

The Home HANDYMAN

November/December 2018 • Vol 28 No 11



ACCENT WALLS



CHRISTMAS PROJECTS

Year-end maintenance

- Complete checklist
- Painting tips
- Revive wooden windows

+plus

Step-by-step:

- Make a wine rack
- Weld a garden bench
- Learn mosaic



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Gino Hart's *Tintanic* journey

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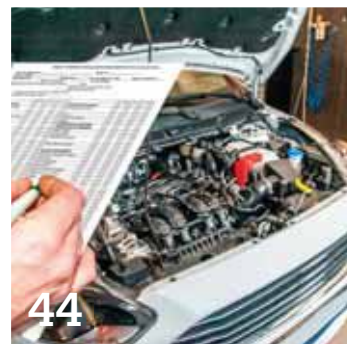
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The Home HANDYMAN



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FROM THE WORKBENCH

Living a dream



The story of the Titanic has always been one of intrigue - from the ship's design and subsequent building in Belfast, Ireland to her tragic sinking in the cold waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. The ship, an undisputed feat of engineering for the time, took three years to build and measured 269 metres in length upon her completion. Titanic trivia says that over three million rivets, contributing to the ship's total weight of over 52,000 tonnes, were used to hold her hull together. Scientists believe that these rivets, together with other factors, played some role in the ship's demise.

Titanic set sail from Southampton on 10 April 1912. She hit an iceberg at 11:40pm on 14 April and by 2:20am, she sank beneath the waves. Only 705 of the 2,224 souls on board survived the epic disaster.

There is much debate as to whether anyone from the White Star Line really proclaimed Titanic to be an 'unsinkable' ship. The ship's brochure described the ship as 'designed to be unsinkable' - the fact remains that many passengers who paid their fare for the New York voyage, did indeed believe the ship to be unsinkable. Scientific advancements in engineering grew rapidly from the turn of the century and people strongly believed in the technology of the time.

Despite the failure and devastating loss of life, the story of Titanic is still one of dreams. When Gino Hart was just a young boy, he became captivated by the Titanic story and the 'ship of dreams' became Gino's own dream - one he pursues with devotion.

Warren Schmidt caught up with Gino on the East Rand as he exhibited his personalised model of the great ship, one he calls 'Tintanic'. The model weighs approximately 400kg, with an aluminium hull. At great personal sacrifice both of his time and financially, Gino has turned his 'practically unthinkable' dream into a reality. You'll find his story on page 34.

On a different note, André Gous is back with another metalworking project for the summer garden. We aim to assist you with your preparation for the festive season. There is a simple wine rack wood project in the issue, along with some interesting decorations and gift ideas for friends and family.

For many of us, year-end means getting to that ever-growing list of projects to keep our homes properly maintained. Our main feature on page 12 will get you started.

If you are going away these holidays for a much needed break after a busy year- safe travels and best wishes for a good rest from *The Home Handyman team*.

Take care,

Gina



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OFF THE SHELF

Your guide to the latest products in the world of DIY

Orbital sander

A must for the DIY enthusiast

The Makita MT M9204B random orbit sander is one of the most useful tools that a contractor, small business entrepreneur or DIY expert can have in their tool arsenal. This sander is ideal for stripping paint off furniture, preparing new moulding or cleaning up between finish coats. Even metal and composite materials such as solid surface counter tops can be smoothed and cleaned. Any rough spots and swirls left by other sanders are effectively removed by the sanding pad that spins at 12,000 orbits per min (o/min). M9204B is fitted with a dust bag and includes some abrasive paper.

Makita's MT range of Standard Duty Industrial Power Tools provides the quality you expect from Makita at an affordable price.

For more information: Visit www.makita.co.za or tel: 011-878-2600



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The Bosch EasyDrill 12 weighs in at only 900 grams, making it lightweight and comfortable to use, even for long periods of time. The drill/driver is easy to operate and is particularly suited for assembling furniture or attaching objects around the home. With one battery charge, it can insert up to 150 screws with a diameter of 6mm. A three-stage LED display keeps the user informed of the current battery charging level at all times. Users who alternate between different tasks can quickly change and insert drills and bits thanks to the quick-release chuck. There are no default settings required for torque or speed, simply remove from the soft case and put the tool straight to work.

Specifications:

- Max battery power/capacity: 12V/1.5 Ah
- No-load speed: 0 to 700rpm
- Max. torque (hard/soft): 15/6 Nm
- Max. screw diameter: 6mm
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- Chuck: auto-lock
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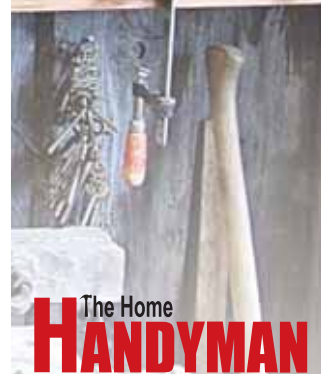
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Ansie Swart

wins a Makita MT M9203B finishing sander.

Prizes are not exchangeable

DIY duo

We started with a full home renovation project when my husband retired two years ago (and yes – we are still married). We are now down to the interior decorating part. As a female reader of your magazine, I want to congratulate you on the re-launch of the magazine – I find it full of interesting and very useful articles and every time I read through the next issue I learn something new!

As a husband and wife renovation team we have been reading your

magazine for many years and many a project has had its creative origins or inputs from articles or readers' letters from the magazine! We have now signed up for the electronic version of it – and just absolutely love the ease of reading and accessibility of this! Many happy *The Home Handyman* projects to all.

Ansie Swart, by e-mail

(Thank you, Ansie. We look forward to hearing more about your renovation project. Please keep us posted. – Ed.)

Report back

To all the woodheads out there - I am proud to own Stanley wood saws, especially the 'jetcut' models. I made the cut as seen in the photo on the right. The 'off-cut' is 1.5 mm thick. As they say: you can enhance your woodworking skills with quality tools! Make something and keep on making sawdust!

Gerhard du Randt, Nieuwoudtville



WINNING LETTER

Meet the team

Dee Dixon is our fabulously talented graphic designer. We caught up with her to find out more about her career and how she enjoys working on *The Home Handyman*.

Where did you start your career in graphic design?



What are your hobbies?

I would have to say that spending time out in nature is my ultimate favourite activity, although time is not usually on our side, it makes it all the more enjoyable when it is possible. I also love DIY... there's nothing

I actually wanted to be a nurse or a hairdresser and then after 'hanging-out' with my dad (my hero) at his publishing company, the creative bug bit me, and 27 years later here I still am... doing what I love. It's funny how you end up where you are supposed to be in life. The best part about my job is that I sit in an office all day, and as much as I love 'people', I actually prefer sitting still and doing my own thing without interruptions.

like seeing your own creation come to life.

How do you enjoy working on the THH layout?

This magazine has become one of my absolute passions. I learn so much with every issue, which is also how I started doing my own DIY. I wouldn't choose any other team to work with; the dedication and team work is incredible... I love my job!

Book winners

5 lucky readers have each won a copy of Jason Kobrowsky's book: *Pallets: Upcycling Projects*, published by LAPA Publishers. The winners are Gideon Crous; Anne Perkins; Adele van den Bergh; Desmond Murugen and E. le Roux.



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Reader's projects



The Home HANDYMAN

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Willing to share your latest project with our readers? Send a step-by-step write up of how to make the project, along with step-by-step photographs (at least 300kb) and a picture of the finished product.

Email projects and photographs to:

editorial@homehandyman.co.za





Leroy Merlin opens its doors

Leroy Merlin opened in Stoneridge Centre, Greenstone Hill near Edenvale on September 28 – the first Leroy Merlin store on the African continent. With a total surface area of 17,000m², the new store is set to offer the South African DIY retail market a wide selection of construction, home improvement, home décor products and tools. Products range from the best locally produced brands and products to internationally sourced items, 40% of which are imported from Europe.

The store has a modern showroom layout, with infographics for customers to better understand how to choose and install products. The new store is geared for customer service, with 150 sales consultants on hand to assist customers. The store also provides free WiFi for customers, a three-month easy return policy, express delivery and lay-by offering as well as other product related services like free wood cutting and custom made blinds and curtains. The Leroy Merlin Home Card offers

30-day promotional price guarantees, easy returns and product guarantees, faster access to services and workshop preferences.

Leroy Merlin, part of ADEO, is the leading home improvement retailer in Europe and the third largest worldwide with a presence in 14 countries.

“Leroy Merlin really believes in the potential of the country and other stores are already in preparation,” stated Cédric Sennepin, Leroy Merlin South Africa country leader. “I really think that our new concept, that we call phygital, the best of physical and the best of digital, will offer a unique experience that South African customers deserve and when I see the energy and the pleasure our team members show towards their work, I am very confident that we will succeed.”

For more information, visit the website: www.leroymerlin.co.za



Cédric Sennepin,
Leroy Merlin South Africa country leader



Desks and trees for schools

Even for a country bountiful in resources, South Africa's natural splendour is undoubtedly one of her finest treasures. MTO helped invest in that heritage and the communities that are part of it by planting trees at schools as well as donating school desks from a very worthy enterprise.

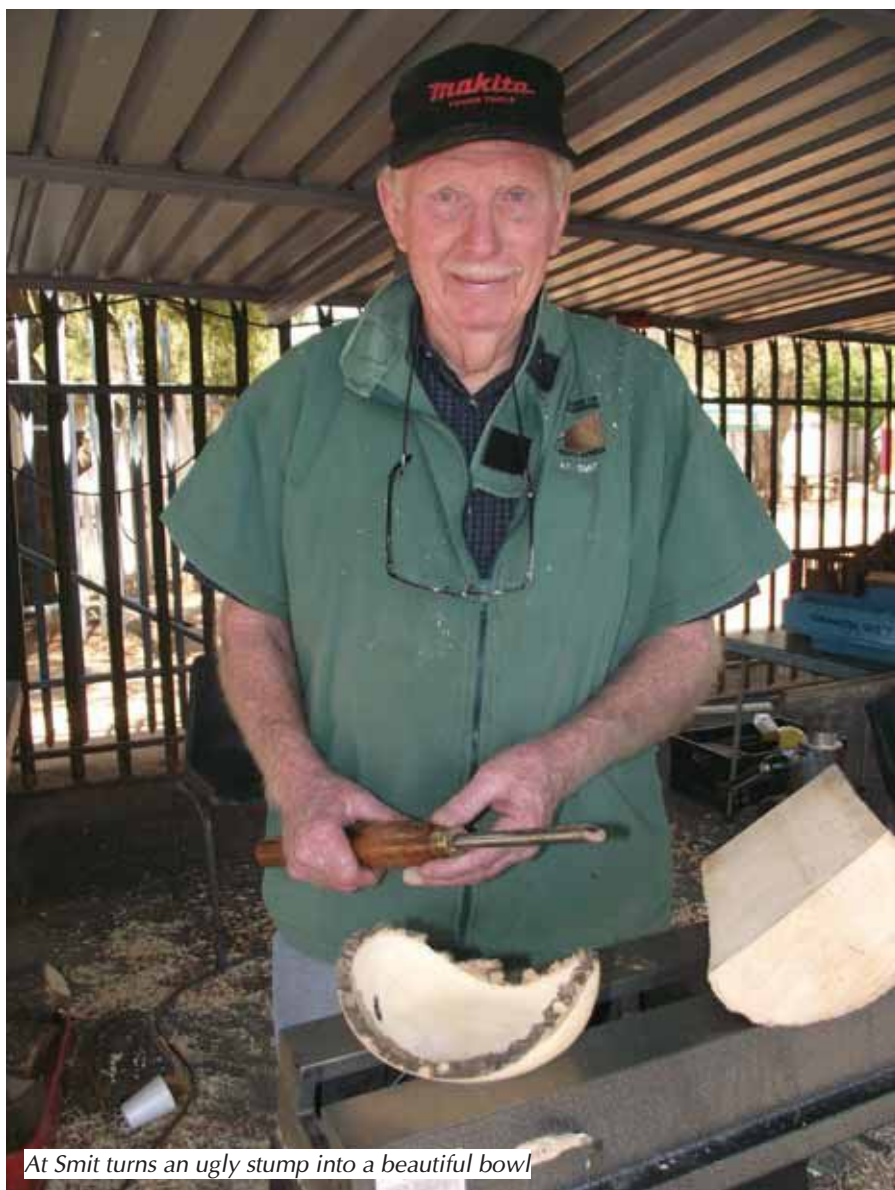
During Arbour month in September, the MTO Group joined five schools to plant trees, donated by Ezigro, that will continue to give joy for years to come.

The trees planted at various primary and high schools included lemon, naartjie, cara-cara orange, kymquat, spekboom, sweet thorn and others.

Diphaswa Primary in Bushbuckridge also received forty desks from MTO's Ramanas Farms and the SanParks Eco-furniture Factory, a non-profit jobs and skills creation venture that turns the wood of invader trees into furniture.

For more information, visit their website: www.mto.co.za

From the left: Lazarus Moriri, foreman for MTO's Ramanas Farms, Lerato Isaacs, MTO stakeholder relations coordinator, Avheyani Mpfareleni, EcoFurniture Sawmill manager and Christopher Dibakoane, EcoFurniture sawmill Driver



At Smit turns an ugly stump into a beautiful bowl

Wood Expo & Craft Festival

The Woodworking Association of Pretoria hosted their annual Wood Expo & Craft Festival in early October at the New Hope School in Pretoria. This year some 48 suppliers were in attendance, with 12 different crafts showcased.

The exhibition of woodwork in the main hall included cabinets, turned items, wood carving, restored furniture and utility items. A large number of smaller items were on sale and a number of presentations were given on a range of woodworking topics.

The suppliers also held various demonstrations of their equipment. The New Hope School provided tasty food and refreshments in aid of school funds.

PowerPoint presentations of the talks will be made available on the Association's website - www.ptawoodworkers.com

For more information on the Woodworking Association of Pretoria, turn to our Woodworker's Corner on page 59.



Back in December

The dynamic property duo identical twin brothers, Drew and Jonathan Scott, are back with *My Dream Home* on DStv's *The Home Chanel* (176). On the show, Drew and Jonathan help couples find, buy and transform extreme fixer-uppers into incredible dream homes. First, real estate specialist Drew tracks down hidden gems with untapped potential, and then it's up to contractor Jonathan to expertly overhaul these ramshackle properties. Starts December 3rd; Mondays 5pm and Wednesdays 9pm.



Did you know?

BirdLife South Africa's 34th Birding Big Day (BBD) will take place on Saturday, 24 November 2018. Whether you are an amateur birder or enthusiastic gardener, celebrate the diversity of the country's bird species and help BirdLife SA tally as many birds as possible across the country, during a 24 hour period.

For more information and to register, log on to www.birdlife.org.za



Summer fix-up

Don't let rising costs put a damper on your home maintenance plans this summer

General issues

Home maintenance may not necessarily be restricted to painting or tiling, but may entail many small, often neglected tasks. These include:

- Corrosion on outdoor gate locks and padlocks.
- Broken or loose furniture that simply needs an additional screw or some bolts tightened.
- Door handles that need to be cleaned and lubricated.
- Cupboard and cabinet handles that have become loose or fallen off.
- Repairs to window levers and adjusters.
- Drooping or loose curtain rails.
- Tile grout that is dirty and stained should be cleaned with a product specifically designed for this purpose.

