

The Home HANDYMAN

March/April 2022 • Vol 32 No 03



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DIY
MAGAZINE



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FROM THE WORKBENCH

For the past few months – even with a short break over Christmas and New Years – I have been really struggling with fatigue (and no, I haven't had COVID yet fortunately!) Every day, come the afternoon, I am completely wiped out. I have tried all the common remedies which are freely available on the internet, including trying to get more sleep, drinking more water, changing my diet and exercising, but no matter what, from midday onwards I am daydreaming about my head hitting the pillow later that night.



Could it be fatigue from the last two years of the pandemic? Or maybe it is related to workload and kid-load? I am 100% sure that our generation was never given the amount of homework and projects which today's schoolchildren get... However, the good news is that I am off to see the doctor soon, and hopefully they will be able to determine the root cause and get me back on track.

DIY fatigue is also a thing, and I am sure many of you have experienced it before. Have you tackled a seemingly endless, ambitious project before? Possibly bought a fixer-upper, be it an old car or an old house which needed a lot of work? Have you started with all the enthusiasm in the world, but as the scale of the task started to set in, become less enthused with the project? It is a common scenario, and there always seems to be something else which needs your attention more than the mammoth project you have taken on.

My advice? Don't stare too hard at what's coming, but do look back at what's done. In this way you can be proud of what is already accomplished, and look forward with enthusiasm to what to do next. The hardest part of building new things is finding ways to make meaningful progress – especially when your end goal is big.

Here's a question: How do you eat an elephant? The answer? One bite at a time. Eating the elephant is hard not because it's a whole elephant, but because we spend so much time and energy trying to figure out which elephant to eat, and what bite to take first.

Sometimes we look up and realise we've spent so much time debating, we could have already built something that would have answered our debate definitively. For many of us, it's hard to start when the whole of the project is not clearly in view. But waiting until you know everything is incredibly inefficient.

First of all, you're never going to know everything. But more importantly, building something is not just the output of your work. It's an important tool in learning and understanding. Actually doing the work can provide insights that years of researching could never find.

For big, ambiguous projects, your greatest risk is not that you make the wrong thing... it's that you never make anything at all.

Big, hairy, ambitious projects are scary and uncomfortable. I hope this method of thinking about breaking them down can help you navigate that ambiguity and make real forward progress. If I can stretch this metaphor to its breaking point: you don't need to know the entire shape of the elephant to start eating it.

Good luck and happy DIY'ing!

Gregg

The Home HANDYMAN



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2022 SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Subscription Fees:

South Africa	Printed	Digital
Back Copy:	R38.90 each	R29.90 each
6 months:	R227.00	R181.00
12 months:	R428.00	R359.00

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CONTENTS

The Home Handyman is published bi-monthly (6 issues per annum) by WJ Lindeque cc t/a BB Print (CK99/23366/23)

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Printing D & S Press

Distribution On The Dot | 011 713 9322

About *The Home Handyman* magazine:

The Home Handyman magazine is a specialized D.I.Y. publication and caters for a well-defined niche market since November 1993. The magazine equips its ever-growing readership with relevant D.I.Y. information, knowledge and skills.

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OFF THE SHELF

Your guide to the latest products in the world of DIY

Franke's much-anticipated range of coloured bathroom mixers

Introducing total versatility to your bathroom design with Franke's brand new Matt Black & Matt White Aspera Range

The already popular straight-edged chrome finish Aspera Range is now expanded to include colour finishes, complete with additional trim sets to customise the mixers detailing!

This colour range perfectly complements the edgy & contemporary bathroom, with a choice of Matt White for a luxurious crisp all-white look or Matt Black for a trendy and dramatic monochrome design.

Trim sets are essentially trim detail on the body construction of the bathroom mixer, made up of an aerator plate cover and cover plate. This unique feature of including additional trim sets with each mixer, allow the homeowner or designer the option to easily customise these mixers. The homeowner can also change the trim at a later stage as trends change – and what's best – the homeowner can do it themselves in a few minutes!

The Matt Black Aspera Mixers come fitted standard in all over Matt Black. Included in the box are two additional trim sets. One set in Chrome, and one set in Rose Gold. The Matt White Mixers come fitted standard a contrast Chrome trim. Included in the box is one additional trim set in Matt White for an all-over monochromatic look.

For more information, visit www.franke.co.za



Fluidmaster launches toilet solutions product range across South Africa

World-leading toilet solutions manufacturer, Fluidmaster has collaborated with distribution partner Standard Hidraulica to launch an exclusive product range across South Africa



Renowned for the innovation and provision of toilet and water management solutions, the Fluidmaster brand was founded in 1957 by inventor and entrepreneur Adolf Schoepe, in the USA.

From its launch date in February products will be available via distribution partner Standard Hidraulica, with a tailored range designed to meet the stringent requirements of the plumbing sector across South Africa.

Mark Thomas, Fluidmaster Managing Director, EMEA and GB said: "We are extremely happy to introduce our bespoke product portfolio into South Africa and believe it will offer installation and functionality options not currently available. We're also really pleased to be working with the Standard Hidraulica team on the launch and distribution of our introductory range."

For more information, visit www.sthza.co.za/fluidmaster

A must have around the home and workshop

The WORX 20V Max WG620E Hydroshot Cordless Power Washer is the world's most portable high pressure cleaner

WORX has a well-earned reputation for designing and manufacturing innovative, high-performance tools, and its WORX 20 V Max WG620E Hydroshot is certainly no exception. Perfectly filling the gap between a standard garden hose and bulky pressure washer, this portable, powerful machine provides a quick, effortless way to clean virtually any outdoor surface, including decks, steps, patios, fences, siding, driveways, sidewalks and stonewalls. It is also ideal for blasting dirt and grime from cars, trucks, boats, bikes, motorcycles, RVs, ATVs, and trailers.



The WORX WG620 offers 320 PSI and is 5 x more pressure than a traditional garden hose with sprayer. The versatile 5-in-1 pressure nozzle lets you easily switch between spray intensities 0°, 15°, 25°, 40°, and watering settings. It can draw from any freshwater source, so it is perfect to use around the home and garden. A new bottle adapter lets you take the water anywhere—much more portable than a traditional pressure washer. Its powerful yet lightweight—anyone can use it.

For more information, contact Vermont Sales on 011-314-7711 or visit www.vermontsales.co.za

Create a smart home

Smart homes are increasing by 18% each year in South Africa and are expected to reach 2.5 million households in 2025

A basic smart home installation can automate security and indoor lighting, as well as a geyser, pool pump and even an irrigation system which can be scheduled according to the weather. Homes can easily be set-up to provide comfort and control while saving time, energy and money.



Often associated with costly high-tech devices, today's smart home is affordable and easy to implement with thanks to locally manufactured products. The Astute Range from CBI-electric: low voltage allows South Africans to add smart home components to households that can tailor everyday living experiences.

Controlled directly from a smartphone and/or tablet, the Range includes the Astute smart controller, isolator and smart plugs which can be managed with the CBI Home app. The products allow users to turn various appliances into a "smart" appliance by connecting it to an Astute Smart device. Household items such as underfloor heating can be set according to ambient outside temperature and time of day – effectively giving you climate control. If you're trying to control screen time for your kids, you can connect your TV to an Astute Smart Plug (ASP) which allows it to be turned off after a set period of time.

These smart devices can also monitor an appliances' energy consumption, such as dishwashers, fridges and washing machines. Smart switches also provide users with greater control over power consumption in rental properties and holiday homes.

For more information, visit www.cbi-lowvoltage.com

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Prizes are not exchangeable

For the not so steady handed

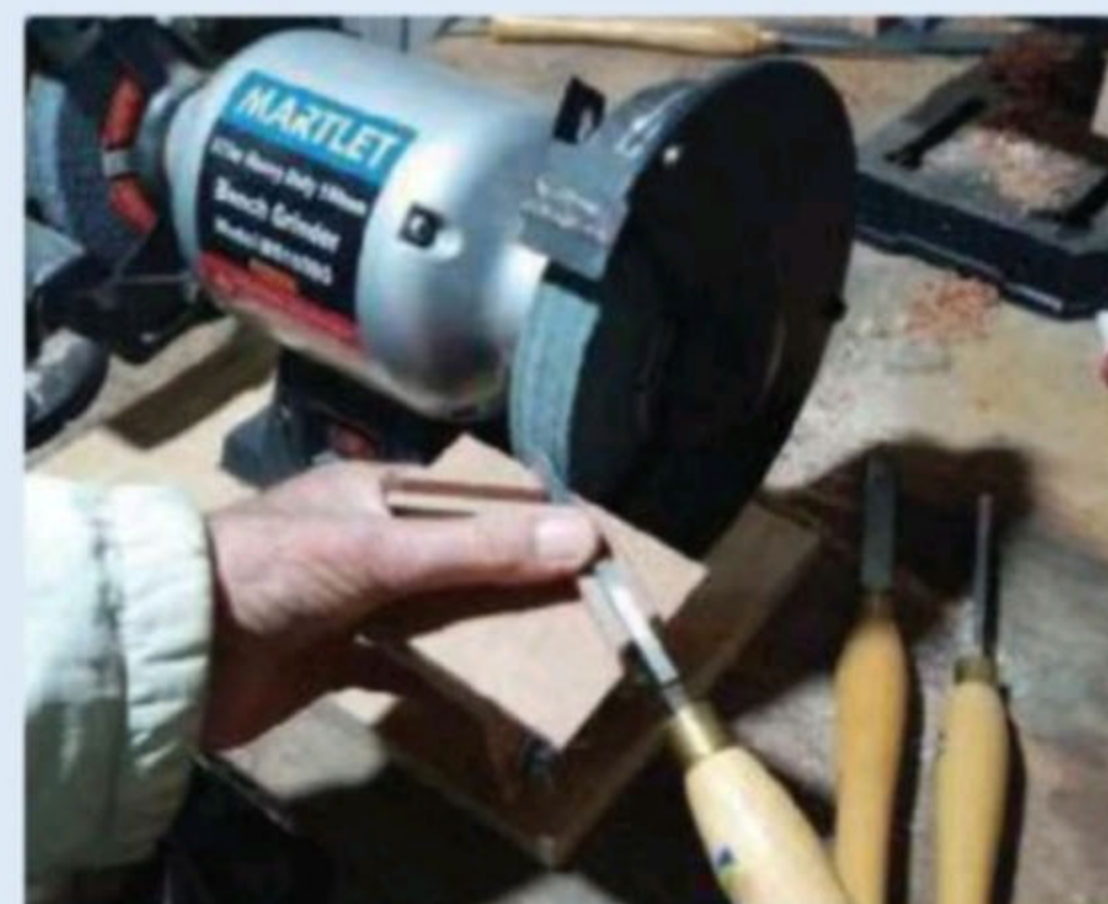
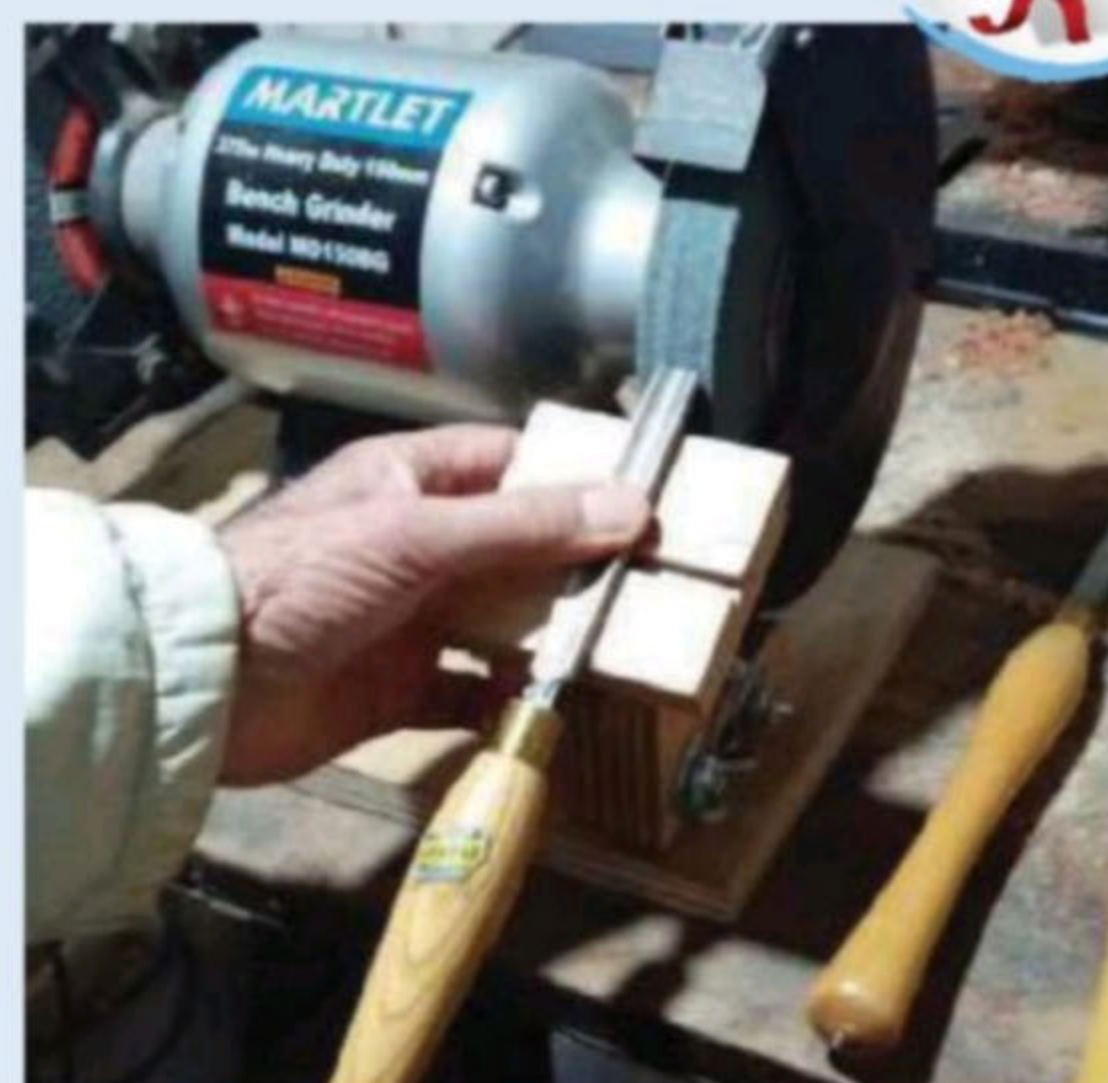


We had a teacher who had the gift of drawing a perfect circle freehand on the blackboard. He also had the gift of eyeballing the centre. To prove this he used the board compass to show us how close to 100% he was. We admired him.

Well, I'm far from that. I do not have a steady hand. I tried my best to grind my lathe chisels free hand, but I just couldn't get it right. I went to YouTube to see what other guys do to solve this problem. As I watched their plans and jigs, an idea started to grow in my mind. The photos tell the story.

It is much better with fixed angles. That means less frustration, greater success and pleasure with my wood turning.

Chris Erasmus, by email



Grandchild's cradle

I just completed a cradle for our first grandchild that I wanted to share with you. It is based on a design that my son had seen and liked. It is made of walnut, maple and ash. The end panel inlays are turquoise and were taken from drawings on my son and daughter-in-law's wedding invitations.

Alan Winslow, by email



How I started woodworking

In a recent issue you asked how people first started out in woodworking. I guess I really got started in our high school's 'industrial arts' (shop class). We did some woodworking, plastics, leather, metal blacksmithing and quite a bit of mechanical drawing. In high school, I got in the 'college prep' track and 'industrial arts' was delegated to the males that were headed to blue-collar jobs. They were known as the 'shop guys.' Anyway, I did some brief woodworking and metalworking in the following years.

My university years pretty much took me away from it. But getting married just prior to getting my graduate degree and moving to our first apartment, we needed a few things like bookcases, TV stand, camping kitchen box and later, a cradle. All were made on the townhouse balcony or in the small garage. My tool kit consisted of a drill, plane, crosscut saw, hammer, some screwdrivers and a tape measure.

Four years and three houses in three towns later, I had a cheap jigsaw and circular saw and continued the work with pine boards. From there, I gradually accumulated some power tools, lots of books and magazines, and I joined a woodworking club. Having an addition put on the house gave me a large space that could become my workshop. Long ribs went diagonally or through a door.

My three girls eventually joined me in the workshop and did woodworking projects. In the interim, I've built hundreds of things: boxes of all sorts, a couple hundred picture frames, beds, dressers, tables, cabinets, shelves and other things for my family. When I was getting burned out with my day job, I looked around and started a furniture repair business where I turned my long-term hobby to a vocation. I did that for 18 years until I retired. Now I'm back to hobby work and making things for family and friends.

Delroy Thwaites, East Rand

Reader's projects



The Home HANDYMAN

www.homehandyman.co.za

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



Our competitions – the fine print

Prizes may not be exchanged for cash. The closing date is stipulated by the competition box. If not stipulated, it closes on the last day of the issue. For example: Jan/Feb edition. All competitions close on the last day of February. To enter simply e-mail your answer to: editorial@homehandyman.co.za and include your name, surname, address and a day time contact telephone number with your entry. Unless otherwise stipulated, competitions are lucky draws and the correct entry drawn on the closing date will be the winner. The prize may differ from the picture shown. By entering this competition you agree to all rules and accept that the decision of the publisher is final and that no correspondence thereto will be entertained. This competition is open to all readers of *The Home Handyman* except employees of THH, BB Print and employees who work for the company that sponsors the prizes and their immediate families. Prizes not claimed within 60 days will be forfeited.

How many reasons does it take to change a light bulb?

The 4th of October this year is Change a Light Day, which encourages people to save electricity by changing their light bulbs, or light fixtures, to an eco-friendlier version.

Change a Light Day was created so that people could be encouraged to make just one small change in their home that would result in them consuming less energy. Switching from an incandescent lightbulb to an LED lightbulb can help save energy and money, and ultimately, the environment.

This is according to Orlando Luis, CEO of Brights Hardware who explains that lighting is a significant contributor to electricity consumption in most people's homes, and that in South Africa approximately 50% of the country's electricity overall is consumed through lighting. "The replacement of lights with energy efficient ones is one of the simplest and most cost-effective measures to reduce electricity consumption - by only changing one light bulb in your home you can reduce your carbon footprint and lower your electricity bills. That's how impactful making the switch to LED lightbulbs can be."

"If you consider that just changing one light bulb in your home can have an impact, imagine what impact widespread use of LED lighting could have on energy savings in South Africa overall – a country known for our energy constraints," says Luis. "When compared with incandescent bulbs, LED bulbs consume up to 90 percent less power. If your house is filled with incandescent bulbs, you will be using a lot more electricity than you could be if you switched to LED."

Another key benefit associated with LED lighting is the fact that the bulbs have a longer life span. "Until recent years, LED bulbs that fit common household sockets were relatively expensive. However, today LED bulbs are often similarly priced to older style bulbs – and can last 10 to 20 times as long. This in turn saves money as you do not need to replace your light bulbs as often, and it also means there is less waste going to landfills – think of all the billions of light bulbs that end up on refuse dumps!"

says Luis, who goes on to unpack another environmental benefit of LED bulbs – the fact that they are free from toxic chemicals, whereas most conventional bulbs contain numerous materials that are bad for the environment, such as mercury.

And it is not just about being the right thing to do. LED lightbulbs are also more effective and efficient than incandescent bulbs. Luis explains that LEDs emit light in a specific direction, reducing the need for reflectors and diffusers that can trap light. "This feature makes LEDs more efficient for many uses such as recessed downlights and task lighting. With other types of lighting, the light must be reflected to the desired direction, and more than half of the light may never leave the fixture."

This makes LEDs perfect for uses such as lighting walkways and other outdoor areas, lighting tight spaces such as countertops for cooking and reading recipes, recessed downlights in kitchens, hallways, and bathrooms, and in a number of office and commercial settings. LEDs also emit less heat which makes them safer for applications such as decorative lighting like fairy lights and Christmas tree lights – reducing the risk of combustion or burnt fingers, they also last longer and they are easier to install.

"By switching from incandescent to LED, you are helping to reduce carbon emissions, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, reduce toxic chemicals and waste to landfills, and save money. When you take all these benefits into account, it is not hard to see why LED lights are the way to go!"

For more information, visit www.brights.co.za



New First Cut branch in Witbank



The newest branch of First Cut, a leading South African provider of cutting, welding and grinding consumables and equipment, has opened its doors in Witbank. Zelda Vorster, who took on the role of Regional Sales Manager for Mpumalanga some six months ago, is at the helm.

Vorster clarifies: "We did not have a branch here in Witbank previously. After I had started with First Cut in mid-2021, working remotely, we realised the potential for the sale and distribution of the full range of First Cut's products in this area. We believed that growing the regional representation and sales of traditional cutting and hand tools offered by First Cut represented a significant opportunity for the company. Additionally, the fact that First Cut is now stocking products locally

RS Components supports SAPPI with skills development

Sappi's Skills Centre in KwaZulu-Natal has recently received a donation of much-needed equipment-ranging from tools, safety gear and electronics valued at over R60 000 from RS Components South Africa.

The Sappi Skills Centre was officially opened in February 2018 by the CEO of Sappi Southern Africa Alexander Thiel. This training facility has seen more than 240 learners graduate from the various programmes which include basic electrical, carpentry, home maintenance and welding.

Currently there are 61 learners in the Sappi Apprentice Programme who are involved in various stages of phase training with 12 of these learners scheduled to complete their discipline-specific trade tests later this year. The Sappi Skills Centre will also be inducting a further 15 apprentices for the 2022 cohort, with 10 of these learners coming from Sappi's flagship Pre-Apprentice Programme.

The Sappi Skills Centre is resourced with experienced trainers in the fields of electrical, instrumentation and mechanical engineering. In addition to the community training, technical training is provided for apprentices, technicians-in-training, engineers-in-training and various skills development courses for employees across all Sappi KZN Mills. The skills centre is currently accredited by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QTCO) as an Electrical Skills Development Provider (SDP).

Trevino Sunker, Skills Centre Manager, stated that he was humbled by the enthusiasm of the young learners who were given the opportunity to develop themselves. "We have a number of success stories of learners who walk through these doors, not knowing fully what to expect and through their drive and tenacity, they walk out with a skillset that they can use to find employment, become entrepreneurs or become part of the Pre-Apprentice Programme. The Sappi Skills Centre is driven to uplift and empower our employees and community with specific and specialised skills that will supply a workforce that is both competent, efficient, and employable for the country's growing needs," he added.

For more information, visit www.sappi.com/sappi-skills-centres



means that we are further enabled to offer our customers a first-class service. I am confident that this new branch is going to be successful."

Existing First Cut customers in the region had previously been serviced from both the Johannesburg and Nelspruit branches. "First Cut is very service-oriented," explains Vorster, "and so it has been a strategic move to open this new branch in Witbank. We will be complementing the tooling and cutting sides of the business with the addition of welding products and services.

We are also planning to promote oxyfuel equipment, a wide variety of hand tools and power tools, general consumables

for the workshop, and personal protective equipment (PPE). As a total supply and solutions package, there is nothing that we cannot provide to customers in a workshop or warehouse."

"I believe this area is hungry for a new, dynamic supplier. We are bringing in quality products at competitive pricing, with a firm eye on safety aspects. I look forward to entrenching this new channel to the local mining and engineering market, and being the solution for the customer," she concludes.

For more information, visit www.firstcut.co.za



WHAT'S HOT IN FLOORING?

Fashion trends are present in different areas. At annual exhibitions, designers present new products, the most popular interiors, colours, and ornaments. Did you know that flooring also has fashion trends? With our help, you will find out which floor options are popular today and which finishing material to choose, taking into account the surrounding interior.

Hardwood/wood flooring trends

Hardwood flooring is always in vogue because of its natural beauty, durability, and sustainability. Birch, oak, ash, or walnut floor coverings will fit into any interior, and you can easily match furniture and decor to this floor.

New trends in hardwood flooring in 2022 are about boards with minimal processing, brushed, and rustic selection, reflecting the wood's natural structure as much as possible.

The wood in classic interiors is not tinted but remains in a natural shade. You can choose flooring in the following popular colours:

- Grey wood flooring does not overload the space and emphasises the naturalness of the material. The unusual texture creates an interesting effect.
- White floors have a glossy sheen that enhances the natural light in the room. Give preference to this material when decorating small spaces.

- Black floors add elegance to any room. Surfaces of this shade blend perfectly with metal. Therefore, black floors are suitable for high-tech interiors.
- The copper colour of the flooring works well with the orange and reddish-brown furnishings. Use this option for a vintage look.

Laminate flooring trends

Standard finishing methods include laminated flooring. High-quality material is characterized by ease of cleaning, ease of installation, and attractive appearance. You can choose a trendy laminate with imitation of wood, stone, and other natural materials.

Tile flooring trends

Consider a popular tile flooring solution. The wood-look remains stylish for years. At the same time, tiles are easier to clean than wood flooring. Such textures as artificially aged, brushed, and scraped are relevant.

- The marble tiles look luxurious. It is suitable for a living room, bathroom, or hallway.
- Rustic stone tiles look unusual. Such flooring will create a more comfortable and homely environment. The best options for tiles imitating natural stone include slate, marble, and limestone.
- Metal effect tiles give the room a trendy and ultra-modern look. The novelty is suitable for more modern interiors.

- Ceramic tiles are ideal for creating geometric patterns. Hexagon elements perfectly decorate the floor.
- Exotic trends include concrete-look tiles. Large-format elements help create a modern interior and are also suitable for decorating a room in an industrial style.

Carpet flooring trends

Choose carpet if you like a plush and cosy-chic feel underfoot. The bold colours of this material are in fashion. These can be contrasting colours and rich shades of ornaments, floral patterns, geometric shapes, and precious stones. Natural and organic tones are popular for a sense of serenity.

In 2022 try solutions like these:

- For boho-style interiors, choose a carpet in neutral tones. Textile accessories in bright red shades and upholstered furniture are suitable here.
- For eco-chic interior decoration, it is better to choose natural fibre coatings.
- Plush and velvet carpets are suitable for small spaces. Velvet surfaces will help create luxury in your home.

Combine bright carpet with colourful furniture. Carpet trends are based on self-expression. With their help, you can show maximum creativity. Coloured and patterned rugs look unusual. You can choose from floral motifs, animal designs, stripes, or geometric shapes.

Floor coverings trends by room

Let's find out which floor coverings are best for individual rooms in 2022.

Kitchen flooring trends

The kitchen is one of the most visited places in the apartment. When choosing materials, do not forget to consider factors such as high humidity and temperature drops. Kitchen flooring should have the following qualities:

- Moisture resistance. Indoors, the flooring is exposed to intense moisture – splashes, evaporation, and cleaning.
- Low hygroscopicity. The material should not absorb moisture, as mould may develop under the covering.
- Impact resistance.
- Hygiene. The coating should be easy to clean.
- Wear resistance and abrasion resistance.

The best solution for the kitchen is ceramic tiles. This material is durable and chemical and moisture resistant. For the kitchen, choose tiles with matte, relief, rough, and glossy surfaces. Products with relief ornaments look stylish.

Suitable materials include linoleum, which is distinguished by a variety of decorative textures. The laminate gives new possibilities in the design of different stylistic solutions. The trend is a vintage-style finish imitating the aged wood, and black, purple, and other rich colours are relevant.

Bedroom flooring trends

Bedroom flooring should be sustainable and beautiful, and the surface should be pleasant to walk barefoot. The colour palette and finishes should be consistent with the surrounding interior.

You can choose a carpet for the bedroom. It has a warm and soft surface. Of the advantages, it is worth noting the variety of patterns and

shades, which allows the carpet to fit into any bedroom style. Long-pile carpets combine wonderfully with other finishes.

You can also choose hardwood, beautiful, and natural flooring that fit perfectly in the bedroom. The material is distinguished by its durability, strength, excellent thermal insulation properties, and environmental safety. Depending on the wood processing, the board may have different patterns.

The parquet board is also suitable for bedroom flooring. It is a three-layer material with excellent decorative qualities. A pleasant-to-touch surface, environmental friendliness, ease of installation, and flawless appearance are advantageous.

Cork flooring is in trend in 2022. Such a covering is distinguished by naturalness, environmental friendliness, ability to absorb noise, increased strength, and long service life. An excellent option for a bedroom can also be the laminate. You can choose any texture and shade.

Consider other options for the bedroom:

- Marmoleum is made of jute or cork, and the central part consists of resin, lime, sawdust, and oil.
- Vinyl tiles are popular for their assortment of different patterns. This allows you to decorate the bedroom in any taste.
- The self-levelling floor is a novelty that is becoming more and more popular. The tough, durable, and wear-resistant flooring is made without joints.

Living room flooring trends

The trend is for interiors with a natural flavour, retro designs, and respect for nature.

- One of the fashionable solutions is a cork floor. It is one of nature's most sustainable materials.

- A return to the retro style is possible with terrazzo tiles interspersed. The classic texture is back in fashion. The original covering is used not only for floors but also for countertops and walls. Terrazzo has a neutral look, but it can also look bright enough.
- Natural surfaces are in fashion. Parquet with ring patterns is widespread, and the French herringbone in light colours is also relevant for the living room.
- Living room coverings have a natural texture or imitate it. For decoration, choose porcelain stoneware, tiles, and vinyl with imitation of concrete, wood, or marble.
- New trends involve the use of large forms.

Bathroom flooring trends

When choosing a floor covering for a bathroom, consider the characteristics of the room – temperature fluctuations, requirements for comfort and safety, and high levels of humidity.

Popular bathroom options include self-levelling flooring, ceramic tiles, cork, and moisture resistant laminate flooring. Of the cheap options, linoleum is worth noting. This flooring has excellent waterproofing properties.

Laundry flooring trends

Laundry floors must be suitable for the specific conditions of the room. Choose a material that is resistant to moisture and high temperatures. Cork is popular. It is a fashionable material that does not absorb moisture. The natural and hypoallergenic flooring does not slip even if you spill water.

You can also try ceramic tiles. A variety of shapes and shades distinguishes this material. A wooden floor with special treatment is also suitable for a laundry room. Alternatively, opt for a moisture-resistant laminate.

The pandemic hit and I decided, like a lot of other homeowners, that it was time to do some upgrades around the house.

Once done, allow the wood stain to dry for a minimum of three days before applying a clear coat to the floors

DIY FAUX WOOD CONCRETE FLOORS

>> Megan Moskowitz



What you will need

- Painter's tape
- Painter's plastic
- Broom and dustpan
- Shop vac (optional)
- Mop and bucket
- Garden hose and nozzle
- Squeegee
- Floor buffer and diamond buffing wheel
- Paint roller and roller covers
- Paint brush
- Wood graining tool
- Rags (lots of rags)
- Gloves
- Fan (optional)
- Respirator
- Concrete paint
- Gel wood stain
- Wood stain
- Clear coat for concrete

I took on quite the project and decided to turn my garage into my very own man cave (or woman cave). I knew I wanted to keep the existing concrete, but I hated the look of it. I had seen someone online post about turning their concrete floors into faux wood floors, so I scoured the internet looking for something that shows how to make faux wood floors on concrete but all the articles I could find

didn't provide much direction. I am a novice DIY'er and I thought, "Hey, I bet I could come up with something." This was my journey.

First sweep up all the dust and debris on the floor. Next, tape up painter's plastic to protect the wall from any paint splatter. I then rented a floor buffer – if you've never used one of these machines before I highly recommend you find a video to watch first which shows you how to use it.

Go over the entire floor twice with the buffer, until the floor feels like 180 sandpaper, and then bring in a hose with a sprayer nozzle. Spray the floor with lots of water and used a squeegee and broom to push the water out of the area (if you're doing this indoors where you can't push the water out of an opening, use a wet/dry vacuum to suck up all the water).

Next use a mop and water to clean up the remaining dirt on the surface. The most important part of this process is making sure the floor is clean. If the floor isn't clean the next steps will be a waste of time and money as they will fail.

Read and follow all manufacturers recommendations for the paint you're using. Paint the floors whatever colour you wish (I chose a one part epoxy paint in the colour khaki shade). Once the floors are dry, decide if you need a second coat of paint (mine did) and paint if desired.

After the floors are painted to your liking decide what size "planks" you would like.

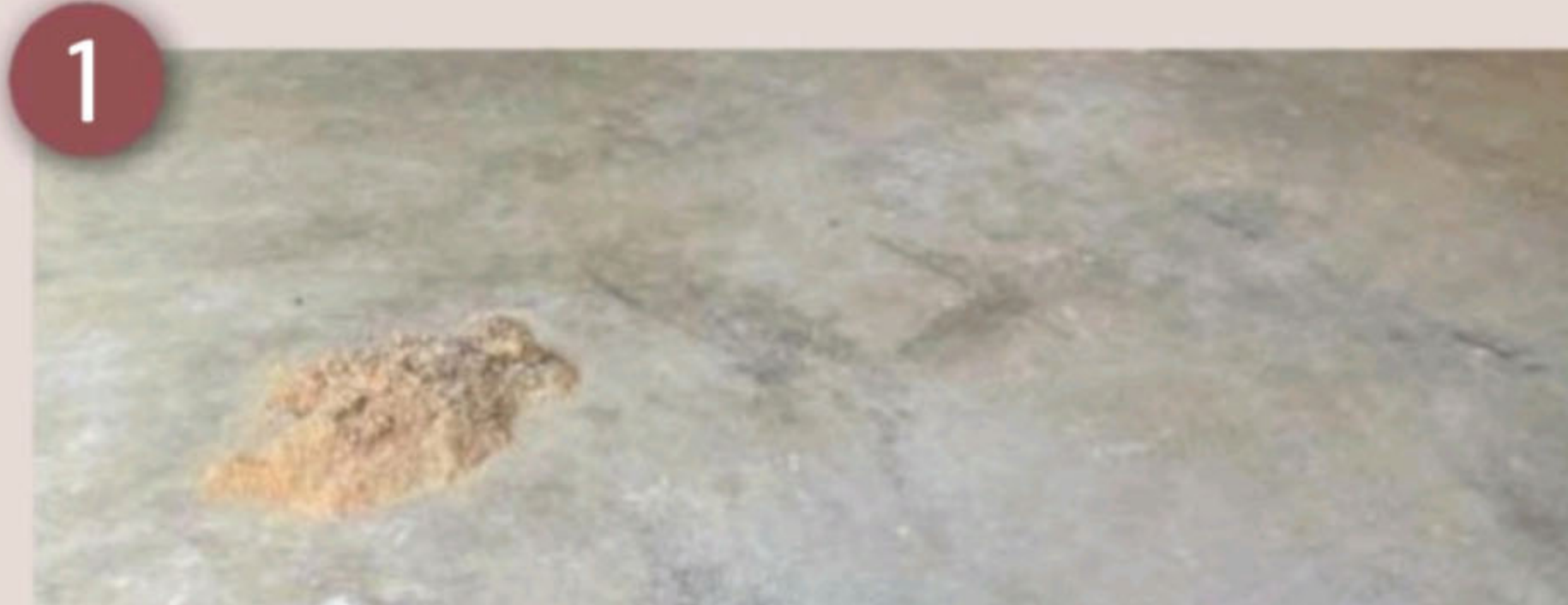
For this project I went with a 1.8m by 200mm pattern. You'll most likely need a partner to help with the taping of the floors (I did). Using painter's tape, lay out all of the 'planks'.

Once the planks are laid out take the gel stain (I used the colour chestnut), and start painting the stain onto the plank. (If doing this indoors I highly recommend a respirator). It doesn't matter what direction the brush strokes are going at this point – the next step will straighten that out.

Take the paintbrush and lay it as flat as you can and pull back in one continuous motion the entire length of the plank (don't worry if your 'woodgrain' isn't straight, remember this is supposed to replicate real wood and nothing in nature is perfect). Continue until the whole plank has been smoothed out.

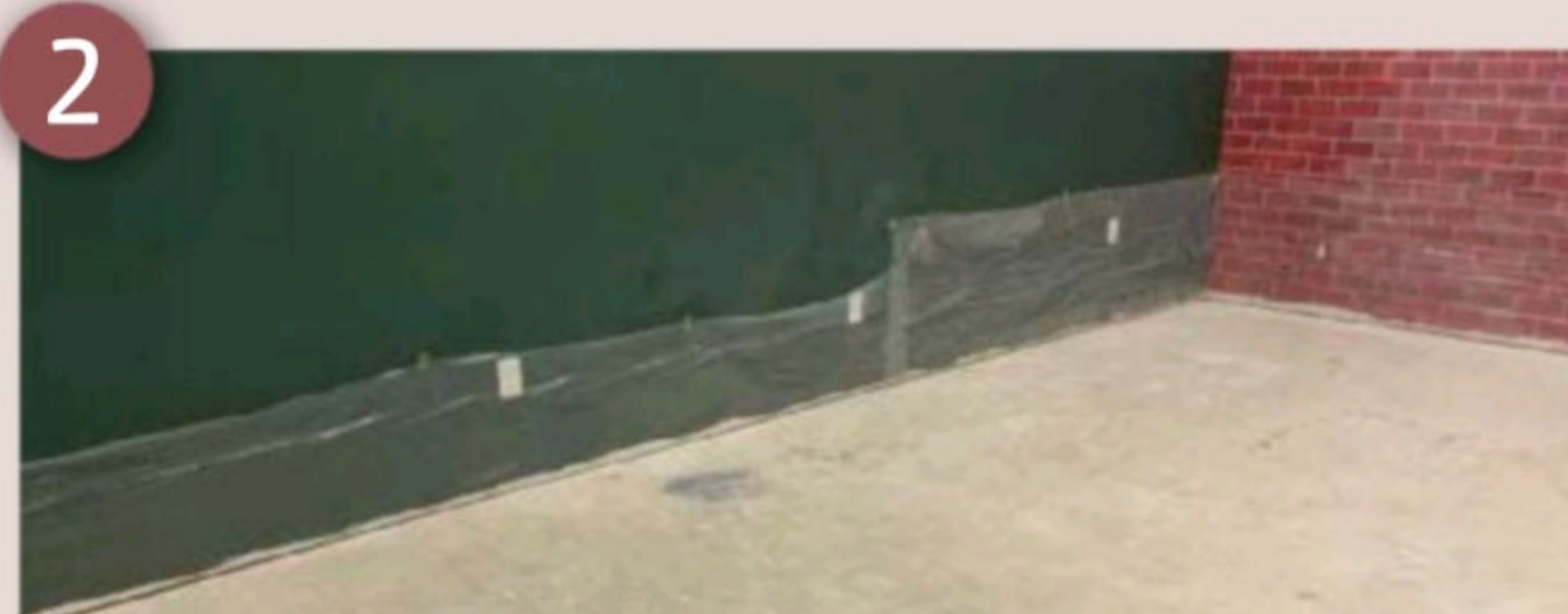
Next take your woodgrain rocker and add in some wood grain. Remember that no two pieces of wood look the same, so we aren't going for uniform here. Repeat this process until the whole floor is done.

Once the gel stain has dried, remove the tape and apply a thin coat of regular wood stain (I used the colour espresso). Allow the wood stain to dry for a minimum of three days before applying a clear coat to the floors. Lastly apply a clear coat to the floors. Once the clear coat has dried, step back and marvel at your new 'wood' floors.



