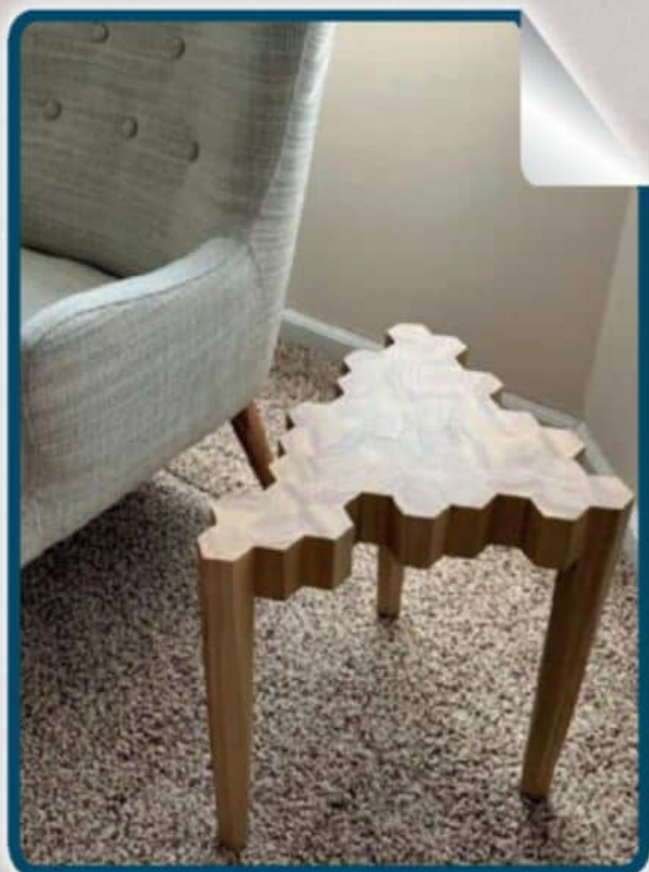


The Home HANDYMAN

Vol 34 No 03



SA'S
ORIGINAL
DIY
MAGAZINE



MAKE A UNIQUE TABLE



BUILD A PALLET
ARMCHAIR

Bathroom projects for all budgets



- Drilling techniques for the DIY'er
- All things decking
- Waterproofing solutions for your home
- Make a succulent planter
- Essential adhesives for every handyman



The original magazine for the South African DIY'er, woodworker and homeowner

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FROM THE WORKBENCH

Technology and DIY

In the realm of do-it-yourself projects and woodworking, the role of technology has evolved from a peripheral presence to an indispensable tool that enhances both efficiency and creativity.

In the ever-evolving landscape of craftsmanship, technology has emerged as an invaluable companion, revolutionizing the way we approach the art of creation. Our pursuit of precision, efficiency, and safety has found new horizons with the integration of cutting-edge tools into the traditional workshop.

Woodworking, a craft deeply rooted in tradition, has embraced the digital age with open arms. From the design phase to the execution of intricate details, computer-aided design (CAD) software has become an invaluable ally to artisans and DIY enthusiasts alike.

Once the exclusive domain of architects and designers, CAD software has seamlessly woven itself into the fabric of woodworking. It serves as a digital extension of the craftsman's mind, allowing for meticulous planning, intricate detailing, and a visualisation of projects with unparalleled accuracy.

In woodworking, precision is crucial, and CAD software becomes a reliable ally, essentially an extension of the craftsman's mind. It offers a platform for envisioning intricate details, such as the curves of a carved ornament or the flawless dovetail joints that signify fine craftsmanship. The software's user-friendly interface empowers artisans and DIY enthusiasts to explore design options with exceptional accuracy and flexibility.

This digital partnership isn't limited to the design phase alone; it seamlessly continues into the execution of the woodworking project. Once the design takes shape in the virtual realm, it smoothly transitions into the hands-on stage, mirroring the precision of the digital blueprint. Woodworkers can now operate with a newfound confidence and accuracy, elevating the act of creation into a blend of traditional skills and digital precision.

Safety, a paramount concern for every artisan, also takes centre stage when you explore technology's role in woodworking. From intelligent dust extraction systems that diligently rid the air of harmful particles to innovative sensor technologies embedded in power tools, technology has become a stalwart guardian of the woodworker's well-being. The incorporation of smart features not only enhances user-friendliness but also mitigates risks, ensuring a secure environment for all craftsmen.

This issue is a celebration of the harmonious coexistence of tradition and innovation, exploring how technology not only enhances the quality of our work but also contributes to a safer and more accessible DIY and woodworking experience.

In addition to our feature articles, this issue is brimming with step-by-step guides, project showcases, and expert tips that cater to both seasoned woodworkers and those just embarking on their DIY journey. Whether you're passionate about crafting bespoke furniture or taking on weekend woodworking projects, you'll find inspiration and practical advice within these pages.

As you flip through the pages of this edition, I invite you to reflect on the ways in which technology has become an indispensable ally in your crafting journey. Let it inspire you, let it enhance your skills, and above all, let it be a guardian of your safety. May your workshops resonate with the hum of smart tools, the precision of digital design, and the enduring joy of creating with your hands.

Gregg



The Home HANDYMAN



www.homehandyman.co.za

2024

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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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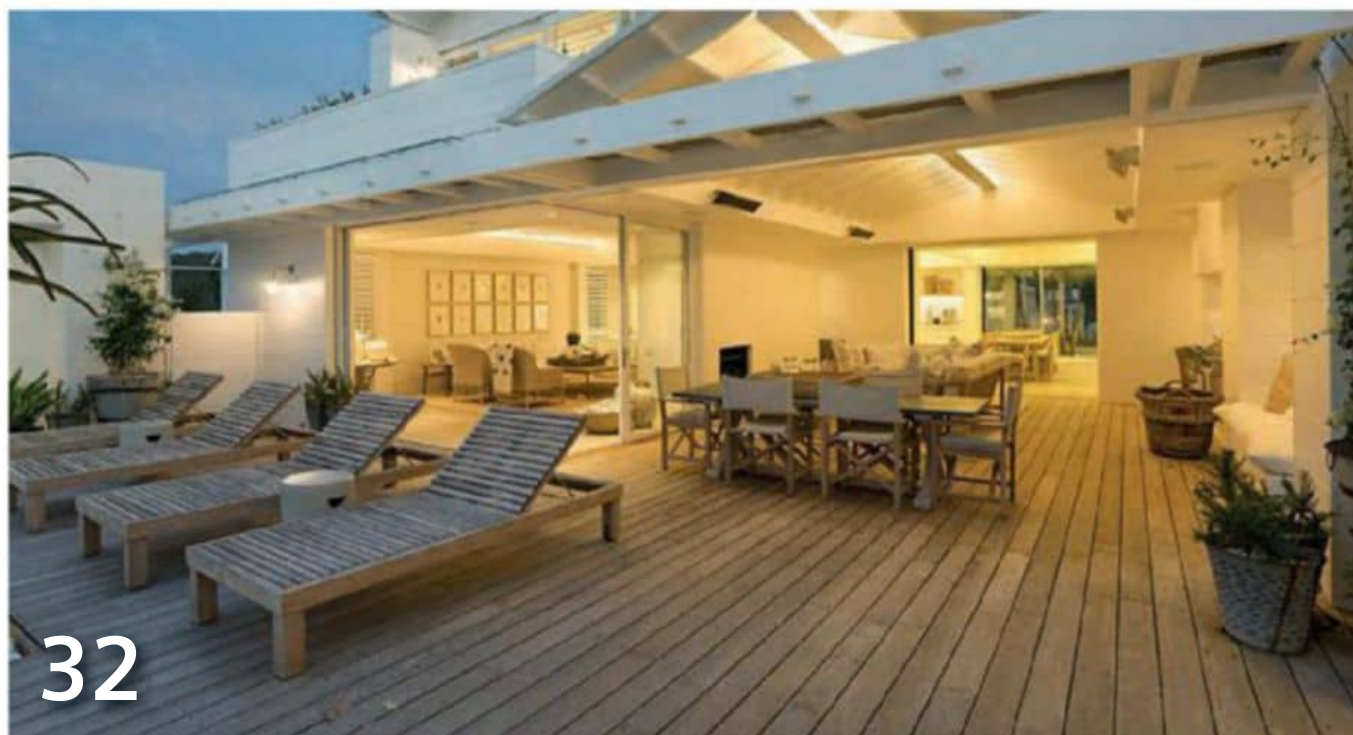
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OFF THE SHELF

Your guide to the latest products in the world of DIY

The ultimate tool for effortless shrub and lawn care

Discover the power of precision gardening with the WORX WG801E.5

Get the edge in your gardening tasks with the compact and lightweight WORX WG801E.5 20V cordless Shrub, Grass Shear, and Weeder. This handy tool comes complete with a battery, charger, and assorted blades.

The WORX WG801E.5, also known as the ZEN™, is a versatile lawn edging and shrub shaping shear powered by a robust 20-volt Lithium-ion battery. ZEN™ offers peace of mind with its user-friendly design. Equipped with three easy-to-change blade sets, it allows you to shape shrubs and edge your lawn effortlessly. Additionally, the WG801E.5 model includes a weeding blade.

With a comfortable soft grip handle and weighing only 150g, the WORX WG801E.5 20V Li-ion Shrub and Grass Shear makes gardening tasks a breeze. Show your garden some love with the WORX Zen.

Key features:

- Laser-finished diamond shrub blade ensures optimal cutting performance
- Over-mold soft grip handle reduces fatigue and enhances grip
- Power Share 20V battery is interchangeable with other 20V WORX tools

For more information, email dean@brandroid.co.za or call 010 824 4420 or 060 985 6257



Food for wood

Woodoc 20: Elevate your indoor woodwork to perfection

Elevate the elegance of your indoor wooden surfaces with Woodoc 20 Indoor Gloss Clear. Crafted for those seeking a polished, grain-filled finish, this premium wood coating is designed to withstand high traffic areas, making it ideal for a variety of applications.

Whether it's your cherished wooden furniture, skirting boards, banisters, or kitchen countertops, Woodoc 20 Indoor Gloss Clear delivers a flawless finish that enhances the natural beauty of the wood while providing exceptional protection.

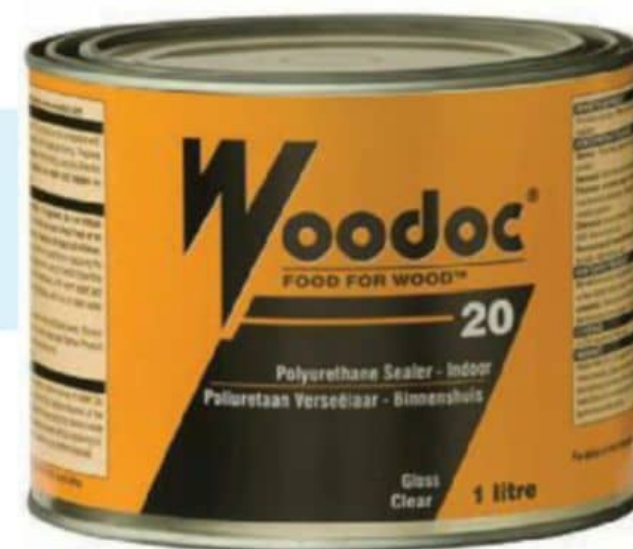
Key features:

- Glossy, grain-filled finish for a luxurious look
- Easy application ensures a smooth process
- Deeply penetrates to nourish wood and enrich its grain
- Resistant to water, alcohol, heat, and cold for long-lasting durability
- Protects against scratches and marks, keeping your surfaces looking pristine
- Non-toxic when dry, making it safe for indoor use

With Woodoc 20 Indoor Gloss Clear, you can achieve a professional-quality finish with ease. Each application not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of your woodwork but also provides lasting protection against everyday wear and tear.

Available in various packaging sizes to suit your needs, including 500ml, 1 litre, and 5 litres, with larger quantities available upon request. Transform your indoor spaces with Woodoc 20 and experience the difference it makes in preserving and beautifying your woodwork.

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



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Experience the next level of power management with the MultiPlus-II GX from Victron, an innovative inverter/charger equipped with GX technology. Designed to streamline your energy system, this versatile device seamlessly integrates with solar chargers, batteries, and other components to efficiently control grid-connected, off-grid, or remote power setups.

Featuring advanced capabilities, the MultiPlus-II GX offers parallel operation for enhanced power output and battery charge-rates. Additionally, it can be configured for three-phase supply, ensuring flexibility to meet diverse energy needs.

With built-in device networking, the MultiPlus-II GX allows for effortless control and monitoring from your smartphone or smart device. Take advantage of features such as uninterrupted power supply, load limit settings, and the ability to supplement limited grid power with battery power, all at your fingertips.

Experience unparalleled convenience and efficiency in managing your power system with the MultiPlus-II GX. Whether you're looking to optimize energy usage or ensure reliable power in any situation, Victron's MultiPlus-II GX is the ultimate solution for your energy needs.

For more information, visit www.victronenergy.com



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Leon Geyer

Win a Worx WX240 4V
USB Mini cordless electric
screwdriver



Prizes are not exchangeable

Decking dilemma

WINNER

For some time now, we have been considering installing a deck, from which to enjoy our garden and the views it offers. The east-west positioning of our L-shaped house on our property, means that the best position for the deck is outside our entertainment area opening out to the south.

This positioning means that whatever deck we install, it will be exposed to a considerable amount of moisture, especially in our Gqeberha Winters. To cope with this, we want to go the composite route and even take it one step further by using a galvanized support structure, similar to the one used for the construction of carports.

I would appreciate any input on this in terms of suitability, bearer spacing, composite board fixing etc.

Leon Geyer, Kabega Park

Ed replies: Thank you for reaching out with your query about installing a deck in your garden with the specific considerations of the East-West positioning of your L-shaped house in Gqeberha, particularly the exposure to moisture during winters. Going the composite route and opting for a galvanized support structure is indeed a wise choice given the environmental conditions. Here's some guidance on your proposed project:

Suitability of composite decking: Composite decking is an excellent choice for environments with high moisture levels, such as Gqeberha during winters. Unlike traditional wood, composite materials are

resistant to rot, mould, and insects. They also require less maintenance, making them an ideal option for a deck exposed to significant moisture.

Galvanized support structure: Using a galvanized support structure, similar to the one used for carports, is a robust choice. Galvanized steel is known for its corrosion resistance, making it suitable for outdoor applications. Ensure that the galvanized structure is appropriately treated to withstand the specific weather conditions of your area.

Bearer spacing: Bearer spacing is a critical factor in ensuring the stability and longevity of your deck. The spacing depends on the type and brand of composite decking you choose. However, a common guideline is to space bearers no more than 400mm apart. Always refer to the specific recommendations provided by the composite decking manufacturer, as they may have variations in their guidelines.

Composite board fixing: When fixing composite boards to the bearers, it's essential to follow the manufacturer's guidelines for spacing, fasteners, and installation. Composite boards often have specific requirements to prevent warping or sagging. Stainless steel screws or hidden fastening systems designed for composite decking are typically recommended.

Additional tips:

Ventilation: Ensure proper ventilation underneath the deck to allow air circulation and prevent moisture

buildup. This is especially crucial in a region with high humidity.

Slope: Design the deck with a slight slope away from the house to encourage water runoff and prevent pooling.

Sealing cut edges: If you need to cut composite boards during installation, seal the cut edges with a recommended sealant to maintain the board's integrity.

Professional consultation: Consider consulting with a local professional or a deck specialist who is familiar with the climate and environmental conditions in Gqeberha. They can provide tailored advice based on your specific situation.

By combining composite decking with a galvanized support structure

and adhering to proper installation practices, you can create a durable, low-maintenance deck that withstands

the challenges posed by the east-west positioning of your house and the moisture levels in Gqeberha.



Handing over the baton

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to you today with a mix of gratitude for the years of inspiration your magazine has provided and a heavy heart as I share a personal challenge that has recently come my way.

I have been an avid reader of your publication for many years, drawing inspiration and knowledge from the incredible projects, step-by-step guides, and expert advice shared within your pages. As a veteran woodworker, crafting has been more than a hobby for me – it has been a lifelong passion and a source of immense joy.

However, life has thrown an unexpected curveball my way. I have been diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson's disease, a condition that has begun to impact my ability to engage in the intricate and physically demanding work that woodworking demands. It is with a heavy heart that I find myself facing the difficult decision to part with my beloved tools, each of which

holds a story of countless projects and memories.

The reason I am reaching out to you is not just to share my personal journey but to express the hope that my tools may find a new home where they can continue to inspire and be put to good use by someone as passionate about woodworking as I have been. The idea of my tools contributing to the creativity and craftsmanship of another dedicated woodworker brings me a sense of solace in these challenging times.

If there is any way your magazine could assist in facilitating the sale or passing on of these tools to a deserving individual or organisation, it would mean the world to me. Perhaps a feature in your magazine could help connect me with someone who would appreciate these tools as much as I have.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the countless hours

of enjoyment and education your magazine has provided me over the years. Woodworking has not only been a craft for me; it has been a sanctuary, a place of solace and creation. I have no doubt that your magazine will continue to inspire and guide woodworkers, both seasoned and new, for years to come.

Thank you for considering my story, and I look forward to any guidance or assistance you may be able to provide.

Eddie Nel, by email

Ed replies: Eddie, thank you for sharing your story with us. Just to fill in our readers, we got in a touch with a charity who assists those with autism to build, create and craft items which are then sold to earn an income. We introduced them to Eddie who was delighted that his collection of tools could be used not only to carry on his passion of creating, but also to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who are often marginalised by society. What a heartfelt story!

Dulux's Colours of the Year: Creating a kitchen with 'home sweet home' vibes

A kitchen is essentially a soul of any home, it's where we go to nourish our bodies, it's also the part of our home where the best bonding takes place. Stories of the day are shared, reminiscing on fond family memories, and of course, peppered with a little gossip.

Taking inspiration from the recently launched Dulux Colour of the Year 2024, Sweet Embrace, which has shown how people are looking to utilise colour in redefining their place in the world, here are some of the latest kitchen colour trends Dulux has seen.

Global earthy tones to keep your kitchen warm

Global earthy tones are warm neutrals which are grounding and timeless, reminding you of home, a place that feels comfortable and safe, and combines shades of stone, soil and clay. They can help create a personal space that's familiar and embracing – somewhere we can feel snug and find comfort. They are known to bring the essence of nature and tranquillity, truly setting up the mood of the moment when you are busy cooking your favourite dishes during this festive season.