Rising fuel costs, rising municipal bills, rising material costs, rising damp... all words that make the homeowner crack at the thought of home maintenance. But don't despair. Rise to the occasion and get your home looking great again by following these basic steps. Careful planning and drafting a priority list can assist greatly towards maintaining your home and keeping it in top shape.

Something which will influence your home maintenance plans is the type of dwelling you reside in. If you live in a duplex, complex, housing estate, townhouse or flat (sectional title), then certain aspects of maintenance will be managed by the body corporate or managing agent. This includes anything in the 'common' property whereby the levy covers maintenance costs. There are rules that determine what you can or can't do to your property, such as erecting a shed, painting the roof a contrasting colour to the rest of the complex, or operating an

>> Warren Schmidt

angle grinder on a Sunday afternoon! Even interior building alterations or replacing a door may need approval from the body corporate.

Essential services checklist

Before carrying out the bigger, labour intensive projects, take a quick look at two essential aspects related to electricity and water supply to your property.

Electrical supply

Electricity brings the modern home to life and runs all household appliances. However, periodic inspections are essential with regards to safety. Damaged electrical wiring and faulty switches and appliances can cause the earth leakage switch to trip, or worse, lead to electrocution or fire. If anything is tripping, DON'T try and force the circuit breaker or earth leakage switch up – have it inspected.

IMPORTANT! Electricity can be lethal. The human body is a fantastic conductor of electricity. The average domestic supply is 220V (single-phase) or 380V (three-phase). Many DIYers have been fatally electrocuted whilst trying to repair appliances or fix electrical problems. Changing light bulbs and replacing plug-tops is well within the means of any DIYer, but any electrical work must be carried out by a qualified and registered electrician.

Electrical standards and regulations change regularly. Many homeowners who have undertaken their own electrical work are often surprised or dismayed to find that their installation is illegal or non-compliant when they sell their home and call an electrician to issue an Electrical Compliance Certificate. For example, did you know that the plug sockets in all new developments and building extensions must now conform to SANS 164-2 (or the ZA-plug standard)? The ZA-plug has a hexagonal configuration similar to adapters used to charge mobile devices, but with the addition of an earth pin.

Also, fire is a very real hazard and many homes have burnt down due to faulty

wiring. For example, using the wrong type of wire fed through a thatch roof to connect an outside spot light which is drawing a high current, may cause the wire to overheat and set the thatch on fire.

What to check:

- All visible wiring at the lamps etc.
- Any outside cabling or wires that may be frayed exposing the copper inside.
- Plugs and extension cords.
- Light switches and plug sockets that may be cracked or damaged.
- It may be worthwhile paying an electrician a call-out fee to run an earth-leakage test and to check the wiring, circuit breakers and earth-leakage switch in the distribution board. Also, they can check that the geyser and stove isolator switches are working correctly.
- Check that any outside junction boxes, i.e. gate motor, swimming pool pump, outside lights, are all sealed correctly. Water and exposed live wiring don't go well together.

Painting interior walls

Purchase the best quality roller and paintbrushes you can afford, as it will make a difference to the overall paint job.

Step 1: Remove curtain rails, fixtures and the plug socket and light switch cover plates. Remove as much furniture as possible out of the room to provide an open workspace. If painting the ceiling, begin with this task first before the walls. Place a protective sheet, or preferably a large plastic sheet, over the floor and any furniture which can't be removed.



Step 2: Using the appropriate filler, fill any unwanted holes or cracks in the wall and allow the filler to dry. If the wall is smooth you can sand the filler until flush with the wall.



Step 3: Surface walls should ideally be washed prior to painting with warm, slightly soapy water to remove dust, dirt and grime. Ask the paint supplier for an appropriate cleaning solution that won't interfere with paint adhesion.



Check all plugs for damage or frayed wiring

Step 4: Using an appropriate paintbrush, begin by painting the corners and meeting points between the ceiling and floor skirting. This is called cutting-in.



Step 5: Work carefully and apply enough width so that the roller won't touch the ceiling or skirting.



Step 6: Using a paint tray and roller, paint the wall surface in an up/down motion from one side to the other. Zig-zagging or overlapping in a criss-cross motion may create lighter or darker tones depending on the paint and light reflection. A second coat may be required, especially if you're repainting a dark surface with a lighter colour.



Paint can be expensive, but a cheap quality product may not last, leaving your house looking worse off after a few months.



Remove debris from guttering

Water supply

The mains water supply is the metered municipal supply that delivers water to your home. It is usually (but not always) situated near the front gate of your property. In townhouse or duplex properties, the main water inlet is usually on the side of the physical building. There is usually a water meter that can be inspected to read water consumption. Nearby, you should find a gate or ball valve to open or close the water supply. And here often lies the problem. In many instances, this valve may be covered over with soil, leaves, building rubble or other items making it inaccessible. Its importance suddenly strikes home when you have a burst water pipe! If you don't know where your valve is situated, find it

and make sure it's clearly accessible and working. Old valves may be corroded and will need to be replaced.

From the inside out... or the outside in

Now, down to the nitty gritty bits of home maintenance. Where to begin is up to you, and quite possibly the weather! Again, compiling a checklist will assist with decision-making. For this article, let's begin inside.

Taps and drains

Firstly, check all your taps throughout the home. The most common issue is that of dripping taps. Leaking water can be caused by two problems, both related



Check all cupboard hinges and tighten up where necessary



After a fresh coat of paint, the room looks as good as new



Weathered wood on garage doors must be removed before a new sealer or varnish is applied

to rubber seals. The one may be situated at the connection between the flexi-hose and tap base, either due to it being too loose or even too tight. The other seal is found inside the tap itself, which may be worn. Some modern taps have sophisticated engineering which makes general maintenance a challenge.

Blocked drains are another commonly encountered issue. In many cases, the combined use of drain cleaner and a rubber plunger will remove blockages. Be very careful with drain cleaning chemicals – some are toxic and/or could cause burns to the skin and eyes. They may also damage or stain the metal (zinc, copper) components of the drain filter or taps. Read the instructions carefully. Blockages are usually found inside the rubber 'S' or P-traps situated just under the basin or sink or found further down near a bend or elbow. Mechanical devices from a hardware or plumbing retailer are available to unblock drains. Alternatively, you can hire the services of a drain cleaning company.

Rubber 'P-' and S-traps can easily be removed and cleaned manually by loosening the clamps. Further along the system the drain pipes connect to the

main sewage line. Modern drain pipes are made from durable PVC, but older systems used either clay or cement pipes which are easily cracked by tree root systems. These may also cause blockages which suddenly become noticeable when you flush the toilet and it fails to drain. Repairs to the main sewage line is beyond the scope of this article and may require the services of a professional company.

Painting

Painting is one of the most common home maintenance tasks undertaken. Painting can be divided into six main areas – interior house walls; exterior house walls, ceiling, roof, perimeter wall and ornamental features, such as garden features, pergolas, garden furniture and others. Each area may require a specific type of paint. Roof paint is different to wall paint and wall paint may be manufactured for either internal or external use, or both. Timber may require an enamel, varnish or oil-type coating. When it comes to painting, do your homework first and ask questions. Paint can be expensive, but a cheap quality product may not last, leaving your house looking worse off after a few months.



A note on damp and moisture

Rising damp can be caused through several channels. These include leaking pipes (either underground or inside the walls), excessive ground water (such as high clay content not allowing water to drain away from the house) or leaking roof flashing or broken tiles, allowing rainwater to infiltrate the home. Damp can also occur inside kitchen or bathroom cupboards where constant high humidity or dripping water (from a shower or basin) seeps into the surrounding area. It may cause cabinets and chip-board counter tops to swell and disintegrate. Damp-proofing solutions are many and varied and will be covered in detail in future articles.



Lubricate rusty locks



Give old garden furniture a new lease with a fresh coat of paint or varnish

Painting exterior walls

The steps outlined in the box 'Painting interior walls' applies pretty much to outside walls as well. However, check that the paint is durable and manufactured for outdoor use. UV protective qualities may have benefits. Prevailing weather conditions must also be considered when planning to paint outdoors.

TIP! All newly plastered walls, or cement-type precast walls, will need to be painted with an undercoat paint.

Careful planning and drafting a priority list can assist greatly towards maintaining your home and keeping it in top shape.



Painting the roof

Depending on the type and design of roof, as well as the material used, for example, metal sheets or concrete roofing tiles, the roof top seldom features under general maintenance. If, however, painting the roof is necessary, some things to consider:

- Waterproofing – are you experiencing

leaks? If so, waterproofing the roof must be considered. We plan to cover this in a future issue.

- Painting the roof goes together with painting any flashing, side-boards, etc.
- As you will be working at height, there are associated risks involved. Take these into account and perhaps consider hiring a proper roofing company to do the job. 🛠️

Tiling tips

Wall and floor tiles are another feature of the home that may require some maintenance, from rigorous cleaning to outright replacement. Cracked or broken tiles can be replaced, but do you have a matching replacement tile? If not, can you still find one? Some tiling retailers may stock very similar or even the exact type of tile, but fashions come and go, and some tiles no longer exist. If the cracked tile is in a small area, you can quite easily replace all the tiles and have a completely new look. Should you have replacement tiles, removing the broken/cracked tile can be a challenge, as you can easily damage adjacent tiles.

Method:

- Firstly, use a toothed grout removal tool to scrape out the surrounding grout.
- Avoid hitting the broken tile with a hammer, as the vibrations and force may damage an adjacent tile.
- Drill a hole in the centre of the cracked or broken tile and work outwards. Work carefully so as not to damage other tiles.
- Once you have knocked out a piece wide enough for a chisel, place the chisel at a 45-degree angle under the tile and using a hammer, knock inward to loosen and break off

further pieces of tile. It's tempting to place the chisel in the interspace where the grout was, but there's a good chance of damaging the other tiles. If proper tiling cement was originally used, the tile should come out easily. However, if normal building cement was used, especially at a strong ratio, the underlying cement might be rock hard, making extraction more difficult.

- Remember to wear work gloves and safety glasses – sharp tile fragments could hit your eyes.
- Once the tile is removed, remove as much old cement as possible.
- Follow the instructions on the package of the new tile cement.
- Using a toothed tiling trowel, fill and spread the new cement to the correct quantity. Don't overfill as it will ooze out when you replace the new tile. Ideally, it must cover the entire underside, but not fill the interspace where the grout will go.
- Gently replace the tile and tap it level with a rubber mallet. The use of tile spaces will keep the tile evenly spaced between the adjacent tiles. Lay the tile gently from one side keeping your fingers under the side closest to you to get the tile correctly spaced, as the tile cement has a nasty habit of sucking the tile down making removal difficult, especially with heavy floor tiles.

HOME MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

ELECTRICAL	✓
Check electrical wiring and chords	
Check all electrical appliances – stove, refrigerator, washing machines, iron etc	
Check that the earth leakage switch is working properly (consult electrician)	
Check all outside wiring for exposed copper or other damages	
Check that all junction boxes are properly sealed	
Check all lights and bulbs – perhaps replace with energy efficient or LED types	
PLUMBING	
Check the main water valve – accessibility, corrosion etc	
Inspect all plumbing and taps for any leaks	
Replace worn washers and O-rings	
Check that all ball valves (if any) are opening/closing properly by basins and toilets	
Clean all drainpipes with appropriate drain cleaner and plunger	
Clean the rubber P and S traps situated under basins and the kitchen sink	
Clean any filters in the washing machine or dishwasher (follow instructions)	
Clean the small gauze filters found on tap nozzles by removing and washing off grit	
TILING	
Replace broken or cracked tiles where possible	
Enquire about specific tile cleaners and/or polishes to enhance your tiles	
PAINTING	
Interior walls	
Ceilings	
Skirting	
Interior doors	
Exterior walls	
Roof	
Window sills	
Window panes	
Perimeter walls	
Garden ornaments or furniture	
Timber sheds, garden arches and other timber items	
SECURITY	
Alarm system – check with your security company	
Electrical fencing – check that it is in working order	
Surveillance cameras – are all security cameras working as they should	
GUTTERS	
Clean all gutters and downpipes	
GENERAL	
Lubricate and treat locks for rust	
Check door handles and door locks	
Adjust or replace cupboard hinges and fittings that may have shifted or bent	
Window levers and adjusters	

Outdoor timber

Garden sheds, jungle gyms, garden arches and other ornaments made from timber may require some attention. And don't forget the timber deck. Treating outdoor timber can be labour intensive, as preparation such as sanding before coating will almost certainly be required. Also, different coating applications may be required, either enamel, varnish, oils or specific products designed for use on decks.

Perimeter maintenance

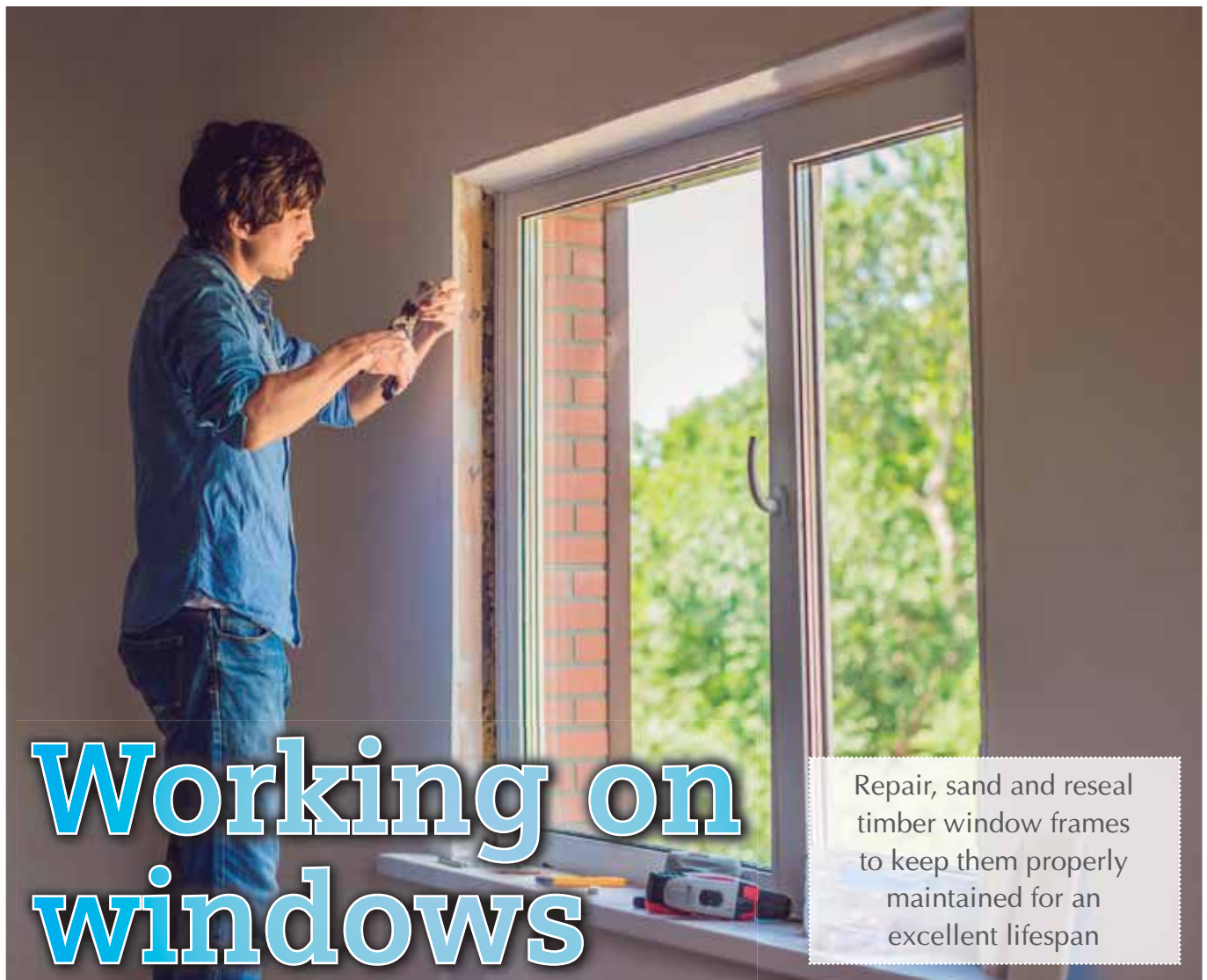
The perimeter of your home is often neglected, but the first line of sight when you approach your home. Maintenance will depend on the type of perimeter structure, such as brick walls, pre-cast walling, palisade fencing etc.