1

First sweep up all the dust and debris on the floor



2

Tape up painter's plastic to protect the wall from any paint splatter



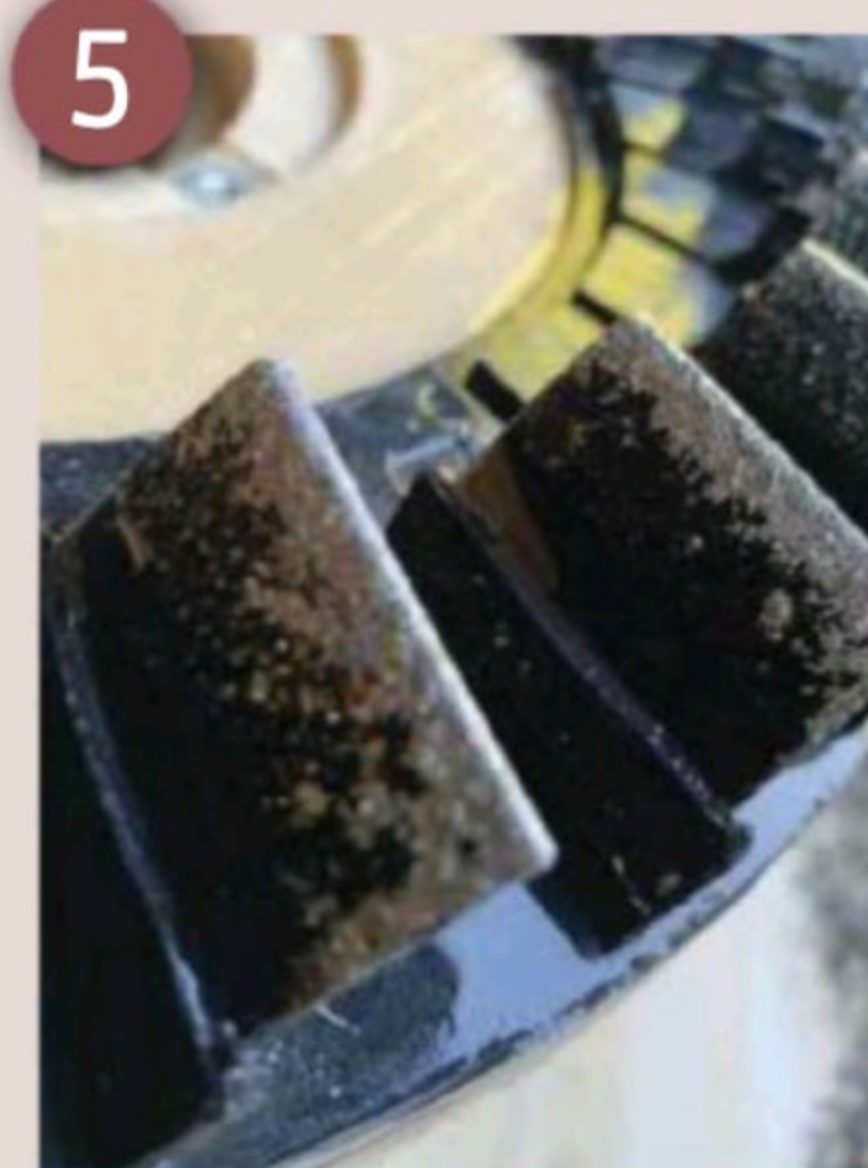
3

I then rented a floor buffer and went over the entire floor twice with the buffer



4

The buffer I used



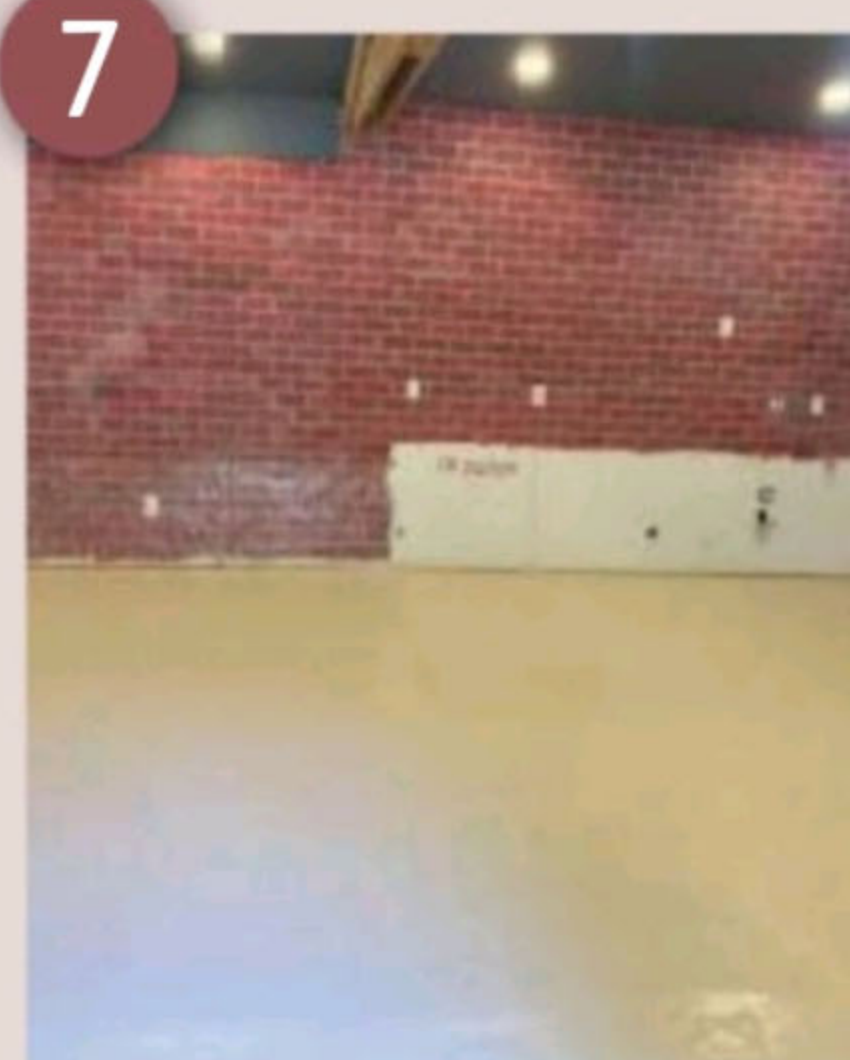
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The underneath of the buffer



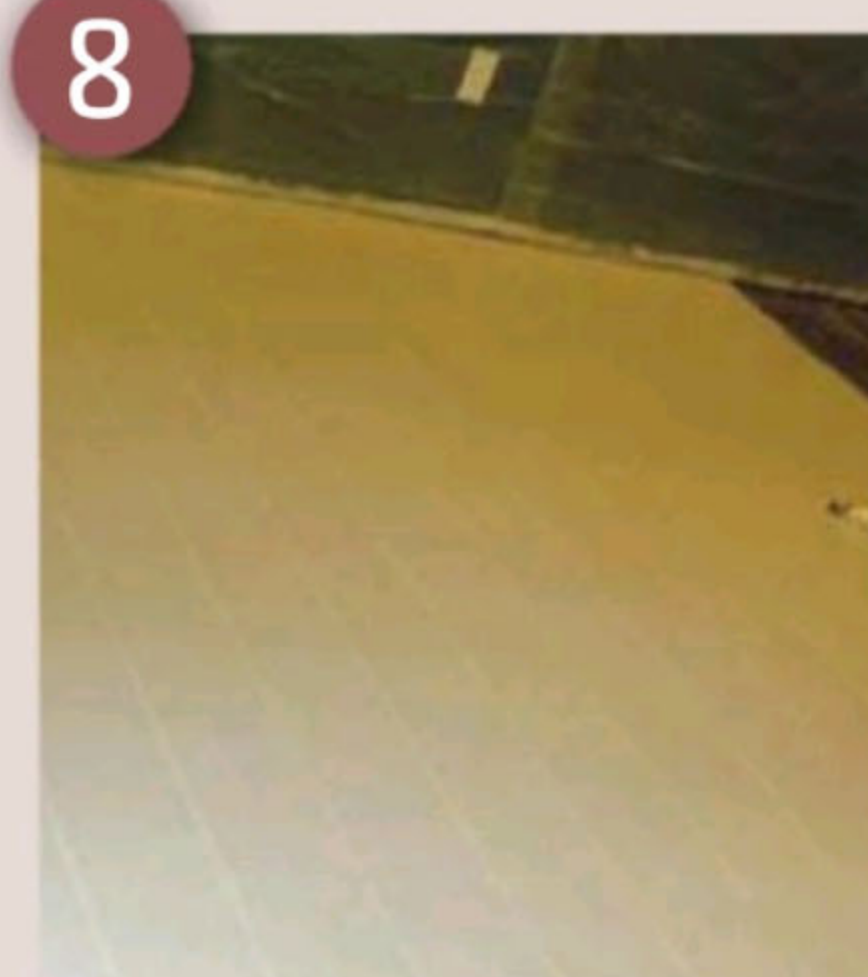
6

The floor mid-buff



7

Use a hose to spray the floor



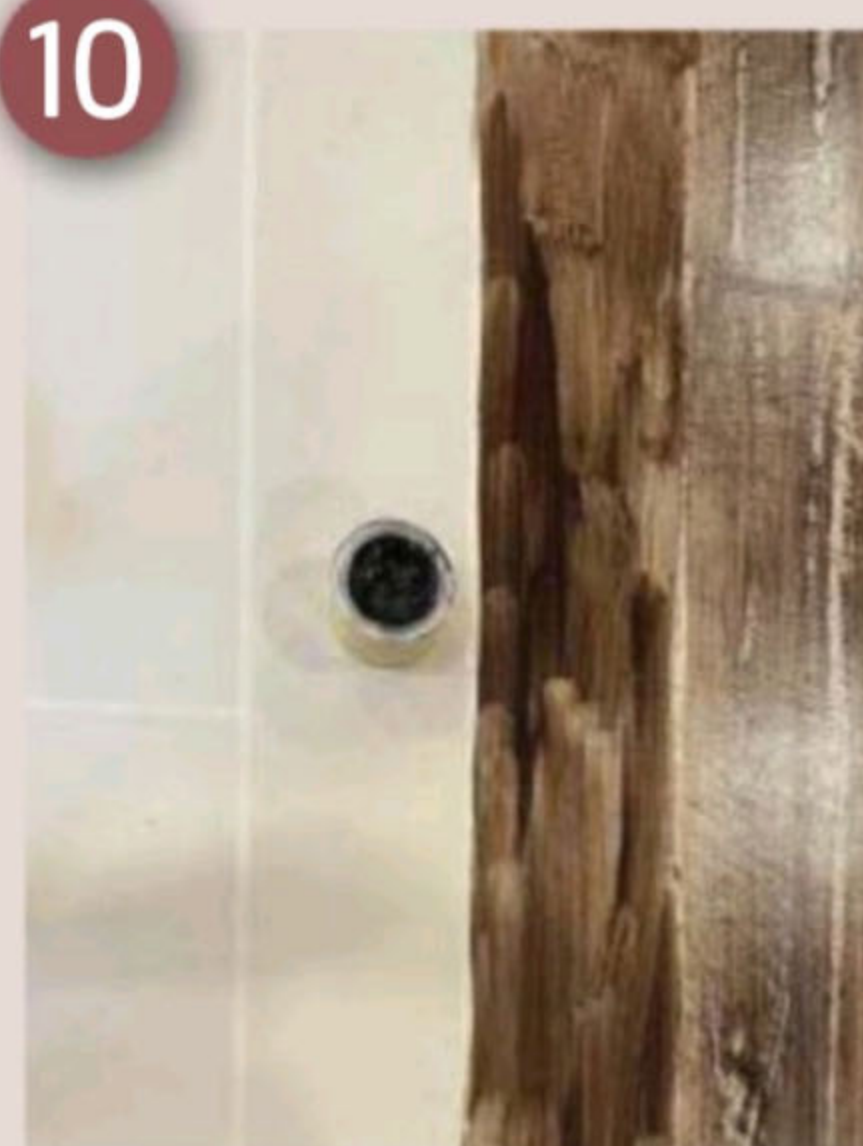
8

Start laying out your 'planks' with tape



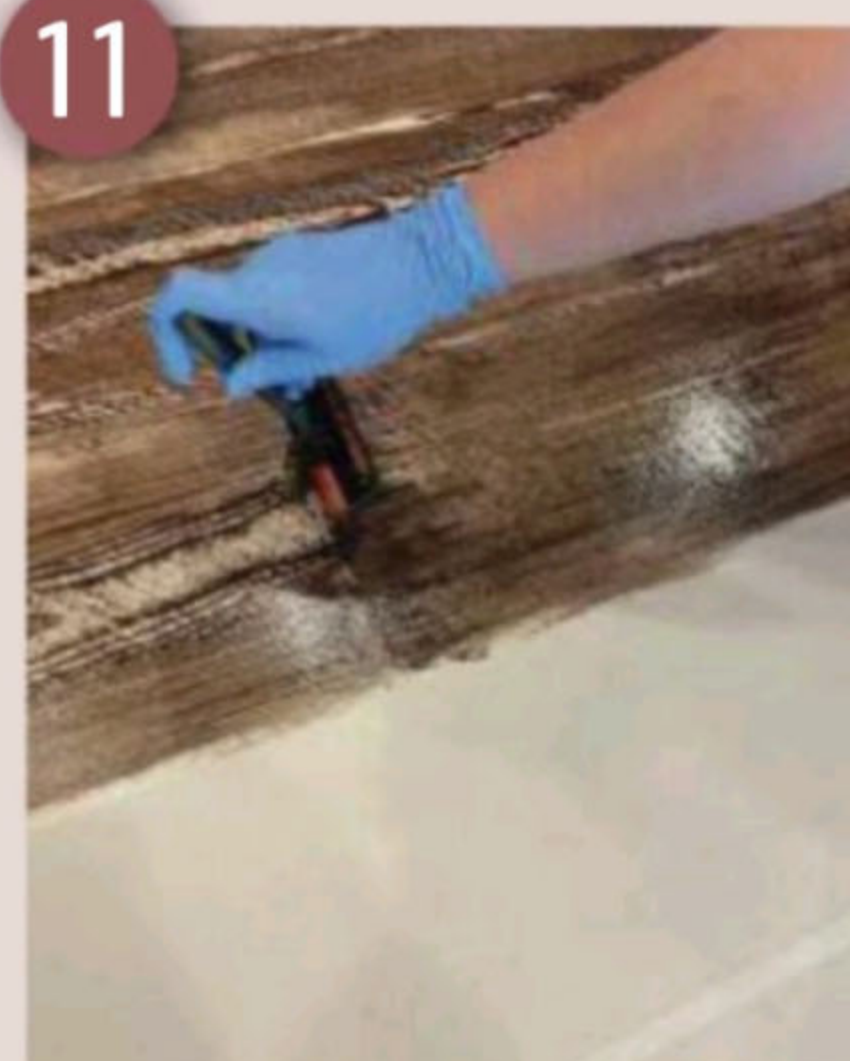
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Once the planks are laid out take the gel stain and start painting the floor



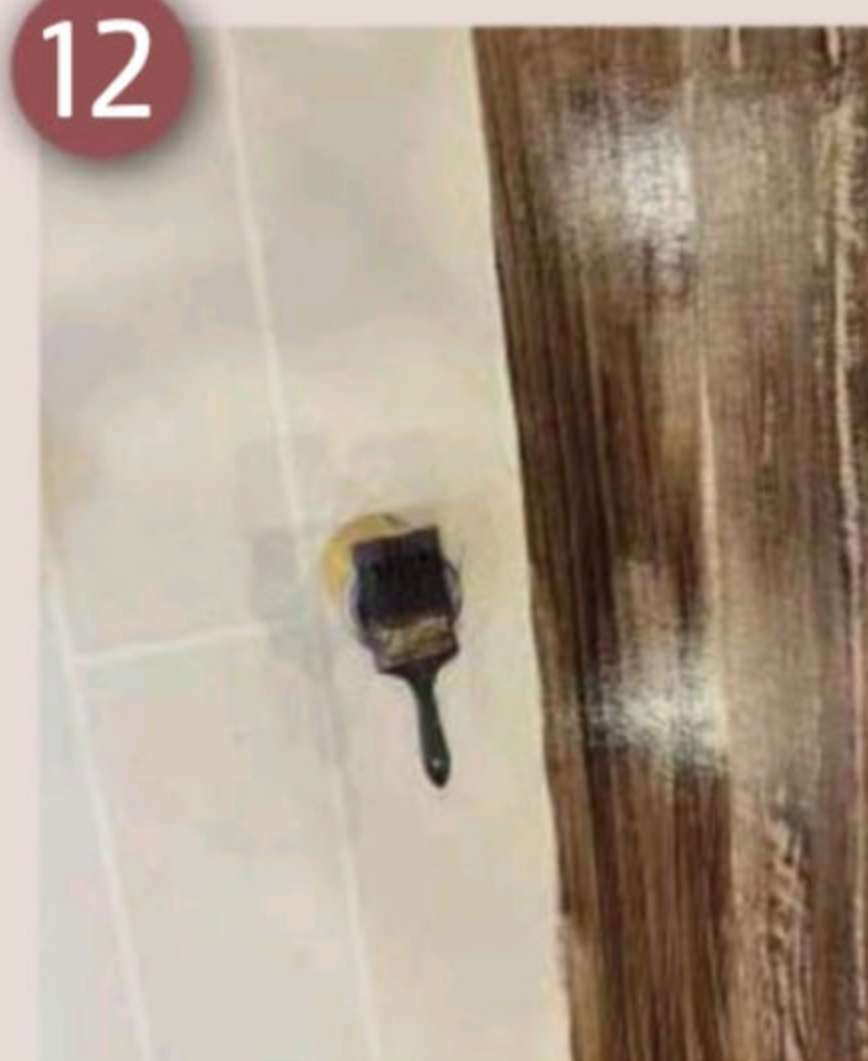
10

When painting, lay the paintbrush as flat as you can



11

Next take your woodgrain rocker and add in some wood grain



12

Once the gel stain has dried, remove the tape and apply a thin coat of regular wood stain

GIN-THEMED TABLE

In this article we will show you how we went about transforming a pallet into a funky gin-themed garden table.



Tools and materials

- A pallet – the cleaner the better (depending on how rustic you want it)
- Assorted screws
- Wood glue
- CNC machine (Optional)
- 1/4 inch V60 router bit
- Blow torch
- Chop saw
- Wood thicknesser (Optional)
- Palm sander
- Sandpaper

>> Kevin Richards

There are many pallet tables out there, but I believe this one is a bit different. I had seen a pallet at my local sports club and asked if I could have it; the answer was yes so I took it apart there and then with my trusty pallet breaker.

At the end of the article I will show you how to make a really easy gin/wine bottle stand as well – it looks as though the bottle is balancing in mid-air.

In this build I used a CNC machine to cut out the letters and various other cutting machinery, so throughout these operations I used the appropriate PPE which included Eye protection, ear protection and a dust mask.

In this build I used the machinery I had at hand purely because it was there, however, this table can also be made with basic tools.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Some pallets split really easily and the nails just knock out. Job done! This was not the case with this pallet, it came apart easily enough, but the nails! There was no way were they coming out so I opted for cutting between the nails and salvaging the wood that way.

I used a wood thicknesser to trim the top surfaces of the wood – it saves on sanding but once again its optional. With this done I could cut the lengths to size.

Step 2: With no plans I just went with what I thought would look good for a small side table. The top of the table slats were cut to approximately 380mm. I cut four at this length – this measurement will be used for the side pieces which will say Tonic and Lemon and also two of the leg braces. The pallet wood is 20mm thick and the Gin and Ice lengths are cut to suit.

With the top pieces cut and sanded, I flipped them over and took care to align them. Then, using two pieces of 60 x 40mm cut to 340mm, these were screwed through to hold the top pieces of the table in position. I used the side pieces of the table as guides to ensure that they were flush to the edge of the table top (see photo).

Before screwing anything down I applied wood glue, and then screwed everything in place. At this point I routed the edge of the table top to round the edges off. This, of course, is optional.

Step 3: The legs were cut to 60 x 40mm on the table saw and I thought a good height would be around 500mm for the table, so these were cut at 480mm allowing for the thickness of the table top.

After cutting to size, the four lengths were sanded and ready to be fitted. I used a Workmate to clamp the table top and then measured where I wanted the holes for the screws which would hold each leg in place, applying glue before tightening the screws. The legs were screwed to the 340mm lengths of timber so they were flush with the ends, using a set square to align.

Step 4: With the legs secured it was time to cut the letters out for the side pieces; the design software I used was Vetric Cut2D. Using Vetric Cut 2D, the first thing we need to do is to input the dimensions in set up. Once done we can then create a rectangle to house the letters or input the letters first and create a rectangle to suit the letters – in my case they were Arial as the font and 45mm Bold using capitals. Centre the letters within the rectangle then centre the letters and rectangle within the work piece.

We now need to create a tool path – for this we select the pocket tab and highlight both the rectangle and letters; this will cut the letters out of the rectangle, rename the file then save to the desktop. The file can then be sent to the CNC machine.

There were no frills for clamping, just two pieces of wood with a hole in, and screwed at each end of the piece.

With a 1/4 inch V60 bit, I used the centre of each piece as the 'zero'. This is done in the set up and is applied to all four of the side pieces.



The pallet wood used for the project



I used a wood thicknesser to trim the top surfaces of the wood



The top of the table slats were cut to approximately 380mm

4



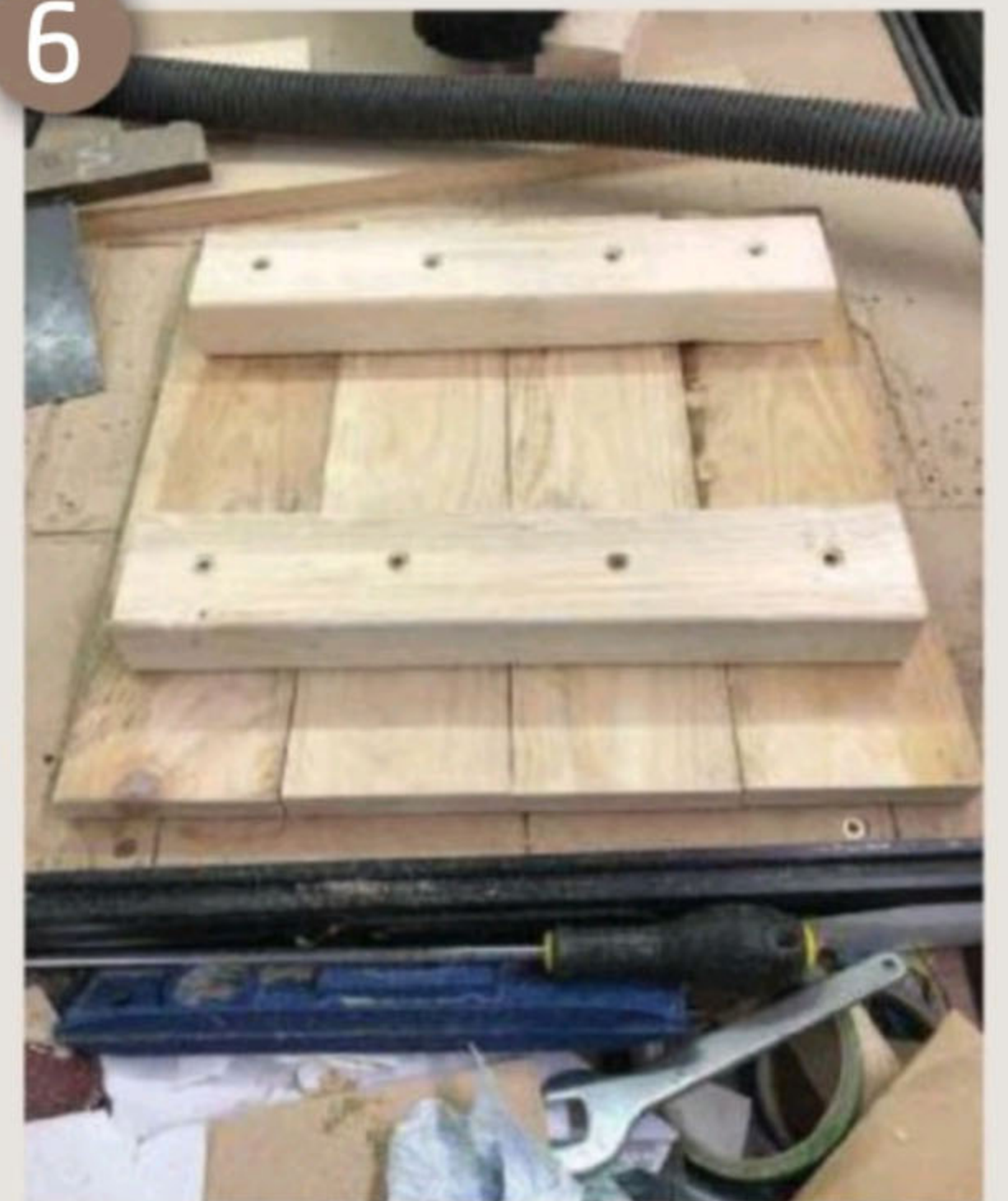
Using two pieces of 60 x 40mm cut to 340mm, these were screwed through to hold the top pieces of the table in position

5



The top of the table

6



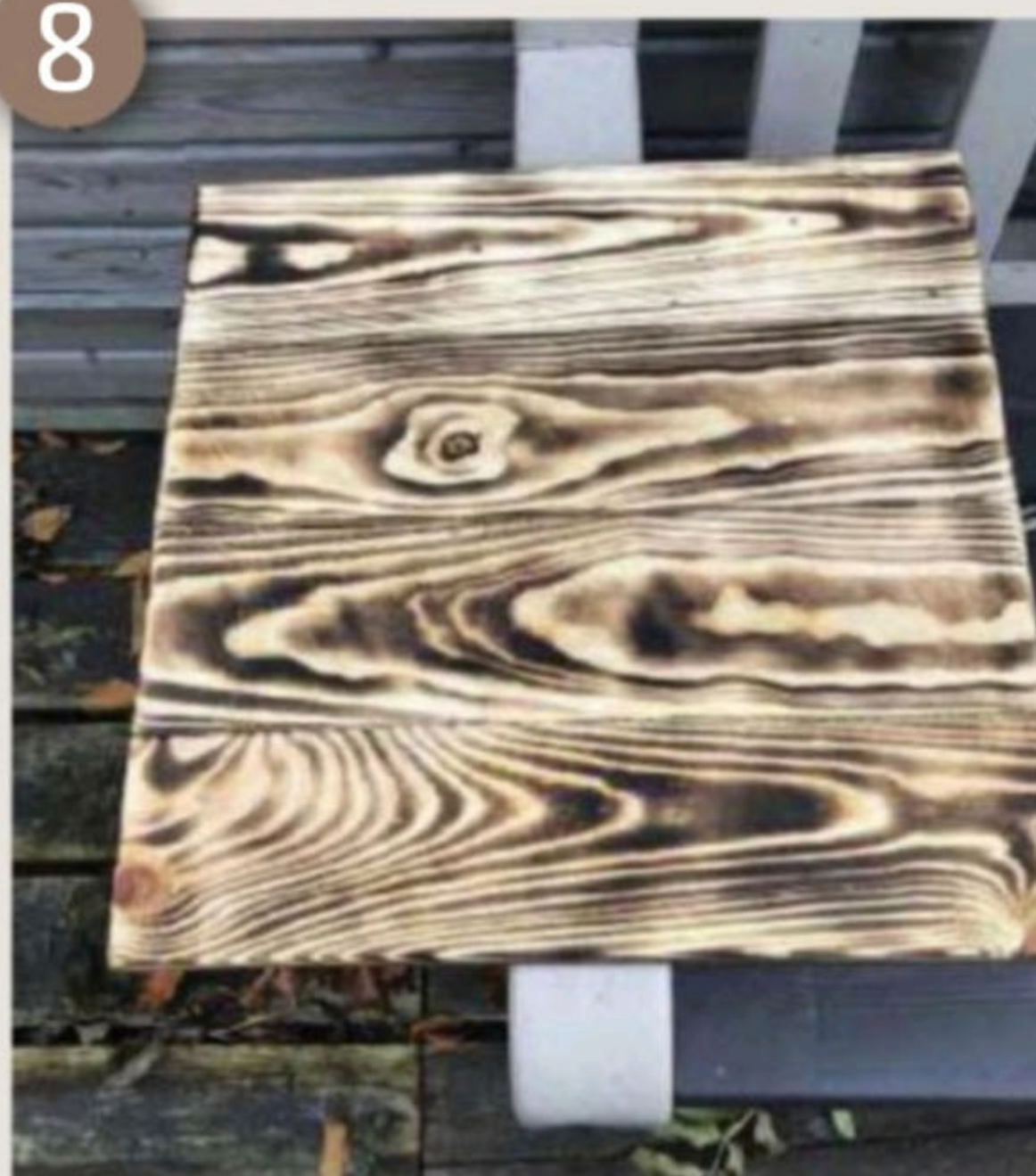
The second brace fitted

7



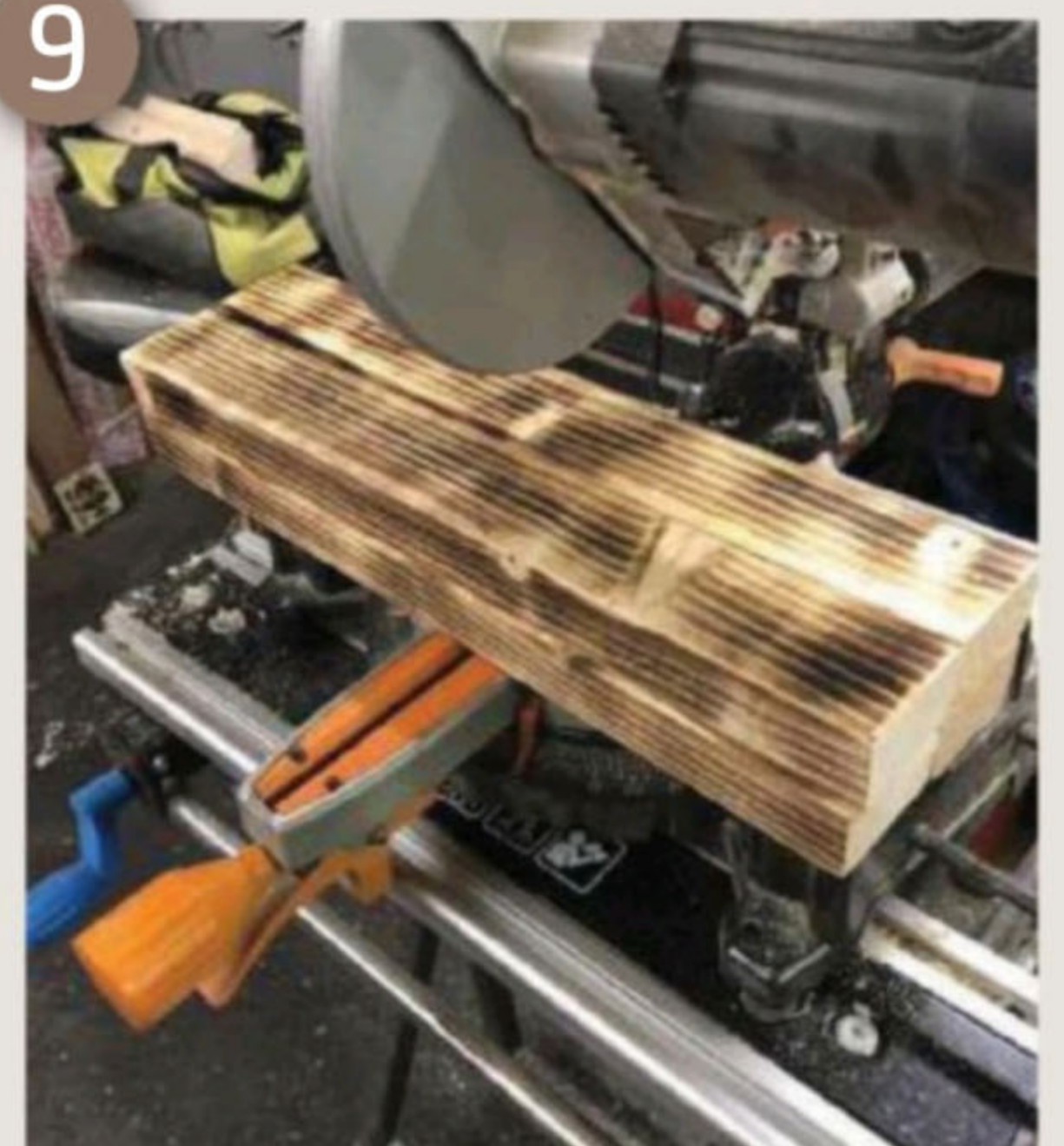
I used the side pieces of the table as guides to ensure that they were flush to the edge of the table top

8



At this stage I took a blowtorch to the wood

9



The legs were cut to 60 x 40mm on the table saw

10



I used a Workmate to clamp the table top and then measured where I wanted the holes for the screws which would hold each leg in place

11



I used a CNC machine for the side pieces

12



Using Vetric Cut 2D, the first thing we need to do is to input the dimensions

13



The 3D version of the design

14



The four side pieces completed

15



To start the assembly, I aligned the Tonic piece, ensuring it was flush to the edges and butted up to the underside of the table top

16



The completed wine bottle stand

Step 5: Prior to starting this procedure I had a brainwave – it was going to be an outdoor table so why not blowtorch the wood? This was something I'd seen before but never tried it, and it wasn't too late to do it, so I did it, and the results were pretty good.

Step 6: To start the assembly, I aligned the Tonic piece, ensuring it was flush to the edges and butted up to the underside of the table top, and then marked where I wanted the holes,

ensuring that I wouldn't hit any screws holding the legs in place, I drilled this piece and screwed in place using screw cups – the same procedure was applied to the remaining three pieces.

All there was left to do now was to secure the leg braces. I measured up from the bottom of each leg and same as above did the piece below the Tonic piece, and secured it the same way as the engraved side pieces. Then I blowtorched the underside of the table as well and any other bits I had missed.

Bonus wine bottle stand

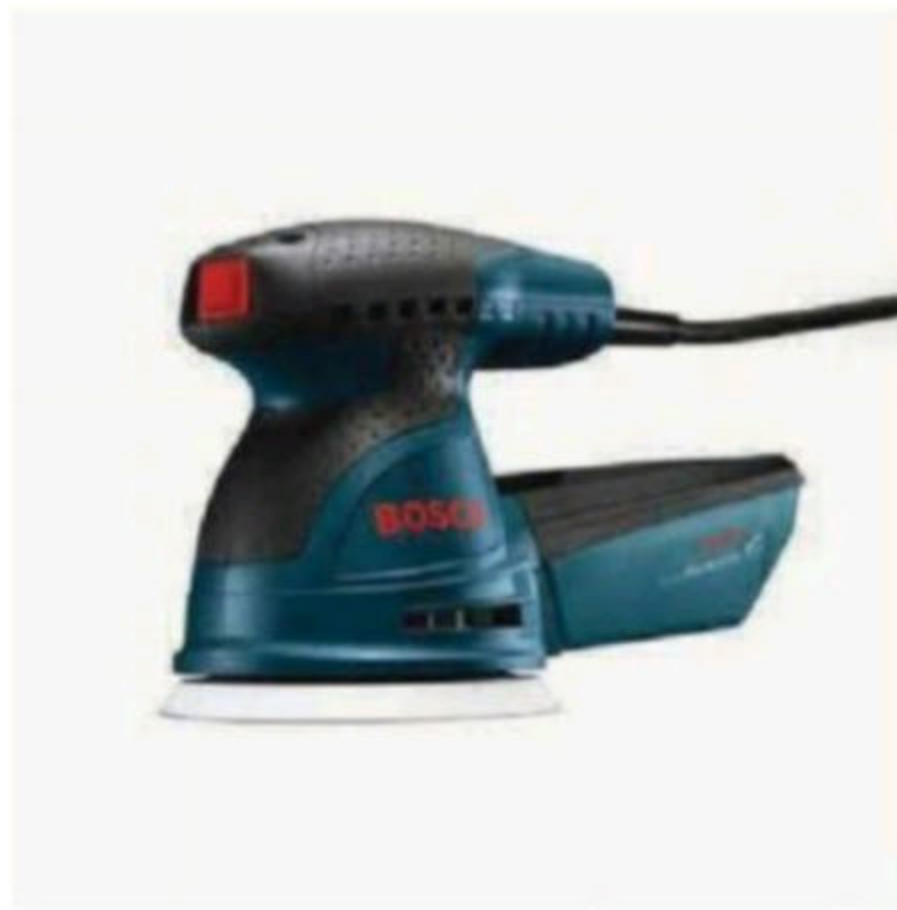
Whilst I was looking for inspiration on YouTube I came across a wine bottle stand. It was just a slat of wood with the bottom cut at 45 degrees and a hole in it for the neck of the bottle. Once a bottle is placed inside it looks as though its balancing in mid-air. So, I decided to have a go at making one and include it with the table build.

This should work with any thickness of wood; the principle is the same as with the width of the wood, but I also think due to the nature of it, it's better with a bigger footprint. The width of pallet wood I used was 20mm, 100mm wide and around 220mm long.

Cut your wood to size, then set the chop saw cutting blade at an angle of 45 degrees and make the across the piece. Measuring 5cm down from the non-angled end (and centred), a 1 3/8 Forstner bit was used to drill a hole straight through the wood using a backing piece of scrap wood to stop splintering. That's basically it, I have seen a video where the hole was drilled at 45 degrees making the bottle more horizontal, but it is a personal choice.

I think a word of warning as well; I suggest the wine bottle holder needs to be displayed out of the way, as if it gets too much of a knock it will be on the floor...





SAND AND DELIVER

Electric sanders make the job of sanding large areas a lot easier than using 'elbow grease' and sandpaper on a sanding block. Various types of electric sanders are available and each suit particular jobs.

One thing to remember when using any type of electric sander is to keep it moving, leaving the sander in one place will 'over sand' that place and make it stand out from the surrounding area.

When sanding, always change the sandpaper from coarse down through the grades to fine as you achieve the finish you require; don't expect one grade of sandpaper to do all the work.

There are three basic motions used in sanders;

- Orbital – the whole sanding plate moves in a small circle causing each grain of abrasive to move likewise.
- Belt – this gives sanding in one direction so any scratch marks will be along the direction of the belt.
- Rotary – where the whole sanding disc goes round – the outer edge moves faster than the centre so the surface is subjected to varying degrees of sanding.

Things to look for:

- Electric – either 220/230V or 110V – can use on site where mains power or a 110V transformer is available.
- Cordless – ideal for using where mains supply is not available. Look for one with a Lithium-Ion battery as these last longer. Having a detachable battery is also useful, you can have a spare battery fully charged ready to insert when required rather than having to wait while a single battery is recharged.

- Dust bag – collects the dust as it is produced – generally not completely effective, you still end up with dust everywhere – just less.

If you plan on doing any type of woodworking around your home then an electric sander is certainly a very good investment. However, if you plan on doing just a few small jobs, then there is no real need to own one at all. It is easy enough to buy some sandpaper, and perhaps a sanding block, and simply use those to sand down whatever woodwork you need to do.

Sometimes it is even better to use sandpaper as it allows you to get into awkward corners that most electric sanders cannot reach. Only if you plan on sanding down large areas such as floors, doors, cupboards, chairs, etc., should you consider buying some type of electric sander. They will save you a lot of physical work and save you a huge amount of time. Let's have a look at what sanders are available.



When it comes to working with surfaces of various materials, grinders and sanders are some of the most commonly used power tools

The 10 most common types of electric sanders

Belt sanders

The belt sander is the perfect choice for larger areas such as floors, beams, doors and tables. These are powerful sanders that get the job done very quickly. They work on a simple principle, where a belt of sandpaper rolls around the sander. This belt is then quickly replaced when it wears thin. You can buy these belts in different grit sizes. They come in different sizes and widths, and they are considered to be quite an aggressive sander. They are ideal for removing large amounts of wood very quickly.

Palm mouse detail sanders

These small detail sanders are called various names such as mouse sanders and palm sanders. These are very popular with many homeowners as they cover the surface really well, and the point allows you to get into most corners. They are also affordable and very easy and safe to use. Most of these use small sandpaper pads which stick using Velcro to the bottom of the sander. You can buy these in different grit sizes.

