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July 2013
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Handyman



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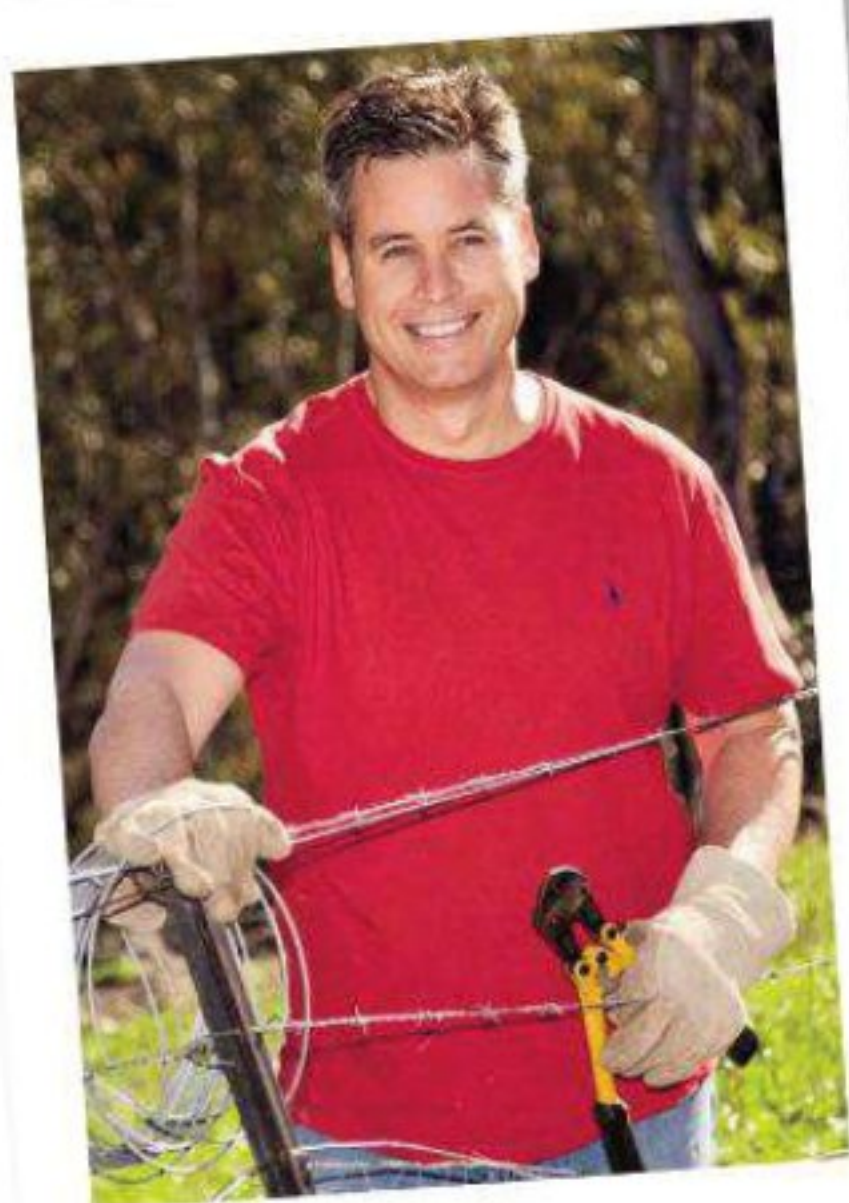


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As all real estate people say, the kitchen and the bathroom are the rooms that really sell a house, so it's no wonder we spend so much time planning a dream kitchen when renovating.

My kitchen is spacious and nice to work in, but whoever designed the cupboards got it very wrong because you need to be a contortionist to access the deeper recesses!

The kitchen is the hub of the home, so it's important to get it right. And *Handyman* is here to help with a guide to avoiding the 10 biggest design blunders, from [page 14](#).

WHAT CAN YOU DIY?

Just like renovating a bathroom, there are many jobs you can do in

the kitchen to save money, but for plumbing and electrical work, you still need to call in a professional.

Assembling the new kitchen cupboards can be done DIY, so check out our inspiring kit kitchens, starting on [page 20](#). They're surprisingly affordable and have a fantastic finish.

We have also put together a simple step-by-step guide to renewing every surface in the kitchen for a total budget revamp, from [page 29](#).

SURFACE RENEWALS

Old weatherboards or fibre cement sheeting can make a house look dated and need a lot of upkeep. But it is a very easy job for 'out with the old, in with the new' to get a totally fresh look, and it can be done in a weekend.

We give you easy-to-follow instructions on how to install instant surface treatments, from [page 80](#).

I hope we inspire you to do lots of DIY this month.

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL

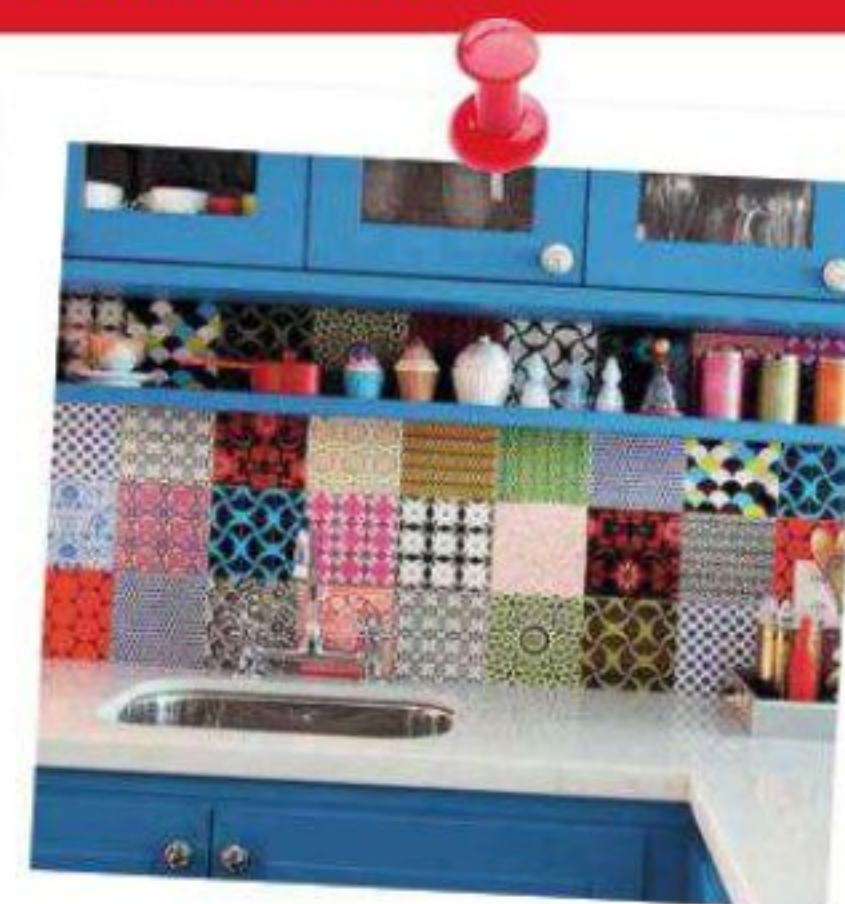
A touch of the exotic

Tropical plants make us think of relaxing holidays on an exotic island. So why not get the look at home? Most parts of New Zealand are too chilly in winter for tropical plants to survive but we've put together a guide for raising them in a cold climate, on [page 104](#).



More inspiration

Looking for inspiration for your kitchen revamp? Pinterest lets you create and organise boards of your favourite pictures. It's a great way to find and share ideas for your next reno. Check out projects from *Handyman* at pinterest.com/diyhandyman or scan the code below with your phone.



Express your creativity with a tiled splashback you can install DIY.



Customise or build furniture for kitchen storage and display.



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MANAGING EDITOR **LEE DASHIELL**
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FEATURES EDITOR **JECCA BLAKE**
TECHNICAL SUBEDITOR **GUN ARVIDSSEN**
SENIOR SUBEDITOR **SANDRA BRIDEKIRK**
SENIOR WRITER **SITA SIMONS**
GRAPHIC DESIGNER **DANIA WARMERDAM**
EDITORIAL COORDINATOR **ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT**
DIAGRAMS **STEPHEN POLLITT**
NEW ZEALAND EDITOR **BRUCE SCOTT**
T: 64 9 488 0862 E: bruce@regatta.co.nz

ADVERTISING

GROUP ADVERTISING DIRECTOR (ANZSA) **SHERON WHITE** T: 61 2 9018 6280
NSW ADVERTISING MANAGER **GUY HANNAFORD** T: 61 2 9018 6279
ADVERTISING MANAGER NEW ZEALAND **KERRY MCKENZIE**
T: 64 9 571 9495 E: kerry@hawkhurst.co.nz
ACCOUNT MANAGER **MAREE SELAK**
T: 64 9 571 9497 E: maree@hawkhurst.co.nz

MARKETING

CIRCULATION MANAGER **MATTHEW KIND**
WEBSITE EDITOR **REBECCA ANGUS**

PRODUCTION

PRODUCTION MANAGER **BALAJI PARTHSARATHY** T: 61 2 9018 6115
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR **CARLOS OCANA** T: 61 2 9018 6116

PUBLISHING

DIRECTORS **WALTER BEYLEVELDT, LANCE CHRISTIE**
PUBLISHER, MANAGING DIRECTOR **WALTER BEYLEVELDT**
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR ASIA PACIFIC **ADINA GHERMAN**

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF THE FAMILY HANDYMAN **KEN COLLIER**

NEW ZEALAND OFFICE

HANDYMAN MAGAZINE
PO BOX 90059, VICTORIA ST WEST, AUCKLAND 1142
T: 64 9 589 1054

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ENQUIRIES

T: 0800 400 060 E: customerservice@readersdigest.co.nz
www.handymanmagazine.co.nz

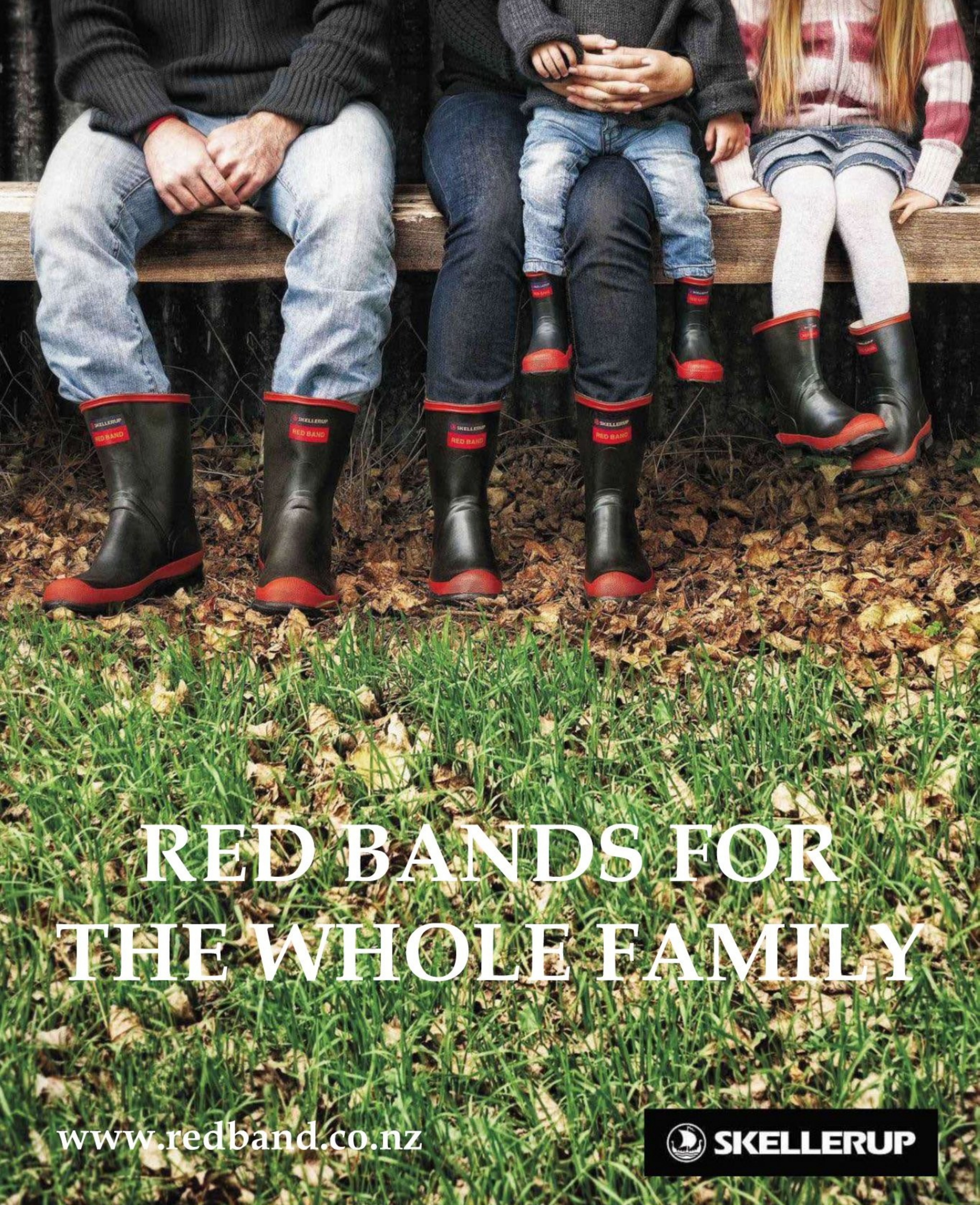
Reader's
Digest
AUSTRALIA

PUBLISHED BY READER'S DIGEST (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD
(ABN 81000565471) 80 BAY ST, ULTIMO, NSW 2007
© 2013 READER'S DIGEST (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD
PREPRESS BY SINNOTT BROS
UNIT 7, 108-120 SILVERWATER ROAD, SILVERWATER NSW 2128
PRINTED BY TIMES PRINTERS PTE LTD, 16 TUAS AVE 5, SINGAPORE 639340
DISTRIBUTED BY GORDON & GOTCH



Handyman magazine is printed on
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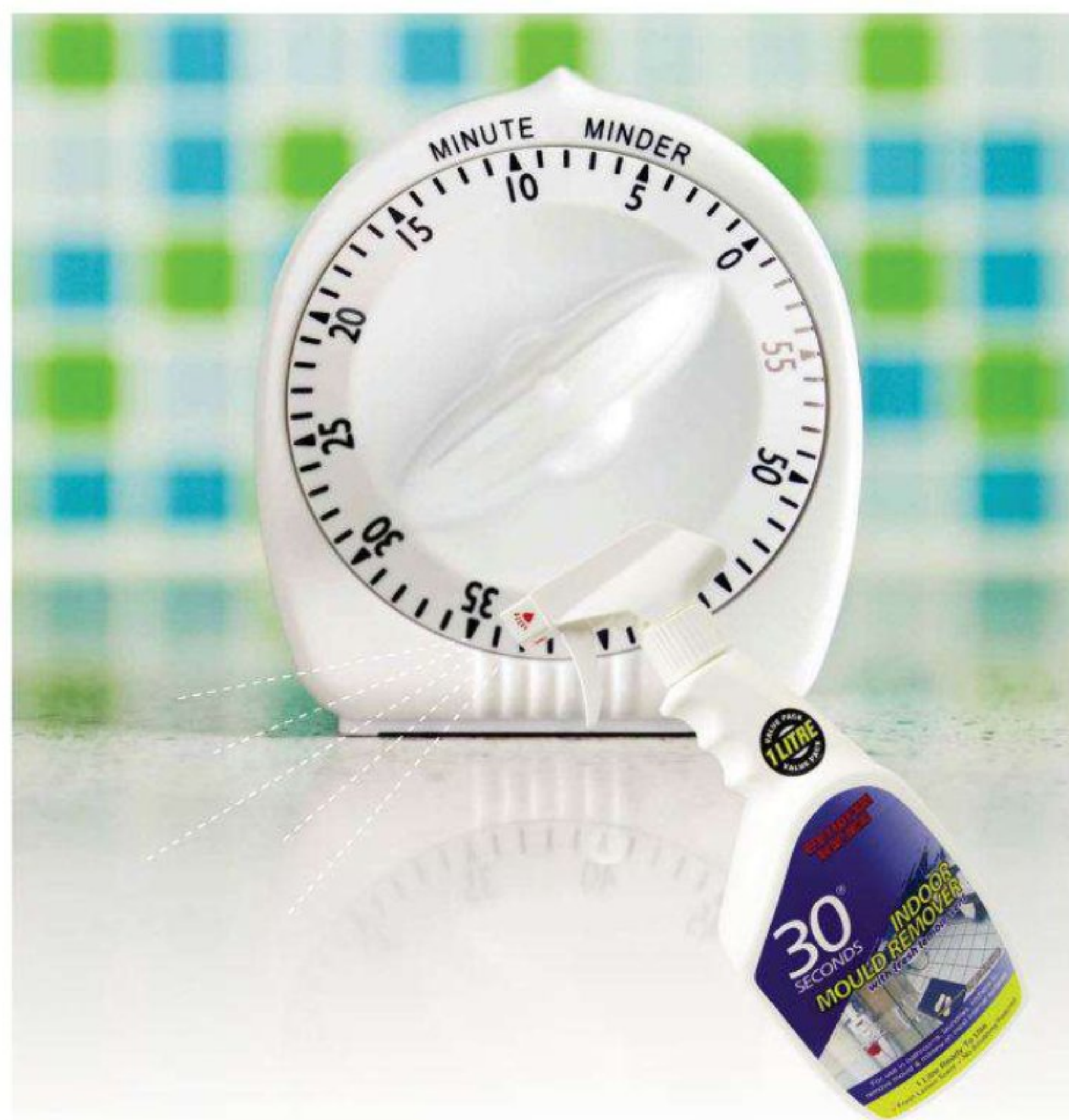
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HANDYSTUFF

Trying to fit everything into your day can be tough, so free up some time with these speedy solutions

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



Spray and wait

Restore domestic bliss and blitz mould anywhere in the house while barely lifting a finger with 30 Seconds Indoor Mould Remover, \$10 for a litre. Just spray and watch the mould dissolve away in the time it takes to make a cup of tea, then rinse clean for a lemony fresh finish.

30seconds.net.nz



Take hold

Win the fight against tight lids and stubborn taps with the Haron Baby Boa Constrictor Strap Wrench, about \$25. Just position the strap, pull tight then turn. This handy household tool has a soft grip, so it won't leave scratches behind.

bunnings.co.nz

Breathe easy

Panicking because your guests are due and the house is on the nose? No Vac Professional Foam Carpet Sanitiser, \$14 for 500ml, will save your skin by killing off odour-causing bacteria in fabric or carpet. eproducts.co.nz



Shine in no time

If you regularly deal with a Masterchef-sized kitchen mess, at least keep your hotplates in shape with Hillmark ShineOn, about \$7. Its specially formulated natural mineral graphite cleans hotplates and creates a barrier to protect them from rust, spills and spatters. hillmark.com.au





Framing Hammer

It's hammer time

The Hart 21oz Framing Hammer, \$50, is definitely not your average claw hammer. For a start it has a side nail pull that lets you snug in close to nails and lever them out with as much as 40% more force than normal claws. Then it has a magnetic nail set that holds a nail on the hammer head ready to be tapped in place, saving you from bashing your fingers. The large, smooth face is offset by 9° for a more natural angle for hitting nails.

nothinghitsharder.com.au

We have lift off

Are the windows, bathroom tiles or kitchen sink unsightly with excess silicone? Clean them up without damaging the surfaces with Selleys Silicone Remover, \$34 for 375g. Apply it to old or

unwanted silicone, wait between two to four hours then clean it off. The gel formula makes it ideal for work on vertical surfaces and it leaves no residue. selleys.co.nz



Rotary Tool

Switch it up

Rapid repairs are easy with the Dremel Corded Rotary Tool 26 Piece Accessory Kit, \$119, which can be used with all Dremel rotary accessories. Swapping attachments is super fast, so you can go from engraving to buffing in seconds. dremel.com



Power Block

Portable power

Need access to multiple power points but there's only one wall outlet nearby? The Arlec Portable Power Block, \$90, has four outlets, each with its own on/off switch. It has an RCD safety switch to protect against electric shock and complies with New Zealand Safety Standards. arlec.co.nz



Time and time again

Different areas of the garden need different watering times and you want to do the job in one easy operation. The Pope Duo Two Hour Tap Timer, \$52, allows two areas to be watered simultaneously at different times. Just click it onto the garden tap, connect the hose or sprinkler, set it to water for up to two hours, then walk away. When the set period is up, the timer shuts off the flow. Simple.

popewatering.co.nz



Easy target

Weeds will have no reprieve when you mix in Kiwicare Dye & Stick, \$12 for 250ml, with your herbicide, insecticide or fungicide sprays. Its red hue highlights the areas you've sprayed, so you never miss a

trick. It also has a formulation that makes the spray mixture stick better to target plants, improving its performance.

kiwicare.co.nz



Work Platform

Room to move

Sick of constantly shifting the ladder and hanging off the side at different heights? Save yourself the hospital time with the Rhino Adjustable Height Work Platform, \$139, which can give you 600 to 900mm more reach. Just like a section of scaffolding, the platform is a generous 390 x 1150mm and features extension brackets that let you join multiple platforms together.

bunnings.co.nz

Dream a little

Imagine cooking up some warming soups in your stunning new kitchen or seeing a stylish new fence in your garden. Winter's not a time to hibernate it's a time to get into some serious D.I.Y. and make it happen.

BRING OUT THE DOMESTIC GODDESS IN YOU

The contemporary range of kitchen appliances from Bellini feature everything you'd expect from more high end manufacturers without the price tag. All the latest technology, and looks to make your kitchen the envy of your friends.



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60CM 4 BURNER GAS GLASS COOKTOP

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CLEANING POWER WITH KINDNESS

There's a Kiwicare product to suit all your tough cleaning jobs around your outdoor areas, boats, car and caravans. Safe to use and kinder on the environment there's a formulation to suit all sorts of stains, grime and dirt.

Kiwicare Dirt & Grime's advanced cleaning formulation is powerful enough to remove most dirt, grime and salt water from most surfaces including fishing gear, outdoor furniture and kids play equipment. \$39.98

Kiwicare Moss & Mould eliminates and protects surfaces from damaging algae, moss, mould and lichen and is ideal for cleaning hot tubs and spas. \$39.98

Kiwicare Tough Stains removes stains in seconds and is bio-degradeable. \$11.98.



AN EASY ECO-FRIENDLY SOLUTION FOR GETTING RID OF WASTE PAINT

No more going to the tip to get rid of your waste paint. Simply mix a sachet of Dulux Waste Paint Hardener into your can of water based paint or timber stain and stir until it solidifies. Remove from the can, wrap in newspaper and pop into your normal garbage bin. One 25g sachet solidifies 500ml of paint. \$3.98.

WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS USE

Made from chrome vanadium steel with a mirror polish finish, the Kincrome 144 Piece Socket and Spanner Set is built for reliability and performance. It comes complete with 1/2" ratchet and a wide range of sockets and spanners to suit most applications. \$189.



A TOUGH LITTLE SUCKER!

The Ryobi 30L Workshop Vacuum is designed to make light work of your workshop and garage clean-ups. With a grunty 1400W of power and either durable plastic or stainless steel construction it vacuums liquids, collects dust and debris and handles a wider range of clean-ups than regular vacuum cleaners. The washable cartridge and foam filter keeps it smelling fresh and clean on the inside. Plastic VC30ARG \$179 and Stainless Steel VC30HDA \$249.



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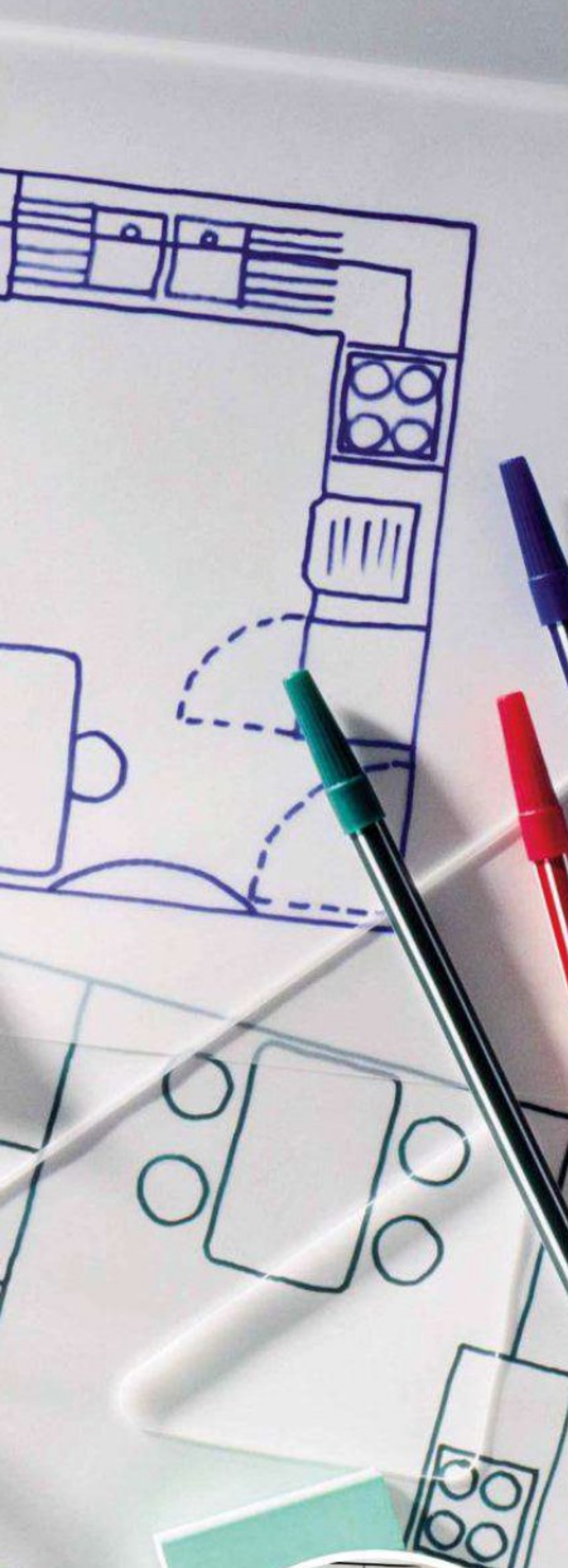
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**PLAN THE
UPGRADE**

Get the floorplan right so the kitchen functions well and has lots of storage, before adding the designer touches.



TOP 10

DESIGN BLUNDERS

Avoid a kitchen reno do-over with this foolproof list of what not to do

WORDS **SITA SIMONS**

No matter how much you have to spend on the kitchen reno, get the planning and design wrong and you'll be unhappy with the end result and out of pocket.

The most frustrating mistakes or miscalculations may not even be apparent at first. But over time the

colliding doors, lack of bench space or uncomfortable stretch from the sink to the cooktop will have you wishing you could rip it all out and start again.

It can be hard to visualise an end result but good planning and avoiding these key mistakes will keep you on track when upgrading your kitchen.

1 Jeopardising the triangle

The sink, the fridge and the cooktop constitute the core area, called the working triangle. Design the space so traffic doesn't flow through this area and consider the ergonomics.

Movement between the three elements should be comfortable and smooth, so keep it unobstructed.

2 Skimping on storage

The kitchen has to house a lot of items, from food to dining ware and all manner of often oddly shaped, space-hogging gadgets and gear.

While it's tempting to trade your dollar for biggest visual impact, such as flooring or tiles, the best bang for your buck is to spend on storage.

Take an inventory of all your kitchen items and organise according to need and the best access points. ➤





Your kitchen needs to suit your lifestyle, so an integrated cooktop in a island bench is great for busy households.

3 Letting doors collide

Sketch the position of opened appliance and cabinet doors and drawers onto the floorplan. This will allow you to discover if doors bang into things or block access points before it's too late.

Include knobs and handles in your calculations and pay attention to drawers and doors that are close to inside corners or opposite each other.

4 Underutilising bench space

There are the basic prep areas that everyone needs but let your cooking habits dictate your benchtops.

Additions like a marble slab for baking or an integrated cutting surface will reward you every time.

Space by the cooktop for utensils and ingredients, and a spot to dump shopping bags near the fridge make every centimetre work to best effect.

5 Going cheap on ventilation

With most modern kitchens being open plan, the need to vent out smells and food particles is greater than ever.

A cheap rangehood or ventilation system simply recirculates odours and dirty air, trapping only the largest food particles in basic carbon filters.

Improve air quality, eliminate lingering food smells and extend the life of your appliances with a good quality unit that vents to outside.



6 Not planning for rubbish

The days of one bin for everything are long gone and if it's a trek to the kerb, integrate the recycling and composting in the kitchen where it's handy and hidden.

Bins take up more space than in times past, so just the one spot is not enough. Plan a position close to the back door in a concealed cupboard. ➤





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7 Using fashion colours

Every element of the kitchen is subject to trends so you could in theory have the most up-to-date space on the block. But those colours that look so good right now are almost guaranteed to appear dated very quickly.

If you have a passion for a certain shade, keep it minimal to avoid regrets down the line. And when it comes to resale, remember that neutral rules.



Keep it neutral for a kitchen that won't date, using fashion colours as accents only.

8 Insufficient lighting

Where many kitchens fail is not having enough task lighting. Prep areas, the sink and cooktop should all be well illuminated. Plan the locations for switches before you start as they will need electrical services.

Overhead lights are best fitted with a dimmer, and look to benefit from as much ambient light as possible from windows and adjoining rooms.

9 Squeezing in an island

Not every kitchen suits an island and bigger is not necessarily better, as anything that gets in the way of the function quickly becomes a bugbear.

Locate the island in a position that won't obstruct the flow of the working triangle and make sure there is enough room around it.

For an island to be a useful addition, it should be a minimum of 1000 x 1500mm and proportional to the size of the kitchen. Allow a minimum aisle of 1000mm between the island and other cabinetry.

10 Designing as you go

Keep tabs on what you can afford. Make a detailed plan before the first tool is lifted, work it and rework it, then stick to it to avoid a meltdown when the bills arrive.

STILL NEED HELP?

Drop in to Bunnings and talk things over with a kitchen design expert.

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DIY KITSET
COLLECTION

CREATE A KITCHEN

Finding the right design is
as simple as opening a box

WORDS **SITA SIMONS**

A new kitchen is an exciting prospect but the endless possibilities can be a bit bewildering. The most important aspect of kitchen design is to choose features that will suit your lifestyle.

Installing a DIY kit kitchen is a cost-effective way to keep things simple while still including innovative solutions such as soft-close hardware and waterfall benchtops.

Here's a showcase of looks from Kaboodle, all stocked at Bunnings. Head to the Kaboodle website to access a 3D planner that allows you to experiment with colour schemes and finishes for the perfect kitchen. (kaboodlegroup.com.au).