Final note – working at heights

Just as a cautionary note – many home maintenance tasks require the use of stepladders. Each year thousands of DIYers and tradesman fall foul of gravity and end up in the emergency room with broken limbs or concussion. Stepladder safety is of utmost importance. Don't take unnecessary risks and make sure your stepladder is always level and sturdy. Make sure it cannot slip out from underneath you. Make sure it is in proper working condition. Even a fall from a small height can cause a sprained ankle or pulled back.

Resource

Photography by Warren Schmidt and Gina Hartoog



Working on windows

Repair, sand and reseal timber window frames to keep them properly maintained for an excellent lifespan

>> Gina Hartoog

Wood finishes

Oils include raw and boiled linseed oil, oils that contain beeswax, teak oil, Danish oil and others. These all feed and nourish wood and are mainly used on wood items that have minimal contact with hands or on furniture. They are deep penetrating products and don't normally dry completely. Raw oil requires thinning with mineral turpentine.

Sealers penetrate into wood, building layers from inside the wood and normally leaving a flush or thin coating on the surface. Dependent on the brand, it leaves a more natural look and can offer a variety of finishes. Surface preparation when reapplying a sealer is less labour intensive than with varnish.

Varnish penetrates slightly into the wood and builds layers on the surface of the wood. If three coats are applied and light sanding in between coats is adhered too as required, varnish can give a beautiful long lasting finish. If applied incorrectly it can lead to the entire job having to be redone from scratch.

Source: Donovan Bezuidenhout

Using wood filler

Before choosing a wood filler, you need to assess where you are going to use the filler. "Is the application interior or exterior and is flexibility/movement accommodation required?" asks Paul Jacobs, Alcolin's lab manager. "Once the type of wood filler has been selected, only then is colour important, and even then, only if one wants to maintain the natural wood colour. If you will be painting the article, then of course colour is not important."

Types of wood filler

Traditional natural wood filler

- ✓ cost-effective
- ✓ easy to apply
- ✓ easy to sand
- ✓ good colour range
- ✗ poor water resistance – not ideal for exterior applications (unless painted/varnished)
- ✗ rigid (withstands movement)

Flexible wood filler

- ✓ acrylic-based
- ✓ water resistance and flexible (good for exterior applications)
- ✓ adequate colour range
- ✗ not easily sandable
- ✗ lower 'solids' content – can lead to shrinkage
- ✗ in large gaps a second application may be required

Epoxy putty wood filler

- ✓ strong bond to wood
- ✓ durable – you can drill into it
- ✓ very little shrinkage
- ✓ can be moulded to form a shape
- ✗ not as flexible as acrylic types
- ✗ more difficult to use – two components need to be mixed
- ✗ limited colour range
- ✗ expensive

What is his advice for wooden window frames? "On the interior side, I would use the traditional natural wood filler, however on the exterior side, I would use an epoxy putty type wood filler, although an acrylic based wood filler would also be suitable if you could find a better colour match," says Paul. "If you are going to paint the window frame with a high quality exterior paint, then you could use traditional natural wood filler."



Properly maintained, wooden windows add a timeless beauty to any home

Timber window frames add timeless beauty to a home, but as with any wood item outdoors, they need to be properly maintained in order to keep them looking good.

Do a complete inspection of your frames. If any of the points below are noted, it's time for some serious maintenance to prevent complete deterioration of your frames.

ASK FOR IT BY NAME

Festool's Cordless delta sander DTSC 400 – for smooth sanding along window surfaces, frames and panelling

The new Festool DTSC 400 cordless compact sander ensures unparalleled mobility and ease of movement when working on any project. The powerful 18 V battery pack with 3.1 Ah guarantees power like that of a mains-powered tool. Weighing in at just 1.4kg, it fits perfectly in your hand, with a soft, comfortable grip and ergonomic design.

The battery pack can be replaced with a plug it-mains adapter to achieve



an unlimited running time ideal for stationary applications. For a dust-free, healthy working environment, use the long-life dust collection bag or in combination with a Festool mobile dust extractor.

For more information:
www.vermontsales.co.za
call 011-314-7711

Inspection check list

- Signs of fading (or small cracks) in the current coating.
- Any sign of water penetration – coming from the bottom up (rising damp) or possibly spilling over from gutter downpipe.
- Signs of weathering (blackening on wood) or rot.
- Ease of opening. It's irritating when you try to open a window, but can't because varnish has build-up over time, causing the window to stick.
- Cracked or missing putty. If you need to replace putty, choose a product suitable for timber windows.
- Nicks and/or cracks in the wood that require filling before you commence with resealing. See the box 'Using wood filler'.

Filling gaps

When you inspect the frame, also check for gaps between the frame and wall. "If the gaps are less than 10mm, then one could use an acrylic sealant

or acrylic based wood filler and the decision might come down to colour," says Paul Jacobs, lab manager at Alcolin. "If the gaps are larger than 10mm, first use a polyurethane expanding foam between the frame and the wall and then finish with an acrylic sealant. For large gaps between frames and the wall, for example 20mm or greater, expanding foam type products really do come into their own. After application of the foam, allow it to set, then cut to shape and plaster or seal."

Restoring the frames

Addressed the cause of the problems noted above. For example, water penetration cause by rising damp or faulty guttering. Blackening should be removed with a suitable wood reviving product.

If your windows show extensive signs of rot – brittleness and crumbling, usually on and around the window sills first, you will have to locate the source of the water and correct the issue. Small sections of the frame may be able to be replaced, but in some instances the whole frame will need to be taken out and a new one installed.

Step 1: Decide on a finish

Before you start your project, make a decision as to what type of finish you want to use on your windows. See the box 'Wood finishes'. Sealers and varnish are better options for window frames. Wooden window frames can also be painted in a colour of choice, using a suitable paint for exterior wood. The product must contain UV protection to prevent colour fading. Purchase your products and equipment before you begin. Choose good quality brushes for a good finish.

Step 2: Prepare the frames

If you don't already have a power sander, invest in one now. "Window frames like many other difficult sanding jobs have many corners and hard to reach areas," notes Greg de Villiers of Vermont Sales. "Look for a sander that will handle the tight areas and corners, the triangular head base units are ideal, some have multiple option heads to go into more difficult spots. Also select a sander that has the quick replaceable StickFix interchangeable sanding pads."

For health reasons, Greg also advises on a tool with a good dust collector, one that connects to the unit itself or the more sophisticated auto electric duct vac unit that connects to the sander.

The sanding process and correct grit number for sandpaper will depend on the condition of the frames. "If they are in a reasonable condition, a fine sanding pad is ideal for a light sanding," advises Greg. "If the frames are in a bad condition, start with a more aggressive rougher pad and move to a finer pad."

You can also use a stripper to remove stubborn coating layers. The product can be applied to the frame and scrapped off using a paint scraper. Care must be taken not to nick or chip into the wood. Consider water-based products which are more environmentally friendly and equipment is easy to clean after the application. After stripping paint or varnish with stripper, you must sand the surface to remove fine particles.



Apply masking tape to the glass before applying your coating



An acrylic sealant can be used to fill gaps and cracks between the frame and the wall

Step 3: Wipe down

If you've used a stripper, use a clean cloth to remove any residue from the stripper. "If you've sanded only, use a clean damp cloth to remove traces of dust," advises Donovan Bezuidenhout, a training practitioner at Kansai Plascon SA, East Africa and Nigeria. "There should be no oily residue, dust or contaminants on the surface as this will cause adhesion issues and possible failure of the coating. The surface must be clean, dry and sound before you move on to the next step."

Step 4: Apply the coating

Protect glass using masking tape – this will save time on the clean-up at the

end of the project. You can now apply your coating as per the manufacture's guidelines. 📌

Donovan offers the following tips:

- Apply the required number of coats for your product.
- Sand lightly in between coats.
- Follow drying times for over coating for your product.
- Avoid applying in direct sunlight
- Avoid thick application
- Don't close windows while the coating is still damp

ASK FOR IT BY NAME

Festool RO 90 DX FEQ – a geared eccentric sander and ROTEX RO 90 offers four devices in one sander

The round tool that sands in corners. Offering four tools in one, for coarse sanding, fine sanding, delta sanding and polishing, resulting in a low investment cost and time saving on any project.

Sand safely against abutting edges without the risk of kickback with the Festool Protector, in three sizes for various angles and window frames. With an ideal ergonomic grip position, and the ROTEX rotary



motion for efficient material removal with effortless work, makes it ideal for overhead work.

For a super clean workplace, the RO 90 DX FEQ/Rotex can be hooked up to any of the Festool mobile dust extractors from the CT series.

For more information:
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 call 011-314-7711



Make a bold statement and add a personal flare to your space with an accent wall



ACCENT WALLS

Accent wall ideas

- Backdrop for an entertainment centre
- Fireplace surround
- Inside a shower
- Bathroom backsplash
- Dining room wall
- Kitchen wall or backsplash
- Behind a build-in bookshelf
- Patio wall
- Braai surround

Accent walls are the perfect way to make a statement in your home. Turn an ordinary wall into a statement feature or as a backdrop that draws in the eye to another important feature in your home.

Accent walls can bring colour, light and texture into your home, depending on the materials you choose. The first step is to determine the right wall to feature as an accent wall. This is important for balance in the space and to ensure that other elements of your décor link in.

A good accent wall may be the first wall you see when you walk into a room

or it may be a functional wall like a place for your TV, a shower surround or kitchen backsplash. A good accent wall may be one that dominates an entrance, an architectural feature unique to your home, a wall close to a staircase or outdoors, on your patio or braai area.

Paint should never be overlooked as a cost-effective way to achieve an eye-catching accent wall. Accent walls in solid colours can provide a backdrop for a beautiful painting or piece of artwork. When choosing the colour for your accent wall, consider the purpose of the room. Colour can be used to create mood. If your room is bold and

>> Gina Hartoog

edgy, opt for warmer colours on the colour spectrum. If your room is a place for rest and relaxation, opt for cooler, lighter tones. Neutrals can also be used effectively as accent walls in the right space. Walls painted in blackboard paint have also become popular in children's rooms and kitchens for inspirational quotes or shopping lists.

When choosing the colour for a solid accent wall as a backdrop for art, consider the colours in the painting you plan to hang there to prevent clashes. If the room is particularly dark, opt for lighter colours. When choosing wall colours, decorators use the 60-30-10 rule – 60% of the room should be painted in your central colour, followed by 30% in secondary colour. Accent colours should account for 10% of the space.

Stone cladding is an elegant and popular choice for accent walls. Thin sections of natural or faux stone (usually tiles) are also used to cover the wall to create the effect that the structure has been hewn from rock. Indoors, stone cladding can be used to create the backdrop for an entertainment system, or as a focal point around a fireplace. It is also a popular choice for braai surrounds and on patios.

Wallpaper has made a big come back in recent years. The range and quality of printing far surpassed anything we have seen in the past. Wallpaper adds colour and, depending on the pattern, can add depth to the room. Wallpaper murals have also made a comeback and can provide a bold and personal focal point for a living or dining room. Wallpaper can also be used in bathrooms, but make sure the paper you choose is suitable for high moisture areas.

Mosaics are trendy and come in a range of colours in ceramic, porcelain, natural stone, glass, metal, aluminium and pebbles. Placed together, they can form any pattern and can be used with great effect for an accent wall. Mosaic tiles can be purchased separately, but for larger areas, and a more uniform look, they are best purchased on a sheet of

mesh backing. The full sheet is placed in the tile adhesive and gaps between the individual mosaics tiles are filled with grout. Mosaics are popular accents in bathrooms backsplashes, shower surrounds and kitchens.

Tiles are one of the most popular materials for an accent wall. With the myriad of patterns and colours available, tile selection comes down to a personal choice. Depending on the wall and the room, you can go bold with pattern, timeless with wood-look tiles or faux stone textured tiles. The new DIY store, Leroy Merlin in Greenstone close to Edenvale offers printing on tiles. You can have your favourite photographs printed on tiles. These can be used with great effect on accent walls.

Wood is timeless and wood panelling on walls has been around for a number of years. Modern trends have moved away from pine tongue-and-groove slats to more weathered wood, showing imperfection rather than a pristine appearance.

Exposed brick, especially face brick used in the interior of a home, was once very popular in interior décor. Modern trends are leaning back to exposed brickwork in the home, but are far more rustic than the perfection of face bricks. Sections of plaster may be removed to expose the brick below and create the edgy, industrial look that has become very popular in modern city apartments. 🏠



Blackboard walls are popular in modern kitchens



Wallpaper



Faux stone tiles



Stone cladding



Wood



Exposed brickwork



Make a practical focal point for your garden that doubles as extra seating for guests

>> André Gous

Project guide

Project difficulty: Easy to intermediate

Estimated cost: R800

Estimated time: 4 to 6 hours

Tools

- Combination Square
- Tape measure
- Chalk
- Welder
- Bolt cutter or grinder
- Paintbrush

Materials

- One sheet of 50 x 50 x 3mm welded square mesh
- 8.4m of 30mm x 3mm angle iron
- Five of 102mm x 19mm x 1,2m industrial pine or one x 6m length
- 25mm x 5mm tex screws
- Dump rock - seven bags
- Bricks
- Varnish or paint

I have a dull corner in my garden that I want to jazz up before Christmas. Due to a very busy schedule I needed to make something fast but also something with a good focal point, so it looks good

in my garden. I also want the item to be low maintenance – I don't want to have to fuss with it periodically through the year. I decided to make a gabion garden bench. It's functional and trendy.

What makes a good garden focal point?

A focal point is any item that draws the viewer's attention to a specific place within the garden. It provides a finishing touch to the space, adding interesting and personal flare. Focal points can be placed anywhere, but you need to take into account the size of your garden. Small gardens may require only one or two main focal points, while larger spaces would need places of interest at regular intervals through the various garden rooms.

- In addition to our gabion bench project, you can choose another functional item, like a birth bath or water feature, or items that add interest, like a sundial or statue. Choose the size carefully. A small ornament in a very large garden will not create much of an impact and a large water feature can be overpowering in a small space.

- Find the right spot for your focal point - an empty corner, the end of a footpath or a flower bed near the entertainment area are all suitable locations. Consider first if you have a space that needs filling and what would be suitable in that location. Alternatively, you can find your object first, then the place it correctly where there is space.

- Focal points can also change with the sun. Choose different items for changing day and night interest. To enhance the look for night focal points, use outdoor lighting. Backlighting makes an object stand out, while up-lighting can enhance texture. Some fittings can be hidden behind foliage and the beam of light angled appropriately to illuminate the piece.



