Canadian PL Robertson invented a tapered square recess driver and head combination. The big advantage to this is that the driver centres itself in the head, and doesn't slip under pressure. The Robertson head holds

so well that the screw will stay with the driver even when held horizontally.

Robertson lost money in his first attempt to produce and distribute his design in the United States, and from then on insisted on not licensing his design to any other manufacturers. Henry Ford wanted to use these fasteners on his assembly line, but wanted to manufacture them himself. Robertson wouldn't budge, and while long popular in Canada, square-drive screws have only recently caught on in other countries.

The Phillips-head didn't come into existence until the 1930s and was actually invented by John P Thompson, who couldn't convince any screw manufacturers that the cross-shaped recess could be manufactured affordably. Henry F Phillips bought the rights from Thompson, obtained patents on the design and searched for a manufacturer.

The American Screw Co. spent half a million dollars to develop the manufacturing process only after the president of the company threatened to fire all of his engineers. General Motors was the first customer, and Phillips-head screws were first used in Cadillacs made in 1936.

What most of us consider to be the Phillips-head screw's biggest defect was actually an advantage when it was first adopted. Because the intersection of the crossed recesses is slightly rounded, the driver will slip, or cam-out, when a Phillips-head screw becomes tight. This prevented over tightening on the assembly line, but is the bane of any woodworker who has had a screwdriver slip and go dancing across a finished surface.

In the last 25 years, cordless drills have become the preferred method of driving screws for woodworking, and the general frustration with the Phillips bit has led to an increase in popularity of the Robertson square drive, as well as other types.

The Pozidriv was patented by the Phillips company and features the same cross-shaped recesses as the Phillips, but the intersection has an additional square recess that reduces cam-out considerably. This type is commonly used in built-in cupboard systems.

Whatever type of driver is used, the interface between driver and screw head should be a close fit to prevent damage to the screw head or the end of the driver.

In the end, like any method of joining wood, there are times when a screw is ideal and times when another choice is better. Over time, the fragile connection sometimes deteriorates as these different materials move in different ways, but this might take decades, which still makes using a screw a feasible option. ✖



More often than not, a specific problem, usually one that you have never encountered before, will suddenly pop up repeatedly within a short space of time. I recently had such a situation with small screws and hinges

By Johann Stadler

No margin for error



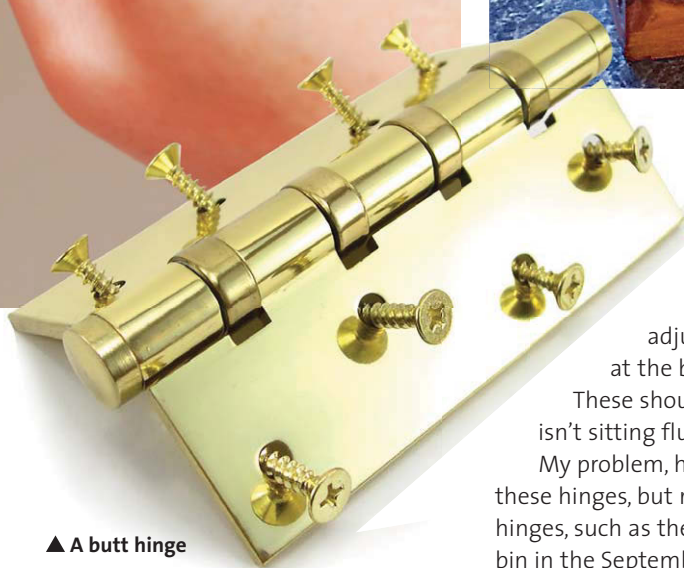
▲ A European hinge

Recently, when working with small screws and hinges, I simply could not get them right, and after much cursing, drilling and screwing, I ended up with too many holes and untidy hinges. However, a bit of research helped to solve the problem and I discovered that with most of today's modern hinges, such as European hinges or pot hinges (mostly used in kitchen, bathroom and bedroom cupboards), installation is fairly easy.