Hot colour

Bring in some personality by using bold colour as a feature. Stick to classic colour combinations to avoid adopting a trend that you may come to regret within just a couple of years.

Too much white can make a space feel sterile, so incorporate a glass splashback in an eye-catching colour for a modern and fresh look that is warm and welcoming.

A large island provides plenty of surface area for preparing food and doubles as a breakfast bar.

GET THE LOOK with Egg White thermoformed doors and panels with Squid Ink laminate benchtops. ➤

Modern family

Using the kitchen as a space for the family to gather is a high priority for many households. Getting the layout right so the cook has room to move around while the kids sit and eat, do homework and chat about their day, relies on good planning.

Allow a bit of extra space between the canopy rangehood and cabinets to reduce the look of a cramped kitchen.

The clever cut and butt system makes joining benchtops a breeze without having to hire a tradesman.

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Consummate entertainer

Bigger is better when it comes to a kitchen designed for entertaining, and thinking of all the practical details in the planning stages will add up to a sociable space.

An open-plan look incorporates the dining area with the kitchen and provides plenty of room to move.

When the final screw is in and the last cabinet door hung, it's time to relax and enjoy a new lifestyle. **GET THE LOOK** with Egg White thermoformed doors and panels with Almond Brittle laminate benchtops.



Small solutions

Make the most of limited space with clever storage and visual illusions.

Tall, slim wall cabinets draw the eye up making the ceiling look higher. Wider floor cabinets keep lines unfussy and streamlined.

The two-tone effect of light and contrasting woodgrain finish doors creates a sense of open space.

A stainless steel splashback adds depth and the shiny surface reflects light around the room. This sleek and stylish feature also provides the protection of a non-combustible surface behind the cooktop.

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Vistelle is rich in colour and reflects light evenly making it ideal for kitchen splashbacks and feature panels!



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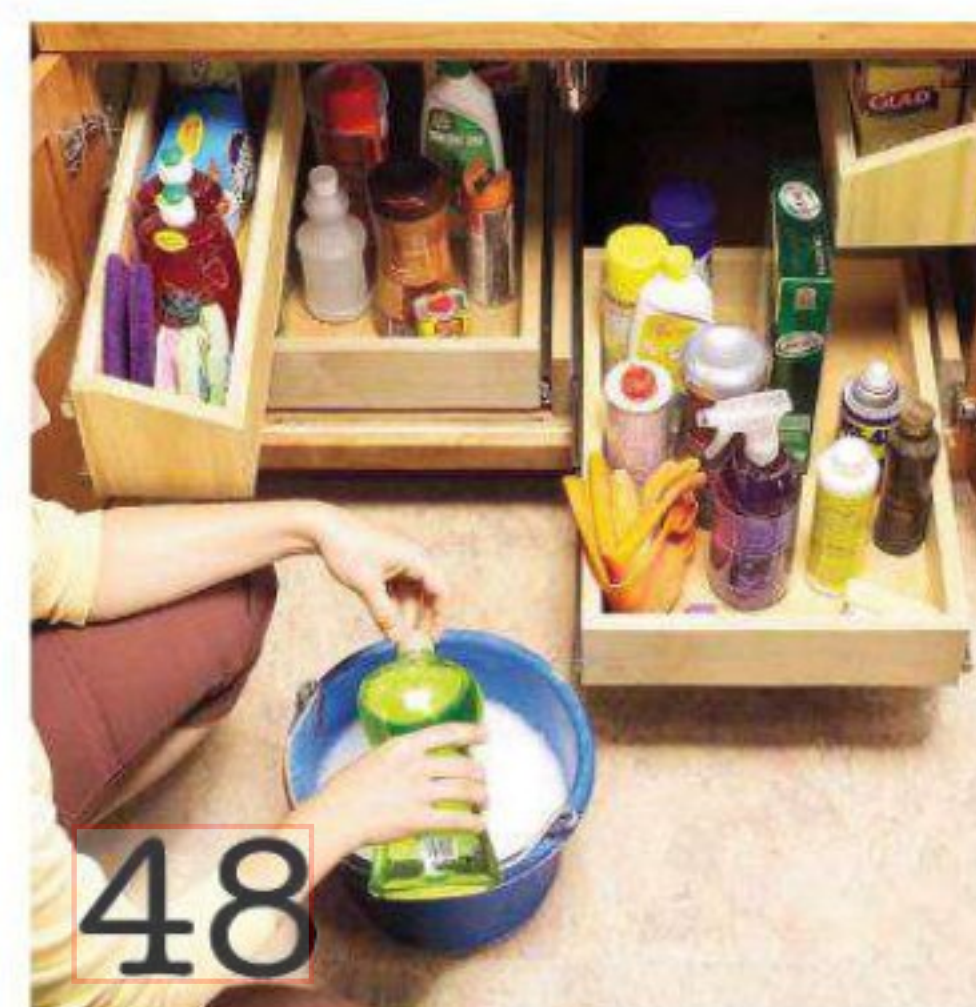
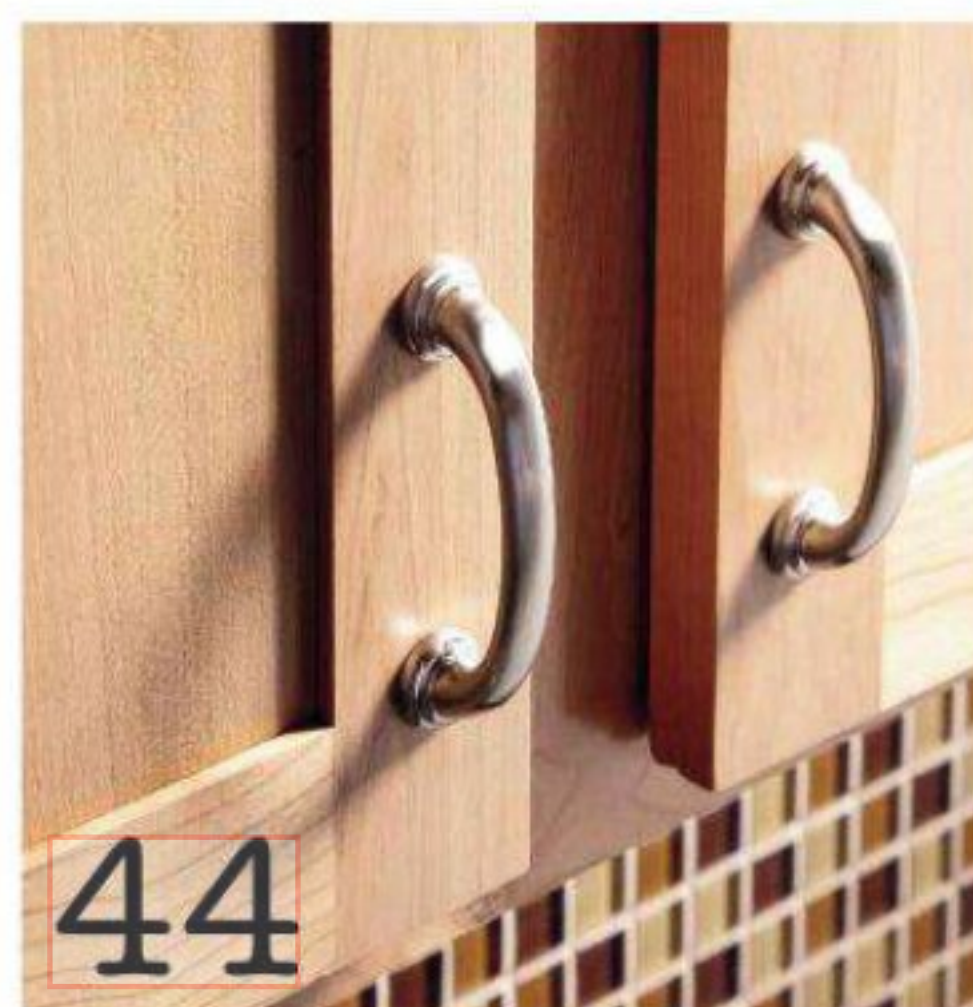


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OVERHAUL
THE
KITCHEN

5STEP *makeover*

Give the kitchen a designer look on a DIY budget
with surface updates and storage upgrades



1

SPRAY-PAINT THE CABINETS

If your kitchen has good bones but is dark and dated, revamp it with colour for a fresh new look in a weekend

Paying thousands of dollars to have new cabinetry installed is not the only way to give your kitchen a total visual overhaul.

As long as your cabinets are structurally sound, just prime and paint the visible surfaces, using a paint sprayer to do all the doors and drawer faces in just a few hours.

A paint finish is not as tough as vinyl wrap but the big advantage is

how much time, money and effort you save. Spraying also provides a super smooth finish and professional look.

For most finishes, all you need to do is apply primer, let it dry then give the surface a light sand to ensure good paint adhesion and a smooth topcoat.

If you have timber cabinets that are finished with a hard, high-gloss varnish, sand them lightly with 180 grit abrasive paper before priming.

MAKE A SPRAY BOOTH

Use plastic dropsheets joined together with masking tape to screen an area and create a temporary spraying booth. Position a sheet of plywood or MDF on a pair of sawhorses to provide a suitable surface for working on.

Make sure the room or workspace is well ventilated and wear goggles plus a suitable respirator to filter out paint mist and fumes. ➤



Preparing to paint

A professional finish relies on the quality of the preparation work, so it's worth the time and effort to get things ready before you begin.

REMOVE THE HANDLES from the doors and drawers, then unscrew the doors from their hinges and pull the drawers out ready for painting.

MASK OFF THE CABINETS using plastic dropsheets or masking paper to wrap the benchtops and appliances, securing it with masking tape. Also cover the walls adjacent to the cabinets to protect them.

CLEAN THE SURFACES of the doors and drawer faces using dishwashing detergent and warm water, then leave to dry and fill any cracks or dings by applying timber filler with a spatula or putty knife.



Red Enz eeZee Wood Filler, about \$10 for 100ml. eezeewood.com



BEFORE

The cabinets were solid but the clear finish was dirty and looked dated.

AFTER
A glossy paint job brightens the kitchen and makes the cabinets look brand new for a fraction of the time and expense of replacing them.

PAINT THE CABINETS



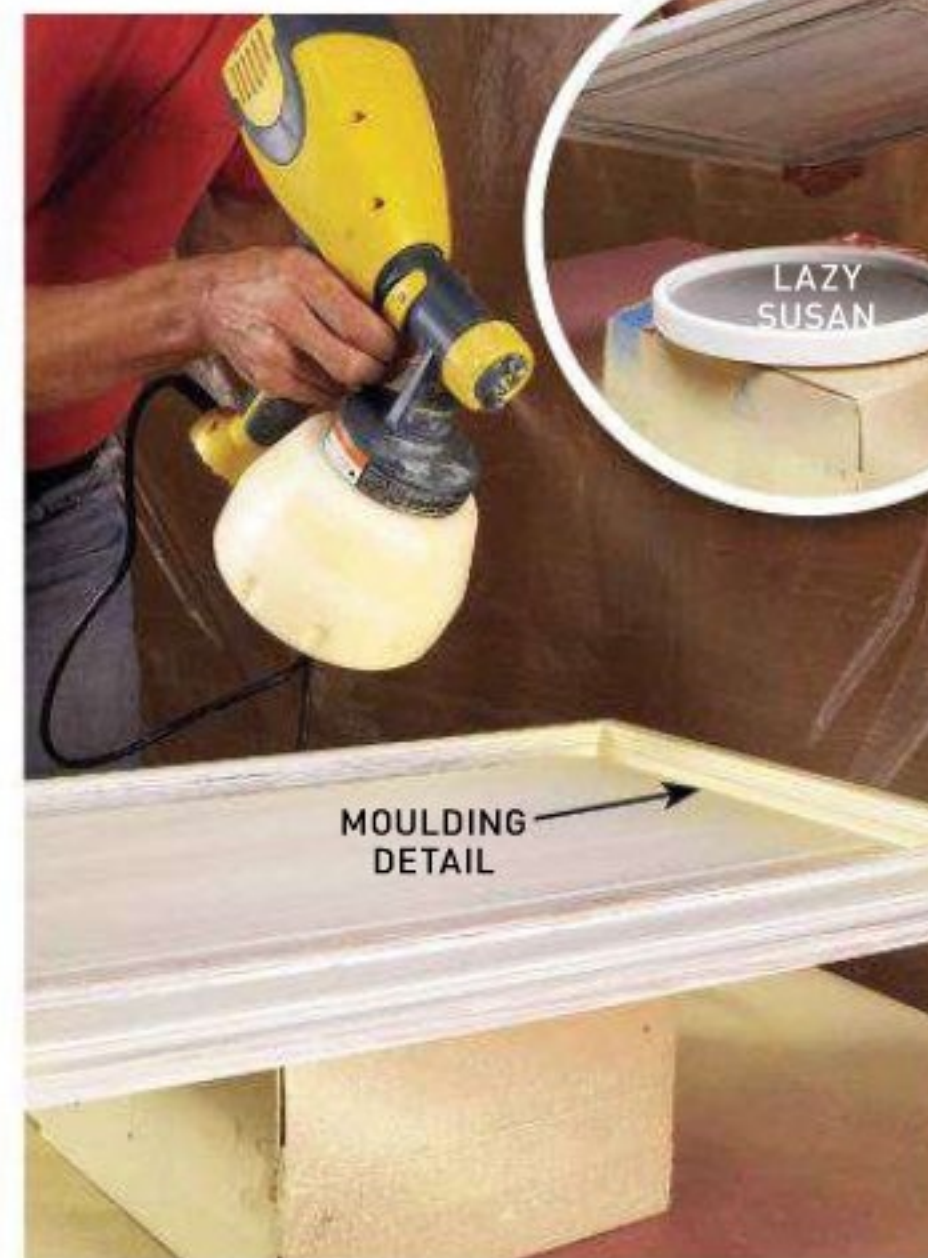
1 Apply the primer

Using a paintbrush, apply primer to one side of all the doors. Leave them to dry while priming the cabinet face frames and sides, then prime the other side of the doors. Leave to dry then lightly sand all surfaces with 220 grit abrasive paper and wipe clean.



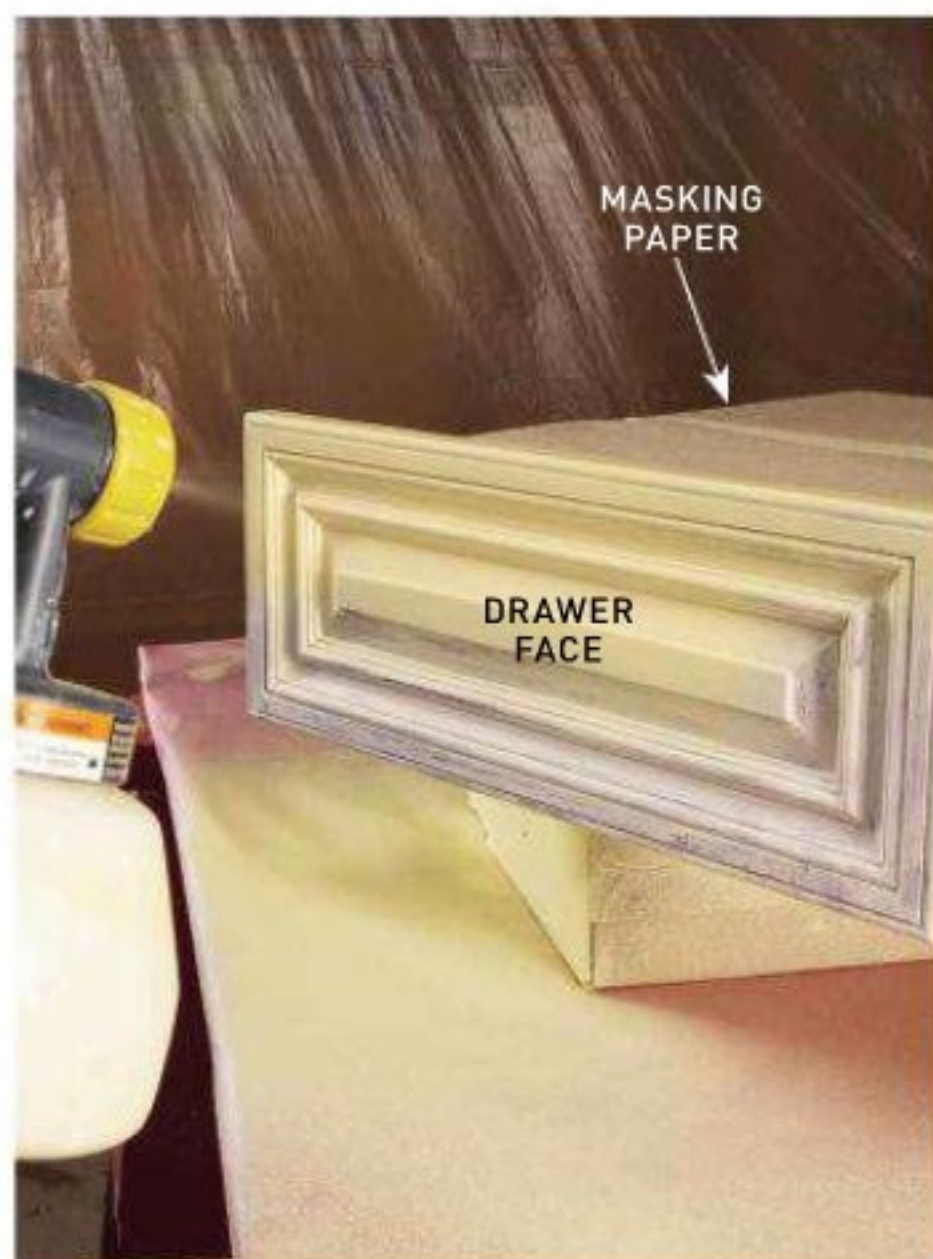
2 Paint the frames

To paint the cabinets, start in a corner and use a paintbrush to apply paint to an entire rail, including the edges, before starting on the next one. **TIP** There is no point spraying the framework as it would take too long to mask everything up.



3 Spray the doors

To apply paint to the doors, start with the edge and moulding along one side, then rotate the door to do the other three sides in turn. Finish by spraying the surface of the door. **TIP** Position the doors on a lazy Susan to make them easier to rotate.



4 Paint the drawer faces

Wrap the drawers with masking paper or plastic, securing the edges with masking tape. Paint the back of the drawer faces first, then the edges and the front.

TIP You can also remove the drawer faces and spray them separately.



5 Correct any runs

Smooth over any paint runs with a high-quality paintbrush while the paint is still wet. Leave to dry then reinstall the doors and drawers.

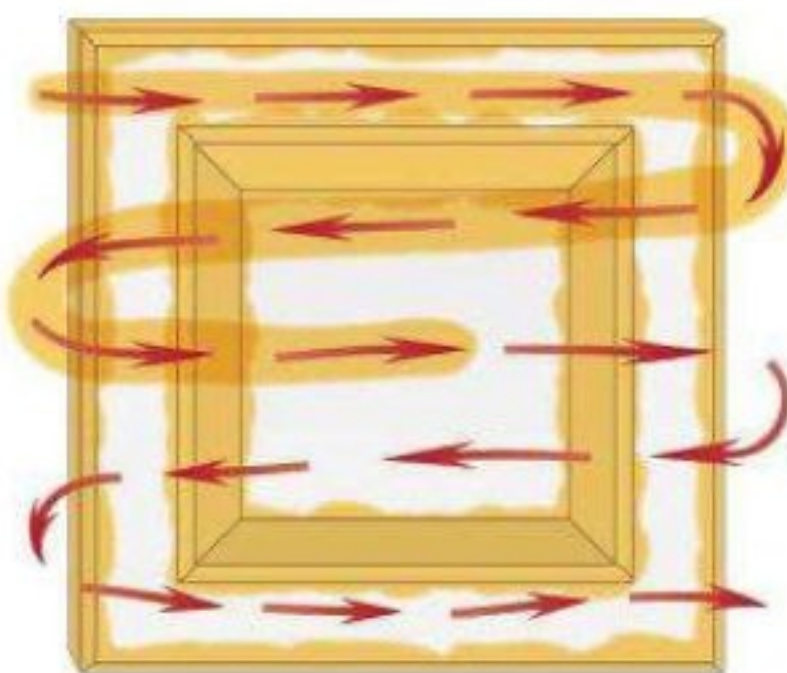
TIP If the paint is already tacky, leave it to fully dry then sand off the run and touch up with a paintbrush.

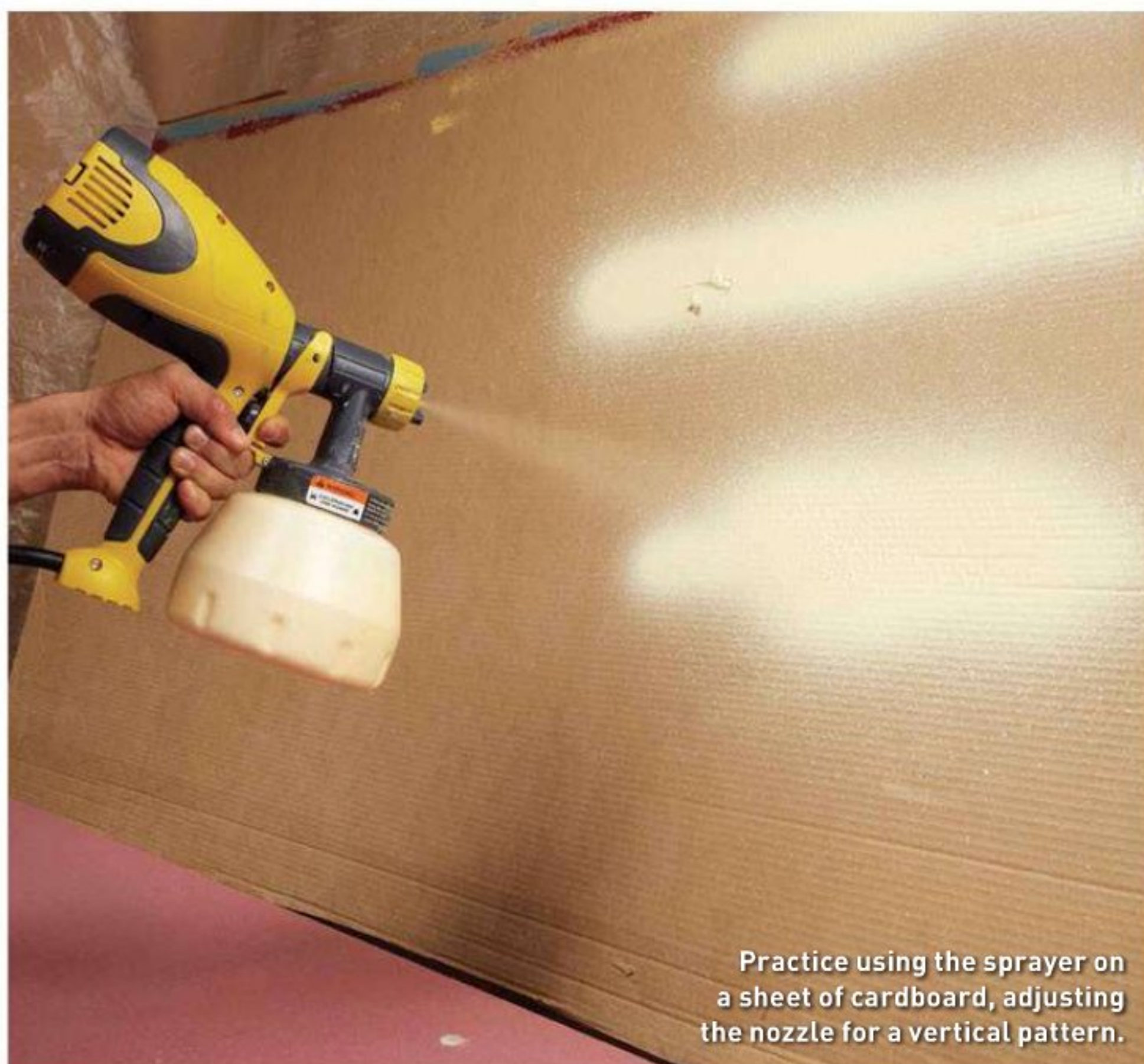
Spraying a door

To ensure even coverage, start by spraying the edges of the doors then the moulding.

Finish by spraying the entire door, starting at the top and sweeping the sprayer in smooth, even passes. Start and finish each pass outside the perimeter of the door to avoid runs.

TIP The secret to success is only squeezing the trigger after the sprayer has been set in motion.





Practice using the sprayer on a sheet of cardboard, adjusting the nozzle for a vertical pattern.

USE THE RIGHT TOOL

To make short work of spraying the doors and drawers, use a high-volume, low-pressure sprayer such as the Wagner W550 Fine Sprayer.

It is suitable for use with ordinary acrylic paint as well as a range of other products such as timber stain, so you can apply the same paint with a brush to do the cabinet sides.

TIP The paint will need to be diluted for use in the sprayer, just follow the instructions in the user manual.



Wagner Fine Spray W550 Paint Sprayer, \$155. wagner.co.nz

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2

REPLACE THE BENCHTOP

Give the kitchen a modern laminate work surface then make a cutout to install a brand new sink DIY

The benchtop can visually dominate a kitchen, so if it's showing its age it can bring down the overall look of the space.

If you're going to replace the benchtop, it makes sense to put in a new sink while you're at it.

You need to measure to the exact millimetre before ordering a new benchtop, then plan the installation carefully for the best results.

TIP If benchtop corners aren't exactly square at 90° the benchtop will need to be templated by a specialist.

DRAW AN ACCURATE SKETCH

Before you begin, ask for measuring instructions from your supplier.

The most accurate method is to order the benchtop using the existing one as a template.

Alternatively, measure the cabinet dimensions and make a sketch of your kitchen. Indicate where the ends of the benchtop don't butt into a wall and end caps are needed.

The supplier will convert these details to a benchtop order, including allowances for overhangs.

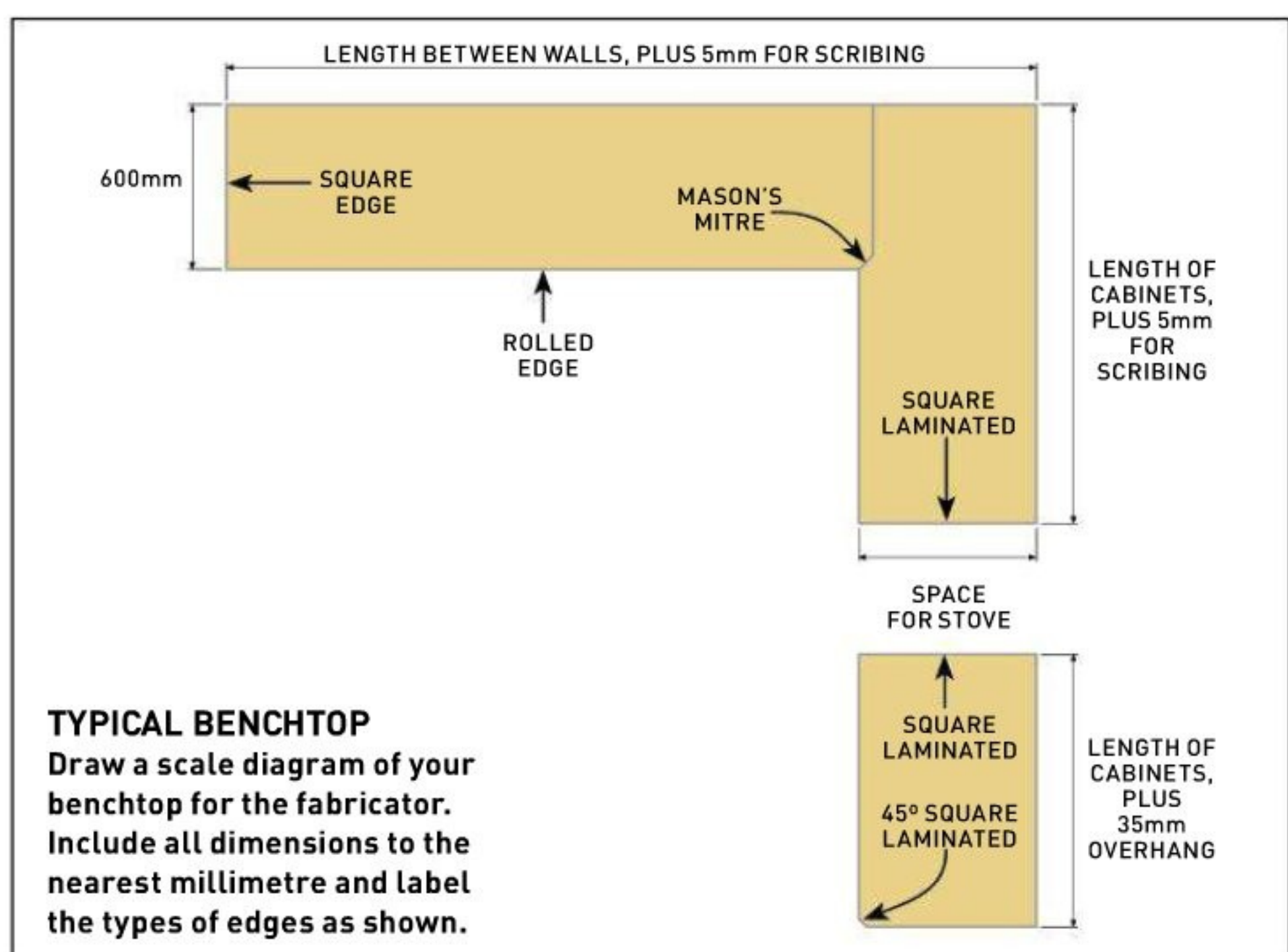
CUT A MASON'S MITRE

A mason's mitre is a type of joint traditionally used in stonework but now commonly used for benchtops.

The two parts being joined meet as a butt joint with a small mitre at the inside edge. This reduces wastage and makes the corner easier to install.

Straight 2400 x 600 x 25mm lengths of laminate benchtop are available for as little as \$99.

If your layout has internal corners, the mason's mitre should be cut by a specialist. It's also best to call in the experts to help install a U-shaped bench enclosed by walls. ➤



Installation guide

To avoid unpleasant surprises, follow this checklist.

1 MEASURE YOUR CABINETS carefully, because if they are a different size from the standard 560mm depth, you'll have to order custom benchtops.

2 CHECK THE THICKNESS of the old benchtop. This is particularly important if the splashback rests on the old benchtop and is being left in situ, because if the new benchtop is a different thickness, it will not fit properly.