Orbital sanders

Orbital sanders are a general purpose sander that are round in shape. They are used for sanding wood by using a rotational spinning action. You buy circular sandpaper pads which attach either by Velcro or by a clip and hook attachment to the base of the sander. These pads are available in various grit sizes. Most of them have adjustable speed and some form of dust collection.

Random orbit sanders

Random orbit sanders are an improved version of the orbit sander. Orbit sanders work by spinning around in a

circle and if not used by skilled hands can leave circular marks on the surface. With a random orbit sander, the sander still moves in circles, but the circular motion is more random, and this action prevents the risk of circular marks.

These come with sanding discs which are attached by a hook and loop and the holes in these discs line up with the dust holes on the base of the sander. That is great for dust collection which is very important when sanding any surface.

Power sanders

Power sanders are the beasts of the electric sander world. These are designed for optimal stock removal and for those tougher sanding jobs. They work by using a screw operated belt tracking system. Most of them will have a variable speed option and good dust collection. They can be used for sanding curved surfaces, shaping wood, removing excess weld, filing down nails and screw heads, and cleaning out apertures. Unlike the belt sander, these have a narrow sanding belt is ideal for removing rust, paint and bolt heads.

Belt/disc sanders

These are a very popular sander for people who love their DIY or do a lot of woodworking around the home. They usually sit on a bench and have a disc for sanding and also a belt for sanding. You can easily switch between the two. These will have sealed switches and a good dust port. These combination sanders give the user various options for sanding. The belt sander can be used for a lot of stock removal, and the disc sander can be used for finer sanding.

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The 10 most common types of electric sanders *contd.*

Sheet sanders

Sheet sanders are rectangular in shape and designed to sand down large flat surfaces quickly. They use a hook and loop system that allows for fast paper change. You can buy sheets specially made for the detail sander, or you can use sandpaper and cut it to shape. Many buyers will tell you that this type of sander is the one that can do all the donkey work of sanding.

Multi sanders

Multi sanders will have a two piece plate as you can see from the image above. That makes this type of multi-sander a very versatile sanding tool, and one that is handy for use around the home. These are light in weight and very easy to move around, especially into the more awkward corners and restricted spaces. A lot of craft people prefer this type of sander and we think they are really useful if you plan on working on sanding furniture such as chairs, coffee tables, chest of drawers, etc.

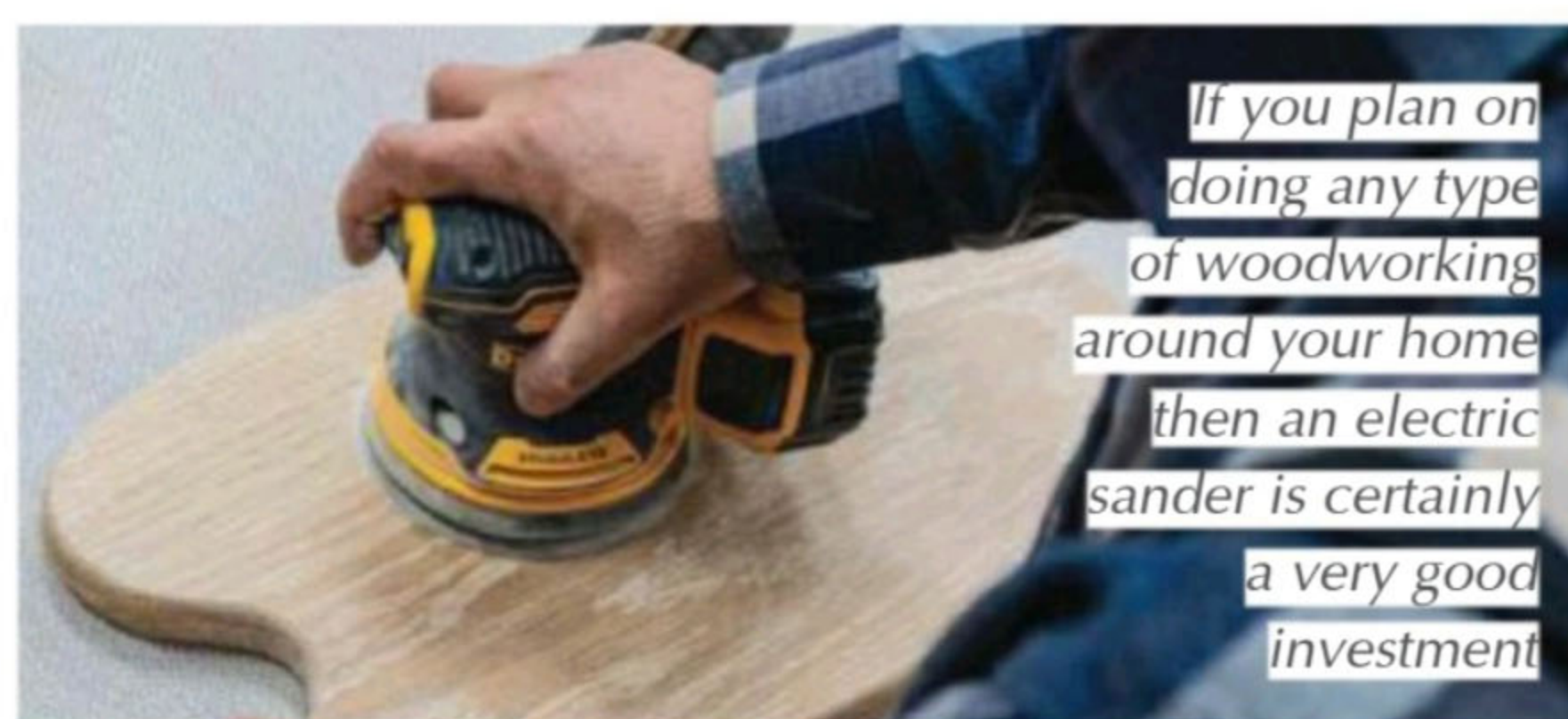
Air sanders

Air sanders are described as such as they use air to power the sander. Almost always these double up as a polisher as well. These are worth your consideration if

you have a compressor for other air tools. If you don't own a compressor then this is not an option for you. Air compressors are expensive so you would be better off buying an electric sander. These air sanders are powerful and very effective to use. The dust extraction is almost always excellent on this type of sander.

Cordless sanders

Cordless sanders are simply preferred by some users as you never have to worry about an annoying trailing electrical lead. You simply use a battery like you would do in a cordless drill or a cordless screwdriver. That does make this type of sander slightly heavier, but you do have a much better range of portability.



Grinder vs. sander:

Which one should you get?

When it comes to working with surfaces of various materials, grinders and sanders are some of the most commonly used power tools. In this article, you will learn what the differences between the tools are, as well as which tool is the better one to get. There are a few different types of grinders. However, in general, when someone says 'grinder' referring to a tool, they are talking about an angle grinder.

An angle grinder is a power tool – either corded or cordless – with a slot for a rotating disc at its end. There are many different types of discs that you can use it with. Some are designed for use with metal while others are for wood. Some are for cutting while others are for polishing. As such, a grinder is a very versatile tool.

Besides the tool itself which also serves as its main handle, angle grinders are often fitted with a removable side handle as well.

Grinder vs. sander:

What are the differences?

While there are some tasks that can be done with both grinders and sanders, overall, they are very different tools.

Attachments

The biggest difference between an angle grinder and a sander is the type of attachments that each of the tools uses. Angle grinders use rigid discs that come in a wide variety of types, each designed for a specific purpose. Sanders use – as their name suggests – sandpaper belts or pads. The pads are held in place either with Velcro or clips. While there are sandpaper belts and pads with a range of different grits, the variety of sander attachments is much more limited compared to angle grinder discs.

Materials

Both grinders and sanders can be used with a variety of materials. However, most commonly, grinders are used when working with wood while angle grinders are used when working with metal.

Versatility

Whether it is sanding of wooden surfaces to smoothen them or of metal surfaces to rid them of paint, power sanders only serve one purpose – sanding. On the other hand, angle grinders are much more versatile tools. They can be used to strip metal (or even other) surfaces of paint, as well as to cut metal pipes and other hard materials. In fact, there are even sanding discs for angle grinders. And, with the right disc, angle grinders can also be used for polishing.

cont. on p22

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Belt Sander

- The tool of choice for sanding wide wooden panels, flattening and stripping old paint.
- Well-balanced with low centre of gravity for better control and easy operation.



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M9200B

Finishing Sander



180W

- An extremely versatile $\frac{1}{4}$ sheet sander.



940W

M9203B

Finishing Sander

- Compact, lightweight $\frac{1}{3}$ sheet finishing sander.
- Perfect for all those hard to reach corners.

M9204B

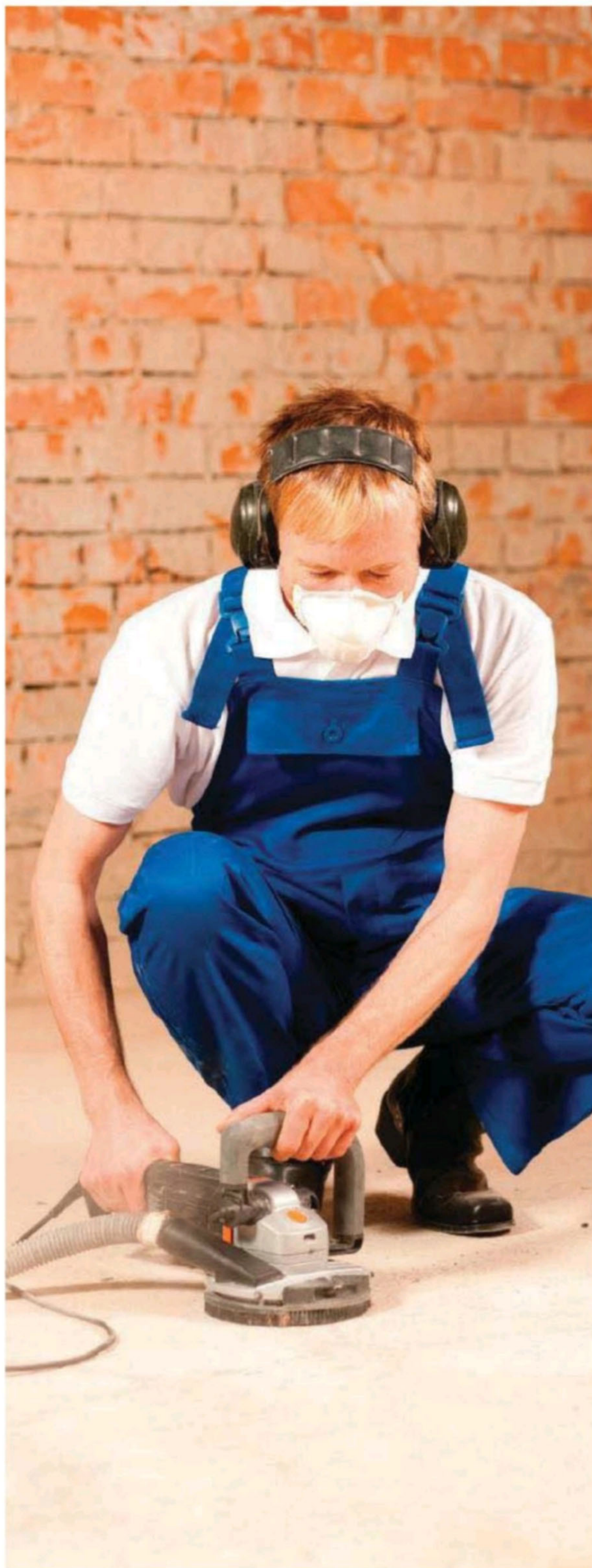
Random Orbit Sander

- Ideal for stripping paint off furniture.
- Prepare new moulding or clean up between finishing coats.
- Smooth and clean metal and composite materials such as solid surface counter tops



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Precision

Different sanders offer different levels of precision. For example, while a belt sander is designed for 'rougher' work, palm sanders are designed for more precise finishing work. In either case, however, sanders are generally more precise and 'gentle' tools than grinders. One example of that would be when trying to remove old paint from a metal surface. You could either use a sander which would result in a smoother finish or grinder which – unless you are highly skilled – might leave you with a fairly uneven and rough finish. It's also important to keep in mind that using the latter would be much quicker, though.

Safety

With angle grinders having a rigid disc rotating at a high speed – and being designed to cut things – they are considerably more dangerous to use than sanders are. Especially so when used to cut metals as in those cases there are also many sparks flying out of the material that is being cut.

As such, you will not only want to use gloves but also safety glasses when using an angle grinder.

As for power sanders, they are relatively safe to use. However, they generate a lot of dust. Because of that, you will want to wear a mask when sanding to protect yourself from inhaling paint or wood particles.

Grinder vs. sander: Which is better?

Considering that they are, for a large part, very different tools, it is impossible to generalise which of the two is better. Instead, it is necessary to look at the task you need to get done and then decide which of the tools better suits it.

An angle grinder with the right disc is well-suited for tasks including:

- Cutting metal bars, pipes, etc.
- Removing old paint from metal surfaces
- Polishing various surfaces

A sander is well-suited for tasks including:

- Removing old paint from wooden surfaces
- Smoothing of wooden boards
- Rounding edges of wooden boards

As mentioned earlier, some tasks – especially removing old paint from metal surfaces – can be done using both an angle grinder and a sander. In that case, the better tool for the job will depend on whether you are looking to get the job done as quickly as possible (angle grinder) or as nicely and cleanly as possible (sander).

How to safely use a sander

To safely use a power sander, first choose the appropriate tool. Belt sanders are used for larger surfaces with vibrating sanders better at finishing. Disk and drum sanders are useful for smaller surfaces. Then select the abrasive material. Flint is used in common sanding materials, garnet is for hardwoods, emery and other materials are used to finish metal. Abrasiveness is identified by the grit with higher numbers (320, 400) indicating a finer grit than lower numbers (150, 220) of coarse abrasive material. Coarse grit is used to remove material faster and fine grit is for finishing or smoothing a surface. Wear eye and breathing protection when sanding.

How to maintain a sander

Sanding blocks require no maintenance beyond replacing the sandpaper when it is no longer abrasive. Power sanders require additional care to maintain the motor and other moving parts. Because sanders develop fine wood dust, periodically clean the sander so the dust does not damage the motor.



Summary

Both angle grinders and power sanders are very useful tools to have in your workshop. However, they both serve fairly different purposes. While angle grinders are mostly suited for 'rougher' work, sanders are designed for more precise work on. While the former is mostly used when working with metal, the latter is best suited for working with wood.

Because of that, eventually, you will want to have both an angle grinder and at least one sander in your kit. If you are looking to get only one of them, though, then you will need to consider the type of work you will mostly be doing.

When deciding, you should also keep in mind that while sanding can be done manually as well, a lot of the work people do with angle grinders would be fairly difficult to do without a power tool.



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What you will need

The materials/tools you will (probably) need to build something like this include:

- Small tubing (I used 10mm with 1.2mm wall thickness)
- Smooth flat profile
- Tube bender (the same size of the selected tubing)
- Weld inverter/Stick welder and welding rods (308 L)
- Drill press and drill bits
- Pipe cutter
- Square and measuring tools (rulers, verniers, etc.)
- Files (of the same diameter of the tubing)
- Angle grinder (optional)

I needed a small front rack on my gravel bike to avoid the handlebar bag from rubbing in the front wheel and to carry some lightweight groceries. Since each

bike/fork has its own bolt pattern, I had to make a custom one for my bike.

The build is relatively straightforward, but some metalworking experience is preferred. I'm not the most experienced metalworker but during pandemic and with more time at home I decided to learn stick welding and after many burnt rods I decided to make something useful other than metal scrap to 'step up' my welding skills.

I went with a simple rectangular shape. I measured the width of my fork legs at the bolt locations and fixed that as my reference. The height was a little bit bigger, but this is entirely subjective to each fork/bicycle/person.

What is not relative is the way you measure it. You need to know the bending radius of your bending tool so that you end up with precise dimensions. If you want a certain length (width or height) to have a total X mm/inch you need to subtract two times the curvature radius of your bending tool and the diameter of the tubing. With that you

have the total length of the "non-bent" sections and from that you can define the starting points and, by considering the perimeter of the bend (a fraction of $2 \times \pi \times R$), you can cut the tube to the total desired length. You can also pre-determine and mark all the points at which the bends will occur. It may take some time and thinking in a first approach but then is quite straightforward.

I fixed the bending tool on a vice and made a mark to help keep the bends in the same plane. I created a guiding line in the tube placing it against something in a fixed position and with a marker on a flat table. Take your time to bend the tube, particularly stainless has it is quite hard to bend. Make sure that your bender is also adequate to the material you want.

While bending keep an eye on squareness, even if you follow the angle marks on the tube bender those will not match to what you want. If you have marked everything correctly, the two extremities of the tube will align

perfectly. I must admit that it is quite satisfying seeing that happen.

After that you can weld the two extremities. I used a stick welder because that was all I had (argon is expensive where I live). With adequate electrodes and amperage you can make it work even though it isn't a clean weld (use a stainless steel wire brush to clean the welds). Make sure to wear eye protection as the stainless steel slag likes to jump everywhere.

With everything welded, I cut two tubes and notched them with a file to match the outside diameter of the tubes. A wood block is helpful to keep the tube in an upwards position. I also cut a U-shaped tube to place it in one extremity of the rack and to avoid things falling towards the bicycle headtube. With everything tacked in place, it is time to patiently weld everything trying to change the welding pattern to avoid distortion.

The last piece of the top part was the small flat profile with three holes to provide some adjustment when fixing it to the fork. These were designed for M5 bolts and to be fixed with washers and nuts (no taps needed). This plate was also stamped with my name and year with a letter punch jig.

After that I decided to smooth all visible welds just for aesthetics.

With that flat profile welded to the top part I transferred the bolt pattern to a longer piece of flat profile and bent it with an hammer in the vice. The edges were also smoothed with an angle grinder. This piece will provide the top attachment to the fork.

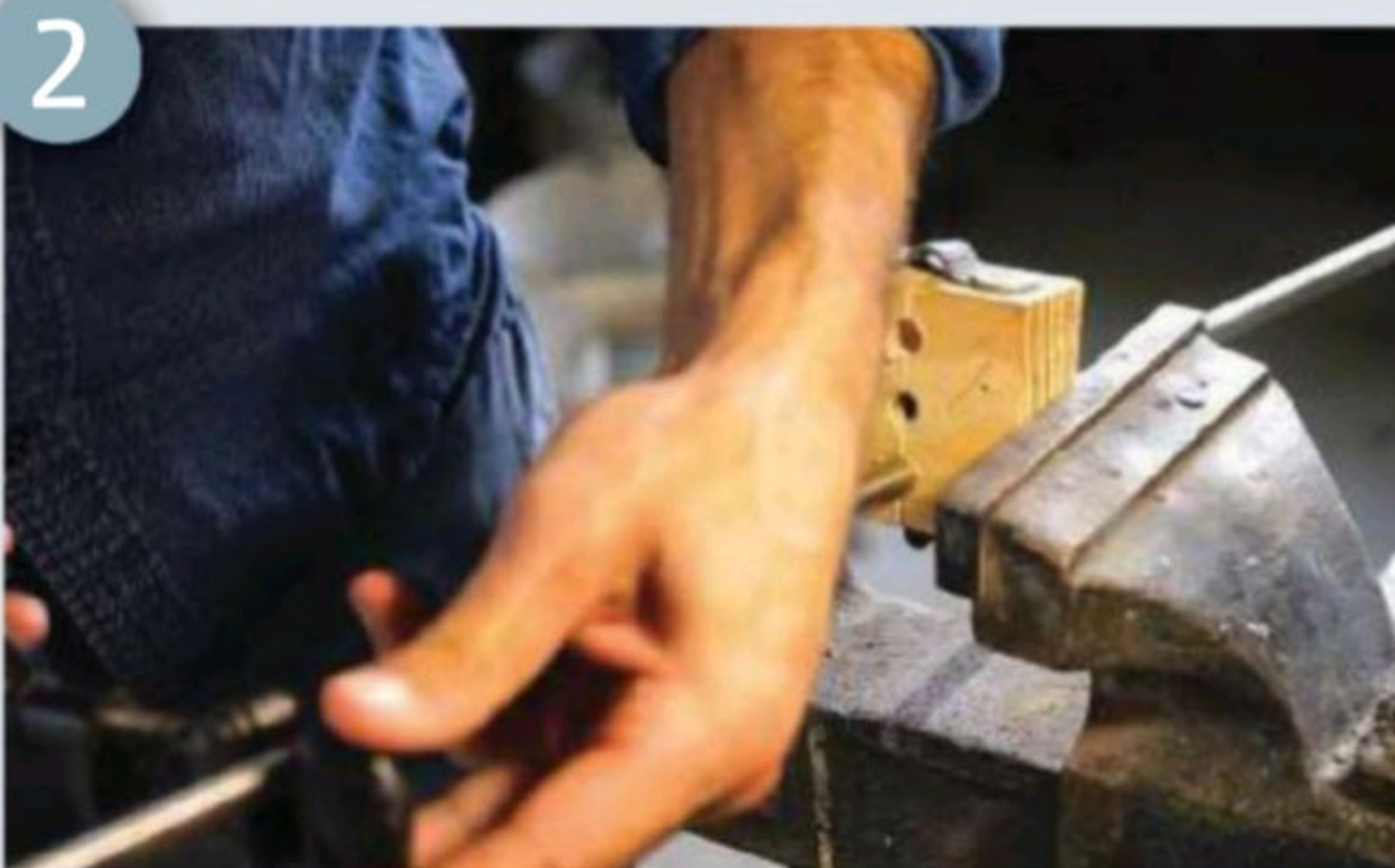
With the top part attached to the fork it was just a matter of cutting the side mounts/tubes to de desired length. I decided to have the rack matching the slope of the frame for aesthetic purposes and to try to avoid things from falling off the bicycle.

With the vice, I just created a flat surface to provide an attachment point through a bolt by crushing the tubing. In my case I had to bend the tubes close to these flat surfaces in advance because the tube would touch the fork legs. Alternatively, I could increase the size of the flat surface to avoid the tubing but that is not aesthetically pleasing for me. I find that this solution of crushing the tubing works quite well and does not affect tube resistance significantly.

Lastly, I tacked everything in place to avoid as much distortion as possible (which is impossible to avoid).



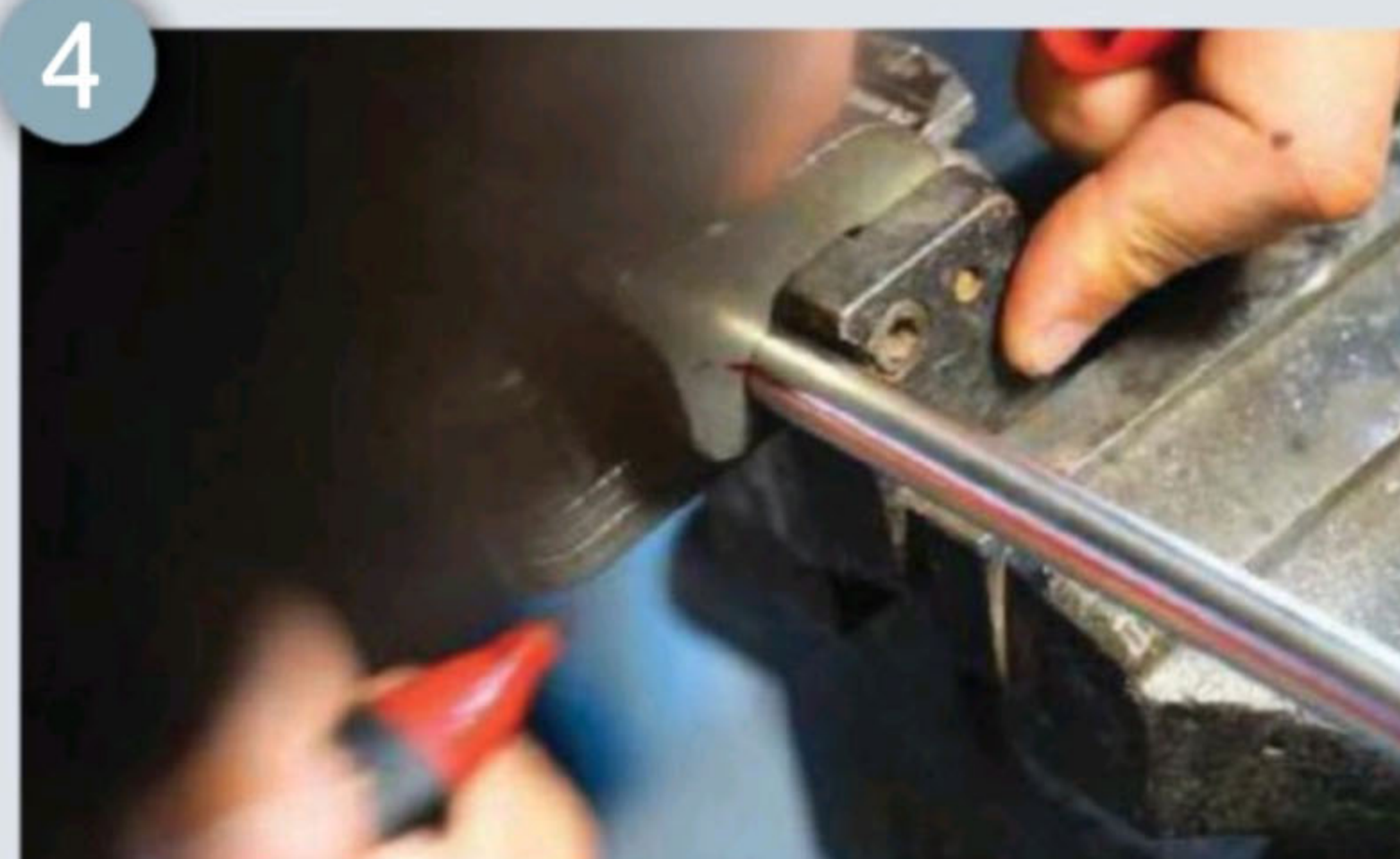
I measured the width of my fork legs at the bolt locations and fixed that as my reference



You need to know the bending radius of your bending tool so that you end up with precise dimensions



I fixed the bending tool on a vice plane



And made a mark to help keep the bends in the same



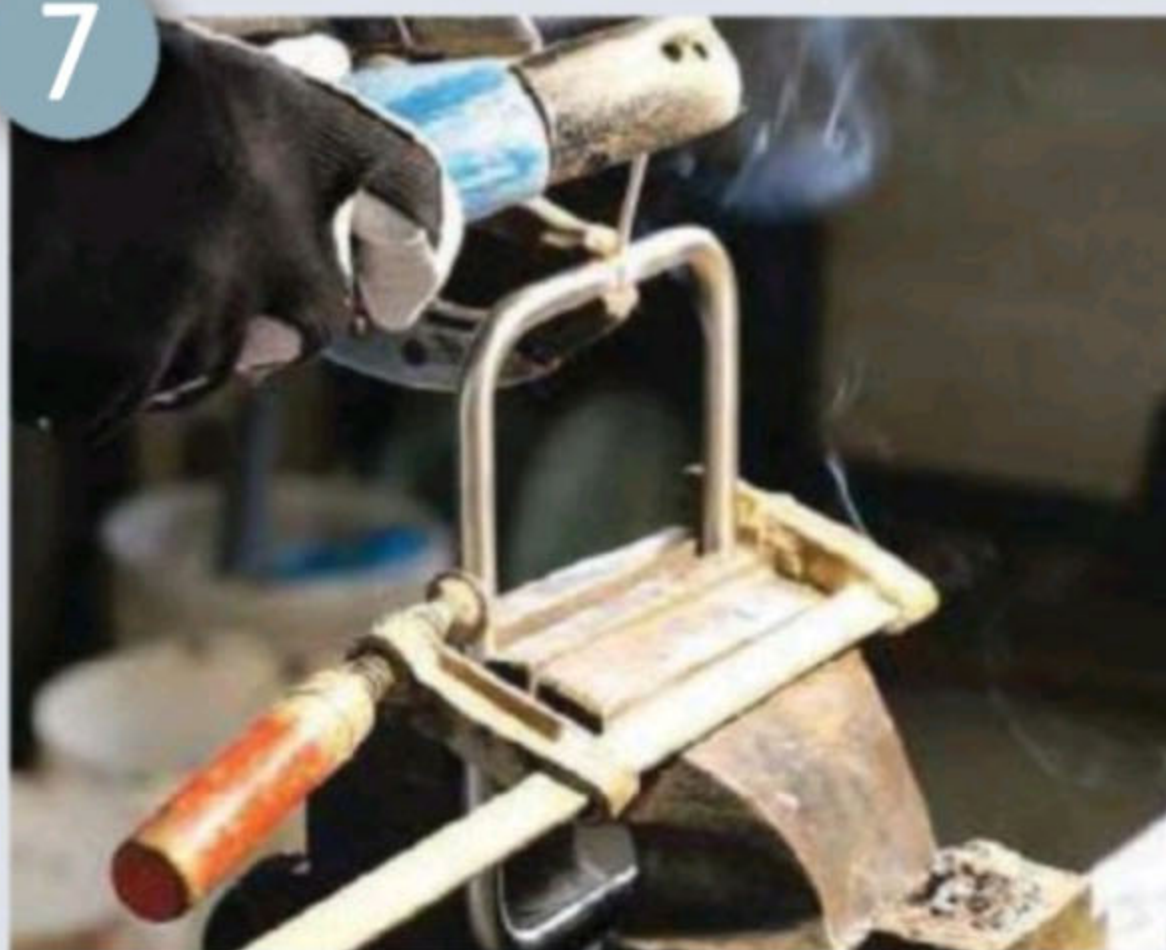
Take your time to bend the tube, particularly stainless has it is quite hard to bend

6



While bending keep an eye on squareness

7



After that you can weld the two extremities

8



With everything welded, I cut two tubes and notched them with a file to match the outside diameter of the tubes

9



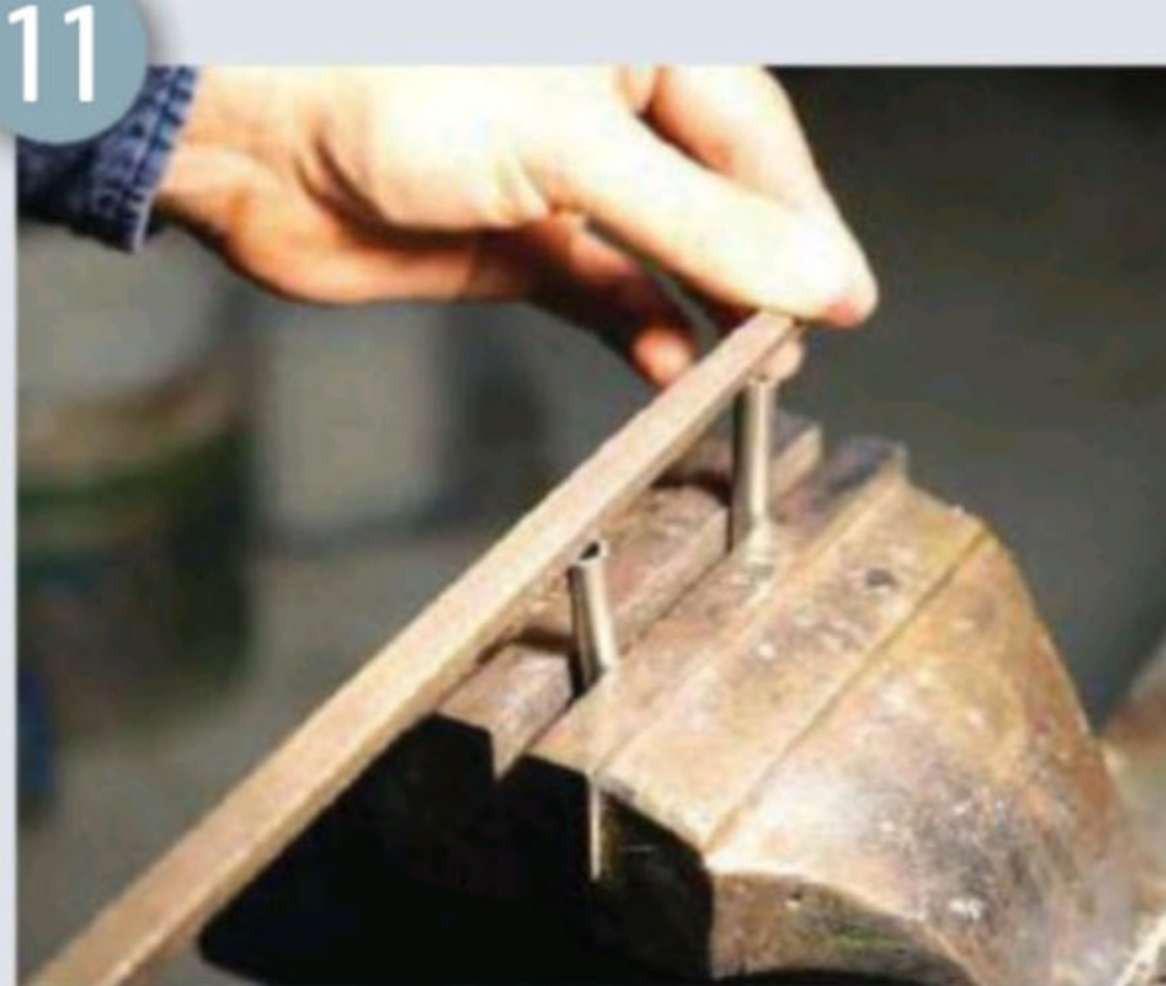
A wood block is helpful to keep the tube in an upwards position

10



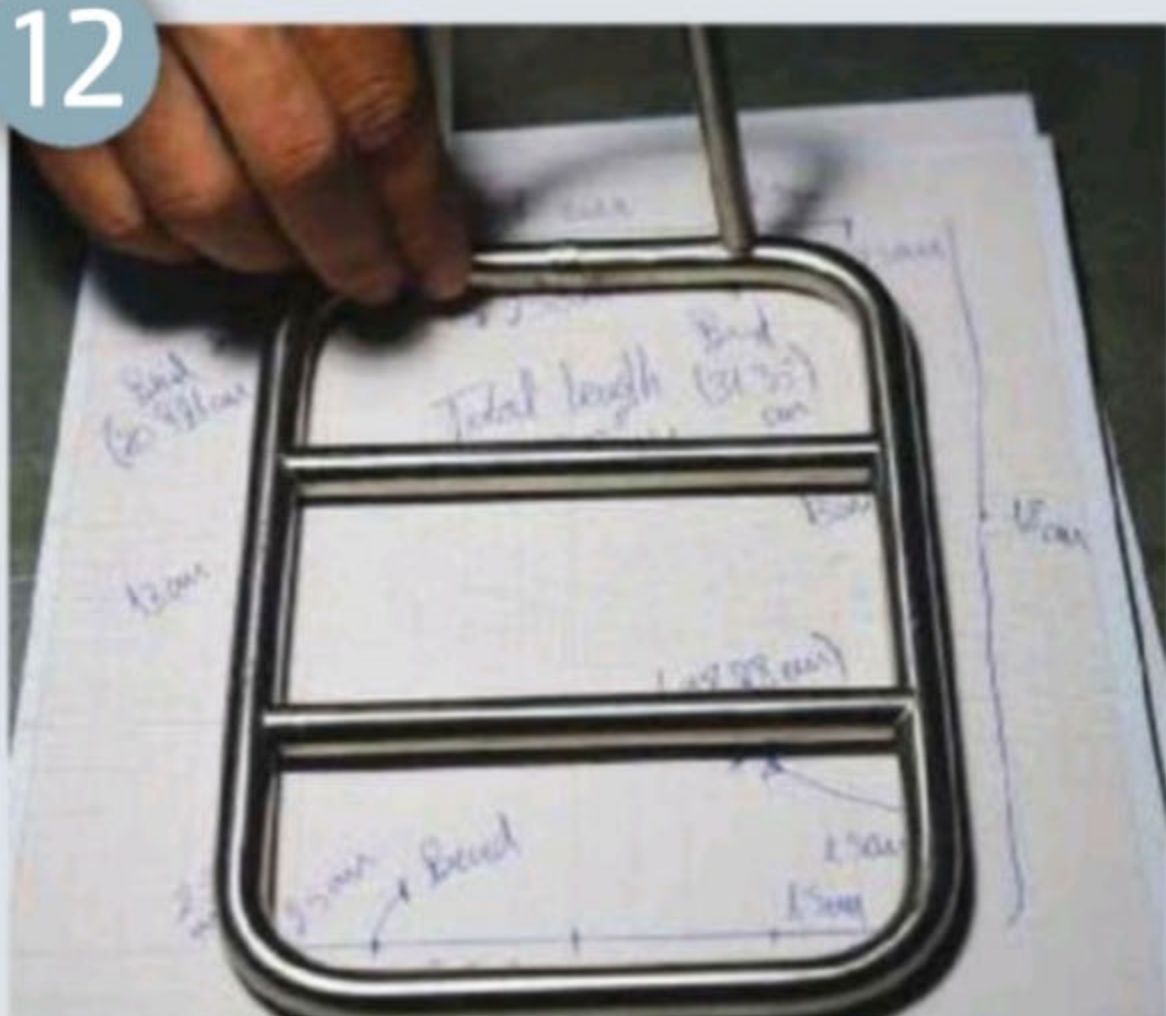
I also cut a U-shaped tube to place it in one extremity of the rack and to avoid things falling towards the bicycle headtube

11



Filing the ends

12



Making sure I am still following my design

13



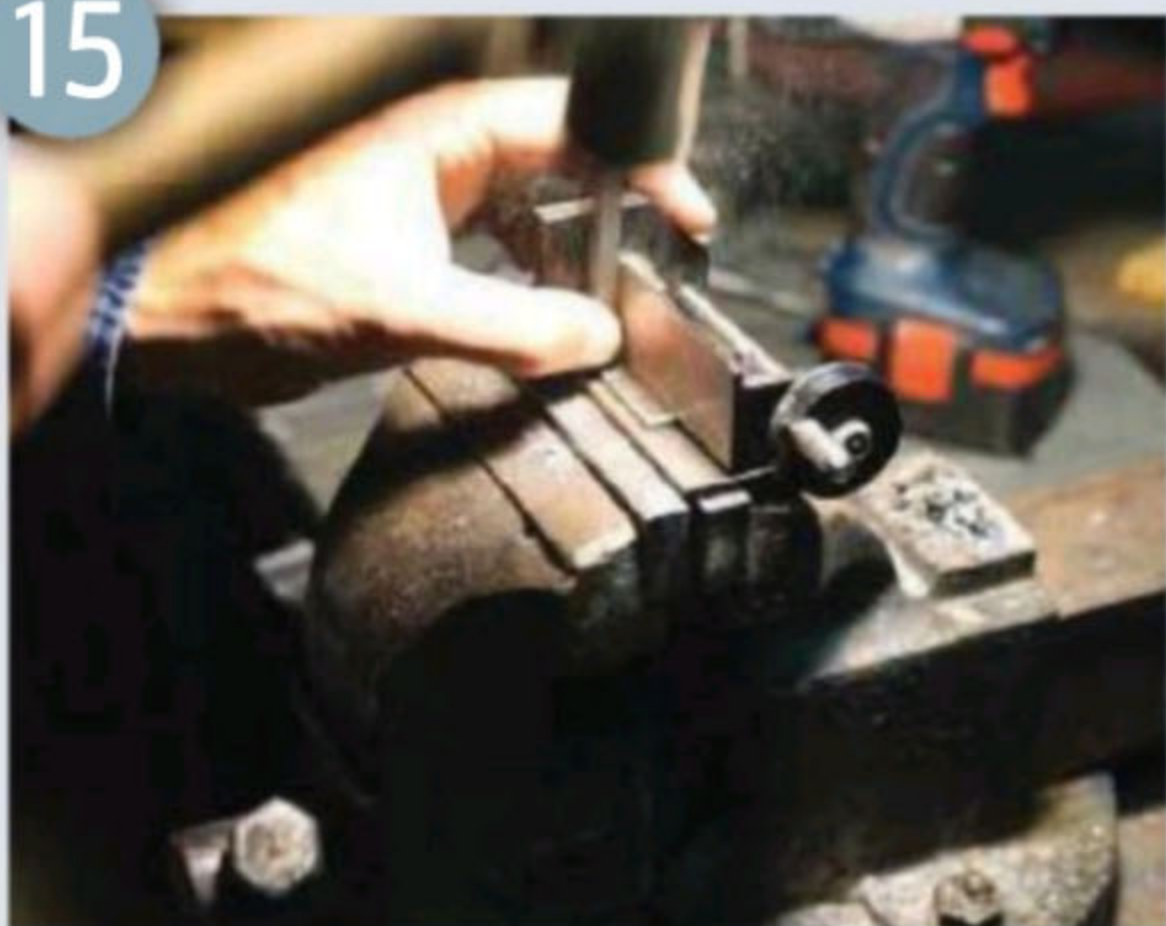
With everything tacked in place, it is time to patiently weld everything