Fluid natural tones to keep your kitchen calm

These spontaneous tones evoke thoughts of nature, and the essence of what life is. Bringing together the soft greens and blues of the woods and sea, you can create a quiet kitchen where you can clear your mind, feel peaceful, hear the chirping sound of birds outside and understand the value of the simpler things. Recent Dulux ColourFutures research suggests that many consumers like the idea of bringing nature closer than ever. Consumers are looking to are looking to slow down

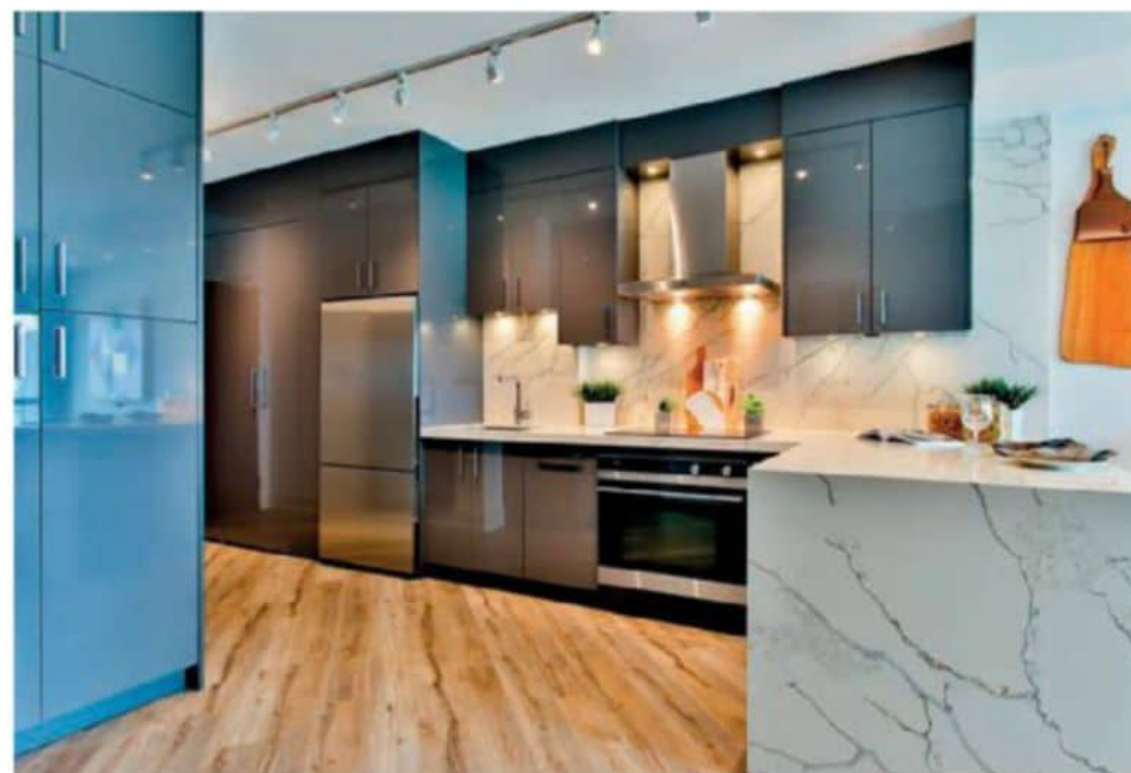
their thoughts and immerse themselves into the intricacies of preparing their food as well.

Modern pastels are known to put a smile on your face with dreamy lilacs and modern yellows to create a friendly, light-hearted space where you feel energised, joyful, and open to new possibilities.

This sets a scenery where you get your creative juices flowing to cook super dishes, and most importantly, get that much-needed joy you crave when preparing food for your family.

Discover how Sweet Embrace and the new Dulux Colour of the Year palettes could turn your kitchen into a warm and inviting space with the Dulux Visualizer App. It's the perfect companion to help provide a little colour guidance for your kitchen revamp.

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



New data reveals solar's growing market share in South Africa

A growing push to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and move towards renewable energy sources has led to trillions being invested in enhancing solar power generation capacity globally.

As of 2023, the use of solar energy in residential homes globally remains limited. In Germany, the adoption rate stands at approximately 11%, while in the United Kingdom, it is around 4%. In North America, the USA lags behind with a mere 3% adoption rate and Australia has emerged as a global leader with an adoption rate of 31% – more than double the 2018 rate of 14%.

"South Africa is still a relatively small solar player, with an estimated residential adoption rate of 3.54%," explains ooba Solar head Dominique dHotman a platform that provides consumers with solar installation quotes for comparison and assists them in securing financing for their solar projects.

"However, we are one of 40 countries around the world with a cumulative photovoltaic capacity of more than one gigawatt, a

status enhanced by our naturally sunny climate."

To better understand the residential solar penetration rate in South Africa, dHotman and the ooba Solar team analysed the estimated market potential of the residential roof top solar installations by major providers against Deeds Office data of residential properties.

While the resulting figures are informed estimates, they provide invaluable insight into size of the residential solar market and which system sizes are most popular among South African homeowners.

When it comes to which region leads the way in solar market potential, it is no surprise that South Africa's most populous province – Gauteng – comes out on top, with an estimated market share of 45.8%. The Western Cape comes in second with an estimated 24%, followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 12.6%.

"Gauteng residents have experienced some of the worst blackouts in the country, not only as a result of ongoing loadshedding but

also due to poor service delivery, resulting in many homeowners having no choice but to go off-grid,” explains dHotman.

As to which provinces are estimated to be the least likely to invest in renewable energy, the North West comprises only 2.5% of the country’s estimated solar market share, followed by Limpopo with a mere 1.9%. The Northern Cape has the smallest projected solar market share in South Africa at 1.4%.

Solar penetration rate across different price bands

When compiling the ooba Solar data to determine market share, dHotman and his team classified the various solar offerings into three distinct categories: small, medium and large. While the product specifications differ across providers, the rough definition is as follows:

Small: 3kW inverter, 5kWh battery, 2.7kWp (6 panels)

Medium: 5kW inverter, 5kWh battery, 3.6kWp (8 panels)

Large: 8kW inverter, 10kWh battery, 6.3kWp (10 panels)

“The data indicates that ‘medium’ systems are by far the most popular, comprising over 50% of installed solar systems in the country,” says dHotman.

Small systems make-up 35%, with large systems at 14.3%

“With the average medium system priced at just over R200 000, it’s clear that South Africans are willing to spend more to ensure increased solar resilience,” he adds.

The ooba Solar data gives additional insight into solar preferences across Full and Sectional Title homeowners, with the data indicating that those with freestanding homes are more likely to invest in solar.

“An estimated 68.7% of all residential solar systems in South Africa are located in full title homes – a staggering majority that may be the result of Body Corporate rules around upgrades and additions to sectional title properties,” explains dHotman.

“Here too, medium-sized solar systems are the most popular among both property types, comprising 50% of total solar systems for both sectional and full title homes.”

Much of the population remains unserved

While residential solar installation rates have increased at an exponential rate since 2021, ooba Solar research shows that an estimated 45% of the country’s households would remain unserved by roof top solar solutions because the cost of these systems would remain out of reach, even with the latest finance options.

“This points to need for other energy sources like gas being more accessible and the need for further innovation in the solar solutions available to this part of the market and to the need for additional financial products to be brought to the market to serve these households. This means that there is not currently a solar offering available on the market, be it in size or price point, to meet this segment’s needs,” says dHotman.

“As a company focused on breaking down solar barriers by easing access to both solar installation and financing, we are working to increase offerings that will meet the needs of this unserved segment and accelerate the large-scale shift to renewable energy adoption,” he concludes.

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



Need some inspiration for your bathroom makeover? Then look no further.

BATHROOM BLISS: DIY RENOVATIONS FOR EVERY BUDGET

In South Africa, where the pace of life can be bustling and vibrant, creating a tranquil bathroom space is essential for relaxation and rejuvenation. A bathroom remodel can vary from simple cosmetic changes to a complete overhaul, depending on your budget and goals. This comprehensive guide provides detailed insights into transforming your bathroom into a spa-like retreat, catering to various budgets and preferences.

Budget-friendly refreshes

Paint makeover: A new paint job can redefine your bathroom's aesthetic. Opt for high-quality, moisture-resistant paint to combat the high humidity typically found in bathrooms. Soft, soothing colours like pastels or neutral tones create a calming effect. Remember to prepare surfaces properly by cleaning and priming for a long-lasting finish.

Update fixtures: Changing taps, showerheads, and knobs is a cost-effective way to modernise your bathroom. Choose fixtures that not only complement the style of your bathroom but also offer functional benefits like water efficiency - a crucial consideration in water-scarce regions of South Africa.

DIY décor: Creative, homemade decor can add a personal touch to your bathroom. Repurpose old jars as storage containers, or create a unique bath mat from recycled materials. These small

changes can significantly enhance the room's ambiance without a substantial financial outlay.

Mid-range renovations

Tiling: New tiling can transform your bathroom's appearance. While full retiling might be expensive, focusing on key areas like the shower or backsplash can be cost-effective. For a budget-friendly alternative, consider tile paints or decals to refresh existing tiles.

Lighting: Proper lighting is vital in a bathroom. It sets the mood and improves functionality. Installing dimmer switches offers flexibility in ambiance, and LED mirror lights add a contemporary flair. Consider various lighting options, such as overhead, task, and accent lighting, to enhance the functionality and aesthetic appeal of your bathroom.

Vanity upgrades: Revamping your vanity can be a game-changer. Painting

your existing vanity, changing the handles, or installing a new countertop can give it a fresh look. For a more significant upgrade, consider replacing the entire unit with a more modern design that offers better storage and enhances the room's style.

High-end remodels

Luxurious bathtubs: A statement bathtub can serve as the centrepiece of your bathroom. Freestanding tubs, whether sleek and modern or classic claw-foot, offer a luxurious soak. Consider the size and style of the tub in relation to the bathroom's overall design and size.

Walk-in showers: A walk-in shower, with its spacious and open design, can add a touch of modern luxury. Frameless glass panels and rain showerheads enhance this luxurious experience. Consider non-slip flooring and adequate drainage for functionality and safety.



New tiling can transform your bathroom's appearance

Heated floors: Underfloor heating brings a touch of indulgence, particularly appreciated during colder months. This feature not only adds warmth but also helps in drying out the bathroom more quickly, reducing humidity and the potential for mould growth.

Personalising your space

Colour palette: Selecting the right colour palette is crucial in creating a relaxing atmosphere. Consider colours that evoke tranquillity and cleanliness, such as light blues, greens, or warm neutrals. These colours can visually enlarge the space and create a soothing backdrop.

Plants and greenery: Incorporating plants into your bathroom adds a natural element that enhances relaxation. Choose plants that thrive in humid environments, such as ferns or peace lilies. They not only beautify the space but also purify the air.

Art and accessories: Choose art and accessories that reflect a serene and luxurious spa-like environment. This could be anything from framed nature prints to elegant dispensers for soap and lotions. Accessories should be both functional and aesthetically pleasing, contributing to the overall spa-like feel.

Practical considerations

Storage solutions: Efficient storage is essential in keeping a bathroom organised and clutter-free. Innovative solutions like floating shelves, built-in cabinets, or over-the-toilet storage can maximise space usage. Consider repurposing furniture pieces or using baskets and bins for a stylish yet functional approach.

Ventilation: Adequate ventilation is crucial for maintaining air quality and preventing moisture buildup, which can lead to mould and mildew. Installing an effective exhaust fan or enhancing natural ventilation through windows can significantly improve the bathroom's air circulation.

Water efficiency: In a country facing water scarcity issues like South Africa, it's vital to incorporate water-saving features. Low-flow toilets, showerheads, and faucets reduce water usage without compromising

performance. These fixtures not only conserve water but also lower your utility bills.

DIY tips and tricks

Planning: Effective planning cannot be overstated. Measure your space accurately and create a detailed plan, including budget and timelines. Consider the sequence of tasks to avoid redoing work.

Material selection: Selecting the right materials is crucial for durability and aesthetics. Research various options and consider factors like moisture resistance, ease of cleaning, and compatibility with existing features in your bathroom.

Tackling projects: Start with simpler projects like painting or fixture replacements before moving to more complex tasks. Always follow safety guidelines, especially when dealing with plumbing or electrical systems. Online tutorials and DIY workshops can be valuable resources.

When to call professionals

While DIY is rewarding, some tasks might require professional expertise, particularly plumbing and electrical work. Hiring skilled tradespeople ensures safety and quality, especially for major renovations.

Sustainable choices

Eco-friendly materials: Opt for sustainable materials like bamboo or recycled glass tiles to minimise environmental impact.

Energy efficiency: Consider energy-efficient lighting and water heating systems to reduce utility bills and environmental footprint.

Conclusion

Creating a bathroom oasis is achievable on any budget with the right approach and a bit of creativity. Whether it's a simple refresh or a complete remodel, these DIY ideas cater to various preferences and budgets, ensuring your bathroom becomes a blissful retreat. Remember, the goal is to create a space that resonates with relaxation and tranquillity, transforming your daily routine into an indulgent experience.

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BUILDING TRUST



Embarking on a bathroom renovation project is an exciting DIY adventure, but amidst the visions of stylish tiles and gleaming fixtures, it's easy to overlook a fundamental aspect: waterproofing.

WHY WATERPROOFING IS VITAL IN YOUR BATHROOM

Waterproofing isn't just an optional extra; it's the cornerstone of a functional and durable bathroom. Here's why:

Preventing water damage: Your bathroom is a battleground against moisture. From steamy showers to splashing taps, water is everywhere. Without adequate waterproofing, this moisture can seep into walls, floors, and ceilings, causing extensive damage over time. Think mould growth, rotting wood, and crumbling plaster – a nightmare for any DIY enthusiast. Waterproofing forms a protective barrier, keeping water where it belongs and preserving the integrity of your bathroom's structure.

Protecting investments: A bathroom renovation is a significant investment of both time and money. You've carefully selected tiles, fittings, and furnishings to create your dream space. However, without proper waterproofing, these investments are at risk. Water damage can wreak havoc on expensive materials, leading to discolouration, warping, and even complete failure. By prioritising waterproofing, you safeguard your hard-earned investments, ensuring they stand the test of time.

Enhancing longevity: DIY'ers, you're not just aiming for a bathroom that looks good today – you want one that will last for years to come. Proper waterproofing significantly extends the lifespan of your renovation efforts. By preventing water ingress, you minimise the likelihood of structural issues and maintain the aesthetic appeal of your bathroom well into the future. It's the difference between a quick fix and a lasting transformation.

Mitigating health risks: Beyond the visible damage, water infiltration poses health hazards. Damp environments are breeding grounds for mould and mildew, which can trigger respiratory problems and exacerbate allergies. Effective waterproofing inhibits mould growth, creating a healthier environment for you and your family. It's not just about aesthetics; it's about safeguarding your wellbeing.

Simplifying maintenance: Let's face it – nobody enjoys scrubbing mouldy grout or dealing with water-damaged surfaces. Proper waterproofing minimises the need for extensive maintenance, making your life as a DIYer much easier. With fewer headaches to contend with, you can spend more time enjoying your newly renovated bathroom and less time battling the consequences of moisture intrusion.

Preserving aesthetics: Your bathroom should be a sanctuary of style and comfort, not a battleground against water stains and crumbling walls. Waterproofing preserves the aesthetic integrity of your design, ensuring that your carefully chosen tiles and finishes remain pristine for years to come. Whether you opt for sleek minimalism or traditional charm, effective waterproofing allows your design vision to shine without compromise.

Boosting property value: For DIY'ers with an eye on the future, waterproofing isn't just about personal satisfaction – it's an investment in your property's value. A well-maintained, water-resistant bathroom adds significant appeal to potential buyers, enhancing the marketability and resale value of your home. By prioritising waterproofing during your renovation project, you're not just improving your living space; you're also safeguarding your financial assets.

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For many DIY enthusiasts, their biggest dream is to have a fully-equipped workshop.

DRILLING TECHNIQUES FOR THE DIY'ER

Embarking on a DIY project can be an exhilarating experience. Among the many skills a DIYer must possess, drilling is fundamental. Whether it's for creating a pilot hole, assembling furniture, or more complex home improvements, effective drilling techniques are essential for achieving professional-looking results. This comprehensive guide aims to equip you with the knowledge and skills required to handle various drilling tasks with confidence.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR TOOLS

Drills and their uses

Cordless drills: These are the most adaptable tools for a DIYer. Ideal for a range of tasks, from simple to moderately challenging projects. They are convenient due to their portability and are suitable for drilling into wood, plastic, and light metals.

Hammer drills: Specialised for drilling into harder materials like concrete and brick. They combine a hammering action with the drill's rotation, easing the process of boring into tough surfaces.

Drill press: This stationary tool is perfect for precision work. It's primarily used in woodworking and metalworking when consistent hole depths or angles are required.

DRILL BITS EXPLAINED

For wood: Brad-point bits for precise holes, spade bits for larger holes, and hole saws for the largest diameters.

For metal: HSS (High-Speed Steel) bits are the standard. Cobalt bits for harder metals and step bits for creating different sized holes.

For masonry: Masonry bits are used, typically with a hammer drill. The tip is designed to pulverise the concrete as it drills.

BASIC DRILLING TECHNIQUES

1. Marking and measuring

Marking: Use a sharp pencil or marking tool. For tiles or glass, a marker or a piece of masking tape can help the drill bit grip at the start.

Measuring: Double-check measurements before drilling. Use a ruler or a tape measure for accuracy.

2. Setting up your drill

Bit installation: Ensure the bit is tightly secured in the chuck. The bit should be perfectly straight.

Power and torque settings: For cordless drills, adjust the power setting according to the material. Higher torque for harder materials; lower for softer ones.

3. Starting the hole

Technique: Hold the drill firmly. Start with a low speed to create a dimple; this prevents the drill bit from wandering.

Pressure: Apply gentle, consistent pressure. Let the bit do the work rather than forcing it through the material.

4. Drilling the hole

Maintaining speed: Keep a steady pace. If the drill has a speed setting, adjust as needed based on material resistance.

Clearing debris: Regularly withdraw the bit slightly to clear debris, especially when drilling into wood or metal.

5. Finishing the drill

Depth control: If precise depth is required, use a drill stop or masking tape on the bit as a visual guide.

Completing the hole: Ease off the pressure as you reach the desired depth to avoid breakouts or damage.

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

1. Drilling into hard surfaces

Steady pace: Keep a consistent speed; too fast can overheat the bit, too slow won't penetrate effectively.

Lubrication: For metal, use a cutting oil to reduce heat and prolong the life of the bit.

2. Angled drilling

Using a drill guide: This ensures the angle remains consistent throughout the drilling process.

Homemade jigs: For repeated angled holes, a custom-made jig can be a handy tool.

3. Drilling large holes

Pilot holes: Start with a smaller bit to guide the larger bit.

Special bits: Use a spade bit, forstner bit, or hole saw for wood; step bit for metal.

MAINTENANCE AND CARE

Bit care: Keep bits sharp and clean. Store them properly to avoid damage.

Drill maintenance: Regularly check and clean your drill. Battery-powered drills should be charged and stored according to the manufacturer's guidelines.

Drilling is a skill that, once mastered, opens up a world of DIY possibilities. By understanding your tools, practicing the techniques, and adhering to safety protocols, you can tackle a wide array of projects with precision and confidence. Remember, patience and practice are key to refining your drilling skills.

BUYING A DRILL

When you are looking to purchase a drill, there are several key factors to consider to ensure that the tool not only meets their current needs but is also versatile enough for future projects. Here's a detailed guide on what to look for:

1. Type of drill

Cordless vs. corded: Cordless drills offer more mobility and are convenient for most household tasks. However, they may have less power than corded drills and require battery management. Corded drills provide consistent power and are ideal for longer, more demanding tasks.

Drill/driver vs. hammer drill: A drill/driver is suitable for general-purpose drilling and driving screws. A hammer drill, which includes a hammering action, is necessary for drilling into masonry and concrete.

2. Power and battery

Voltage: Indicates the power of the drill. For light tasks like screwdriving and drilling into soft materials, 12-18 volts might suffice. For more demanding tasks, look for 18-20 volts or more.