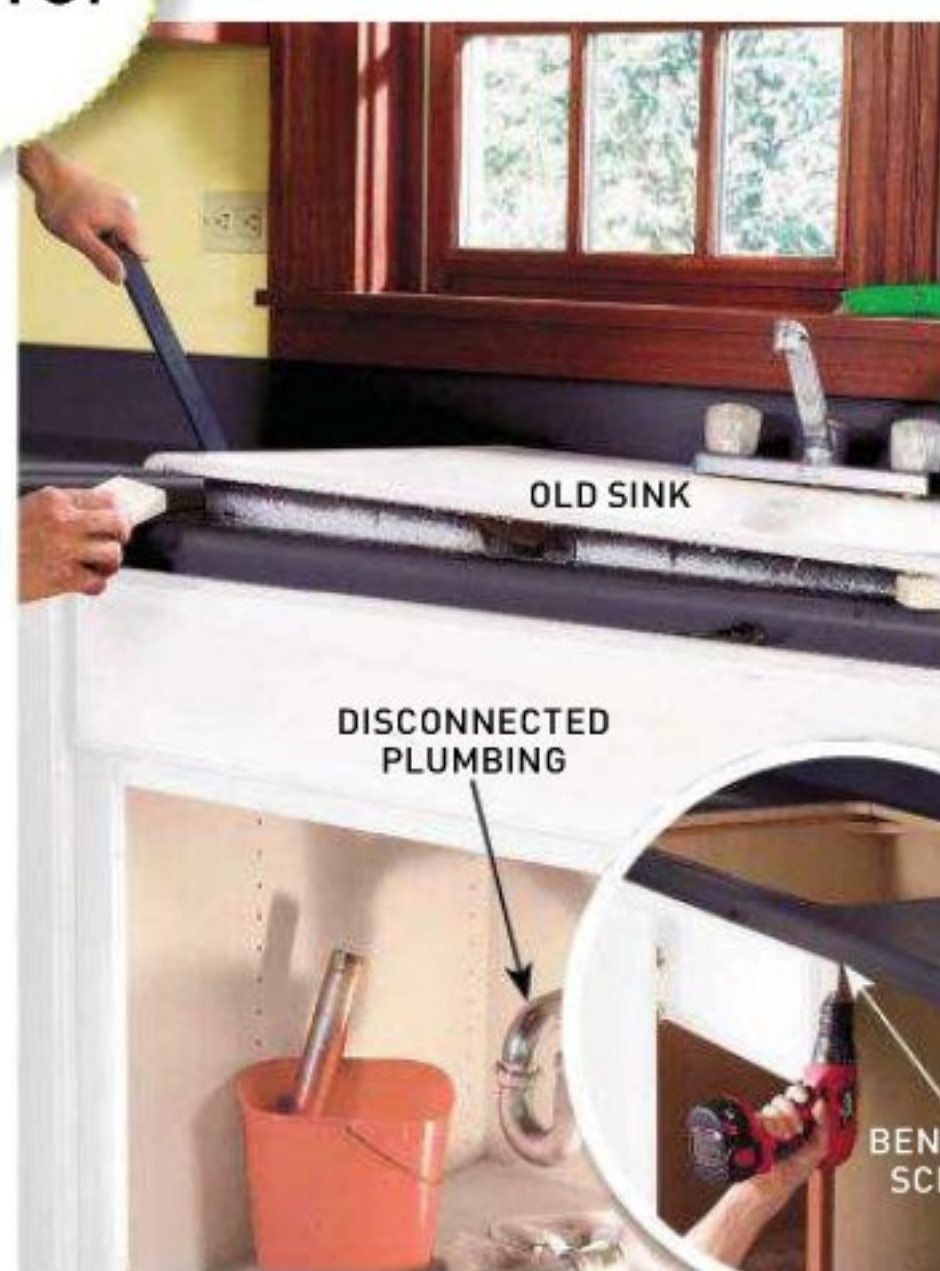
3 USE A STRAIGHTEDGE to check the walls are straight and use the 3-4-5 method to check the inside corners are exactly 90°.

If the long side of the triangle deviates more than about 5mm in 1500mm, discuss the situation with the supplier.

They may be able to cut the mitre to compensate for a corner that is severely out of square.

A shiny new benchtop and sink can take decades off your kitchen and improve functionality.

INSTALL A BENCHTOP



1 Remove the old benchtop
Shut off the water supply then disconnect the plumbing. Unclip the sink, prying up the edges to remove it. Inspect the underside of the benchtop and remove all screws securing it. Slice through the silicone along the splashback then lift out the benchtop.



2 Scribe the benchtop
Position the new benchtop and check the back edge fits along the walls. If the walls aren't straight and there are visible gaps wider than 5mm, apply masking tape to the laminate edge then use a pencil and compass to mark a scribe line onto the tape.



3 Trim the edges
Remove the benchtop and clamp it firmly on a pair of sawhorses. Use a belt sander fitted with an 80 grit belt to carefully sand to the scribe line. Replace the top and check the fit against the walls, making sure the front is parallel with the cabinet faces.



4 Check the overhang
Use the compass or a steel rule to measure the benchtop overhang is at the required distance at the stove and refrigerator openings. If the appliances fit tightly between the cabinets, the capped overhang can be reduced by scribing and sanding the other end.



5 Join the mitre
Apply a continuous bead of clear adhesive along the raw edges of the joint then push the pieces together and add the connector bolts. Use a hammer and scrap timber to tap along the joint from above until the surfaces are flush then tighten the bolts fully.



6 Secure the benchtop
Drill pilot holes through the cabinet attachment cleats and secure the top using 30mm x 8g particleboard screws. Hold the top down to keep it from lifting as the screws are secured. **TIP** If cleats aren't available, use metal angle brackets and shorter screws. ➤

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Whatever your benchtops requirements, Benchtops Direct love taking the hassle out of your decision making process. We are experts at consultation, manufacture and installation. Choose from our options:

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Find the best benchtop for your new home or improved kitchen with help from our experienced team. Our 28 years of industry experience means you'll have the best advice to help you choose the right colours, styles and fittings.

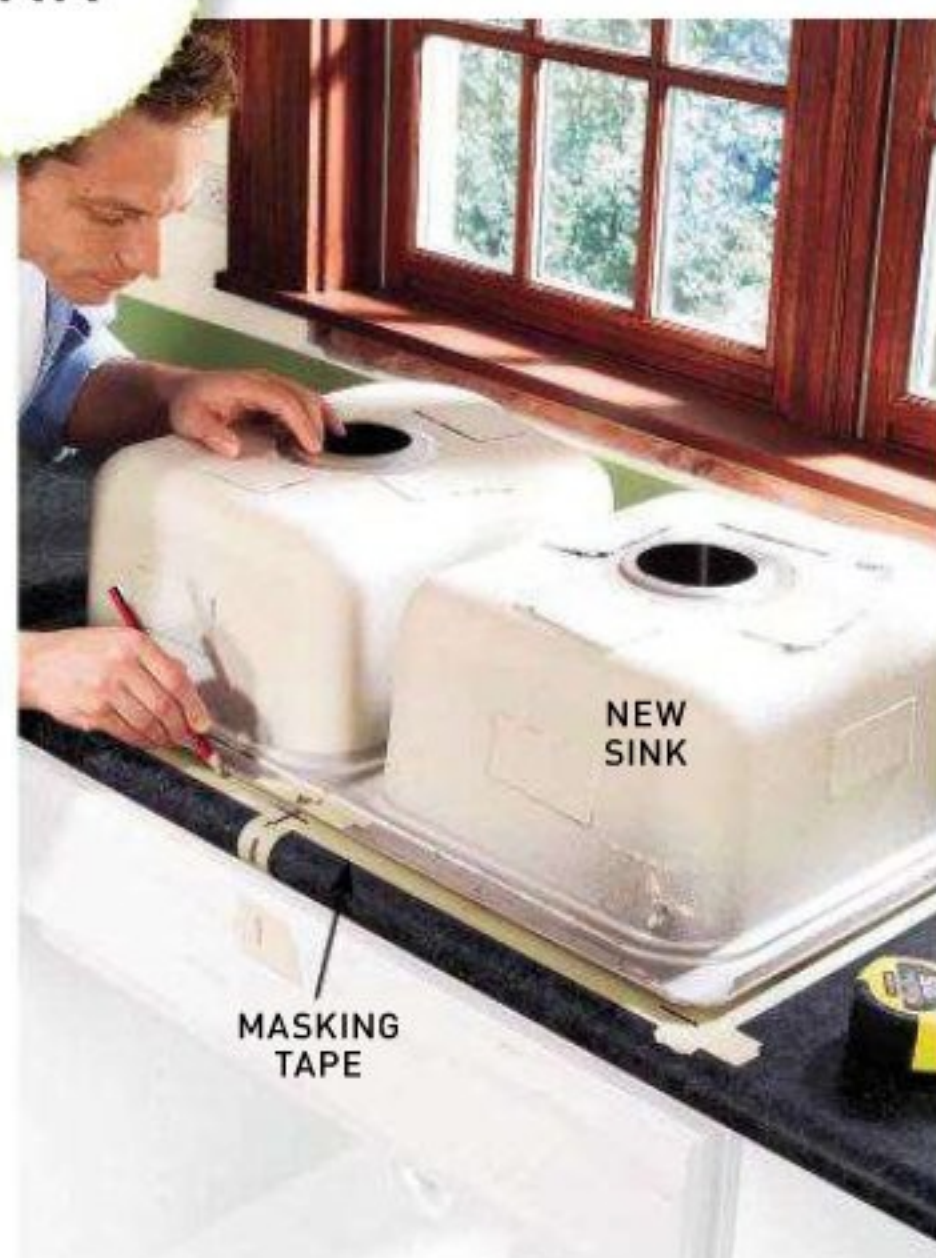


Contact us today to discuss your requirements and for a **free estimate**.



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0800 692 362
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INSTALL A SINK



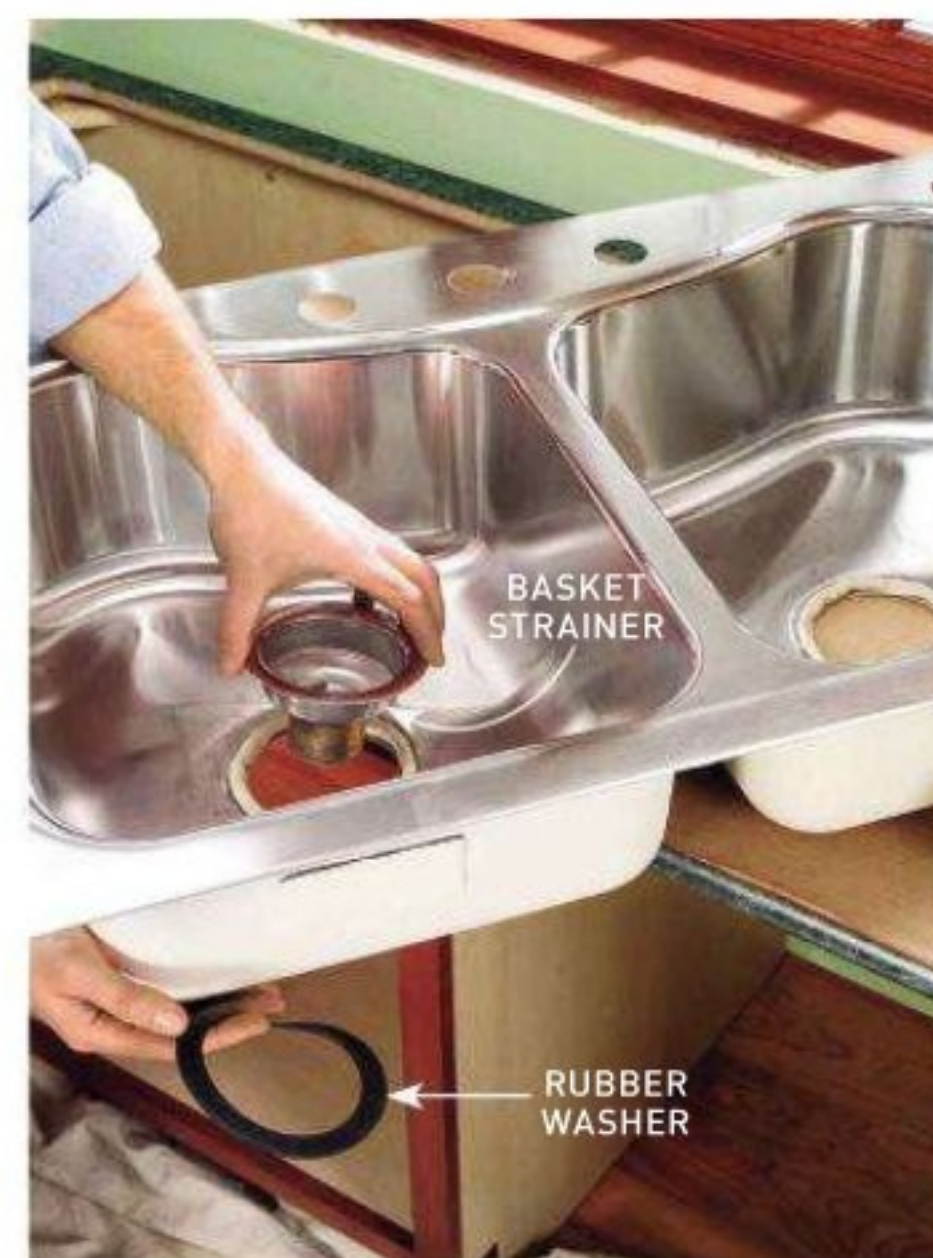
1 Mark around the sink

Position the sink on the benchtop upside down, preferably with equal spacing at the front and back. Apply masking tape around it and use a pencil to mark the edge. Remove the sink and apply more tape to mark the cut line 10mm inside the sink outline.



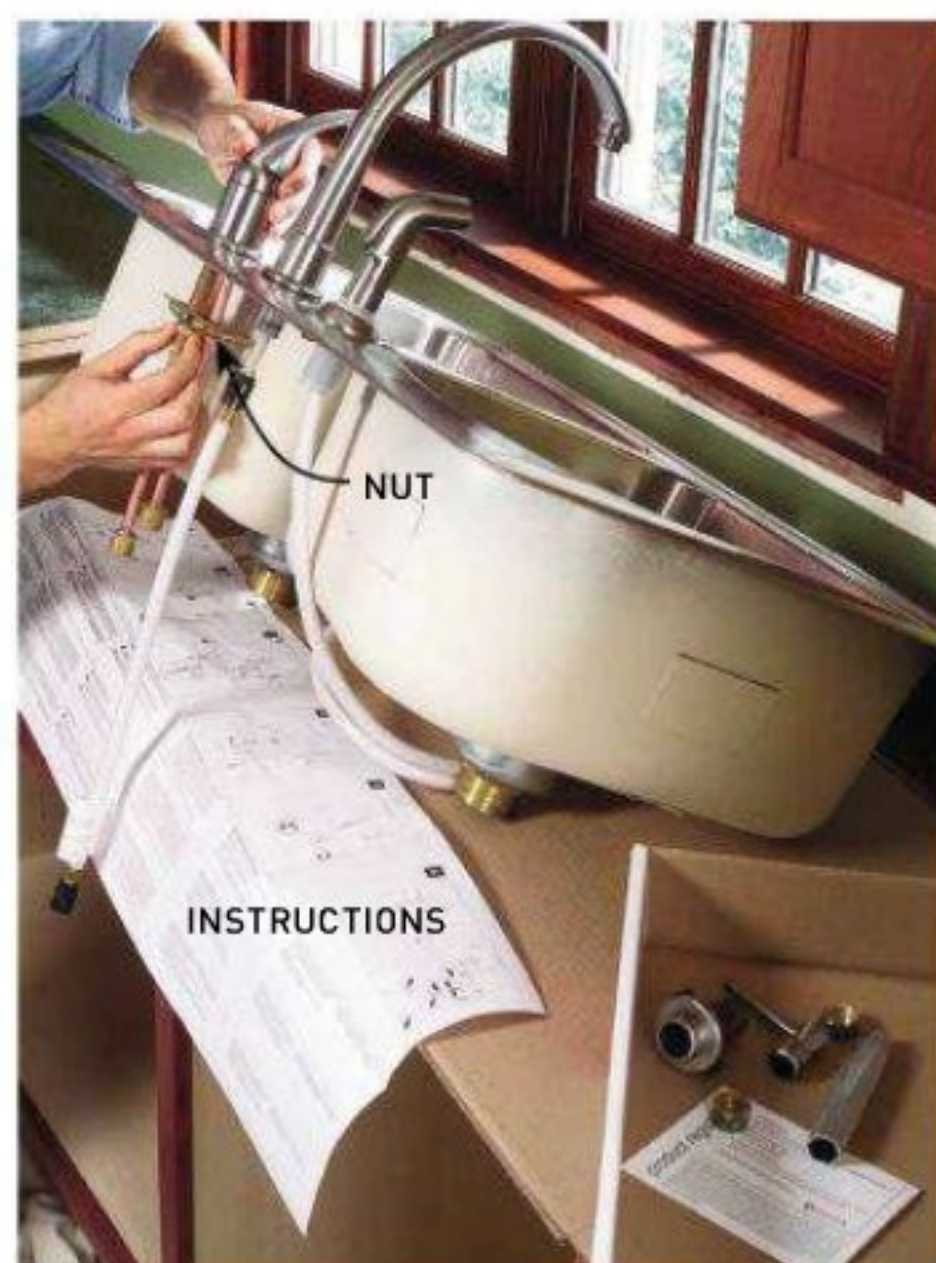
2 Cut the benchtop

Use a drill with a 10mm twist bit to make starter holes inside the corners of the cut line then use a jigsaw with a timber blade to make the cutout between the holes.
TIP Use screws to secure scrap timber to the cutout so it doesn't fall in.



3 Install the basket strainers

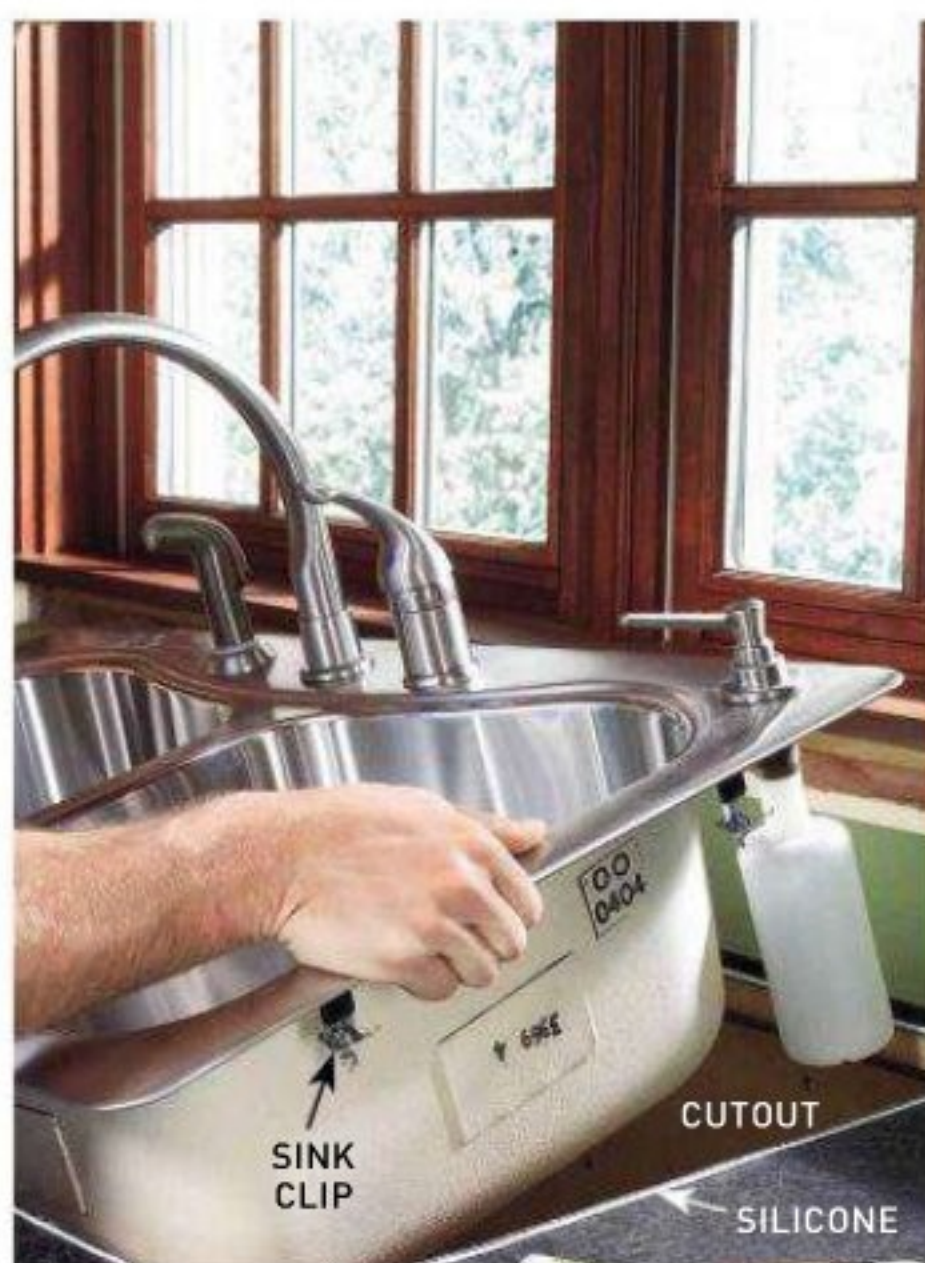
Position the basket strainers in the sink holes using the supplied rubber washers. Tighten the flange nut to waterproof the strainers and prevent any leaks into the cabinet.
TIP Use plumber's silicone if washers aren't provided.



4 Attach the tap assembly

Install the tap handles and spout according to the manufacturer's instructions, then secure by winding the nuts onto the threaded bases and tightening them.

TIP The taps need to be professionally connected to the water supply.



5 Position the sink

Secure the hinged sink clips to the flanges on the underside of the sink. Apply silicone around the cutout or attach the double-sided sealing tape supplied to the underside of the sink. Peel off the outer coating of the tape and position the sink in the cutout.



6 Finish the installation

Use a screwdriver or socket driver to tighten the sink clips from below. Tighten opposite clips first applying even pressure so the sink is pulled flush to the surface of the benchtop. Have the tap hoses and waste pipes connected by a plumber.

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See what light can do

PHILIPS



MAKE A MOSAIC SPLASHBACK

Transform a wall in the kitchen by using tile sheets to give it a colourful and durable makeover

A new splashback is a fast and effective way to revive your kitchen. Tiles are a popular DIY surface treatment, as they're durable, wipe clean and easy to install.

For maximum colour and texture, go for a mosaic wall. And to create one quickly, use tile sheets.

Buy mosaic tiles in 300mm square sheets, from about \$10 each, in a range of finishes, including glass, ceramic, natural stone and metallic.

The tiles are attached to a paper or mesh backing, so it's easy to trim and position the sheets to fit around appliances and switch plates.

GET IT RIGHT

Before you begin, make sure the wall is flat, even, dry and clean.

Fill any holes or dents and leave it to dry for a week. Wipe the surface with a degreaser then wash with water and mild detergent using a sponge.

Using the right tools and products will make the job a lot faster and give you a longer-lasting finish.

■ **TILE ADHESIVE** comes in powder varieties or pre-mixed tubs. Some adhesives require specific primers, others can be used directly.

Talk with your tile supplier about recommended adhesives, as heavier tiles will require a stronger bond and some situations may necessitate a specialised product.

■ **NOTCHED TROWELS** have edges that leave ridges in the mortar, which collapse to create a uniform bond on the back of each tile. For small mosaics, use a 6mm V notch trowel.

■ **GROUT FLOATS** have a sponge base and are used for working the grout

into the spaces between the tiles. Pointed floats are best for getting grout into corners.

■ **GROUT** should be a premium brand for splashbacks, as they are better at resisting stains and do not show variations in shade if coloured.

■ **SEALANT** will protect your grout from stains, mould and moisture and help to keep it clean. If you're using natural stone mosaics, the tiles should also be sealed.

TIP If using glass tiles, check if they are fully opaque. If not, choose an adhesive colour to complement the tiles and grout. ➤



Tiler's Mate Pointed Grout Float, \$42. tilersmate.co.nz



Cemix Pre Mixed Paste Adhesive, \$15 for 500ml. cemix.co.nz



A colourful mosaic splashback wall adds wow factor to the kitchen and can be done in a day using DIY-friendly tile sheets.

INSTALL MOSAIC TILES



1 Prepare the walls

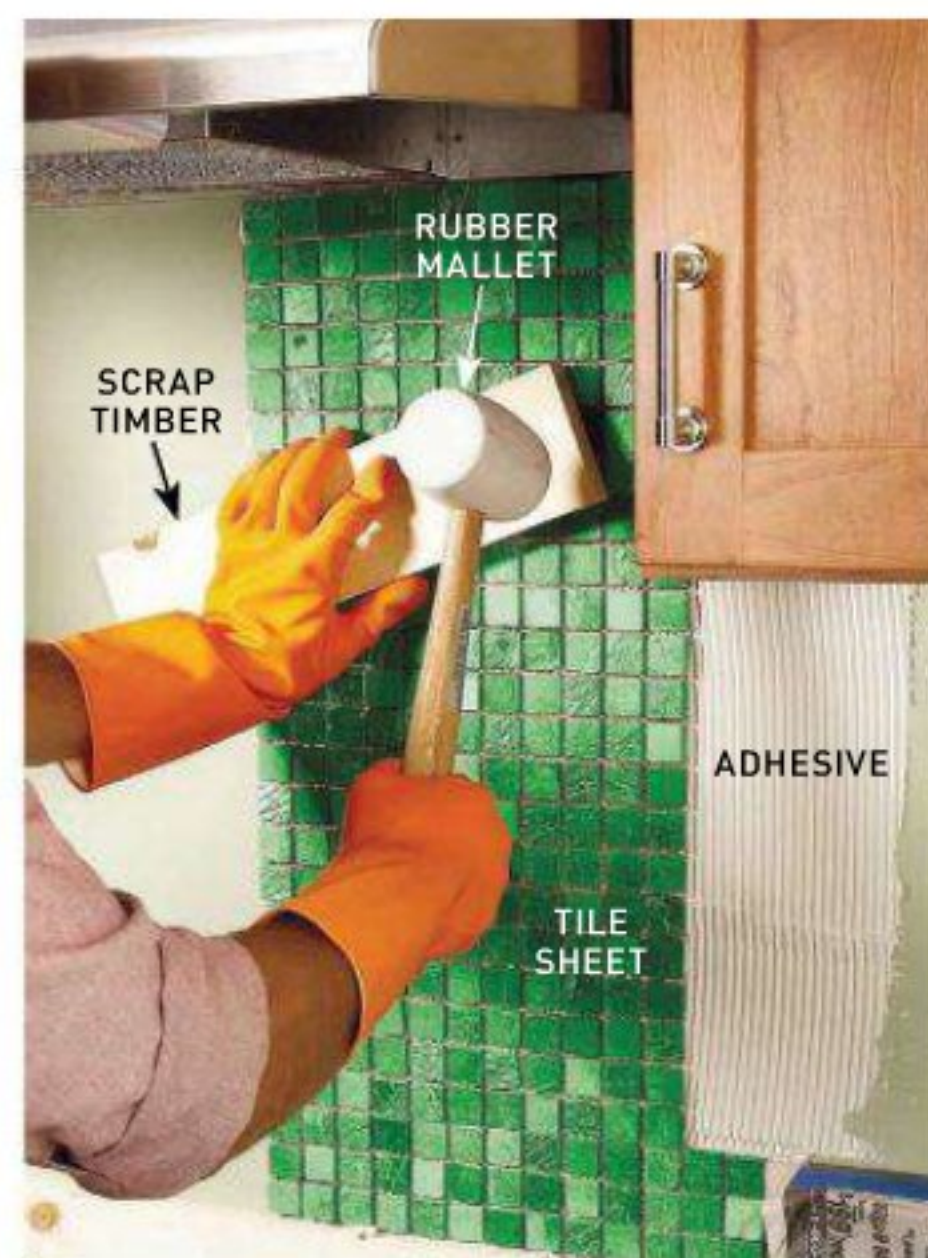
Mask off benchtops and cabinets, leaving a 6mm gap between the wall and tape. Secure a batten to the wall at the height of the burner plates of a freestanding stove. Mark a plumb line on the wall, positioned to avoid small tile cuts in the corners.



2 Apply the adhesive

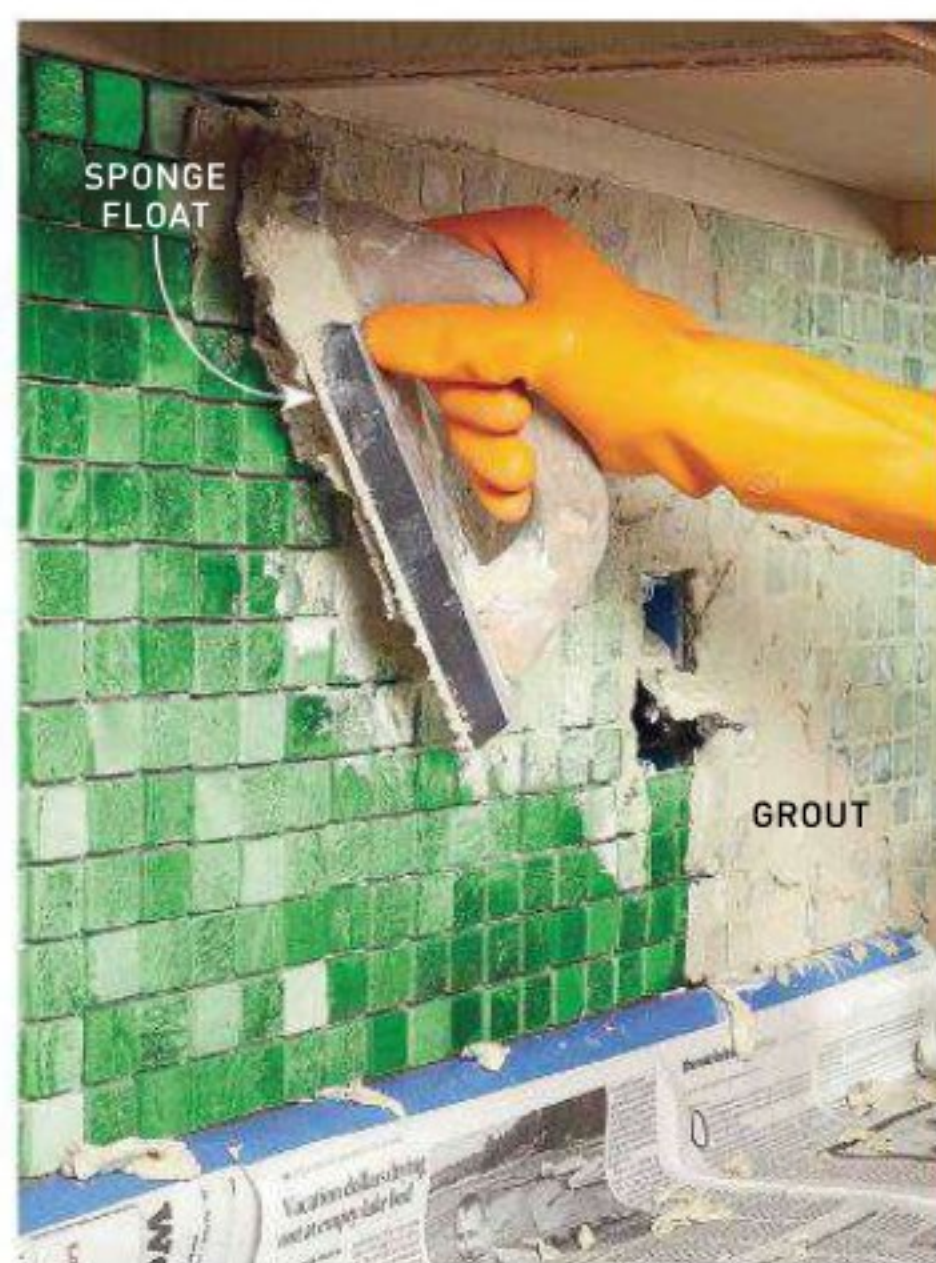
Use a 6mm notched trowel held at 45° to apply adhesive over an area about one sheet wide from the plumb line. Run the trowel over the adhesive again to ensure even distribution.