14



Use a stainless steel wire brush to clean the welds

15



The last piece of the top part was the small flat profile

16



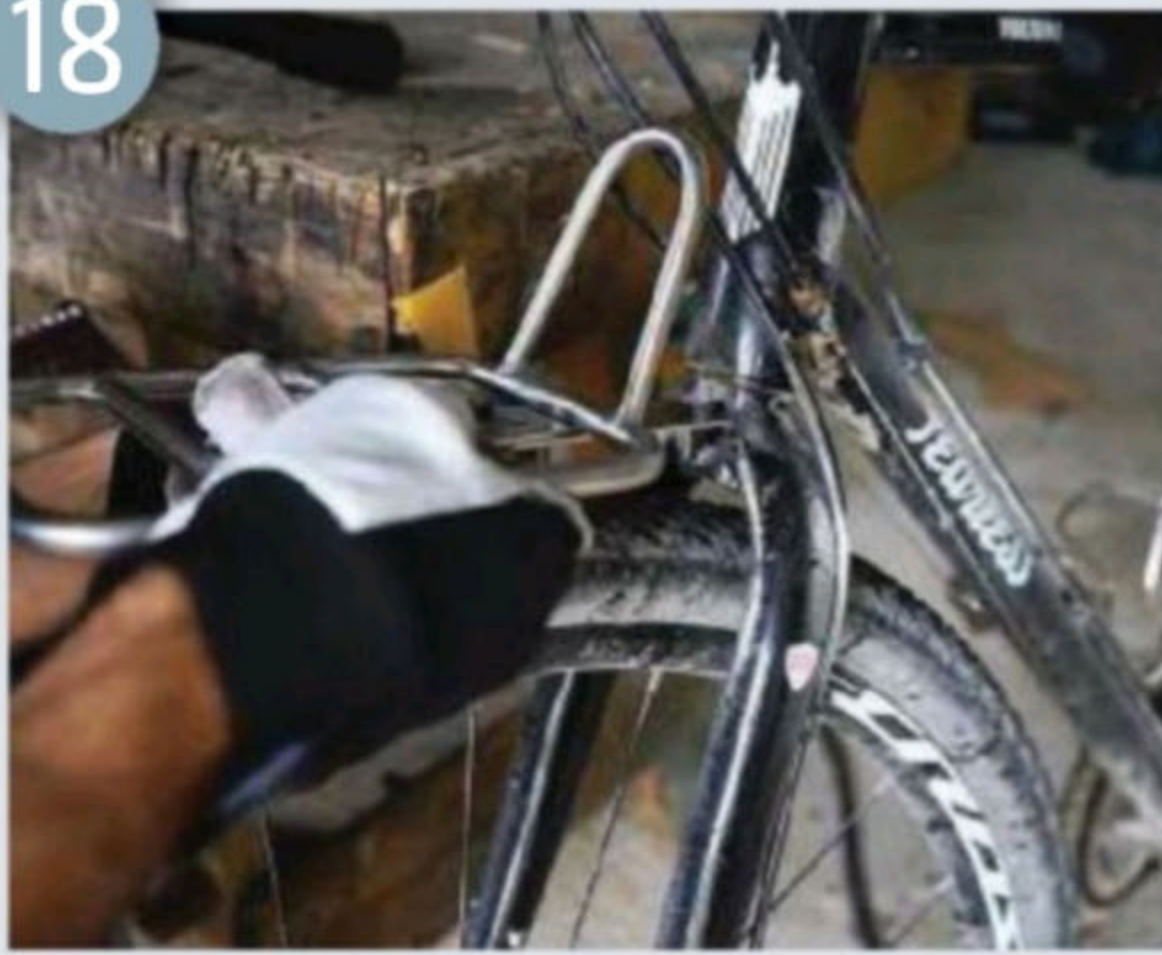
Attaching to the rack

17



After that I decided to smooth all visible welds just for aesthetics

18



Checking to see how it will look

19



Drilling three holes to provide some adjustment when fixing it to the fork

20



With the top part attached to the fork it was just a matter of cutting the side mounts/tubes to the desired length

21



With the vice, I just created a flat surface to provide an attachment point through a bolt by crushing the tubing

22



In my case I had to bend the tubes close to these flat surfaces in advance because the tube would touch the fork legs

23



Lastly, I tacked everything in place

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KEEP THE FIRE BURNING



What you will need

- 16 x 64mm coarse-thread Kreg Pocket-Hole Screws
- 32 x 32mm coarse-thread Kreg Pocket-Hole Screws



Wood products

- 2 x 38 x 38 x 1800mm board
- 2 x 19 x 89 x 2400mm board



Tools

- Drill/Driver
- Kreg Pocket-Hole Jig
- Mitre saw
- Jigsaw
- Sander
- Tape measure
- Straight edge ruler

The lower area of this firewood storage rack from Kreg holds your fire logs securely, while the upper area is a great place for keeping kindling. You can build one in just a couple of hours using four boards, a mitre saw (or circular saw), a jigsaw, a drill, and a Kreg Pocket-Hole Jig.

PARTS LIST	
4 x Leg	38 x 38 x 660mm
4 x Short Rail	38 x 38 x 230mm
4 x V Rail	19 x 64 x 362mm
8 x Slat	19 x 89 x 305mm

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Cut four Legs and four Short Rails to length from 38 x 38mm boards, as shown in the cutting diagram. Set your Kreg Pocket-Hole Jig for 38mm-thick material, and then drill pocket holes in the ends of each Short Rail at the locations shown. Sand the frame parts smoot. Don't sand the ends of the Short Rails.

Step 2: Lay out two Legs and two Short Rails, as shown, so that

the upper Short Rail is flush with the upper ends of the Legs, and the lower Short Rail is positioned 19mm up from the lower ends of the Legs. Then attach the Short Rails to the Legs using 64mm coarse-thread Kreg Pocket-Hole Screws. Repeat the same process for the second frame side.

Step 3: Cut four V Rails to length from 89mm boards, as shown in the cutting diagram. Mark the angled lines on the first piece and then cut

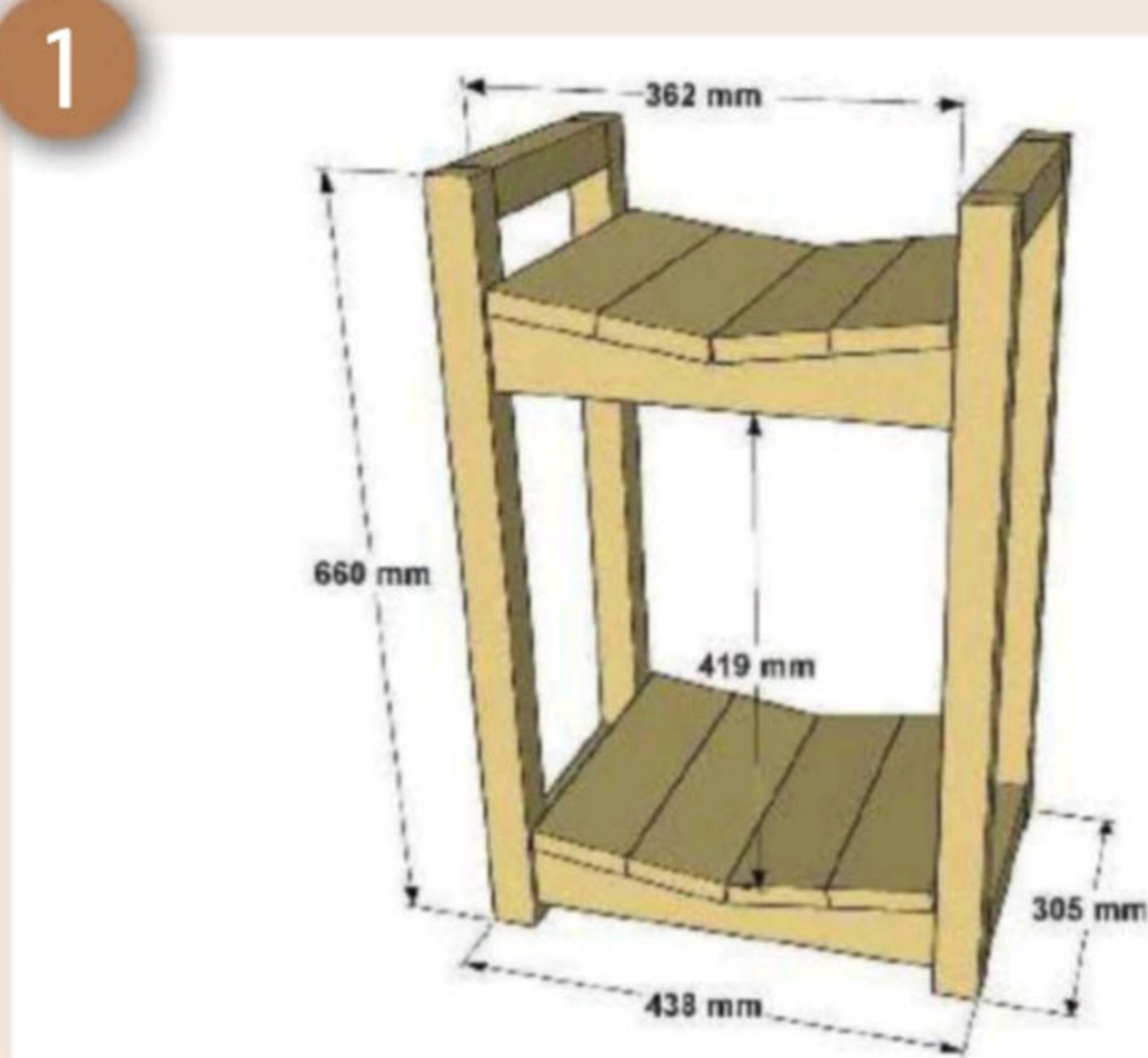
along the lines with a jigsaw. Sand the cut edges as necessary to make them smooth. Then use this V Rail as a pattern for marking the other three. Cut and sand them in the same way. Reset your Kreg Pocket-Hole Jig and bit for 19mm-thick material, and then drill pocket holes in each V Rail at the locations shown. Sand the faces and edges of the V Rails smooth. Don't sand the ends.

Step 4: Lay the first assembled frame on a flat work surface, and then position the V Rails as shown. Secure the V Rails using 32mm coarse-thread Kreg Pocket-Hole Screws.

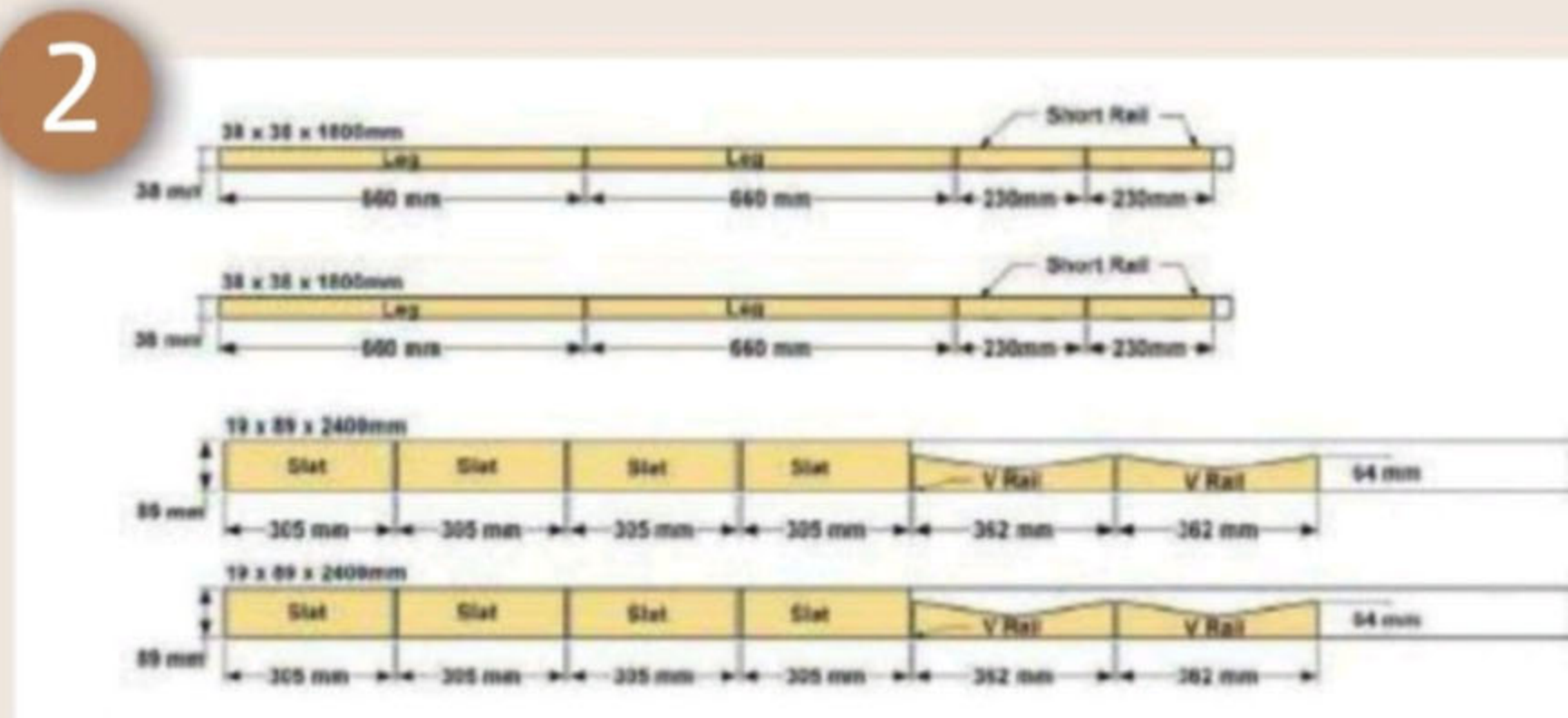
Step 5: Now you can attach second assembled frame side to the V Rails using the same process as the previous step.

Step 6: Cut eight slats to length from 89mm boards, as shown in the cutting diagram. Then sand the faces, edges, and ends of the Slats smooth. Position four of the Slats on one V Rail, as shown, so the Slat ends are flush with the outside edges of the Legs. Secure the Slats to the V Rail using 32mm coarse-thread Kreg Pocket-Hole Screws. Repeat this process to attach the second set of Slats to the other V Rails.

Step 7: With your firewood storage rack assembled, you can look it over to see if it needs any touch-up sanding. Then apply the finish, stain, or paint that suits your style and complements the space where you'll use the rack.

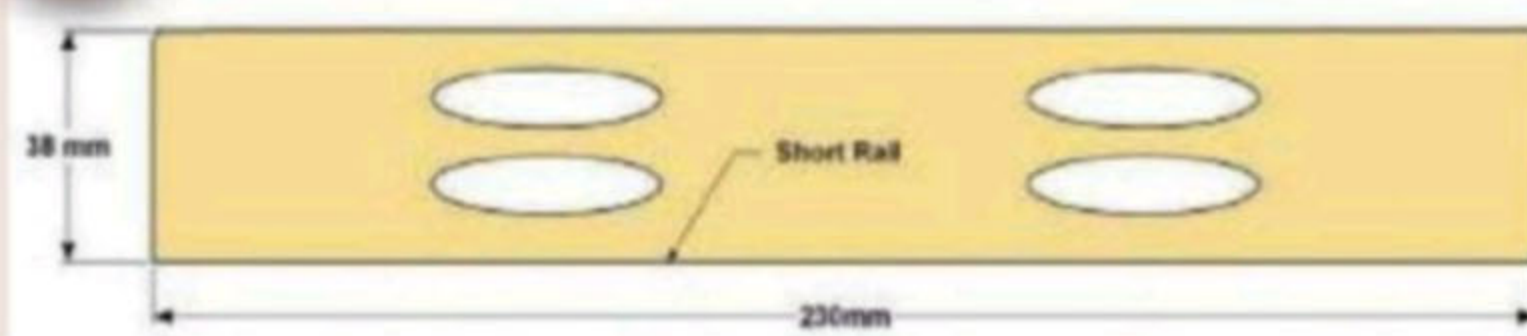


Dimensions of the completed project



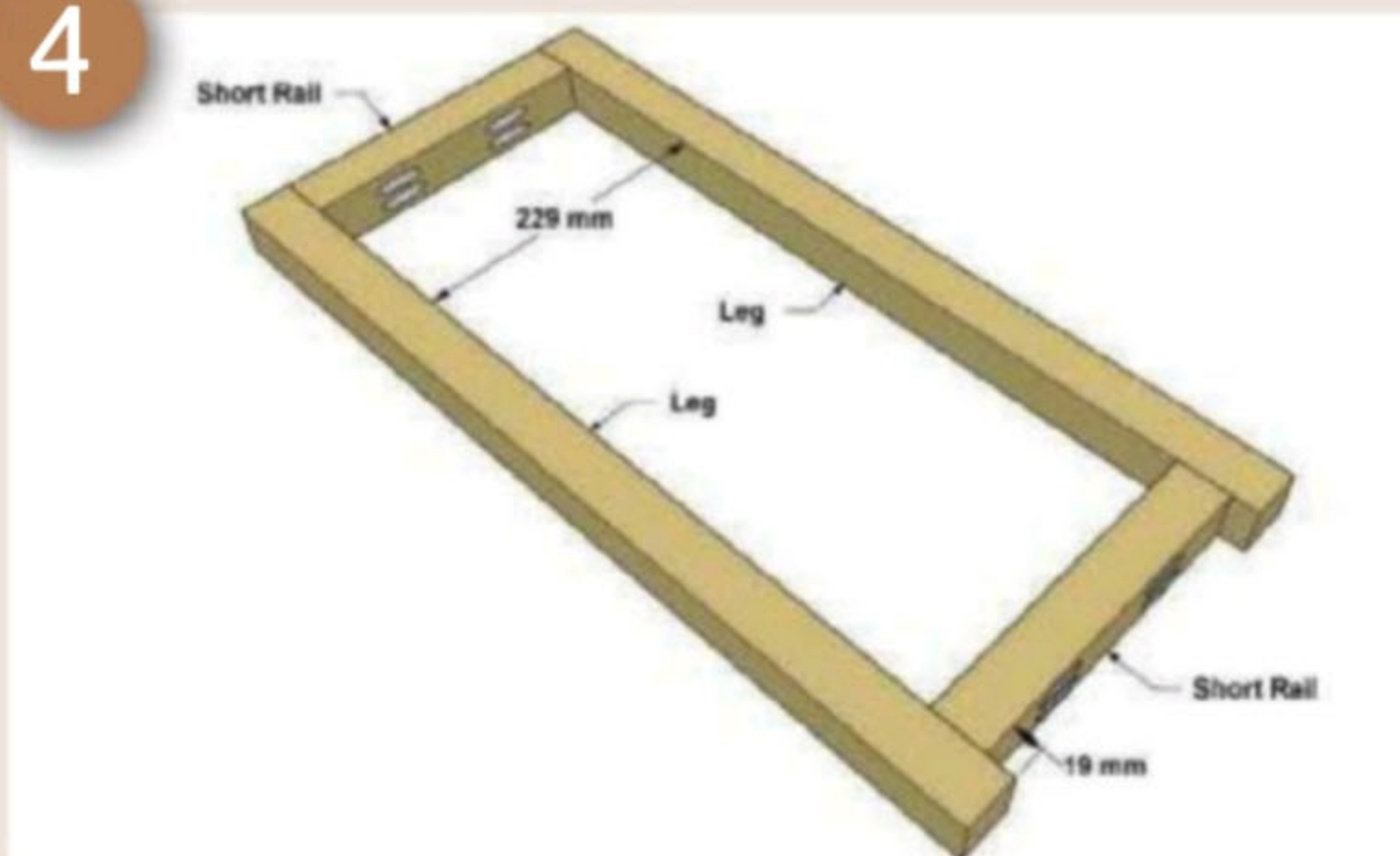
The cut diagram

3



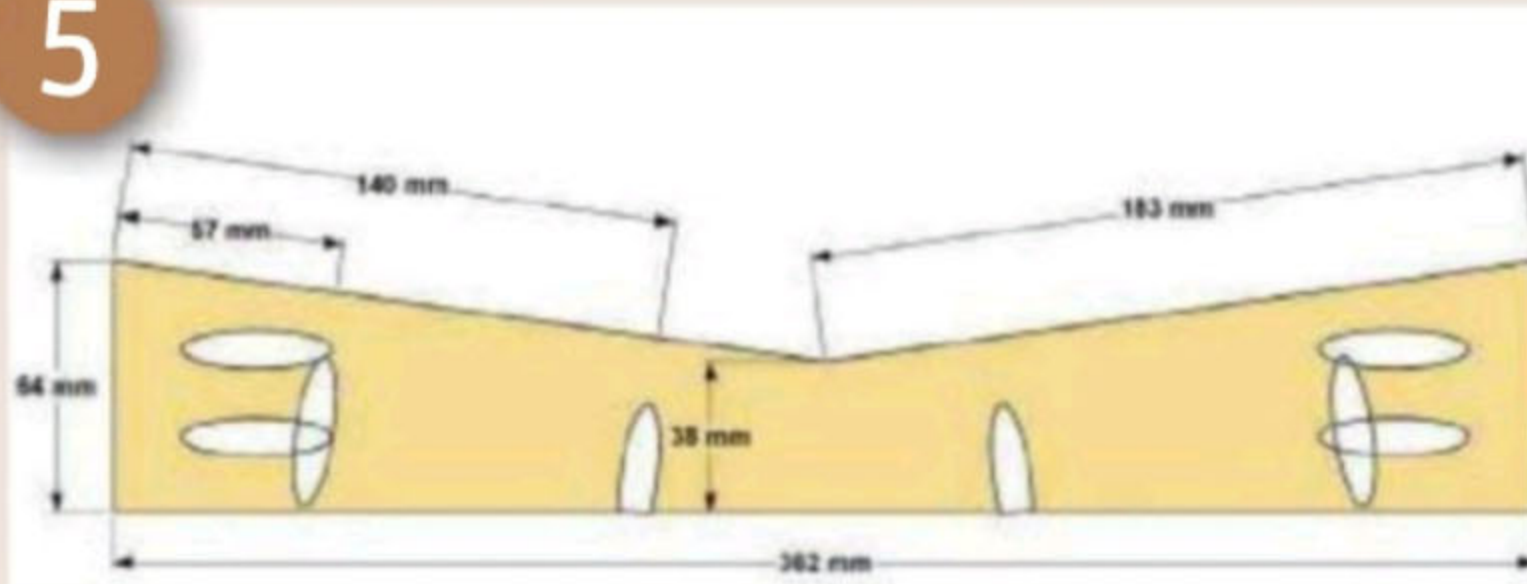
Make the Frame Parts

4



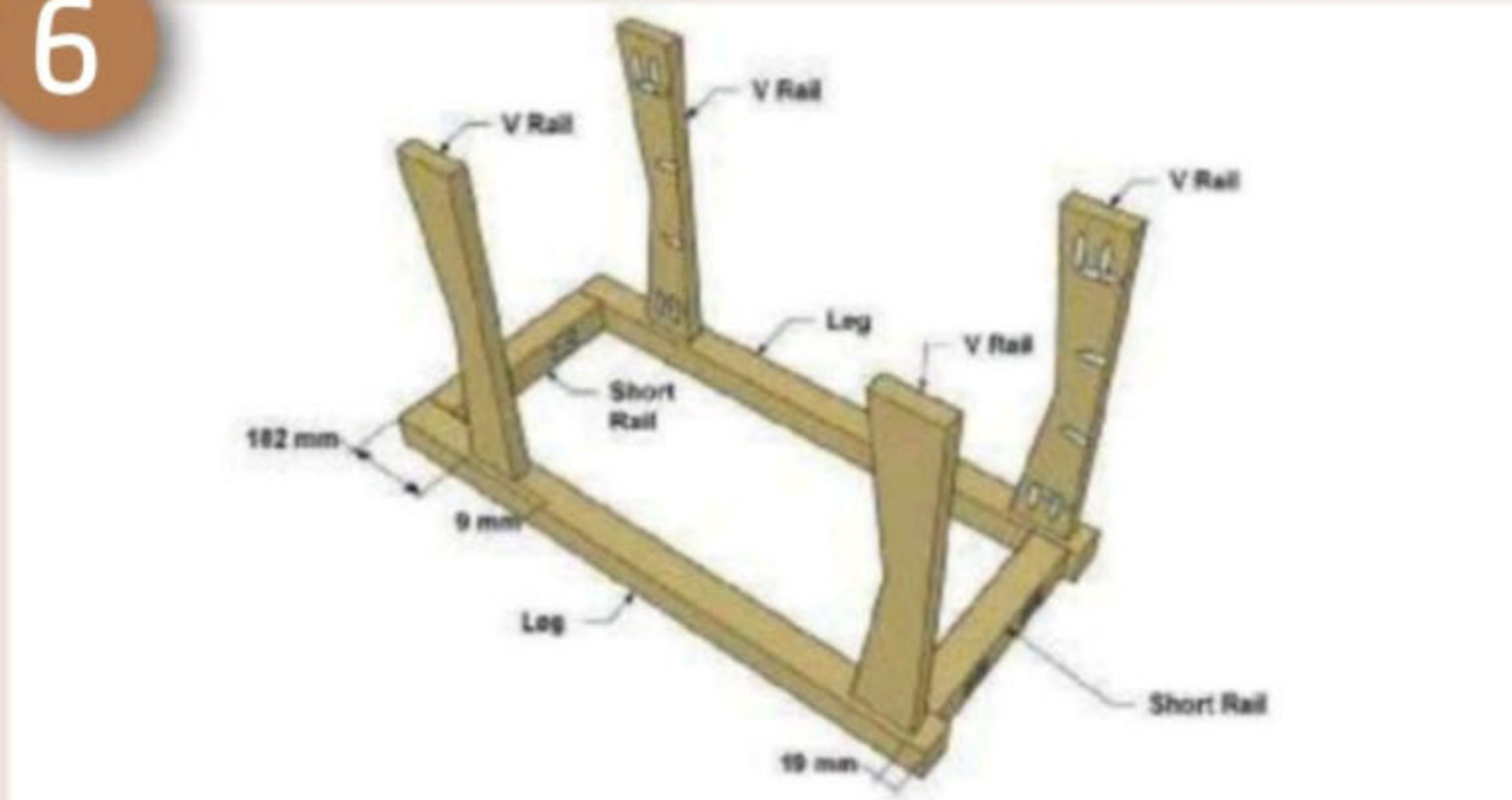
Assemble the Frame

5



Make the V Rails

6



Attach the V Rails to One Frame

7



Add the Second Frame

8



Add the Second Frame



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For more information, visit www.kregtool.com

When reader, Alan Garner-Savory, asked for an article on how to make a padded headboard with buttons, *The Home Handyman* duly obliged.

BUDGET FRIENDLY DESIGNER HEADBOARD

>> Matt Andries

My wife and I recently purchased a new king-sized bed, and we were thrilled to trade in our old queen size, but that also meant we needed to get a new headboard as well... My wife went out shopping and found a nice fabric 'tufted' headboard for over R10 000! After finding out that a 'tuft' was just a button, I was shocked at the cost. I convinced my wife to let me try building one similar in an effort to keep my hard-earned money in my pocket. Trust me, this was an easy project and I spent less than R750 total!

For this project you will need some basic tools and materials:

- Tools: Drill, drill bits, screwdriver bits, staple gun and staples, upholstery needle, circular saw (a chop saw or mitre saw is nice for cutting the supports but is not necessary).
- Materials: 1220mm x 2400mm sheet of plywood or MDF, wood for the frame, wood screws, padding, fabric, button kit, wax thread, staples.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: The nice part of building your own headboard is that you can make it whatever size you want. You will want to take measurements to determine exactly what you want and make yourself a quick reference drawing.

Here are a couple of things to consider:

- How tall do you want the headboard to extend past the surface of your mattress?
- Do you want the headboard to overhang the sides of the mattress?
- What is the hole spacing on your bed frame?

I was making this headboard for a large king-sized bed and the room has vaulted ceilings. I decided to make

the height of the headboard rather tall so that it would be a focal point in the room. The picture shows the measurements I chose to use for this design.

Step 2: After you plan the design you need to cut your materials to length. I used a circular saw to cut the plywood to length. Since the plywood comes in big sheets, I decided to keep the height at 1220mm so I would only need to make one cut. Use a mitre saw or hand saw to cut all the other support pieces to size. I decided to completely frame out the plywood to add some support to the headboard. This made the whole structure very sturdy. I do recommend spending a little extra on your frame. You can usually find a premium grade for only a few rands

more per piece and then you don't have to worry about warp or knots as much.

Step 3: After getting all of your materials cut to length, lay out everything to make sure they fit properly. The next step is to fasten the support pieces to the plywood. Choose a fastener that gives you the maximum engagement without going completely through both pieces. If you have clamps, I recommend clamping the support pieces to the plywood. This will allow you to pre-drill some pilot holes and then drive your screws without risk of misalignment. I do recommend pre-drilling some pilot holes prior to driving your screws. If you don't, you will risk splitting your wood.

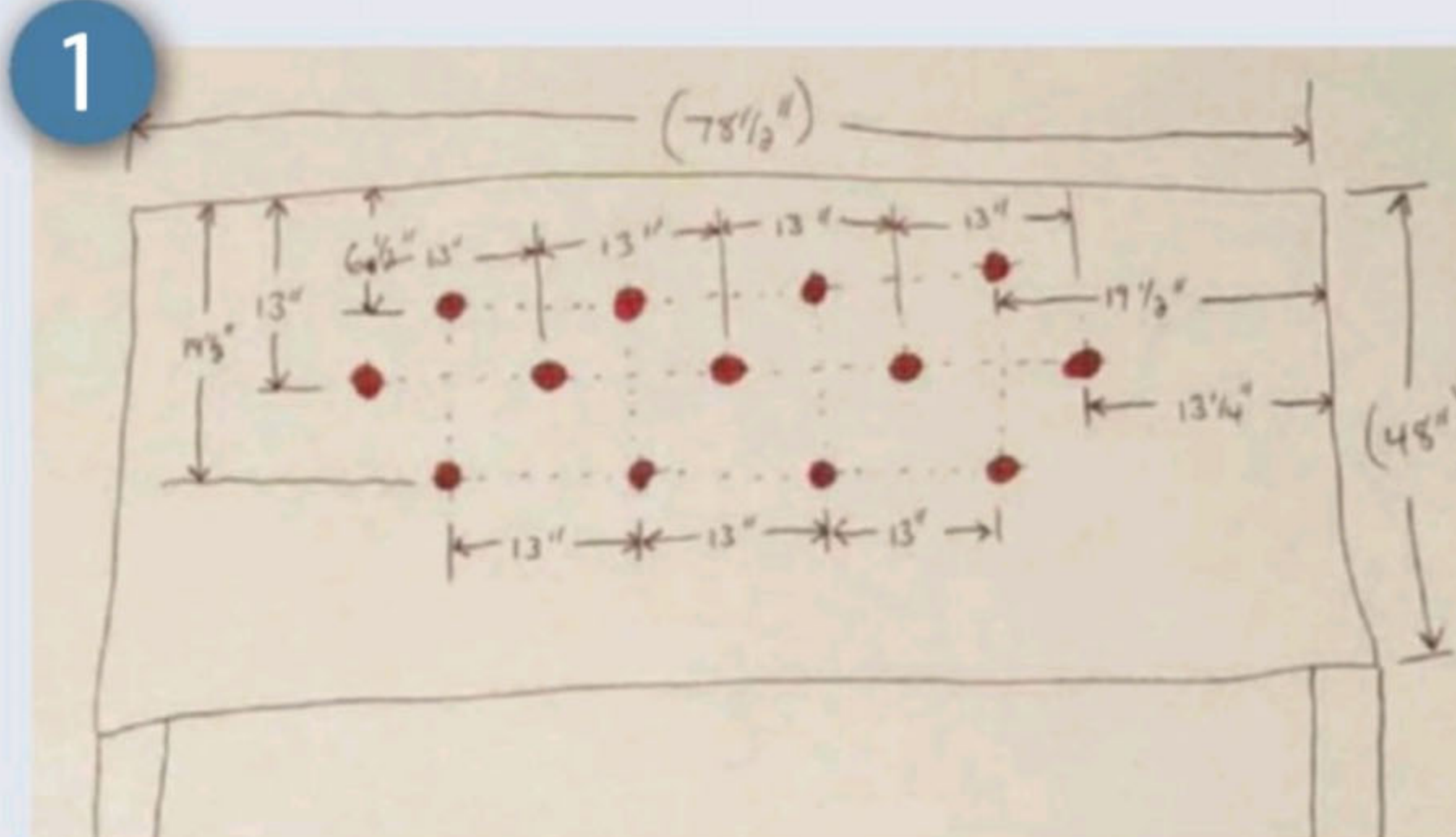
Step 4: Now is the time to decide if you want to add any additional features to your headboard to add a little bit of character. Determine what kind of design you would like to create and go for it. I am very analytical, so I wanted to make sure I had a pattern that was perfectly centred. I biased the pattern high to account for the height of the mattress and pillows. Here is the spacing I chose for this headboard. You can change it however you like.

I then transferred the pattern to the headboard with a tape measure and marker and drilled holes at the centre of each button location.

Step 5: The next step is to staple the padding to the headboard. This padding is available at most hobby stores and comes in several varieties. This particular padding came in a 1220mm roll, and you could get whatever length you wanted. I wanted to make sure the headboard was nice and soft, so I decided to put two layers of this padding on. Depending on the look you are going for, you could go with more or less. Just wrap the padding around the edges to the back and use a staple gun to firmly attach the padding in place. Staples are cheap so I put a staple in every 15-30mm or so.

Step 6: Next attach the fabric in the same manner as the padding. Make sure to keep it pulled tight to eliminate wrinkles. I actually purchased a fabric curtain that was of sufficient size and cut it to fit. This allowed us to match some existing colours and materials in the room and proved to be a very cheap option, even cheaper than buying fabric by the foot at those craft stores.

Step 7: I purchased a button making kit and used some of the same fabric to make some custom buttons. These were only a couple rand and worked out perfectly. You basically cut an oversized circle of material, place it over the button and push it into the provided receptacle. You then tuck the material edges inside and press the other



The original design (in inches)



After you plan the design you need to cut your materials to length



I decided to completely frame out the plywood to add some support to the headboard



The padding used for the headboard

half of the button into place with the provided pusher. It snaps into place, and you have a perfect button with whatever material you choose.

Step 8: Use an upholstery needle to attach the buttons to your headboard through the holes you drilled earlier. I used some waxed thread and it makes threading the needle so much easier (thanks fabric store lady!) Pull the button as tight as you like to give it your desired look and use the staple gun on the thread to hold it in place. I used a couple staples to hold the thread, so

I didn't have to worry about tying it. You'll notice that I used a permanent marker to locate all of the holes I drilled. I got sick of trying to locate all the holes in the contrasting surfaces of the plywood I used.

Step 9: Lastly, you need to attach your headboard to your bed frame. I decided that some large screws would be sufficient to attach it. Instead of measuring and trying to locate the holes perfectly over the entire span, I decided to match drill the holes. I just had someone hold the headboard where

I wanted it and I drilled a hole through the frame into the headboard. I then attached it with some machine screws, washers, and nuts.

Enjoy your new headboard that costs a small fraction of what the big furniture stores charge. This whole project took me just over two hours to complete and saved me over R9000. This was my first 'upholstery' project, but it proved to be much easier than I thought. Hopefully this inspires you to make something yourself that the big retail stores charge a premium for!