The European hinge

The best way to go about installing these hinges is to order your doors with the 35mm pot hole already drilled. Creating the fitting holes should not be attempted by a novice installer, unless you have a fair amount of patience and willpower to complete the task at hand. If you want to take up the task, it is advisable that you purchase a handy marking jig.

If your door hinge holes are pre-machined, start by attaching the hinges to the pre-machined positions on the door



▲ A butt hinge



The butt hinge used on my bread bin

Horizontal adjustment can be done by tightening or loosening the front screw on the hinge arm. The final adjustment is via the screws at the back of the hinge arms.

These should be adjusted if the door isn't sitting flush against the cabinet.

My problem, however, was not with these hinges, but rather with the small butt hinges, such as the ones I used on the bread bin in the September 2013 issue.

and screw home the screws. Once the hinge is attached to the door, hold the door in place (in its fully opened position relative to the cabinet) and put two screws in each mounting plate on the cabinet side. Then separate the door and hinges from the hinge mounting plates and finish screwing the mounting plates onto the side of the cabinet. Once the mounting plates are firmly secured, you can easily reattach the door to the cabinet box, and the door is installed. Easy.

If you need to adjust the door height, you can loosen the hinge plate fixing screws and move the hinge plate up or down as necessary before tightening the fixing screws.

The butt hinge

The problem with installing hinges is that they usually come at the end and finish off a project. Leaving them skew or moving them around until they are right can make a good project look like it should rather be thrown on the scrap heap.

Firstly, get your hinges in place. Start by fitting a pair of similar hinges on similar pieces of wood with the same thickness. This helps to get the exact spacing between the fixed board and the lid. Feel the hinge to make sure it moves freely and that the screws are not under unnecessary stress. Make sure you measure the space correctly and then move onto your actual project.

Mark exactly where your hinges should be and keep the spacing in mind. Always dry fit first, ask for a second opinion and then move on. Avoid marking with a pencil because once the hinge is installed, it will be almost impossible to get rid of the lines in a confined space. I used a sharp metal marker and made subtle markings on the corners.