TIP To stop adhesive hardening on the trowel, clean it with a wet sponge.



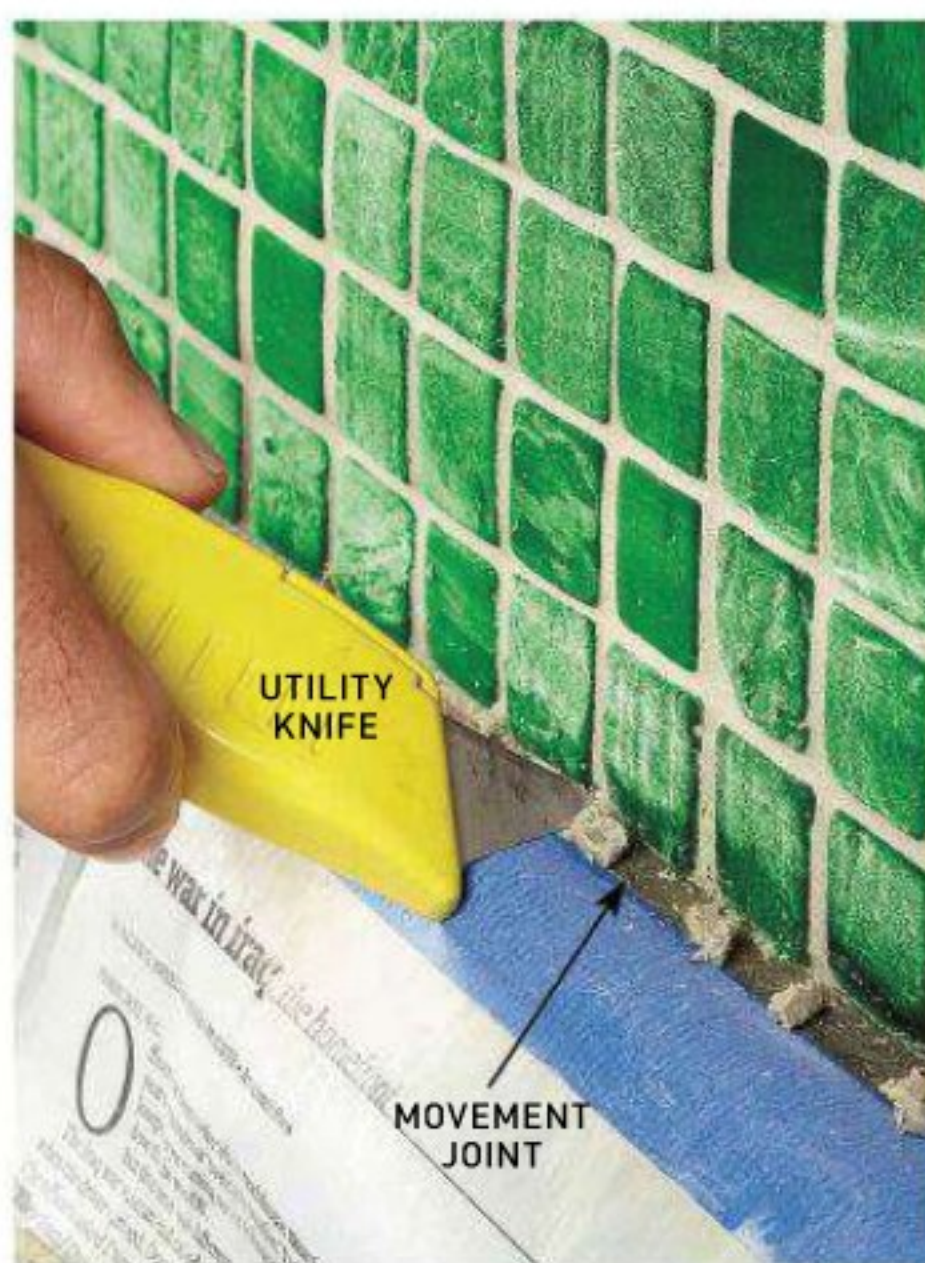
3 Install the tile sheets

Position the first tile sheet above the batten and aligned with the plumb line then the next sheet with a 2mm gap between, tapping with scrap timber and a rubber mallet. Continue attaching tile sheets, cutting to fit and checking alignment as you go.



4 Grout the joints

Let the adhesive cure for 24 hours. Apply the grout with a sponge float, pressing it into the joints. To remove excess grout, hold the float at a 60° angle and move it diagonally across the tiles. Wait 10 minutes, then clean the excess grout using a damp sponge.



5 Finish the splashback

Scrape grout out of the movement joints at inside corners and along the base of the tiles using a utility knife, then sponge the tiles again. Leave for a day then buff the tiles with a soft cloth, wait two days and apply silicone sealant in the movement joints.

Cutting tiles

Few kitchens are built to a strict 300mm square grid, and most have electrical outlets, light switches and other wall fixtures that require trimming tile sheets.

The beauty of mosaic sheets is you can cut the mesh backing between tiles to customise the shape and size of sheets.

If you do need to cut the actual tiles, use an angle grinder or mosaic cutter for glass, terrazzo and ceramic tiles.

Large-format slate tiles can be cut with a wet saw, which costs about \$60 to hire for a day.



Tiler's Mate Mosaic Cutter, \$44.

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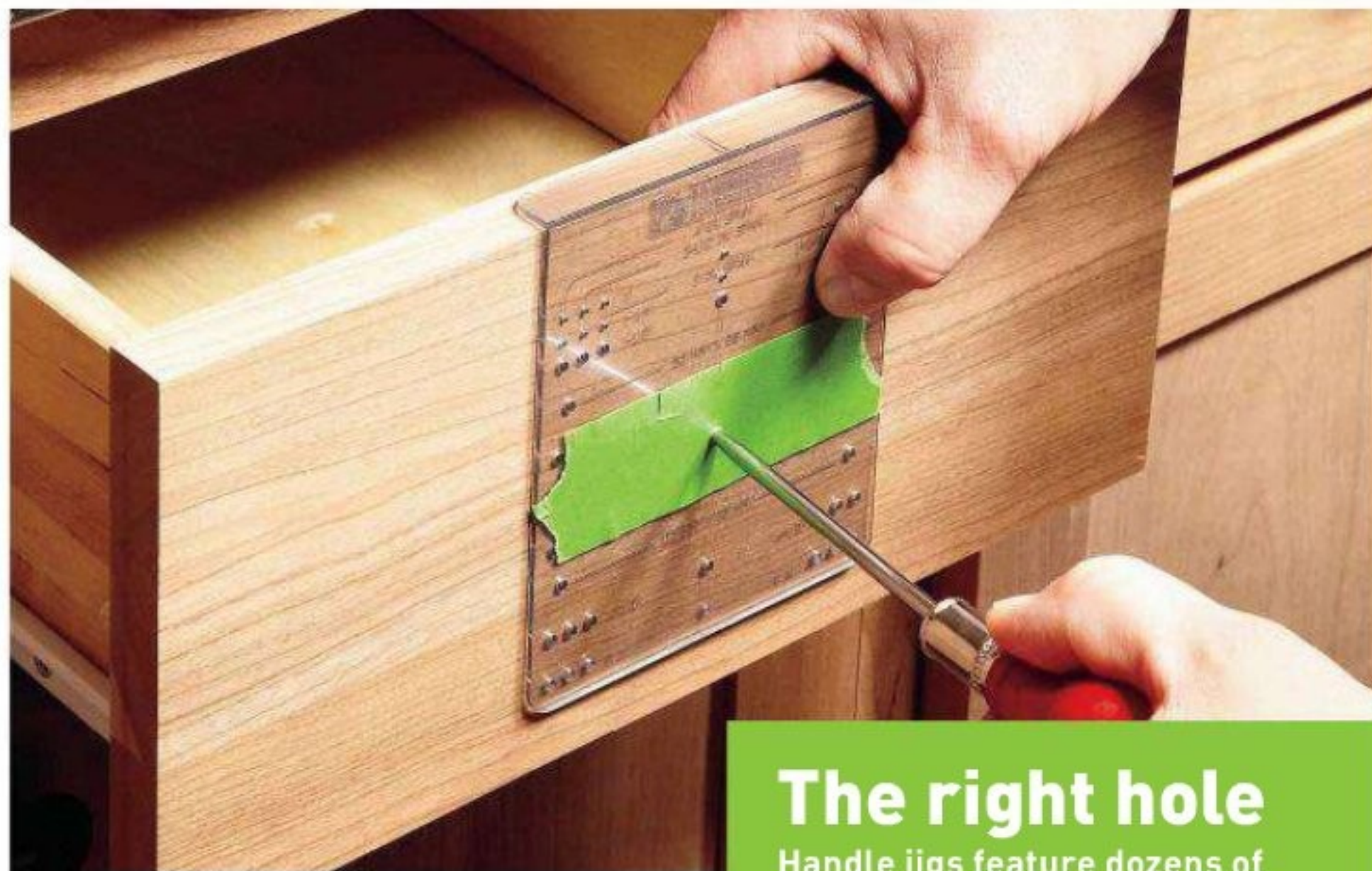
ADD NEW HARDWARE

Replacing the cabinet handles and drawer knobs is a simple way to give kitchen cabinetry a mini facelift

After completing a major kitchen upgrade like installing a new benchtop, painting the cabinets or tiling a splashback, door handles may seem like a minor item.

But cabinet hardware is the bling of the kitchen. Just updating handles and knobs can give the room a fresh new look, and the impact is even greater if the cabinetry has been revamped or the doors upgraded.

One of the last jobs on the kitchen makeover to-do list it's also one of the most important and essential to get right the first time as hardware is so visible. Follow our guide to installing cabinet hardware like a pro.



The right hole

Handle jigs feature dozens of holes to suit a range of spacing options and handle lengths.

To prevent disaster by using the wrong hole accidentally, apply masking tape and poke through only the ones you need.

Use an awl instead of a pencil to mark the holes, that way your drill bit won't skate off the mark, even if you're drilling into a hard vinyl wrap finish.

Designer handles

Modernise your kitchen with sleek metallic hardware, available in a diverse range of styles from bar and T handles to square pulls, from Sylvan (sylvan.co.nz).

Priced from about \$5, they are made from either aluminium, zinc, nickel plate or stainless steel.



Sylvan 96mm Firth Handle, \$7.



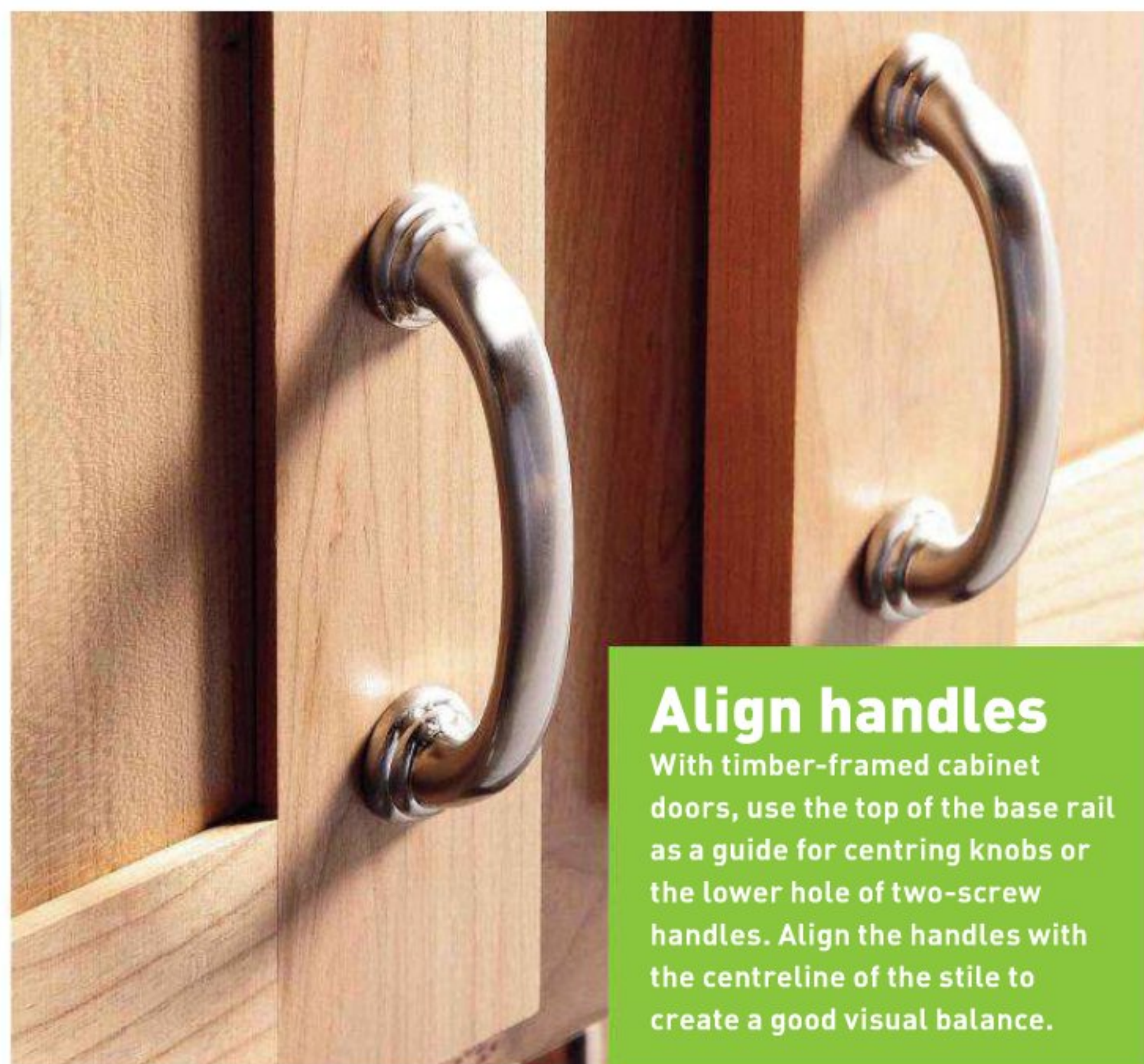
Sylvan 96mm Norton Handle, \$6.



Attach temporarily

It's too late to realise after you've drilled the holes that a handle creates an obstruction when the door is open, or is too high for comfortable use.

Stick on a few handles using Blu-Tack to make sure they are optimally positioned, then mark the locations and identify the most suitable holes to use on a handle jig.



Align handles

With timber-framed cabinet doors, use the top of the base rail as a guide for centring knobs or the lower hole of two-screw handles. Align the handles with the centreline of the stile to create a good visual balance.

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Handyman

ON SALE
29 July

Paint

Top techniques to help you paint faster and neater.

PLUS Expert advice on how to choose colour.

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Best solutions for each room of the house.

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Plant roses, grow spinach and learn to espalier.

PLUS Grow plants from seed. We show you how!



Keep the screws tight

The biggest disadvantage of one-screw doorknobs is that they are certain to come loose and start unwinding themselves eventually.

The simple way to prevent this is to use a thread sealant such as Loctite on the machine screws before winding on the knobs.



Fill timber holes

When replacing door handles with new ones of a different size it's much harder to hide mistakes or fill holes invisibly in timber cabinetry.

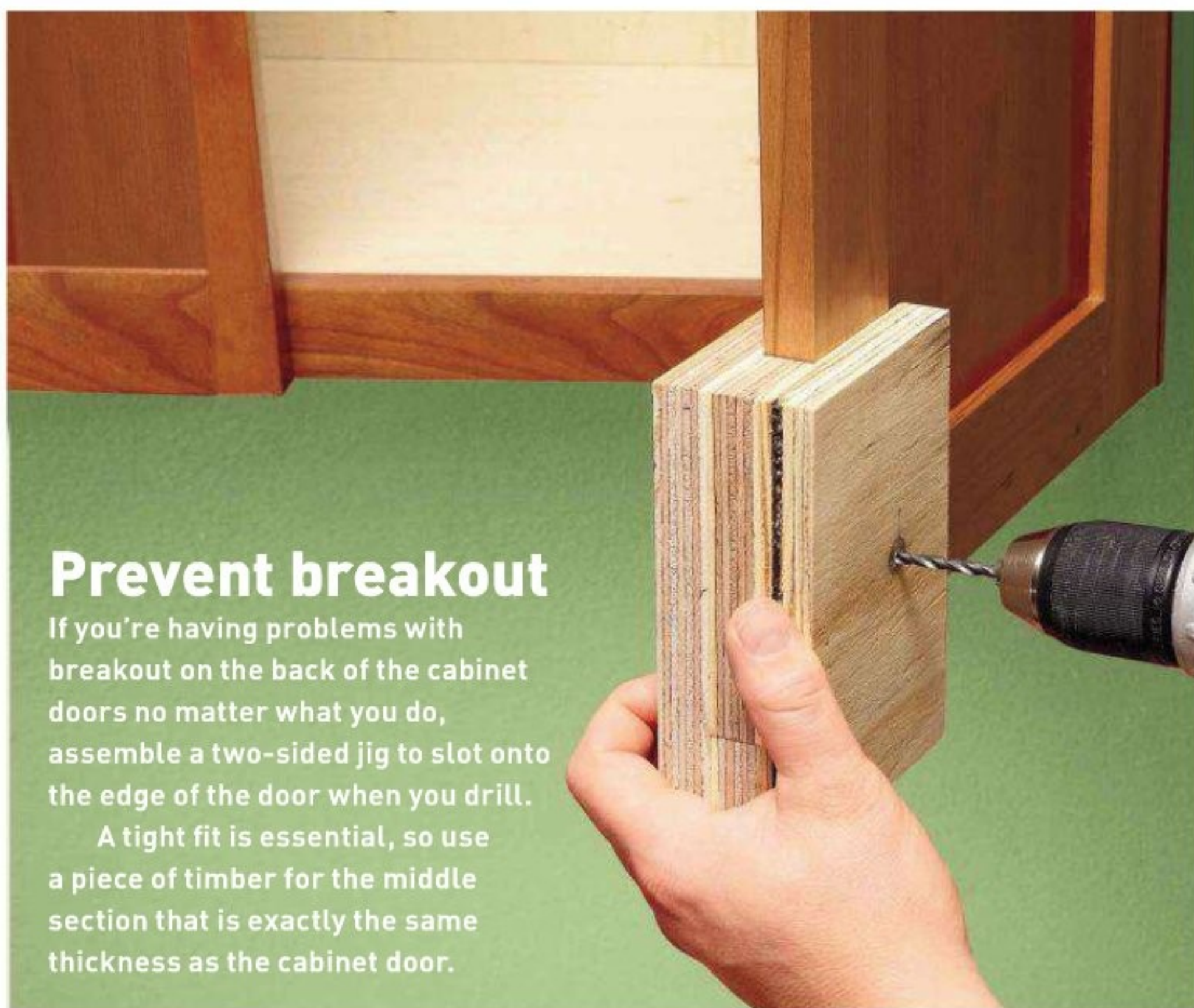
To obtain a perfect match, take one of your doors with you to the hardware store and choose three small tubs of tinted putty, one to match the darkest grain, one for the lightest and one that is in between.

Use the colours to mix a custom shade that will render any hole completely invisible when you fill it.

Prevent breakout

If you're having problems with breakout on the back of the cabinet doors no matter what you do, assemble a two-sided jig to slot onto the edge of the door when you drill.

A tight fit is essential, so use a piece of timber for the middle section that is exactly the same thickness as the cabinet door.



Match the handle sizes

The best way to minimise work is to replace two-screw handles with new ones that have mounting holes the same distance apart.

Measure the hole spacing before choosing new hardware, as the style you like may be available in several spacing options.



TWO-SCREW
HANDLE

ONE-SCREW
KNOB

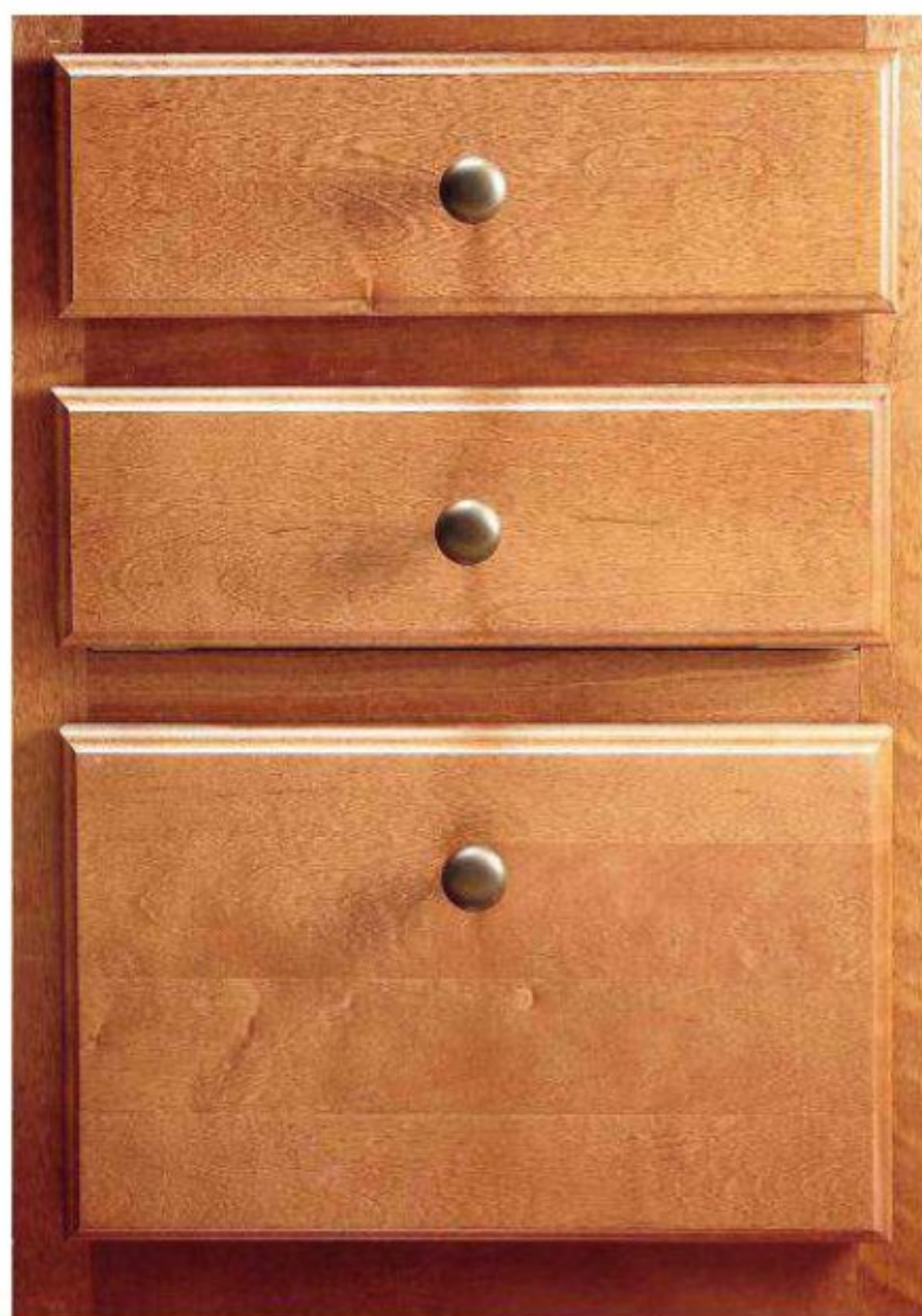


Drawer template

Doorhandle jigs aren't always the most suitable option for marking holes on drawers.

Drawer faces can often be oversized or require handles in a non-standard location.

For a quick homemade solution, carefully measure and mark hole locations on an offcut of plywood then secure it to a second offcut using adhesive and screws.



Correct for large drawers

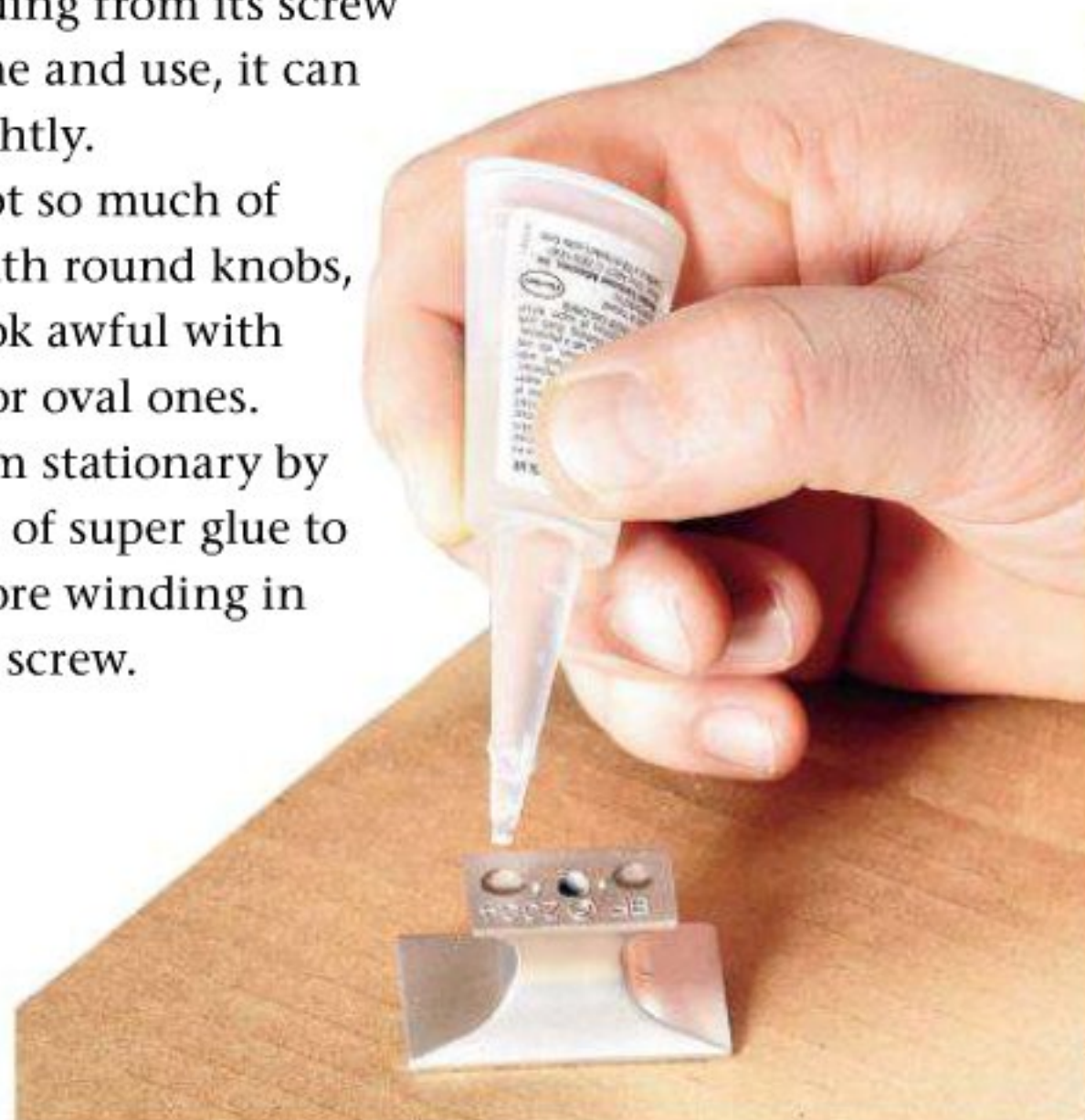
The base drawer of a set is often double-height for storing pots and pans or other large kitchenware. Instead of positioning the handle in the centre of the drawer face, secure it the same height from the top as the other handles. It looks more natural and means you won't have to lean down as far to open the drawer.