5



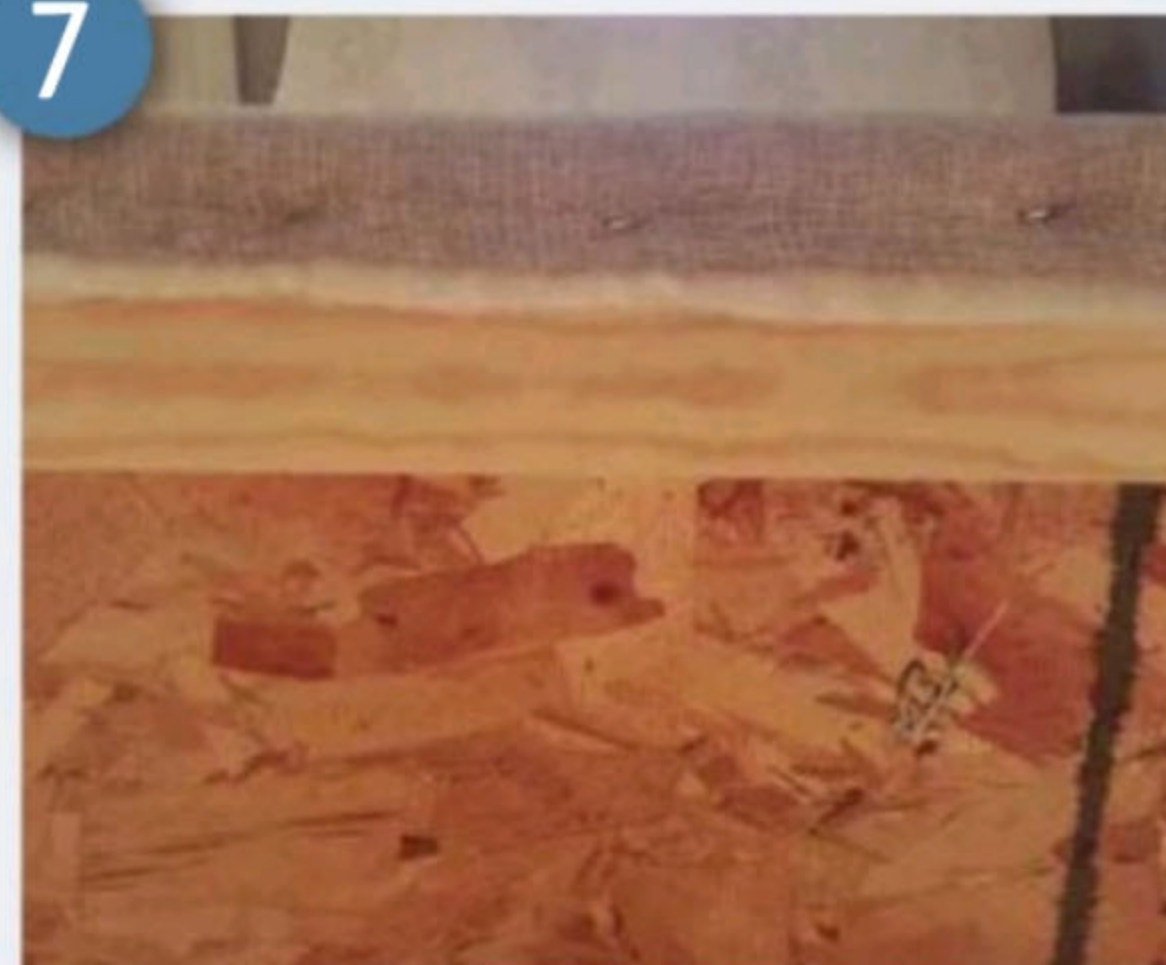
The next step is to staple the padding to the headboard

6



Next attach the fabric in the same manner as the padding

7



Staple the fabric to the back

8



Close-up of the corner

9



I purchased a button making kit and used some of the same fabric to make some custom buttons



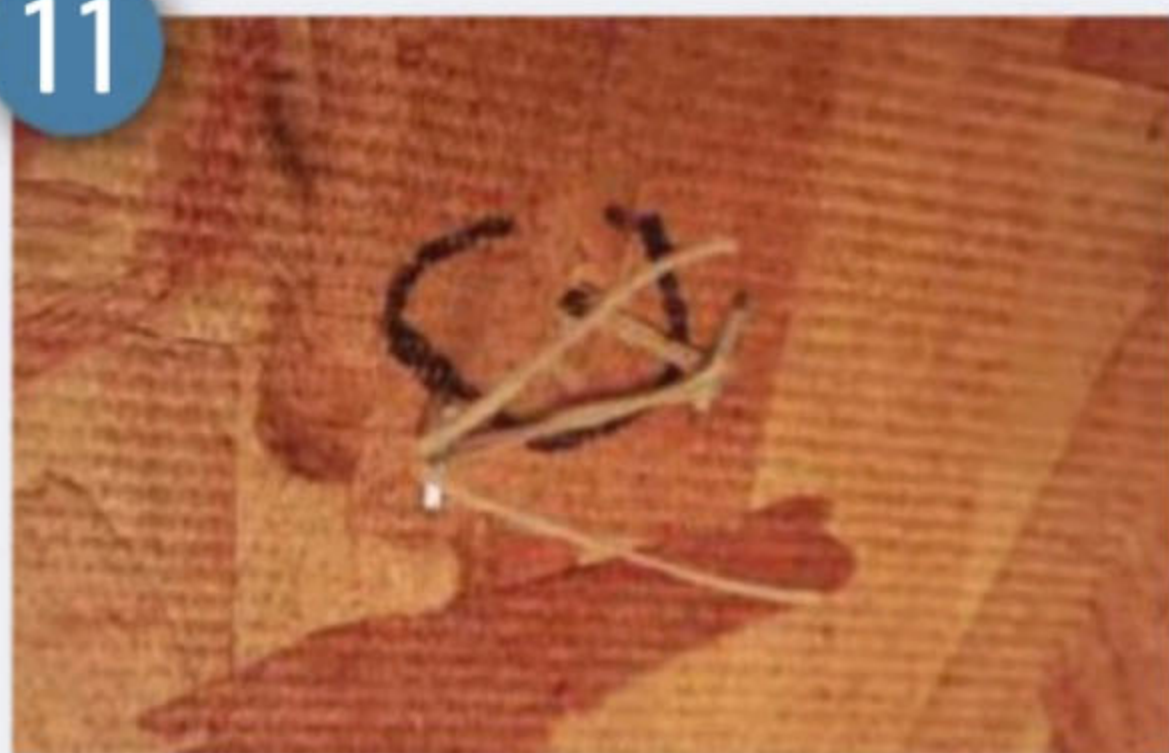
Use an upholstery needle to attach the buttons to your headboard

10



I used some waxed thread and it makes threading the needle so much easier

11



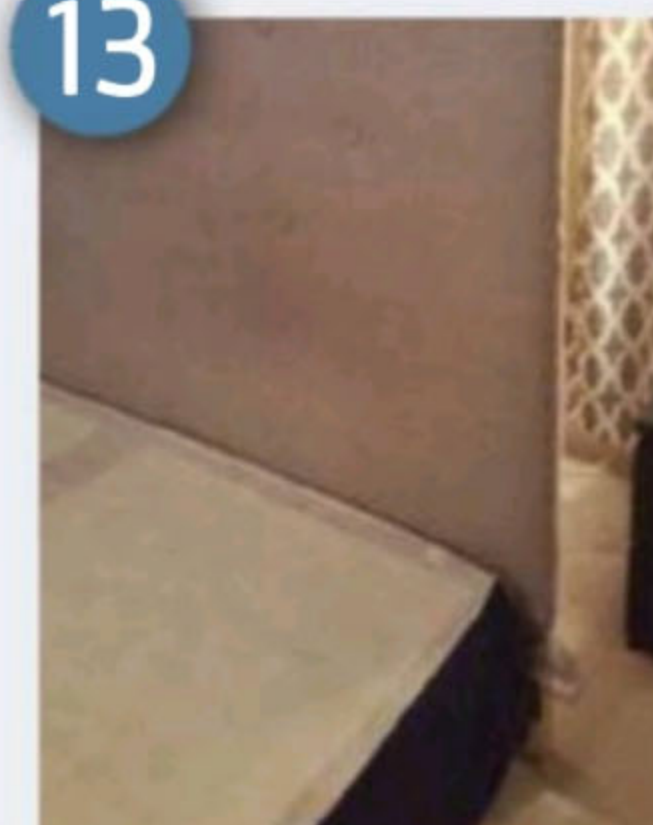
You'll notice that I used a permanent marker to locate all of the holes

12



Lastly, you need to attach your headboard to your bed frame

13



All done!



What will it cost?

How to assess the potential cost of a renovation project

The success of a home improvement project is the result of expert planning. As much as home renovation comes with costs and lots of decisions to make, it is a phenomenal way to breathe new life into any home or living environment. It will put your mark on the property and add to its value.

Whether you are planning something big or small, to take control of your home renovation budget you need a plan. One factor, amongst others, is to plan how much product is needed to complete your project on time and cost effectively.

Three important factors to consider to assess the cost of your project

- 1. Understanding the design and planning requirements:** Whether you are updating the look and feel of your bedroom with a new headboard, adding a laminated glass partition to add an extra room or space or privacy in your home, or simply just painting your wall – you have to be clear on the job and the requirements. For example, glass for interior use will be different from that used for exterior applications. It's vital to understand the application and the correct product required for the project.
- 2. Calculate material costs:** Now put together a list of materials you'll need to do the home improvement job. There are a variety of ways to calculate how much materials you'll need. One method is to use the online product calculators such as the Builders Products Calculators which has recently launched. This calculator is just one of the many online calculators that can help

you calculate your product requirements exactly. The Builders product calculators cover paint, blinds and curtains, headboards and glass cutting, including mirrors and doors.

- 3. Write a schedule of works:** It's crucial to define your home renovation process before you start the work – a project plan of what needs to be done and by when. Be clear on the steps you will need to take to renovate the property before you make a start, and prioritise work that is urgent. You might find that works in one room impact on those in another, so have a clear vision and prepare a schedule of works listing the order of jobs.

Saving on renovation costs

One of the best ways to lower your renovation costs is to tackle home projects yourself. You could cut the first part of labour costs by painting all your walls yourself, ripping out old flooring, tearing down drywall or removing cabinetry before the work requiring a skilled person starts.

Time is essential when planning for renovation. Making cohesive and functional design can be overwhelming, so taking more time, even when you have all your money ready, is crucial. You may regret the choices you make in a rush.

In closing, it is important that once you start on a project, you keep changes to a minimum to avoid extra costs. Put a budget in place against your project using the estimates from the online product calculators and keep a running tally so you can stay on track.

For more information, visit www.builders.co.za

Water features and garden fountains add charm and personality, so you can style your home outside as well as in.

WATER FEATURES FOR SMALL GARDENS

Water features in large gardens and stately homes have always been designed to impress but small garden water features are definitely worth their place. And although most suburban gardens can't hope to emulate the scope and scale of these show-stopping installations, it's eminently possible to recreate the same sense of serene, flowing wonder on a smaller scale.

Why introduce a water feature to your garden?

Water and gardens have always gone hand-in-hand. That's partly because gardens are a place to indulge your senses, boasting gorgeous and alluring sights, sounds and scents.

Water has a particular sensory value with its ability to soothe and calm, but fountains and other water features have their roots in their practical application, too. All plants need water, and some of the lushest, most attractive greenery, grows best in close proximity to a bountiful water source. Ponds and pools will also attract wildlife to create a rich landscape.

Things to consider

Planning is everything! The main issues to consider when designing your water feature concern its site and situation, but there are other things to think about, too.

- **Practicality:** Is the proposed position for your water feature within reach of power and water supplies?

- **Exposure:** Hot sun and billowing winds can reduce water levels dramatically, meaning you'll need to top up your water far more frequently. Try to avoid areas exposed to extreme heat or draughts if possible.
- **Maintenance:** How much work will you need to do over the years to maintain your water feature in good working condition? Think about how often you will need to top up the water, especially in the summer months and in the event of a hosepipe ban.
- **Safety:** Will your water feature need to be child or pet proof?
- **Material:** What will your water feature be made of? Options include stone, metal and slate and your choice will depend on how it blends with the rest of the garden.

Types of water features

Lately, it seems like outdoor living is all the rage. Especially when the weather's warm, you probably like going to cookouts and pool parties, or even just sitting on the patio to watch the sunset. You might even know someone with a pool or garden, if you don't have one yourself. If you've been considering ways to enhance your outdoor space this year, installing a small water feature might be a great way to go.

A small water feature can be many things - a fountain, waterfall, rock pond or birdbath. It can take many forms and use flowing or standing water to enhance an outdoor area.

Small water features are a sure-fire way to give your space a little something extra without necessarily spending a lot of money. Not only are they beautiful, but these additions will offer you and your guests a nice, tranquil and relaxing outdoor space.

There is a dazzling array of different water features available, suitable for every size and type of garden space. Water features for small gardens need to provide a focal point without overshadowing the rest of the garden.

Water fountains

There are many options for outdoor water fountains, so it's important to do your research to see which one will complement your space best.

Fountains come in many shapes and sizes. They can go on walls and waterfalls; they can feature decorative toppers, and can be spherical or tiered. They also come in many different types of materials such as copper, cement, brass and stainless steel. You can use fountains as an accent to your garden, yard or patio. You can even place them in an outdoor pond. Remember that bigger isn't always better in this case. Although fountains can be a great addition to your landscape, they shouldn't overpower your space.

Miniature ponds

The first decision to make when choosing a miniature pond concerns its location. Assess the weather patterns around the area to make sure that the pond won't get too much sun or shade. Ideally, the pond should get 4-6 hours of sunlight during the day to ensure that the water stays clean and clear of algae. This is also important if you want to have fish or tropical plants in your pond. Too much sun or shade is lethal to these additions, so the key is finding a good balance. Also, choose a location that won't subject the pond to runoff rainwater, where foreign debris may interrupt the pond's ecosystem.

Next, you must decide on the size of your pond. It is important that the pond is at least 60cm deep and 90cm wide, but you can expand the width according to your preference and the size of your space.

When you begin digging your pond, consider creating a shelf along the edge where you can plant your vegetation. Next, line the area with heavy-duty waterproof plastic. Then, just fill it with water. You may choose to sink large tubs or containers into the ground to house your pond. This is an easier alternative to digging a hole - just make sure you coat the inside of the container properly. You also may want to aerate your watering hole to stave off bugs.

Lilies, pickerelweed and zebra rush are a few great plant options for your pond. Do some research to find out which plants will flourish the best. If you want to add goldfish to your pond, you can get them from your local pet store.

Birdbaths

Birdbaths are an excellent way to add something extra to your space. They are also entertaining: You'll likely see robins, thrushes and other birds that prefer birdbaths over bird feeders.

You can buy generic birdbaths, but there are also many other types of baths available. Heated bird baths are great for the winter months, when the water tends to freeze. Electricity runs to the pedestal of the birdbath, which keeps the water above freezing without actually warming the water. You can also add a fountain mist to your birdbath. This will attract other birds; hummingbirds, for example, love to fly through mists of water.

Keep the birds' safety in mind. Select a birdbath that has a gradually sloping wall with a non-slippery surface. Also, make sure that the water is no deeper than 75mm to keep smaller birds from drowning. If needed, you can put rocks in the bottom of the bath to make the water shallower and also to help the birds enter the bath with ease. Change the water every other day to keep it clean and fresh; never use chemicals.



Japanese-inspired water features have become very popular

Japanese water gardens

In keeping with the Buddhist tradition, Japanese water gardens create peaceful and tranquil locations to collect your thoughts and reflect. If you want a peaceful atmosphere, then make sure your Japanese water garden is quiet. Avoid loud, rushing water and areas with noisy surroundings. The water should be soothing to the ear as it runs; it can even stand still if you like.

Don't forget to accent your garden with plants and rocks. A nice combination of flora and fauna will give your garden the perfect finishing touches. Bamboo and bonsai trees are common, but you can use any plants that you wish. Rocks also add a little something extra and often serve as the foundation of the water garden itself. The key is to ensure that the plants and rocks have enough space between them, as Japanese water gardens also symbolize space.

Rock ponds/rock gardens

Rock ponds use many different sizes, shapes, and colours of rocks and boulders to accent a space. The soothing effect of the water as it runs over these rocks accentuates the beauty of the pond. You can also plant blooms designed for rough terrain around a rock garden.

You can use natural or artificial rocks, depending on your preference. Artificial rocks can be much easier to handle. They're more lightweight than natural rocks, which is helpful when you position the rocks in your pond. Natural rocks can also crack over time because of constant contact with water. Natural rocks, however, do provide a more native look and can make your garden more genuine.

You can also add plant life to your rock pond to form a rock garden designed to accentuate your space and make it look more natural. As with other gardens, you should evaluate the layout of your garden and the sun/shade patterns to see which plants will flourish in your pond. Gardenguides.com says to "set the rocks in the lowest, front part of the garden first and work upward. Shovel enough soil around each rock to anchor it firmly. You may need to bury half or more of each rock." After you've positioned the rocks, let the soil settle around them for a few days, then examine the space and tweak the layout before you add plants.

Bubbling containers

Perhaps the most compact backyard water feature is a bubbling container. You can select nearly any size pot, slip in a pump and fountain and presto – you've got the soothing sounds of bubbling water. Ideally, the decorative container you select will have a hole in the bottom, through which you can discreetly insert the pump's cord. If not, drill a hole yourself or leave the cord sticking out the back, then disguise it with greenery.

When choosing a spot for your container, it's best to set it in a nook or other area close to an outlet. If you don't do this, you'll need to use an extension cord, and extension cords can easily come unplugged. Plus, you'll have to hide more cord. If you're in a mosquito-prone area, you may wish to put two or three goldfish in the pot; they'll gobble up the larvae.

It's easy to let your imagination run wild when you're working with bubbling containers. Buy three pots of varying heights, for example, and set them in a decorative cluster. Or completely submerge your container(s) into the ground to make it appear as if water is bubbling up from an underground spring.

Water basins

Akin to both waterfalls and birdbaths, water basins are decorative bowls that catch water dripping or pouring from a nearby spout. When the basin fills, it overflows, generally onto decorative rocks that hide a reservoir buried under the ground. The water is then recirculated from the reservoir back into the spout. Basins can be made from a variety of materials, including hand-hammered copper, aluminium, stone or wood. Similarly, the spouts can be crafted from materials like bamboo, if you're going for an Asian look, or any of a variety of metals.

Water basins have their roots in Japanese garden design. Chozubachi basins, for example, are set near the garden gate with a ladle so guests can have a drink or splash some cool water on their brow in a ritual suggesting forgiveness. Tsukubai basins have no ladles and are set low so visitors have to bend to reach the water in an act of reverence, indicating you're entering a sacred portion of the garden.



If you've been considering ways to enhance your outdoor space this year, installing a small water feature might be a great way to go

Spas

If you've got some money and some space, a spa pool might be the way to go. First, you install a small pool or whirlpool, then you add a water feature at one end: a cascading waterfall fountain, for example, or some spouts that spit out water in eye-catching arches. Since this is a multi-purpose project – the pool and water features provide relaxation, but also aesthetic and audible appeal – pay heed to all facets. If you take care to select the proper pool size and shape, then randomly stick a water spout in the middle, you won't maximise your enjoyment of this investment. Instead, make sure the waterfall fountain and/or waterspouts are installed in a scenic, sheltered setting where you can easily see and hear them when you're not in the water, plus feel relaxed and surrounded by beauty when you're lazing under or near the sprays.

Waterfalls

Waterfalls come in all sizes and configurations, so you can really do almost anything here. But to help you focus a little, there are two main types of waterfalls: those with ponds below, and those without. Traditionally, waterfall-seeking homeowners have installed ponds in their yards, then topped them off with a decorative waterfall feature – often a small stream of water cascading down a jumble of rocks. These types of ponds often feature pretty plantings and even colourful fish. While beautiful, such installations can be quite pricey and require a fair amount of maintenance, which is probably why pondless waterfalls eventually emerged.

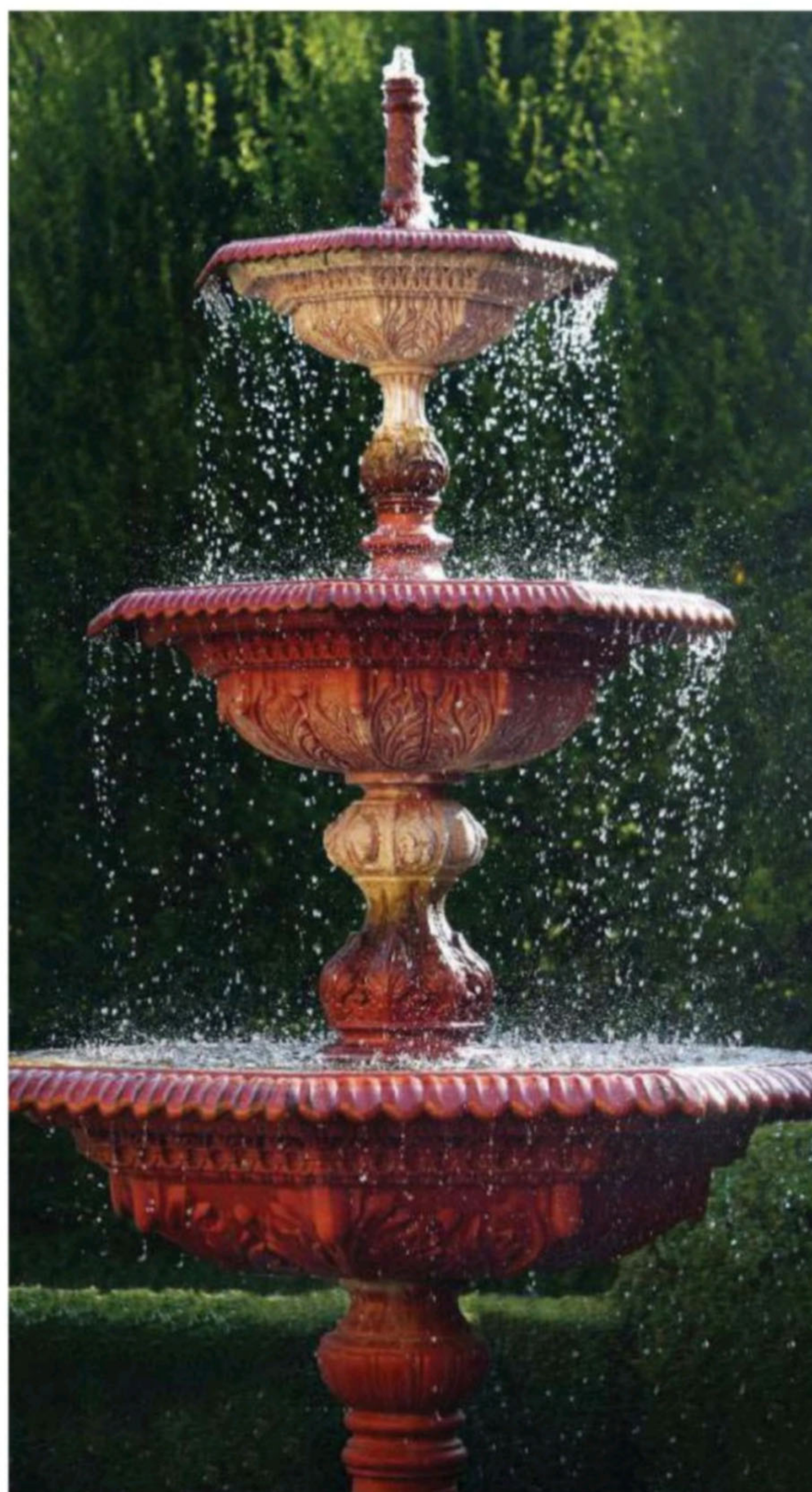
With pondless waterfalls, water cascades down something – rocks, for example, or a stone wall – and onto a bed of ornamental gravel. The gravel covers a retaining basin that catches the water and a pump that sends it back up to the top of the waterfall. These are great options for those who don't have the space or desire for a pond, yet love the look and sound of a waterfall.

Stairway water features

One of the more innovative water features you can create resides in the middle of your stairs. Part waterfall, part fountain, it involves first setting up a rather hidden waterfall or spout somewhere at the top of your stairs or in the middle of a paved walkway – for example, within a boulder sitting in a shallow basin. This basin is connected to a small reservoir at the bottom of the stairs via a channel that runs down the walkway or stairs. When operative, water from the waterfall or spout flows down the walkway, trickles down the stairs and into the basin below, then is pumped back up to the top. Such a novel water feature not only adds the soothing sounds of rushing water to your home, but is a surprising, fun element that will delight all your guests.



Water features and garden fountains add charm and personality



Classic fountains are still a trendy option

Discover how to turn wooden shot glasses.

BEGINNER TURNING PROJECT

>> Jake Drews



What you will need

- Besides some scrap wood, you may want some of the following tools: (but these are not necessarily required)
- 1 3/8" forstner bit
- Carbide turning tool
- Sanding spindles
- Mineral oil

I've always thought it would be cool to make some wooden shot glasses for camping, and now that I have a lathe, I finally could! One thing I really like about this project is that you do not need an expensive lathe chuck to make these little wooden cups. All you need is some wood, some turning tools, a lathe (obviously), and a lathe face plate (your lathe probably came with one of these).

Now let's go make some wood shot glasses!

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: To create the blank for the shot glass, we need a block of wood that is approximately 75mm long and 65mm square. I used some scrap wood I had left over from a cutting board I made last Christmas. Because the scrap wasn't thick enough, I had to cut it down on the table saw, then used a hand plane to flatten it.

Once the glue dried, I could cut out my blank. You could save a lot of time on this step by just buying some pre-made blanks from your local wood store.

(Note: These blanks might be a bit small, but they should work if you are careful).

Step 2: If you have a lathe chuck, again this step would be easy. But those are expensive, and really unnecessary for this type of project. Instead, I cut out a circle of wood that was about the same size as my faceplate that came with my lathe. I then attached the block of wood to the faceplate using screws.

Step 3: To attach the blank to the faceplate, I used a single screw through the centre of the face plate, into the centre of the blank. Generally, this would not be enough to hold the blank in place, so I use some hot glue around the edge of the blank for a little bit more staying power.

Step 4: With the faceplate now attached to my lathe, I used my carbide turning tool to face off the end of the blank. This ensures a nice flat, square surface.

Then, I used my 1 3/8" forstner bit to drill a very shallow hole into the blank. I only drilled about 1/8" deep. My goal here was simple to identify the exact centre of the piece as it relates to the drill bit, which will be important later on.

Step 5: Now that I had a nice centre mark on the blank, I used the dead centre to support the wood while I used my roughing gauge to shape the cup. I wanted to nice sweeping shape with smooth edges.

Since the bottom of the cup is essentially glued to the face plate, be sure to leave enough room to get a cut-off tool in here. I also used my small pen-sized spindle gauge to shape the bottom of the cup, since my carbide tool was too large.

Step 6: Now that the outside is all shaped the way I wanted, I then installed my forstner bit again and drill down into the cup. It is really important that the lathe is turning as slowly as it can, and that the forstner bit is super sharp.

Step 7: We all hate sanding, but it needs to be done. Spend the time now to sand up to a fairly high grit. I prefer 220.

Step 8: Very, very carefully, I then used my cut off tool to sneak in under the cup and separate it from the rest of the blank. Depending on your lathe, you will probably want to stop before cutting all the way through, and switch to a saw for the last few cuts.

You wouldn't want your new wooden shot glass to go sailing across the workshop now, would you?

There will probably be a little piece of wood sticking out from the bottom of the cup. I used little spindle sanders for my drill press to sand it off, but you could use a Dremel or a file.

Step 9: Anything that could contact food (or drink) should receive the most food safe finish you can think of. In this case, I decided on pure mineral oil (the same stuff we use on cutting boards), and some beeswax. This will give it a nice, water-resistant finish that won't hurt you if a little bit of it dissolves into your drink.

I hope you enjoyed this little project about making shot glasses on the lathe! This was a super fun project and all of the techniques used could be applied to bowls too.



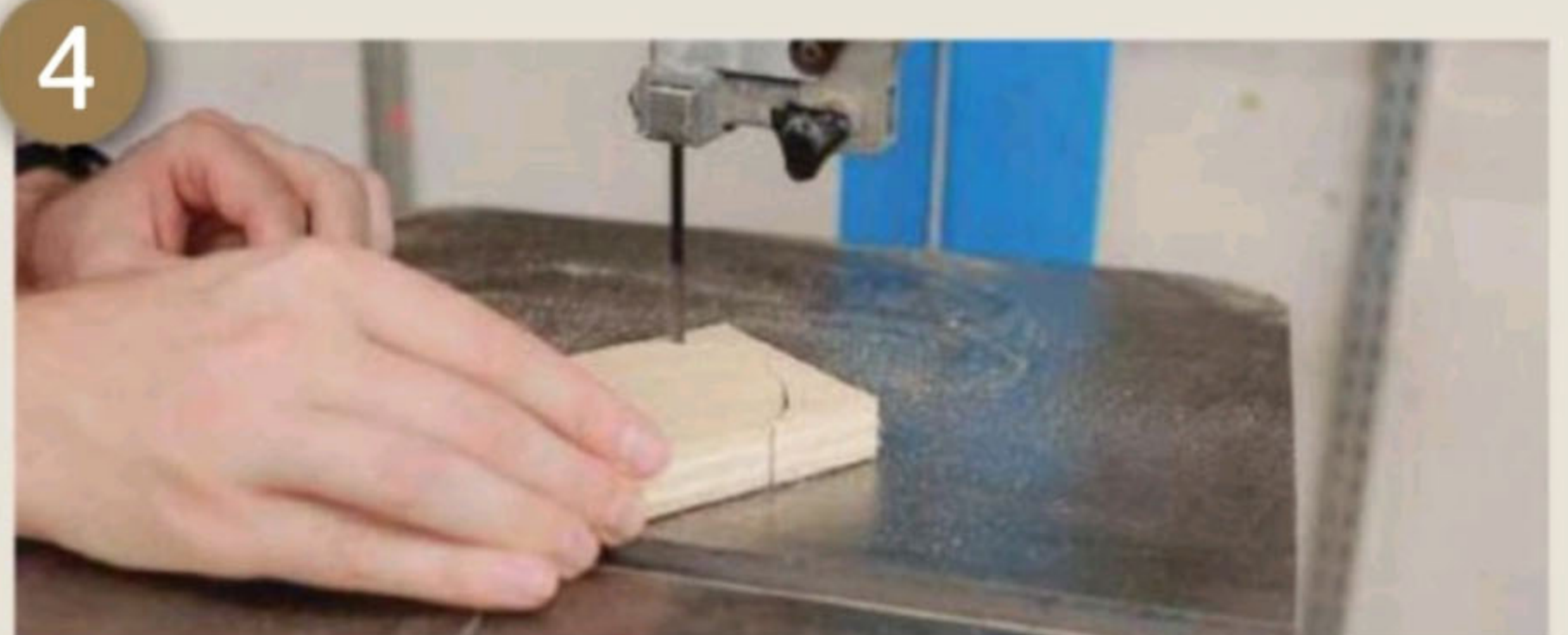
Start by creating the blank



Because the scrap wasn't thick enough, I had to cut it down on the table saw, then used a hand plane to flatten it



Once the glue has dried, cut to size (blade guard only removed for photos)

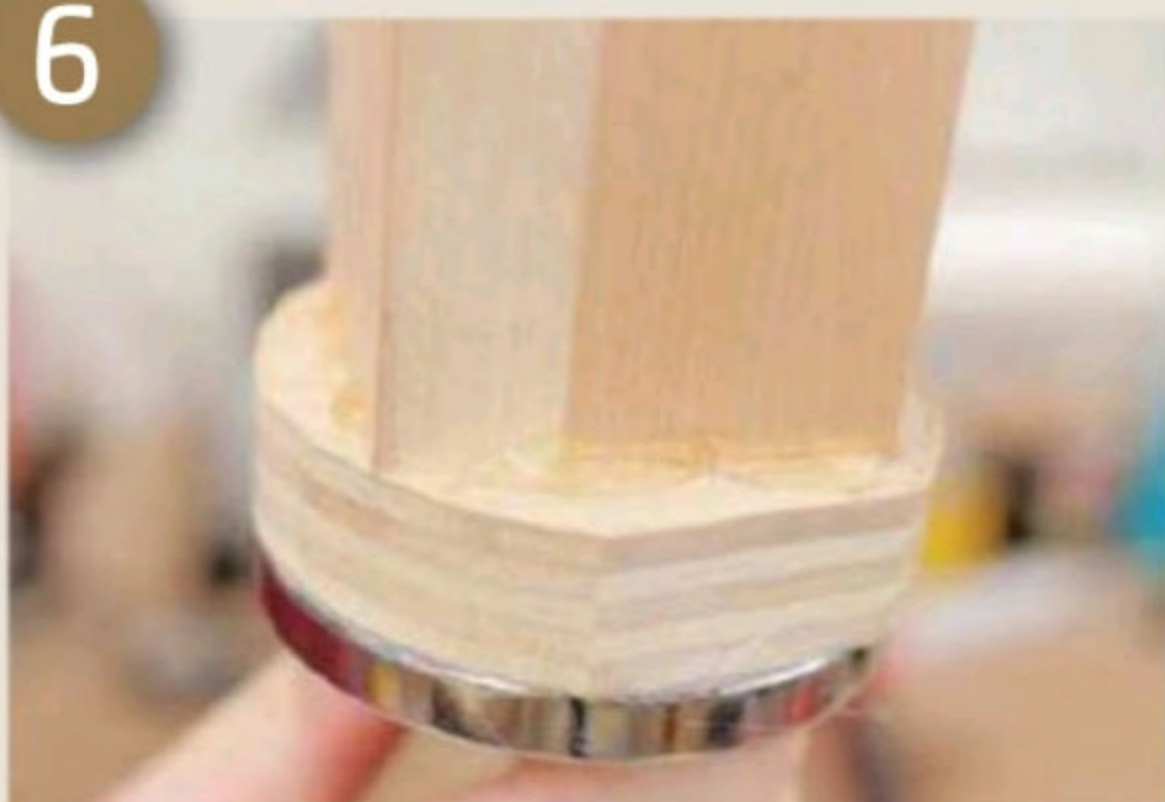


I cut out a circle of wood that was about the same size as my faceplate that came with my lathe (raised blade guard for photos)



I then attached the block of wood to the faceplate using screws

6



To attach the blank to the faceplate, I used a single screw through the centre of the face plate, into the centre of the blank

7



I used some hot glue around the edge of the blank for a little bit more staying power

8



The single screw adds extra stability

9



With the faceplate now attached to my lathe, I used my carbide turning tool to face off the end of the blank

10



Then, I used my 1 3/8" forstner bit to drill a very shallow hole into the blank

11



Now that I had a nice centre mark on the blank

12



I used the dead centre to support the wood while I used my roughing gauge to shape the cup

13



Starting to take shape

14



Since the bottom of the cup is essentially glued to the face plate, be sure to leave enough room to get a cut-off tool in here

15



I then installed my forstner bit again and drill down into the cup

16



It is really important that the lathe is turning as slowly as it can

17



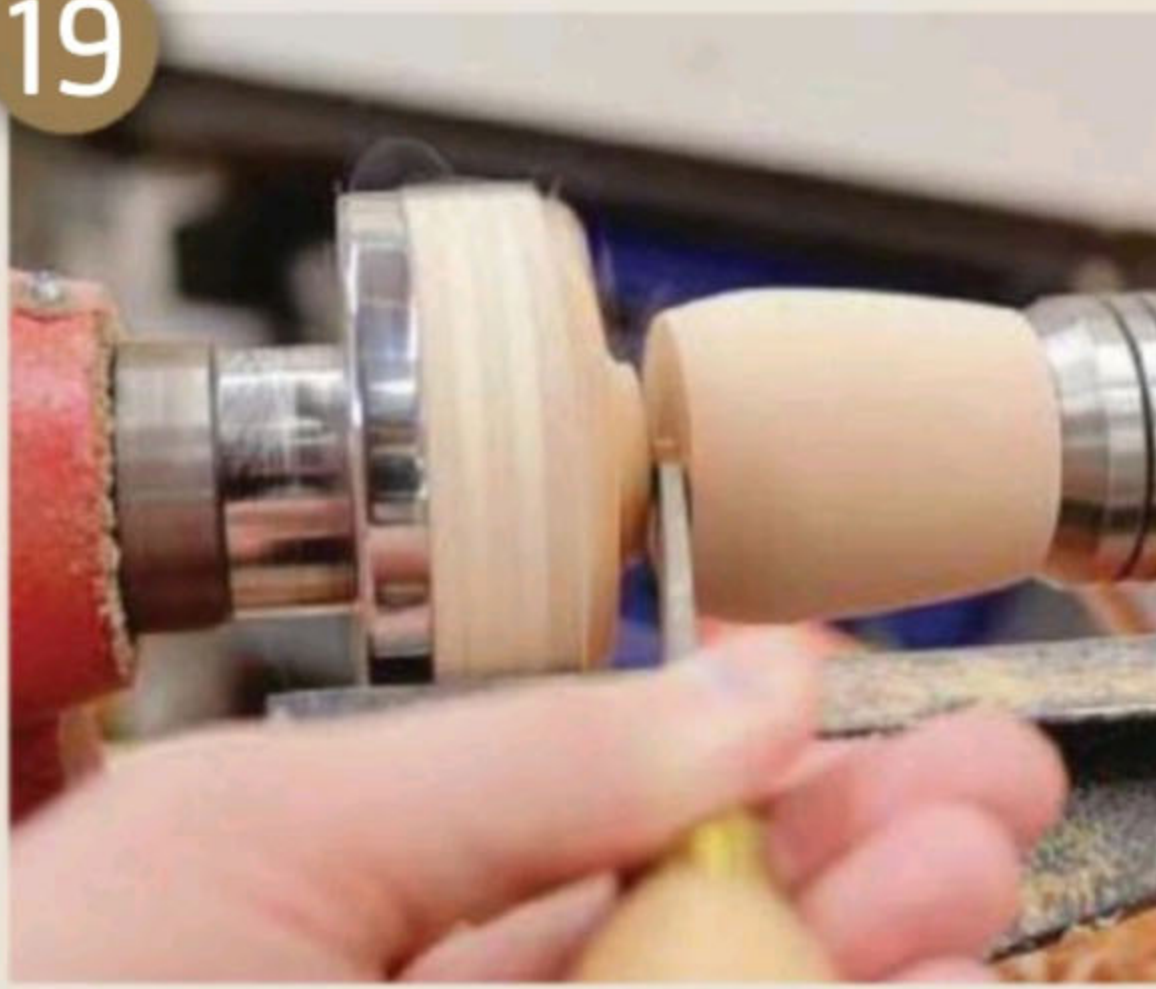
The inside hole drilled

18



Spend the time now to sand up to a fairly high grit

19



Very, very carefully, I then used my cut off tool to sneak in under the cup

20



Depending on your lathe, you will probably want to stop before cutting all the way through, and switch to a saw for the last few cuts

21



I used little spindle sanders for my drill press to sand to bottom

22



I decided on pure mineral oil as the finish

23



This gives it a nice, water-resistant finish

Intro to woodworking tools

Saws

Just about every woodworking project starts with a saw. There are many different types that are meant for different materials, jobs, and more. A handsaw does not require any power and is very portable. Electrical saws span from more portable circular saws to heavy-duty table saws.

Blades

A key distinction between saw blades is the type of cutting they are used for. Coarse teeth are usually ideal for rip cutting, which is cutting in the direction of the grain. Finer toothed saws are used for cross-cutting perpendicular to the grain.

Drills

Drills can be hand-cranked or motorised, depending on the scale of your job. If you are working on a smaller project without access to power, you may opt to use a battery-

powered drill. If your job requires more force and deeper holes to be drilled, you can invest in a drill press.

Clamps

Clamps are necessary tools for joinery and an essential tool in the workshop. They work great as an extra set of hands to hold your project in place.

Chisels

Chisels have a sharpened metal blade and a handle and are often used in tandem with a mallet or hammer, to shape and cutaway solid wooden material. Different styles of chisels are used for different applications. Paring chisels are lightweight and are never malletted, while mortise chisels are thick, heavy, and ideal for removing material from hardwood.

Planers

Planers are used to smooth and remove excess material from flat surfaces. Power planers are electrical and can

plane a large surface area quickly, while hand planers are operated by hand and focus on smaller areas at a time.

Sanders

Sanders are used to smooth the surface of the wood using sandpaper, often applied in a sequence of grits beginning with a larger grit and finishing with a finer grit. Power sanders work well for fast jobs with large surfaces, and hand sanding is best for smaller projects.





Create a beautiful bathroom

The top tips and trends for a beautiful bathroom

Bathrooms are a quintessential example of a space that, with intuitive and considered design, have the potential to be functional, beautiful and significant in reducing our anxiety. By designing a soothing environment, we can create an oasis for us to retreat to, relax in and revitalise our souls after a long day.