Step-by-step gabion bench

Step 1: Use a bolt cutter or angle grinder to cut the wire mesh. (Photo 1 and 2). Cut the following sizes - two of 1,2m x 450mm and two of 450mm x 450mm.

Step 2: Now use an angle grinder to cut the angle iron: four of 1,2m and 8 of 450mm.

Step 3: Weld two rectangular frames with 1,2m x 450mm angle iron. Use an overlap joint or a cut-out joint. For a cut-out joint, follow photos 3A to 3E.

Step 4: An overlap joint is two pieces of angle iron that overlap each other and are then welded together. For an overlap joint, follow photos 4A and 4B.

Step 5: Use the remaining 450mm angle iron to join the two rectangular frames. Now place your wire mesh on the inside and tack

weld in place. Weld all four panels creating a tube (open bottom and top). Optional: cut a third 1.2m panel and weld in place for the floor. (Photo 5 and 6).

Step 6: Next, cut five pieces of 102mm x 19mm x 1,2m industrial pine. Sand down, varnish and leave to dry. You can also paint the wood in a different colour, if desired and seal with a clear varnish to protect the seat from the damaging UV rays of the sun. (Photo 7).

Step 7: Find the right location for your bench. Once it is filled it is very heavy and not easy to move. Rather fill it in its final place. Fill the middle with bricks to create a cavity between the welded mesh and bricks to save dump rock. Complete the bench by fastening the 1,2m wooden slats with 25mm x 5mm tex screws to create the seat. (Photo 8 and 9).

1



Measure and cut components to size

2



Cut the mesh to size

3a



Measure for the cut-out joint

3b



Make the cut

3c



Angle of the cut

"In addition to our gabion bench project, you can choose another functional item, like a birth bath or water feature, or items that add interest, like a sundial or statue."



Before welding



The complete joint



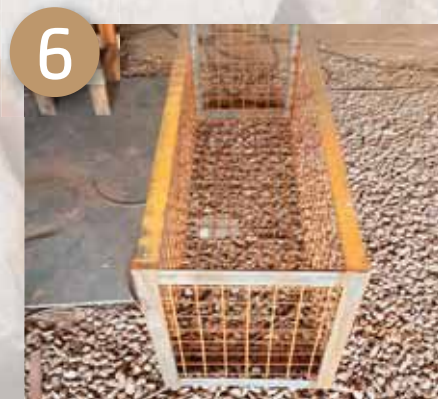
Slip over



Weld in place



Tack weld mesh in place



The rectangular gabion



Prepare the wood



Place bricks on the inside



Place dump rock on the outside

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Flexible, versatile waterproof sealants that can be used in a number of different applications

Silicone sealants

>> Kim Roberts

Uses for sealants

- Fixing glass or mirrors to a tiled surface
- Sealing gaps around showers, baths, windows and work/kitchen counters
- Sealing downpipes and gutters
- Fish tank construction and sealing
- Moulding of soft rubber goods
- Repairing rubber trim in cars
- Reduce noise - rubber feet
- Sealing skylights

When you need to make a waterproof gap seal where there may be movement between the parts, silicone sealer is your answer. 'Low modulus' sealants are more elastic and so are best for areas where there will be more movement. 'High modulus' sealants make a more rigid seal.

There are many different types of silicone sealants available with specific uses and properties. There are coloured silicones and even silicones that can be painted within an hour of application. These all cure at normal room temperature, with a bit of moisture in the air. It is best to choose one that specifically suits your project. Your choice will be made by considering

the surfaces you work on, whether the task is interior or exterior or has a safety requirement.

The shelf life of an unused product is limited, check the best before dates. If silicone has hardened in the tube, it is unusable. Sealants that are too old may never cure. If you are working with a clear silicone do so under excellent lighting so that you can see clearly.

Some silicone sealant products have protection against mould and discolouration. If mould does grow on a silicone seal which does not contain a mould inhibitor, the product 'Mould Buster' from the Tile and Floor Care (TFC) is excellent for removing mould on silicone. 🏠



Tips for using silicone sealants

DO:

- Choose the best silicone for your project
- Use a silicone stripper to remove old silicone first
- Use acetone or methylated spirits to first de-grease the joint
- Look at your gaps, find the largest gap, then select the smallest tool to cover that gap (2/3mm each side)
- Cut the nozzle to the exact width of the profiling tool you selected, straight across nozzle (90°)
- Aim to cover only two sides of the joint
- Squirt/push the silicone into the joint
- Work in shorter manageable sections
- Clean your tools with paper towel immediately when finished

DON'T:

- Use detergent and water
- Use your finger
- Use tape
- Cut the delivery nozzle at only 45°
- Use a pulling action when dispensing along a joint
- Cover all three joint sides
- Shape applied silicone into a concave profile



SEALANT SOLUTIONS

for every DIY job



Sanisil®

Silicone sealant for sanitary applications

- Fungi and mildew resistance
- Used for basins, showers, toilets, baths, etc



Sikacryl®-S

Multipurpose acrylic sealant

- Crack filling
- Window frames, window sills, doors etc



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Elastic joint sealant and multipurpose adhesive

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- Steps, skirting boards
- Vertical & horizontal joints



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Silicone sealant for swimming pools and permanently wet areas

- Swimming pools
- Shower rooms in sports halls or leisure facilities



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Transparent multipurpose sealant and adhesive

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Sika Customer Service:

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Email: headoffice@za.sika.com
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How to load a sealant gun

Press and hold the metal button or turn the push rod to disengage the ratchet and pull the nob all the way back. Insert the sealant tube nozzle through the hole at the front and then place the tube into the frame. Push into place – firmly up against the base of the tube. Pull the trigger and your gun is ready to dispense silicone. Carefully select your width point and cut the nozzle at 90°.

Properties of silicone sealants

- It does not shrink
- There is a long life expectancy – 10 to 25 years for some types
- It remains permanently elastic after curing
- Most solvents and chemicals will not damage the seal
- It is waterproof and keeps its colour
- Temperatures ranging from -60°C to +200°C will not damage the sealant
- After curing it is non-toxic
- It adheres very well to most commonly used building materials and even glass

TYPES OF SILICONE SEALANTS

General purpose (home and garden)
Sticks to most building materials – mortar, cement, concrete, plaster, masonry and mirrors, is durable, UV resistant and has good elasticity.
Aquarium
A tough sealant to use when making an aquarium. Non-toxic to fish.
Bathroom/shower
Contains a fungicide to reduce mould forming on it in a moist environment.
Food safe
Safe for food contact items. It has a very low toxicity, and is often used inside fridges.
Glazing
Used for sealing glass edges in window and door frames, and for bedding in glazing panels. It adheres well to glass and cures with a clear finish.
High temperature
For industrial or electrical applications and will withstand temperatures of up to 260°C. (Up to 300°C is also available) when cured. Used to form seals between high temperature surfaces.
Specialist
Usually for industrial uses, to resist moisture penetration – especially in electronics.
Neutral cure
This type of silicone releases no acetic acid while curing, so no vinegar like smell is made. Alcohol or a non-acid is released during the curing process. Acetic acid (found in acetoxy-based silicones) may cause discolouration on some substrates. When a neutral cure silicone is used, clear polycarbonate materials will not discolour. Better quality sealants are usually neutral cure products.
Frame sealant
This type withstands UV radiation and weathers well. It can accommodate large amounts of movement. It adheres to most building materials and comes in a range of colours.



Sealing a kitchen sink not only holds it in place, but also seals gaps to prevent water from damaging cabinetry below



Consider a growing gift – an orchid, an African violet or a pot of poinsettia, that keeps on giving, long after the tinsel fades



GO green

Keep it simple this festive season for a more sustainable celebration that is kind to our planet

With summer in full swing and Christmas just around the corner, it's time to get out the decorations and get into the Christmas mood. In South Africa, Christmas is linked with our summer holidays so there is plenty more travelling, eating and buying around this time of year. If we collectively aim for a more sustainable approach, we can make a real difference and reduce our carbon footprints – all while saving money.

Consider a living tree. A living Christmas tree keeps on giving throughout the year and you can enjoy it on your patio or plant it out in the garden. Be considerate of your living tree when adding decorations. Light bulbs should point upwards and away from foliage. Avoid using heavy ornaments. Make your own natural ornaments using pine cones, seed pods or dried berries. The traditional Christmas conifers

include the *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Gold crest' or the Leyland cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*) but you can also consider wonderful indigenous trees like Henkel's yellowwood (*Podocarpus henkelii*) or the wild gardenia (*Rothmannia capensis*).

Make gifts and decorations. A massive part of Christmas expenditure is the amount we spend on gifts. While it is nice to give gifts to loved ones, as a DIY'er you can use your talents to make personal gifts for friends and family. Many people appreciate a hand-made gift because of the planning, time and effort required to make it. Consider a growing gift – an orchid, an African violet or a pot of poinsettia, that keeps on giving, long after the tinsel fades.

Go light on the lights. If your Christmas tree lights have seen a few celebrations from the tree, consider replacing with

new energy-efficient products. Put the tree lights on after dark and switch them off when you go to bed. Never leave the lights burning all night. If you do want to light up the outside of your home, consider solar-powered lights. The initial cost may be higher, but you'll save in the long term.

Skip the wrap or recycle. Thousands of tons of wrapping paper, bows and ribbons end up in landfills after Christmas. Wrap your gifts in a gift (a T-shirt, scarf or pretty tea towel) or find ways to reuse boxes or paper, decorate and use these to wrap your gifts. If you do want to use paper, opt for biodegradable paper that can be placed into your paper recycling. Instead of paper ribbons and bows, use natural items to decorate your gifts – seed pods, feathers, leaves or sprigs of long-lasting flowers or herbs like lavender, mint, thyme or rosemary. 🌱

Wall-mounted wine rack

Keep a few of your favourite bottles of wine on hand with this wall-mounted wine rack



This clever wine rack design stores up to six wine bottles in a way that also adds fun decor to your dining area or kitchen. It's made from just a few boards and a couple dozen pocket-hole screws, so you can make one in no time! If you have wine storage at home, consider making this as a gift for a friend – and throw in a good bottle of wine.

Step-by-step method

Step 1: Make the back

Cut one back to length from 19x140mm pine. Set your pocket-hole jig for 19mm-thick material, and then drill pocket holes in the back at the locations shown. With many projects, it doesn't matter if the pocket holes are positioned precisely. When you're drilling pocket holes in the back, pay close attention. That way, when you start final assembly of your wine rack, you know that everything will line up right. After drilling the pocket holes, drill two 5mm holes through the back at the locations shown. These holes will be used to mount the wine rack to the wall in the final step. Sand the back smooth.

Step 2: Make the braces

Next, cut four long braces and two angled braces from 19x38mm boards. One end of each of these braces is cut at 45°. Also cut two short braces, making square cuts on each end of these. Next, you can drill pocket holes in the angled brace and the short braces, as shown. Make sure when you're drilling them that you create "mirror image" left and right pieces. That way, the pocket holes can all be located facing inward when you assemble the sides in the next step.

Step 3: Assemble the sides

Now you can create a pair of side assemblies. Lay out two long braces, as well as the left side angled brace and short brace, as shown. Use a piece of scrap wood to help with alignment. Glue each joint (but don't glue the assembly to the alignment board), and then secure the pieces using 32mm pocket-hole screws. See the tip to help you decide on the correct screws. Repeat the process to put the right side assembly together. If you want to cover up the pocket holes, now is a good time to fill them with pocket-hole plugs. Glue the plugs into the holes and let the glue dry. After that, trim the plugs flush with the wood surface, and then sand the side assemblies smooth.

PARTS LIST

Quantity	Part name	Measurements
1	Back	19 x 140 x 775mm pine
4	Long brace	19 x 38 x 370mm pine
2	Angled brace	19 x 38 x 235mm pine
2	Short brace	19 x 38 x 195mm pine
1	Back spacer	19 x 89 x 755mm pine

TIP: Match the screw to the wood

We built our wine rack from pine, which is classified as a softwood. Softwoods are less dense than a hardwood like oak, so softwoods require a coarse-thread pocket-hole screw. These screws have deep, aggressive threads for good holding power in softwoods. If you decide to build your wine rack from a hardwood, such as oak or maple, use fine-thread screws instead. They have less-aggressive threads, but more of them, to hold in dense hardwoods.

Step 4: Attach the back to one side

Lay one of the side assemblies (the right is shown) and position the back on the assembly as shown. Make sure that the bottom end of the back is positioned correctly - the pocket holes are located closer to the end at the bottom than at the top. Also make sure that the back is flush with the angled end of each brace. Apply glue, and then secure the back to the side assembly using 32mm pocket-hole screws.

Step 5: Attach the second side

Flip the partially-assembled wine rack over, and repeat the previous step to secure the second side assembly to the back. Make sure that the side assemblies are oriented correctly and aligned.

Step 6: Add a back spacer and finish

Cut a back spacer to length from a 19 x 89mm board. Sand the spacer smooth. Apply glue to one face of the spacer, centre it on the back, and then secure it in place with clamps while the glue dries. Using the pilot holes in the back as guides, drill the pilot holes the rest of the way through the spacer. Then you can paint or stain your wine rack to suit your taste. We used a bold yellow stain.

Step 7: Install the wine rack

Decide on a suitable location. When you drill into masonry, keep away from electrical plugs, switches and wires and possible water pipes. Ideally a digital metal detector will let you know that there are wires or pipes in the wall. This

is a very handy tool to have in your tool box. If all clear mark your holes, select the correct masonry drill bit and wall plug to fit the hole and the screws, drill your holes, insert the wall plug, position your wine rack over the holes and insert your screws. 📏

Materials

- One x 19 x 140 x 1220mm pine board
- One x 19 x 89 x 1220mm pine board
- Two x 19 x 38 x 1800mm pine board
- Twenty-two Kreg 32mm coarse-thread pocket-hole screws
- Ten x Kreg pine pocket-hole plugs
- Five x 90mm flathead wood screws
- Wood glue

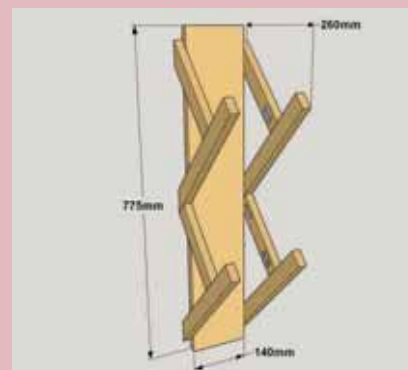
Tools

- Drill
- Pocket-hole jig
- Mitre saw
- Sander
- Tape measure
- Combination square



Download full-size graphics from our website: www.homehandyman.co.za

Thumbnail images



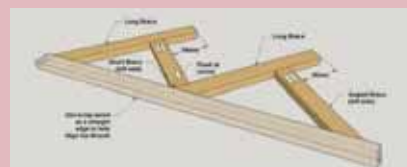
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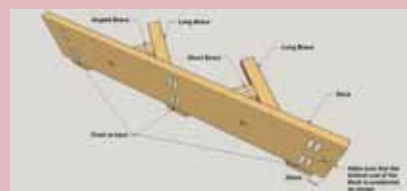
Back of the rack



Rack braces



Assemble the sides



Attach the back to one side



Attach the second side

Resource

This project was supplied courtesy of the Kreg Tool Company

Practically unthinkable

Against near impossible odds, artist Gino Hart sets sail to the *Tintanic*

>> Warren Schmidt

Dedication and sheer determination have culminated in an artistic masterpiece that has attracted the attention of historians, model-builders and fans of the *Titanic* from as far away as Canada and Malaysia. Meet the *Tintanic*. And no, the name is not a typographical error.