Stop the spin

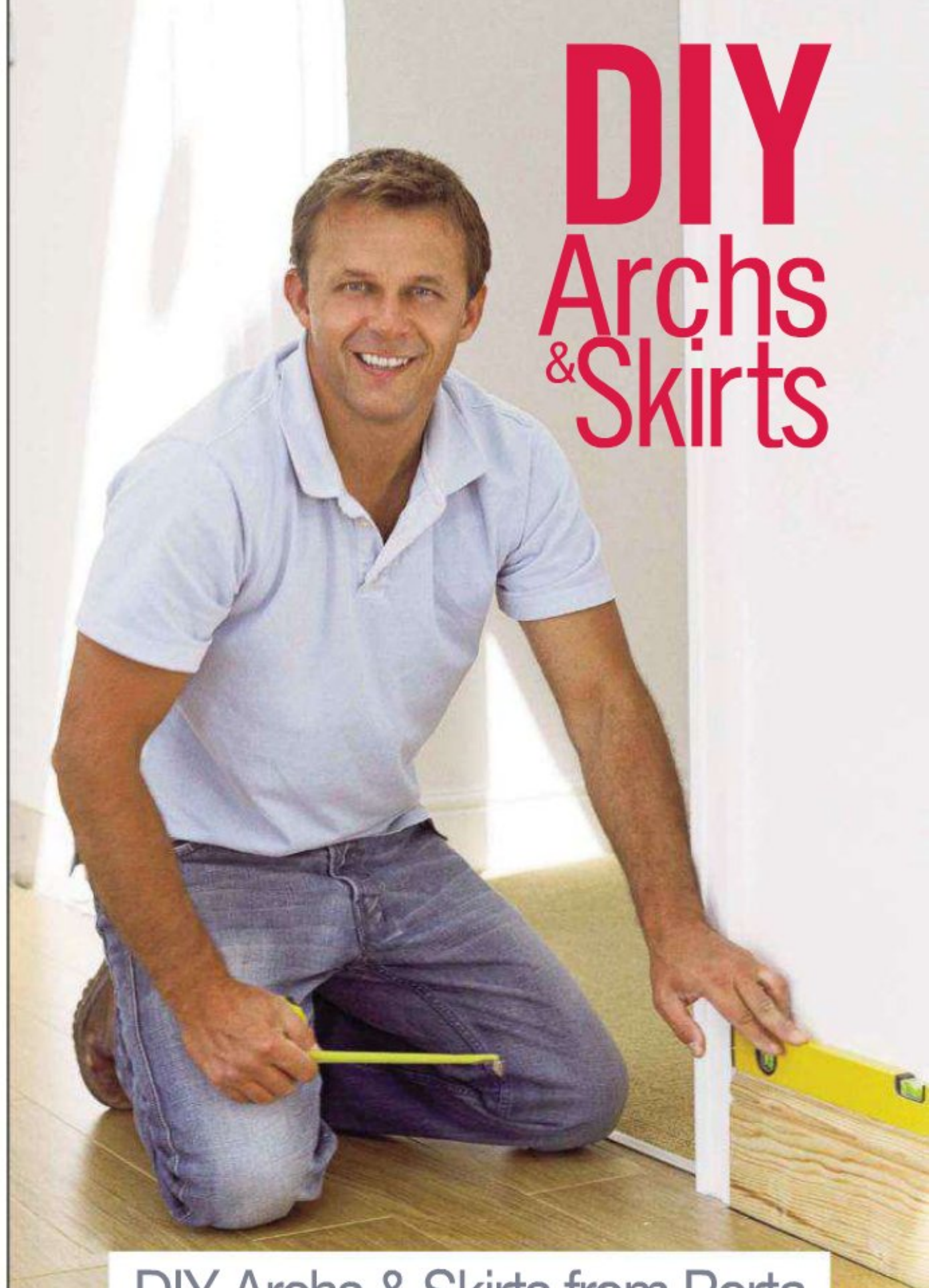
Thread sealant will keep a knob from unwinding from its screw but, with time and use, it can still turn slightly.

This is not so much of a problem with round knobs, but it can look awful with rectangular or oval ones.

Keep them stationary by adding a dab of super glue to the back before winding in the machine screw.



DIY Archs & Skirts



DIY Archs & Skirts from Porta

Manufactured from radiata pine (clear, finger-jointed & pre-primed) Porta has a variety of modern and classic archs and skirts to help update your home. To view the full range and installation instructions visit www.porta.co.nz. Available from Bunning's and other major hardware stores.

Decorative Architraves & Skirtings



Beaded Colonial (PINE) Colonial (PIFJ)

Modern Architraves & Skirtings



Bevelled Bullnose Bullnose (10mm) Double Bullnose Pencil Round

TIP 1: A painted finish will only require light sanding with 150 grit sandpaper. Then use a good sealer or primer then lightly sand once. Apply two coats of acrylic and for a tougher finish use an oil based enamel.

TIP 2: It is advisable to "acclimatise" your archs & skirts prior to installation. Acclimatise at room temperature for 24 hours before installation.



portamouldings



Turn the often cluttered and chaotic undersink cabinet into a haven of organisation with customised storage.

Fasteners

All joints are secured with PVA adhesive, and 40mm x 8g timber screws are used to attach the partitions and the tray sides.

To secure the unit base to the cabinet and mount the cleats, use 30mm x 8g screws. Attach the slides using 15mm x 8g timber screws.

5

INSTALL SLIDE-OUT STORAGE

Build basic timber boxes and mount them on drawer slides to get organised and maximise cabinet space

DIY > \$265

HAVE IT DONE FOR \$665

SKILL > 1 2 3 4 5

TIME > 1 DAY

The area under the kitchen sink is often under-utilised because the waste pipe projects down awkwardly into it, limiting the available height for storage.

Designed to make use of the irregular spaces around the sink bowl and plumbing, these slide-out trays fit

into a standard 900 x 720 x 560mm flat-packed base cabinet.

Cut from plywood and pine, the trays are built using butt joints and are easily adapted to suit other sizes.

The two base trays fit beneath sink plumbing that exits through the back of the cabinet, with plenty of room for cleaning products and similar items.

If the plumbing in your kitchen exits through the base of the cabinet, change the dimensions of the trays so they're shorter or narrower as needed, or make two tiers of upper trays.

CUT THE COMPONENTS

The unit base, tray bases and cleats are cut from 17mm CD plywood using a circular saw and straightedge guide.

Cut the partitions and tray sides from 90 x 19mm dressed all round (DAR) pine, and the upper tray sides from 140 x 19mm pine using a circular saw and speed square.

To finish, the trays are sanded with 180 grit abrasive paper and sealed with two coats of clear polyurethane to protect them from product spills and water damage. >

Drawer slides

For the smoothest operation, we used full-extension drawer slides that contain ball bearings.

To reduce the cost of the project, use single-extension drawer slides.

Hafele single-extension drawer slides are base-mounted and can handle up to 30kg.

Hafele ball-bearing roller runners are side-mounted and have a 45kg weight capacity.

Hafele Drawer Slides,
from about \$11 a pair.
hafele.com/nz



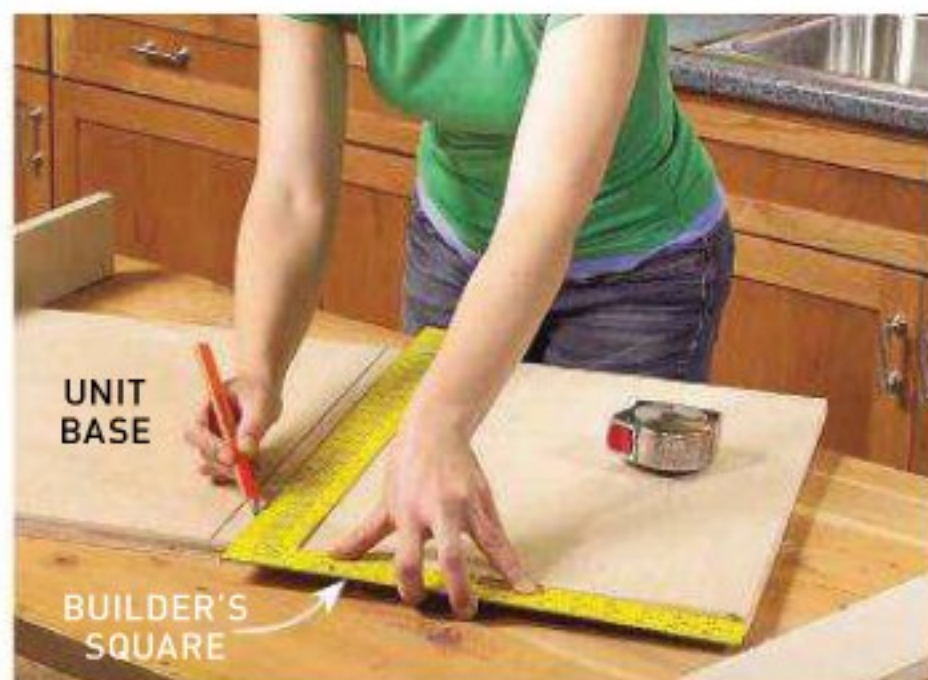
**Hafele Ball-Bearing
Roller Runners,**
from about \$16 each.

BUILD THE STORAGE TRAYS



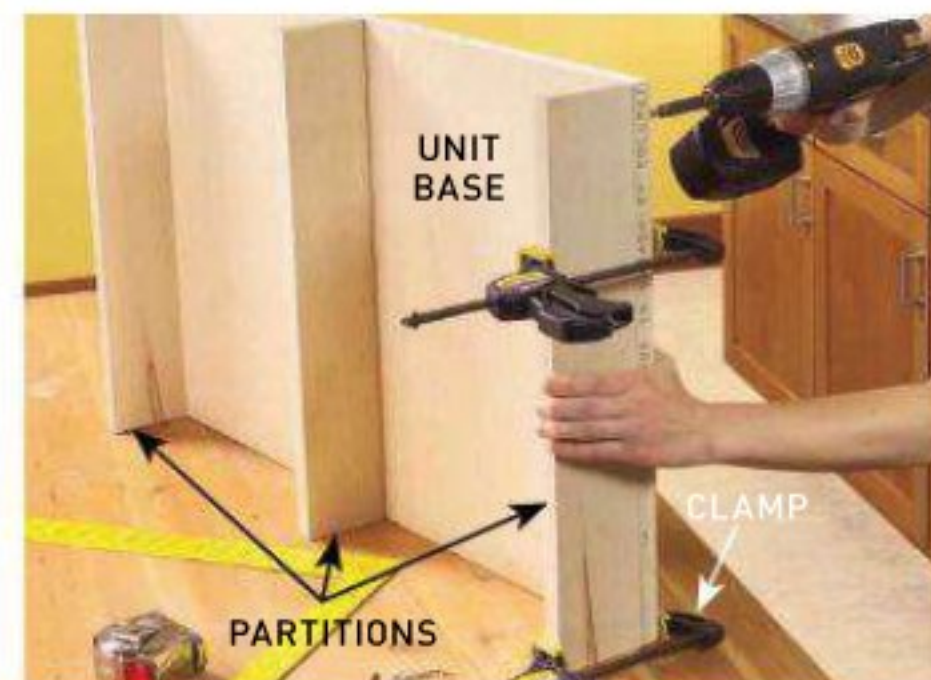
1 Measure the cabinet

Open the cabinet door fully and use a measuring tape to find the interior dimensions. Check for plumbing and electrical fittings or any other obstructions to determine the tray layout.



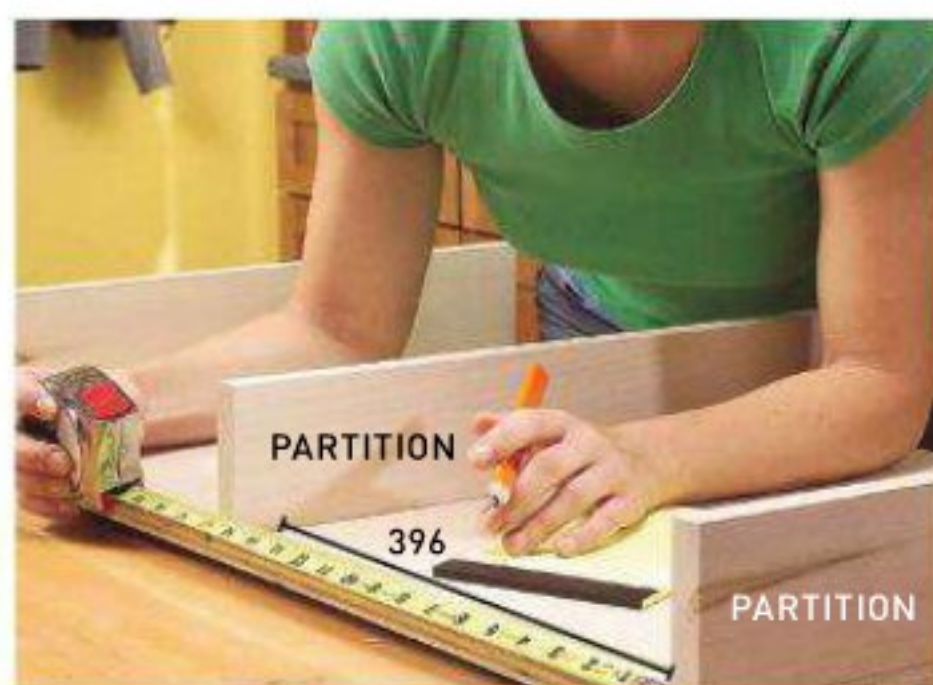
2 Prepare the unit base

Cut the plywood unit base to measure 20mm narrower than the inside width and 30mm shallower than the depth of the cabinet. Use a builder's square to mark a line across the centre of the unit base.



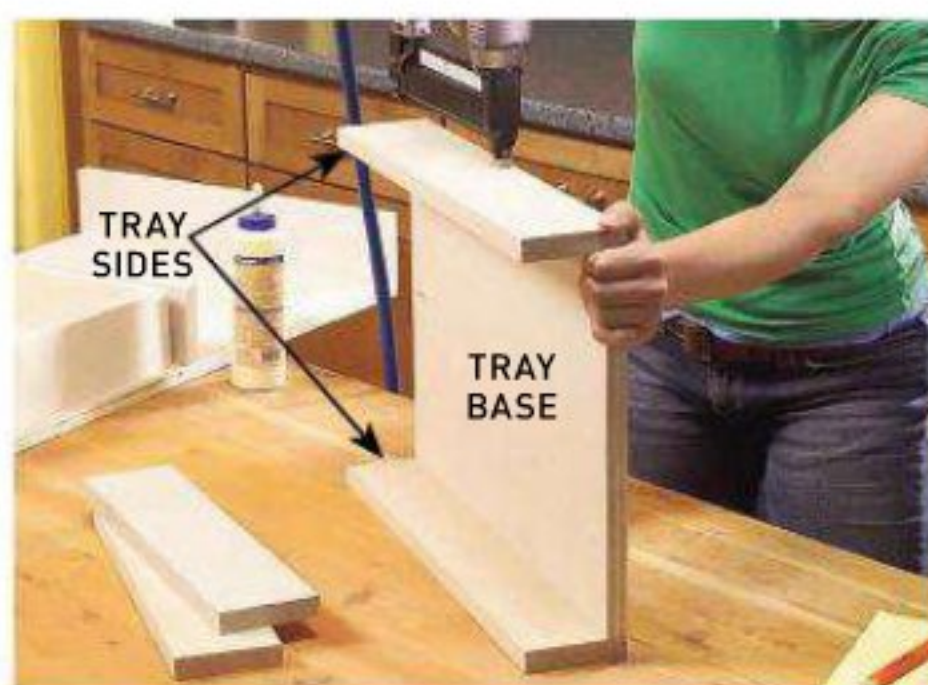
3 Attach the partitions

Mark lines 8.5mm either side of the centreline to indicate the centre partition. Clamp the partitions to the base then drill 2mm countersunk pilot holes and secure the partitions with PVA adhesive and screws.



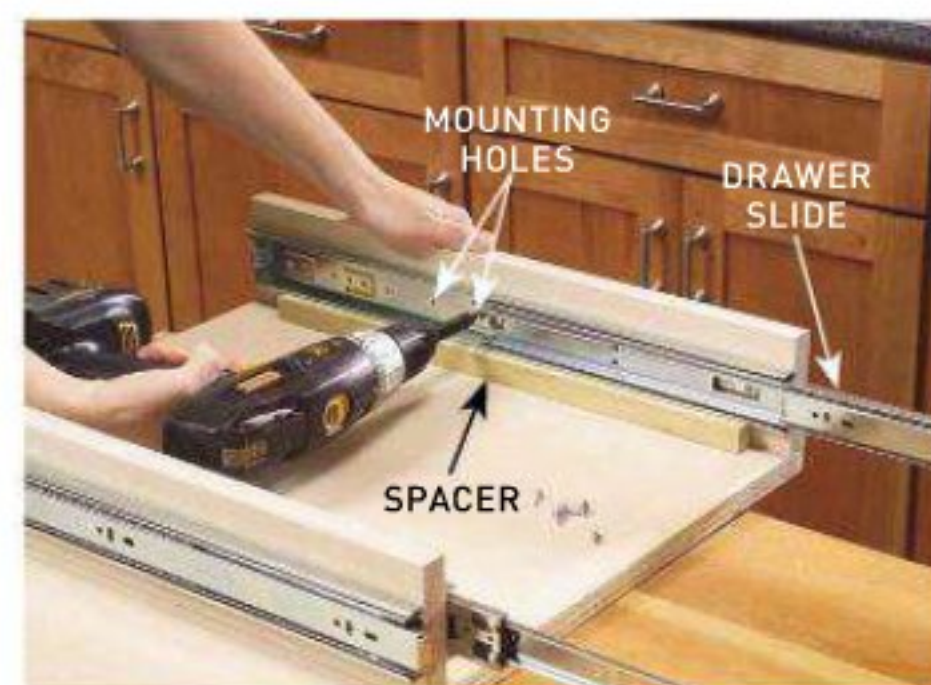
4 Cut the front and back

Measure the exact distance between the partitions. Subtract 25.4mm from these measurements to allow sufficient space for the drawer slides then cut the tray front and back to match the measurements.



5 Assemble the trays

Position the tray base between the tray sides, securing with PVA adhesive and screws. Position the tray front and back, securing to the base edges and the ends of the sides using adhesive and screws.



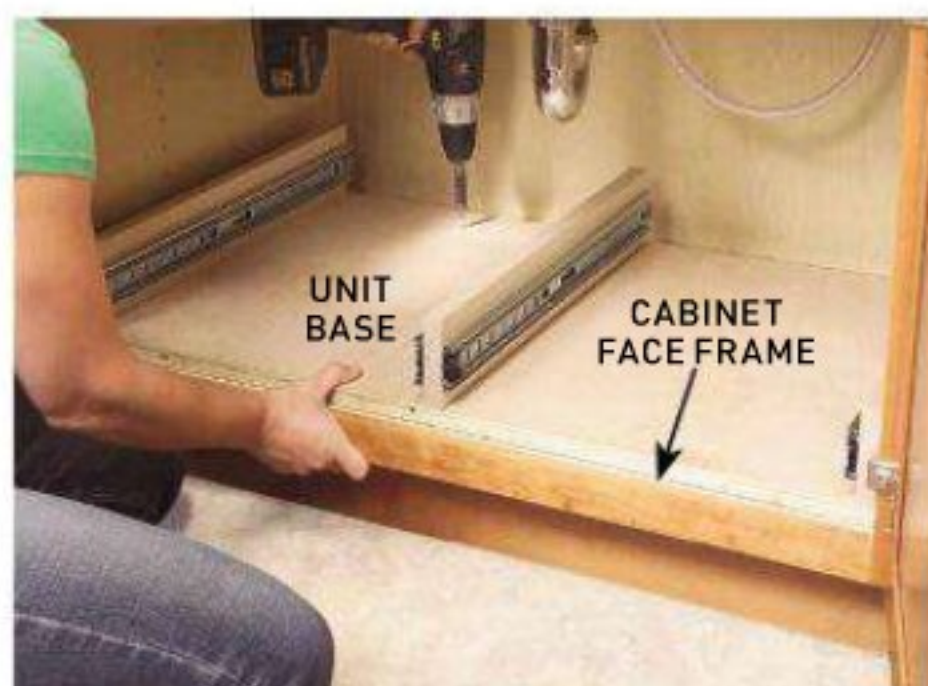
6 Secure the slides

Position the drawer slides on the base unit on 17mm plywood spacers, flush with the front of each partition. Open the slides slightly to expose the mounting holes and drill 1.5mm pilot holes, securing with screws.



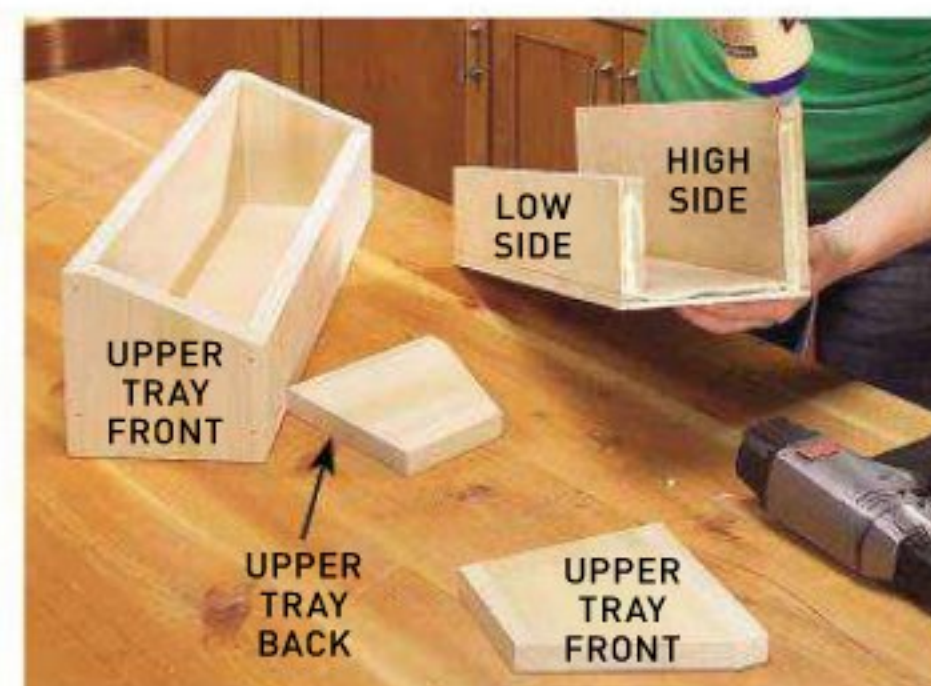
7 Mount the trays

Push the release lever to separate the drawer and the cabinet sections of the slides. Position the drawer sections on 17mm spacers then secure to the tray sides. Reassemble the slides and check for smooth operation.



8 Install the trays

Position the unit base flush with the back of the cabinet face frame and drill pilot holes, securing with screws. Position the trays and slide them in. **TIP** If you have frameless cabinets, set the base 3mm back from the front.

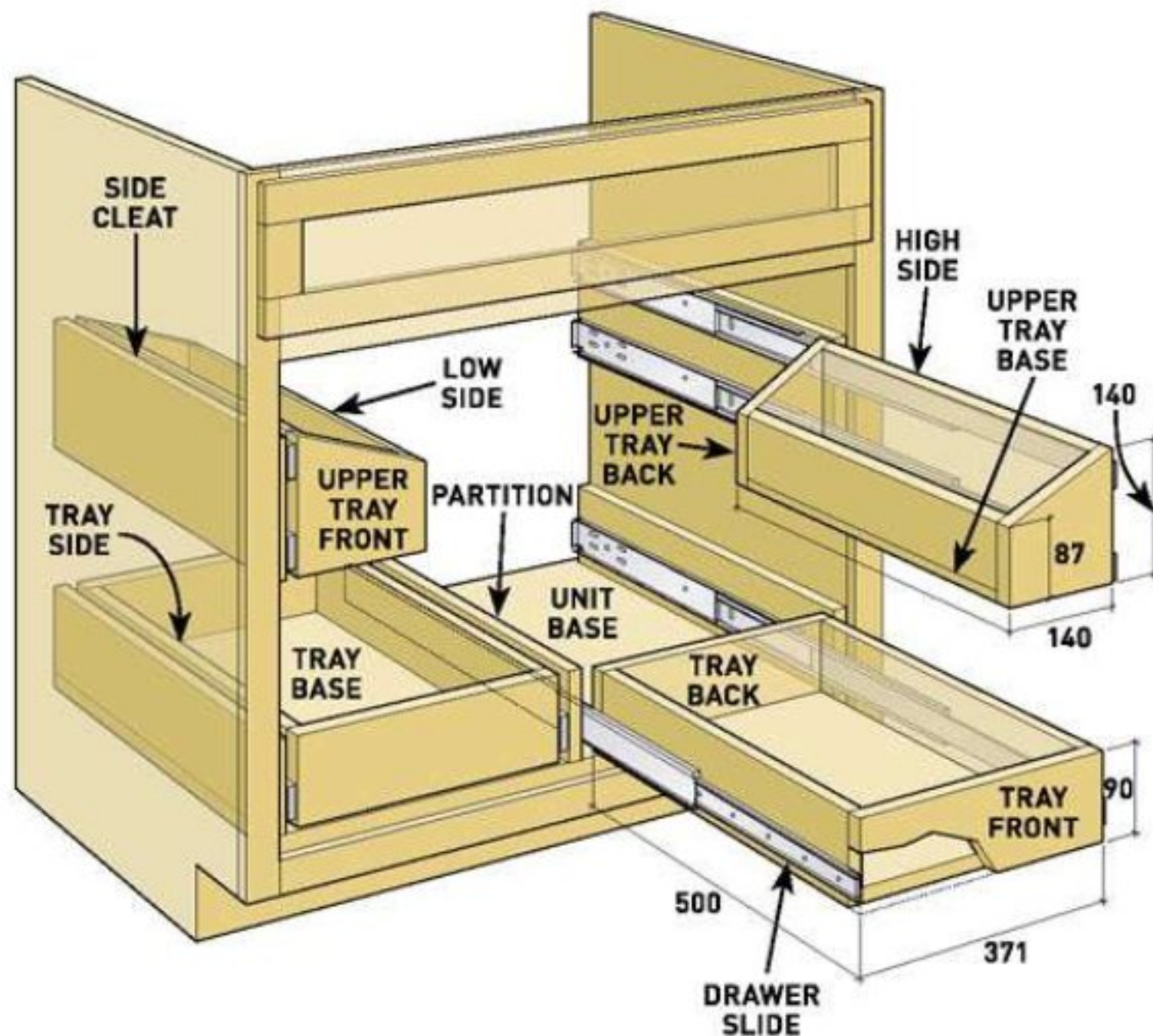


9 Build the upper trays

Assemble the upper trays using adhesive and screws then secure the side cleats to the cabinet sides with screws. Mount each upper tray on a pair of slides positioned 30mm from the top and base of the cleats.

SLIDE-OUT STORAGE TRAYS

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
PLYWOOD		
Unit base	510 x 850 x 17	1
Tray bases	466 x 333 x 17	2
Upper tray bases	466 x 140 x 17	2
Side cleats	510 x 140 x 17	2
PINE		
Partitions	510 x 90 x 19	3
Tray sides	466 x 90 x 19	4
Tray front and back	371 x 90 x 19	4
Upper tray high sides	466 x 123 x 19	2
Upper tray low sides	466 x 70 x 19	2
Upper tray front and back	140 x 140 x 19	4

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Download the tools, costs and materials for building slide-out storage trays.

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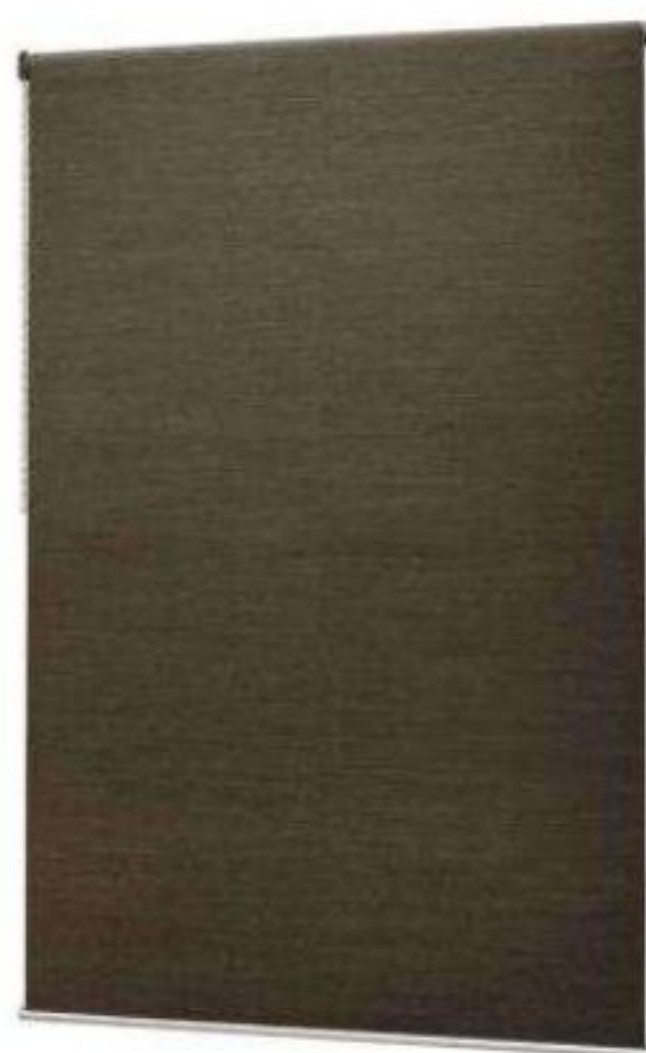
Window treatments

Choosing the right window treatment is a decision that can dictate the feel and ambience of the room. From controlling light and privacy to heat retention and deflection, there's a style and a solution for every space and budget.

The Windowware blinds shown on these pages are from an extensive range at Bunnings (bunnings.co.nz).

Roller blinds

Roller blinds are cost effective and simple to install and maintain. They suit modern living and provide excellent sunshading. Available in a range of colours, choose one close to the wall shade for a disappearing effect.



Charm Charcoal Blockout Roller Blind,
60 x 210cm, \$37.85.



Glamour Blind Snow Blockout Roller Blind,
60 x 210cm, \$57.95.



Boutique Parchment Roller Blind,
60 x 210cm, \$56.84.



Roller blinds are sleek and understated for a stylish, contemporary look.

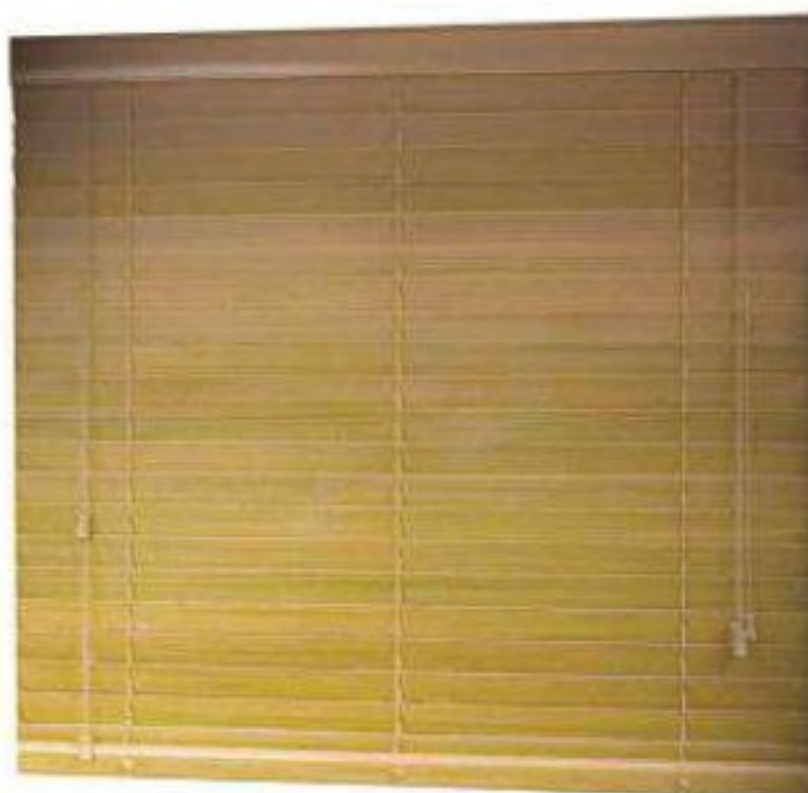
»Refresh your living spaces with a new look for the windows, choosing a blind that complements your style



Venetian blinds are ideal for filtering light through large windows.