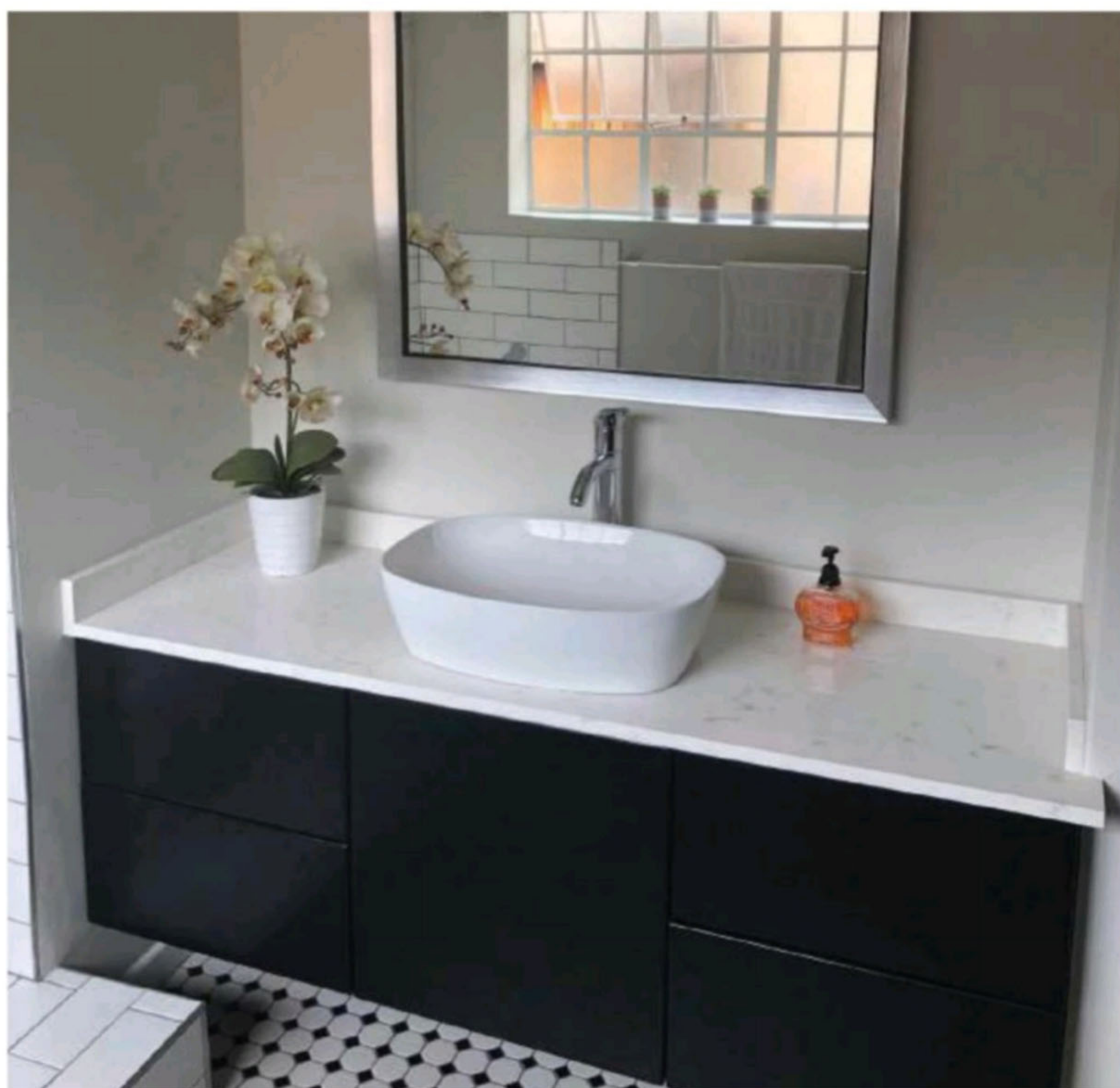
Bathrooms are a particularly important source of value in any home and a fabulous bathroom can add commercial value to the property. As an investment, it is important to remember to stick to what the owner prefers and not just what the market wants or what the trends are at that point. Contrary to what many believe, buyers of new properties are more likely to buy the unique experience of how a space feels over spaces that are devoid of personality, so infusing the space with personal style will allow all to enjoy it while one has use of it and can help the property to sell eventually.

2021 brought a design revolution in what we want from our spaces as we all spent more time in our homes. Overall people have a greater desire to be more connected to nature, to warm up their spaces with earthy tones and soft textures and to add pops of energising colour.

Europe is experiencing a movement away from white sanitaryware in bathrooms in favour of vibrant colours that create an energising atmosphere. However, in South Africa, we tend to be more conservative in the finishes we select. This is perhaps due to the costs involved in redoing a bathroom



In South Africa, we tend to be more conservative in the finishes we select



Storage is essential in keeping an uncluttered space for the myriad of practical items used in a bathroom

Plants work so well in bathroom spaces and the naturally occurring ambient humidity from the steam of a shower is perfect for a wide array of tropical and sub-tropical plants.

bathroom and explains why traditionally bathrooms have been kept very classic and monochromatic. Due to our more conservative nature, the trend towards coloured sanitaryware may not be observed as broadly here unless it's in a fun area like a kid's bathroom.

Although more people are becoming bolder in their use of darker moodier shades, we expect that 2022 will stick to a more classic take on European boldness and tones of serene blue and green will appear in tiles, patterned wallpaper and paint. Metallics are also set to shine and warm bronze and gold metallic stylings dominate the catalogues.

Here are six tips to create a beautiful soothing bathroom space:

Consider storage

Storage is essential in keeping an uncluttered space for the myriad of practical items like lotions, beauty products, soaps and shampoos you may have. Begin by identifying everything that the shower needs to store, and then implement the ideal sized in-shower storage and avoid annoying bottles falling all over the place. Having a linen cupboard to store dry items like toilet paper and towels, as well as the normal vanity storage, is always a bonus if one can find a nook for it.

Bring nature in...

Plants work so well in bathroom spaces and the naturally occurring ambient humidity from the steam of a shower is perfect for a wide array of tropical and sub-tropical plants including orchids,

peace lilies, ferns and even air plants. They add a wonderful connection to nature, soften materials like marble or tile and add a gentle aspect of colour.

Use soft textures

Soft textures underfoot protect feet from surprisingly cold tiles and add a touch of luxury. Every bathroom needs a bathmat but depending on the size of the bathroom, don't be afraid to use more than one, or explore different shapes like a round carpet in the middle of a bathroom.

Accessorise

Many people under-style their bathrooms, leaving them with a stark or incomplete feel. Simple elements like small decorative shelves for face cloths, diffusers and plants can make the world of difference. Decanting oils and salts into pretty bottles can make a

unique feature, add a spa-like element, and be arranged around a bath area to be both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Mix and match

A combination of tiles in a bathroom creates a wonderful pattern even if they are all in one colour, and by using different shapes can create subtle interest. It is also a great way to create a feature area or wall with a smaller budget – one can combine cost-effective and expensive tiles to give a sense of elegance without the expense.

Think about seating

Having either a built-in shower seat, an ottoman or even a little bench to rest a towel on is always a nice touch and adds an element of luxury to a bathroom, even in a much smaller space.

Upcycle an old clock with pallet blocks.

TIME TO UPCYCLE

some epoxy to glue the movement mechanism in place, and when the epoxy was dry enough, I glued the cover back with wood glue.

With the centre piece done it was time to prepare the other blocks for final assembly. For that, I needed to remove part of the wood from the back side of each block. In this way I would get some space to attach the fixing board. To make it safe and easy, I made a simple jig. The corner blocks were cut at 45 degrees angle, while for the side pieces, I cut the sides and used a chisel to remove the cut wood.

From 12mm plywood I prepared the back board to attach all the wood blocks. The first to be glued was the centre piece, and after that I attached all others. I wanted there to be a 7mm gap between the blocks, so I used 7mm spacers.

The final assembly process was quite simple; I used spacers and clamps to fix the blocks in their preferred place, the pre-drilled and screwed them in place. The final step was to put some finish on. I used a transparent finish using beeswax oil. I really like how it brings out all the wood textures, all dark spots, splits and marks which were created by nature.

>> Steph Grant



Materials:

- Old clock or clock movement mechanism
- Pallet wood blocks
- Wood glue
- Wood screws
- Wood finish



Tools:

- Circular saw
- Clamps
- Drill and bits
- Jig saw

I had an old ugly looking, scratched all around wall clock. It was functioning fine, but the way it looked wasn't acceptable for me anymore. So I decided to take out the movement mechanism and make my own design by using some pallet wood blocks.

I measured and cut the pallet wood blocks in half to get the proper block height for my clock. Next I measured the movement mechanism shaft length and cut the same thickness piece of block off the clock centre. Next, I marked and cut out a hole where movement mechanism would be hidden.

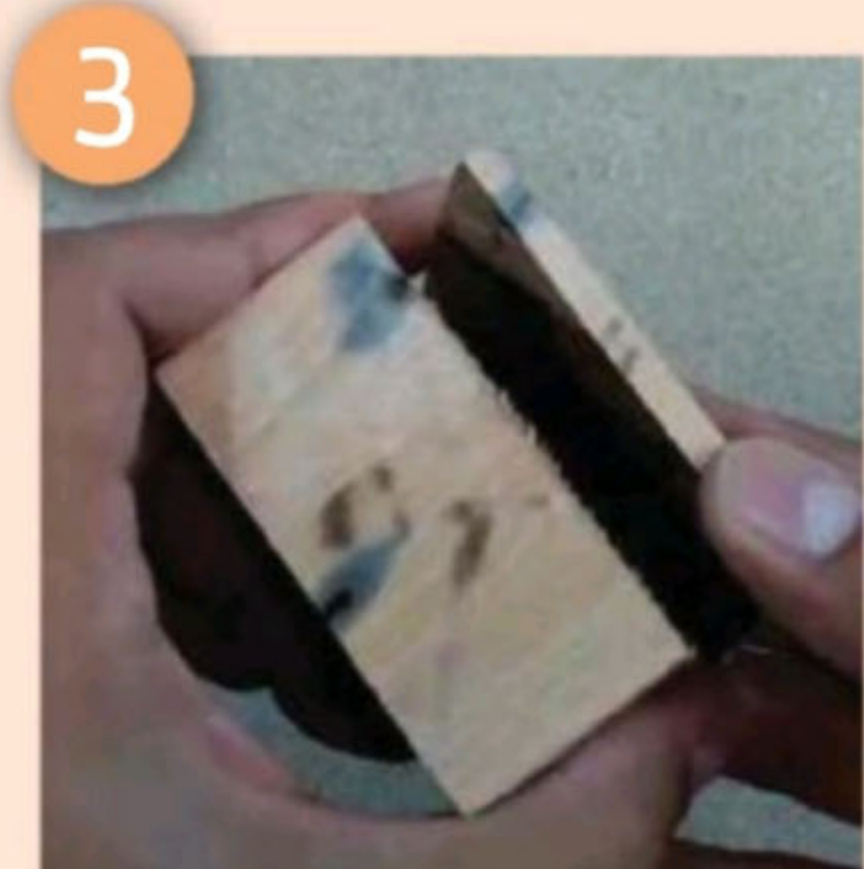
I found a centre point, and made a hole for the clock shaft. Then I mixed



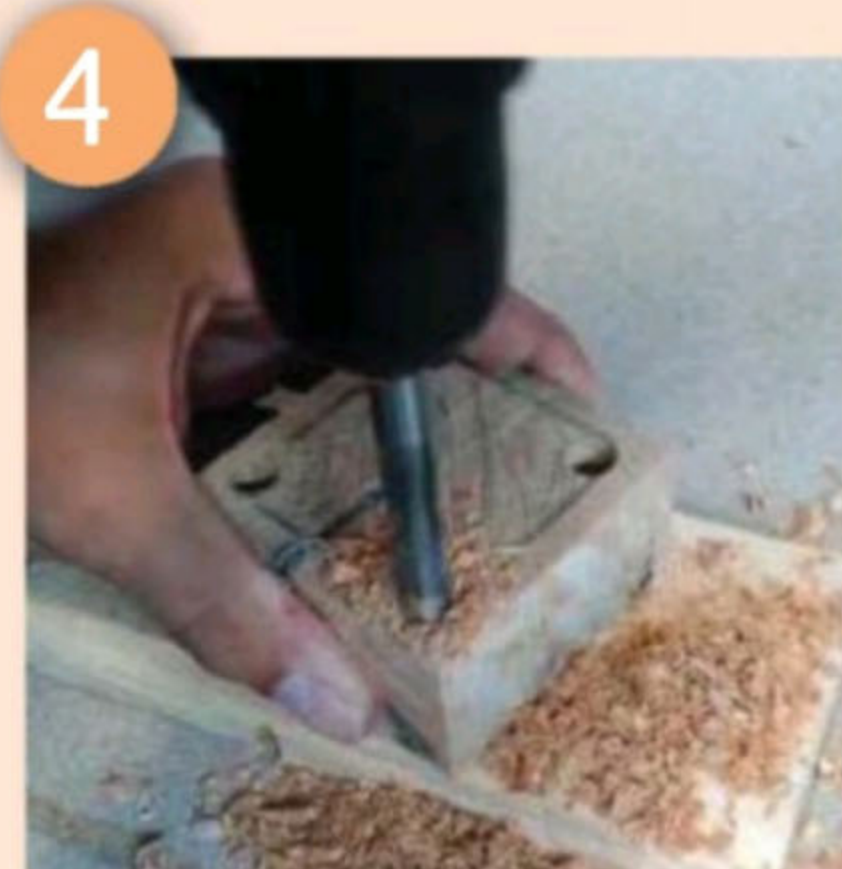
The old clock before removing the mechanism



Cut your blocks to size



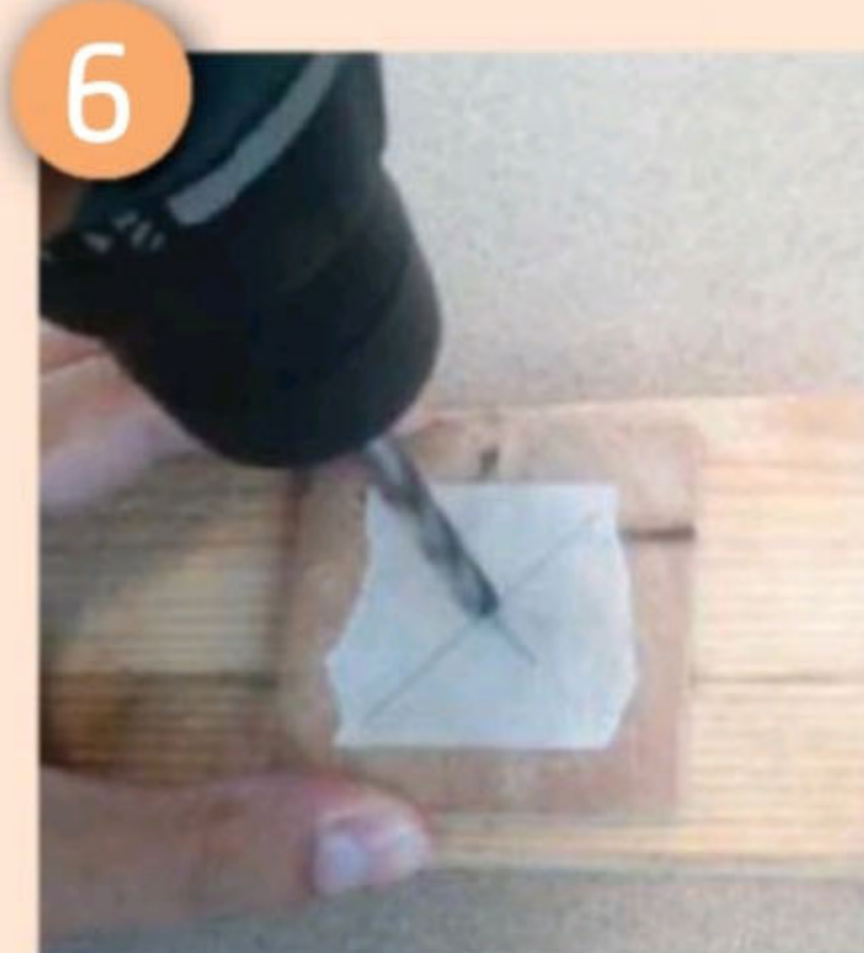
Measure the depth of the mechanism and remove from the centre block



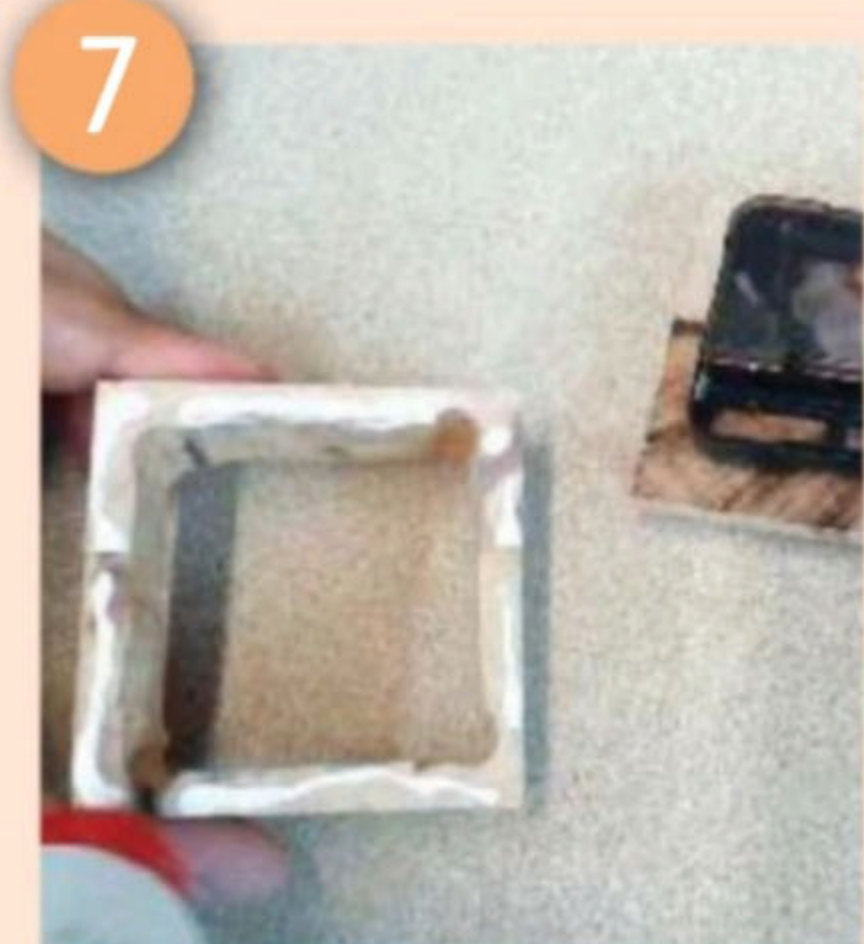
Mark and cut out a hole where movement mechanism will be hidden



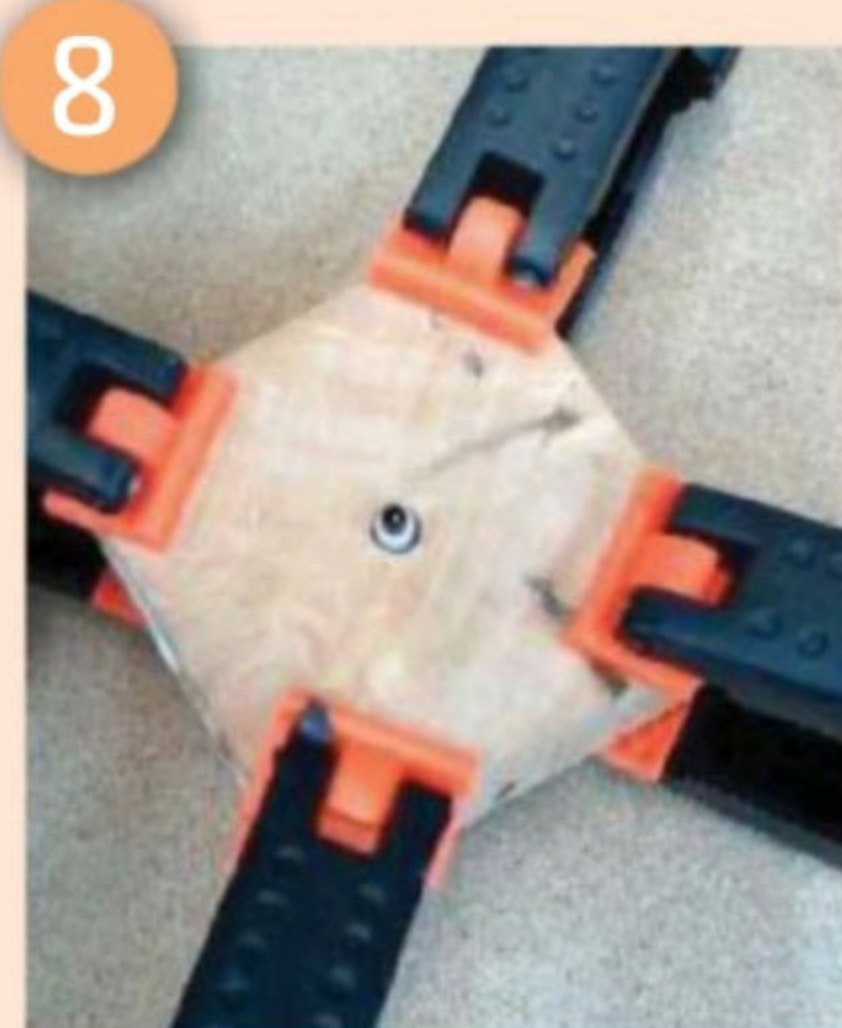
Middle block done



I found a centre point, and made a hole for the clock shaft



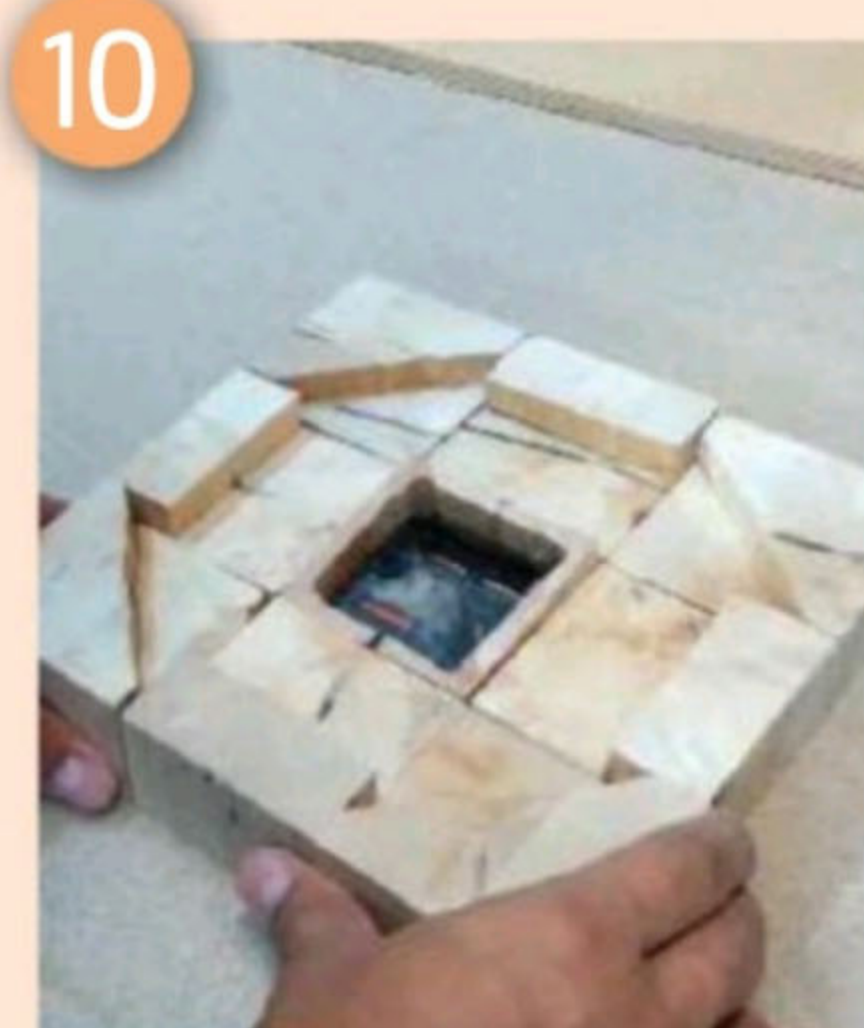
Mix some epoxy to glue the movement mechanism in place



Clamp and let dry



Using the jig to help cut the blocks



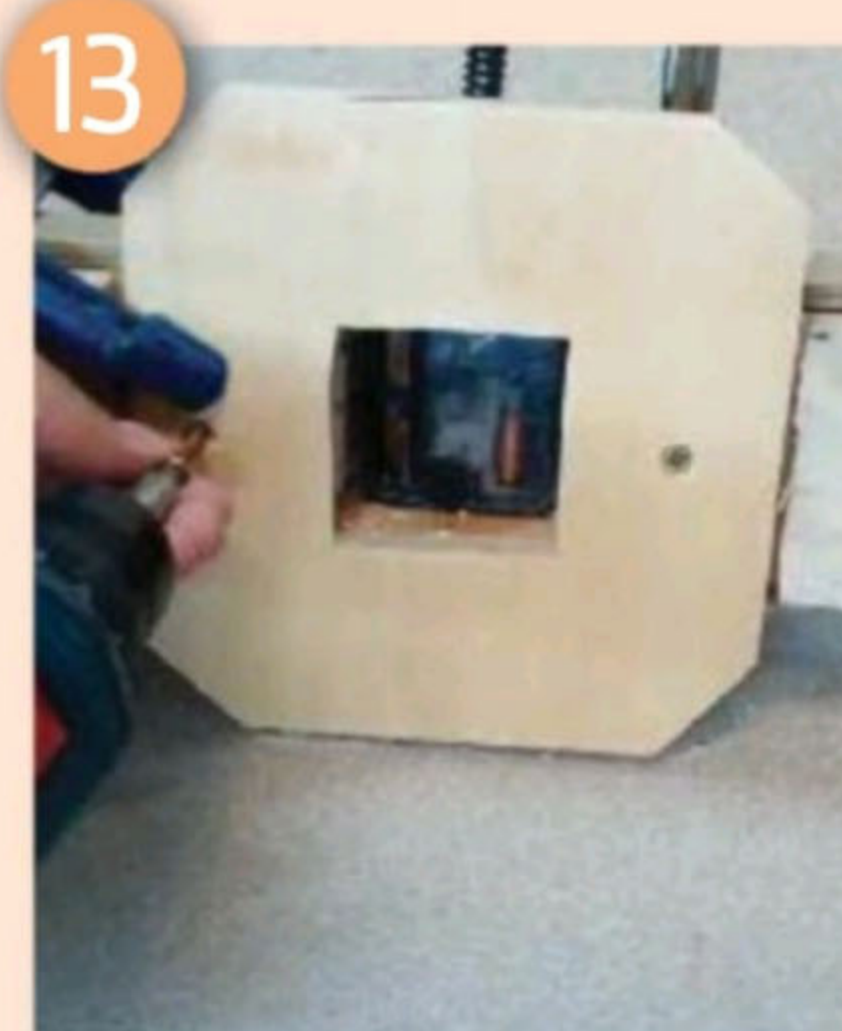
The blocks all cut



From 12mm plywood I prepared the back board



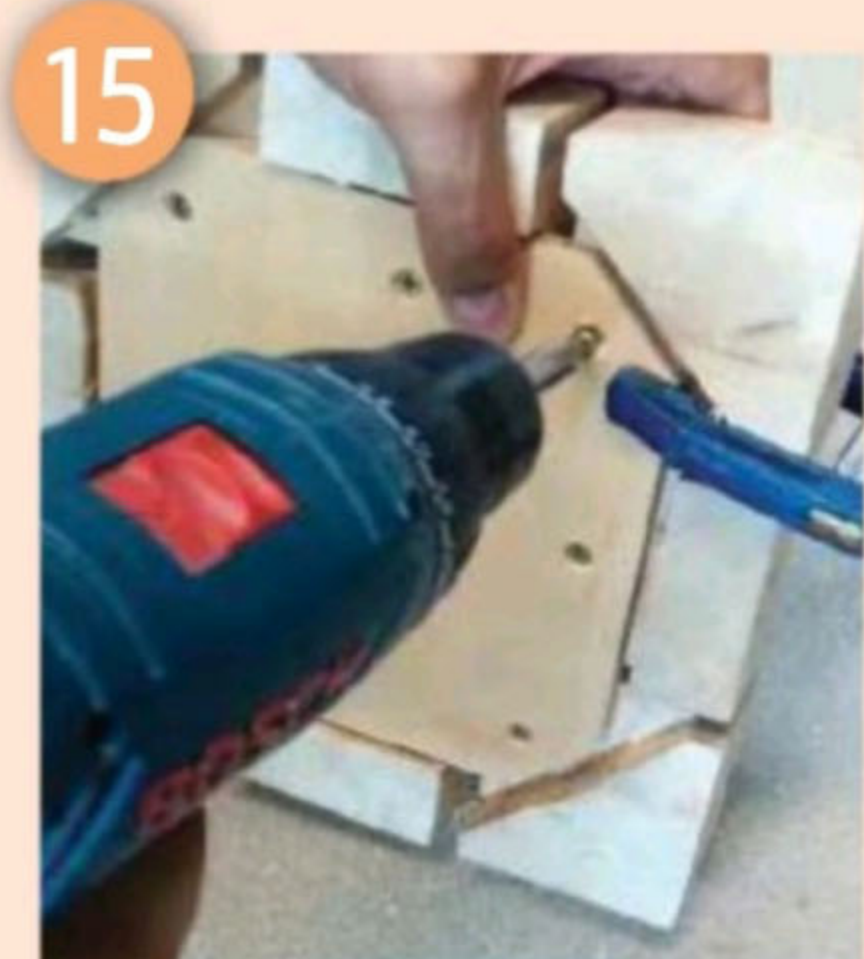
Glue the centre block to the back board



Attaching the rest of the blocks



I wanted there to be a 7mm gap between the blocks, so I used 7mm spacers



The blocks are then screwed into place



Almost there!



Finally apply the finish



Shelving is your best option for utilising your space to maximum capacity.

SHELVING – THE DIFFERENT TYPES

Shelving is always useful around any home for added storage space, whether it's a shelf in the bathroom, kitchen, garage or workshop. There are various options of shelving to suit different uses, wall construction with various types of shelf material.

When considering which type of shelf mounting to use and the type of shelf material, what will be placed on them and the look of the shelving may need to be considered. What you place on the shelves will influence how strong they need to be, this will have an effect upon the material used for the shelving itself, the distance between supports and the method of supporting the shelving.

The shelving styles discussed in this article are:

- Built-in shelving – a useful way to use an alcove (often found both sides of a chimney breast). The actual alcove effectively provide two vertical ends and supports for the shelves are fixed to the sides of the alcove.
- Fixed brackets – probably the most common arrangement – brackets are fixed to the vertical wall and the shelving is placed across them.
- Adjustable shelving systems – custom made for the job, these usually use vertical rails with adjustable height brackets to

achieve different shelf spacings – these are useful but may be costly.

The method chosen to secure the shelving to the wall, will be influenced by the type of wall in question; walls may be masonry covered in plaster, masonry dry lined with plasterboard or plasterboard or lathe and plaster studding. Each type of wall will require a different approach to fixing the shelving, these are explained on our page for how to make strong fixings.

Shelving faults

It is a good idea to consider the faults commonly associated with shelving, this will give you an idea of what not to do. No matter which style of shelving is used, their failures tend to be because of one of the followings:

- The fixings pull out of the wall – this may be the result of:
 - The screws being too short.
 - The wrong type of wall plugs being used or the correct type not being used correctly. As mentioned previously, see our page on how to make strong fixings to different types of wall.
- The brackets bending – the brackets need to be strong enough to support the weight being put on the shelf.



Adjustable shelving systems usually use vertical rails with adjustable height brackets to achieve different shelf spacings

- The shelf 'sagging' – for a given type/thickness of shelving material, this is usually the result of the supports being too widely spaced: or looked at another way, the wrong type/thickness of shelf material being used for the spacings of the support.
- Shelving material breaking (usually follows severe sagging) – the causes are the same as for the shelf sagging (above), just gone to the extreme.

Individual brackets

Using a number of individual brackets fixed to a vertical surface (i.e., wall) with the shelf material laid across the top of them is probably the most widely form of shelving used.

There is a wide range of shapes and sizes of individual shelf brackets available – something will suit any requirements. Brackets range from the simple, plain brackets to highly decorative ones with a huge variety in between. There are also a wide range of sizes, colours and finishes.

The lengths of the two arms which make up the 'L' shape of brackets tend to be of different lengths. The longer arm normally fits against the wall, while the shelf material is laid across the shorter arm which projects from the wall – this reduces the lever effect which the bracket has on the wall fixings. The width of the shelf material used should only project slightly further forward from the wall than the shorter arm of the bracket itself.

Brackets can be fixed directly onto the face of masonry and masonry/plaster walls just using the appropriate wall plugs and screws. Alternatively, a wooden batten can first be fixed vertical to the wall at each bracket position and then the brackets screwed to the battens.

Built-in shelving

Using an existing alcove where the shelf supports can be

fixed at the sides is one of the easiest/quickest ways to put up shelving and often uses a space which would otherwise be wasted.

Although the length of the shelving is effectively determined by the size of alcove, these types of shelves can be quite flexible:

- They can be arranged to provide shelving with different heights and depths, the shelves don't all need to be the same.
- The height of the lowest shelf can be arranged to leave space underneath for a piece of furniture standing on the floor.

Adjustable shelving systems

Adjustable shelving systems are readily available – to put them up, just fix the vertical rails to a wall and then slot in the brackets to support the shelves. The systems generally consists of two main parts:

- The vertical rails which are secured to the wall.
- The shelf brackets which just slot or clip into the vertical rails and support the shelving material.

Note that the parts from different manufacturers or systems are not usually interchangeable – so problems may be encountered if the system needs to be extended in the future and the original range/manufacturer cannot be identified or located.

The rails and brackets are usually made from either aluminium or steel and come in various sizes – the rails to suit the height, and the brackets to suit the width of shelving used.

These manufactured systems are a simple method of shelving that is easy and quick to fix in place and which provide robust, neat and easy to adjust shelving – but at a price.



Built-in shelving is a useful way to use an alcove



Most people don't immediately think of the sink and tap when they remodel the bathroom, and when they do, it is often the last thing they consider.

Sinks and taps in the bathroom: GETTING THE BATHROOM YOU WANT

Usually, the rough plumbing goes behind the wall of a bathroom remodel, and this is typically done at the start of the renovation. However, a bathroom renovation contractor will have to know what type of sink and tap you want before the rough plumbing is installed.

With so many options to choose from, it can be overwhelming to choose a tap and sink, but there are some tips that can help you narrow down your choices:

Bring some ideas and your budget when meeting with the contractor

To start the process of choosing the sink and tap, consider taking some ideas along with you when you meet your contractor for the first time (if you are not doing the job yourself). If possible, bring photos or pictures from magazines to show what you like, or even what you hate. This will give the design team an idea of what your preferred style is, and it will make it easier for them to recommend products. You should also talk about your budget when you meet with the contractor for the first time, as plumbing fixtures run the gamut when it comes to price. It is possible to have a beautiful bathroom at any budget, you just must make sure the contractor knows

exactly what that budget is before they start planning and recommending elements for the bathroom, including the sink and tap.

Some options for bathroom sinks

There are a number of styles to choose from when it comes to a bathroom sink. A drop-in sink, for instance, is an economical choice, but there is a challenge when it comes to cleaning the area where the sink meets the countertop. An under-mount sink is another option, and they are available for a number of budgets. Since these are installed under the countertop, they are much easier to care for than a drop-in sink.

Another option is a vessel sink. These are quite trendy, but they do have more expense associated with them. However, many will choose to spend a bit more on these sinks as they add a unique design element to the bathroom. The integral sink, which is when the sink and countertop are a single piece, might be an ideal choice for some homeowners, and if you have a small bathroom, you might consider a pedestal sink.

When it comes to materials, vitreous china is extremely popular, as it is easy to maintain, affordable, and it works



Sinks come in a variety of materials these days, including bronze

well when it comes to matching most decors. Metal is another option, and some of the most popular materials include copper, stainless steel and brass. Metal sinks look best in contemporary bathrooms, or those with a rustic design. However, these sinks often are more expensive and require more maintenance. Glass is a popular high-end option for a bathroom sink, and marble is popular to bring an elegant and luxurious look to the bathroom.

The bathroom tap

Now that you know more about your options for sinks in the bathroom, it is now time to think about the tap. Most people are surprised to know that your choice of tap can be more expensive than the sink, and can take a big piece out of your budget. Many people see the tap as a focal point of their bathroom, and in some cases, like a piece of art.

One option you have when choosing a tap is a wide-spread tap. This has a spout with both hot and cold handles. They have drillings from 15 to 50cm, and they require three holes in the sink. There are also mini versions, which require a 10cm centre. A two-handle centre set tap is another option, and the spout and handles are both combined on one base. Each valve needs its own hole in the countertop or sink. A single set tap is usually centre set, but it has a spout and single handle in one piece. A wall-mounted tap is a final popular option, and in this case, the tap matches well with both freestanding and over-the-counter sinks, but they require a wall-mount valve and a drain. This tap makes it easy to clean your sink because you won't have to fight with the tap to clean the backsplash.

Tap finishes

Choosing a finish is the final choice when it comes to the tap, and it generally depends on the style of the bathroom. For more traditional bathrooms, for example, oil-rubbed bronze is a good choice, but polished nickel is nice for contemporary decor. Chrome and satin nickel are also popular, but chrome can be more expensive than the other options.

To really find out which options are best for your bathroom, it is best for you to visit a showroom and see the items in person. Take the suggestions from the experts, stick to your budget, and you will be shocked by how beautiful your bathroom can look.



A close-up of a new tap for a bathroom sink

How to replace a basin tap

Fresh fixtures can mean the difference between a dream and a drab bathroom. We show you how to change a bathroom basin tap in five easy steps.

Beautiful taps and basin wastes are important assets to a good-looking bathroom; chrome reflects light and draws the eye to your important features, while the bright, clean look of new fixtures gives your bathroom a hygienic, fresh appearance. So, when your basin taps start to dull and scratch, your once beautiful bathroom is reduced to looking grimy and worn-out.

In this handy step-by-step guide we will teach you how to quickly replace an old basin tap with a nice new one, and once again restore your bathroom to its former glory. This is a beginner difficulty job, you will need some confidence in your ability, a couple of free hours, and some good-old-fashioned elbow grease!

When examining beneath your sink, you will also notice a large, plastic pipe. This is your waste, and it is connected to your plug hole. The other two small, copper pipes are your hot and cold water pipes. On the underside of the basin itself, the tap is screwed into the basin; you should be able to see the bottom of the screws, and the nuts that lock them in place. (NB: in between the nut and the basin, there may be one or two washers. These are the barriers between your sink and your tap, they help protect your ceramic and seal your everything together.

Note: You may need a compression fitting – this is a part that connects your water pipe to the flexible tap tail, although you may have one fitted on your old pipes, not all pipes are the same size, so make sure to check if you need a new size.

Step 1: Turn off your water

First, you need to turn off the water supply for both hot and cold taps from the mains supply. Then, run the hot and cold taps in your house a short while to drain any excess water

and ensure the mains is definitely switched off. Make sure all your taps remain 'open'.

Step 2: Remove your old tap

Get under your basin and unscrew the nut that locks the basin to your old tap. This can be awkward and fiddly, but once it is loose it should come off easier. Once this is removed, lift the old tap away from the basin and remove your old tap from your domestic pipe work.

Step 3: Install your new tap

Connect the threaded post to your tap, then feed into the basin hole, so your tap sits on top of your basin, with the thread poking out below. Again, there may be a washer included or needed to make sure the tap sits snugly. Screw the nut tightly onto the threaded post, your tap is now gripped on to your basin.

Step 4: Connect your plumbing

Screw the flexible connectors into your tap, then, connect them to the copper domestic pipes, with a compression fitting in between – this keeps the pressure between the two pipes regulated and safe.

Your tap should now be gripped onto your basin, and the hot and cold pipes should feed directly from your wall to your new pipes. Do a last check to make sure that there are no loose or leaky connections.

Step 5: Switch your water supply back on

Turn your water supply on from the mains. Any air that has backed up into the taps or pipes will be forced through, followed by the water. If your new tap is set to 'closed' when the air rushes through, it could potentially damage the tap, so we recommend all taps be set to 'open' for the moment the water supply is switched back on. Remember the other taps in your property may still be set to open, so remember to switch them off once water comes through again.



Replacing a tap is a job most DIY'ers can accomplish

BRIGHT IDEAS

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



Making small fastener organisers

I am constantly looking for ways to recycle plastic containers into something useful for my shop. Here's a handy one: I turn those clear plastic breath mint containers into small holders for storing tiny screws, nuts or bolts. They let me see, at a glance, what the contents are, and I can shake out one or two at a time for use. It takes very little drawer space to store lots of different sized fasteners neatly and

conveniently in these little containers.