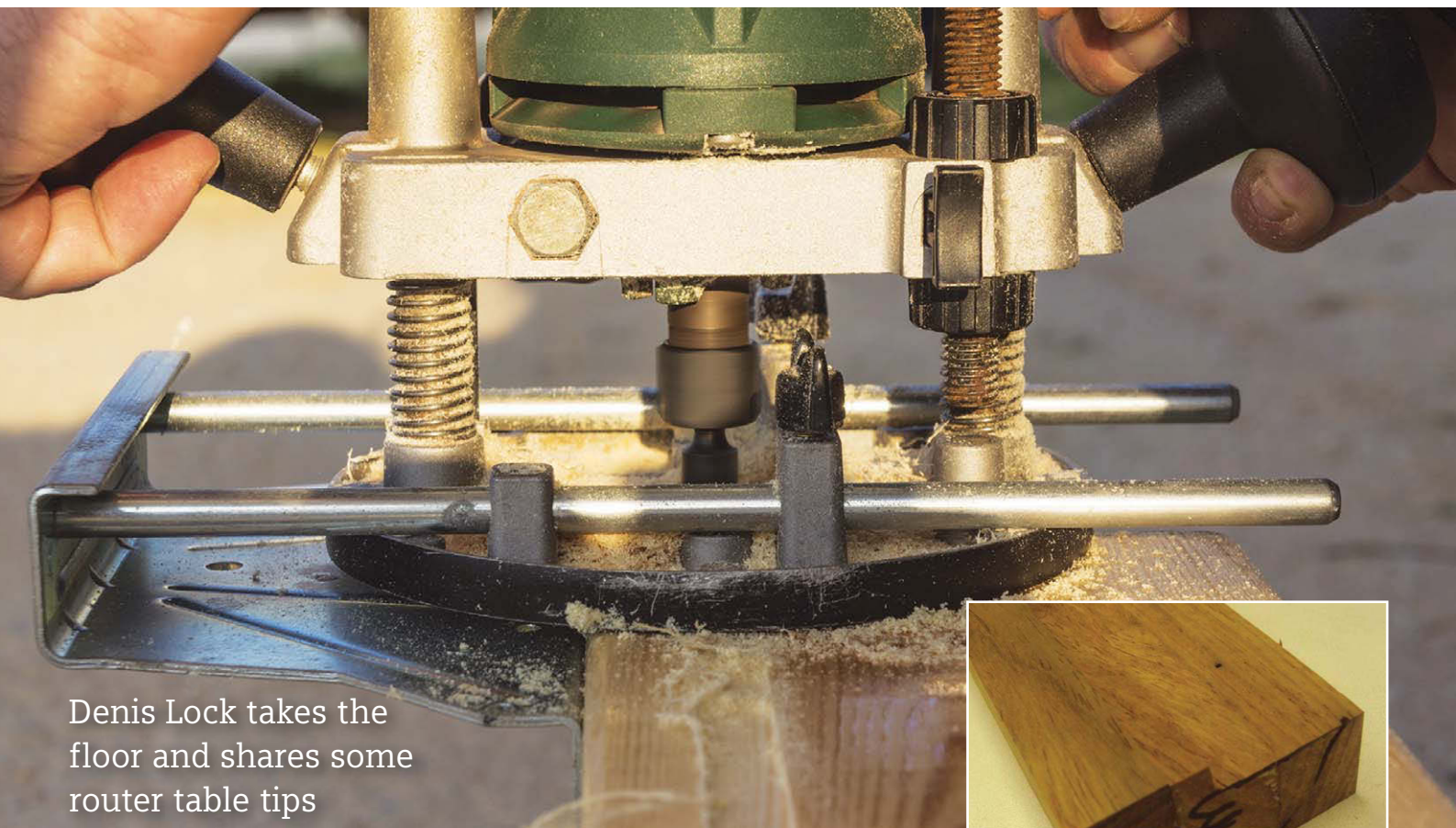
Next, put your hinges back in place using a piece of Prestik to hold them in position. The next step is probably the most important. Mark through the hinge holes exactly where the screws should be. Also do this using a sharp object – even a 2mm drill bit seems to run a little off the mark when you work with such tight margins. Then use a drill bit in the indents for pilot holes.

When tightening screws, use an old school screwdriver and not your electric or battery operated driver. Nothing brings a project together like a fair amount of TLC.

Do the above correctly the first time because you can't simply move a screw one or two millimetres along once the hole is complete. ✂

A woodworker's diary

Router table tricks



Denis Lock takes the floor and shares some router table tips

On my *Fundamentals of hand-held routing* course I tell the students that a hand-held router is potentially an unstable machine and I show them ways of overcoming this problem. On my *Fundamentals of table routing* course I state that attaching a router under a table solves this problem. It doesn't, however, solve the problem of unstable work pieces in certain operations. This article presents some router table tricks to handle this problem.

I regard my router, hand-held or table mounted, primarily as a trimming machine. Where practical I 'hog away the waste' (love that phrase) on a more efficient cutting

machine such as a table saw or bandsaw and then trim to the final size with a router. At the same time the saw blade marks are removed and finish sanding is minimised. I am currently working on a project that requires a 35mm by 7mm rebate in a number of pieces of 60mm by 30mm stock. I set up my circular saw and cut a 34,5mm by 6,5mm rebate (see photo 1). A quick calculation showed that by cutting away the waste on the circular saw I produced 42% less sawdust than I would have if the entire cut had been made in multiple passes on the router table.