Venetian blinds

Particularly good for filtering glare, venetian blinds are a popular choice for many households. Available in various materials and colours, they add charm and suit any environment.



Basswood Wooden Venetian Blinds,
60 x 137cm, \$69.85.



White Birch Timber Venetian Blinds,
60 x 137cm, \$56.45.



White Aluminium Venetian Blinds,
60 x 137cm, \$24.15.

MODERN
UPDATE

OUR NEW \$7750 KITCHEN

Keeping the existing cabinets and most of the appliances helped this makeover stay well within budget

WORDS **SANDRA BRIDEKIRK** MAIN PICTURE **STUART SCOTT**

The hub of their home had served John and Dianne Bowler well for more than 20 years, and though they had few complaints about the kitchen, they decided it was time for a revamp.

‘The kitchen layout and space was good but it was looking a little tired after all that time, plus the wear and tear caused by two kids,’ says John.

DOING THE RESEARCH

Before committing to a plan, the couple looked at retail showrooms and display homes for inspiration as well as magazines and websites.

‘We came to the conclusion it would be better to revamp the cabinets instead of replacing them.

‘We loved the solid oak doors and panelling, and the cupboards were in excellent condition,’ says John.

The couple also elected to keep the old sink and most of the appliances, significantly reducing the outlay.

MAKING PREPARATIONS

With a solid plan in mind, John set about removing the old splashback tiles, taking care not to damage the plasterboard wall too much.

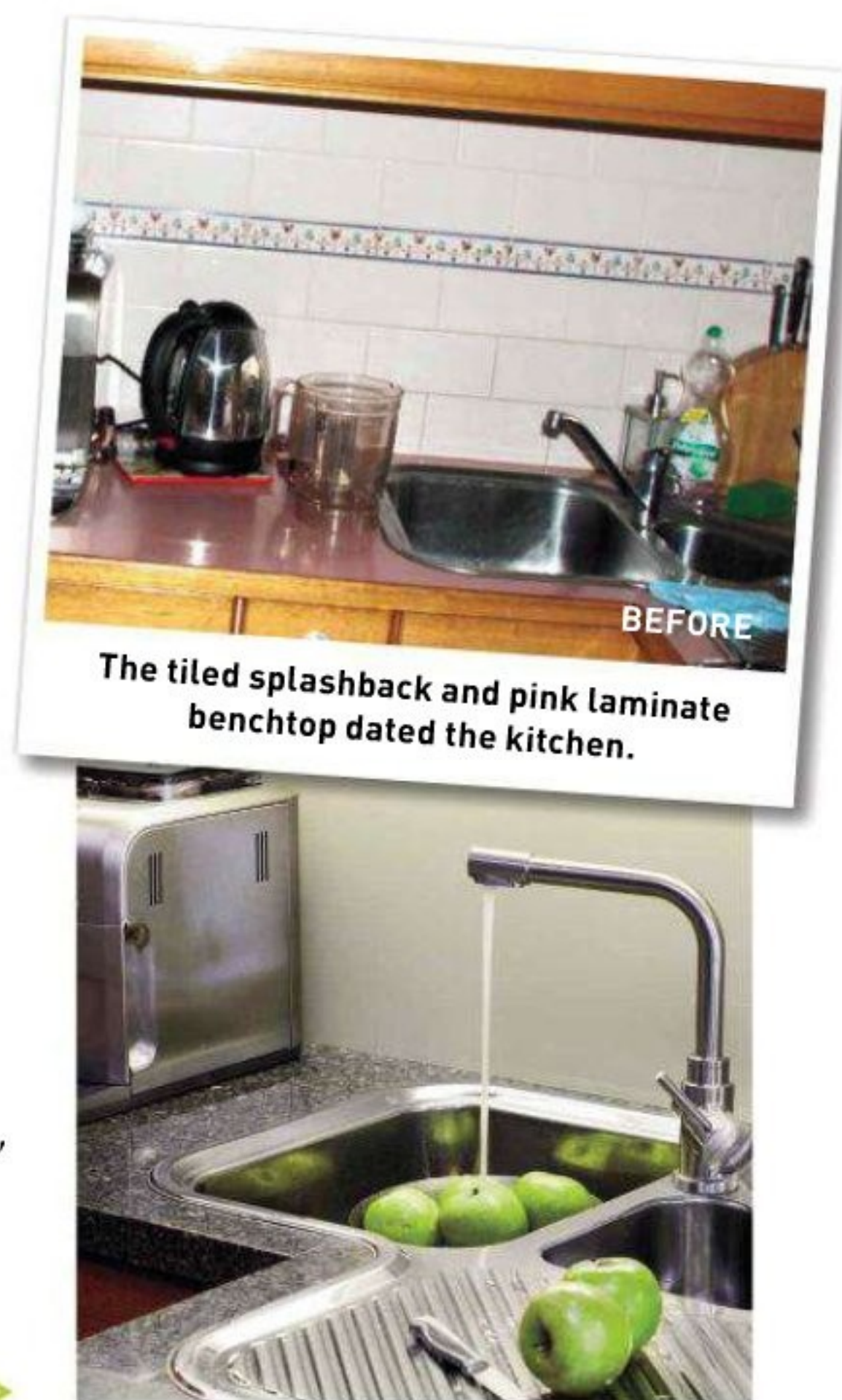
‘Considering the amount of work it took to repair the wall in the end, it probably would have been easier to simply cut the wall lining off and replace the entire sheet of plasterboard,’ he says.

John coated the wall with finishing compound, which was left to dry and sanded smooth, then sealed with a coat of paint.

‘It took about a day all up, but I did an hour or two every other day.’

After weighing up the merits and prices of the materials available, from laminates to reconstituted stone, a new benchtop was ordered.

‘We settled on natural stone from Spain. It’s probably one of the more expensive ones on the market but I think it’s also one of the best.’ >



The tiled splashback and pink laminate benchtop dated the kitchen.



AFTER
A new benchtop and glass splashback
haul the kitchen into the 21st century.



The old benchtop was replaced.



Gaps were sealed with silicone.

Laying the tiles

By the end of week three the glass splashback was installed, then John installed the new rangehood and refitted the light pelmet.

The tilers were also finally ready to start work, cutting scrap tiles to fill the holes where the old flooring had been partially removed.

The 400 x 400mm tiles were cut to fit around the cupboards and against the skirtings.

'The tilers worked from the dining room doorway through the kitchen and then into the sunroom to the back door,' says John.



UPGRADING THE FLOOR

The next step was to tackle the floor. John sought quotes to remove the old floor tiles and replace them with new porcelain stone-look tiles.

'The cost was very high so we decided to prepare the floor ourselves and have the tiler just lay the new tiles. Unfortunately this proved too much, even for me, as it took about an hour just to remove one tile and there were 35 square metres of them.'

In desperation, John tracked down a company that would strip the floor for \$35 per square metre.

'After a couple of hours and several holes in the floor, the tradie we hired also gave up, and we still had a skip bin sitting empty in the driveway.'

Eventually John called in a team that was recommended by his local tile supplier to do the job.

'They had a long hard look at the existing floor and suggested we lay the new tiles over the old,' he says.

This approach only raised the floor level by about 15mm, which was not enough to cause any problems.

MEASURING UP

Things moved more quickly during the second week of the renovation. The electrician shifted the power outlets and the benchtop supplier came to measure up.

'Since the benchtop was replacing an existing one he simply took the measurements of the old one before I removed it,' says John.

Back at the factory, the dimensions for the new benchtop were loaded into a laser CNC machine that cut the top to the exact size and shape for a perfect fit.

'I removed the old benchtop while the new one was on trestles for a measurement check and a final cut and polish,' says John.

'After a bit of adjustment with the grinder, the sink and cooker were fitted in their respective cutouts.'



The revitalised cabinetry was modernised with new handles.

INSTALLING THE BENCHTOP

The next step was to position the sections on top of the cabinets.

'This stone weighs a ton and the three installers and myself struggled to manoeuvre each piece in place.'

The first small section of benchtop fitted perfectly but the second bigger section had to be adjusted slightly with the grinder before installation.

'The joint was opened just slightly and epoxy adhesive applied. We eased it back into position and checked it again,' says John. 'Epoxy was also used to secure the benchtop to the cabinets. The joint was filled with epoxy coloured to match the top.'

To finish the job, the stone was given a final polish with a buffing wheel then silicone sealant was applied. A new flick mixer and an under-bench water filter were installed, and the sink and cooktop fitted and reconnected.



REVAMPING THE CABINETS

Over the next week, John removed the old cabinet doors and cleaned off any built-up grime before revitalising the clear finish with buffing oil, which he polished to an even sheen.

Each door was rehung and the hinges adjusted to create even gaps and alignment.

New European-style handles were secured in place of the round knobs, with larger handles on the pot drawers and pantry doors.

The other drawers had hook-style finger pulls attached, and a slide-out waste bin was installed under the sink.

'The whole project took about four weeks to complete and we are really happy with the results,' says John.

WHAT IT COST

The reno took four weeks to do, with the tiling and benchtops taking up most of the time and budget.

Powerpoints	
Rangehood	\$85
Pelmet	\$247
Sink mixer	\$65
Water filter	\$264
Splashback	\$189
Benchtop	\$770
Tiles	\$3300
Paint	\$699
Sundries	\$193
Handles	\$50
Plumber	\$107
Electrician	\$80
Tiler	\$60
Skip bin	\$1400
TOTAL	\$246
	\$7755

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STYLE
meets
FUNCTION



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LUKE & BROOKE

AFTER
Light and bright, the kitchen has been completely transformed with a little demolition and a lot of paint.



BEFORE

Functional but dark the kitchen was closed off by faux timber arches.



The freshly powdercoated doors make the dated cabinets look new.

Brooke's budget beater

Handyman reader Brooke Searles and husband Luke couldn't live with the outdated kitchen in their new home, but weren't ready for a major reno.

'We needed a solution we could be happy with for a few years. After a bit of research, we decided on some cosmetic upgrades,' says Brooke.

'The first step was to get the daggy timber-look arches down, and fast.

'We went in with hand tools and the difference it made to the house was instant, opening everything up.'

PAINTING THE WAY

The couple painted the cabinet frames white and had a local supplier powdercoat the doors. With new handles, the look began to take shape.

'Now it was the peach benchtop that really stood out. I painted it with a laminate product over a weekend

and was pleased with the finish, it's smooth and shiny and a thousand times better than before.'

A tile paint in duck-egg blue masked the old splashback then it was the floor's turn for a lick of the brush.

Says Brooke, 'We spent less than \$1500 and I don't think you could beat that. Until the big renovation somewhere down the line, we're happy with the result.'

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SPONTANEOUS

The remedy to
“WHAT SHALL WE DO?”



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SAVING
MONEY

APPLIANCE CARE

The kitchen contains some of the most costly items in the home so maintain them well to keep cash in your pocket

Refrigerators

The most essential piece of equipment in the kitchen, make sure your fridge is running efficiently for better food storage and to keep energy costs down.

- **GIVE IT ENOUGH ROOM** by allowing at least a 10mm gap at the sides and 20mm behind. If the fridge is in direct sun, install a blind to screen it. Better still, ventilate the fridge space to the roof void or through outside walls.
- **CLEAN IT INSIDE AND OUT** every four to six months, working from the top down and cleaning one shelf or area at a time. Wipe the interior with a mild detergent solution or bicarb soda.
- **WASH REMOVABLE SHELVES** in the sink with warm water and detergent, but let glass shelves come to room temperature first to avoid cracks.
- **CLEAR THE DRAIN HOLE** at the base of the fridge and wipe the door seals, taking care to clear all dirt from the grooves.
- **WIPE THE COILS** and around the motor every three months as dust can

cause the unit to run poorly. Unplug the fridge, pull it out and use the vacuum cleaner's brush attachment.

- **KEEP IT LEVEL** to make it efficient. Raise or lower the feet or castors using an adjustable wrench, or turn the levelling screws with a shifter. Use a spirit level to ensure that the fridge is balanced.
- **CHECK DOOR SEALS** twice a year to keep food fresh and energy costs down. Close the door on a sheet of paper then try to pull the paper out. If there's little resistance, the seal isn't working. Coat the flat surface with petroleum jelly, or completely replace a stiff or cracked seal. ➤



Hillmark Steel Kleen Ezi-Wipes, \$9 for a 10 pack. hillmark.com.au

Choosing a new model

Refrigerators are switched on and running 24 hours a day, all year long. They account for about 20% of the electricity used in the average home, so it definitely pays to make sure they run as efficiently as possible.

When you need to replace your fridge, choose one with the highest energy rating you can afford and look for the energy-saving logo. The most efficient new models can save about two-thirds of the power used by a 10-year-old fridge.



Smart idea

A well-stocked freezer isn't just good news for mealtimes, it also keeps your freezer running at maximum efficiency as there's less circulating air that has to be cooled. Fill empty spaces with containers of water. They will not only improve your freezer's performance but also help to keep the contents cold for longer in the event of a power cut.

Glass shelves love a good clean but dry them well before putting them back.

Stoves and rangehoods

Regular cleaning is the key, but simple checks will also ensure that your oven, stovetop and rangehood are working as efficiently as possible.

- **PROTECT COOKTOPS** made from glass or ceramic which are easily damaged. Avoid abrasive cleaners and use only smooth-bottomed pans that won't scratch the surface.
- **NEVER STORE HEAVY ITEMS** like pans or canned food in the cupboards above the cooktop. If they fall or you drop them, they'll damage the surface.
- **LOOK UNDER THE RANGEHOOD** once a month and wash the grease filter in the top rack of the dishwasher or by hand. Soak fabric filters in a degreasing agent then soapy water. Some recirculating rangehoods have filters that can't be cleaned, so consult the manual first.

■ **A NOISY FAN** may be clogged. While the filter is off wipe inside, including the fan blades if you can get to them, using a general cleaner. Depending on the type, the filter may need to be changed every six months.

■ **WIPE UP SPILLED FOOD** promptly with a soft cloth. If food does burn onto the surface of the stove, spray it with a 50/50 mix of dishwashing liquid and water, then let it soak for a few minutes before wiping it clean.

■ **CLEAN BURNERS** of caked-on food by allowing it to cool then wiping off as much as you can before turning the heat to high to let the spill burn off.

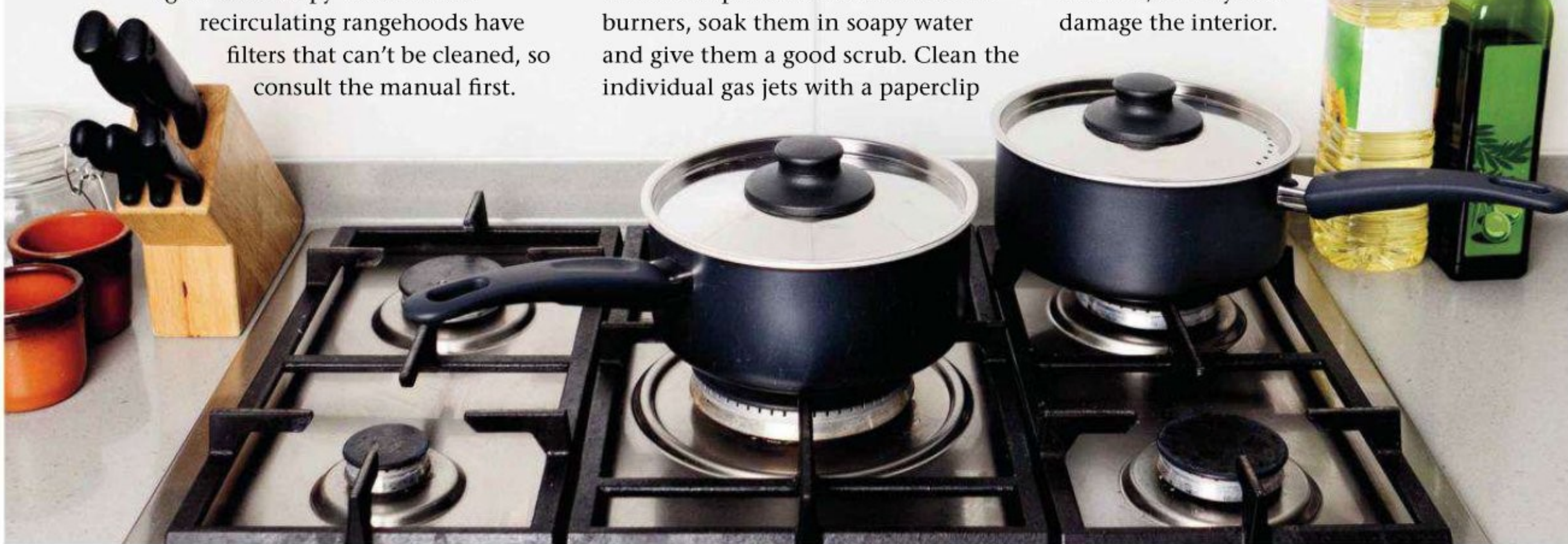
■ **CHECK GAS BURNERS** if the flame is orange rather than blue. Wait until the stovetop is cool then remove the burners, soak them in soapy water and give them a good scrub. Clean the individual gas jets with a paperclip



or darning needle. Use fine wire to clean the tiny holes where the pipe from the pilot light connects to the burner.

TIP If you live by the ocean, orange flames can be caused by salt in the air.

■ **SET A SELF-CLEANING OVEN** to its cleaning cycle and give the oven racks a mild ammonia bath while you wait. Always let the cycle complete before opening the oven door and don't use commercial cleaners, as they can damage the interior.



Common cooker problems

1 The temperature is inconsistent

Preheat an electric oven then use a thermometer to test the accuracy of the thermostat. To recalibrate an old oven, turn the screws behind the temperature knobs or consult the manual for specific advice. If the thermostat is faulty it must be replaced by a technician.

2 The oven door looks wonky

Staining or soot around the door can indicate it's warped. Open the door and loosen the screws near the corners that join the inner and outer panels. Push down on the door, twist it from side to side then tighten the screws. Close the door and look for gaps.

3 The door doesn't close tightly

Open the door and inspect the seal clipped to the front of the oven. Peel off a damaged, burned or soiled seal and replace with an identical one from an appliance parts supplier. Leave seals on self-cleaning ovens to a professional repair technician.

4 Things are not cooking properly

The element may be burning out. Disconnect the power by tripping the switch at the consumer unit, then remove the screws that hold the element in place. Pull out the element and have it tested with an electrical continuity tester. If it's faulty it will need to be replaced.

5 The stove sides are hard to keep clean

If you have a freestanding stove, keep spills from adjacent benchtops by installing T-shaped plastic gaskets, available at hardware stores, slipping them between the stove and the benchtops. When the gaskets get soiled, wash them then reinstall. ➤



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For more information or to receive free samples, visit www.hillmark.com.au or call the Consumer Help Line on 0800 735 539.

Dishwashers

Check the moving parts that can weaken with age like the doors, spray arms and hoses and look out for early signs of rust and damage.



Smart idea

To keep your filter clean for longer, get into the habit of scraping and rinsing plates and saucepans before putting them in the dishwasher.

■ GIVE THE DISHWASHER A WASH

every six months, or sooner if it starts to look grimy. Either use a dishwasher cleaning product or pour a cup of white vinegar into the empty machine, unless the manufacturer advises against it, and run a wash cycle. Clean the door edges and seals with dishwashing liquid, checking they are in good condition.

■ **CLEAR BLOCKED SPRAY HOLES** that can get clogged by food and mineral deposits. Remove the racks, then unwind the screws that hold the spray tower or hubcap arm in place.

Lift off the arm, clean out the holes with a paperclip and scrub with white vinegar and a nail brush.

■ **CLEAN THE FILTER** in the base. How often you need to do this depends on how much you use your machine and how well you rinse the dishes.

Start by doing it weekly and increase the time interval if you find it doesn't need cleaning that often.

Wash the filter under running water, clean it with dishwashing liquid solution and rinse thoroughly before refitting it in the machine.

■ **REPLACE HOSES** before they break. If your unit has a standard reinforced rubber inlet hose, replace it every two years or upgrade to a braided stainless steel hose. Unless the new hose has metal fittings it only needs to be hand-tightened to be connected.

■ **IF WATER WON'T DRAIN** then the strainer or filter may be blocked. If cleaning doesn't fix it, look for a blockage in the drain hose.

Pull out the machine, disconnect the hose and check that it's clear. If water is still not draining, the drain pump motor probably has a fault and a professional needs to be called in.

Correct stacking ensures a clean result at the end of the wash cycle.

Common dishwasher problems

1 Dishes aren't getting clean

The simplest cause is careless loading. If dishes overlap or cutlery protrudes through the dish rack and stops the spray arm turning, the water and detergent can't do their job. Or the sump filter may be blocked, leaving dirty water circulating during the rinse cycle.

2 Clean dishes are streaked with white

These white streaks are mineral deposits from hard water. Look in your manual or check with the manufacturer about recommended methods for softening the water in your unit.

3 Glasses are left with ring marks

This means you're using insufficient rinse aid during the wash. Check the rinse aid level and the setting that determines how much the machine uses per wash, and top it up.

4 Glasses are coming out sticky

Too much rinse aid is being used and it is leaving a deposit on glasses. Check the rinse aid level and the setting that determines how much the machine uses per wash, and adjust accordingly.

5 The powder is not dissolving properly

The powder may be forming lumps, leaving deposits on dishes and in the machine. Don't store the powder where it can absorb water, like under the sink, and make sure the powder hatch in the machine is dry before use. Also give the filter and spray arm a clean.



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Hillmark SteelKleen is recommended by leading Manufacturers including Electrolux, Fisher & Paykel, Smeg, Chef, Westinghouse & Bosch.



For more information or to receive free samples, visit www.hillmark.com.au or call the Consumer Help Line on 0800 735 539.

BUYER'S GUIDE

TORCHES

The Classic

With its handy strap, light aluminium body and tactile rubber shaft, it's easy to keep a grip on the Arlec 7 LED Ultra Bright Torch, \$13. Conventional in shape, the seven energy-saving LEDs that help prolong battery life are what separates it from the herd. Buy it in red for a snazzy look.



Roaming Ray

Need a light under the car, over the workbench or in the garage? Grab the Arlec 24+3 LED Hand Lamp, \$8. Its 27 LEDs are located in two places, so it can be used as a torch or a lamp. And with a swivel hook and magnet it can be hung or fixed to surfaces to illuminate any type of space.

Go To Glow

Fumbling in the dark? Keep an Arlec 9 LED Flashlight, \$8, handy for when you get up at night. This torch even has two magnetic points so you can attach it to the fridge while you get a drink. Great for all the family with three colours available and three AAA long-lasting batteries supplied.



Switch on and be illuminated by the best and most useful lights for day-to-day living and DIY applications

Pocket Power

Good things come in small packages, like the Arlec Ultra Bright LED Stick Light, \$6. Waterproof and impact resistant with a moulded pocket clip, it's ready to tough out life in your jeans or toolbelt. Its six white LEDs pack a punch to light up any indoor or outdoor project.



Use Your Noggin

Free up your hands with the Arlec 3W LED Headlight Torch, \$25, perfect for the next time you have to go under the house or lug stuff into the roof space. It has an adjustable headstrap and beam, featuring three light modes including max, low and blinking, for power conservation.



Bendy & Bright

Keep your peepers focused on the page well after dark with the Energizer Flexible Booklight, \$21. Handy for reading large books or thick manuals, it features a wide clip and a neck as flexible as a yoga instructor. The super bright Nichia LED bulb will shine on for 10 hours of battery life.



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THE RIGHT TOOL

'Often the only difference between a good finish and a bad one is the method of sanding,' says *Handyman* deputy editor Frank Gardner.

'Using abrasive paper with a cork block will give satisfactory results but selecting an appropriate sander will provide a uniform surface and a far superior finish.'

There are many types of sanders, each with specific functions, ranging from the heavyweight belt sanders to the smaller, lighter detail sanders for getting into tight spots.

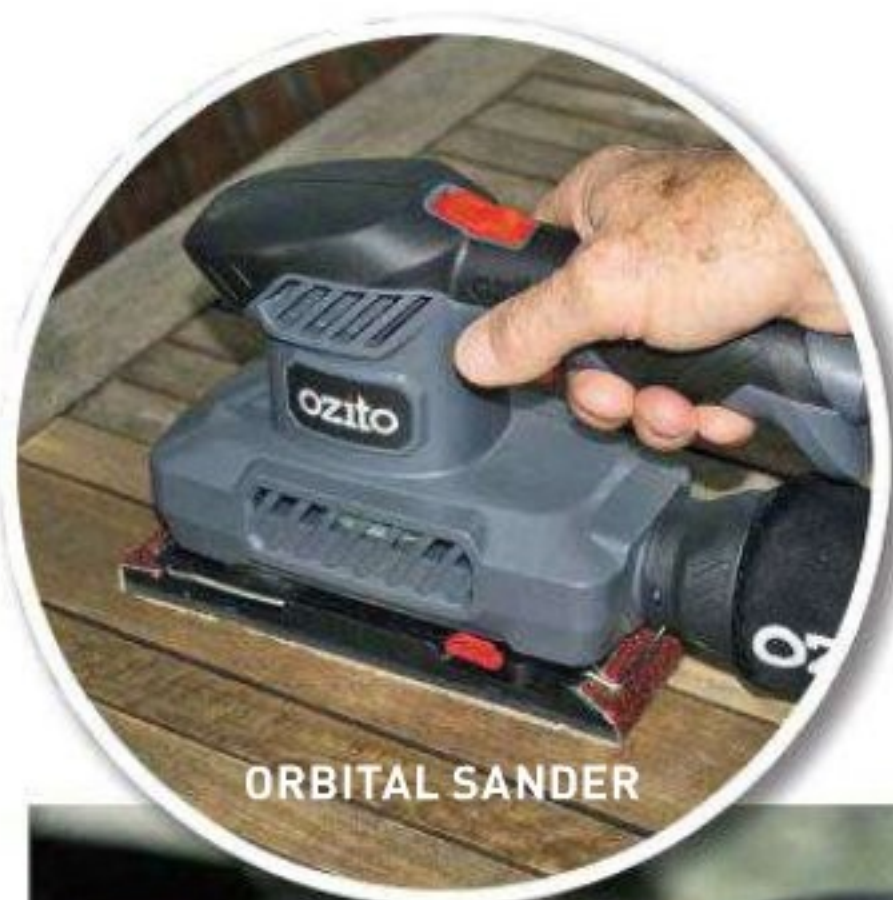
Choosing the correct sander for the job goes hand in hand with selecting the right grade of abrasive paper. We show you how to match both to get the desired finish and the best possible results. ➤

*ORBITAL SANDERS

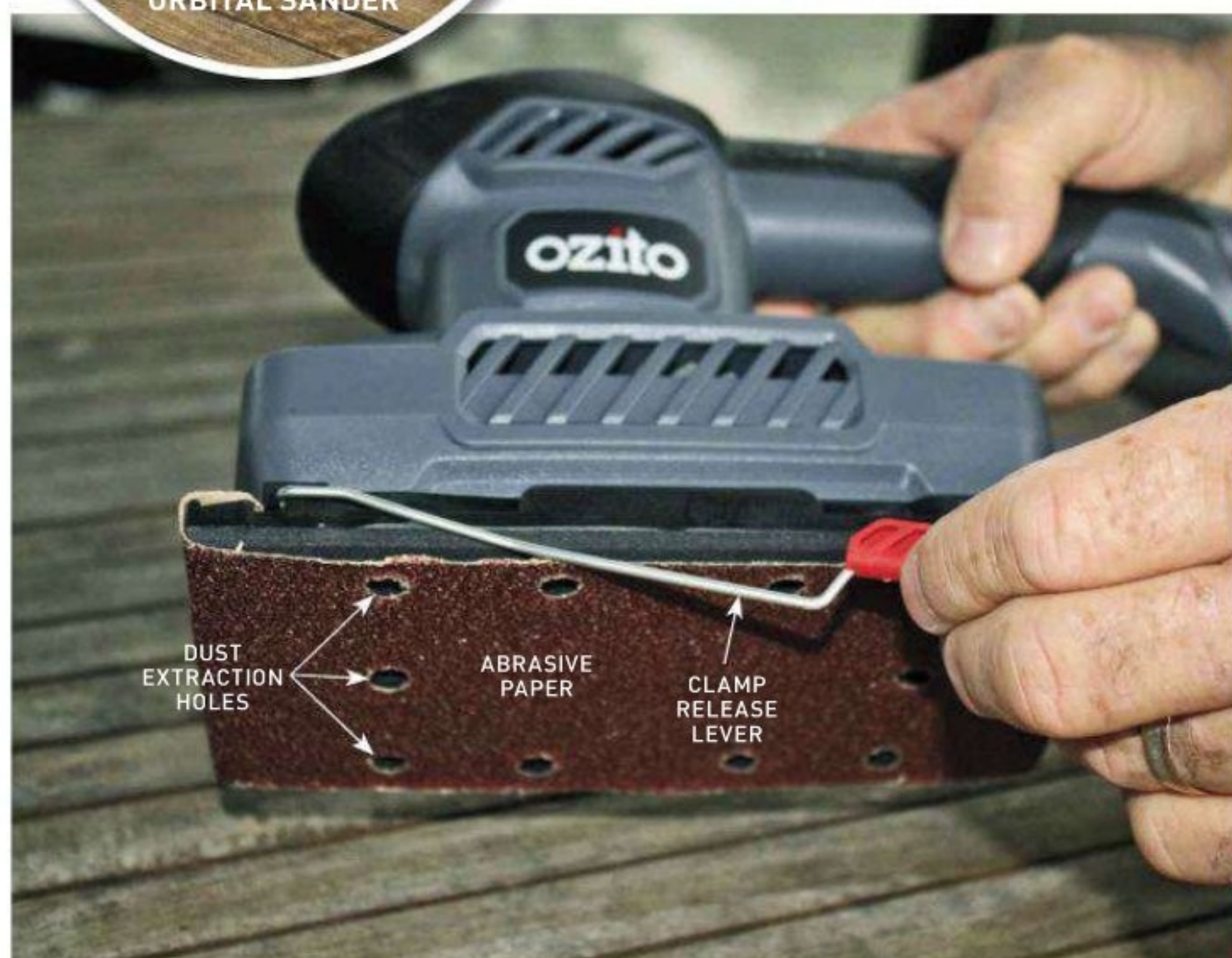
An orbital sander is used for general sanding jobs and between coats of paint or other finishes.

It features a flat base, called a platen, which operates with a circular or orbital action. It's light and easy to use on plaster, timber or previously painted surfaces.

Most are driven by a 115 to 280W motor, with the size of the sander base pad corresponding to a half or third of the area of a standard abrasive paper sheet. A one-third sheet orbital sander is ideal for DIY.