Terry Parris, by email



Lights, camera, action

I like the idea of having lights on electric hand tools but don't feel like trading mine in for the newer models. Instead, I put self-adhesive Velcro pads on the various tools and on a miniature pen light. Now I can move the light around (or remove it) according to the job. It works fine on circular saws, drills, routers or whatever.

Will Kinsey, Midrand

Storing glue in the shop

The solution I use for glue storage is simple. First, after every use, I clean the cap or whatever method of closing the bottle the manufacturer used with a clean damp rag. Then I store my glue bottles upside down. The liquid glue at the 'top' of the bottle seems to seal the rest of the bottle. This seems to greatly slow down the moisture loss from the glue.

Larry Donald, Western Cape



A pair of quick clean-up tips

To remove pencil marks from unfinished wood, rub the mark along the grain with a clean rag or paper towel moistened with denatured alcohol (do not use on latex based painted surfaces, it will remove the paint). The alcohol will dry quickly and not leave an oily residue.

Secondly, to remove glue left by a price sticker or other stickers, spray WD-40 on a clean rag or paper towel, rub the glue off, clean the WD-40 residue with a rag or paper towel moistened with denatured alcohol, the alcohol will dry quickly and leave a clean surface.

Ken Poimboeuf, by email

Surgical glove improves grip strength

I often find wooden clamp handles too smooth to grip tightly when applying clamping pressure to a glue-up. Here's a simple trick that gives me some extra purchase on the handle: I put on a disposable surgical glove. Its rubbery surface instantly improves my grip so I can give the handle the extra twist it needs.

Charles Mackenzie, by email



WIN!

Tork Craft 3 Piece Multi-Tool Set

Includes a 63mm Folding Knife with 3Cr13 Blade, aluminium handle a blade push release mechanism; Multi-tool made from 2Cr13 material, included is a long nose plier, standard plier, side cutter, file, Phillips screwdriver, small slotted screwdriver, knife, saw, awl, medium slotted screwdriver, large slotted screwdriver a can opener; and an aluminium flashlight with three batteries included, tail push button to switch on/off.

Send your bright ideas to:

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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).

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Congratulations to Terry Parris who wins a Tork Craft 3 Piece Multi-Tool Set.



HOW TO MARBLE WITH NAIL POLISH



Materials

- New bottles of nail polish (some nail polishes gave us better marbling effects than others)
- Room temperature water in a pan (that's deep enough for your item to be submerged in – we used a disposable baking pan)
- Scrap paper (to cover your work area)
- Watercolour paper (or you could try marbling other items too)
- Disposable gloves or nail polish remover
- Toothpicks
- Popsicle stick

>> Laura Gill

Recently we had an epic craft/play date with cousins which was a ton of fun! My niece recently received a bunch of nail polishes for her birthday, so I thought it would be an excellent

time to try marbling paper with nail polish.

The results were amazing and they're made just using nail polish and water! We had fun choosing colours, swirling them around, and creating these lovely, colourful works of gorgeous art. Want to see how we made them? Keep on reading!

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Cover your work area. Make sure you work in a well-ventilated room. (This was really important because the nail polish fumes were fairly strong. I developed a bit of a headache afterwards).

Step 2: Pour your room temperature water into your pan. Make sure that the water is deep enough to submerge your item. (We just used a disposable baking pan

because we were just marbling watercolour paper). Warm water also seemed to work better than cold.

Step 3: Optional: Put on disposable gloves so that the nail polish won't stain your hands. Or, you can always use nail polish remover to clean your hands later.

Step 4: Now comes the fun part. Choose nail polish colours that would go well together. Open your bottles.

Step 5: Do these next steps quickly to get the best results. Quickly pour your colours into the water starting from lighter colours to darker colours.



TOP TIP! Try a couple of drops of nail polish remover in bottles of older polish to thin it out.

We tried several different types of nail polish. Sparkly polishes just didn't work. They stayed clumped together in the water. Our new nail polishes seemed to work the best, providing vibrant colours that spread around nicely in the water. An older jar of nail polish also just remained clumped in the water. I'm not sure why we got these results, but I'm guessing that it had something to do with how old the nail polishes were and how quickly they dried. The newer bottles of non-sparkly nail polish seemed to work the best.

Take your toothpick and quickly swirl the colours around. Quickly dunk your watercolour paper into the water and pull it out.

Step 6: Use your popsicle stick to remove any excess nail polish that's floating around in your water.

Step 7: Place your DIY masterpieces and place them on scrap paper to dry. Then you'll have your very own collection of lovely marbled papers.

I was so worried that this project would turn out to be a dud, because I had previously tried marbling with nail polish and gotten horrible results. Looking back I think it's because I was

using pretty old nail polish. We used very new bottles of nail polishes and got some really vibrant results. The best part about this project is that my niece really enjoyed herself too. I don't

normally craft with older children, so I was glad that we both had fun. She ended up wanting to keep all the pieces of paper, which made me feel very happy.



Pour nail polish into a pan of water



Swirl the nail polish and dip a piece of paper in it



How one of them came out



And another one



ASK OUR EXPERTS

Our panel of experts answer your questions on DIY problems

Shining balustrades

WINNER

How do I get my stainless steel balustrades to shine again? Is there any product I can use?

Riedwhan, by email

Ed replies: Thank you for your query. The stain resistance of stainless steel stems from an extremely thin but tenacious and self-repairing film which forms on the surface. This film imparts the properties of stainless steel: stain resistance, non-tainting of food, hygiene, cleanability and the aesthetic appearance that make stainless steel the ideal choice for many household products. Further, stainless steels do not chip, flake or crack.

Stainless steel will be unaffected by the normal conditions of household use. Routine gentle cleansing will reward the owner with a product which retains its properties and appearance through many years of constant daily use.

The best method for cleaning stainless steel is quite simply soap, or a mild detergent warm water, applied with a soft cloth or synthetic sponge. Rinse in hot water and dry with a soft cloth or allow to 'drip' dry.

Occasionally, the use of a mild household cleaner, like Handy Andy,

and fine synthetic scourers, (Scotch-Brite) or a brush with nylon bristles may be used. Routine cleaning applied over several days will generally remove heavy soiling and staining.

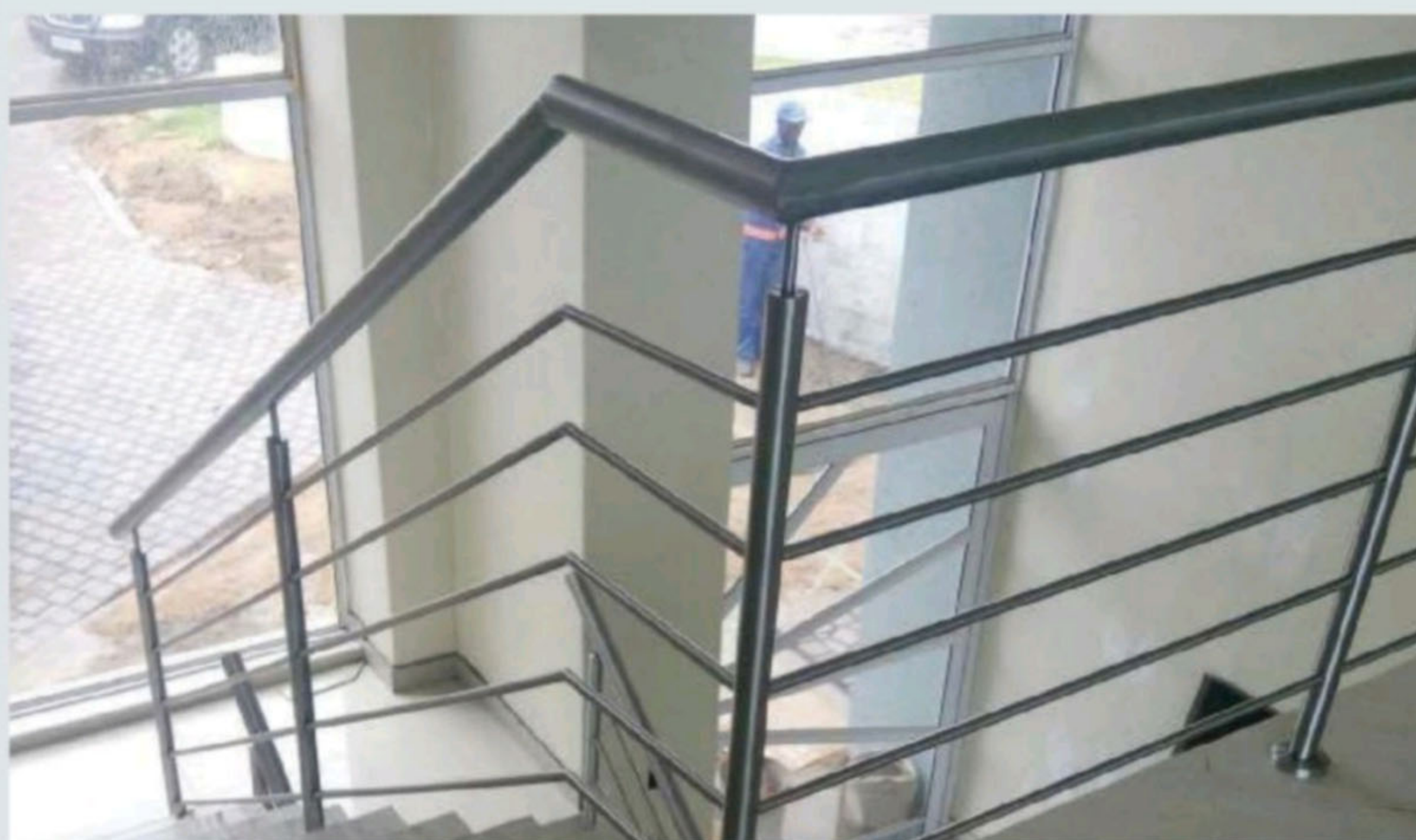
Use:

- Routine gentle cleaning
- Household cleaners showing 'suitable for stainless steel'
- Repeated routine gentle cleaning rather than a single aggressive cleaning

Do not use:

- Course abrasive powders
- Metallic scourers
- Silver or brass cleaners

Labels can be a constant source of irritation on stainless steel. Remove labels by soaking in a hot soapy solution and rubbing with a cloth or sponge. If adhesive remains, remove with a soft cloth soaked in alcohol (Methylated Spirits) or an organic solvent (Benzene).



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Our winning query comes from Riedwhan who wins a subscription to *The Home Handyman* magazine for a year.

Replacing popped stones in a sandstone wall

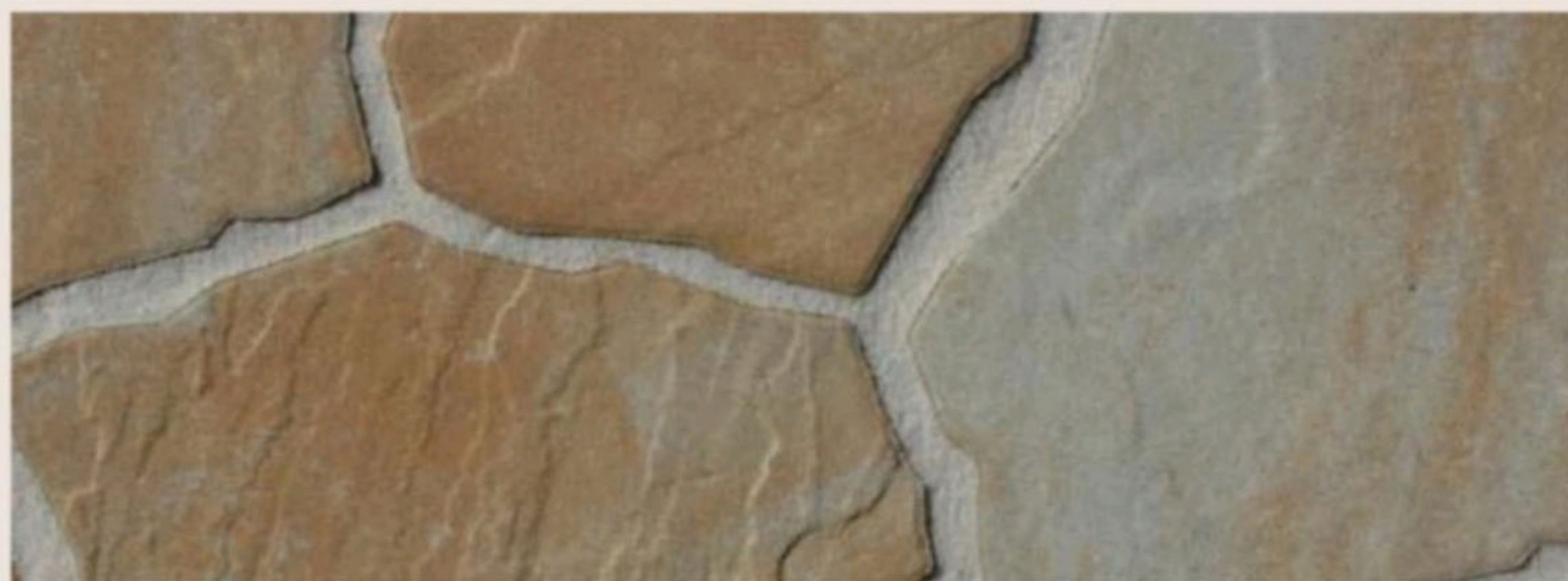
I have a fairly large 2m high sandstone wall, double faced with rubble fill and mostly mortar joints. A few stones have popped out of the wall and the shapes of these stones are not nice square or rectangle shapes that would be fairly routine to replace, they are more irregular shaped with the backs of these stones being more cone shaped.

Are there any clever methods or

devices for holding irregular stones like these in place whilst the mortar sets, as they look like they will just fall out due to their weight before the mortar has a chance to hold them in place?

Martin Hogan, Midrand

Ed replies: You really shouldn't need any devices to assist; try using a dryer mortar mix which will hold the stones in place.



Alternating hot/cold but taps are fine

I have an issue with both shower systems in my house alternating hot/cold when run – the shower temperatures never actually get 'scalding' hot, more like warmish before reverting to cold and back. I have tried adjusting both valves to improve with little luck, the only improvement I've had is reducing the flow on the mains feed with a ball-valve otherwise the cold seems to prevail completely. The basin taps, however, both upstairs and downstairs, do get hot. I should note this wasn't always the case; previously before installing the second shower system, I had good temperature in the first shower. I've had two plumbers check it over with no luck. My gut feeling is that it may be related to a lack of pressure in the hot from the geyser. We have a strong mains feed pressure but also suffer from hard water here.

Dominic Kalil, by email

Eddie Denis, practising plumber
replies: Start by fitting an adjustable pressure reducing valve in the mains supply to the shower valve, you can then balance the hot and cold pressures.



Filling in a 'skylight' in kitchen ceiling

We moved into an old house about a year ago now, and the people before hadn't done much, so we've spent this year doing quite a lot of DIY and getting quite a lot of contractors in, to do the kitchen, bathroom, windows and doors.

When we moved in, we had a lean-to galley kitchen with an adjacent small dining room, which we've now knocked through into one room to increase the size of the kitchen. Because the original kitchen was so small and dark, at some point someone had created a hole in the ceiling and added a really bad rooflight. It is freezing right now, and not needed, because the room is much lighter than before.

My question is, what's the easiest short-term way of patching up this hole so that the kitchen isn't cold all the time? We are intending to replace the terrible plastic ceiling next year with a normal plasterboard ceiling and maybe insulate the little roof above it, but we're just looking for a quick fix to get us through the winter that won't lead to mould problems etc. The hole is only maybe 0.5m x 0.5m, if that, but it makes the whole room freezing. Would a bit of ply with some insulation above work okay, or would condensation form on it?

Russel Ramsden, by email

Ed replies: It is very likely that you will get condensation, but you will be able to judge this for yourself – do you get condensation forming on the skylight now? Sealing it off will only make things worse.

Since you are going to redo the ceiling at a later stage, maybe just accept that you will get condensation on your proposed plywood.





Denis Lock continues his series on using a router safely and effectively.

ROUTING'S BEST KEPT SECRET (PART 1)

>> Denis Lock

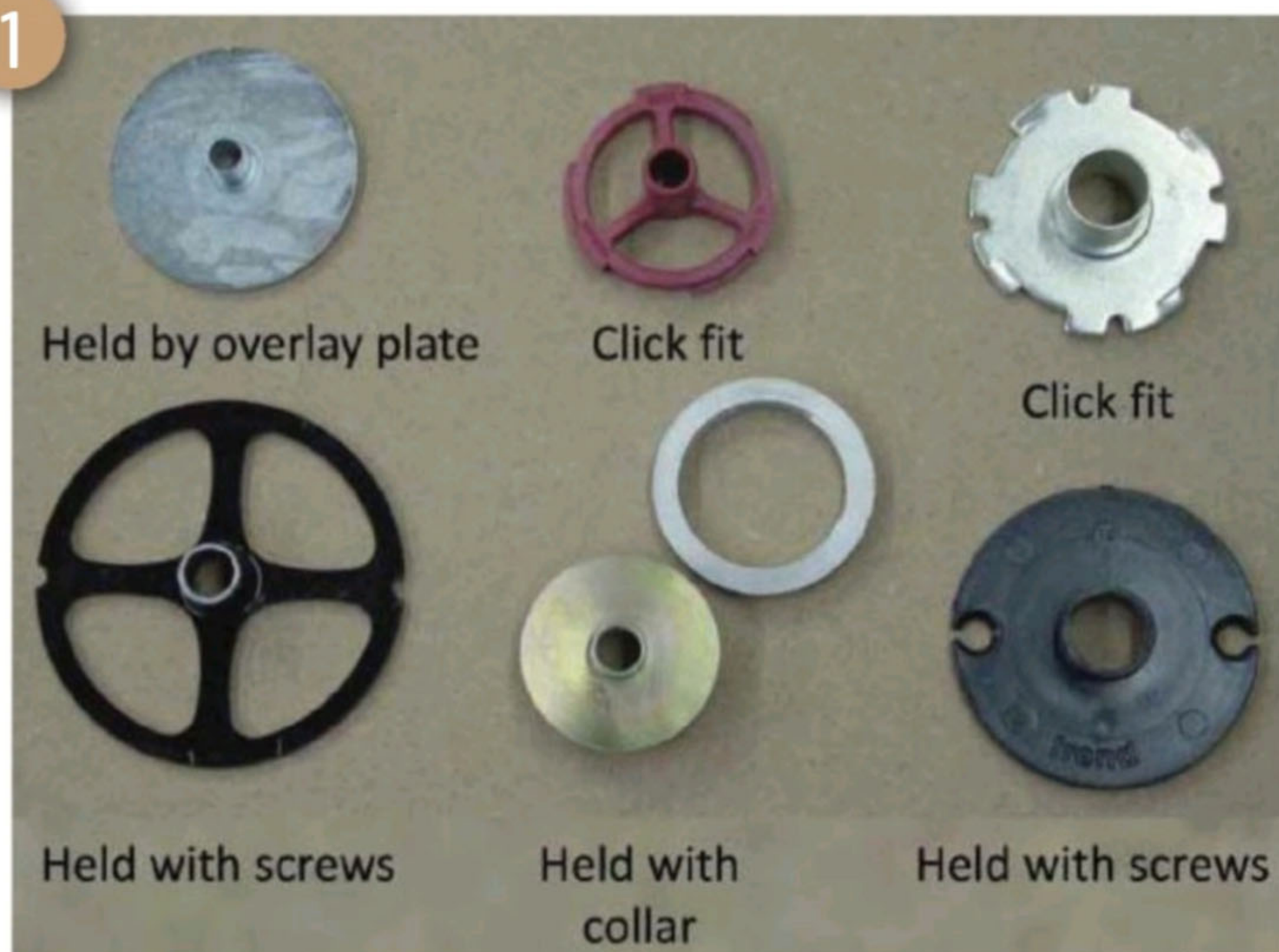
A small accessory called a guide bush is, without doubt, routing's best kept secret. Most of my students don't know what I am talking about when I ask them to take out their guide bush. Many of them can't find it in their tool box when I explain what it looks like. They have never used it and have probably mislaid it. Even some of the router manufacturer's South African agents don't know what I am talking about when I try and buy a replacement for a student. A guide bush consists of a metal plate (normally circular) that fits into the centre opening in the router base. A concentric bush is attached to the plate and extends some 5mm to 10mm beyond the router base plate. There is no universal bush design standard: each manufacturer has their own design. Photo 1 shows the design of six different manufacturers. Not only are they different sizes they also have a different attachment method. Some are click fit, some are held with screws, some are held with a collar and some with an overlay plate.

Another way to describe a guide bush is a metal collar that attaches to and extends below the router's base plate. Photo 2 shows a photo of a router with a guide bush attached. It also shows a schematic of a guide bush in its most common application: face pattern routing. A guide bush acts a lot like a bearing on a profile bit. The main difference is that whereas a bearing is attached to the bottom of a router bit, a guide bush surrounds the bit like a collar. The bush is used in conjunction with a pattern attached to the face of the workpiece. A bearing rolls along the edge of a workpiece. A bush runs (rubs) against and follows a pattern. Americans call a guide bush a rub collar. You can see from Photo 2 where the name comes from. I think this alternative name better describes the accessory.

You can plunge the router bit through the bush (collar) to varying depths into the face of the workpiece to which the pattern is attached. If you run (rub) the bush against the pattern you reproduce the pattern on the face of the work. Hence the term face-pattern routing. It is obvious (Photo 2) that the diameter of the bit has to be less than the internal diameter of the bush: I recommend at least 5mm in order to allow clearance for vacuum extraction of chips and dust. Unlike edge pattern routing, where the cut lines up exactly with the pattern, there is an offset between the pattern and the cut. The offset given by the formula in Photo 2. This offset must either added to the pattern size, in the case of female patterns, or subtracted, in the case of male patterns.

Most routers are shipped with a single guide bush: typically, with an outside diameter (OD) of 17mm to 20mm. This size is fine for most work. Sometimes a larger or smaller bush is required. The cast-iron plate holder featured later in this article required a 30mm OD bush as a 25mm diameter bit was used to hollow out the plate recess. Commercial patterns such as those used to cut dovetail joints, do lettering, cut mortice and tenon joints, and do inlay work require special size guide bushes. Most dovetail kits require a 7/16" OD bush (convert it to Metric if you must – 11,11mm). Inlay work requires two guide bushes. Most router manufacturers make a range of bush sizes but they are generally not stocked by the South African agents. I have resorted to importing bushes a number of times. You can buy after-market guide bush kits (Photo 3 shows the set made by Rockler). These conform to the Porter Cable standard. This requires 1 and 3/16" (30,16mm) diameter router base opening and the bush is held by a threaded collar (the bottom-middle bush in Photo 1). Your router does not have this size opening so

1



Guide bush designs

will need to buy a universal base plate as well (Photo 4 – also by Rockler). The neatest solution I have come across is the Milescraft universal base plate and bushing kit (Photo 5). This is the one I use: more next issue.

I follow a number of overseas interior decorating websites. Painted (or partially painted furniture) is definitely in vogue. Medium density fibreboard (MDF) is an ideal material for painted furniture. It is smooth, flat, dimensionally stable, cheaper than solid wood and has a much better surface for painting. Flat painted panels, however, can be boring. Fortunately, MDF exhibits good face- and edge-machining characteristics and there are many opportunities for enhancing the appearance of simple painted doors, drawer fronts and panels. An example of a face-routed door for a small cabinet is shown in Photo 6. Vary the dimensions and proportions (and perhaps the design) and this door could be a door for a bathroom vanity unit, a drawer front in a chest of drawers, a panel in a bed headboard, the side or top panel of a toy box, a panel in a blanket chest or a panel in a window seat. The bit used to rout this panel, an ogee plunge bit, is shown on the left of Photo 7. Any of the other bits shown in Photo 7 (and more) could be used.

All of these bits have a smaller diameter than the inside diameter (typically 15mm to 20mm) of guide bushes shipped with routers. This allows the bit to be plunged through the bush and reproduce the pattern on the face of the MDF panel (see Photo 2). The pattern used to rout the door is shown in Photo 8. It is obvious that this pattern is built up from multiple pieces. It is also a female pattern. Theoretically you could make a single-piece male pattern (the shape of the opening in Photo 8). I always use a female pattern for guide bush routing. Although a male pattern is a lot easier to make it is difficult (if not impossible) to use. I guarantee that you will overshoot the first corner (Photo 9). This cannot happen with a female pattern.

One of my woodworking philosophies is 'If you can't break it down, build it up.' Instead of trying to accurately cut a complex pattern from a single piece of pattern material, I built it up from the nine easily-shaped pieces as shown in Photo 10. Instead of trying to glue the eight pieces edge-to-edge I glue them to a backing or substrate. This is a piece of scrap 3mm plywood or MDF. The oversize opening is roughly cut on a bandsaw:

2



Rockler guide bush set

3



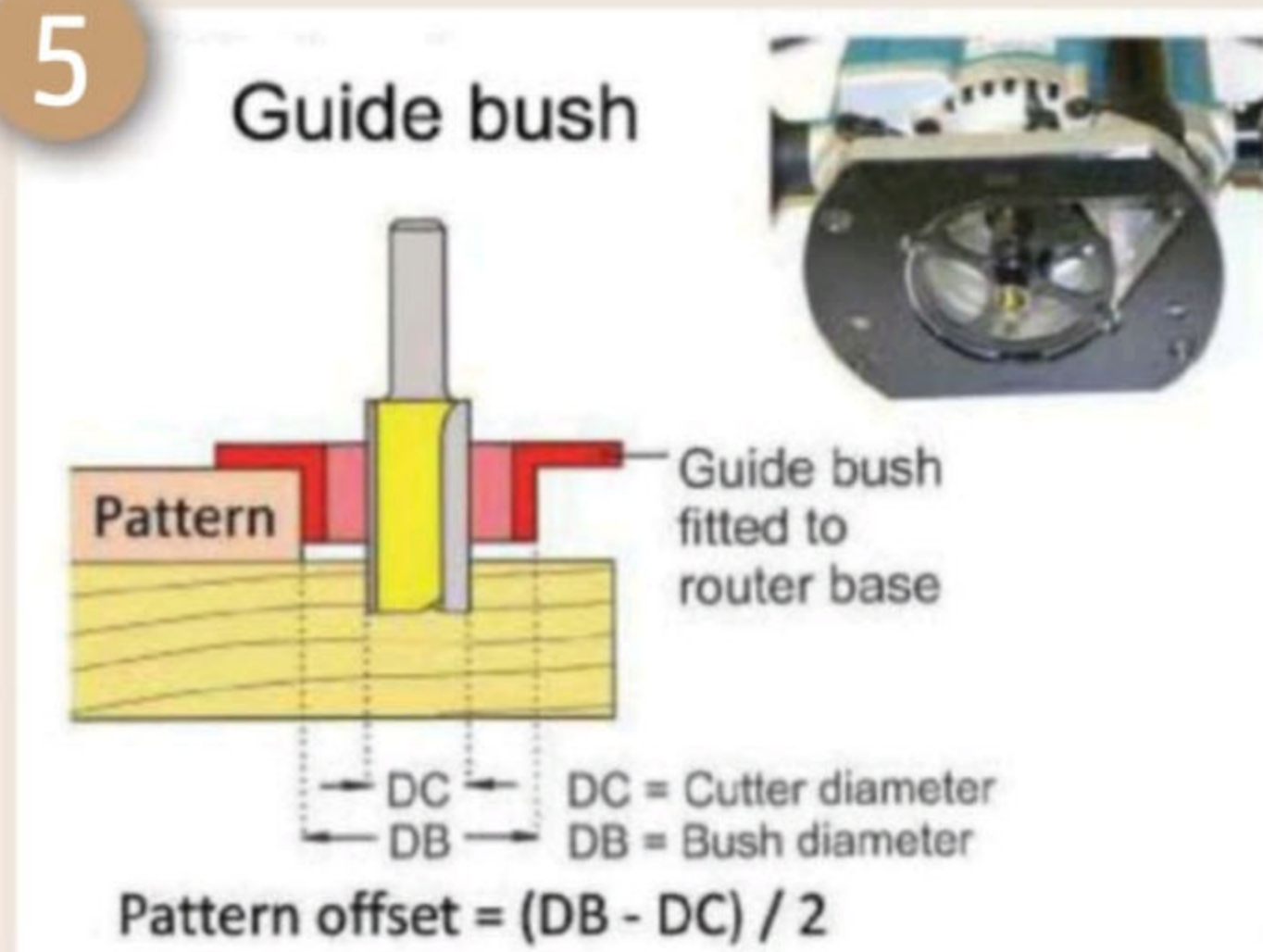
Rockler router base plate

4



Milescraft base and bushing set

5



Guide bush schematic

6



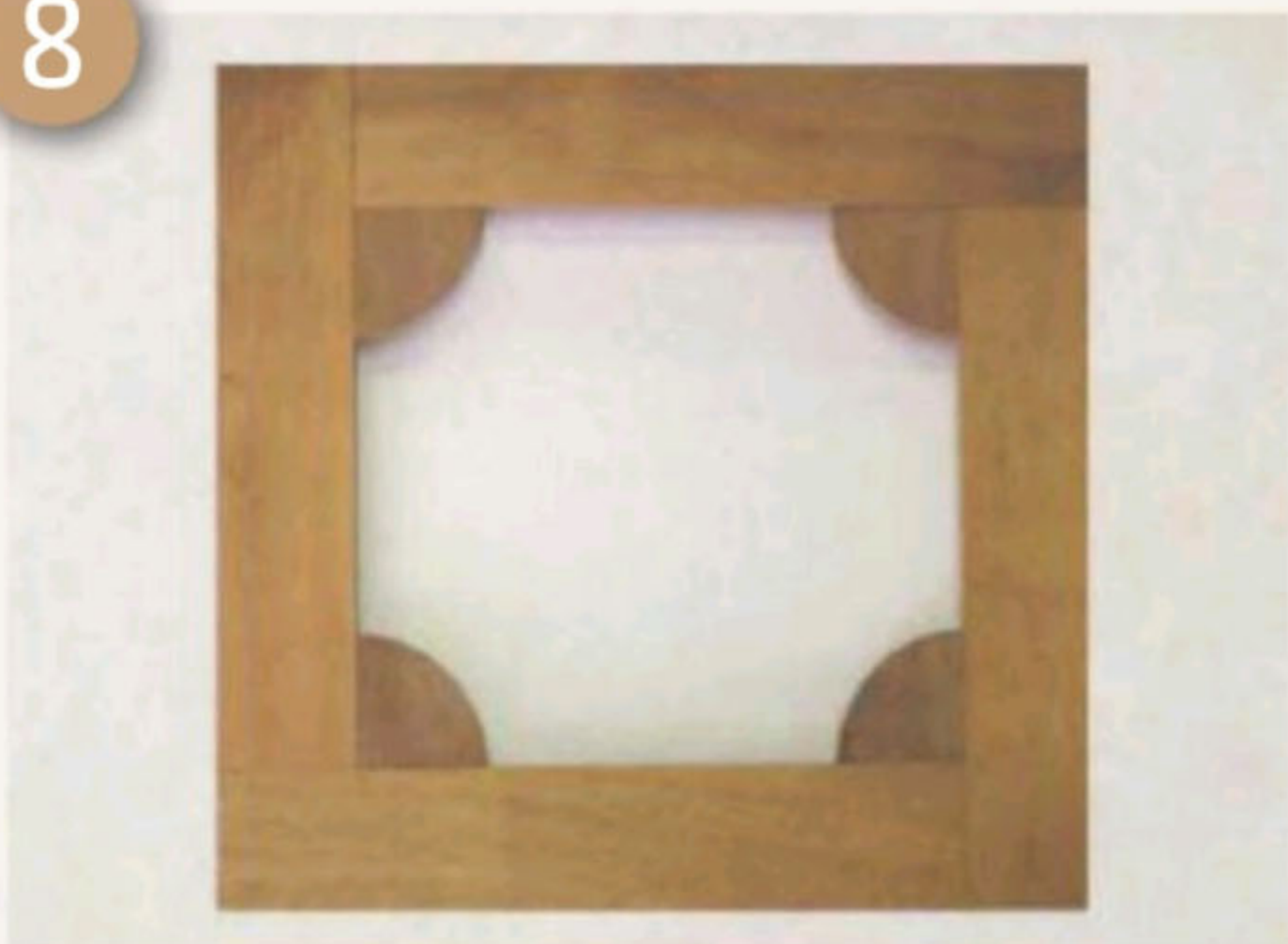
MDF door – pattern routed

7



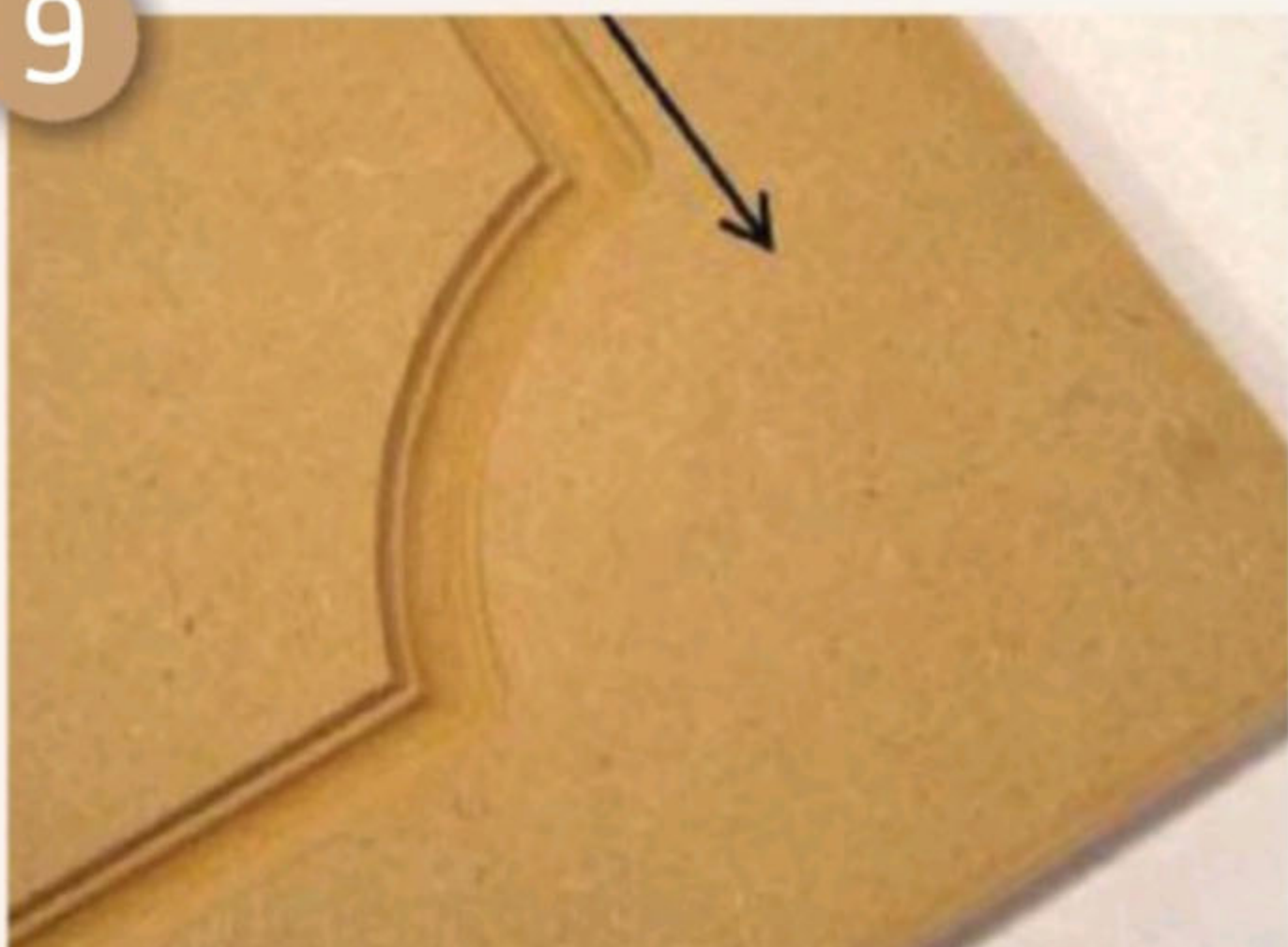
Pattern routing bits

8



Door pattern

9



You will overshoot

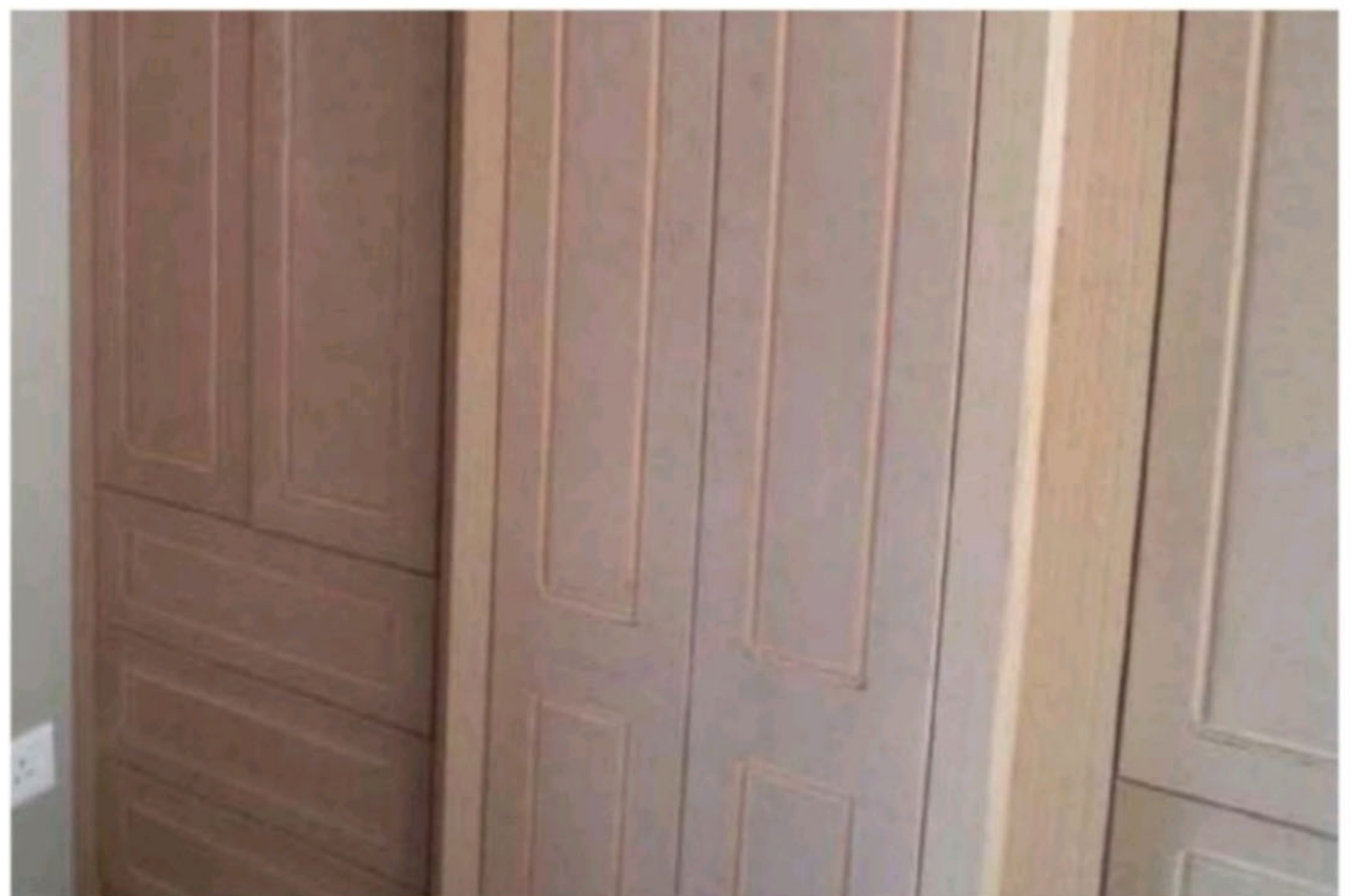
the entry cut is indicated by an arrow. The remaining eight pieces were cut from good quality 9mm plywood. The four quadrant pieces were cut from a circle cut on a drill press with a hole saw. Start by gluing one side strip to the substrate. Continue with the remaining three strips. Check for distance and squareness as you go. Then glue the four quadrants in place: resulting in the pattern shown in Photo 11. The underside view shows that the substrate is shy of the pattern. Thus, it can't interfere with the guide bush. The four strips

Photo 9 is ready to rout. The pattern has been placed over the MDF panel. It is held in place by the positioning strips (Photo 11). A balancing island (BI in Photo 12) stops the router tipping. It is the same thickness as the pattern plus substrate and is held in position by double-sided tape. Position the router with the base straddling the pattern and island. Set the router to cut 3mm deep into the MDF panel. Position the router so that the bush is firmly against the centre of the left-hand strip of the pattern.