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Battery type and life: Lithium-ion batteries are preferable due to their lighter weight and longer life. Check the ampere-hour (Ah) rating – a higher rating means longer battery life.

3. Speed and torque

Variable speed control: This allows for greater control over drilling and driving. A lower speed is better for driving screws, while a higher speed is needed for drilling.

Torque settings: Adjustable torque is useful for driving screws without stripping them. More settings give finer control over the power applied to different materials.

4. Chuck size and type

Size: Common sizes are 3/8 inch (suitable for light tasks) and 1/2 inch (for heavier tasks). The size determines the maximum shank diameter of the drill bit that can be used.

Type: Keyless chucks are convenient for easy hand-tightening and changing of bits.

5. Ergonomics and comfort

Weight and balance: A lighter drill reduces fatigue, but it should also feel balanced in your hand.

Grip: Look for a comfortable grip, preferably with a non-slip surface.

Compact design: In tight spaces, a more compact drill can be advantageous.

6. Additional features

Built-in LED light: Useful for illuminating your workspace, especially in tight or poorly lit areas.

Brushless motor: Offers more efficiency and durability than brushed motors, as well as better battery life.

Additional accessories: Some drills come with extra batteries, a carrying case, or a set of drill bits.

7. Brand and warranty

Reputable brands: Opt for well-known brands with good reviews.

Warranty: A longer warranty period can be indicative of the manufacturer’s confidence in their product.

8. Price vs. usage

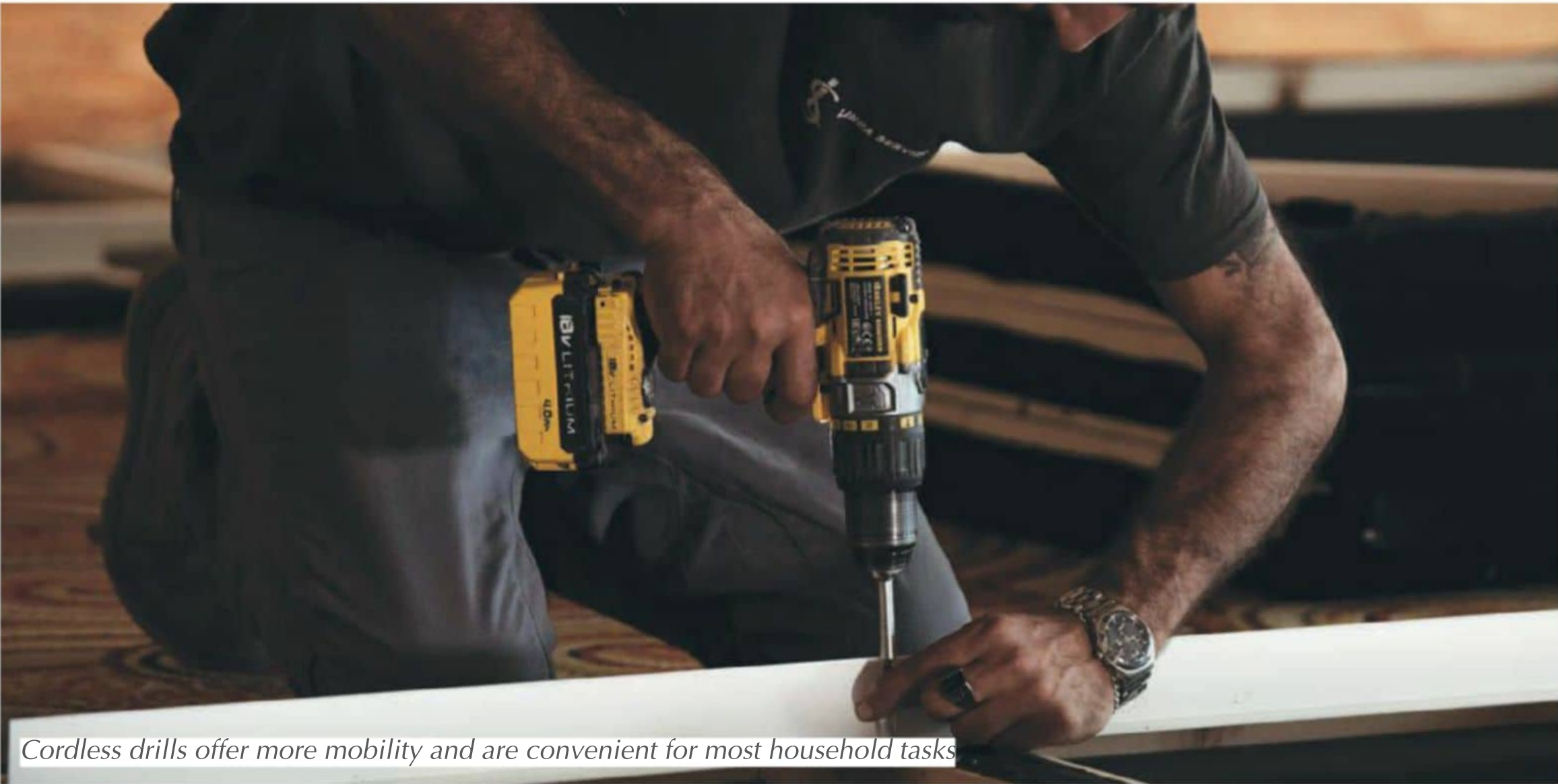
Budget vs. needs: Balance your budget with your anticipated usage. If you plan to use the drill frequently for a variety of tasks, it may be worth investing in a more expensive model with more features and power.

Choosing the right drill requires a balance of power, features, comfort, and price. By carefully considering these factors, DIY enthusiasts can select a drill that not only meets their immediate needs but also serves them well in future projects. Remember, the best drill for you is the one that fits your specific DIY needs and preferences.



Protective gear: Always wear safety goggles and ear protection. Consider a dust mask for particularly dusty materials.

Secure material: Clamp down the material to prevent movement while drilling.



Cordless drills offer more mobility and are convenient for most household tasks

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WMORTI007

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MAC AFric MORTICE
LOCK FITTING JIG KIT
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TT00LB085

R1695
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This is a project my mom has wanted me to build ever since she and my sisters found their succulent obsession.

SUCCULENT PLANTER FROM PALLETS

>> Ryan Maddison



What you will need

- An old pallet, preferably one with wide (14mm) boards on the top and bottom
- Black plastic or flex seal
- Hot glue or silicone
- A reciprocating saw
- A sander
- A mitre saw
- A brad nailer
- A planer (optional)
- Wood glue
- Clamps
- A tape measure



Since my mom likes rustic things, we decided to build this project out of an old pallet. This made things a little more difficult, because some of the boards were quite warped. However, it worked out fairly well in the end.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Prepare the boards

First, you'll need to get the boards off the pallet. I used a reciprocating saw to cut the nails, but you could try to pull the nails out (you'll risk splitting the wood though). Plus, she liked the nail heads to go with the rustic look.

Once you have about five boards, you'll need to sand them down. I started with 50 grit, then stepped it up to 120. Now, you'll need to leave three boards the same length, and then the other two will be for cutting up. Make sure the three whole boards are all the same length and width because these will become the sides and bottom. In my case, I had to plane the edge down on one of the sides, because it was wider than the other.

All this depends on the condition of your pallet. I can't give accurate

measurements for the ends and the top, because it depends on the size of the pallet boards. For the boxes on both ends you just have to play by ear, so to speak.

Step 2: Put it together

Okay, now to assemble it. Lay the board you want to use for the bottom on a flat surface. Run a bead of wood glue along one side of it, and clamp one of the sides as shown.

Now, shoot a few brad nails into the joint making sure they go all the way into the bottom board (they will tend to shoot out the top or bottom of the board). Next, do the same for the other side.

Cut a piece off one of your remaining boards, cutting it as long as the bottom board is wide (usually about 14mm) and put it in as shown. This is the top of one of the little boxes on the ends. (If you don't build the

boxes, this project will be a lot easier) do the same on the other side, and nail them both in. For the ends, cut a piece that is as long as your box is wide. Attach as shown in the pictures. Do the same on the other end.

To complete the box, you'll need to close off the last side, the one inside the box. For me, this was the hardest part, because my sides were bowed in, so cutting a board to fit was hard. However,

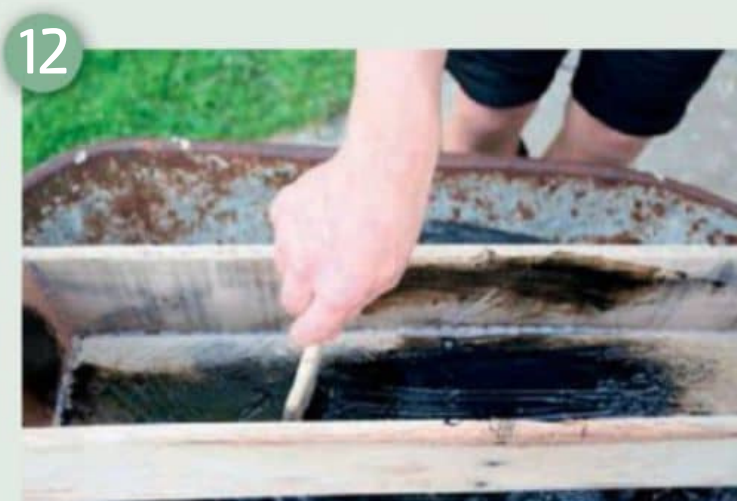
with a lot of sanding and some brute force, I was able to make them fit. Then I hot glued the seams to fill any gaps, and then painted the whole inside with flex seal. You could try to use black plastic to cover the inside, but flex seal was really easy and will work a lot better. Lastly, we used stain on the outside, but you could paint it, or just leave it plain.

Step 3: Finished!

Once the flex seal has dried and cured

(24 hours) you can plant whatever you want in your planter! This was where I came out of the equation. My mom and sisters put gravel in the bottom for drainage, filled it with a mixture of sand and cactus soil and then planted a bunch of succulents in it.

It now graces the dining room table as a centerpiece. She is so happy with the way it turned out, and I am glad to have it complete!



1. I used a reciprocating saw to cut the nails 2. Sand down the boards 3. Run a bead of wood glue along one side 4. Line up the pieces 5. Shoot a few brad nails into the joint 6. Cut a piece off one of your remaining boards 7. Attach it to the box as shown 8. For the ends, cut a piece that is as long as your box is wide 9. To complete the box, you'll need to close off the last side 10. I hot glued the seams to fill any gaps 11. Don't forget the sides 12. I painted the whole inside with flex seal



Whether it's a small repair, a creative craft, or a significant construction task, having the appropriate adhesive on hand will contribute to the overall quality and durability of the finished product.

Essential adhesives FOR EVERY HANDYMAN

In the world of do-it-yourself (DIY) projects, having the right tools is crucial, and among them, adhesives play a pivotal role. From mending broken items to creating new masterpieces, a well-stocked DIY toolkit should always include a variety of adhesives. In this article, we'll explore the essential adhesives every DIY enthusiast should have in their arsenal, providing insights into their applications and highlighting the importance of using the right adhesive for the right job.

Super glue (Cyanoacrylate adhesive)

Super glue, or cyanoacrylate adhesive, is a must-have in any DIY toolkit. Its quick-bonding properties make it ideal for fixing small items like ceramics, glass, plastic, and metal. Whether you're repairing a broken vase or piecing together a delicate model, super glue ensures a strong and fast bond. It's important to note that a little goes a long way with this adhesive, so use it sparingly to avoid messy results.

Use it for: Repairing broken ceramics, fixing glassware, bonding plastic components, assembling model kits, securing small metal parts, quick fixes on various household items like toys, frames, or decorative items.

Wood glue

For woodworking projects, wood glue is indispensable. It forms a

strong bond on porous surfaces like wood, plywood, and MDF (Medium Density Fibreboard). When used correctly, wood glue creates a joint that can be even stronger than the wood itself. It's crucial to apply even pressure and allow sufficient drying time for the glue to set. Wood glue is versatile, suitable for both indoor and outdoor projects, making it an essential component in any DIY enthusiast's toolkit.

Use it for: Crafting wooden furniture, assembling wooden cabinets, joining wood pieces for carpentry projects, creating wooden crafts, repairing wooden frames, bonding wooden veneers, laminating plywood, and constructing wooden structures.

Epoxy resin

Epoxy resin is a powerful adhesive with a wide range of applications. Its versatility makes it ideal for bonding different materials, including metal, glass, ceramics, and plastics. Epoxy resin creates a durable and waterproof bond, making it suitable for projects that require strength and resilience. It often comes in two parts that need to be mixed before application, and it's crucial to follow the manufacturer's instructions for the best results. Epoxy resin is commonly used in crafting, jewellery making, and for repairs that demand a long-lasting bond.

Use it for: Crafting jewellery with metal and gemstones, repairing glass or ceramic items, creating durable outdoor sculptures, bonding dissimilar materials such as metal to plastic, encapsulating objects for a glossy finish, and crafting custom-shaped items using moulds.

Contact adhesive

Contact adhesive is a flexible and strong adhesive that's perfect for bonding large surfaces like laminates, veneers, and plastics. It forms an instant bond when the two surfaces coated with the adhesive come into contact. This makes it particularly useful for projects where precision is key. Contact adhesive is commonly used in carpentry and DIY projects involving furniture and home decor. It's important to apply the adhesive evenly on both surfaces and allow it to become tacky before bringing the pieces together for a secure bond.

Use it for: Applying laminate on kitchen countertops, bonding veneer on furniture surfaces, attaching plastic or rubber trims, securing decorative panels, creating custom wall art with fabrics, and assembling large-scale DIY projects like home theatre systems or furniture pieces.

Hot glue gun

The hot glue gun is a versatile tool that uses hot melt adhesive sticks. It's perfect for a wide range of DIY projects due to its quick bonding and ease of use. Whether you're working on crafts, home decor, or simple repairs, the hot glue gun can be a lifesaver. Keep in mind that hot glue might not be the best choice for load-bearing applications or projects exposed to extreme temperatures. It's an excellent temporary solution and is easily removable when necessary.

Use it for: Crafting with fabric or ribbon, assembling DIY costumes, creating temporary fixes for household items, bonding lightweight decorations, affixing embellishments to surfaces, and quick repairs for various materials such as plastic, paper, and fabric.

PVA glue

Polyvinyl acetate (PVA) glue, commonly known as white glue, is an essential adhesive for various DIY projects. It's suitable for bonding porous materials such as paper, cardboard, fabric, and wood. PVA glue is known for its ease of use, non-toxic nature, and versatility. It's often used in crafting, bookbinding, and woodworking. PVA glue dries clear, making it ideal for projects where aesthetics matter. Keep in mind that it may not be the best choice for projects that require a waterproof bond.

Use it for: Bookbinding and paper crafts, assembling wooden puzzles, creating paper mache projects, bonding fabric for sewing projects, crafting with cardboard, and joining porous materials for lightweight DIY projects.

Construction adhesive

When it comes to heavy-duty projects involving construction

materials, a reliable construction adhesive is indispensable. This type of adhesive is designed for bonding materials like metal, concrete, stone, and brick. Construction adhesive is particularly useful in structural applications, such as securing baseboards, drywall, or subflooring. It provides a strong and durable bond, ensuring that your construction projects stand the test of time. It's important to choose a construction adhesive that suits the specific materials you're working with and follow the recommended application guidelines.

Use it for: Installing baseboards and crown moulding, securing subflooring and drywall, bonding concrete or stone for landscaping projects, constructing outdoor furniture, and joining metal components for structural purposes.

Spray adhesive

Spray adhesive is a convenient and versatile adhesive that comes in an aerosol can. It's ideal for bonding lightweight materials such as paper, fabric, foam, and plastic. Spray adhesive provides an even coat, ensuring a strong and uniform bond. It's commonly used in crafting, upholstery, and for projects that require a temporary bond. It's important to use spray adhesive in a well-ventilated area and follow the safety guidelines on the product.

Use it for: Attaching fabric to surfaces for upholstery, bonding foam for cushioning or insulation, creating collages, mounting posters, and adhering paper or fabric to surfaces in a way that allows repositioning before setting.

Silicone sealant

Silicone sealant is a waterproof adhesive that's perfect for sealing gaps and joints in various DIY projects. It's commonly used in plumbing, bathroom, and kitchen projects to create watertight seals. Silicone sealant is flexible and durable, making it suitable for both indoor and outdoor applications. It comes in a variety of colours, allowing you to choose one that matches your project's aesthetics. Proper application and curing time are essential for the silicone sealant to provide an effective and long-lasting seal.

Use it for: Sealing gaps and joints in bathroom and kitchen fixtures, weatherproofing outdoor structures, preventing water leaks in plumbing, creating custom aquariums, and bonding glass or acrylic surfaces for a clear and waterproof seal.

Building and maintaining a comprehensive DIY toolkit involves more than just having the right tools; it's about having the right adhesives for the job. Each adhesive serves a specific purpose, and understanding their characteristics and applications is key to successful DIY projects. Whether you're a seasoned craftsman or a weekend warrior, investing in a variety of adhesives will undoubtedly enhance your ability to tackle a wide range of projects with confidence and precision. So, stock up on these essential adhesives and let your DIY creativity flourish!



OUT OF SHAPE



What you will need

Materials:

Wood:

- I used pine for this project because it is easy to work with, and relatively inexpensive.
- I ordered 50mm pine online which came surfaced on both sides and was 46mm thick. I do not have a planer, so ordering like this was ideal. Most timber/hardware will have a similar product. My piece was 230mm wide and about 1000mm long.

- Wood glue

Tools:

- Table saw
- Random orbital sander

Callipers:

- Digital or dial

Angle gauge:

- A digital angle gauge may work, but typically only have an accuracy or

about 0.2 degree. I used a bevel gauge, with a bevel angle setter.

Bar clamps:

- I needed a capacity of 600mm

>> Lance Leonard

This is a concept I wanted to try after making other tessellated surfaces and cutting boards. This is essentially an end grain cutting board with three of the segments elongated to become legs. The random shape of the surface is inspired by a beehive.

This is a relatively straightforward project that only requires a table saw, sander, and accurate measuring tools.

You can take this project and add your spin to it by changing the size, number of legs, and orientation of hexagons.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Precise hexagons

The success of this project, and ease of assembly, comes down to cutting perfectly uniform hexagons. Variation

in angle or side lengths will create issues during assembly. I tried a few different ways to cut perfect hexagons and will explain what I found to be the best method.

Break down

Break down the board into shorter, more manageable, lengths of 480mm. Rip these to be wider than your desired hexagon. My height is 46mm, so I ripped these to a width of 58mm.

Blade angle

Set the blade angle to 60 degrees. I used a bevel gauge and bevel angle setter for this, but a digital angle gauge may be accurate enough.

Ripping hexagons

My method is detailed in the pictures. I wasn't able to set the fence and get perfect measurements in one shot. Instead, I created a stretched hexagon that was 'wider' than what I wanted, and then slowly snuck up on a perfect hexagon. Use callipers to check your dimensions as you sneak up on the perfect size. All my parallel sides were within 0.25mm of each other, and I still had some alignment issues during glue up.

Once the fence was set, I could use that setup to cut all the pieces. Save the off-cuts. These will be helpful later.

Cross cut

Use a mitre sled, to cut the hexagons to length. The table top is made from 37 pieces that are each 63,5mm long. The legs are each 458mm long. Use blue tape to minimise tear out.