The router table set up to trim the rebate is shown in photo 2 – a straight bit



1
A rebate ready for trimming

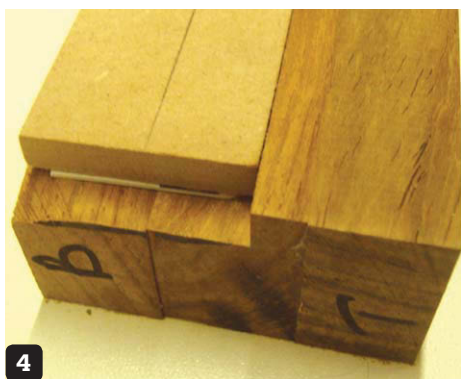


2
Setup for trimming



3

Tipping problem



4

Sizing a spacer

sticking up 35mm out of the table and 7mm from the fence. The left half of photo 3 shows how the router bit will just shave half a millimetre and clean up the saw cuts. There is a potential problem. The piece of wood is unstable and it could be tilted inward as shown on the right of photo 3. This would ruin the workpiece. If I only had to cut one piece I would concentrate fully and ensure that I didn't allow the workpiece to tip. As I had a number of pieces to cut I wanted a foolproof solution so that I didn't spoil a piece as the result of a moment's inattention.

Many woodworkers are in too much of a hurry to cut their project pieces to their final length. Cutting to length is my final operation. At this stages the pieces being rebated were 80mm to 100mm too long. I was thus able to make a short test cut on the router table in the end of one piece. I then made a spacer as shown in photo 4. The spacer, which is a piece of 6mm MDF and a piece of 1mm plastic held together with double-sided tape, is the same thickness as the depth of the finished rebate. The spacer was then taped to the router table fence just behind the cutter

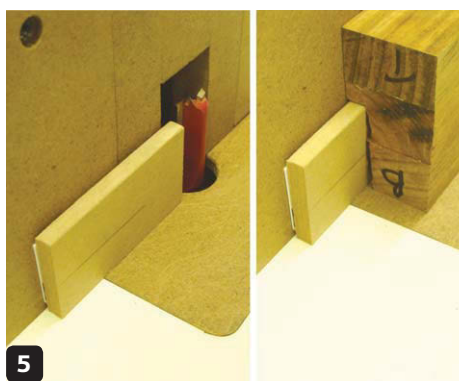
(left side of photo 5). The right side of photo 5 shows the trimming of the rebate. This is foolproof: there is no way the workpiece can tilt. I call this approach an 'outfeed spacer' as it is attached to the outfeed side of the fence.

The mirror in photo 6 is in our dining room. It brightens the room and makes it look larger by reflecting the outdoor greenery. It is made from the moulding (cut in my workshop) shown in photo 7. The router bit used (shown in the insert) is one of a number of ½" shank face moulding bits that are readily available. The moulding is 65mm by 26mm and has two stacked rebates cut on the inner back edge. The first, which is for a 3mm Masonite backing, is 24mm by 4mm. The second, which is for the mirror, is a further 12mm by 4mm. Both can be cut in one pass each on a router table and hogging away the waste is not justified. There is no stability problem when cutting the 24mm by 4mm rebate for the backing. Cutting the second 12mm by 4mm rebate presents a stability problem. This is

avoided, as in the example above, by using an 8mm outfeed spacer.

The face moulding requires the removal of a fair amount of stock. The profile does not lend itself to waste removal on a circular saw prior to routing. I thus cut it in three passes, moving the router table fence further back each time. The first pass is completely stable as the original flat face of the moulding rides against the router table fence. The top half of photo 8 shows the result of the first pass. The second pass is also completely stable - the bottom half of photo 8 shows the result of the second pass. The third and final pass would not be stable and precautions must be taken - it would be a great pity to ruin a component at this stage.

Some type of outfeed spacer could have been used but there are two other options. The first is what I call an outfeed clip (photo 9). The clip consists of a small offcut (same thickness) of the pieces being moulded, a piece of photocopier paper (0,1mm thick), a piece of 6mm MDF and a C-clamp. The