Gino Hart, the innovative creator behind *Tintanic*, revealed his visionary journey behind the development of a truly impressive rendition of the *Titanic*. “But it is not an exact replica of the *Titanic*,” Gino explains, “but rather a personalised version of the *Titanic*, as one would have created from memory – almost a cartoonist version in a way but based on historical fact.”

Many people have ideas and aspirations, but very few carry them out as Gino has done, especially considering the overwhelming challenges he faced during ten years of dedicated effort he put behind this project.

Born in the East Rand town of Boksburg, Gino lived and was schooled in the Free State town of Oranjeville and Villiers. After high school he delved into the world of media and advertising, but in 2013, after the magazine he worked for closed because of decreased marketing spend, he focused all his time and energy on creating *Tintanic*. However, his interest in the *Titanic*’s history and maiden voyage began many years prior, in his early teens, when he began collecting memorabilia and reading up on everything he could. This included author Walter Lord’s “*A Night to Remember*” and “*The Night Lives On*”.

Gino was fourteen when he first attempted to build a model *Titanic* and no less than eighteen prototypes were built before embarking on the current project. “I would scour shops asking for cardboard boxes, wood and polystyrene, and use wood glue and screws to construct the models,” says Gino. “The *Tintanic* is my nineteenth model,” he adds.

Materials

There is so much more to *Tintanic* than meets the eye. Unknown to most casual observers is that each level below the deck has been painstakingly recreated in crafted detail and this chapter is still unfolding – chairs, décor and even items of food are being strategically put in place in some 4,000 rooms. The model’s exterior is made up of twenty large sheets of high-grade aluminium sponsored by Stalcor and an impressive 100,000 pop-rivets sponsored by Connect Co. The aluminium hull of the ship is where it gets her adopted name of *Tintanic* from. It took three years to construct the aluminium hull and interior decks. The hull was cut to size using a regular tin snip cutter 20mm at a time.

The internal structure is held together by a very strong adhesive developed by Strongbond Adhesives, which ensures structural integrity and enough flexibility to keep components together during

"Titanic is a fantasy world. She serves as inspiration to us that anything can be achieved if one is prepared to work hard and endure. Anything is possible – you just need to believe and follow your dreams – whatever they might be." - Gino Hart

moving operations. Incredibly, salvaged wood from the original Titanic was donated by Canadian collector Grant Bell and used in the miniature staircase, giving the model immediate historical value.

The model measures an impressive 27ft (822cm) long; 3ft (91cm) wide and 6ft (182cm) tall and weighs approximately 400kg. "Moving the model to new locations can be a logistical challenge," explains Gino. Fortunately, he has two dedicated assistants, William Joyce and André Sutherland, who understand exactly how the model is dismantled, transported and reconfigured.

When asked if he had a workshop in which to build the model, Gino laughs and explains, "No. I hired a house in Villiers where rentals are cheap and began building the model in sections in the living room. Some evenings I would become so deeply entrenched that I would work throughout the night, fearing that I would get arrested for disturbing the peace! Villiers is a small town."

"As you can appreciate, I had to think the project out very carefully. I had absolutely no budget and friends would deliver food to my house. Each process required forward thinking to ensure that the model could be moved through doorways. It was a project of absolute faith, believing that it could be done. In many respects, it was *Practically Unthinkable*, and this has become my catch phrase for the project," he elaborates.

In 2015, halfway through the construction of *Titanic*, Gino was offered an opportunity he could not turn down. Premier Exhibitions was hosting *Titanic, The Artefact Exhibition*, in Johannesburg and Cape Town. With Gino's extensive historical knowledge, he was invited on board to be the official guide and historian. The exhibition displayed 144 real objects from the



Gino Hart, creator of Titanic



The model has over 4000 rooms and compartments



André Sutherland (left), Gino Hart and William Joyce are taking *Tintanic* on a country-wide exhibition



Each window has been perfectly recreated in detail



The figurines are moulded from resin and special silicone

Titanic and Gino enthusiastically introduced thousands of patrons to the history and relevance of the artefacts. In March 2016, when the exhibition concluded, Gino returned his attention to completing *Tintanic*.

With the launch imminent and space constraints looming, Gino approached his old high school in Villiers, enquiring whether they had space to house the model. The school board agreed to assist, and it so happened that his old carpentry class was available, named The Design Centre. With assistance from Gino's old carpentry teacher, Jos Ferreira, they planned an official launch date. In a fitting tribute, Redmond Taggart, the great nephew of Thomas Andrews, the original builder of the Titanic, was present at the launch.

When questioned if he has any tips for aspiring model builders, Gino advises: "Don't build Olympic size, but keep it practical and don't worry about what people say. Keep going, figure it out and use your head."

What of the future? Gino explains: "We are currently embarking on a nationwide tour, spending thirty days at each venue, such as shopping malls, which will eventually culminate in Cape Town."

The *Tintanic* is currently undergoing a country-wide exhibition tour and details can be accessed on the official website: www.tintanicmodelship.weebly.com. 📌

Resource

Photography by Warren Schmidt



The deck is made up of at least 10,000 deck planks, inserted one at a time



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The heart will go on



Make a pretty mosaic cut-out photo frame for someone special

>> Catherine Reimers

With Christmas almost here, you are probably looking for gift ideas for family and friends. If you're a keen crafter, make our mosaic cut-out photo frame for that special someone. Personalise the project by choosing colours that will match with the décor in the home of the person you are making the project for. Have some photographs printed and add them to the frame, for that special finishing touch. Gift recipients value the thought and effort that goes into a homemade gift.

Project guide

Project difficulty: Medium

Estimated cost: +/- R500 (all new materials)

Estimated time: 2 days

Tools & materials

- Jigsaw
- Plywood board
- Drill and wooden drill bit
- Mosaic tiles
- Tile cutters and nippers (glass cutter for glass tiles are best)
- Key coat for bonding
- Flex tile adhesive
- Grout (white, grey or black)
- Small wooden pegs
- Wood glue
- Picture hanger
- String to tie pieces together

Step-by-step

Step 1: Assemble your tools and materials together.



Step 2: Draw out the shapes on the board.



Step 3: Using a utility knife, score along the outline shape. This will help give a clean cut especially when cutting across the grain of the wood.



Step 4: Now we start with the cutting. It is best to cut the insides out first as it is more manageable. If the outside is cut first, it will be difficult to get a good grip on the shape to cut the inside. To cut the inside, first we drill into the area to be cut using a large wooden drill bit (an 8mm or 10mm).



Step 5: It will now be possible to get the jigsaw blade in to start cutting. I cut two holes close together so that the jigsaw glides through more easily. The trick is to avoid getting stuck on the bends. I cut lines across the inside being careful not to cut through the solid area.



Step 6: Now that the insides are cut, use the jigsaw to cut the outside of the heart shape around the outer line of the heart. Remember, the smaller the shape the harder to cut!



Step 7: With all four hearts cut, sand the shapes and their sides.



Step 8: Apply key coat to the solid heart shapes which we will create a better bond for the tiles. Set the two hearts for the photo frames aside and get ready to mosaic.



Step 9: Draw out the pattern for the mosaic and begin cutting tiles.



Step 10: To fill the mosaic pattern, I used a marker on the tiles to help cut the correct shape of the tiles. It's a bit like fitting puzzle pieces together. Keep in mind the grouting will accentuate the pattern and any line work in the design. I have used a rather simple style and added a few ceramic flowers which are available at art and craft shops. As you stick the tiles, the glue will squeeze between the tiles. Try to clean this as much as possible with a paint scraper.

If the glue sets it will interfere with the grouting, as it dries white. So know what colour grouting you will use! Once the mosaic tiles have been cut and stuck down. Leave the tile adhesive to dry for 24 hours.



Step 11: Before grouting, check the order that you'd like the hearts to hang in so that hole can be drilled in the correct place for the string to be threaded through. Using a small wooden drill bit, drill holes where marked. It may be tricky to drill through the tile so I have not stuck any down where the holes have been drilled.





TIP: Stick bamboo skewers into the holes before grouting so that they don't have to be opened again if the grouting goes in.

Step 12: Mix the grouting. This should be a creamy, buttery mix. If you have an old credit card it makes it super easy to apply the grout. And gloves are handy too, as the pigmented grouts can stain and also burn sensitive skin. Once the grouting has dried, scrub clean with a damp sponge. It takes a bit of elbow grease and many wipe downs but totally worth it.

Step 13: Paint the two hearts in a colour of your choice. I used yellow and a charcoal edge to work with the colours in the mosaic.

Step 14: Take the wooden pegs and glue them to the back of the hearts. These will hold the photographs.

Be sure to wipe away any excess glue.



Step 15: For the top heart I glued a small block of wood to the back for the picture hanger to be screwed into, as the screws or pins are too long for the width of the wood. String shapes together. Cut and peg photos in the frames and hang! 📌



If you have additional wood left after making the heart frames, why not make these rustic Christmas cut-outs for your tree?



Step 1: The first step is to draw out the Christmas shapes you have in mind. Because these are small items, they can be tricky to cut. The best shapes are going to be simple shapes without too many bends or tight corners. One has to make sure you have enough support under the wood but it also has to go over the edge of the table for the jigsaw blade not to be interfered with.



If you are not experienced with a jigsaw, the blade may get jammed and force the wood to start bouncing. It is best to go slowly and if any jamming occurs, switch off machine quickly and pull blade back out along the cut line.

Step 2: With the shapes cut, sand the shapes and their sides.



Step 3: Apply your white paint and drill holes at the tops for the string.



Step 4: Draw on your detail and paint in the characters. I sanded back the white for the wood grain to be brought out and to give a more rustic feel. I then painted solid colour for a bit more detail.

Step 5: For the Santa head (which also looks great if you make many varying faces and string together under the mantel), cut a small section off the end of the wooden dowel. Sand and stick with wood glue onto Santa's face for his nose. I also drilled halfway through the wood for the eyes. Thread the string through the holes and hang! 📌

Tools & materials

- Jigsaw
- Ply board or any wood
- Paint
- Dowel (8 or 10mm)
- Drill and 4 or 5mm bit
- Wood glue
- String

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As the summer gets underway, a number of unwanted guests may decide to take up residence in your home or garden – with the right approach and various products on the market, you can safely get rid of problem pests

How can I keep ants out of my kitchen this summer?

While cockroaches are unwanted and considered unhygienic, ants are a nuisance. One minute there aren't any in sight and the next, a whole army arrives. The ants we see in our homes are worker ants on the hunt for food for the queen and colony. Insecticide manufacturers have used this as an advantage and developed products that lure ants with the promise of food, only to include a poison which they take back to the nest. Ant bait stations should be placed under cupboards and along known ant tracks.

There are also a number of chemical insecticides on the market that are available in concentrated form to be mixed with water, or as ready-mix products in the form of aerosol or a fine spray. These can be applied around the outside of the house or indoors along skirtings and door frames as an effective barrier, depending on where the product is safe to use – indoors or outdoors.

When using these insecticides always follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully and use the correct dosages as set out. Before applying the product, put on eye protection and gloves. Keep bottles of pesticides and insecticides in a locked cupboard, away from children and pets.



We enjoy entertaining around the braai, but I hate the flies. How can I keep them away?

Flies make their presence known during the hot summer days. When food is around, you can bet the flies will soon appear. House flies lay eggs in soil, garden debris or in animal faeces. Not only are they a nuisance, but they carry and can spread a large number of diseases to humans. There are a number of products on the market that target flies for different situations. The gold standard for insects is a fly zapper with a blue light which attracts and kills insects. Both indoor and outdoor models are available and work well to keep flies and mosquitoes away from patios and braai areas.

You can also burn citronella candles or incense sticks both inside and outside your home. The best incense fragrances to repel flies are camphor, rosemary, lavender and peppermint. An environmentally friendly option for a picnic or braai is to fill a glass jar with apple-cider vinegar. Make a paper funnel and place inside the jar. The flies are attracted to the smell of the vinegar, but once inside the jar, the funnel prevents them from getting out. Place the jar away from your picnic table.





We live near a dam and mosquitoes are a huge problem every summer. What's the best way to deter them?

As soon as the weather starts to warm up, mosquitoes or 'mossies' make an appearance. Mosquitoes breed near water, so even if you don't live close to a large body of water, consider places on your property where they may lurk. These include guttering that is filled with leaves and constantly damp, rain water tanks that are left open (no mesh lid) or stagnant garden ponds.

There are a number of insecticides that can be used to combat mosquitoes. Some products on the market need to be applied to walls and surfaces – they are purchased as a concentrate and added to water. Once applied to the wall using a spray bottle, the residue stays on the wall and is long-lasting. Aerosol insecticides usually need to be used on a daily basis, but can be very effective in keeping rooms free of these pests.

Part of dealing with mosquitoes (and preventing malaria if you live in a malaria area) is to avoid being bitten. Cover up your arms, legs and ankles at dusk. You can also burn coils or mosquito repellent plug-ins through the night to keep mosquitoes out of bedrooms.



Aphids are attacking my roses but I don't want to use a pesticide as I am trying organic gardening. What can I use to deter them?

Going organic in your garden means working to bring back the balance of nature. Once this balance is achieved, you will notice that the number of pest problems like aphids, begin to decline and good garden guests like bees and ladybirds visit more frequently. Ladybirds are great to have in the garden – they are natural predators of aphids. One ladybird can eat about 50 to 60 aphids per day.

There are a number of organic products on the market to control these pests. These are free of chemicals but rather contain a mix of natural products that repel unwanted pests. You can also make your own brew. Add some crushed garlic to a litre of boiling water. Grate in some household soap and leave to cool completely. Add to a spray bottle and apply to the leaves. You can leave out the soap and add chillies to the water mixture, but you'll need to leave it to seep for around two weeks to gain full strength before using on your plants.



How can I get rid of rodents?

Not only can rodents be destructive, but they also spread disease and attract snakes. Rodents quickly learn that food is found around humans and they make themselves at home. Poison can be used to kill these unwanted pests as soon as they come snooping around your property.

Rodenticides on the market are very effective against rats and mice, but they must be used correctly and kept away from uninformed persons and animals. Eco-friendly products are effective against rodents but do not pose a danger to birds or animals that may pick up the dead carcass. If you choose to use a chemical rodenticide, place the bait in a locked bait station. This keeps the poison in a safe and contained place and rats and mice will more readily enter the box to feed, as they feel less vulnerable than eating out in the open.



Have your car serviced about two weeks before you hit the road for a trip



Ready for the road

If you are planning a road trip for the holidays, for your safety and that of your family, make sure that your vehicle is in good working order

Objects in the vehicle can become dangerous in the event of an accident, or could obscure road visuals or obstruct the driver's car control during the journey

>> Kim Roberts

Forgotten something?

Spare tyres

Take more than one spare on a long journey, especially if you are planning to drive on treacherous terrain. "Have spare tyres checked for the caravan or trailer too," suggests Layton Beard of the Automobile Association (AA).

Emergency kit

In addition to a car emergency kit, pack in a few bottles of water, a blanket and some snack bars in case you are stranded indefinitely. If your car kit does not contain a first aid kit, add one and replace spent torch batteries.

Cell charger

Check that your car cell phone charger is in working order, or better yet, purchase a solar charger for the trip, suggests Layton.