Step 2: The legs

The legs are tapered on the table saw using a jig that rides along the fence. They could also have been shaped with a hand plane, tapered and rounded on the lathe, or even left as is.

Layout lines

At the top end of each length, draw a

line that is 63,5mm from the top. This is where the taper will start.

On the bottom end of each leg, draw a concentric hexagon that is 6mm inset on each side.

Find the centre of each side, and draw a second hexagon that is inscribed, and rotated 60 degrees. This will become the bottom of the leg.

The jig

The jig is made from 20mm plywood that is 150mm x 500mm.

The left edge of the jig will touch the inside of the blade, and will be your reference to know where to line up the tapers.

Use your layout lines and a square to line up the where the taper begins and ends. Glue support blocks in place to keep each leg at that angle. Install toggle clamps to hold in place.

The cut

It will be easiest to make each cut on all the legs before moving to the next cut as each setup is slightly different. Begin by cutting two opposite sides on all of the legs. Save the cut offs.

Rotate the leg 60 degrees, and glue in one of the cut offs for support. Adjust the toggle clamp.

For the next four cuts you will continue to rotate the leg 60 degrees. Add shims between the leg and the stop to keep the leg in the correct spot and secure.

Step 3: Glue up

Errors will compound and telegraph through the table. As you glue up each piece, take time to make sure each piece fits correctly.

Glue, clamp, clean

Begin by gluing and clamping four hexagons. The opposing clamping pressure will help keep the pieces aligned. This will be near the centre of the table.

Thoroughly wipe away any squeeze

out, as this would interfere with subsequent pieces.

I added a couple pieces at a time over the course of several days following a plan that I came up with beforehand.

Clamping cauls

Use the off cuts from when you created the hexagons to make corner cauls.

Glue two strips to a piece of plywood backer.

This will help keep clamps on the corners, and will help avoid damaging the corners.

Step 4: Sanding

Underside

Sand the underside of the table with a random orbital sander. I used 80, 120 and 220 grit. This area will be hard to sand once the legs are on.

Top

Sand the top with 80. You will do a final sanding once the legs are attached.

Edges

Sand the edges with 120 and then 220 grit sandpaper. Use a sanding block on the outside faces. Glue sandpaper to one of your cut-offs to get into tighter areas.

Legs

Sand the legs being careful not to round over the tapered facets. Break the edges at the feet of the legs.

Step 5: Final assembly

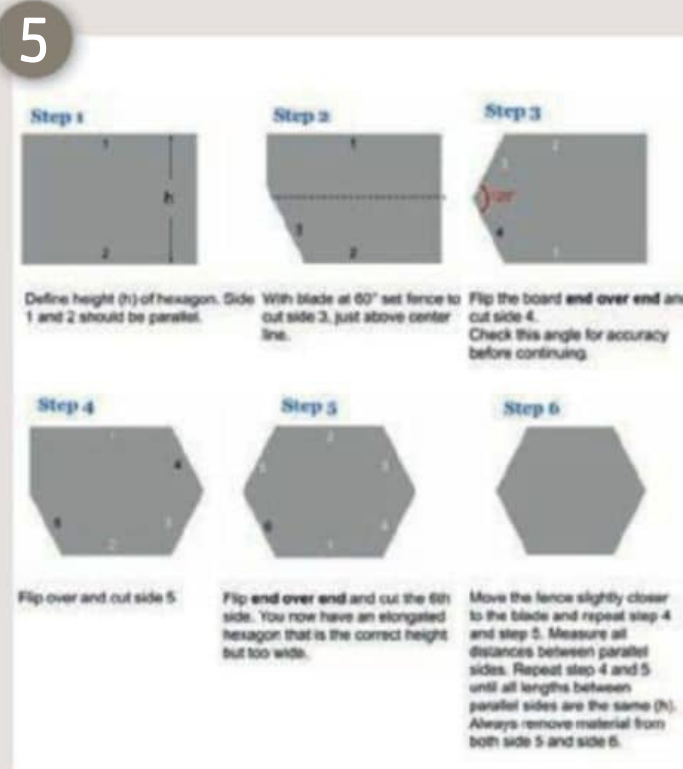
Glue the legs on, one at a time.

Final sanding

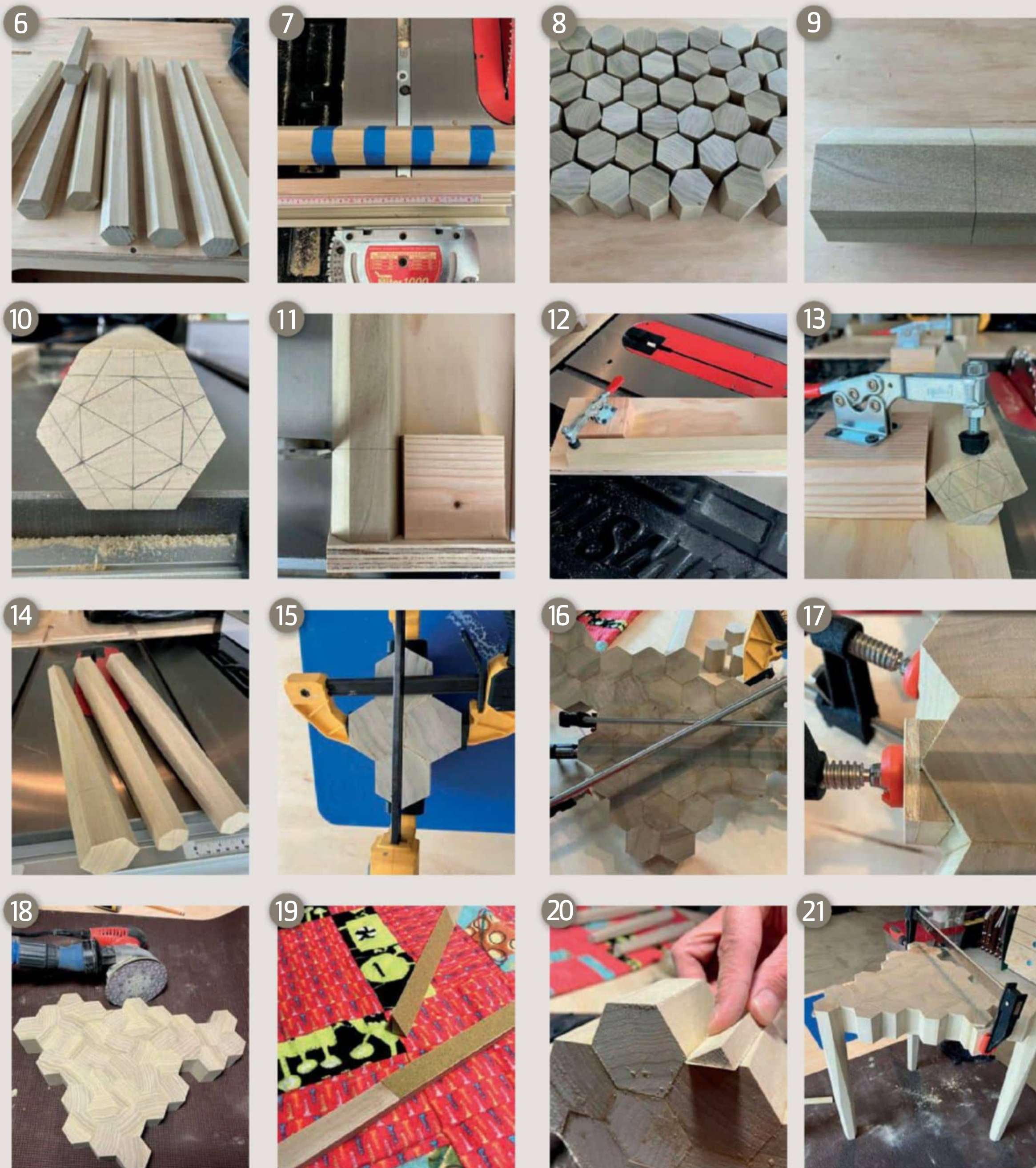
Sand the top of the table with 120 grit and 220 grit sandpaper. Complete final sanding of the edges and legs. Break all sharp edges slightly with 220 sandpaper.

Finish

Any finish is suitable. I used a hardwax oil, but would have preferred to maintain a lighter colour.



For a high res version of the drawing of this project, email editorial@homehandyman.co.za



1. I used pine for this project because it is easy to work with, and relatively inexpensive 2. All cut to size 3. Set the blade angle to 60 degrees 4. Use callipers to check your dimensions 5. How the hexagons were achieved 6. The legs are each 458mm long 7. Use blue tape to minimise tear out. 8. The hexagons cut to size 9. Draw a line that is 63,5mm from the top; this is where the taper will start 10. Find the centre of each side, and draw a second hexagon that is inscribed 11. I used a jig for the next steps 12. The left edge of the jig touches the inside of the blade 13. Use your layout lines and a square to line up the where the taper begins and ends 14. The tapers taking shape 15. Begin by gluing and clamping four hexagons 16. I added a couple pieces at a time over the course of several days 17. Use the off cuts from when you created the hexagons to make corner cauls 18. Sand the underside of the table with a random orbital sander 19. Glue sandpaper to one of your cut-offs to get into tighter areas 20. This makes it easy to sand some of the angles 21. Glue the legs on, one at a time

Make a pallet
wood armchair.

FROM DISCARD TO DÉCOR

I designed and made this chair for my wife's birthday. I wanted something elegant and comfortable that she could use both in the house and which could, with ease, be carried out into the garden.

The most difficult part of the whole build was keeping her from finding out about it.

Having enjoyed making it and with the added bonus that she loved it, I'm now thinking of making a sofa and maybe also a porch swing in the same design. However, making them as a surprise present is going to be nigh on impossible...

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Sourcing materials

The chair is made from untreated pallet wood, which I pick up easily from various tradespeople and shopkeepers, both of whom put them out for me when I go on a regular pallet run once a week. Most of these pallets are marked with an official looking brand mark but several small specialist shops I visit make their pallets in-house but these too are made of untreated or rather heat-treated wood.

Most of what we have here is pine of various qualities but on occasions we also get oak. Some lucky people can source pallets that are made of bamboo and I think this chair design would look great in that material.

Step 2: Materials and tools

The actual cost for materials in money terms for this build

was around R20, since everything was recuperated except for a small amount of glue and a few screws. The chair can be completely made with hand tools, although, as I wanted to make sure I had the chair ready for my wife's birthday, I did resort to using a router and cutting some of the planks with a circular saw.

As this was a surprise gift, using hand tools seemed a much better option and the use of the circular saw could easily be attributed to me cutting firewood. I must admit though, I am tending more and more to use hand tools as I'm less likely to make mistakes and it makes the exercise a lot more peaceful.

With reference to cutting firewood, I planed all the wood I used to make this chair and, because of this, I needed to choose the best planks I could find and those with interesting knots and grain. So, when working out how many pallets you'll need, it will very much depend on the quality of the individual wooden plank.

To give you a rough guide as to quantities, I took the best planks from three pallets to make the seat and the back rest and for the legs I took the 'stringers' from a standard pallet.

Step 3: Design criteria

My three main ideas for my chairs design were:

- That it should be fit for purpose, i.e. comfortable.
- That it should look good.
- That the arm rests should be at the optimum height for holding a book.

My choice of planks and the fact that I was going to plane

them and router certain edges had taken care of the second, and for the first I decided that I should mock-up pallets for the seat and backrest, so as to find the optimum angle and that I should, at the same time, work out the best depth of each for optimum support for the back and legs.

Step 4: The chair: a breakdown of each planed wood component and its assembly

The back comprises:

- 6 planks/slats each measuring 520mm x 90mm x 17mm.
- The planks are pinned to a wooden rectangle 595mm wide and 520mm high of 25mm square section.
- The rectangle is held together with screws and faux dowel joints (more of these later).

The seat comprises:

- 6 planks/slats each measuring 520mm x 90mm x 17mm. These are screwed directly into the rails connecting the legs at the front and rear.
- These two rails measure 25mm x 44mm x 66mm and the length includes the tenon which is one half of a mortise and tenon joint.

Each side comprises:

- A shaped arm rest fashioned from a plank 710mm x 75mm x 17mm. This is screwed into the top of each leg.
- A front leg made from a pallet stringer: 540mm x 63mm x 40mm.
- A rear leg from the same material: 540mm x 40mm x 40mm.
- A stretcher or bottom rail: 540 x 40mm x 25mm (this length includes the tenon).

The front comprises:

- The rail previously mentioned upon which the seat front sits.

The back rail comprises:

- A single length 680mm 15mm square section which is screwed into the undersides of the arm rests and into the back frame. This rail stops the chair back from pivoting on the bottom fixing screws. (It holds the back in position).

Step 5: Joining the legs to the stretchers/rails

A simple, yet very strong woodworking joint that joins two pieces of wood at right angles by cutting a slot, into one piece and fitting the other piece into it.

I first spread wood glue into the joint and cut into each leg to make an extra strong bond. The stretcher is knocked into the joint in each of the legs just by using pressure of the hand. I then placed two screws into my pre-drilled and countersunk holes and screwed them together.

Step 6: Shaping the arm rests

The width of the arm rest is just slightly wider than the front

leg and is cut to a narrower width near the rear of the arm rest.

The narrower width is just slightly larger than the rear leg. I made the transition between the two widths by making a 45 degree cut and achieved a pleasing radius by boring a 13mm hole. The two saw cuts were tangential to this hole.

Step 7: The arm rests: Using faux dowels joints to cover the screws

Although in some parts of the chair the screws were left visible on purpose, such as in fixing the slats to the front support rail of the chair seat. In other areas I thought it more pleasing to conceal them with faux dowel joints.

To this end I cut short roundels of dowel. I placed a little glue into each screw hole. I then hit the dowel home with a tack hammer.

I cleaned up the 'dowel joint' with the sanding block, added a little filler (glue mixed with sawdust) and sanded the whole joint again.

Now the arm rests are fixed to the top of the legs we have two completed sides of the chair.

Step 8: Joining the chair front and the sides: Mortise and tenon joints

A mortise and tenon comprises a peg or pin called the tenon. This is cut into one piece of wood so as to fit snugly into a slot or hole called a mortise, which is cut into the piece to be joined to it. This joint looks like a butt joint but requires no screws or nails, and is a preferred joint of cabinet makers and carpenters.

As previously mentioned, the arm rests are each screwed into the end grain of the legs and these screws are then concealed beneath a faux dowel joint.

The rear and front pairs of legs are now joined via a stretcher or rail by means of a mortise and tenon joint. This now completes the chair frame.

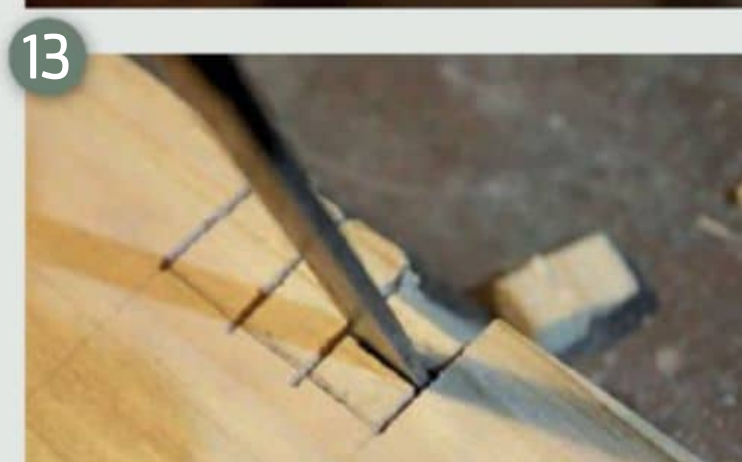
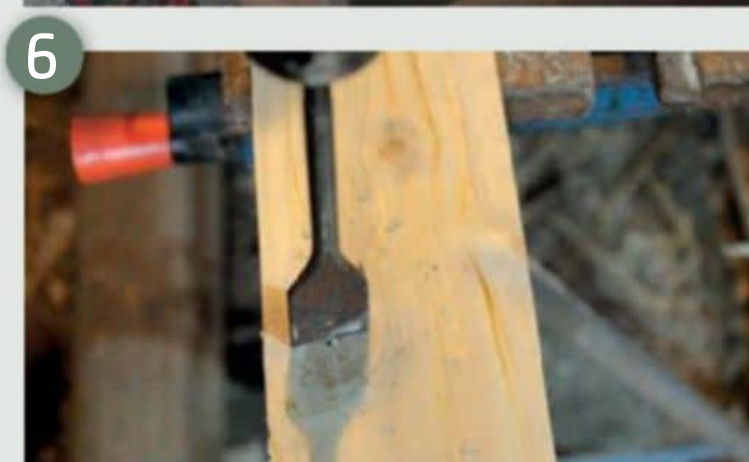
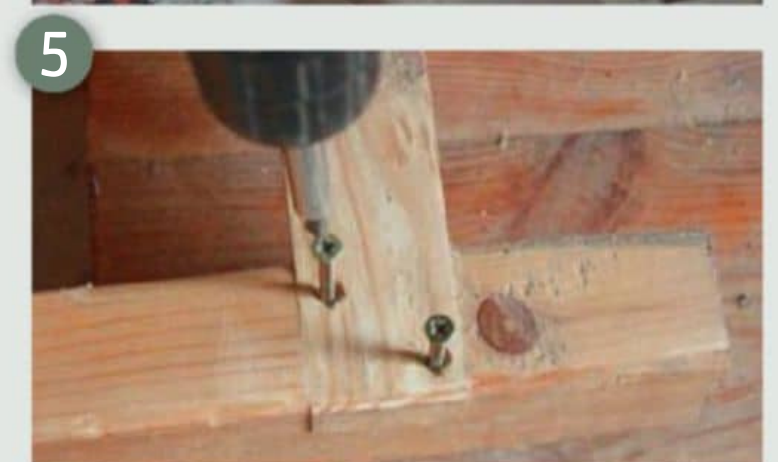
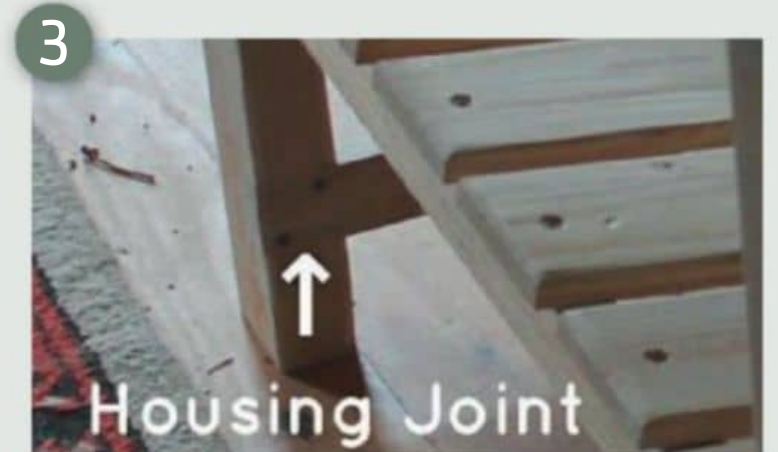
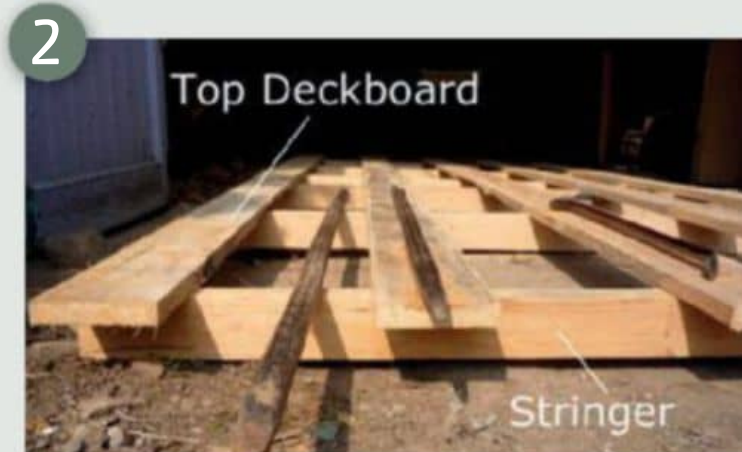
Step 9: Seat planks and chair back

The seat planks are screwed to the front and rear support rails. The planks for the chair back are nailed into position using 30mm panel pins. These were then driven home using a nail punch and concealed with a little wood filler.