5

Use of outfeed spacer



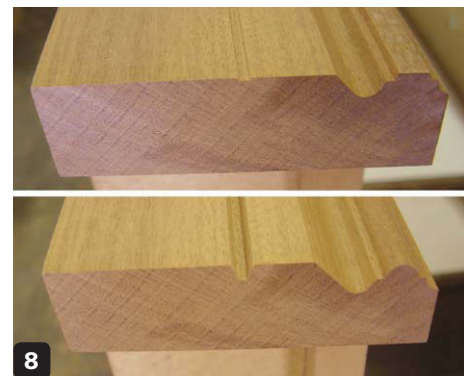
7

Moulding profile and cutter



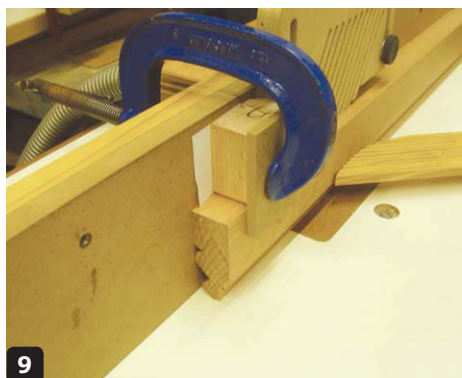
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Brighten up the room

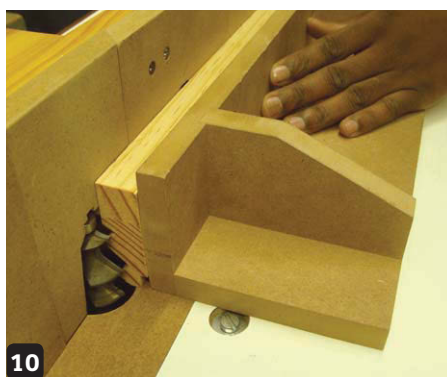


8

Passes 1 and 2



9
Outfeed clip



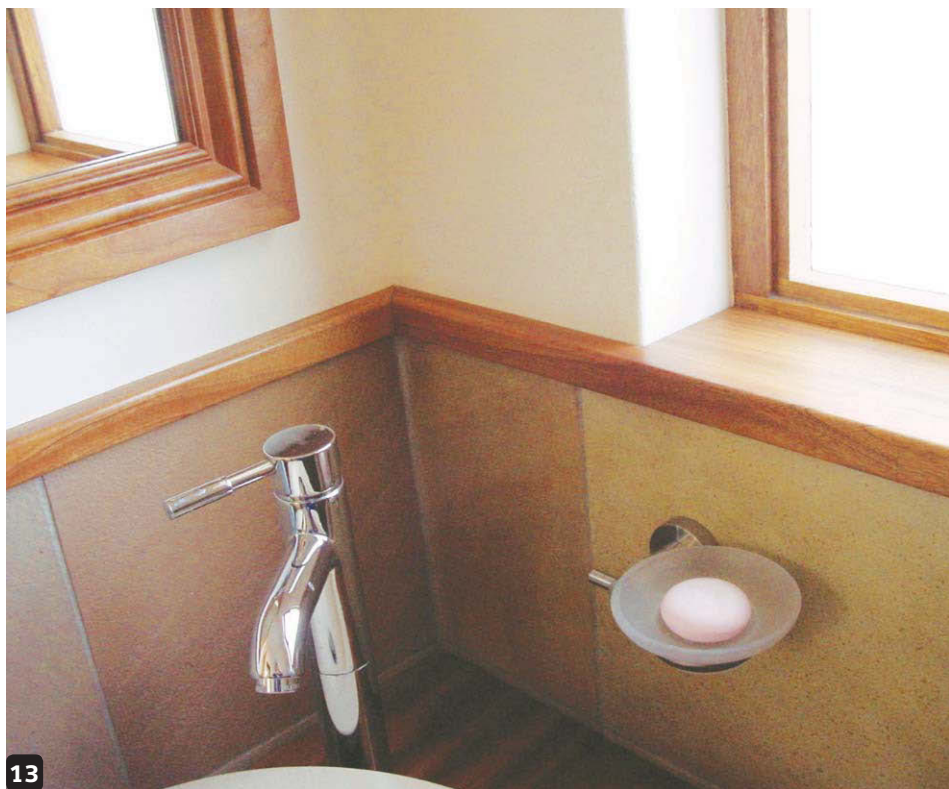
10
Sled



11
Ugly edges



12
Cover strip



13
The magic of moulding

piece of paper allows the wood being cut to slide freely. The two leading edges of the clip were chamfered to provide smooth ingress. The face mould cut on mirror pieces is a much more demanding cut than the rebates discussed earlier. If the wood is lifted from the table or moved away from the fence while cutting or trimming a rebate a bump will remain. This can be removed with a second pass. If the wood is lifted from the table while cutting the face moulding the cut is ruined. This is the reason for the two feather boards you see in photo 9.