Personal details

Prepare a document with the details of your medical aid, car insurance company and if you are a member of any roadside assistance company or automobile club, like the AA, include these details as well. Keep it in the cubby hole.

The summer holidays are on the horizon! Before packing your bags for travel, make sure your car is ready for the long haul. Have your car serviced about two weeks before you hit the road for a trip. This way, you can 'test' drive it for a few days, confirming all is well with the vehicle.

There should be no unusual engine sounds, knocks or squeaks, nor bouncing suspension or any other handling problems with your vehicle in order to ensure your safe arrival at your planned destination.

Car pre-trip check list

Tyres

The condition of your tyres is vital. Road handling and hold all are linked to tyre condition. Check the depth of the tyre tread (most tyres have tread depth indicators). Skimpy tread is a red flag for you to replace immediately. Run your eye and hand over the entire surface of each tyre (inside too) to check for canvas show, damage, embedded nails or even

bubbles. Ensure that the rims and air valves are good. All tyres must be correctly inflated. Remember to check that the spare tyre is in good condition, correctly inflated and that the wheel spanner and jack are in working condition.

Brakes

The brake pads should be more than 5mm thick and your hand brake should engage within four clicks, holding the car in position. Your car should not veer when you apply brakes while driving.

Clutch

Smooth gear changes and no shuddering indicate a healthy clutch system.

Fluids

* Oil

Check the oil level and condition of the oil. Top up to the correct level. Fresh out of a service, the oil will be a golden colour, but, dark, gritty oil indicates a dire need for a service.

* Power steering fluid

While on the move your steering wheel must respond immediately, turning the wheels easily.

* Radiator fluid

Also called antifreeze or coolant. Check the level and top it up if necessary.

* Brake fluid

Your brakes should not have extra travel, or feel spongy. Top up the brake fluid if necessary, but if you suspect trouble have them attended to before you travel.

* Transmission/gear box fluid

Gear changes must be smooth and easy, if not, your gear box fluid needs to be checked.

* Windscreen fluid

Often forgotten, the windscreen cleaning fluid must also be topped up to help keep a clear path of vision. Insect

debris can smudge your windscreen and you must be able to clear your vision quickly.

Steering

The steering should be smooth, with no vibrations or pulling in one direction.

Battery

Check the cables and terminal attachments for corrosion, and that the connections are secure. If necessary, have a battery centre check it for you.

Belts

Look closely at the engine belts (V-belts, fan belt, timing belt) as wear and tear have an effect on them. Turn the ignition off first, *before* you check for any splits, fraying, cracks, missing teeth or glazing. Engine belts should have very little slack in them. Car manuals usually list appropriate times to replace worn belts. Do so if necessary.

Hoses

Squeeze and feel for soft spots or weak points, especially near the hose clamps. The hose should be firm and pliable. There must be no hardened, glassy surface, abrasion or parallel cracks visible.

Windscreen wipers

Front and rear wipers must fully clear your windscreen. Replace wiper blades if worn.

Lights

All lights - head lights (bright and normal), fog lights, brake lights, indicators, and reverse lights must be tested and confirmed to be fully functional, and clean. 🚗

Resources

Additional information courtesy of Layton Beard of the AA

Before you go

Do your own checks too, the day before you leave, even though the car has been serviced. Double check on the six fluids (as listed in the section on fluids) that keep your vehicle operating safely. Check for any leaks from hoses and parts under your car. Go through the vehicle methodically to avoid missing anything important. Fill the fuel tank and you are ready for the road.

Keep luggage in the seating compartment of the vehicle to a minimum, rather use the boot. Objects in the vehicle can become dangerous in the event of an accident, or could obscure road visuals or obstruct the driver's car control during the journey. If any caps are removed to perform any checks, remember to replace them correctly.



Turn on the lights



Add a relay to your motion sensor to turn on 12V LED lights

>> Kin Le Roux

Materials required

- One 5V power supply (an old cell phone charger is perfect)
- One microwave sensor module
- One DIY time delay board kit
- Thin cables

Note: All components are available in kit form from Bot Shop - www.botshop.co.za

Project guide

Difficulty: Easy
Estimated cost: R85
Estimated time: 30 minutes

In this article we look at a DIY board you can build yourself to create a timer that will switch a relay on for a specified amount of time. This type of circuit is used often in security lights where a short signal is received, usually from a motion sensor, that will trigger the counter and open the relay that switches a light (or siren) on for the pre-set time. In electronics signal wires are an important concept and we will take a more in-depth look at it in the section below.

A word on sensors

When a motion sensor picks up motion, it only sends a quick 'one second' signal out. The signal it sends out is usually just 5V or 12V power to a wire for a short duration. This wire is called a signal wire and is

connected to an electronics board. When it picks up this signal, an alarm will sound or lights will turn on.

This is similar to an ordinary switch. If you push on a switch, it will supply power to something. A sensor works on the same principle as a push button but will provide power to a signal wire for a short time, depending on the sensor type. A movement sensor will switch power on movement detection, a smoke sensor on smoke detection or another scenario.

In the last issue, we connected a relay board to a microwave sensor, and we could get the relay to switch on from the signal wire power. The problem is that the signal is only on for a short period and that limits the usability of the project.

Timer electronics board

The answer is a timer relay board. This board allows you to set the duration of time a relay will be open once a signal is received. Once this board gets the signal (even if the signal is just available for a couple of milliseconds) it will switch on the relay and start a counter that will count down the time you have set.

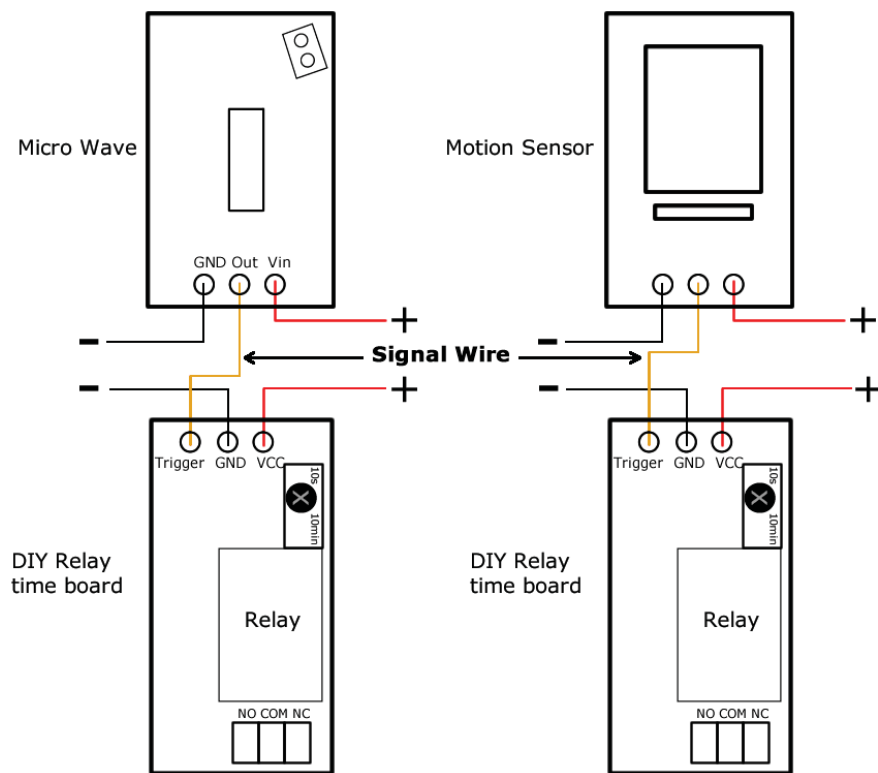
555 IC and capacitor

The 555 IC has been used for a number of years in circuits where 'time' is manipulated. In its most basic use, the IC has a trigger pin that will start the timing (in our case open the relay). A capacitor is connected to another of the 555 IC legs.

A capacitor is an electronic component that can store a small amount of power.

Now, this 555 IC monitors the volts stored in the capacitor, once the volts are less than two thirds of the board voltage, the timer stops and the relay switches off. What we need to do is to discharge the capacitor at a controlled rate because a capacitor can store power for a long time.

We can use a resistor to slowly discharge the capacitor. On this DIY board we use a variable resistor to change the resistor value and thus the speed at which the capacitor discharges. These variable resistors are also called 'potentiometers' and come in different styles and values. A 10K potentiometer, for example, allows you to change the value from 0 Ohms to 10K Ohms. (Ohms is the name for the unit of measured resistance and its symbol is ' Ω ').



Signal wire diagram



A timer relay board allows you to set the time a relay will be open once a signal is received



Variable resistor, called a potentiometer



A capacitor



The 555 IC

A sensor works on the same principle as a push button but will provide power to a signal wire for a short time, depending on the sensor type

Step-by-step

Step 1: Solder all the components to the DIY board as described in the instructions that are included in the kit.

Step 2: Connect the power to your sensor and timer relay DIY board first. Do not plug the power in the mains yet. The easiest would be to cut the plug off the 5V power supply cable and to connect the power wires to two female wires on the positive power supply wire (red wire)

and another two female cables to the negative power supply wire (black wire). Both boards have descriptions on them so you know where the power should go.

Step 3: In the wiring diagram, you can see the yellow wire connecting the movement sensor pin (marked “Out”) and time delay board pin (marked “Trigger”) together. When movement is detected, it will supply 5V to the relay

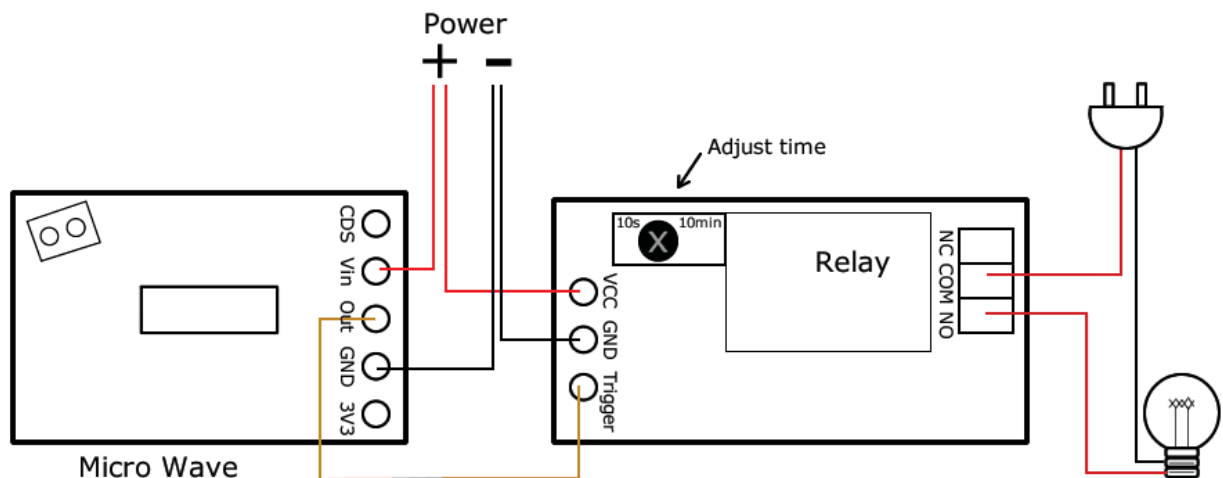
board. The yellow wire is the signal wire we talked about earlier.

Step 4: You can connect low power lights like 12V LED lights without danger to yourself. ⚠

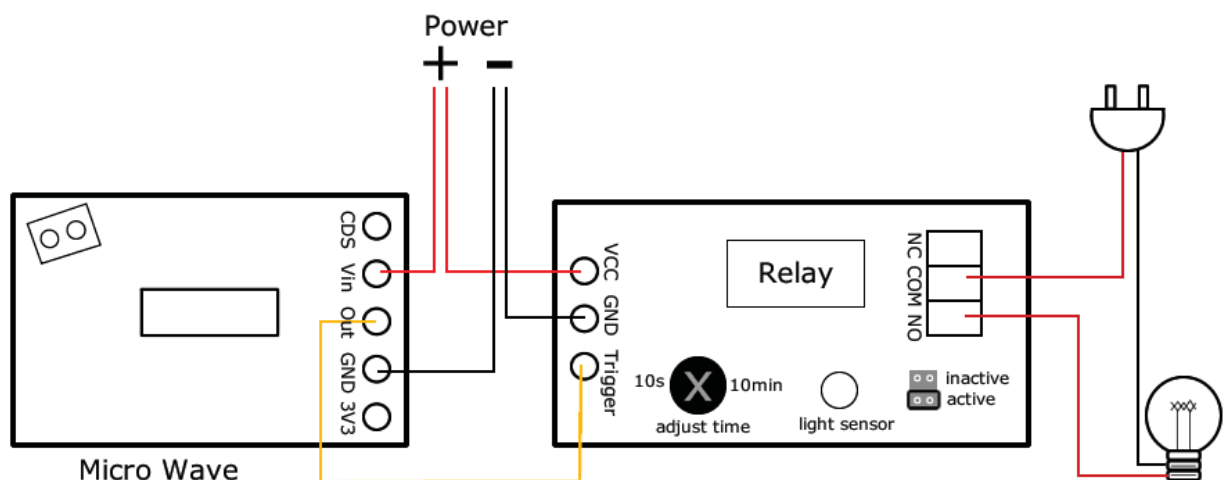
Resource

All parts used in this project and upcoming projects are available for purchase from Bot Shop – www.botshop.co.za

Warning: it is dangerous to connect high voltage equipment like 220v to relays, it can kill you.



Wiring diagram for a relay time board



Wiring diagram for a day/night time delay board

BRIGHT IDEAS

Readers share their time-saving, space-saving or innovative ideas



Open in a flash

WINNER

Opening the lid of plastic containers used for storing paint and crack fillers cannot only be difficult, but the possibility of ruining the sealing edges of the lid and/or the container is almost 100% if you use a screw driver. I came upon the idea to use an awl (the type with a rounded tip) and it works wonderfully. Carefully insert the tip of the awl between the lid and the container, and with just enough pressure, slide the tip of the awl along the groove, lifting the lid neatly and without any damage. Note: If you like your fingers the way they are, just keep them at a safe distance as one slip of the awl may end up in an unwanted situation and you'll be restocking the first aid kit! **Eben Smit, email**

Stripping wallpaper

I recently bought an old house which I intend to renovate and I began to redo my son's closets which were previously wallpapered. The wallpaper had been in place for 50+ years and it was glued solid! I remembered watching a television programme with a lady who was removing wallpaper but she had a spray bottle of water in her hand, so I thought I should try wet the paper. I took the spray bottle but I added sugar soap and lo and behold nothing could be better! Using sugar soap water in a spray bottle not only removes the wallpaper with great ease, but it cleans the glue away at the same time. It became all too pleasing to peel away the 50-year-old layer.

Belinda Danielz, Horison



Handy glue container



Looking for a handy storage idea for wood glue? Place it in a plastic tomato sauce container with a 3mm wire plug. This makes dispensing the glue a snap! A second yellow container can be used to store waterproof glue.

Keith Sheard, e-mail

Snappy storage

It's always difficult to find the right place to store kitchen cutting boards. Here's an interesting storage idea. The boards are held by square cup hooks. The dowel stabilises the boards.



Keith Sheard, e-mail

Share your ideas!



WIN

A 7-piece Felo Series 200 shock-proof screwdriver set, made in Germany.