Step 10: Final stages

The chair back rests on the seat planks and is fixed to the rear legs with screws. The chair back at the height of the arm rests is screwed to the back rail.

We left the pine to age gracefully, which if it is often used outside will be a most becoming silver-grey. However, you can put any finish on that you like.



1. The chair, and what parts of the pallet were used to make it 2. The pallet, and what parts of the chair it was used for 3. The housing joint 4. After disassembling the pallets, I planed them smooth 5. Screwing the housing joint together 6. Boring a 13mm hole 7. Confirming where to cut 8. The end result 9. I concealed some screws with faux dowel joints 10. Hit the dowel home with a tack hammer 11. Clean up the 'dowel joint' with a sanding block 12. Fix the armrests to the top of the legs 13. Cutting the mortise 14. A nice snug fit 15. The rear and front pairs of legs are now joined via a rail 16. A mortise and tenon joint is also used for the rail 17. The planks for the chair back are nailed into position using panel pins

Homeowners often find themselves grappling with a common nemesis – damp. We offer the solutions.

WATERPROOFING SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR HOME

This persistent issue not only poses a threat to the structural integrity of homes but also jeopardises the health and well-being of its occupants. In this comprehensive guide, we will unravel the mysteries behind damp, help you identify its telltale signs, and provide step-by-step methods of waterproofing to ensure your home stands strong against the elements.

Understanding the causes of damp

Damp is a silent infiltrator, creeping into our homes through various avenues. Identifying its root causes is crucial for effective damp prevention and management.

Poor ventilation: One of the primary culprits behind damp in South African homes is inadequate ventilation. Without proper air circulation, moisture accumulates indoors, leading to condensation on walls and ceilings. This is particularly common in bathrooms and kitchens where steam and cooking fumes linger.

Leaky roofs and gutters: Damaged or poorly maintained roofs and gutters allow rainwater to seep into the structure, creating damp patches on walls and ceilings. Regular inspections and timely

repairs are essential to prevent water ingress.

Rising damp: In regions with high groundwater levels, rising damp becomes a prevalent issue. This occurs when moisture from the ground ascends through capillaries in walls, causing unsightly stains and damage. Installing an effective damp-proof course can mitigate this problem.

Cracked or porous walls: Wall cracks and porous surfaces provide a gateway for moisture to permeate the structure. Over time, this can lead to damp issues, making it imperative to address any visible cracks promptly.

Step-by-step methods of waterproofing:

Damp issues can cast a shadow over the comfort and well-being of your home. From unsightly stains on walls to the musty odours that linger in the air, tackling damp requires a systematic approach. In this step-by-step guide, we will walk you through the process of identifying and eliminating damp in your home, ensuring a dry and healthy living space for you and your family.

Step 1: Identify the source of damp

Before embarking on a damp-busting mission, pinpoint the source of the issue. Common culprits include leaky roofs, damaged gutters, rising damp, and poor ventilation. Inspect your home thoroughly, paying attention to ceilings, walls, and the areas around windows and doors.

Step 2: Improve ventilation

Inadequate ventilation is often a major contributor to damp woes. Boost airflow by installing extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms. Regularly open windows to let fresh air circulate through your home, helping to reduce condensation and prevent damp from taking hold.

Step 3: Mend leaky roofs and gutters

Inspect your roof for any signs of damage or leaks. Replace missing or damaged roof tiles promptly, and repair any gaps or cracks. Clean gutters regularly, removing debris that may impede the flow of rainwater. Ensure that gutters are securely fastened to prevent water from seeping into the walls.

KEEPING WALLS DAMP PROOF FOR OVER 30 YEARS

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Step 4: Install a damp-proof course (DPC)

For areas prone to rising damp, consider installing a damp-proof course (DPC). This physical barrier, usually made of materials like bitumen or plastic, prevents moisture from ascending through the walls. Professional installation is recommended for optimal effectiveness.

Step 5: Seal wall cracks

Identify and seal any visible cracks in walls using appropriate sealants. This not only enhances the aesthetics of your home but also prevents moisture from infiltrating through vulnerable points. Ensure that the sealant is applied thoroughly and allowed to cure properly.

Step 6: Apply waterproofing paints and coatings

Invest in high-quality waterproofing paints or coatings for vulnerable areas such as basements or external walls. These products create a protective barrier against moisture, safeguarding your home from the elements. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for application and drying times.

Step 7: Use silicone sealants

Create a watertight seal around windows, doors, and other openings using silicone sealants. This simple yet effective measure prevents water from finding its way into your home through gaps and cracks. Ensure that the sealant is applied evenly and is well-adhered.

Step 8: Landscape for proper drainage

Assess the landscape around your home and make adjustments to promote proper drainage. Slope the ground away from the foundation to prevent water accumulation. Consider using permeable materials like gravel for pathways, allowing water to drain away naturally.

Step 9: Internal damp-proofing solutions

In areas susceptible to damp, such as basements, consider internal damp-proofing solutions. Damp-proof membranes and tanking systems can be applied to create a barrier against moisture infiltration. Consult with professionals for the most suitable approach for your specific circumstances.

Step 10: Regular maintenance checks

Prevention is the key to a damp-free home. Schedule regular maintenance checks to inspect for any signs of damp or potential issues. Addressing problems promptly will save you from more extensive and costly repairs down the line.

Conclusion

By following this step-by-step guide, you can bid farewell to damp-related worries and create a home that is both dry and healthy. Whether it's sealing cracks, improving ventilation, or investing in damp-proofing measures, each step contributes to a comprehensive solution. Take charge of your home's well-being, and enjoy a comfortable, damp-free living space for years to come.



*Damp meters are useful
tools to test for damp in
your home*

Learn how to make removable bar stool covers.

UNDER THE COVERS



What you will need

- Decking wood/pine
- Dropsaw/any saw will work
- Drill
- Wood screws
- Counter sink drill bit
- Orbital sander
- Wood Clamps
- Corner clamps
- Pocket pole jig

>> Anita Hutton

Have you ever had buyer's remorse? This project is the result of one of mine. I made my son an outdoor bar table from some recycled decking planks and fencing posts a few months ago. But unfortunately, I did not have enough wood left over to make some bar stools to go with the table. I went online and spent R1500 on new bar stools and instantly hated them once they arrived. They looked so rubbish next to the table.

I could not send them back because the postage costs were so high, so I had no choice but to keep them. So, I did the next best thing and gave the bar stools a makeover to match the table.

My idea for these chairs was to cover them with recycled decking planks so they

matched the table. The issue I had was the chairs were metal so it would be difficult to screw wood into the frame. I finally came up with an idea to make covers that would simply slip over the top and the base.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Making the base for the seat

Start by measuring the outside dimensions of the seat to get the size of the frame. I measured from the front of the bar stool to the back of the backrest. The reason I included the backrest of the bar stool was to leave a gap so the cover would slide over the backrest. This will stop the seat from slipping forward when someone gets on and off the bar stool.

Next, use a pocket hole jig and drill two holes on each end of the side pieces of the bar stools. Because I was using decking planks that have ridges on one side, I drilled the holes into the flat side. My reason for doing this was to get a more secure joint and the ridges could also be a feature on the front.

I added some wood glue to the joints and used some corner clamps to hold the wood in place while I added the screws.

Step 2: Cutting the wood

Before you start cutting all the wood that goes across the frame, test that the frame fits over the bar stool. Next, measure from one side of the frame to the other to get your measurement. I needed approximately 50 pieces for the four bar stools – this was including the pieces I had to cut a bit smaller for the top and the sides.

Step 3: Drill the holes

I wanted all the screws to be in the same position on each piece of wood so it would look nicer. But the thought of measuring each piece of wood was a nightmare for me. To make this job quick and easy I used a scrap piece of wood and made a template for the screw holes.

To prevent the screw heads from causing injury or damaging people's clothes I counter-sunk all the holes so that the screw heads did not stick out.

You can now screw the wood into the sides of the bar stool frame. Have a look for the image of how the bottom seat of the bar stool will look.

Step 4: Making the backrest for the bar stools

You will need to leave the base in place while making the backrest so you know where to start adding the

wood. I started by adding one piece of wood in the front to hold the sides in place. This will allow you to accurately measure the height and width of the side pieces of wood.

I marked out the measurements with a pencil adding 1cm to the depth of the sides to allow for inconsistency in the plastic covering already on the chair. I cut the sides to size before adding the front and back panels like I did for the

seat. Once you have covered the front and the back you can screw the last piece across the top.

Step 5: Making footrests for the bar stools

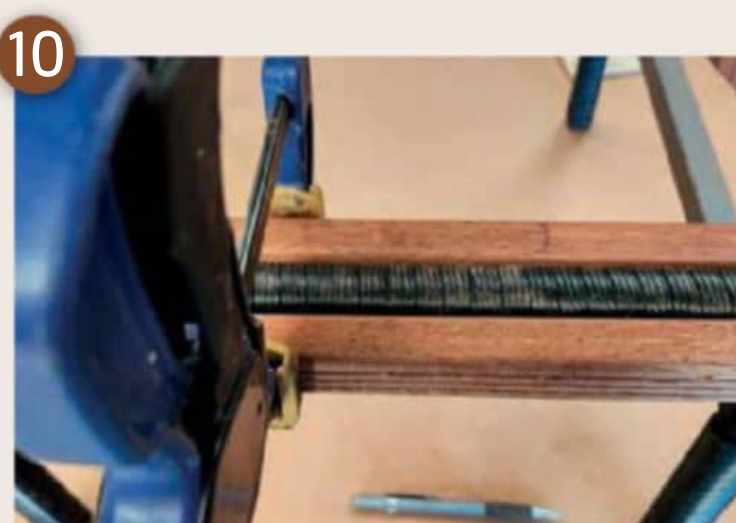
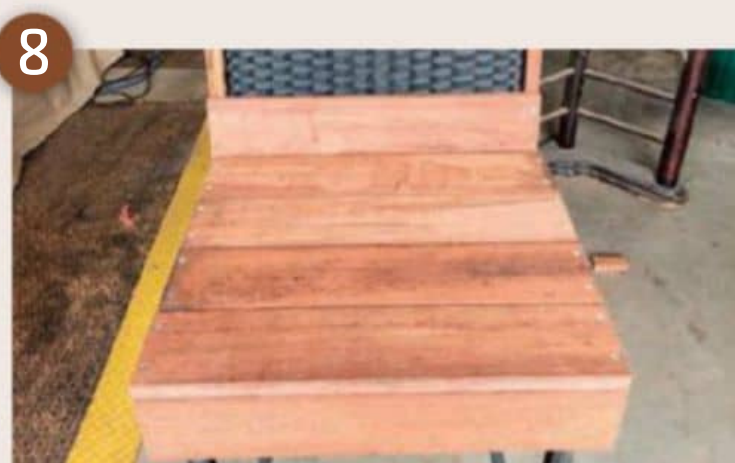
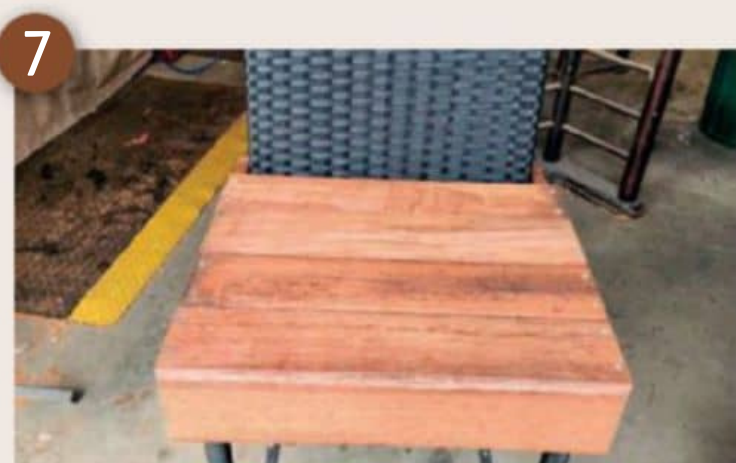
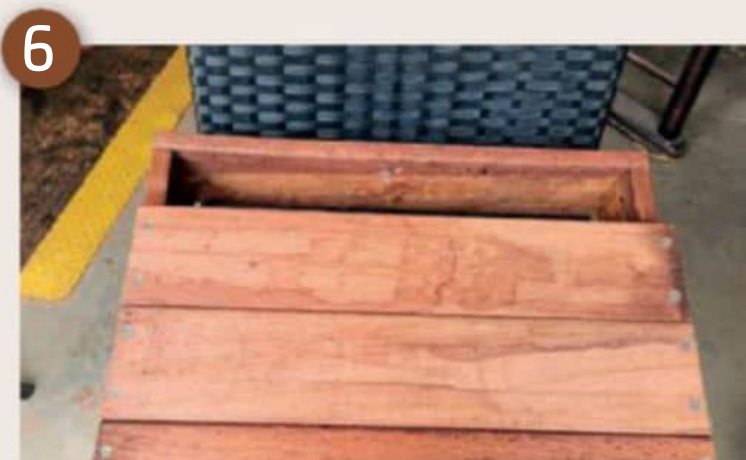
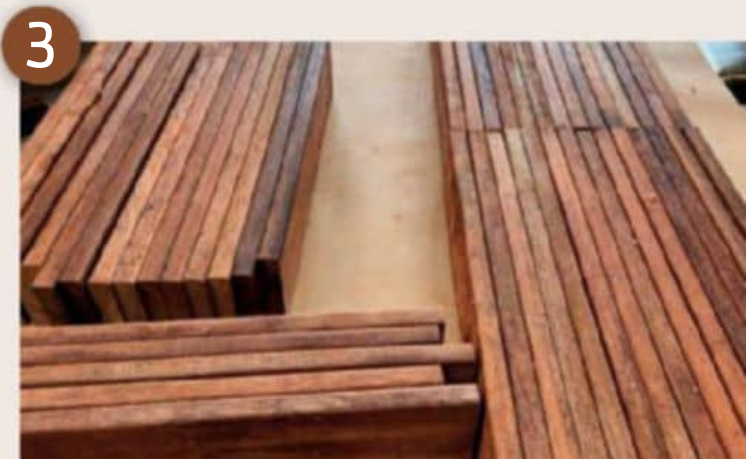
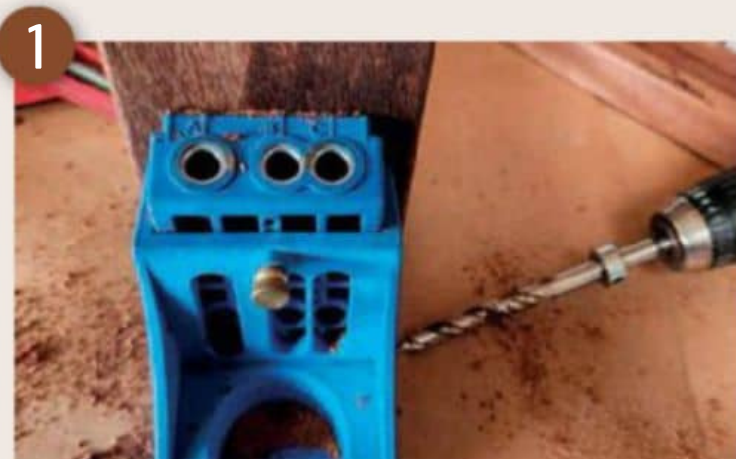
To try and balance out the wood colour I added some wooden footrests. These were created by simply boxing in the metal frame. I cut wood to the measurements of the footrest and

screwed them together.

Next, I clamped the wood in place and flipped over the bar stool and screwed in the final piece of wood.

Step 6: Sealing the wood

Finally, I used an orbital sander to remove any rough edges and to clean up some of the watermarks in the wood. I added two coats of timber oil and I was done.



1. Use a pocket hole jig and drill two holes on each end of the sides pieces of the bar stools 2. I did this to get a more secure joint 3. I needed approximately 50 pieces for the four bar stools 4. I made a jig so all the screws would be in the same position on each piece of wood 5. To prevent the screw heads from causing injury or damaging people's clothes I countersunk all the holes 6. How the bottom seat of the bar stool will look 7. Screw the wood into the sides of the bar stool frame 8. You will need to leave the base in place while making the backrest 9. To try and balance out the wood colour I added some wooden footrests 10. I clamped the wood in place and flipped over the bar stool and screwed in the final piece of wood 11. The end result – I'm much happier!



Read our comprehensive guide to decide what type of deck to install.

ALL THINGS DECKING

Decking is an integral aspect of outdoor living, especially in the beautiful and diverse landscapes of South Africa. A well-designed deck not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of a home but also provides a functional space for relaxation and entertainment. This article delves into the world of decking, exploring the various types, care, and repair methods suitable for local homes.

In South Africa, the types of decks found in homes and buildings often reflect the country’s diverse climate and lifestyle preferences.

Here are some common types:

HARDWOOD DECKS	
Hardwood is popular for its durability and natural beauty. Woods like Balau, Garapa, and Ipe are often used. These woods are resistant to rot and termites, which is essential in the South African climate.	Types of hardwood
	Popular choices include Balau, a dense wood with a rich, warm colour, and Garapa, known for its golden to yellow-brown hue. Ipe, also known as Brazilian Walnut, is prized for its extreme hardness and durability.
	Characteristics
	These woods are naturally resistant to rot, decay, and insect infestations. They are extremely durable and can last for decades if properly maintained.
	Maintenance
	Requires regular oiling and sealing to maintain colour and longevity.
	Use
	Ideal for high-end residential properties and commercial spaces looking for a luxurious, natural aesthetic.

COMPOSITE DECKS	
Made from a blend of wood fibres and plastic, composite decking is low maintenance and resistant to decay, mould, and insects. It’s a popular choice for those who prefer a deck that requires less upkeep.	Materials
	Made from a combination of wood fibres and recycled plastics.
	Durability
	Resistant to rot, warping, and splintering. They don’t require treatment against insects or decay.
	Maintenance
	Low maintenance, only needing occasional cleaning. Doesn’t require staining, sealing, or painting.
	Use
	Suitable for environmentally conscious consumers and those who prefer less maintenance.