Some router table fences do not lend themselves to the outfeed clip approach: there is no room for a C-clamp. This brings me to a third solution – a sled. The sled is an L-shaped structure made from MDF, chipboard or plywood (photo 10). It is as long as the longest piece of moulding to be cut: mine is 1200mm. The moulding is lined up and held to the sled with screws through the upright piece of the sled into the back of the moulding. The screw holes don't matter, as they are not visible when the mirror is mounted. It is easy to apply both inward and downward pressure to the sled as you can see in the photograph 10.

Feather boards are not needed.

The guest toilet in my son's home is tiled to windowsill height with sandstone tiles (photo 11). The tiles are attractive; the edges are ugly and need some sort of cover strip. The profile that was used (30mm by 23mm) is shown in photo 12. The corner rounding was done first on a router table. Next the rebate was cut on a circular saw. As the rebate was not visible it was not necessary to clean it up by trimming with a router. The clearance chamfer was cut on a router table. An outfeed spacer was used to prevent tipping. The fitted moulding is shown in photo 13. Makes a big difference doesn't it? You will note that the mirror uses the same moulding as my dining room mirror. I've made good use of my face moulding cutter.

The three techniques presented in this article bring control to unstable and potentially dangerous router table operations. Control leads to safety. Control leads to accuracy and quality. That is what I want in my workshop. I would be interested to hear your router table tricks and/or problems. I can be contacted at routingwithdenis@gmail.com or via my website www.routingwithdenis.co.za. ✂

MAKE A KITCHEN GADGET COMPETITION

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

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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).

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

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

- 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

Here are a few items made by Nico de Lange from Frankfort in the Free State



A short fold-up and carry stepladder



A dinner table for the family

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



A biltong carver



Woodworking associations

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

For many years Malcolm Cunnington has worked in the centre of Johannesburg in an office that had old 230mm x 75mm x 22mm wooden floor tiles, and when they were removed and replaced with carpets, he managed to find a use for them



▲ "When management decided to install carpets and the old tiles were ripped out and binned, the floor tiles were too good to be dumped. I retrieved a few and kept them in the box labelled 'Just in case I need them,'" says Malcolm



▲ Some years later Malcolm's family became interested in bonsai and the time came for the tiles to be recycled. They were split into thinner sections, the old tar adhesive was removed and the required sizes were cut and sanded. These new pieces were assembled into a table measuring 230 x 375 x ±75mm high for a bonsai stand. All of the work, other than some of the sanding, was completed using hand tools

BOOK SHELF

Viv Martin from Hardware Centre reviews the latest in woodworking literature

Woodworker's Guide to Dovetails

Author: Ernie Conover

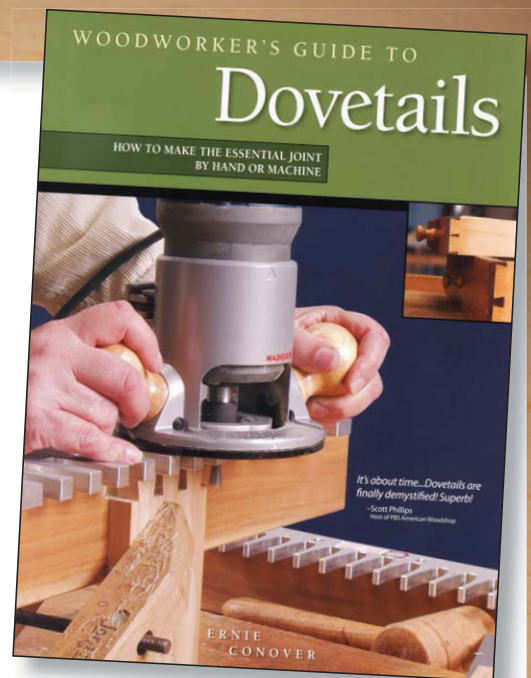
Publisher: Fox Chapel Publishing

The author on the history and evolution of dovetails states: "The dovetail predates history, and no exact date of its first appearance is known. It was certainly used in Egyptian times and can be found in the furniture of early Chinese emperors. The design of the dovetail has changed with the march of history, driven by man's better understanding of wood as a material, as well as improvements in woodworking tools. Some changes were merely stylistic, and it is often possible to date a piece by the style of its dovetail joints."