Send your bright ideas to: editorial@homehandyman.co.za with 'Bright Ideas' in the subject line or PO Box 24938, Gezina, 0031

Please include your name, physical address and a contact number (office hours). You may also include a photograph (300kb) of your bright idea (where applicable).

Please note: Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery and are sent by the prize sponsor. Prizes are not exchangeable.

Congratulations to Eben Smit who wins a mini Rotary Tool with 72-pc Accessory Kit and Flexible Shaft from Tork Craft.

FAMILY
PROJECT


Soi good fun

Tips for using chalk paint

- Shake the bottle well before you start.
- Where possible, use a silicone brush as there is very little fibre loss.
- Wait 30 minutes for the paint to dry between coats.
- To thin, use water. Mix with water for whitewash effects.
- Finished products can be sealed with water-based varnish.
- Clean your equipment with warm soapy water.
- Seal pots after use or your paint will dry out.

Source: Granny B's Old Fashioned Paint

>> Gina Hartoog

There is nothing more fun than making snazzy Christmas decorations to jazz up your Christmas tree. We've taken some new paint brushes and turned them into super Santas with some chalk paint and googly eyes.

Note: We've provided these steps for your child to follow, but for safety reasons, always assist your child with any project.

Step-by-step

Step 1: Ask a parent where you can do your project. Outdoors, in a shady area is best, if you don't have a workshop or garage at home. Place paper or newsprint down on the surface so you don't get paint on the table. Assemble everything you need for the project.

Step 2: Use a white piece of paper and decide on the designs for your Santa hats. The 'hats' are the paint brush handles. Although Father Christmas has a red hat we've taken the liberty to be as creative as we like. Draw out your designs before you start painting.

Step 3: Give all the brush handles a rub down with sandpaper – this will ensure that the paint will adhere nicely. Wipe down to remove the dust.

Step 4: Begin with the first brush. If you are doing candy stripes, use masking tape to mark off the stripes. Use a thin paint brush to apply your paint.

Step 5: Complete all your Santa hats – depending on how many paint brushes you have. If you want your brush to look a bit 'weathered'. Allow the paint to dry, then rub lightly with sand paper. We used a white base coat on ours, followed by red and a light sand to produce the distressed effect.

Step 6: Use the thin paint brush, to give the paint brush bristles on your ornament a bit of a white tinge. You can do some or all of your brushes – or none if you prefer to leave them as is.

Step 7: Apply pink, tan or brown paint to the silver part of the brush. This is Santa's face. Allow to dry.

Step 8: Ask mom or dad to help you measure a strip of white felt for the hat edging. You don't have to use the white felt for this edging. Use any of the fabric pieces you have bought. Let them help you cut it and glue in place. You can use craft glue or a glue gun. Take extra care when using a glue gun. The glue gets very hot and it can burn you.

Ask mom or dad for assistance.

Step 9: Once the felt is in place, glue on the eyes and the nose. We used split pins for the two smaller brushes and different drawing pins for the two large ones. You can also use soft craft pom-poms, available at stationery and craft stores. Glue in place.

Step 10: Decorate that hats as you like. Cut a piece of ribbon and push through the hole at the top of the hat.

Tip: If you have green paint left over, collect some pine cones at a local park and paint them green for instant Christmas trees. 🌲

Project guide

Difficulty: Easy

Estimated cost: R200 (for 4)

Estimated time: a few hours

Tools & materials

- Chalk paint in Christmas colours
- New paint brushes in various sizes (wood handles with a hole/light-coloured bristles)
- Thin paint brushes
- Googly eyes
- Split pins and drawing pins
- Masking tape
- Ribbons, lace or fabric strips
- Stickers or other embellishments
- White felt square
- Craft glue
- Glue gun
- Craft scissors or knife
- Sandpaper
- Soft cloth
- Jar of water (cleaning brushes)

Resource

Paint supplied courtesy of Granny B's Old Fashioned Paint. For more information visit www.grannyb.co.za or call: 011-708-0139



Assemble what you need



Apply paint to the handles



Get creative with your colours



Paint the face



Add the 'fur'



Glue eyes in place



Insert the ribbon

ASK OUR EXPERTS

Our panel of experts answer your questions on DIY problems

Router query

WINNER

My better half gifted me a Ryobi RT800 router table after I expressed interest in doing more with my Bosch POF 1200 AE router. I have already modified the base plate so that I can mount my router onto the table. My query pertains to how to adjust the height of the router bit from the top of the table. Is there a modification that can be done to enable this, instead of adjusting the router from under the table every time?

Lawrence Govender, Sasolburg



Expert woodworker Denis Lock

responds: As you have experienced there is problem in adjusting the bit height on a Bosch POF 1200 AE when mounted on a router table. There are very few routers available in South Africa that provide above-table bit height adjustment. I have been confronted with this problem for over

50 years and have never come across a router modification solution for Bosch or similar DIY routers. The solution involves a router table modification. The most common is a motorcar scissors jack under the router. A hand wheel and threaded rod with a pad on the end under the router also works. For many years I used a simple

lever pivoted on a cross piece behind the router. I designed this to give me a 4-to-1 mechanical advantage and a 4-to-1 distance multiplier. You can buy commercial router lifts but you will spend more than you spent on the Bosch router plus the Ryobi table. I would be interested in a photo of the solution you implement.

WIN

A 6-month subscription to *The Home Handyman* magazine

Send us your DIY queries and you could be a winner!

Send your queries to:

The Home Handyman DIY Queries
editorial@homehandyman.co.za or
P.O. Box 24938, Gezina, 0031

Please include your name, physical address and contact number (office hours)

Please note: Queries will only be answered in the magazine. Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery and are sent by the prize sponsor. Prizes are not exchangeable.



Revamping windows

It's almost that time of the year to start varnishing the wooden window frames. There are a lot of products on the market from wood preservatives to oil and water-based varnishes. Our window frames are in various states of healthiness... from window putty that needs to be replaced and parts of window frames that have not been looked after and are rotten. Where and how should I start?

José Rebelo, e-mail



Editor responds: Your query comes in the nick of time! We have a comprehensive article on timber window frames in this issue. Please turn to page 18.

Our winning queries come from Lawrence Govender and Gerard Marian. They both win décor and craft paint gift hampers from A.Shak.

Grinding wheel query

As the grinding wheel of my 6" bench grinder (which was purchased about 28 years ago) had to be replaced, a spare grinding wheel purchased together with the bench grinder, was fitted. However, I started to wonder if the bonding material of the abrasive compound is still intact after so many years. Taking into consideration the hammering such a wheel is exposed to, I am really concerned about the safety and the wheel exploding due to the high stresses produced on rotation. I am including a photograph of the spare wheel. On the other hand, the existing grinding wheel of the same age, up to now performed perfectly without any problems.

Eben Smith, by e-mail

Metalworking expert André Gous responds: As the abrasive wheel runs on excessive high revolutions per minute

(2800 to 3500) as you state, it is extremely important to be aware of the safety hazard of a bench grinder. Firstly, the grinding wheel needs to be stored at a moderate temperature (10°C to 30°C and humidity not higher than 70%). Other tools should not be stacked on top of such a wheel either. By not using the grinding wheel often, deterioration of the bonding agent will occur especially in moist conditions. Small invisible hairline cracks may develop which can cause an explosion. There is a sound test you can do. Tap the wheel gently with a non-metallic tool such as a plastic screwdriver handle for light wheels. Tap wheel about 45° each side of the vertical centre line and about 3 to 5cm from the periphery. A good grinding wheel will ring with a clear tone. A cracked wheel will ring with a dull tone, that quickly fades. Look at your manual instruction booklet (if you still have it), it normally states usages within three years of the production date. I am also

a bit concerned that your grinding machine and your actual stone is not running at the same speed. The picture shows a maximum of 2000rpm. If my memory serves me right all the old machines ran on 2800rpm, meaning your wheel may not be suitable for your machine.



Condensation around windows

WINNER

There is a lot of condensation in our house in the mornings, particularly around the window areas. The window sills are very damp which will eventually affect the wood and paint. We do not have a damp problem - which I know would cause it. How can I reduce moisture/condensation problems in the house? We do the normal such as open windows in the morning and we have an extractor fan in the bathroom but the condensation/moisture builds up over night when the house cools.

Gerard Mavian, Website query

Clive Smith of Inspect-a-home answers: The answer to this question is very simple. You need to provide adequate ventilation during the night in order to prevent

condensation from forming. What is happening is that the temperature inside the house is warmer than that of the exterior of the glass and condensation is occurring on the glass and is then running down onto the window sills. If a heater is left on overnight, the condensation will be even more exaggerated.

The condensation that you are experiencing is very similar to that of a cold drink which is left in a glass on a warm day. The solution - provide ventilation throughout the night in the form of airbricks or a window which is left slightly ajar. This will allow the humidity in the house to escape.





Braai trolley

With retirement comes a number of changes, but Denis Lock refuses to give up his Sunday braai - even if it means adjusting to a smaller unit and making a handy braai trolley

>> Denis Lock

My wife and I will shortly be moving to a retirement village. This is going to result in a number of lifestyle changes. One very obvious one is the Sunday braai. You can't use a charcoal braai on a first floor patio. Knowing how much we enjoy the Sunday braai, our three children clubbed together and bought us a mini gas braai. It came with strict instructions: Dad has to build a braai trolley.

Dad has done his job (photo 1) and the project is the subject of this article. It will not be a "step-by-step build a trolley" article. Rather I am going share a number of "tips and techniques" from this project. These can help you build a braai trolley. They can also be applied to other projects such as: coffee table

with a magazine drawer, hall table with a drawer for car keys, kitchen table with drawers for cutlery and more.

The gas braai had been tried out on our existing patio table. The height of this table (700mm) was comfortable for braaing. The height of the braai trolley was thus set at 700mm. The size of the corrugated box the braai came in was 700mm by 400mm. Guess what size was selected for the trolley top: that's right – 700mm x 400mm. One more major measurement to decide upon: the depth of the drawer. This needed to be 120mm so that a spare gas canister would fit in it. This set the height of the apron pieces at 170mm (photo 2). Three more design decisions were made. I decided to use an inset drawer design and not the simpler

overlay drawer design. I had some castors salvaged from an office chair and two of these would be used. That's what makes it a trolley. I decided not to add a separate handle. The lip of the top would be sufficient to move the trolley short distances.

The approach I take to most projects is to "construct around the design". The overall design is done without any thought to construction details. Then I decide what construction techniques to use.

Construction of top

I was lucky: I had a 1500mm x 250mm x 20mm kiaat board that I used for the top. This allowed me to make the top from two pieces of grain-pattern matched and



Completed project

colour matched wood (photo 3). Don't be in a hurry to edge-to-edge join the pieces you are going to use to make a top. Spend some time examining the pieces and arrange them to give the best effect. Ignore the oft repeated advice to alternate the annual rings. Choose the best face of each board and make that the top face. Having done this play with different board

edges. With two boards there are four possible combinations. With three there are eight... My choice is seen in photo 3: the joint is invisible. The four possible matches are: edge A2 to edge B2 (the one I chose) - joint invisible - very attractive; A1 to B1 - joint visible - attractive; A1 to B2 and A2 to B1 - joint sticks out like a sore thumb - unattractive.



Apron height



Grain pattern matching



Gluing breadboard end



Leg construction

Knowing how much we enjoy the Sunday braai, our three children clubbed together and bought us a mini gas braai.

6



Bad design

7



Drilling jig

8



Castor fitted

9



Main joints

The top is thickened to appear to be 38mm thick. I followed the techniques documented in my article Preventing the *Panel of Doom* published in the May/June 2018 issue of this magazine. Breadboard ends have been added as can be seen in photo 3. Three slip tenon joints were used to attach the breadboard ends (photo 4). The three slip tenons are glued to mortices in the edge of the thickened top. Only the centre slip tenon is glued to the breadboard end. The outer two are left to float in oversize mortices and allow for wood movement.

Construction of legs

I didn't have any 50mm x 50mm kiaat to use for legs so they were laminated from two pieces each of 50mm x 23mm material (photo 5). Again I spent some time playing with the eight pieces in order to get the best colour and grain pattern match. Sometimes you are lucky, sometimes you are not. Do the best you can: you don't want every leg to shout out to the world "I am made of two pieces of wood." After lamination the two best legs were selected as the front legs and the faces that showed the lamination were set to point left and right: not to the front. To ensure that I kept this orientation a cabinetmakers' triangle was drawn on the top of the four legs. The black diagonal line seen on the top of the leg is part of this triangle. I also marked the position of the mortices as added protection (also seen in photo 5).

A 3mm chamfer (4,3mm on the diagonal) has been routed on all four arrises of the leg. As noted in my July/August 2018 article: "A chamfered

edge creates a definite surface that reflects light in such a way as to help define the outline of component." I used a 45° chamfer bit throughout this project. It is not necessary to use every profile bit you have on a single project.

The apron and stringer pieces are inset by 6mm. This is sufficient on a project of this size. Some woodworkers insist in placing the apron in the middle of the leg (photo 6). I think this is ugly. It also reduces the length of the tenon by nearly 50% resulting in a smaller gluing area and reduced joint strength.

Two of the legs required an 8mm diameter hole in the bottom end to take a castor. It is possible to set up my drill press to drill holes in the end of long pieces of wood. This is a real sweat and not worth it for two holes. Photo 7 shows the simple guide block, with a V-slot, that I used to drill a perpendicular hole with a hand-held drill. I continue to be surprised at what I can setup with a block of wood and a couple of clamps. Photo 8 shows the result. At this stage the leg had not been chamfered.

Joints – apron / stringers to leg

Every woodworking joint you or I make involves a trade-off between appearance, strength, skill required, equipment required and time. The major joints in this project are highlighted in photo 9: the apron to leg joints (A) and the stringer to leg joints (B). There are a number of possibilities for right angle joints such as the ones we are discussing. These are pocket hole, dowels, biscuits, traditional mortice and tenon, and slip tenon.



The apron to leg joints present a challenge. In my April 2018 article I stressed what I call the 75mm rule. The apron pieces are 170mm high and as it is at right angles to the leg (a grain direction conflict) and the 75mm rule would be broken if pocket hole screws or dowels were used. These joints do not make provision for wood movement. The solution is to use a pair of mortice and tenon joints or slip tenon joints and only glue one of them. I prefer to use a slip tenon joint (photo 10). This joint consists of a pair of identical mortices. They are joined with a simple slip tenon crosscut from a prepared strip. This joint is easy to make if you have a plunge router and even easier to make if you have a Festool Domino machine.

Photo 11 shows a dry fit of the apron to leg joint. Instead of one wide slip tenon there are two. Both slip tenons are glued to the apron but only slip tenon A is glued to the leg. Slip tenon B does not break the 75mm rule. Slip tenon B is not glued to the leg (photo 12) and is free to float as the apron width changes with seasonal moisture

changes. Slip tenon B adds very little to the strength of the apron to leg joint. Slip tenon A provides more than enough strength. Slip tenon B prevents the apron twisting. The stringer to leg joints did not present any problems. Slip tenons, 40mm wide, were used.