PINE DECKS	
Treated pine is a cost-effective option and is widely used for decking. It’s treated to resist termites and decay, making it suitable for the outdoor environment.	Type of pine
	Usually treated pine, which is a cost-effective and versatile timber.
	Treatment
	Pressure-treated to resist termites and decay.
	Maintenance
	Needs regular maintenance such as staining or sealing to prevent weathering and to extend its life.
	Use
	Commonly used in residential applications where budget is a key consideration.

CONCRETE DECKS	
In areas where termite damage or wood rot is a concern, concrete decks can be a practical choice. They can be designed to mimic the look of wood and require minimal maintenance.	Design flexibility
	Can be shaped and coloured to mimic other materials, including wood.
	Durability
	Highly durable, not susceptible to rot, termite damage, or warping.
	Maintenance
	Requires minimal maintenance and is easy to clean.
	Use
	Ideal for areas where wood decay or termite damage is a major concern, such as coastal or humid regions.

ALUMINIUM DECKS	
Aluminium decking is less common but is valued for its durability and resistance to rust and decay. It's also lightweight and easy to install.	Durability
	Highly durable, resistant to rust, decay, and insect infestation.
	Weight
	Lightweight and often comes with interlocking panels for easy installation.
	Maintenance
	Virtually maintenance-free, does not require staining or sealing.
	Use
	Suitable for modern architectural designs and properties that require a durable, low-maintenance decking solution. They are also useful in areas prone to wildfires due to their fire-resistant properties.

BAMBOO DECKS	
Bamboo decking is an eco-friendly option gaining popularity. It's durable, sustainable, and has a unique aesthetic appeal.	Sustainability
	Bamboo is a rapidly renewable resource, making it an eco-friendly choice.
	Durability
	Bamboo is strong and durable, though not as long-lasting as the hardest hardwoods. It's treated for increased resistance to moisture and insects.
	Maintenance
	Requires regular maintenance similar to hardwood, including oiling and sealing.

Bamboo decking <i>contd.</i>	Use
Ideal for environmentally conscious homeowners who want a unique, natural look. Suitable for both residential and commercial applications.	

Each of these decking types offers distinct advantages and suits different preferences, environments, and budgets. The choice in South Africa often depends on factors like the local climate, desired maintenance level, aesthetic preferences, and environmental considerations.

How to care for your deck

In the southern hemisphere, where the climates range from tropical in the north to temperate in the south, caring for your outdoor deck is crucial to maintain its beauty and longevity. Whether your deck is made of hardwood, composite materials, pine, concrete, aluminium, or bamboo, each requires specific care to withstand the unique weather conditions. Here's your guide to keeping your deck in top shape year-round.

HARDWOOD DECKS

Regular cleaning: Sweep the deck regularly to remove dirt and debris. Clean with a mild soap and water solution to prevent mould and mildew buildup.

Oiling and sealing: Apply a high-quality deck oil once or twice a year to maintain the wood's natural colour and protect it from UV rays.

Avoid water pooling: Ensure proper drainage to prevent water accumulation, which can lead to wood rot.

COMPOSITE DECKS

Gentle cleaning: Use soap and water for regular cleaning. Avoid harsh chemicals that can damage the composite material.

Stain management: Address spills immediately to prevent staining. For tough stains, use specific cleaners recommended for composite decking.

Periodic inspection: Check for any loose boards or screws, as extreme weather can cause expansion and contraction.

PINE DECKS

Regular maintenance: Treated pine decks need to be sealed regularly to protect against moisture and termites.

Re-staining: Every few years, sand the surface lightly and apply a new coat of stain to keep the deck looking new.

Moisture control: Ensure proper ventilation to avoid moisture buildup under the deck.

CONCRETE DECKS

Easy upkeep: Sweep regularly and wash with a hose to remove dirt.

Sealing: Apply a concrete sealer every few years to protect against moisture and cracking.

Crack monitoring: Inspect for cracks or chips and repair them promptly to prevent further damage.

ALUMINIUM DECKS

Low maintenance: Aluminium decks require minimal care. Regular sweeping and occasional hosing down are usually sufficient.

Rust prevention: Although aluminium is rust-resistant, check for any signs of oxidation or damage, especially in coastal areas.

Secure fixings: Ensure that all railings and fixtures are securely attached.

BAMBOO DECKS

Frequent oiling: Bamboo decks need more frequent oiling than hardwood to maintain their appearance and durability.

Regular cleaning: Sweep regularly and clean with a bamboo-specific cleaner to prevent dirt accumulation.

Moisture management: Ensure the deck is adequately ventilated to avoid moisture entrapment, which can lead to warping or rot.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ALL DECK TYPES

Annual checks: Regardless of the deck material, inspect it annually for any signs of wear and tear. Look for loose boards, protruding nails, or structural damages.

Furniture care: Use protective pads under furniture legs to prevent scratches. Rearrange furniture periodically to avoid uneven colour fading.

Avoid pressure washing: High-pressure washing can damage the surface of many decking materials. If necessary, use it on a low setting and with caution.



Ensure your deck is adequately ventilated to avoid moisture entrapment, which can lead to warping or rot

DEALING WITH THE SOUTHERN

HEMISPHERE'S CLIMATE

Sun protection: In regions with high UV levels, extra care should be taken to protect decks from sun damage. Regular application of UV-protectant finishes can help.

Humidity and rain: In humid and rainy climates, ensure good drainage and airflow to prevent mould, mildew, and rot.

Termite control: In areas prone to termites, regular inspections and treatments are necessary to protect wood decks.

SUMMING UP

A deck is a significant investment and a central part of outdoor living in the southern hemisphere. Proper maintenance tailored to your deck's material and local climate can extend its life and keep it looking beautiful for years to come. Whether it's a luxurious hardwood deck or a modern composite one, giving your deck the care it deserves will ensure you enjoy your outdoor space to the fullest.



Treated pine is a cost-effective option and is widely used for decking

BRIGHT IDEAS

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



Savvy storage solution

Having long been frustrated by the clutter in my workshop, I decided it was high time to bring order to the chaos. Rather than investing in expensive storage solutions, I opted for a thrifty yet effective approach. My 'bright idea' came to life when I repurposed an old wooden pallet into a wall-mounted tool rack.

After securing the pallet firmly to the workshop wall, I gave it a new lease on life by sanding it and staining it. To ensure each tool had its designated spot, I attached sturdy hooks to the

pallet's slats. The result? A practical and visually pleasing storage solution that not only cleared the floor space but also transformed the workshop into a more organized and efficient haven for my woodworking endeavours.

This DIY project not only allowed me to flex my creative muscles but also provided a sustainable solution to workshop disarray. Now, with every tool in its place, I find myself inspired to take on new projects with the confidence that my workshop is primed for productivity.

Hendrik Hutton, by email



Radiant repurposing

I recently stumbled upon an incredible way to give new life to old wine bottles. By inserting battery-operated string lights into the bottles, I've created a dazzling display that instantly transforms my dining area into an intimate and inviting space. This simple yet effective DIY project has become a conversation starter during dinner parties, and the warm glow adds a touch of elegance to every occasion. Thank you for inspiring me to think outside the box and brighten up my home in such a unique way!

Conner Slade, by email



Sparkling chandelier from upcycled materials

Your recent upcycled Mason Jar Lamps project motivated me to take on a larger-scale endeavour – a sparkling chandelier made from reclaimed materials. I collected old glass bottles, some wire, and a handful of LED lights to create a stunning centrepiece for my dining room. The result is nothing short of breathtaking, and I'm grateful for the inspiration to turn everyday items into something extraordinary!

Stephen Jones, KwaZulu-Natal



WIN!

A Tork Craft Saw Horse set

Portable Saw Horse, Load Capacity 500Kg per Saw Horse, Working Height 730mm
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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).

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

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Congratulations to Hendrik Hutton who wins a Tork Craft Saw Horse set.



DIY popsicle stick coasters for kids.

CRAFTING FUN MEMORIES



What you will need

You don't need a lot to create these decorations. All you need is:

- Popsicle sticks (coloured or plain)
- Craft glue or hot glue gun
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrushes
- Clear sealant spray

- Felt or cork sheets
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Decorative embellishments (optional)

Engaging in creative projects with children not only nurtures their artistic skills but also creates lasting memories. In this DIY article, we'll explore a delightful project – making coasters from popsicle sticks. This easy and entertaining

craft not only produces functional items but also provides an opportunity for bonding and imaginative expression. Gather your kids, and let's dive into the world of crafting with popsicle sticks!

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Gather your materials

Before embarking on this crafting adventure, ensure you have all the

necessary materials ready. Lay them out on a clean, spacious surface, making it easy for your little ones to access and engage in the creative process.

Step 2: Design your coaster

Encourage your kids to let their imaginations run wild! Whether it's a rainbow, a smiling sun, or abstract patterns, the design possibilities are endless. Using a pencil, lightly sketch the chosen design on a flat surface where you'll arrange the popsicle sticks.

Step 3: Arrange the popsicle sticks

Begin arranging the popsicle sticks according to the sketched design. Experiment with different patterns and orientations to create an aesthetically pleasing layout. The sticks can be positioned vertically, horizontally, or even diagonally, allowing for a variety of coaster designs.

Step 4: Glue the popsicle sticks

Once satisfied with the design, carefully glue the popsicle sticks together. If working with young children, a craft glue suitable for their age is recommended. For older kids, a hot glue gun under adult supervision can speed up the process. Allow the

glue to dry completely before moving on to the next step.

Step 5: Paint the coasters

Now comes the fun part – painting! Provide a palette of acrylic paints in vibrant colours and let your children unleash their creativity. Encourage them to fill in the spaces between the popsicle sticks, ensuring that the entire coaster is covered. Experiment with different colour combinations to make each coaster unique.

Step 6: Add decorative touches (optional)

For an extra touch of flair, consider adding decorative embellishments. These could include stickers, sequins, or even small beads. Allow your kids to express their individuality by personalising their coasters with these optional additions. Ensure that any embellishments are securely attached.

Step 7: Seal the coasters

To protect the artwork and ensure durability, apply a clear sealant spray over the painted coasters. This step is particularly important to safeguard the coasters from spills and stains. Allow the sealant to dry thoroughly before moving on to the final step.

Step 8: Attach felt or cork backing

To prevent the coasters from scratching surfaces, attach a layer of felt or cork to the bottom. Measure and cut the material to match the size of the coaster, then glue it securely to the underside. This step also adds a professional finish to the project.

Step 9: Enjoy your handcrafted coasters

Once the felt or cork backing is secure, your DIY popsicle stick coasters are ready to use! Set them out on the family table, and let the kids proudly showcase their creative efforts. These coasters also make for thoughtful handmade gifts, providing a practical and sentimental touch to any occasion.

Crafting with popsicle sticks is not only an enjoyable activity for children but also a fantastic way to foster creativity and imagination. The DIY popsicle stick coasters project allows kids to explore design, colour, and texture, all while creating functional items for everyday use. So, gather your materials, set up a crafting station, and embark on this delightful journey of artistic expression with your little ones. The memories created during these crafting sessions are sure to last a lifetime.



Encourage your kids to let their imaginations run wild



You can even make coasters which look like pallets



For an extra touch of flair, consider adding decorative embellishments

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." – Pablo Picasso

ASK OUR EXPERTS

Our panel of experts answer your questions on DIY problems

How can I ensure a perfect finish when staining wood?

WINNER

Over the last few months, I have really started to enjoy woodworking, but I have been disappointed with my finish when staining wood. While the process of crafting wooden pieces has become a fulfilling and creative outlet for me, achieving that perfect, professional-looking finish has proven to be a bit elusive. Any tips would be a blessing!

Sophie van Rooyen

Ed replies: Achieving a perfect finish when staining wood requires careful preparation and application. Start by selecting the right stain for your wood type. Different woods absorb stain differently, so test the stain on

a scrap piece or an inconspicuous area first to ensure you're happy with the colour.

Preparation is key. Sand the wood thoroughly, starting with a coarser grit and working your way up to a finer grit. This will create a smooth surface for even absorption of the stain. Clean the wood of all dust and debris after sanding – even the smallest particle can affect the finish.

Apply the stain using a brush, cloth, or sponge, working along the grain of the wood. Apply evenly, avoiding over-application, which can lead to a blotchy finish. If you desire a darker tone, apply multiple thin coats rather than one thick coat.

After applying the stain, wipe off any excess before it dries. This will prevent an uneven finish and ensure the wood grain is visible.

Finally, let the stain dry completely, and then apply a sealer. The sealer protects the wood and enhances the stain's appearance. Be patient during the drying process – rushing can ruin an otherwise perfect finish.



How do I choose the right type of paint for a home exterior?

New homeowner here! Our little fixer-upper needs a repaint outside, but what would you suggest that won't break the bank, but will still hold up for a few years. We live pretty close to the coast.

Emma van der Merwe

Ed replies: Choosing the right type of paint for a home's exterior crucial, given the country's diverse climate conditions. The key is to select a paint that can withstand local weather patterns while also meeting your aesthetic preferences.

For areas with high humidity and coastal regions, opt for paints that are mould and

mildew resistant. These paints contain additives that prevent the growth of fungi, essential for maintaining the appearance and integrity of your home's exterior.

In regions with intense sunlight, UV-resistant paint is a must. These paints are formulated to resist fading and degradation from the sun's rays, ensuring that the colour remains vibrant for longer.

For general durability, acrylic latex paints are a popular choice. They're flexible, which means they can expand and contract with temperature changes without cracking. They're also easy to clean and maintain, making them ideal for our climate.

If environmental factors are a concern, look for eco-friendly paints. These have lower levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and are better for both your health and the environment.

Finally, consider the surface you are painting. Different surfaces (such as wood, metal, or plaster) require different types of paint for optimal adherence and longevity.

Remember, a good quality primer can enhance the paint's performance, providing a better foundation for the topcoat and improving the overall durability of the paint job.



A 2-in-1 drill driver from WORX

The WORX WX177 SwitchDriver is two drills in one. It performs the task of drilling holes and driving screws simply by rotating dual chucks getting your work done twice as fast.

Send your queries to:

The Home Handyman DIY Queries: editorial@homehandyman.co.za or

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

Please note: Queries will only be answered in the magazine. Prizes are not exchangeable.



Our winning query comes from Sophie van Rooyen who wins a 2-in-1 drill driver from WORX.

What wood?

Recently, I've been contemplating the idea of crafting my own outdoor furniture to enhance the aesthetic appeal of my garden. The weather here can be quite challenging, with high temperatures, occasional rain, and intense sun exposure. Therefore, I am curious to know: What is the best type of wood for outdoor furniture that can withstand the diverse weather conditions prevalent in South Africa?

Ollie Botha

Ed replies: In South Africa, with its varied climate from humid coastlines to dry interiors, choosing the right wood for outdoor furniture is crucial. Hardwoods are generally the best option due to their durability and resistance to weathering.

Teak is a top choice; it's not only resistant to rot and decay but also repels pests. Its high oil content helps it withstand the elements, making it ideal for South African weather.

Another excellent option is Balau, a heavy hardwood native to Asia but commonly used in South Africa. It's well-suited for outdoor furniture due to its density and natural oils, which protect it from weather and insects. Balau's rich colour and grain also add aesthetic appeal.

However, if you prefer a local wood, consider Saligna (also known as Sydney blue gum). Originally from Australia, it's now widely grown in South Africa. It's less expensive than teak or Balau but still offers good durability and resistance to rot and insects, making it a viable option for outdoor furniture.

Remember, irrespective of the wood chosen, regular maintenance is key to longevity. Use suitable sealants and oils, and cover or store your furniture during extreme weather conditions to preserve its quality and appearance.



Safety when working with metal

I am an avid follower of your magazine and have been thoroughly inspired by the incredible metalworking projects you have showcased. Inspired by your expert guidance, I am excited to embark on my own metalworking journey. However, given the inherent risks associated with working with metal, I am reaching out to seek your valuable insights on the safety precautions one should undertake when diving into the world of metal crafting.

Thank you so much for your time, and I eagerly await your expert advice to ensure a secure and enjoyable metalworking experience.

Thabo Moloi

Metalworker, Mark Palmer replies: Metalworking, while rewarding, involves several hazards, so taking the right safety precautions is vital. Firstly, always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes safety goggles to protect your eyes from flying debris, gloves to shield your hands from sharp edges and hot surfaces, and ear protection to guard against the loud noises often produced in metalworking.

Ventilation is crucial, especially when welding or soldering, as these processes release fumes that can be harmful if inhaled. Ensure your workspace is well-ventilated, and consider using a fume extractor or respirator for added safety.

Fire safety is another critical aspect. Have a fire extinguisher readily available, and be mindful of sparks, which can ignite

flammable materials. It's also advisable to wear flame-resistant clothing.

Be sure to use tools correctly and maintain them well. Dull or damaged tools can be hazardous. Regularly inspect and replace any that are not in good condition.

Lastly, educate yourself on the specific techniques and tools you'll be using. Consider taking a class or seeking guidance from experienced metalworkers. Knowing the correct methods not only improves the quality of your work but also reduces the risk of accidents.



Denis Lock shares experience gained from more than 70 years of woodworking practice, 18 years of freelance woodworking journalism (more than 130 published articles), 15 years of running a woodworking school and more than 600 students.

WORKING WITH WOOD

Some thoughts on measuring and measurements

I no longer have 20-20 vision. It is harder and harder to read those little marks on measuring instruments and machine scales. I have concluded that when my brain, my eyes, a measuring instrument and a piece of wood come together in space and time it is a recipe for error. The most common error is a parallax error. A parallax error is one that occurs due to the incorrect positioning of the eyes while taking a reading on a measuring scale. If the viewing angle is not at right angles to the scale at the point where we are taking the reading, we will get a measurement that is either too small or too large.

This often happens when a pointer (cursor or hairline) is raised from its scale. It also happens when the scale is raised from the item being measured. Sometimes the pointer is wider than the space between division lines. How do you position or read such a pointer? Other errors result from transposition: measure 427mm and cut 472mm. Or worse, measure 472mm and cut 427mm! Other errors result from errors of mental arithmetic: $((61,4\text{mm} + 36,8\text{mm}) = 97,2\text{mm})$ instead of 98,2mm. Incorrect zeroing of a measuring instrument pointer is another cause. Enough: I have made my point!

The old adage Measure twice, cut once is grossly overused today. It is very valid when working with hand tools where each component is individually measured, marked and cut. Sixteen measurements for the length of the legs for four stools. Today I measure once, set a stop on the fence of my radial arm saw or compound mitre saw and cut sixteen legs the

same size. The fact that they might be all 460mm instead of 450mm (10mm too long) doesn't matter. You won't notice and the stools won't wobble. In fact, it is better than (for a given table) four legs measuring, say, 448mm, 449mm, 451mm and 452mm (the result of four individual measurements and four parallax errors). The average length is 450,0mm: very accurate but boy does the stool wobble!

The word accuracy is grossly overworked by woodworkers and today's woodworking literature. I tell my students that most of the time they should strive for precision, not accuracy. Perhaps a better word (than the technical phrase precision) is repeatability. Nobody will notice that a dining room table top is 10mm short or that all four table legs on a table are all 10mm too long. The time when accuracy is required is when cutting joints such as mortice and tenon, dovetails, finger joints and the like. In fact, these joints must be cut to an accuracy of a tenth of a millimetre. This of course is also high precision.