Revered for its beauty and strength, the precise joint is regarded as the mark of a skilled craftsman, and has graced the corners of heirloom cabinets, boxes, sideboards chests and more. Many woodworkers would love to use dovetails in their work, but some believe they are difficult to master.

- This book, Ernie Conover spells out:
- The type of dovetails and when they should be used.
- The tools you will need to make the dovetails.
- Hand cutting and machine cutting basics.
- Getting the most from your router.
- How to set up and use various brands of jigs.

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▲ These tiles are difficult to work with; they are hard and brittle. The tar adhesive is not easy to remove and they are very oily, which makes sanding difficult, but the end result was worth all the effort



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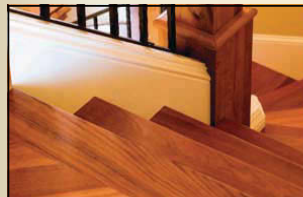


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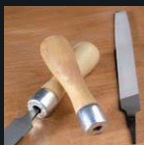
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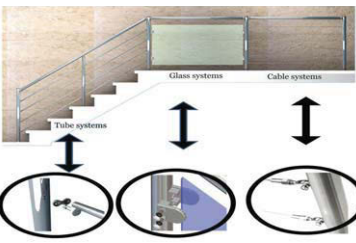
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I could already see myself walking down the red carpet to receive my academy award for best leading roll in the category 'Foreign Television Advertisements'.

A star was born.

I was given a short description of the storyline and the location. "A walk in the park," I thought. There was no mention of a script or any extraordinary tasks to be performed by yours truly. It was a simple "pitch up, look good, smile at the camera and hold a bottle of pool chemicals".

Mid-August, and the day of the shoot was a cloudy Tuesday morning. There was a fresh breeze in the air and my nerves were not doing anything for the image that I was trying to project. The shoot would be at two locations, one at a nursery and the second at a house in Johannesburg. The film crew was 10 times the size of what I was used to. I was introduced to art directors, wardrobe managers, production teams and a script writer (script writer?

before the retake. Not surprisingly, at one stage even I thought I sounded Russian. All I wanted to do was go home and forget that this ever happened. No way...we were off to the second location.

The scene that greeted me ran shivers up my spine, which would later turn to hypothermia. A rather tense-looking cameraman set up in the pool in a thick wetsuit. I was led off to a room in the house, referred to as "wardrobe". Four sets of identical outfits were neatly laid out on a bed, next to a big towel and the welcome sight of a glowing gas heater in the corner. There was no mystery in what awaited me.

"What we would like you to do is to run, then dive into the pool fully dressed and as you come up, look at the camera and say: 'Aaaaah! This is the life.'" As for the script, I thought I could memorise that one without any effort. A short run, a dive and I hit the water, both eyes jumping into one socket and as I came up, "Aaaaah! This is the life" was once again replaced with some Russian dialogue and a facial expression that made me look like a goldfish sucking the side of a fishbowl.

Out of the water, off to "wardrobe", a quick change of clothing and back to the pool. "Can you look a little more relaxed when you come up and look into the camera" was the request from the cameraman, whom I had come to dislike intensely by then.

Another two hours of absolute torture and it was a "wrap", as they say in the business. I honestly think that they could not find anyone else to agree to have a winter swim and decided to offer me the gig, but not make any mention of the pool scene.

Three hours of gruelling takes, retakes and retakes of the retakes that we had already taken before

No one mentioned a script). "Aaagh, it is a short script, just read over it, I am sure you will manage". This still did not fill me with confidence, and at that point I was finding it difficult to remember my own name, let alone a script.

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