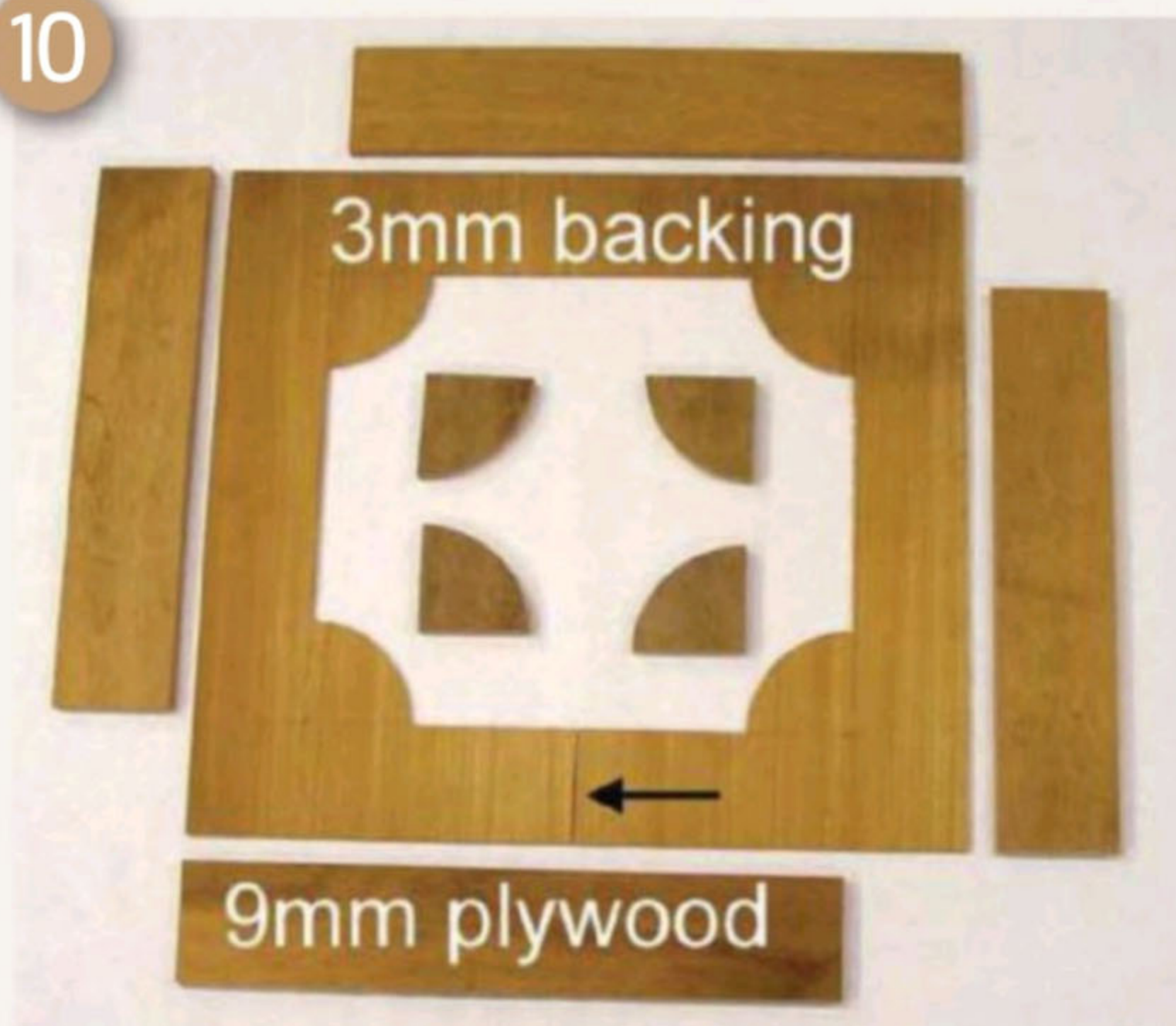
Do a trial run or two with the router unplugged and switched off. Guide the router, in a clockwise direction concentrating on keeping the bush running against the pattern. Get the feel of the operation before doing the actual cut. Right, let's go. Place the router with the bush firmly against the centre of the left-hand pattern strip (Photo 12). Switch on, wait for the router to reach full speed, plunge, lock depth and guide the router (clockwise) around the pattern. When just past the starting point un-plunge and switch off. You will be surprised at how easy this operation is. Over 400 of my students have done this exercise. More than 95% performed it perfectly the first time. MDF dust is harmful to your respiratory system. Attach a dust extractor and/or wear a good dust mask.

I have introduced you to face-pattern routing using an MDF door as an example. It works equally as well on solid wood (Photo 13). A cutting board (Photo 14) requires a groove to capture the meat juices. The way to rout the juice groove is the same as we routed the pattern on the MDF door. Instead of an ogee bit a bull-nose bit was used. Instead of a pattern with quadrants in the corners a simple rectangular pattern was used.

In my next article I will cover the use of guide bushes to do joinery work such as mortices, dovetails, dados and splines. I will also cover the exciting field of inlay work. I hope you have not mislaid your guide bush and can start doing some face-pattern routing.

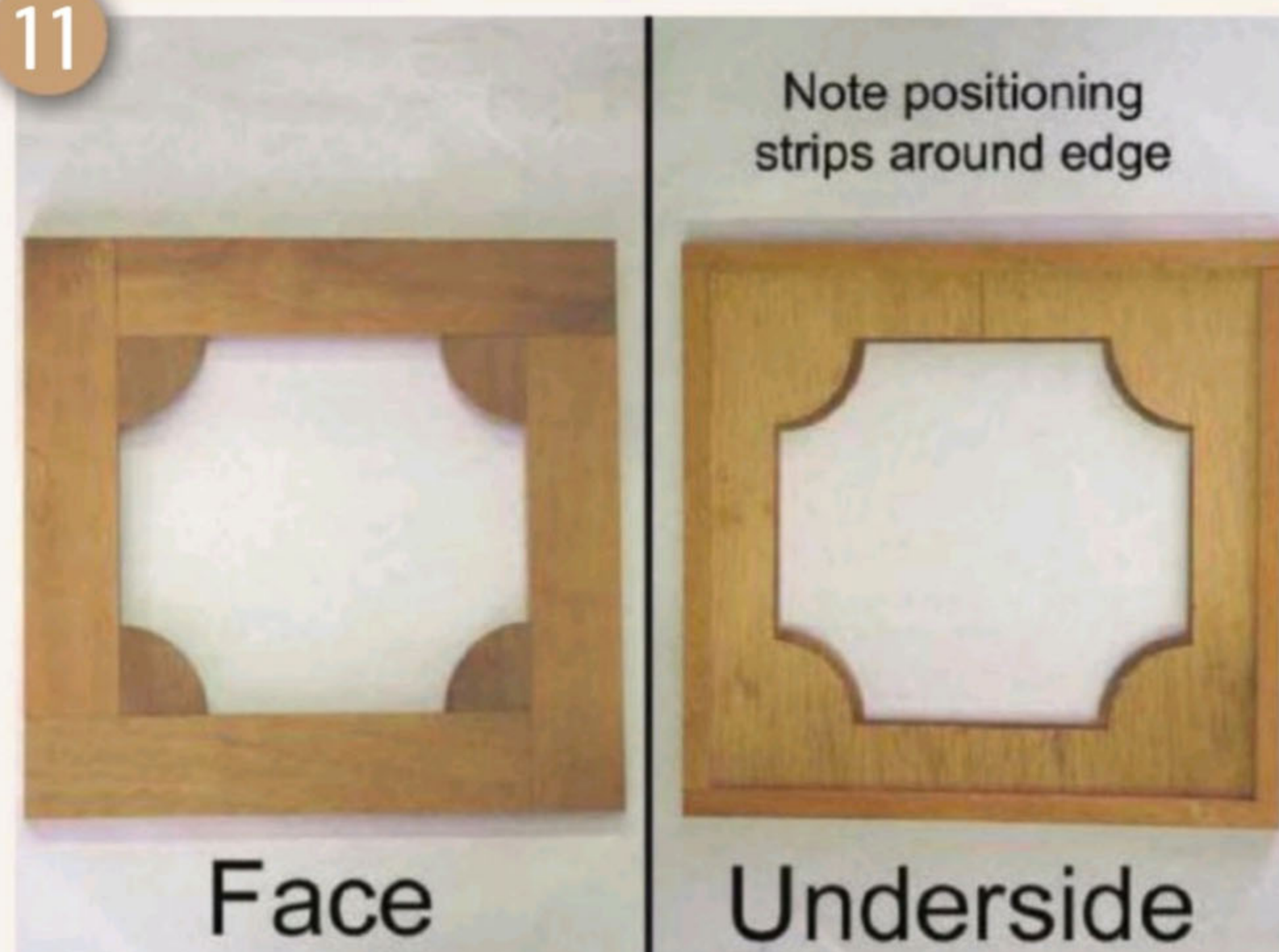


10



Pattern parts

11



Assembled pattern

12



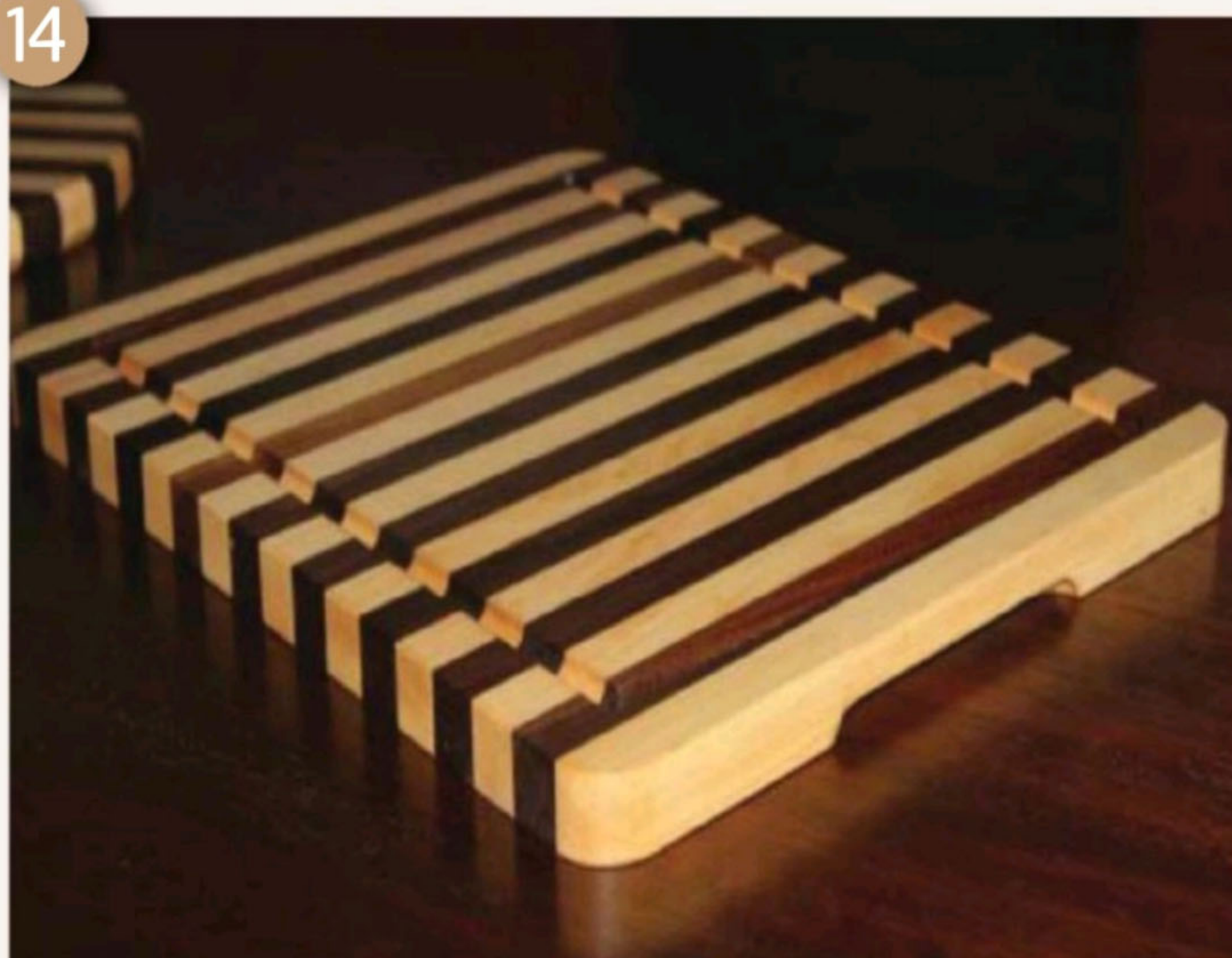
Ready to go

13



Solid wood doors – pattern routed

14



Cutting board – juice groove



ABOUT DENIS:



Denis Lock runs a woodworking school and shop. He can be contacted at denis@tacazze.co.za or 082-267-5948. Visit his website at www.routingwithdenis.co.za

WOODWORKER'S CORNER

Sharing techniques, ideas and a love of wood

Why it's so important to use and select the correct cutting blade

Whatever jigsaw tool you have in your workshop or using in your business/industry or the specific power tool make you own, type, model, or brand, MPS has the blades in its range, for all the popular models. There is no material that MPS blades will not cut whether it is a hard material such as iron, stainless steel, steel, alloys, plastics; all wood types, hardwood, and tiles. The MPS range has them all, there is really nothing like having the correct blade for the material you are cutting, the correct blade will cut it more accurately, better, cleaner, and quicker without damaging the material you are cutting.

The choice between CV, HSS, Bi-Metal and HM models are carefully evaluated per the intended purpose of use. High-alloyed Chrome Vanadium steel is used for work on softer materials such as wood, fibreboard, and synthetic materials. High Speed Steel, hardened in a vacuum furnace, is used for work on harder material such as metal (iron and steel), aluminium and nonferrous metal. Carbide is used for high abrasion resistance offering long life. Bi-Metal 65-67 HRC is the perfect combination of flexibility due to the spring steel which despite bending, always returns to its original form and durability, thanks to the HSS strip alloyed with Cobalt, that is welded on. Bimetal is also heat treated in a vacuum furnace. Suited to work on wood and metal.

The reasons for needing so many different blade types is important. The material to be sawn plays a particularly important role. whether it is a hard material such as iron, stainless steel, hardwood or tile or a soft material like softwood,

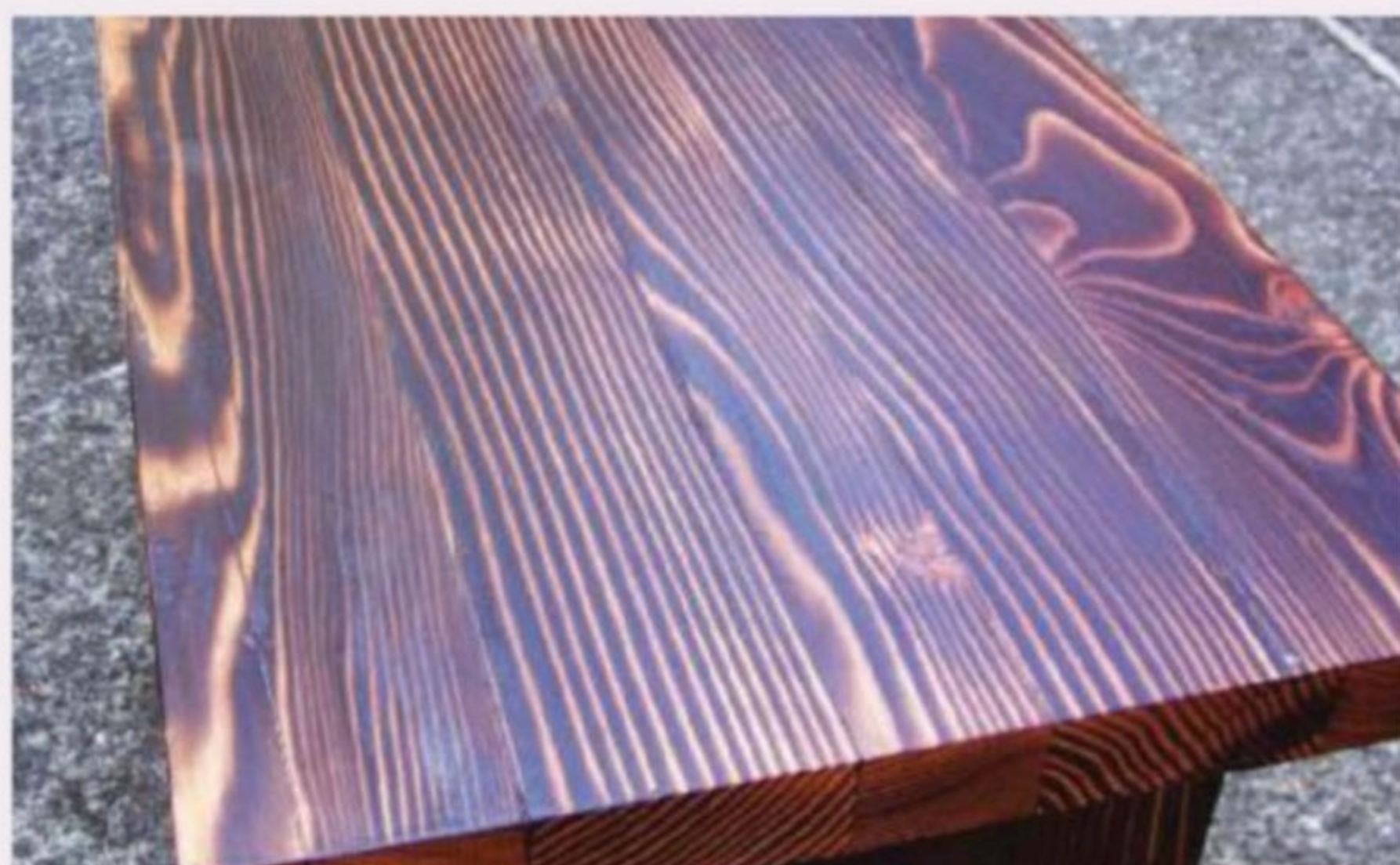
plywood, synthetics, or cork that is being sawn, this determines what material the blade should be made of, along with tooth spacing, what strength of teeth and which tooth geometry are the most suitable.

The second factor to be considered is the thickness of the material which determines the length of toothing on the blade. The cut-quality desired also plays a pivotal role in this decision-making process. Here, the appropriate blade is determined depending on whether a rough cut is sufficient or if a finer cut is required, whether angle precision is necessary or if contours or curves are being sawn.

Most stores will give you advice, but you can also go to www.vermontsales.co.za and click on MPS and go through their selection; it will give you the description, the material it will cut, sizes, blade type, fine or rough cuts and all the unique features of the various blades.



Shou Sugi Ban wood burning technique



Shou Sugi Ban is the traditional Japanese method for preserving wood by charring the surface to bring about carbonisation. This carbonisation process protects the wood against insect attack and creates a waterproof barrier without applying sealer or varnish.

In Japan, the process of Shou Sugi Ban is referred to as Yakisugi and was used as a method for charring cypress boards to make them waterproof. Yaki means to char, while sugi means cypress, so this is the method of charring cypress.

Using the Shou Sugi Ban technique on pine allows you to bring out the beautiful, natural grain of this timber, and also to create pieces that are truly unique and look nothing like

pine After treating furniture with the Shou Sugi Ban technique, it can be placed indoors or outdoors and requires very little maintenance.

The process involved in Shou Sugi Ban is actually very simple. Using a blowtorch, the surface of the wood is burnt until you achieve a cracked or charred look. After charring the surface of the wood, a standard wire brush is used to remove the charred

finish by brushing with the grain. The wire brush opens up the pores of the wood and slightly lifts up the grain. The dust is removed and then the piece is ready for use and can be stained or left raw.

Even though the Shou Sugi Ban method provides a waterproof finish, many prefer to apply a sealer or varnish over the surface to bring out even more detail in the grain.

Software to help you plan your woodwork projects

Planning your projects is the best way to ensure that you limit mistakes, costs, and wasted time on problems that could have been perceived which is just a little bit of calculation. More than that, we all want to have a visual representation of our projects before we go ahead and execute them. Not all of us, however, are bonafide artists and/or architects.

Luckily, however, there are a few easy-to-use online and app-based design software applications which will get you obsessing over your project well before even turning that table saw on.

SketchUp

There are few free drawing applications as popular as this software and these are due to its history. The drawing software was built for both 2D drawings and 3D modelling. Woodworkers can make use of the hand or a stylus pen to draw woodworking designs on its responsive workspace and interface. These 2D drawings can then be turned into 3D models which provide a more accurate view of designs. SketchUp also comes with a wide array of tools that simplify drawing from scratch or editing already existing ideas.

Autodesk Fusion360

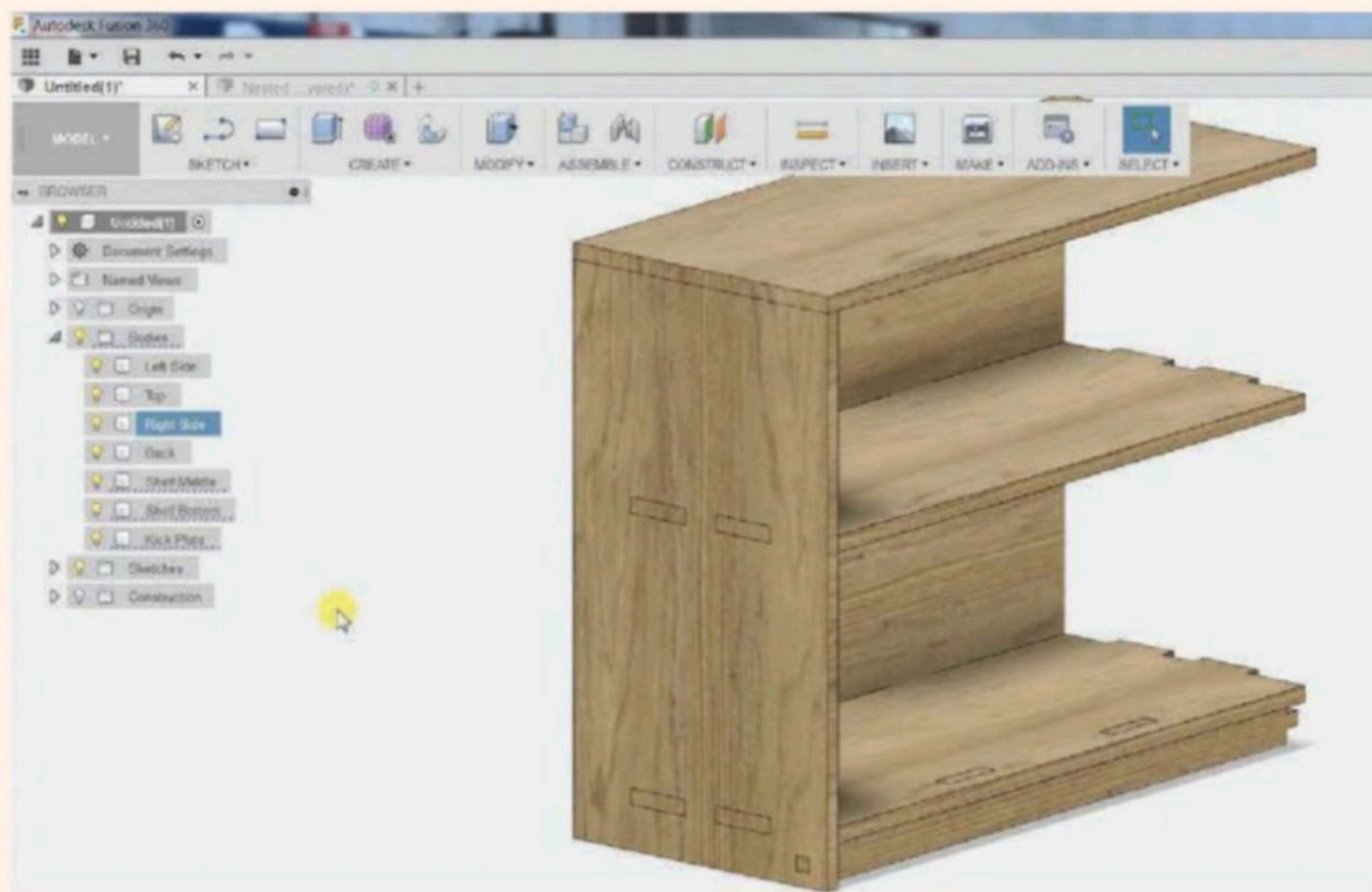
AutoDesk Fusion 360 is another great piece of woodworking design software that has a free trial version available to explore many of the possibilities found within the program. If you have experience with CAD, as many woodworkers and architects do, then you'll love how familiar this software will feel. There's a good chance you've already tried it out. The software is packed full of design features that woodworkers can use to create amazing furniture ideas. It's also good for the average handy person who wants to build something for their home and features many aspects of CAD that other building trades can utilise as well.

That means other designers, ranging from machinists to amateur hobbyists, can also utilise the great design elements included here. AutoDesk Fusion 360 has a few different free options, depending on your desired level of use. This is a great option for home-based fabrication or if you're just learning basic woodworking design

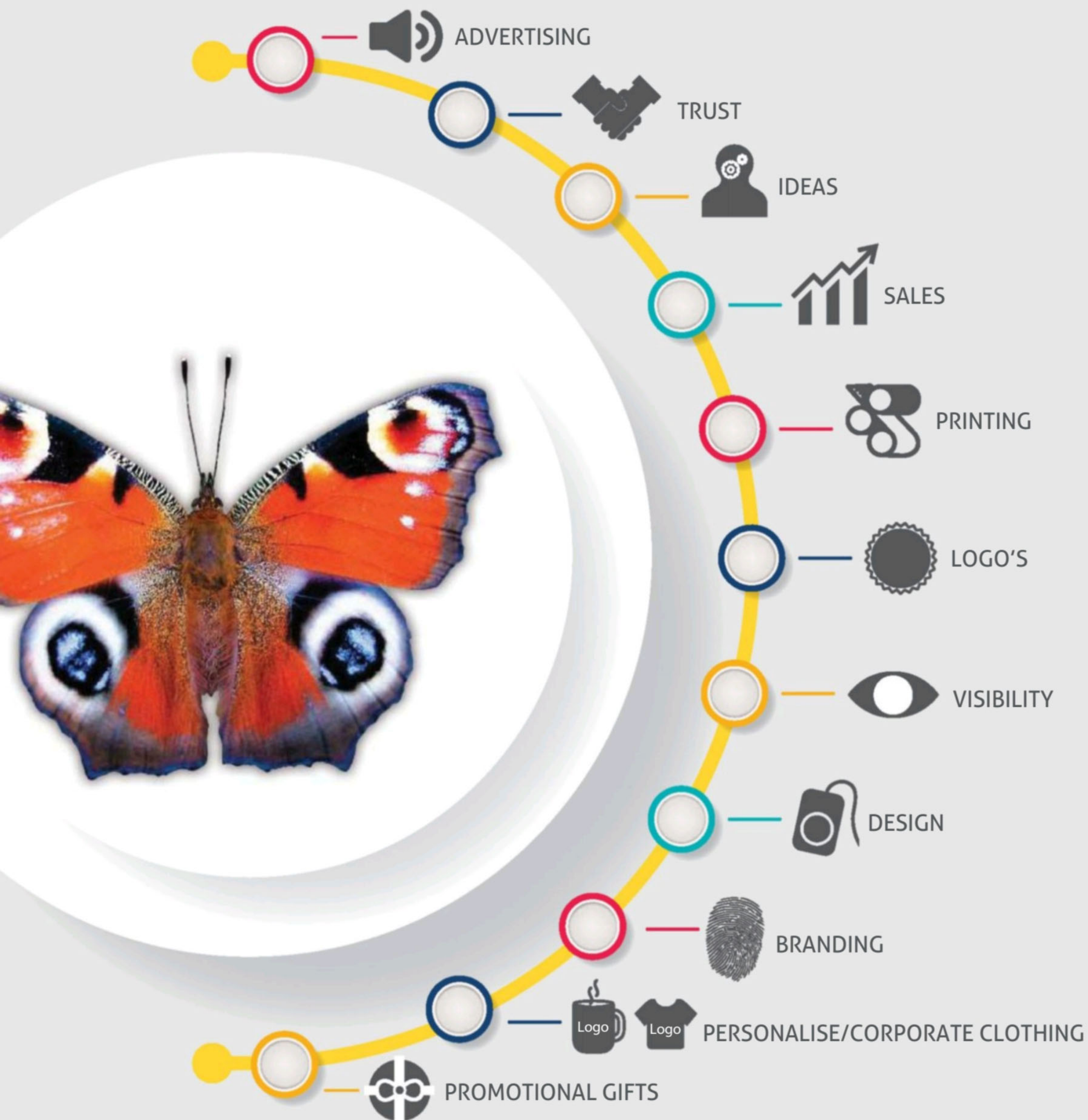
CADPRO Furniture Design Software

CADPRO is an application that allows users to design furniture and visualizes them in 3D. The software also provides documentation features that ensure your ideas are clear and can be shared with collaborators. The software is easy to use like most dedicated CAD applications for woodworking. The user-friendly interface means you can get started with designing without any prior knowledge of CAD.

CADPRO is one of the few applications that support sketch tracing. Sketch tracing involves the scanning of designs sketched on paper and importing the scanned copy into the CADPRO interface for further edits. The software also offers interactive furniture design features that allow you to view edits to designs in real-time.



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The 5 most common blunders DIY'ers make

Here are the most common blunders that new DIY'ers make. Of course, there are many more to consider but these are some of the most common ones that can leave you with a hefty bill in the end.

1. Trying to fix plumbing problems without experiencing plumbing training

If you don't know what you're doing, it's best just to call a professional. The problem is, you may be tempted to try 'fixing' things yourself because it seems easy and straightforward. But plumbing work can be very dangerous if you don't know what you're doing. You could cause a flood or even start a fire!

Plus, repairing plumbing problems incorrectly can result in extensive water damage that will cost you thousands to repair. So, if you're not sure about what's wrong with your plumbing or how to fix it, call a plumber!

2. Trying to fix electrical problems without getting proper training

If you're not familiar with electric circuits and how electricity works, don't try to fix it yourself. You could end up electrocuting yourself, or start a fire in your home.

If you are not sure what is wrong with an electrical component, just call a professional electrician. It's worth the money and if they do something you didn't authorise (which does happen) you're covered because the work will be done under their license and insurance.

3. Trying to do your roof repairs on your own

The roof of a home is its most vulnerable part. It's important for all homeowners to be aware that many shingles and old roofs are extremely dangerous, especially when they're not attached properly or have sharp points sticking out from them which can puncture things in the house like lawn chairs or even pets!

Also, roofs can get damaged due to wind, high temperatures, and other weather conditions. If you do notice cracks forming in your roof it is best to call an expert who will ascertain the seriousness of any damages. Even small cracks can quickly turn out to be huge problems that could cost you a lot of money to fix in the end.

4. Failing to repair a broken appliance

If there's something wrong with one of your appliances (washing machine or tumble dryer) and you don't get it fixed, it will only cost you more money in the future. You may not notice the deterioration of your appliance at first but over time things will start to wear out which can cause some very serious damage. Pay attention to your appliances and get them repaired as soon as you notice they're not working properly.

5. Investing too much when starting out

There is an issue that I have noticed when starting out with home improvement projects. People often invest too much money into something when they are not sure that they can handle it properly. This can lead to many problems and will not be covered by warranties which means you will have to pay for them on your own.

As an example, if your goal is to build a patio area then maybe go for building a small one first (e.g., putting down some bricks). Once you are more confident, move onto making a larger one or expanding the existing one further as you get more experience with different materials like brick, stone, etc. You can make your patio bigger over time instead of trying to do everything at once which could easily cause delays or problems that will not be covered by warranties.



ARTIFICIAL GRASS



Artificial grass is a top contender for home improvements due to its low maintenance and high-quality finishes, making it the best choice product when considering how to improve your home. Whether for home or commercial applications, artificial grass can suit your requirements and budget.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ARTIFICIAL GRASS?

- It saves water
- It's easy to maintain
- Artificial grass can be environmentally friendly
- Durable – lasts up to 20 years
- Long term investment

17542195



25mm Augusta



25mm Cruz



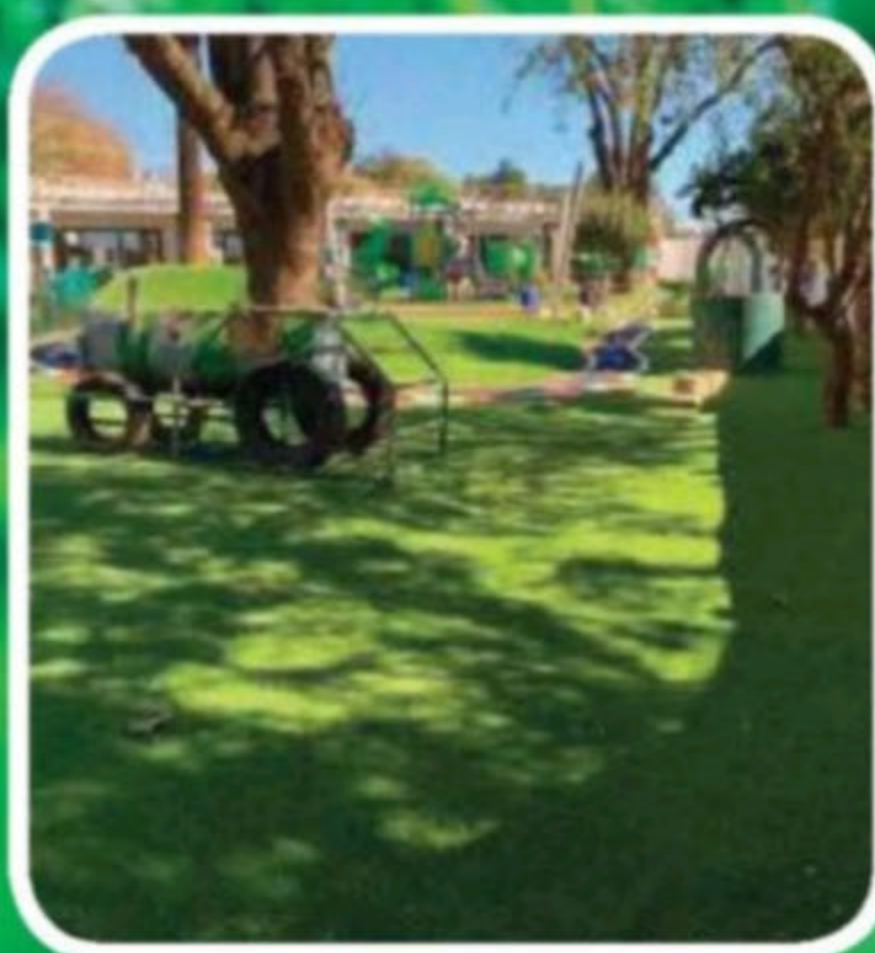
30mm Pet Grass



40mm Soccer Duo Rye



13mm Multisport



30mm Autumn

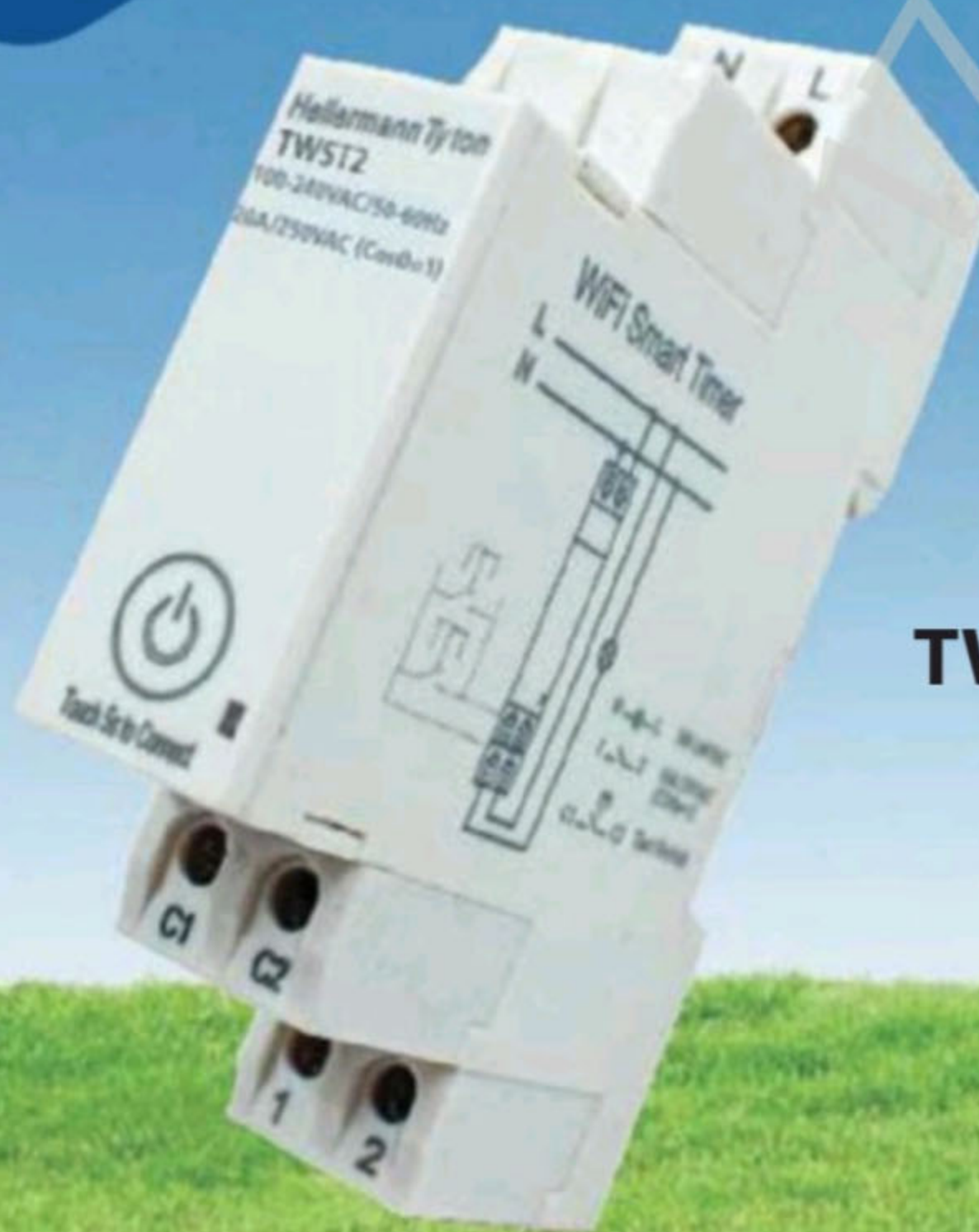


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