Today's increased use of man-made boards such as medium density fibreboard (MDF), chipboard, plywood and oriented strand board (OSB) does not lend itself to traditional joinery like dovetail joints. Newer techniques such as biscuits, Festool Dominoes and pocket-hole screws are used. These tools, their usage and their companion fittings provide the precision required. The method of positioning a biscuit cutter, the kerf of the biscuit cutter blade and the thickness of commercial biscuits result in very precise joints. The same is true of the

>> Denis Lock

diameter of a Festool router bit and the thickness of commercial Dominoes. Pocket-hole joints start with two pieces of wood securely clamped with their faces flush. A single hole is drilled using a very accurate drill guide. The focus in making items from man-made boards must be on repeatably not accuracy.

Over the years the occurrence of measurement errors in my workshop has led to development of a philosophy that can be summed up as Gauge don't measure. My students hear this terse three-word phrase many times during my courses. The full statement is Gauge don't measure – unless it is absolutely necessary. There are times when you must measure and all the advice re accurate measurement is valid. The position of the dados for the shelves of a bookcase must be marked by measurement.

The subsequent widths and depths of the dados does not need to be measured and marked. A one-time setting of the router bit depth (using a gauge) and the use of an exact-width dado jig avoids the need for further measurement. The shelves themselves are used as gauges to set the width of the dados. Any variation in shelf thickness and even slight tapering is automatically catered for. Many such jigs are documented on the world wide web.

Let me explain how I accurately set the depth of the router bit. Photos 1 and 2 show the router parts that are used to set the depth of the router cut. The depth turret can rotate to present steps which are 3mm apart. The depth rod is locked with the rod lock a given height above the turret. This height is the depth the router will plunge. The manufacturer's user guide presents this technique for setting the plunge depth:

- 1 – Insert the desired bit
- 2 – Place the router on a flat surface
- 3 – Plunge the router till the tip of the bit touches the surface
- 4 – lock the router depth. The router depth is now 0,0mm
- 5 – slide the depth pointer so that it reads zero on the scale
- 6 – loosen the depth rod lock
- 7 – slide the depth rod upwards till the pointer reads the desired depth measurement. Let's say 6mm
- 8 – Lock the depth rod

There is now (theoretically) a 6mm gap between the tip of the depth rod and the turret stop. I say theoretically: it is somewhere between 5mm and 7mm. Look at Photo 3: the depth pointer is wider than the scale interval. How can you measure accurately with a setup like this. My advice is: ignore the pointer and scale and find a good 6mm gauge. What better than the shank of a 6mm twist bit (see Photo 4). That will give you an exact 6mm depth of cut.

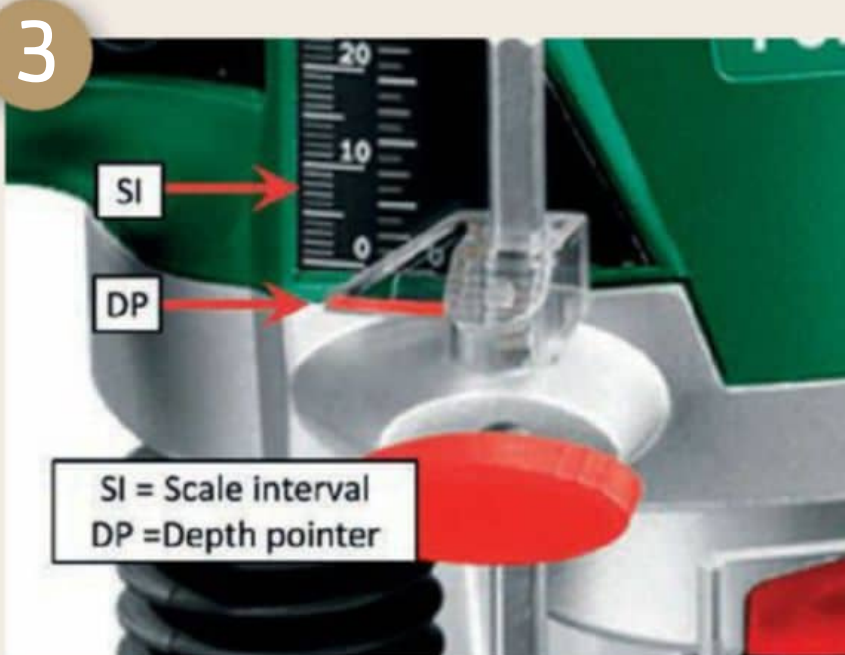
How thick is a piece of paper? If it is 80 gsm paper (standard photocopier / fax machine paper) it is 0,1mm (a tenth of a millimetre). The abbreviation gsm or g/m² stands for grams per square metre and measures the weight of paper. The weight of normal printer paper is 80 gsm. Thin card stock has a weight of 160 gsm, the stock used for business cards is generally 240 gsm. The thickness of these three weights (as near as makes no difference) is 0,1mm, 0,2mm and 0,3mm. What has the thickness of paper got to do with woodworking? I use paper and card as measurement gauges. The gauges I use fall into four groups. See photos 5 and 6.



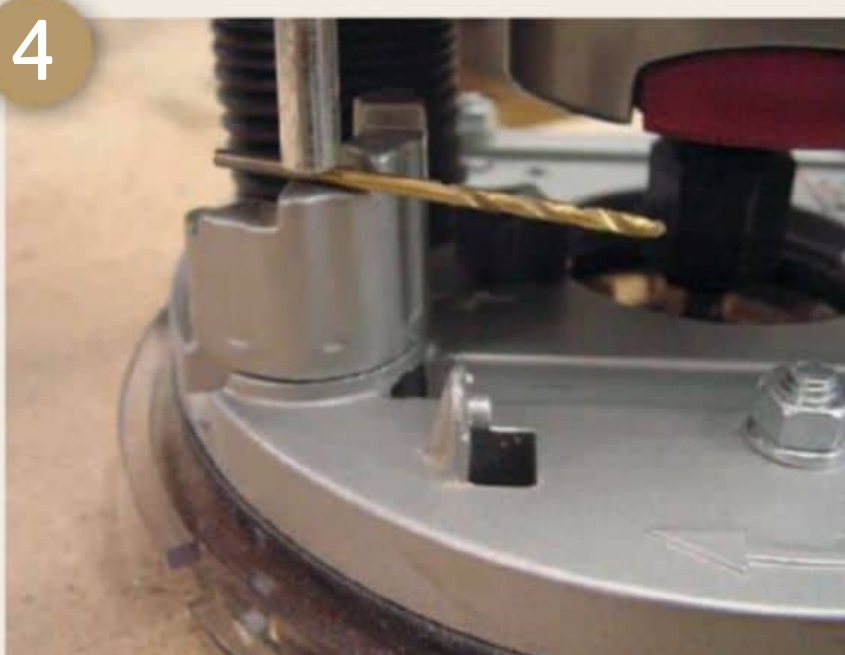
Depth setting components – I



Depth setting components – II

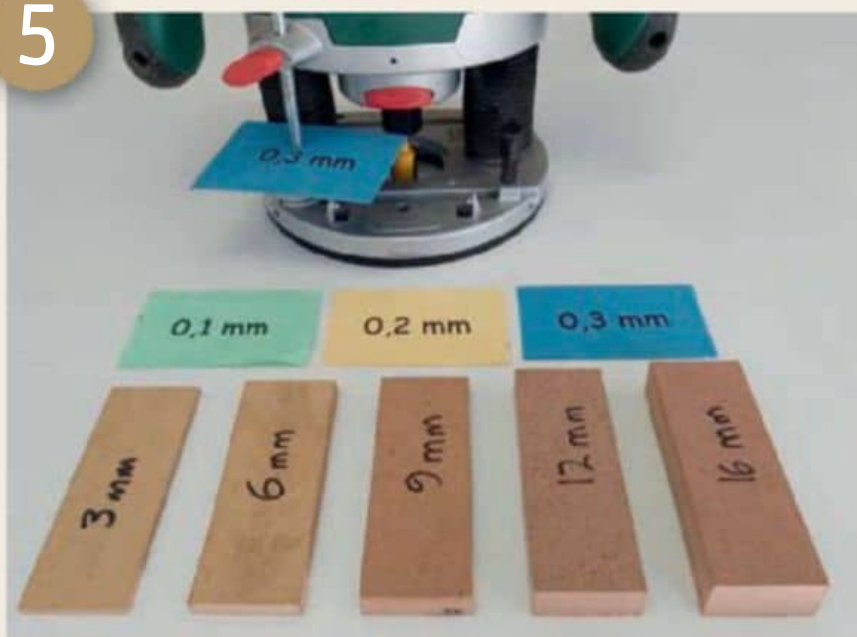


Size of depth pointer



Gauge, don't measure

5



Paper and MDF gauges

6

Useful gauges:

- Twist or spur bits
- Spade bits
- Small pieces of MDF
(3 mm, 6 mm, 12 mm, 16 mm)
- Paper, cardboard and plastic:

Photocopier paper	0,1 mm
Card (160 gsm)	0,2 mm
Card (240 gsm)	0,3 mm
Credit card	0,8 mm