ORBITAL SANDER



LOAD THE

ABRASIVE PAPER

Cut a full sheet of abrasive paper into halves or thirds, or cut lengths off rolls of standard widths, and secure to the base of the sander using the integrated clamping brackets.

TIP Some sanders also have a hook-and-loop base to make it easier to attach sanding sheets.

*RANDOM ORBITAL SANDERS

More powerful than orbital sanders, these tools are used for fine sanding and achieving a smooth finish or quick surface removal.

Random orbital sanders have a base disc that moves in a random pattern created by rotating in an oval loop while being simultaneously spun in small circles.

When used with a coarse, low-grit disc, a random orbital sander can quickly remove paint from timber or rust from metal, or smooth uneven surfaces.

THE SANDER SIZE is classed as 125 or 150mm, referring to the diameter of the sanding disc.

They range from palm-sized to dual-handle units but for most DIY, a 125mm sander with a 230 to 270W motor is ideal.

Look for a model with an efficient dust-extraction system, variable speed control and low vibration. ➤



LOAD THE

ABRASIVE PAPER

Abrasive paper discs have pressure-sensitive adhesive or hook-and-loop backing, and come in grits from 40 to 180. Choose a disc with a dust-hole pattern that matches your tool.

TIP Have a range of discs with different grits on hand before starting a sanding job.



*BELT SANDERS

Used for heavy-duty sanding, belt sanders have more power than finishing sanders and tackle tough jobs like smoothing rough timber or levelling uneven joinery.

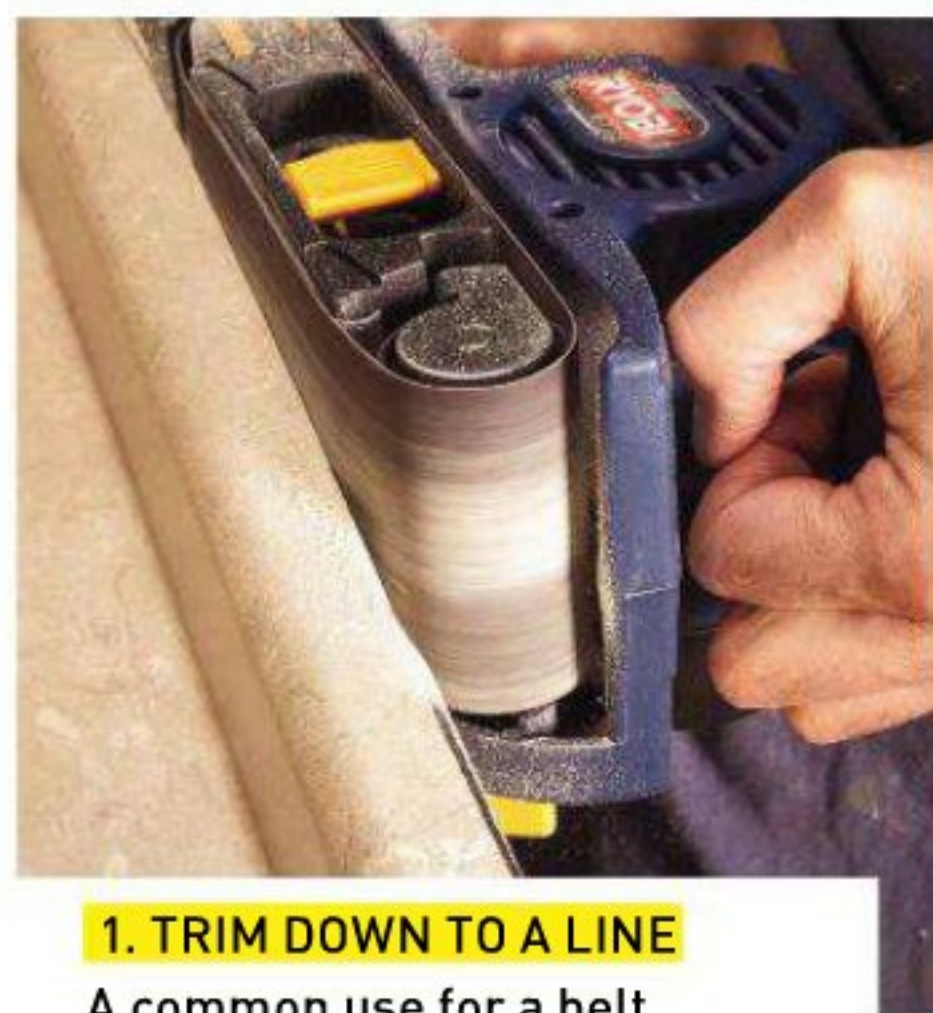
They can be used for edging glass, and masonry and metalwork.

Belt sanders are powered by 240V motors that drive the rollers on which the loop of abrasive cloth called the sanding belt is mounted.

They come in various sizes from handheld to large bench-mounted units. A handheld sander that takes 533 x 75mm belts provides plenty of power for the average DIYer.

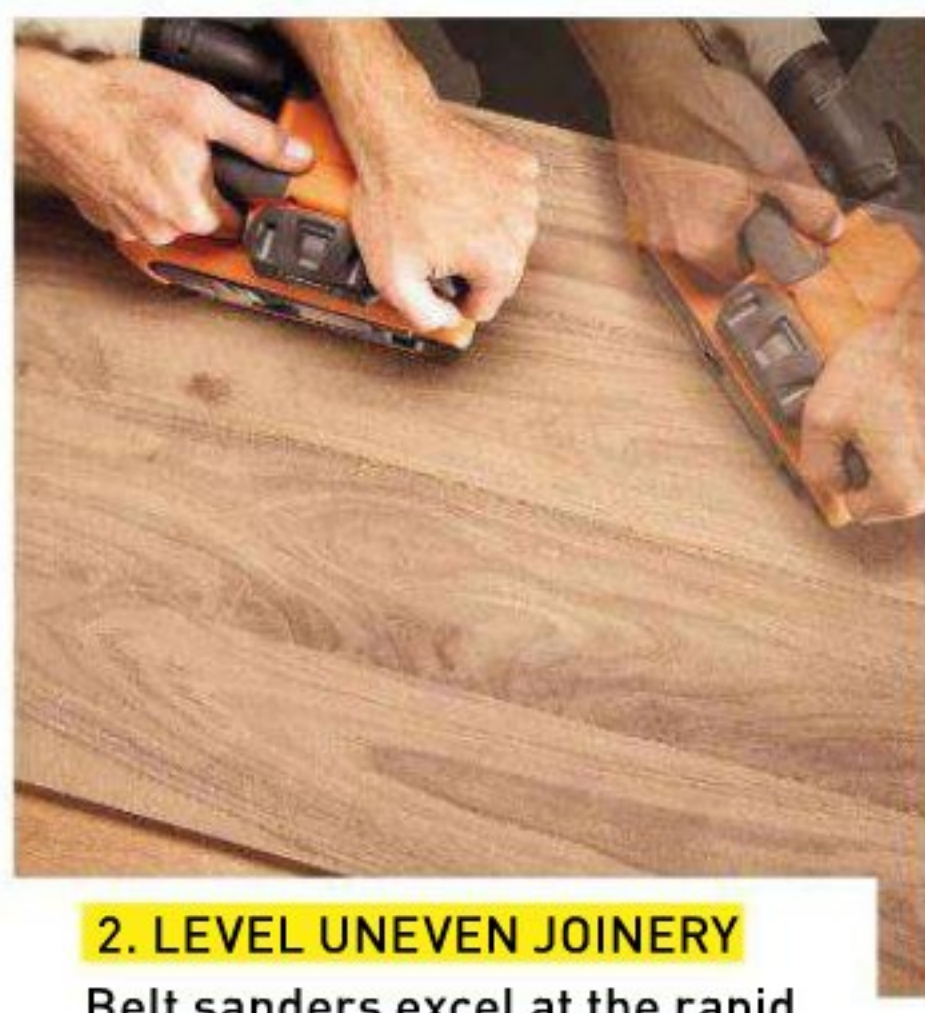
USING A BELT SANDER

A versatile tool the trademark of the belt sander is its aggressive rate of removing material. The common belt sander can be used for a range of jobs, but must be treated with care because of the potential risk of it damaging your workpiece.



1. TRIM DOWN TO A LINE

A common use for a belt sander is to trim down to a marked line, like trimming a door to stop it sticking. If trimming laminate, make sure the direction of belt travel pushes the laminate down.



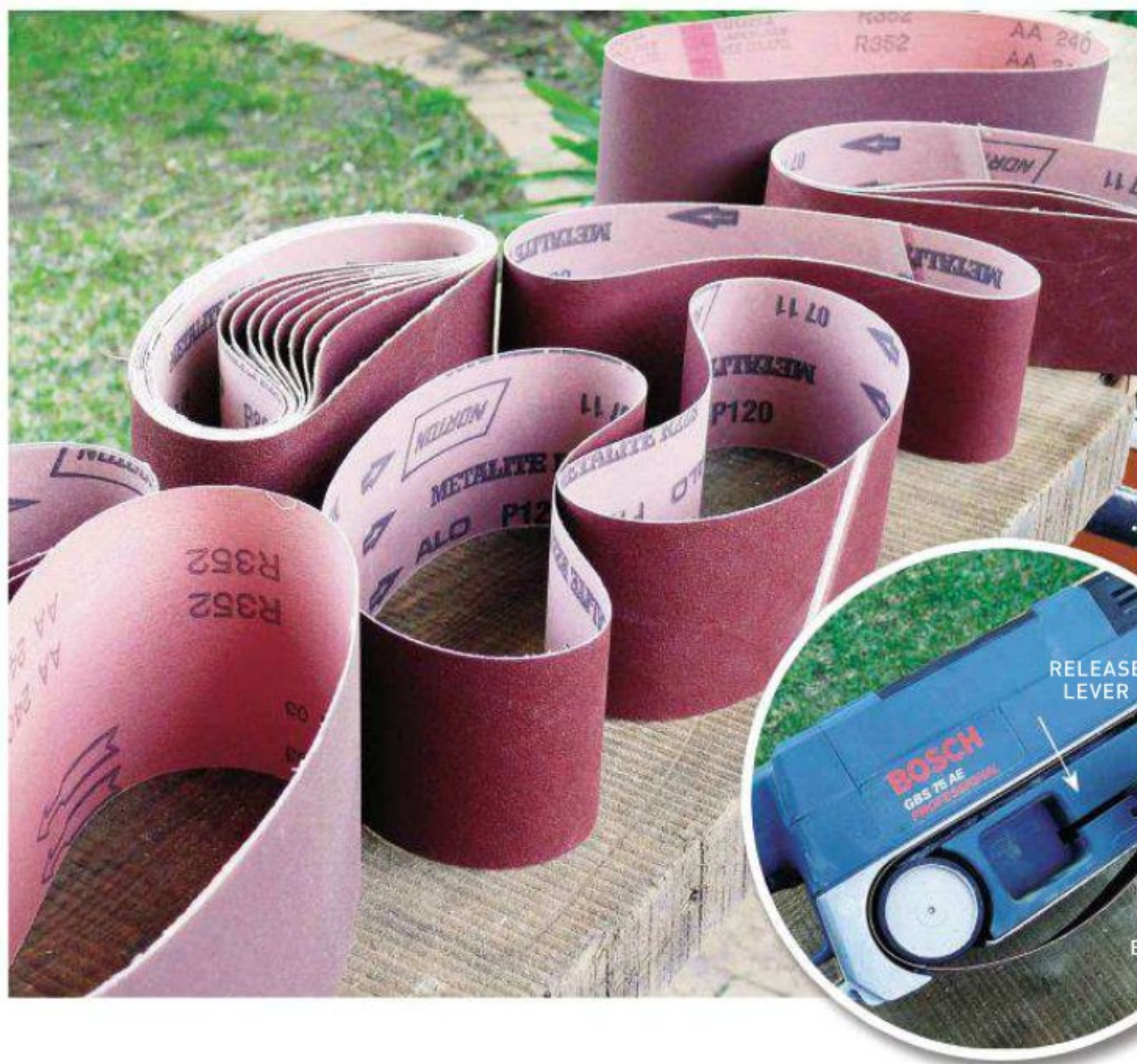
2. LEVEL UNEVEN JOINERY

Belt sanders excel at the rapid removal of timber, making them great for levelling and smoothing rough boards. Start at an angle to the grain for aggressive levelling, then finish with the grain.



3. USE GOOD TECHNIQUE

Don't push down on the sander, let its weight do the work. Make slow, smooth, overlapping passes and let the tool go past the end of the workpiece without dipping. Avoid changes in speed or direction.



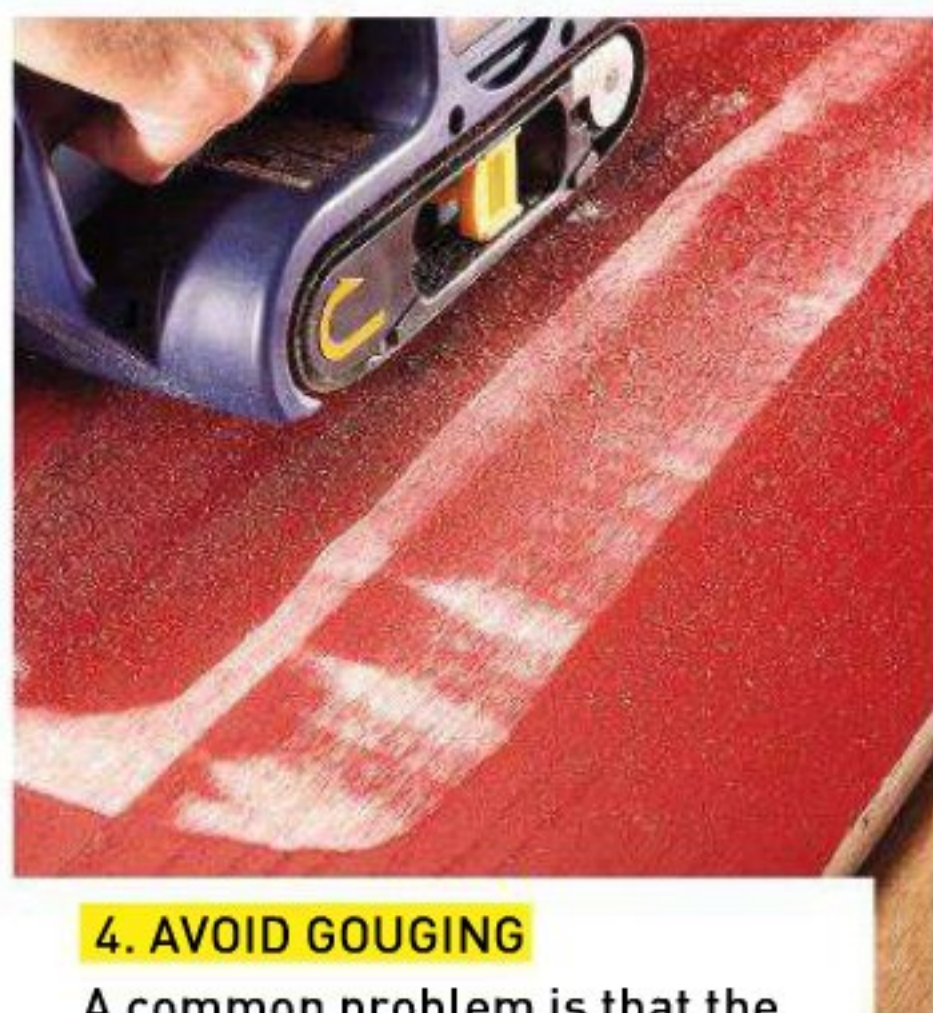
ALL ABOUT SANDING BELTS

Belts come in various sizes and grits, surfaced with a variety of abrasive compounds. The most commonly used are aluminium oxide belts in 40, 80 and 120 grit sizes.

REPLACE THE BELT by moving the side-mounted release lever to its open position. This eases the spreader clamp that tensions the belt, allowing it to be removed by sliding it sideways off the tool.

Before sliding on the new belt, check the inside of the belt for directional arrows and match these with the arrow on the sander.

Many sanders have a tracking control which is a knob or dial near the front roller. If the new belt starts skidding to one side, adjust the tracking to change the front roller angle slightly and centre the belt. ➤



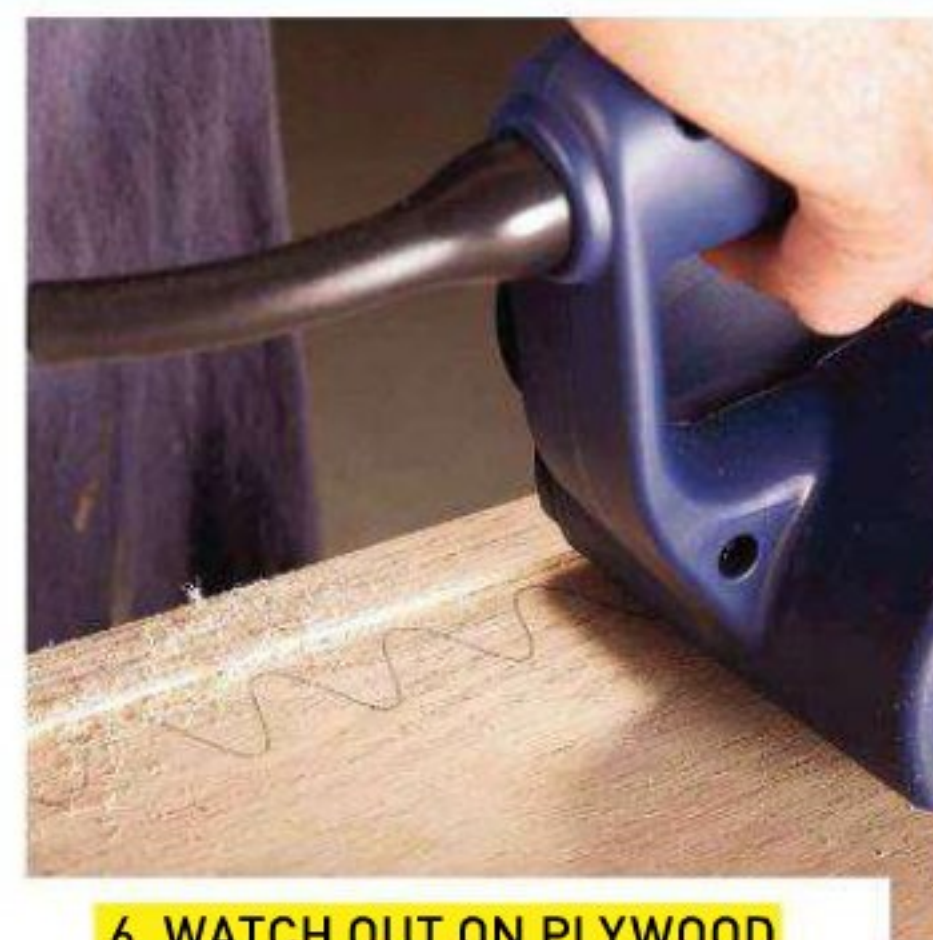
4. AVOID GOUGING

A common problem is that the belt can easily gouge a surface, as this painted panel shows. To prevent gouges, use clean, new belts, avoid grits coarser than 120 and keep the plate under the belt free of sawdust.



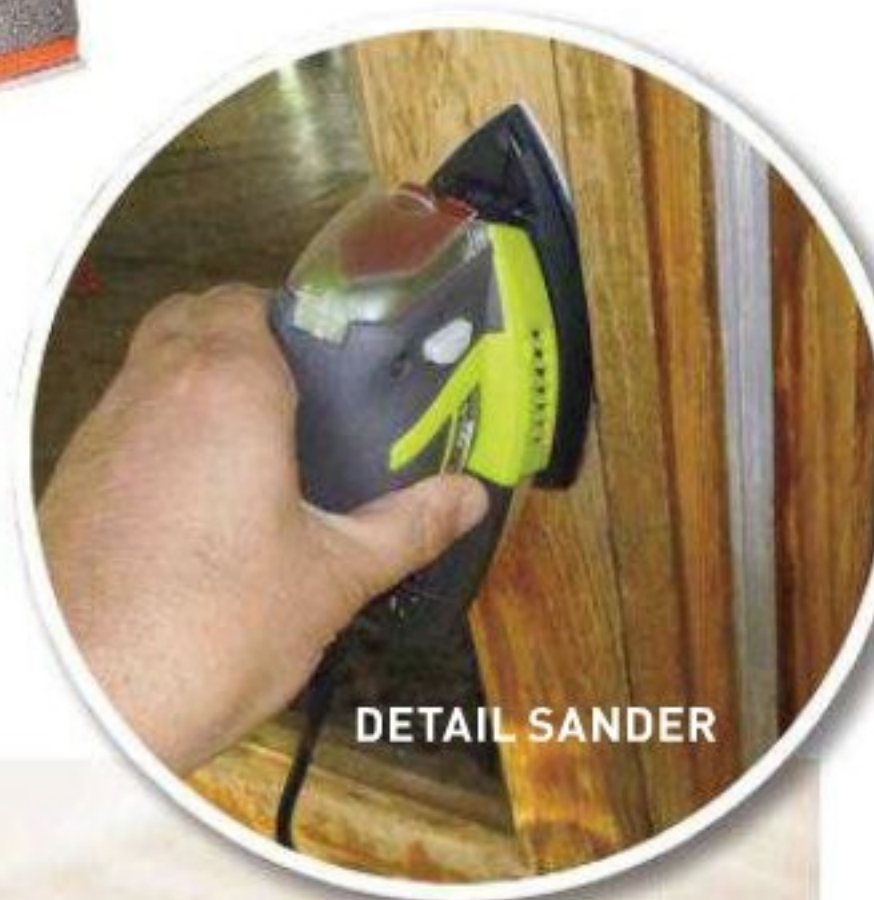
5. TRIM AFTER SANDING

To avoid rounding over the end of a board, sand the surface before cutting it to final length. You can then safely finish sanding the surface using a palm sander with abrasive pads of a finer grit.



6. WATCH OUT ON PLYWOOD

Belt sanders can wreck plywood instantly by going straight through the outer skin. If you have to sand timber edging flush with plywood, mark a pencil line to clearly show where the plywood starts.



* DETAIL SANDERS

The best choice for working in tight, hard-to-reach areas, detail sanders are used for very fine sanding. They differ in pad design, sanding action, grip and variable speed.

PADS are generally attached to a sander base that's shaped like a clothes iron or triangle using a hook-and-loop system.

Some have interchangeable attachments or finger pads to sand right into tight corners and crevices. **ACTION** can be orbital or oscillating. For sanders with orbital action, the pads rotate in small circles, and are best on finish-sanding flat surfaces.

An oscillating action rocks the pad forward and backward in a short arc, and is best on flat surfaces and mouldings.

VARIABLE SPEED is a useful feature that many models offer. Setting the sander on high speed can remove a lot of material quickly, while slow speed offers more control.

GRIP is usually one of two designs, either palm or barrel. Choose the one which is most comfortable by shape and weight. Sanders with palm grips have an orbital action.

LOAD THE

ABRASIVE PAPER

On most detail sanders, the base features a hook-and-loop surface to attach the abrasive paper. To replace a sanding pad, simply peel the worn abrasive paper off the hook-and-loop surface of the sander base then align the new pad and push to secure.



* CORDLESS DETAIL SANDERS

Used for paint and rust removal, cleaning, polishing, coarse, light and finish sanding, cordless detail sanders feature Li-Ion battery systems that supply power with no self-discharge and no memory effect.

Some models have battery charge level indicators and supply up to 18V of power.

Cordless detail sanders are invaluable when mains power is not available or in spaces where a cord would be cumbersome.



ABRASIVE PAPER

Abrasive paper, commonly called sandpaper, comes in a huge range of different backings, adhesives, grits and anti-loading features.

TIP Begin a sanding job with a coarse low-grit abrasive, working your way up to higher, finer grits progressively.

GRITS

40-60 Coarse
80-120 Medium
150-180 Fine
220-240 Very fine
280-320 Extra fine
360-600 Super fine



DUST EXTRACTION

Some detail sanders have dust-sealed switches to maximise tool longevity while others have integrated dust removal systems. These suck sanding dust directly from the pad into a filter box or bag at the rear of the tool.

TIP Always wear breathing protection when sanding timber, plywood, MDF or a painted surface. ➤

SANDER BUYING GUIDE

Stock your toolbox with a range of sanders capable of everything from heavy-duty stripping to fine finishing, and you'll save heaps of time by not having to do all that sanding by hand, no matter what project you're working on.

DETAIL SANDERS

As the lightweights of the sanding family, they feature a base pad that moves at high speed but are designed to only remove a small amount of material. This allows them to be used for precise sanding without the risk of damaging the workpiece. They are perfect for small projects and are unbeatable at getting into tight, hard-to-reach places.

OCCASIONAL USE



Hook-and-loop paper fitment for fast and easy changes and a dust-sealed switch to keep out dust and maximise tool life.

Ozito 125W Detail Sander, \$40. ozito.co.nz

REGULAR USE



Features interchangeable triangular or sheet bases and fold-out finger pad for fine detail sanding in corners and tight areas.

Ryobi 180W 3 in 1 Multipad Sander, \$99. ryobi.co.nz

HEAVY USE



Dual-area sanding base for optimum abrasive paper use, and microfilter box for dust extraction and clean working.

Bosch 160W Multi Sander, \$110. bosch-do-it.co.nz

ORBITAL SANDERS

These are the original rectangular-shaped power sanders that have been around for about 60 years. Sometimes called sheet or vibrating sanders, they are used with either half or one-third of a standard abrasive sheet. They're easy to use but do tend to leave small fine circles on the surface that is being sanded.

OCCASIONAL USE



Handy DIY tool with dual-fan air extraction, producing a cleaner work environment, and lock-on switch for easy control and operation.

Ozito 150W 1/3 Sheet Orbital Sander, \$40.

REGULAR USE



Powerful tool with an integrated dust-removal system, and a variable speed and alloy baseplate for true flat sanding.

Ryobi 280W 1/3 Sheet Sander, \$70.

HEAVY USE



Efficient microfilter system for clean working and fast sanding. Powerful motor with electronic stroke-rate setting for a good quality finish.

Bosch 250W 1/3 Sheet Orbital Sander, \$99.

RANDOM ORBITAL SANDERS

These sanders are modern, refined and versatile, with top-of-the-range models being far more expensive than their orbital counterparts. They require special sanding discs and combine an orbital action with a rotary one, overcoming the problem of leaving visible sanding marks as orbital sanders tend to do.

OCCASIONAL USE



Designed for fast material removal with an ergonomic palm grip for comfort and hook-and-loop paper fitment for fast paper changes.

Ozito 125mm 230W Random Orbital Sander, \$40.

REGULAR USE



Micro hook-and-loop type paper attachment for fast changes and variable speed control for surface-specific sanding.

Bosch 125mm 270W Universal Random Orbital Sander, \$143.

HEAVY USE



A powerful motor produces 200 orbits per second with low vibration. The rubberised top and body give improved comfort and control.

Makita 125mm 300W Random Orbital Sander, \$219. makita.co.nz

BELT SANDERS

Designed primarily for the fast removal of large amounts of material, these are the tools at the heavy-duty end of the sander spectrum. The belt sander is usually used in line with the grain to avoid visible scratches across the grain pattern. Belts are either 75 or 100mm wide to match the sander size.

OCCASIONAL USE



Ample power for fast removal of material with adjustable front handle and small front roller for close-up sanding to vertical edges.

Ozito Belt Sander 800W, \$68.

REGULAR USE



Adjustable front handle for better control and comfort, and cyclonic action dust box for efficient dust removal and clean working.

Ryobi 800W Belt Sander, \$129.

HEAVY USE



A robust sander with fine adjustment tracking to maintain belt tension. Extended roller and low-profile nose allow sanding in confined spots.

Makita 850W Belt Sander, \$529.

SHARPEN HAND TOOLS

Maintain cutting tools to extend the life of your equipment

One cause of disease affecting garden plants that is often overlooked is blunt tools, as dull blades make rough cuts that tend to invite infection.

Cleanliness is important for tool life as well as for plant health, so remove dirt from tools after working in the garden by using warm, soapy water to wash away any residue that might spread disease.

When dry, wipe the tools with a rag moistened with a little vegetable oil to prevent rust.

HONE WITH STONE

Secateurs come in two blade styles, bypass and anvil.

BYPASS SECATEURS have a single sharp, curved blade that cuts against a thicker hook. This type is useful for making small, neat cuts.

ANVIL SECATEURS have a blade sharpened on both sides that cuts against a flat surface, like a kitchen knife against a chopping board. These are best for making larger cuts.

Using a fine sharpening stone is a simple way to maintain these tools. Moisten the stone with water and, starting at the base of the blade, rub the stone to the tip with slight downward pressure and even strokes.

Avoid sawing the stone or rubbing it back and forth as this will risk damaging the blade.

TIP The stone can be used on the cutting edges of hoes, spades, hedge trimmers, scissors and knives.

GRIND THE AXE

A blunt axe creates twice the work. To sharpen the blade with a bench grinder, start the grinder and when it's up to speed, lightly drag the cutting edge of the axe against the grinding face in a smooth motion.

Use continuous strokes, never stop in the middle of the blade and ensure the entire edge receives a gentle grind.

Repeat until the first side is cleanly profiled then grind the other side.

TIP Wear safety glasses and safety gear when operating a bench grinder.



Sharpen an axe with a Ryobi 150mm Bench Grinder, \$89.

Revive a chainsaw

The woodchip from a chainsaw should have a rough texture. You'll know the teeth on the chain need sharpening when it begins to spit out fine dust.

A bench-mounted chain sharpener revives the blade. Mount it on a secure surface, then adjust the angle of the cut, the chain or tooth stop, and the depth.

Slowly lower the grinding disc to make contact with the front face of the tooth.

Rotate the guide clamp and slide the chain to the next cutting edge. Repeat on the opposite side.



Bench-mounted Ozito Chain Sharpener, \$84.



CLADDING MADE EASY

Upgrade the exterior with a modern DIY alternative to timber boards

WORDS **FRANK GARDNER**

Timber weatherboards have stood the test of time but advances in technology have resulted in greater choices when it comes to cladding your home.

Modern alternatives can be made from reconstituted hardwood or fibre cement (FC) comprised of cement, finely ground silica, cellulose fibres and water. Some products have interlocking edges to make DIY installation easier.

The method for cladding a home using FC planks is much the same as when using natural timber boards.

SHEETS AND PLANKS

Fibre cement cladding in sheet and plank form is low maintenance, suited to any climate and a top choice for bushfire areas as it is non-combustible.