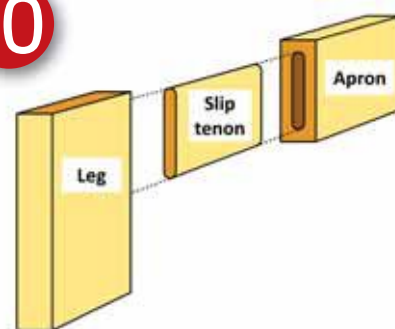
In my next article I will tell you how I made the drawer front and the front apron from a single piece of wood resulting in the perfect grain match seen in photo 1. I will tell you how I built the drawer using French dovetail joints. The techniques to achieve a dead square assembly and the installation of the drawer runners and guides will complete this discussion. ■

ABOUT DENIS:



Denis Lock runs a woodworking school and shop in Midrand, Gauteng. He can be contacted at denis.lock@worldonline.co.za or 082-267-5948. Visit his website at www.routingwithdenis.co.za
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10



Slip tenons

11



Two tenons

12



Only one glued

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE...



Do the best you can: you don't want every leg to shout out to the world "I am made of two pieces of wood".

WOODWORKER'S CORNER

Sharing techniques, ideas and a love of wood

Making jigs

>> Tobias Lochner

The necessity of making jigs is part of every woodworker's process. Whether we make a jig for a one off situation, or make one for long term repeatability, we all need to make jigs.

The three important factors that every good jig needs: accuracy, safety and control. There is a plethora of jig ideas on the internet, in good woodworking books and in magazines. Ranging from cutting, measuring, layout, woodturning and routing jigs to drilling, planing and chiseling jigs - the list is endless.

I prefer to make jigs for the long term. I suggest that you also adopt this approach. A good jig requires time and effort, so make it accurately and well. My preferred material is Birch plywood and

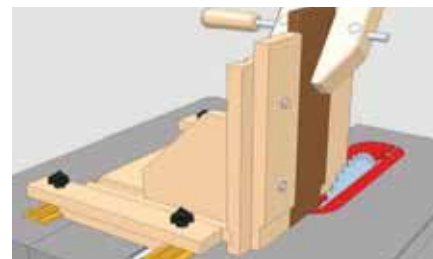
for jig hardware, I generally use Toolcraft "T" Track, Woodpeckers knobs & handles, Incra Combination Track, Incra and Micro Jig adjustable Mitre Sliders and Woodpeckers or Toolcraft "T" Bolts and Toolcraft Rare Earth magnets.

Whether you decide to make a pair of bench hooks, a pair of bar gauges or trammel bars, a shooting board, a crosscut sled, a planing board, a large circle cutting jig for your band saw, a tenoning jig or tapering jig for your table saw, take a little time and effort to ensure that your jigs are truly accurate. They will stand repeated punishment in your workshop and will pay off handsomely.

There are excellent jig hardware kits and clamps available from Incra, shooting

board and bar gauge kits from Veritas, self-adhesive tape measures from Kreg and a great selection of clamps, knobs, handles, "T" nuts and bolts from Woodpeckers and Toolcraft, Rare Earth magnets from Toolcraft, so collect your off cuts, MDF and plywood and start building!

Questions for Tobias can be directed through the "Ask Our Experts" page.



SPOTLIGHT

Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*)

>> Lenn Clark

Thirty years ago we started Touw Meubels as a family business in the Southern Cape, manufacturing solid wood products from local timbers. Seeing that I did my apprenticeship working with imported beech which is a lovely stable timber and easy to work with, great was the shock when I had to work with blackwood for the first time. I immediately realised that I still had a lot more to learn about this alien wood.

Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) is a beautiful multi-coloured timber, ranging from very light to red and dark brown. In the early 1990's all blackwood furniture had to be formal, dark and evenly coloured with no knots or defects. The latest trends have changed to light

blackwood with natural defects and cracks with a much more informal look. We manufacture 70% of our furniture in blackwood.

Blackwood is a hardwood and cross grained and is not always an easy timber to work with. Through experience with kiln dried timber, sharp tools, the right machines and glue, one can manufacture beautiful products such as furniture, staircases and flooring. I have successfully hand-carved and steam bent it. It wood stains and finishes well with oils and varnishes. I think blackwood is an ideal choice for owners, manufactures and hobbyist for most interior woodwork. It's value for money.

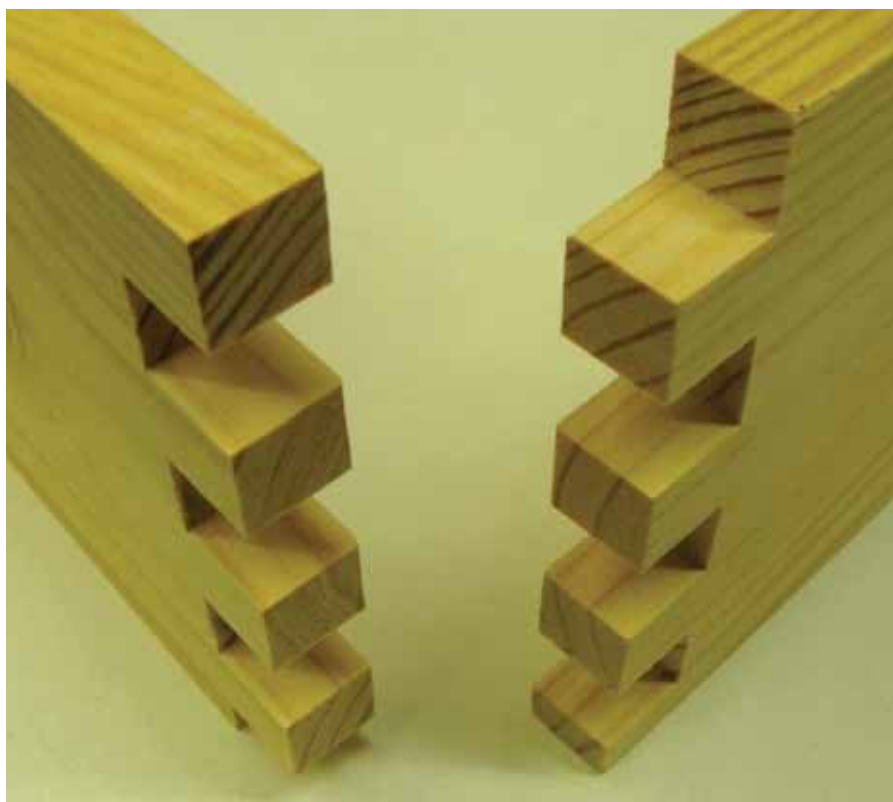


Finger joints

>> Denis Lock

An attractive joint for the corners of a box is a finger joint, also called a box joint or comb joint. It consists of a series of interlocking fingers that give the joint a high degree of mechanical strength. More importantly the faces of the fingers provide face-grain-to-face-grain gluing areas. Collectively this is a large area

and after gluing the resultant joint is very strong. There are two ways to machine cut (I wouldn't try by hand) a finger joint: a table saw or a router table. The joint shown was cut on a router table using a simple jig. At the heart of this jig in an indexing key the same size as the fingers.



Know the lingo

Patina The natural aging of a wood over time. The surface is generally smooth, yet worn, with marks that indicate good usage and a natural darkening of the timber. There may be

a build up over oils and waxes on the surface.

*Got an interesting woodworking word?
Share it with us: email to
editorial@homehandyman.co.za*

Woodworking associations

The Woodworking Association of Pretoria was established in 1989 as a non-profit association with the purpose of bringing together woodworkers in all disciplines in the Pretoria area of South Africa. Its objectives are, amongst others, the dissemination of information on wood and woodworking, to create co-operation between members, to exchange ideas and knowledge, to organise regular meetings, workshops and competitions of members in the various disciplines of woodwork, to issue a regular newsletter to members and to liaise with other similar associations and clubs in South Africa.

Membership is open to any person interested in woodwork who applies on the prescribed application form and pays the annual subscription. The Association currently has more than a hundred members. Within the association there are three groups - cabinet makers, wood turners and the woodcarvers.

The monthly meeting of the Association takes place on the last Wednesday evening of every month. Guest speakers are invited to meetings to discuss or present various woodworking related products, equipment or techniques.

*For more information visit the website:
www.ptawoodworkers.com*

Woodworking associations' details are available on our website at www.homehandyman.co.za. To add your club details or provide details for any upcoming events for us to publish on this page, please email details to editorial@homehandyman.co.za

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Showcase your woodwork projects

Custom design

Alan Templar shares his wooding experiences: "From my first woodwork class, during my school years, I developed a love for making different items from wood. Recently, I started making furniture in addition to the wooden children's toys I have made over the years. This includes pre-school furniture such as dressing tables, play stoves, trucks, train sets and doll cots, to mention a few. In order to improve my woodworking skills, I enrolled myself into a few courses held by Denis Lock. These courses have helped build my confidence to attempt many other different woodwork projects. My family and I started a bathroom renovation at our home. During this process we found the bathroom basin vanities available did not suit the space we had available in our bathrooms and were priced well out of our budget. I decided to attempt the design and make up of a basin vanity cabinet to meet and suit our bathroom specifications."

For a different feel in each bathroom, Alan made two different vanities - one a drop-in basin and the other, a free standing basin. He also changed the doors for a varied look. Alan says he always tries to use recycled wood to complete projects, but in this case, the units are made from 9mm shutter ply, ply wood and recycled pallet wood off cuts.



Gifts from the heart

Kevin Owen is a civil engineer by profession and took up woodworking in 2012. He wanted to make a special gift for his first granddaughter who resides in the United States and opted for stunning doll's crib. This project was the start of Kevin's woodworking adventure.

"The learning curve never ends in woodworking but I have reached the level where I am now giving woodworking lessons to beginners," says Kevin. "I have made a number of toys for my grandchildren and have progressed to furniture, furniture restoration, bowls, chopping boards and the like. My most recent effort was a wine presentation gift box for my brother, Terry's birthday. The box is made from cherry with a wenge inlay. The joints are classical dovetail joints which I think is one of the most beautiful joints in woodworking. I am still gainfully employed so all my woodworking is done in my spare time. The box in picture took about two weeks to make."



Write to us



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Please send us pictures of your project.

Write a caption with your name, surname, inspiration, type of wood, etc. and send to editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Add mint to salads
and summer drinks



>> Gina Harroog

GROW HEALTHY HERBS

Herbs have been used for centuries for health, healing and to add flavour to food

Culinary herbs are used either fresh or dried. Leaves are generally chopped or ground for spice or flavour, while other parts of the plant, including the seeds, fruit, stems, bark or roots may be used fresh or dried.

Full sun

Basil, bay, chives, coriander, dill, oregano, rosemary, thyme, sweet marjoram

Semi-shade

Chervil, fennel, garlic, mint, sage, bee balm, lemon balm

3 TIPS for growing herbs in your garden

1. Find the right spot

Most varieties enjoy a sunny spot, so choose a place that gets around six hours of sun every day. If you are planting directly into the bed, combine herbs with vegetables to get the benefit of companion planting. This is an ancient form of pest control and, when chosen correctly, the companion plants help to repel insects and protect crops.

Not all herbs enjoy full sun, so check your variety before planting. Always add compost and bone meal to the soil and mix in well before sowing seeds or planting out seedlings purchased from your local nursery.

2. Consider containers

Herbs are great container candidates – not only do they grow well on a sunny patio or in the braai area, but they look good when grouped on a herb stand or window sill.

You can start off with a 15 to 20cm plastic, terracotta or glazed pot. In a larger pot you can plant a selection of herbs for a mini herb garden. Drainage must be good. Cover the bottom of the pot with broken crocks or stones. Add bone meal to commercial potting soil. Always water your containers very well. Save water after cooking vegetables or pasta to water your herb containers. Allow to cool before watering.

3. Take care of plants

Feed growing herbs at least once per month with organic plant food, but check the manufacturer's guidelines so that you don't overfeed. Liquid plant food helps to stimulate healthy leaf and root growth. Pinch back growing tips and prune after flowering. For containers, cut them back on a regular basis to keep a nice shape. Harvest herbs for use in the morning. Use your fingers to break off a few leaves, but if you need to cut the stem, use secateurs. If pests attack your herbs, mix dishwasher soap into a jug of warm water and add some crushed garlic for extra punch. Apply to plants using a spray bottle. 🍷

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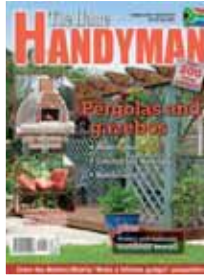
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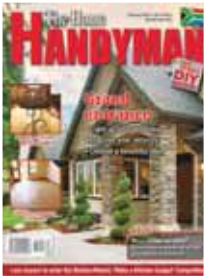
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Bladder trouble

Drills, pipes and lukewarm water – not your average DIY job – just Reuben 'The Screwman' Hart and another unsuspecting prank victim

This column is dedicated to all those who have suffered my insatiable love of practical jokes – staff, colleagues, friends and family alike. This is for you brave souls that have stuck it out with me all these years! Sometimes I felt really bad for what I had done, but I was over it in a flash.

One such time springs to mind. David, an ex-colleague of mine, let's call him Trevor to protect his identity, had an office right next to the pub, with a window between the office and the pub. This total coincidental office layout led to yet another one of my illustrious pranks. One thing about my pranks is that I have a fairly debauch sense of humour and no shame.

One morning I went to the shop at the crack of dawn with yet another blueprint for a prank. I drilled a hole through the wall in the pub to David's office. Then I fed 10mm clear tubing from the pub to David's office and all along the skirting (Yes... I did. 'Go big or go home' I say). I then ran the tubing under his desk, and at an exact point, I stuck it on with the ever-popular duct tape. I then attached a

5 litre plastic container with hot water to the other end.

All the prep done, all I had to do is wait. I could hardly contain myself! At exactly 8.15am, the unsuspecting victim entered the premises, newspaper and files in hand. Like a psychopathic serial killer I stalked my victim, sat down in front and had a chit-chat over a cup of tea, doing a last minute check that everything was in place.

At last it was show time. I felt like I was at the theatre, the only thing missing was the box of Nutties. I took my seat behind the bar counter and opened the blinds ever so slightly. At my feet lay the 'Dignity Destroyer' with lukewarm water, ready for the onslaught. Through my voyeuristic peephole in the blinds I could see David engrossed in the morning paper... It was time.

I gently put my left foot on the bottle and applied pressure. I could see the liquid travelling through the tube to its final destination – like that of an intravenous drip travelling to the condemned. Then all hell broke loose. David kicked back his office chair, rolled back and hit the

>> Reuben Hart

wall behind him with a thunderous thud. He bent over, clinging to his crotch like a new born baby, shouting for help!

In the aftermath and debrief, it came to light, that David thought he had bladder failure. All he could feel was a warm sensation between his legs, very much like that childhood memory of wetting your bed. To add insult to injury, he had to walk around the office with a rather big wet spot, looking like he was in search of his 'Nu-Nu blanket'. At first David had a complete humour failure, but as the day progressed he could not help but join in the laughter. No one was ever safe from my wicked sense of humour. 📺

ABOUT REUBEN:



With 40 years of his life in the hardware business and 12 years on radio as 702's DIY guru, behind his belt, Reuben 'The Screwman' Hart decided to pack it up and run for the hills. After traveling 7000km, he and his wife found their hill in Barrydale in the Western Cape.



Shield yourself/Pantser jouself



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Arma Iuris (Pty) Ltd (established in 2005), inter alia renders the following labour law services. Our services, known as Laboria, include the following nationally:

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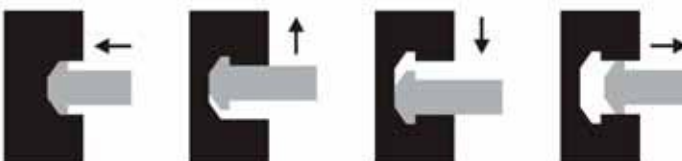


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