Gauge categories

7



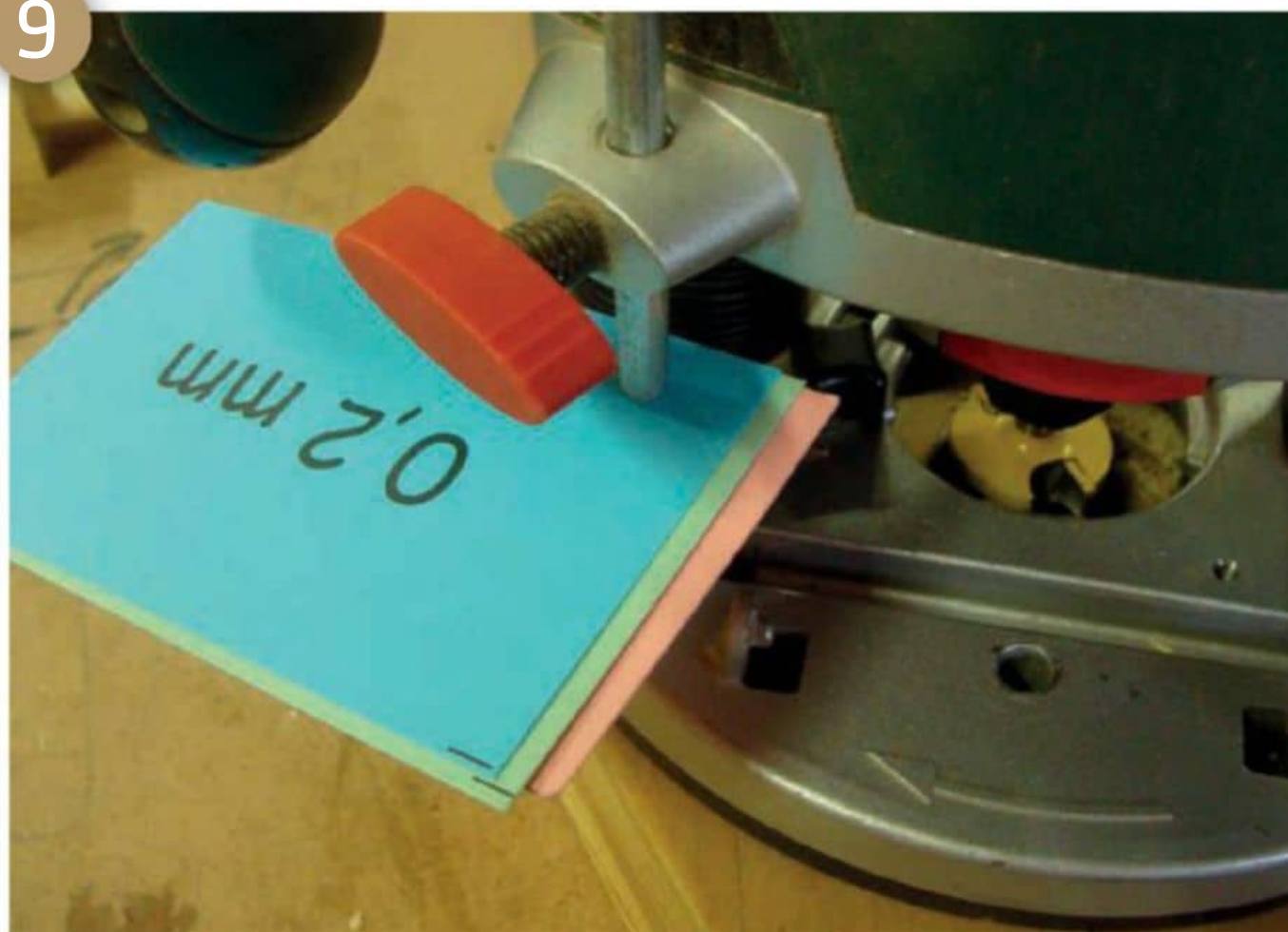
Double tangential round over

8



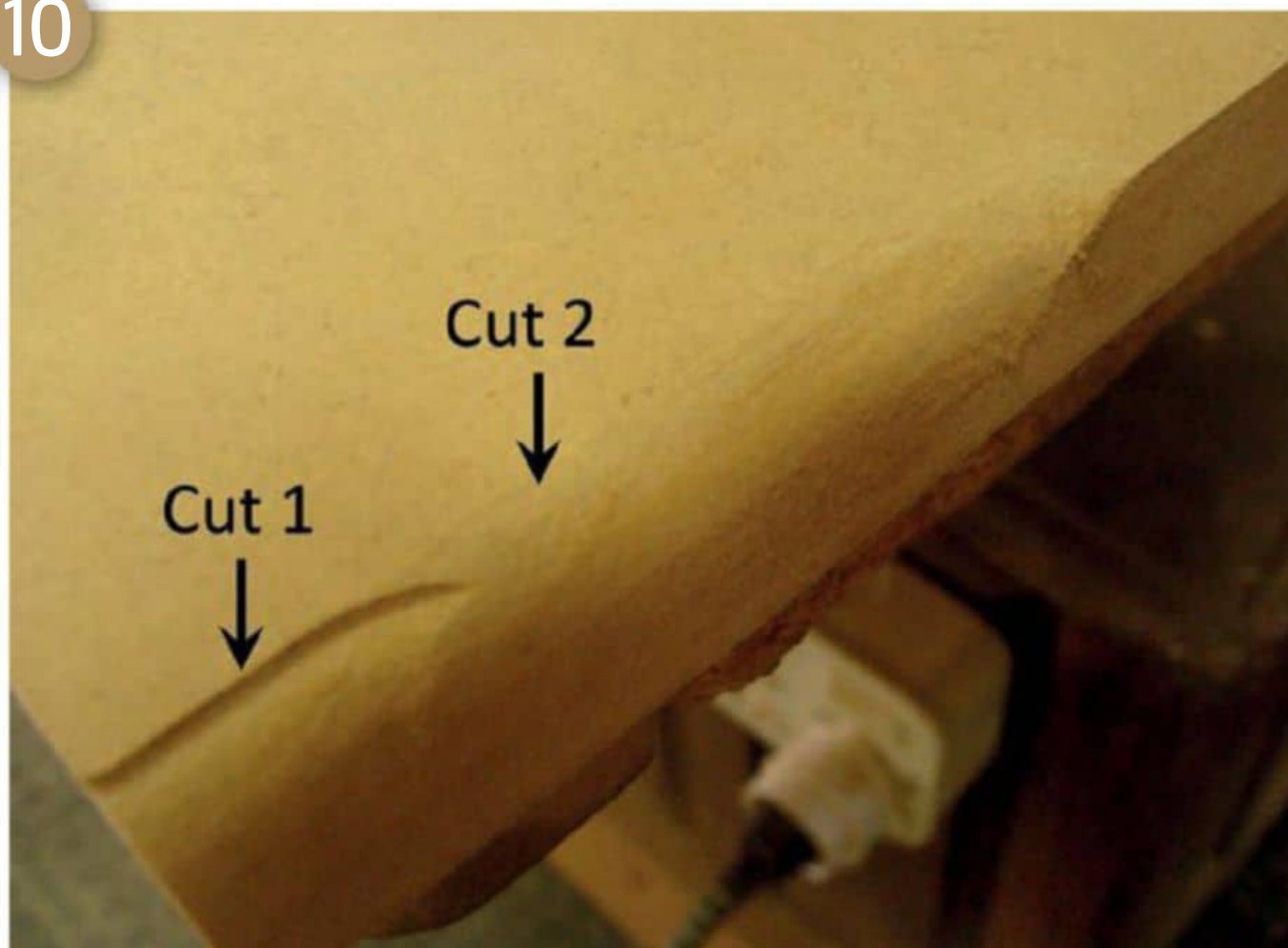
Too deep

9



Reduce depth

10



Second cut – spot on

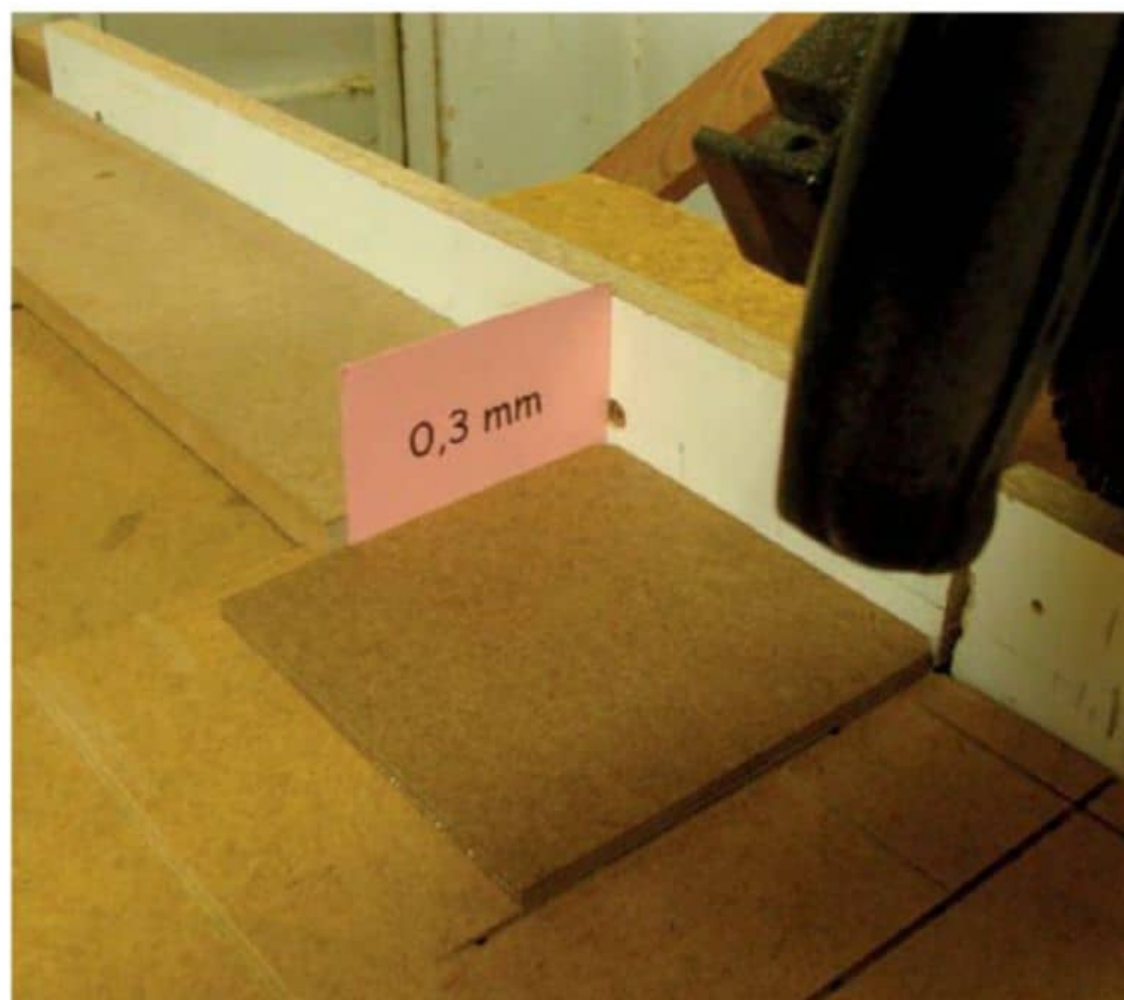
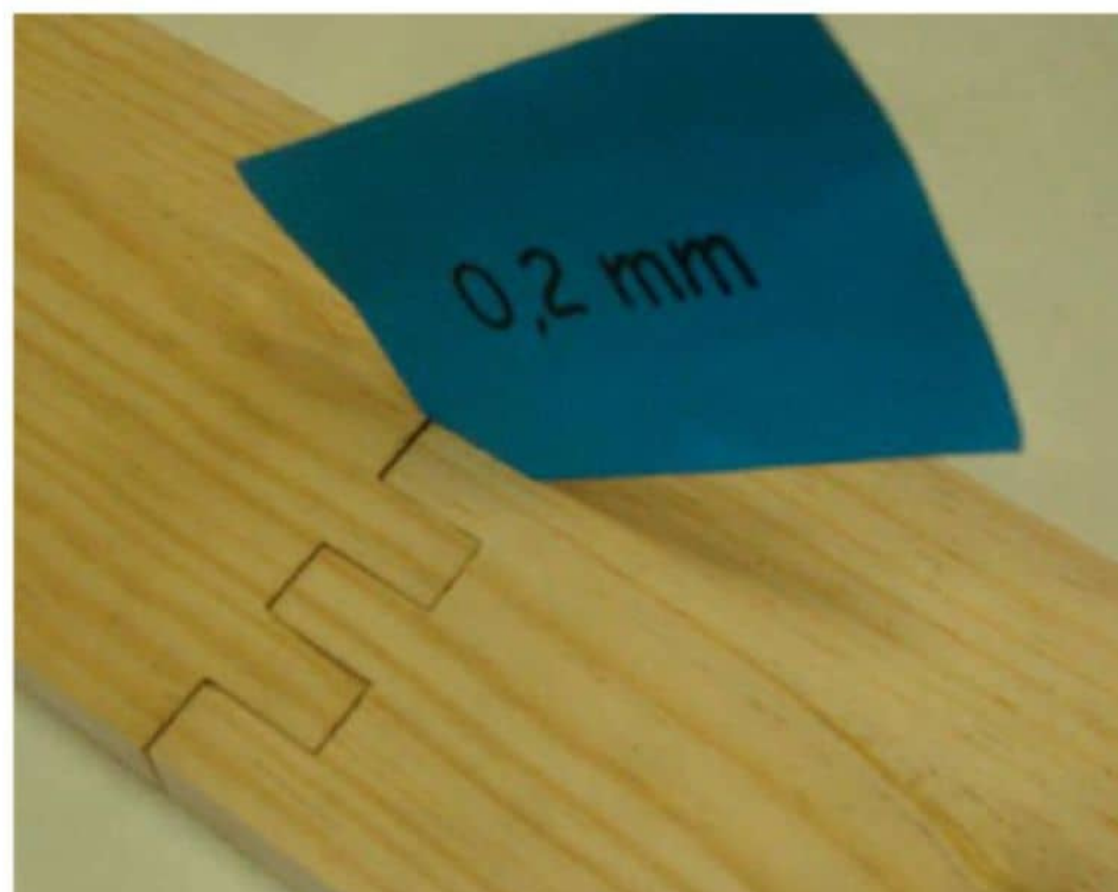
The first group is my set of twist bits: the shanks of these give a convenient set of gauges measuring from 1mm to 12mm. Photo 4 shows the use of a twist bit to set the depth of cut on a hand-held router. The second group is my spade bits: the blades of these provide gauges ranging from 10mm to 40mm. I use a 25 mm or 30 mm spade bit to set the plunge depth on my router when cutting mortices. The third group consists of squares (40mm x 40mm) of 3mm, 6mm, 9mm, 12mm and 16mm MDF. When I cut a 6mm slot (to take a M6 bolt) I observe the rule that a straight cutter should never cut deeper on one pass than its own diameter. I use three or four 6mm MDF gauges to set the bit height on my router table. I start with one gauge and then stack two, three... for subsequent passes.

The fourth group are pieces of plastic. An expired credit card cut in two gives a pair of 0,8mm gauges. Some offcuts from the local Mr Plastic

provided some 1mm, 1,5mm and 2mm gauges. The final group has already been mentioned: pieces of 80 gsm, 160 gsm and 240 gsm paper and card stock. These provide very accurate 0,1mm, 0,2mm and 0,3mm gauges. I have placed the gauges I use into four categories for purposes of explanation. In practice I will often combine gauges from two or more groups.

A common edge treatment on my projects is a round-over (Photo 7). The bearing on an accurately ground round-over bit will ensure that the cut is tangential to the edge. To get the cut tangential to the face requires that the router depth be exact. I start by deliberately setting the bit a shade too deep. I then gauge the excess by using a combination of paper gauges (Photo 8). I don't think of this excess as 0,6mm (0,2mm + 0,3mm + 0,1mm). I think of it as BGY (blue + green + yellow). I then decrease the router bit depth by BGY (Photo 9). Most times my second cut is perfect (Photo 10). Sometimes I have to adjust by one more Y.

Don't rush to grab the measurement instruments (recipes for error). Stop and think if there is a way you can gauge instead of measuring.



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

"Every moment I shape my destiny with a chisel – I am the carpenter of my own soul." – Rumi

WOODWORKER'S CORNER

Sharing techniques, ideas and a love of wood

Exploring woodworking and woodturning clubs in South Africa



Our country boasts a vibrant community of woodworking and woodturning enthusiasts who are passionate about crafting beautiful, functional items from wood. For those looking to enhance their skills, share experiences, and connect with like-minded individuals, joining a woodworking or woodturning club is an excellent opportunity. Here, we will explore some prominent clubs and associations catering to the woodworking and woodturning community.

Woodturners Association of South Africa (WASA):

The Woodturners Association of South Africa (WASA) is a leading organisation dedicated to promoting woodturning craftsmanship across the country. Established in [year], WASA provides a platform for woodturners of all skill levels to share knowledge, participate in workshops, and exhibit their creations.

Contact details:

Website: www.wasa.org.za

Email: info@wasa.org.za

South African Woodworkers Guild (SAWG):

The South African Woodworkers Guild (SAWG) is an inclusive community that caters to both beginners and seasoned woodworkers. SAWG focuses on various aspects of woodworking, including furniture making, carpentry, and woodturning. Members benefit from regular meetings, skill-building workshops, and access to a network of experienced artisans.

Contact details:

Website: www.sawoodworkersguild.org

Email: info@sawoodworkersguild.org

Western Cape Woodturners Association:

Based in the Western Cape, the Western Cape Woodturners Association is a

regional association dedicated to the art of woodturning. The guild organizes regular meetings, demonstrations, and hands-on workshops, providing members with valuable opportunities to learn and grow their skills.

Contact details:

Website: www.wcwa.org.za

Facebook: Search Western Cape

Woodturners Association FB Group

Gauteng Woodworkers Association (GWA):

The Gauteng Woodworkers Association caters to woodworking enthusiasts in the Gauteng region. With a focus on fostering a sense of community, GWA offers members access to a range of resources, including tool libraries, mentorship programs, and collaborative projects.

Contact details:

Website: www.gautengwoodworkers.co.za

Email: info@gautengwoodworkers.co.za

Joining a woodworking or woodturning club

If you are interested in joining any of these clubs or associations, simply visit their respective websites or contact them directly via email or phone. Membership fees, benefits, and meeting schedules vary, so it's advisable to reach out and gather all the necessary information.

For South African woodworking and woodturning enthusiasts, joining a club or association provides a fantastic opportunity to connect with fellow craftsmen, learn new techniques, and showcase your creations. Whether you're a novice or an experienced woodworker, the clubs mentioned above offer a supportive community where your passion for woodworking can flourish.

Ancient logs offer earliest example of human woodworking

At the end of 2023, researchers discovered remnants of what is thought to be the world's oldest known wooden structure, an arrangement of logs on the bank of a river bordering Zambia and Tanzania that predates the rise of modern humans.

The simple structure, made by shaping two logs with sharp stone tools, may have formed part of a walkway or platform for human ancestors who lived along the Kalambo River nearly 500,000 years ago.

Marks on the logs show they were cut, chopped and scraped with an array of stone tools found at the site. One log, a type of bushwillow, overlies the other and is held in place by a large inverted U-shaped notch in its underside.

"When I first saw it, I thought this can't be real. The wood and the stone suggest a high level of ingenuity, technological skill and planning," said Prof Larry Barham, an archaeologist at the University of Liverpool who led the work.

"It could be part of a walkway or part of a foundation for a platform," he said. "A platform could be used as a place to store things, to keep firewood or food dry, or it might have been a place to sit and make things. You could put a little shelter on top and sleep there."

Scientists at the University of Aberystwyth dated the structure to at least 476,000 years old, from long before Homo sapiens are thought to have emerged about 300 000 years ago. The structure may be the work of Homo heidelbergensis, a predecessor of modern humans that lived in the region.

The scientists arrived at Kalambo Falls in 2019 hoping to press on with excavations made in 2006, only to find the river had shifted course and flooded the area.

Barham's plan B involved sliding down a 10m cliff to a strip of beach on the Kalambo River upstream of a waterfall that plunges towards Lake Tanganyika. There he found the first of the wooden items recovered on the trip, a digging stick dated to about 390 000 years ago.

Other wooden items included a wedge, a split branch with a notch that may have formed part of a trap, and a log cut at both ends. "It might be a work surface, like a Black and Decker workbench," Barham said of the log.

The findings, published in Nature, are remarkable because wood so rarely survives for long periods. The material at Kalambo Falls was preserved by waterlogged sediments that are starved of oxygen.

"It may not be the beginning of the built environment, but it is the earliest time we have of people taking trees, taking charge of this material, and shaping something that has no precedent, that has no natural form to emulate," Barham said. "It's a real cultural imposition on the landscape."

The site probably contains more ancient wooden objects, and Barham said the priority was to work with the Zambian government to get Kalambo Falls recognised as a Unesco world heritage site.

Dr Sonia Harmand, an expert in early stone age archaeology at Stony Brook University in New York called it a groundbreaking discovery.

"We know so few things about the use of organic materials during the early stages of our evolution that this makes it a very wanted discovery," she said. "The team is formed of world experts and no doubt the discovery is solid."

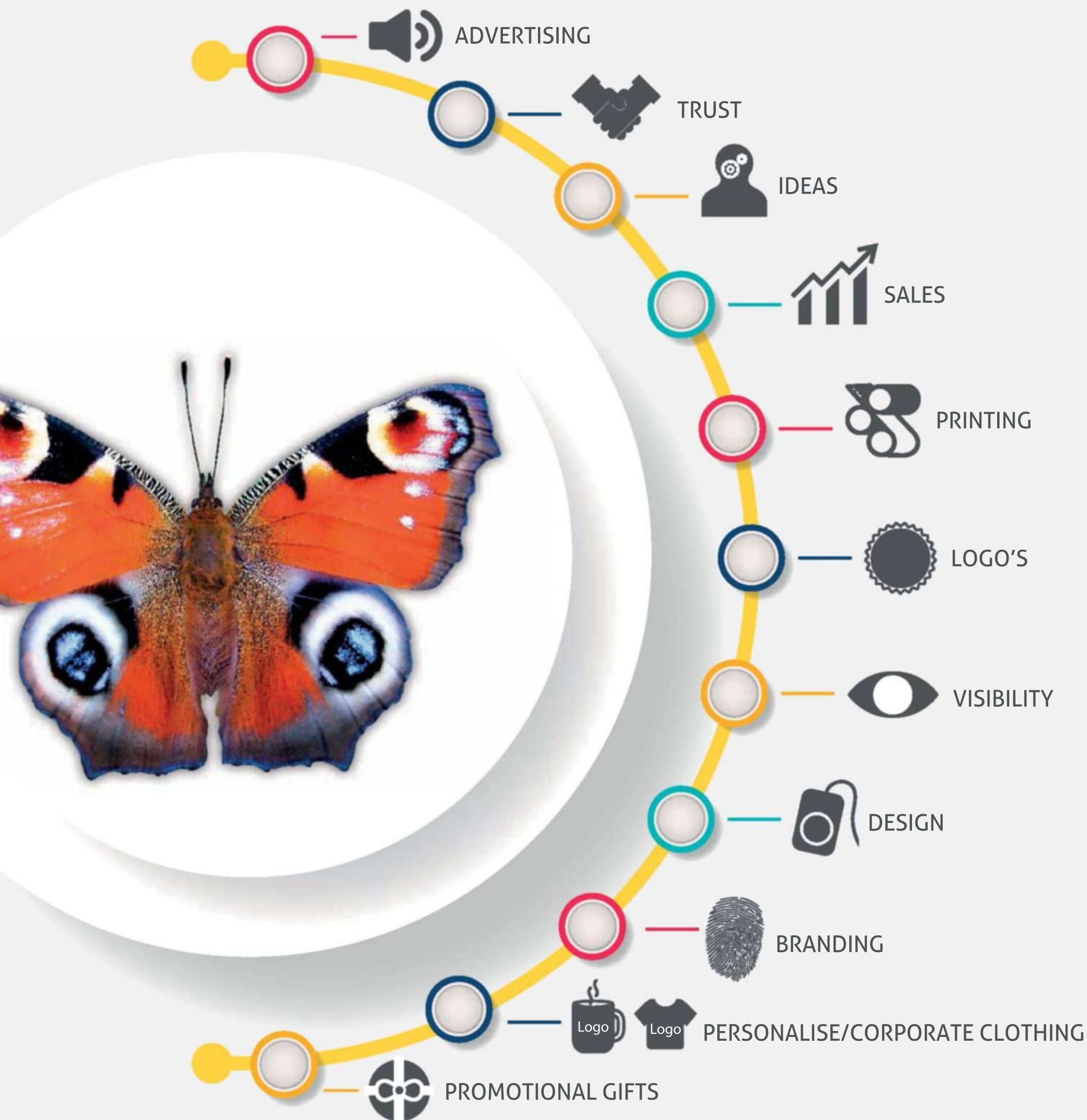
Dr Annemieke Milks, a Palaeolithic archaeologist at the University of Reading, said the interlocking, shaped logs were evidence of a "behavioural threshold", showing that as early as 476 000 years ago, humans used large-scale materials to transform their lived environment.

"Although quite simple in nature, the shaped and interlocking logs indicate that these humans structured their environment," she said. "While many other animals engage in such behaviours, the Kalambo Falls humans made use of multiple materials – at the very least stone and wood, and possibly fire – to do so.

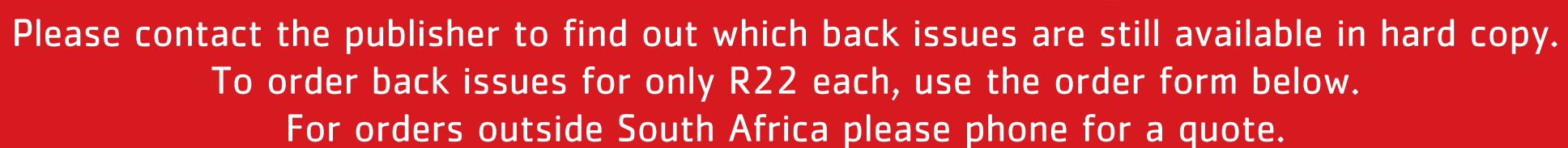
"The rarity of wood preservation implies that such behaviours were more widespread than what we witness in the archaeological record," she added. "Although the use of wood for tools and structures remains commonplace today, their findings provide a rare glimpse into the role that this simple material played in human evolution."



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THE HOME HANDYMAN | VOLUME 34 NO. 3 47



Don't you just hate it when you are working on a woodworking project, and somewhere along the way you discover that something just isn't right? Before you sacrifice your hair, first take a look at some of the reasons why woodworking projects fail.

4 REASONS WHY WOODWORKING PROJECTS FAIL

1. Inaccurate measurements

If you have never heard the old saying measure twice and cut once, I can't stress enough how important that this rule is. Believe it or not, the biggest mistake that occurs in woodworking projects is inaccurate measurements.

Some of the other measurement mistakes that we have seen in the past (besides failing to recheck for accuracy) are failing to mark the measurement. Don't try to wing it. Lay the measuring tape out and clearly mark the spot or line.

And never alter your tape measure's end hook. I have seen people remove or try to tighten down the end hook because they think it is somehow too loose or defective. Don't do that.

2. Inaccurate cuts

Not getting exact cuts can throw off a project by anywhere from a minuscule amount to enough to cause a wonky look. Generally, a woodworking project will call for multiple pieces to have the exact same measurements – such as four legs needing to be the same length, or the tops and bottoms of a cabinet needing to be identical. If they are not cut to the exact lengths, the outcome could be a wobbly table or a crooked shelf. One solution is to cut all the pieces as a unit, however, this is not possible for most projects.

A better solution is to use a stop. If you don't want to purchase a stop, you can always make one. Really, all you need is something that is square and level that can be locked in place to guide you with your cut.

3. Failing to check for level

Anytime that you are building something that has a flat surface or a flat side, you should check to make sure that it is level. A level is the easiest tool that there is to use. All you have to do is adjust it until the bubble is in the centre.

(Hint – make sure that you are working on a level surface or your project will give you a false reading).

4. Failing to check for square

Regardless of what you are building, unless it is circular, you should always check for square. If you are new to woodworking, this simply means that you are testing all corners to make sure that they are a perfect 90 degree angle. There are several ways to check for square, but the easiest way is to use a square. If you can place one side of the square against one side of the corner and the other side of the square lays flush on the other side of the corner, then you have a square angle.

If the square does not lay flush on both sides, even if there is just a small amount of space, then you are not square. In which case, you need to make an adjustment before attaching the pieces. If you have checked off numbers 1-3, you should be able to get it square with very little effort. If, on the other hand, you are ending up with pieces that can't be made square, and you are certain that you have done all the above steps correctly, then the problem is probably with your wood choice.

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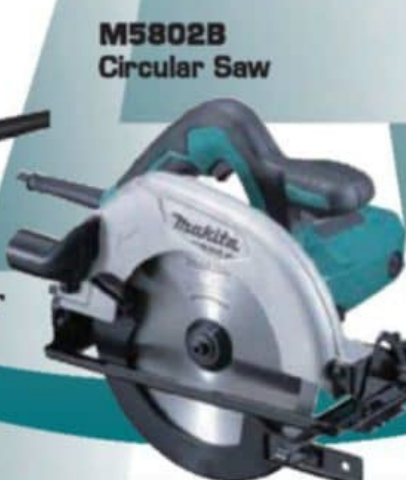
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