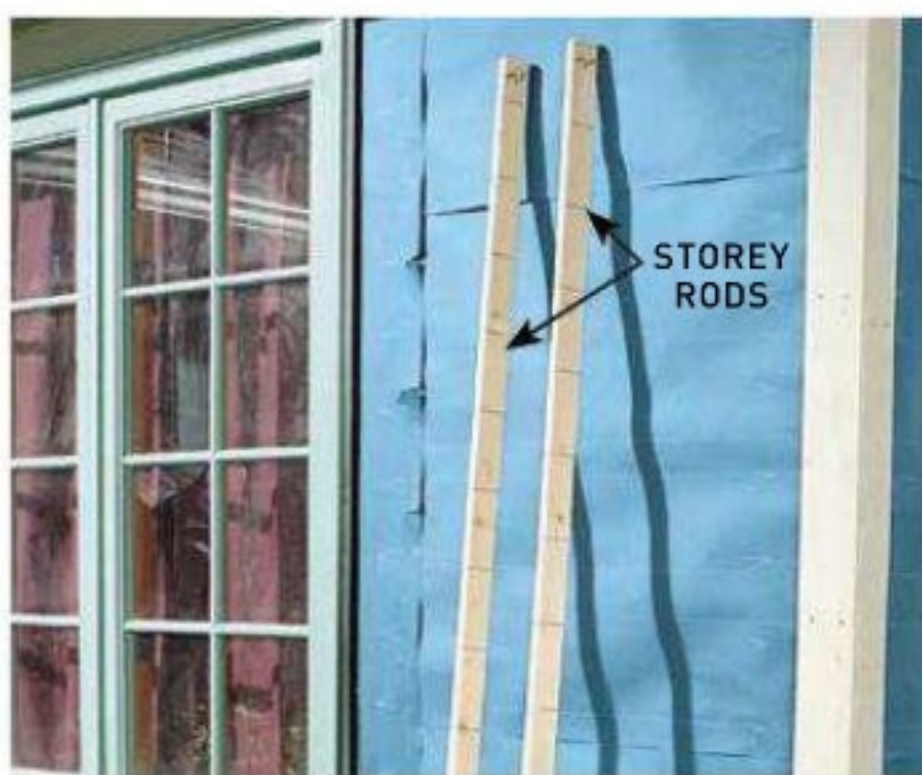
Planks with similar proportions to weatherboards are sold in smooth, woodgrain or rusticated finishes. To calculate how many you need, multiply the number of courses by the wall length then divide by the plank length.

TIP To find the number of courses, remember to use the actual coverage of each board, not its total width. ➤



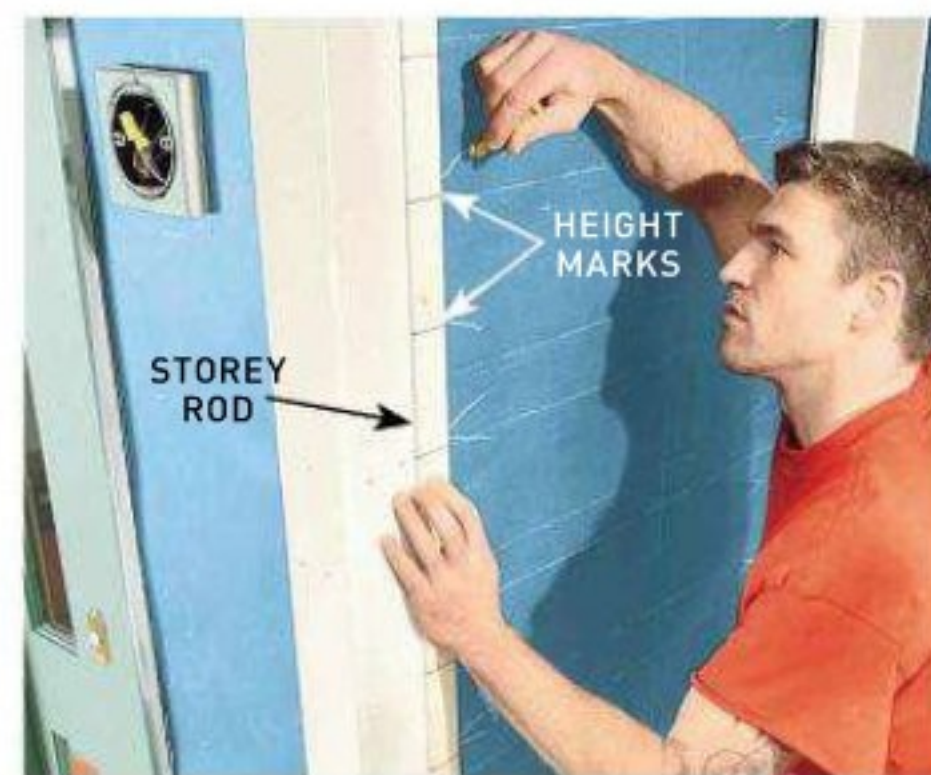
1 Secure the sarking

Mark stud locations at the top and base of the walls, then wrap the walls in sarking, working with a partner to keep it stretched and taut. Attach the base layer first, overlapping it with subsequent layers, and secure using a staple gun or special metal fasteners.



2 Make storey rods

Cut two lengths of 42 x 19mm timber to match the wall height. Calculate the cladding setout and transfer the intervals to the storey rods, marking where the top of each plank is located. Square lines around the rods at these heights.



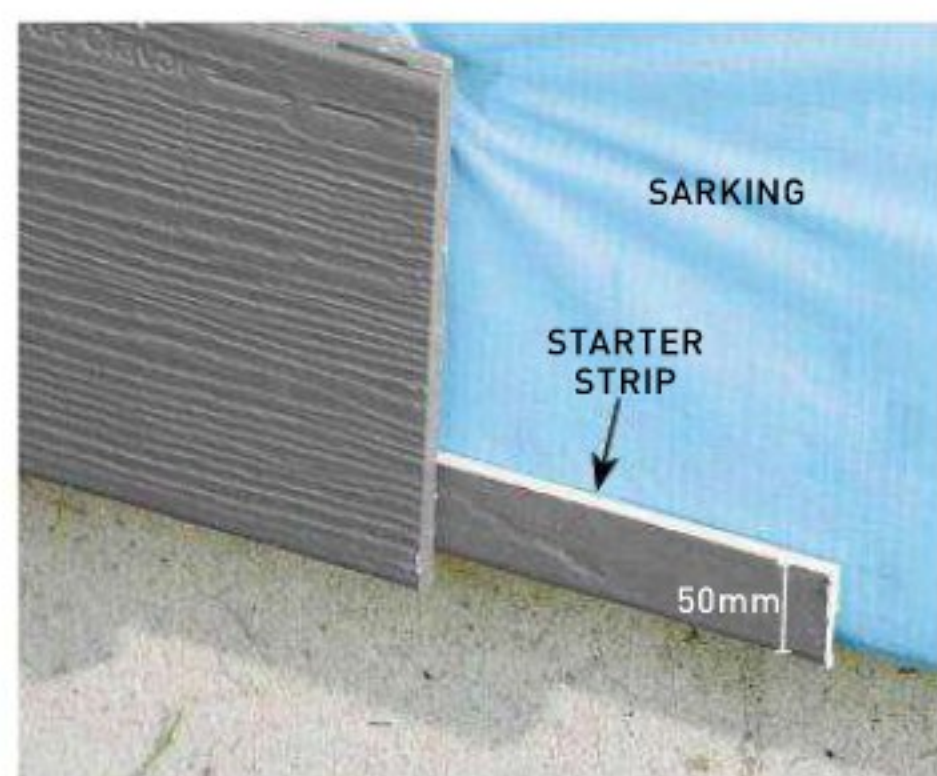
3 Lay out the cladding

Use a spirit level to establish a baseline around the perimeter. Set out one wall at a time, securing a storey rod at each corner, aligned with the baseline. Set stringlines or flick a chalkline to show the finished height for each course.





James Hardie Scyon Linea boards look and install like traditional weatherboards but are more durable and low maintenance. jameshardie.co.nz



4 Secure a starter strip

Attach a metal foot mould or starter strip to the baseplate of the wall to ensure the first row of planks are kicked out to the correct angle. The starter strip should be continuous around the perimeter and should overhang the foundations by 50mm.



5 Attach the boards

Position the first row of planks on top of the starter strip, beginning at an external corner. Secure the base edge of the plank to each stud through the starter strip, keeping the plank level. Continue attaching subsequent rows but do not secure the corners.



6 Cut around windows

To accommodate the base and top of any windows, make a cutout wide enough to leave 5mm clearance at the sides, head and sill, keeping the planks as close to a full width as possible. **TIP** Windows wider than 1800mm should have a joint at each corner.

INSTALL SHEET PANELS

Sheet cladding has a long history as a housing construction material.

The predecessor of today's more advanced FC sheets was traditional fibro, which was phased out due to asbestos-related health risks.

In recent years, sheet cladding has undergone a revival due to new production methods, efficient installation techniques and a range of finishing options.

Reconstituted hardwood sheeting is the alternative to using FC planks.

For a strong and durable product that is easy to install, Weathergroove sheeting from Weathertex costs from \$115 for a 2440 x 1196mm panel (weathertex.co.nz).

The panels feature self-locking edges, an innovation that eliminates the need for panels to be joined over a framing stud.

The joints are waterproofed with a polyurethane sealant and finished with corners made from aluminium channel for a neat look.



WEATHERTEX
WEATHERGROOVE

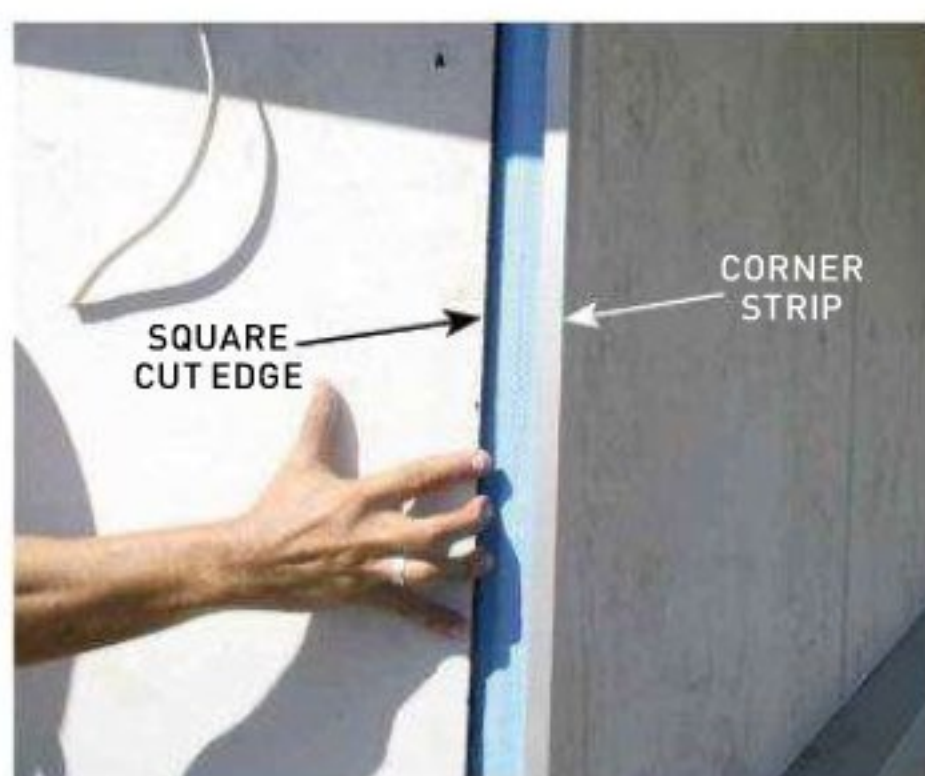


Panels of sheet cladding create a modern look and are very effective for making a new addition blend in.



1 Attach the sarking

Mark the stud locations at the top and base of the wall then cover the framing with wall sarking material. Working from the base upwards, overlap each previous sheet of sarking, securing it to the framing with metal fasteners.



2 Set the corner channels

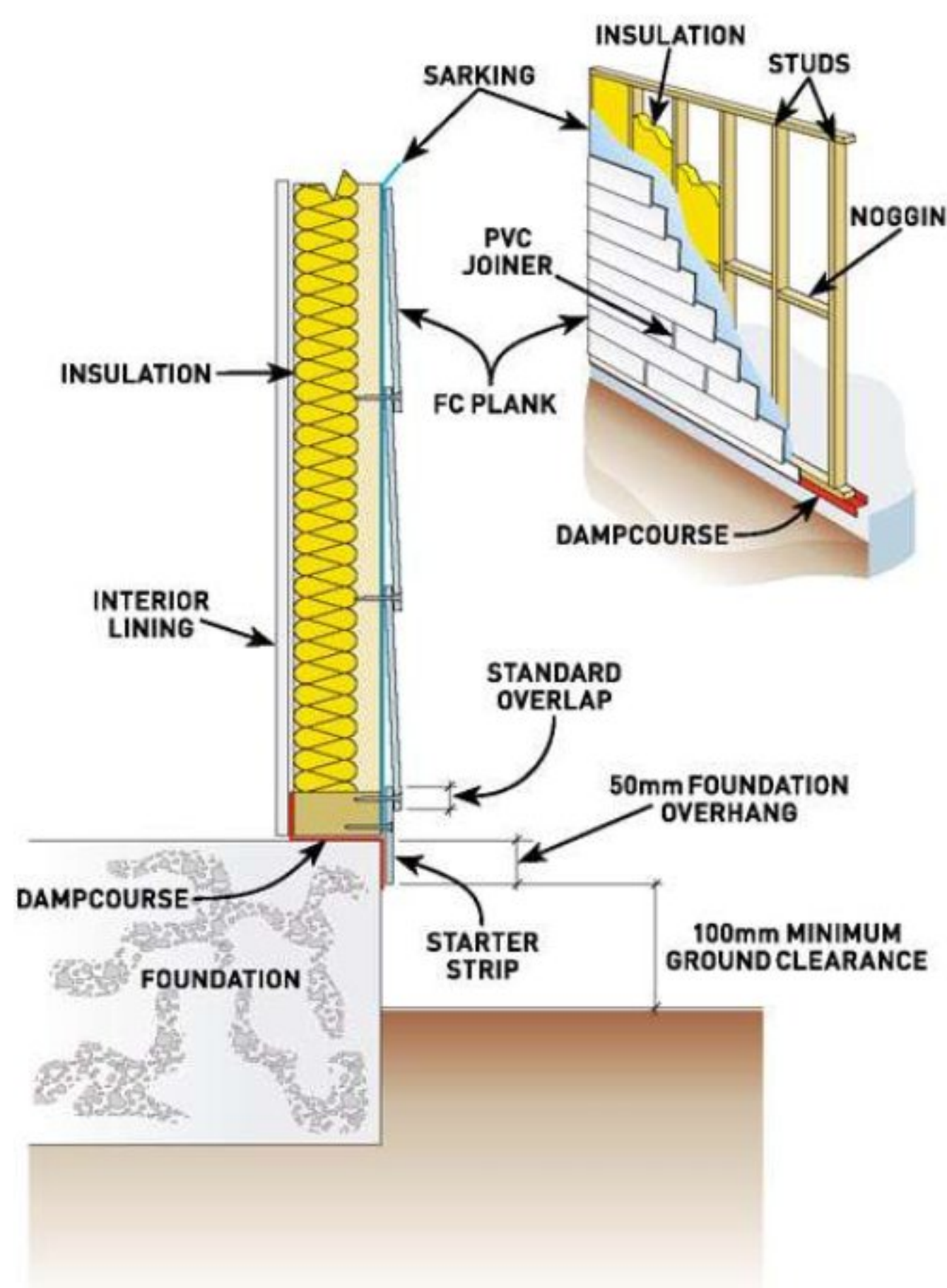
Establish a level baseline 20mm below the baseplate of the frame. Position the aluminium corner strip and check for plumb with a spirit level, securing to the corner studs using galvanised flathead nails through the inside flashing wing of the strip.



3 Apply sealant and secure

Cut the panel edge to sit in the corner strip, securing with 50 x 2.8mm galvanised nails. Secure at 150mm centres to the studs and plates nearest the edges and at 300mm elsewhere. Apply flexible sealant to back vertical edges before locking panels together.

FC BOARD LAYOUT

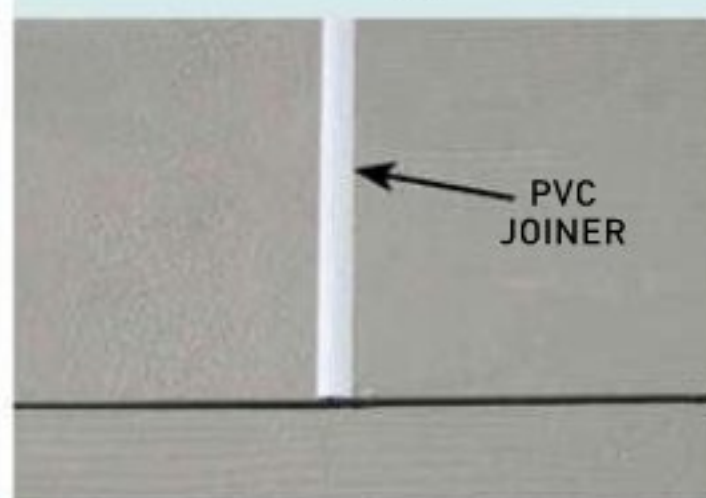


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Visit handymanmagazine.co.nz/mag for Patching A Hole In Fibre Cement.

FINISHING ACCESSORIES

Join FC boards with specialised fittings and finish corners using preformed aluminium.



JOIN THE PLANKS using a metal soaker or PVC joining strip if they can't be attached directly to a stud, fitting the ends of the planks into the sides of the joiner.

FINISH THE CORNERS by butting the plank ends against a timber end stop, or use an internal or external aluminium corner piece for a neat, weatherproof finish.

SMART®

MULTI-TOOL ACCESSORIES

BEST IN BLADES | BETTER RESULTS

SMART
SMTX
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The Longreach blade

32mm wide and a reach of 67mm long, this blade goes the distance thanks to the heat treated hard pointed teeth

035HCT

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35mm wide and only 0.8mm thick with heat treated teeth, the SMART Piranha blade cuts timber like no other.

044BMT 44mm wide Bi-metal Blade

"Nail Buster Extreme"

Suitable for timber with nails, non ferrous metals, 54mm depth of cut.

Why is Titanium coating so good?

It is designed to reduce friction which reduces the heat build-up during the cutting process, significantly increasing the life of the blade. This even makes the New Nail Buster Extreme Gold blade capable of cutting deck screws, an application not possible with any other brand of blade.

Suitable for timber with nails, non ferrous metals, 54mm depth of cut.

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- The most universal fitting blades in the world....
The new SMTX shanks suits all the common brands
 - ✓AEG ✓RYOBI ✓Bosch ✓Craftsman ✓Fein
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Go to WWW.SMART-TOOLGROUP.COM to locate your nearest dealer.

A vibrant purple shed with a white-framed window, surrounded by lush greenery and a white wicker chair. The shed is made of horizontal pine weatherboards. The window is a four-pane unit, and through it, various paint cans and supplies are visible inside. A white wicker chair with a high, curved back is positioned to the right of the shed. The ground is a mix of dirt and mulch, with some small plants and flowers growing near the base of the shed. A large, weathered log is used as a planter bed in front of the shed. The scene is set in a garden with trees and bushes in the background.

WEEKEND
PROJECT

AFTER
New pine weatherboards finished in a vibrant purple turn the dilapidated shed into a weather-tight workshop.

SHED REVIVAL

Give a rundown shack new cladding to turn it into a smart workshop

PROJECT **LEE DASHIELL** MAIN PICTURE **GEOFF BECK**

The old cedar weatherboards on this shed were starting to split and fall off, exposing the framework to the elements.

Not only unsightly, the damaged boards also posed a risk of serious structural damage. Exterior surfaces need to be in good condition and have a suitably impervious finish to protect the studs and insulation from rain and sun.

Sometimes, minor damage can be repaired using two-part timber filler or by replacing a section of

board, but if the cladding is badly compromised then it will need to be replaced entirely.

The sarking on this shed was still in good condition so it was decided to remove the cladding and simply secure new primed weatherboards directly in place of the old ones.

For a job like this the first step is to use a pry bar to lever off the boards, working your way down from the top.

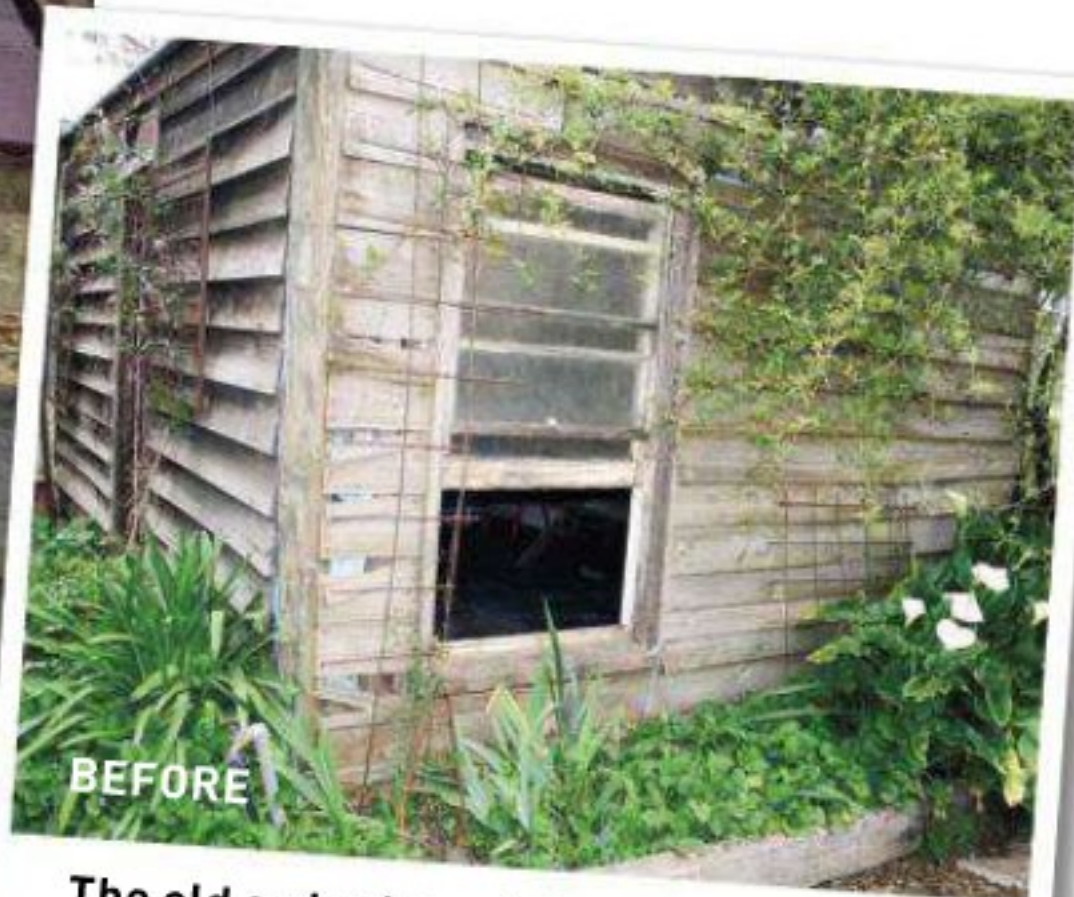
BUYING NEW BOARDS

To calculate the total area of wall to be covered, multiply the length by the height of each wall to obtain the number of square metres.

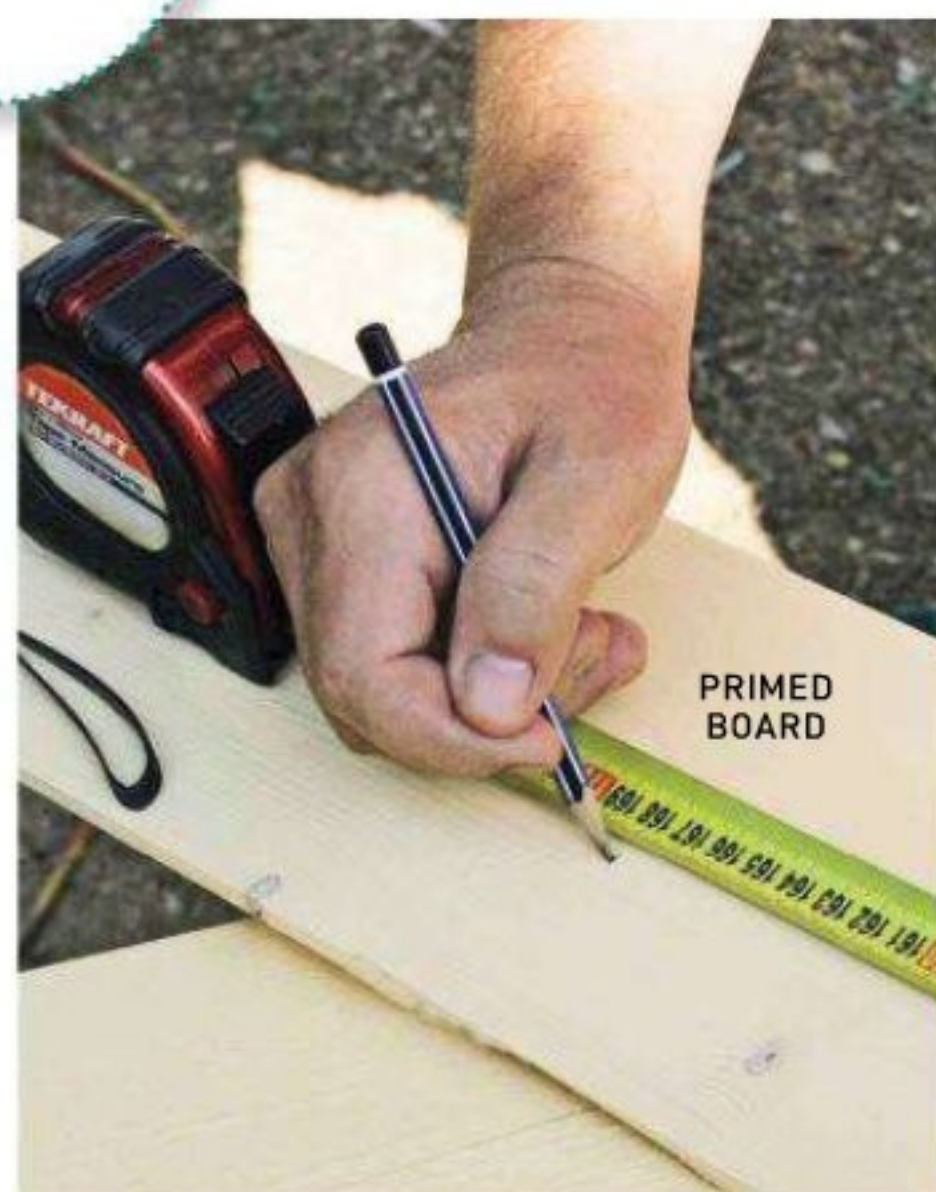
Then multiply the length by the height of each window and door and deduct the total area of the openings from the wall area.

Take the measurements to your cladding supplier, tell them which profile you prefer and they will calculate the total linear metres you need, allowing for wastage.

The boards used for this project were primed pine, which comes in five metre lengths at about \$16 a metre, from Bunnings (bunnings.co.nz). ➤

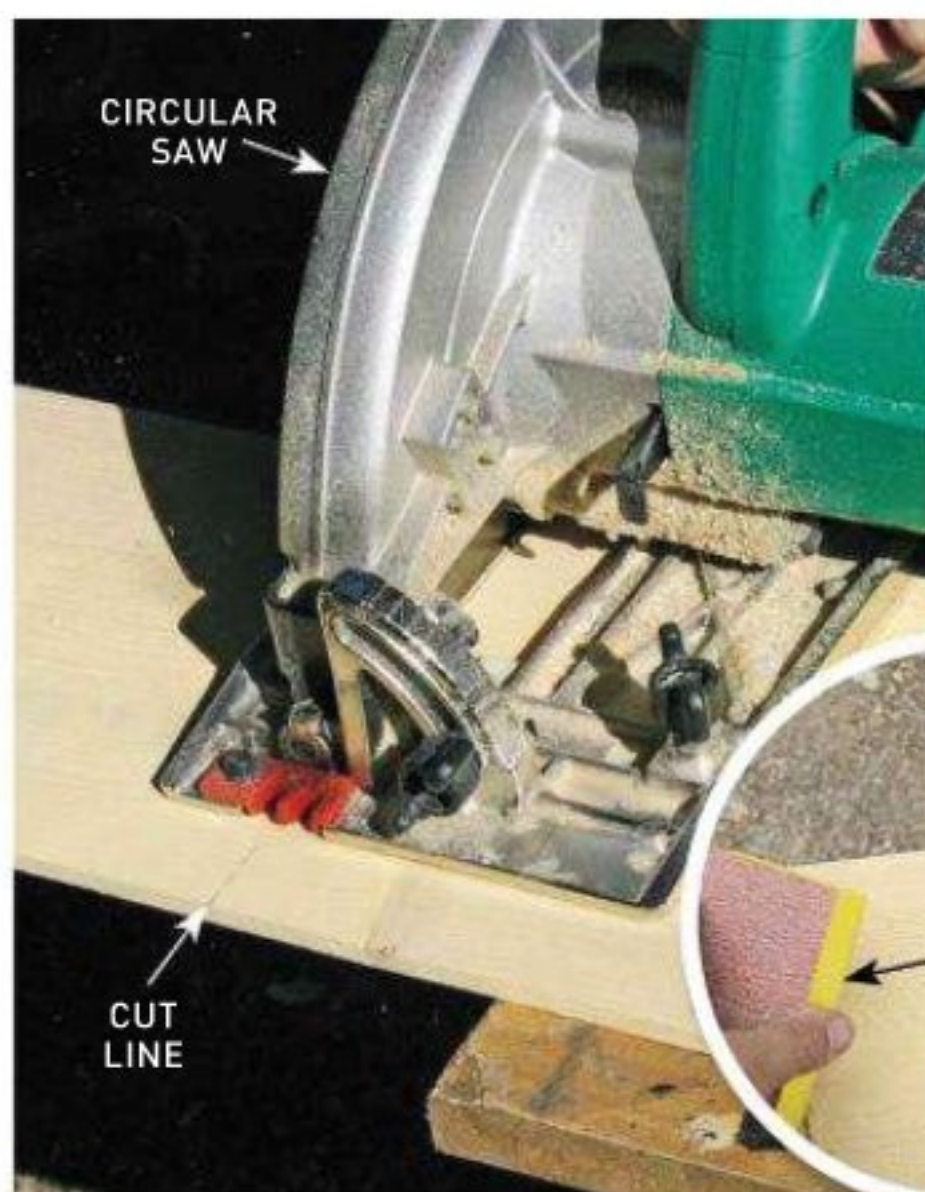


The old cedar boards had weathered and split, exposing the sarking in places.



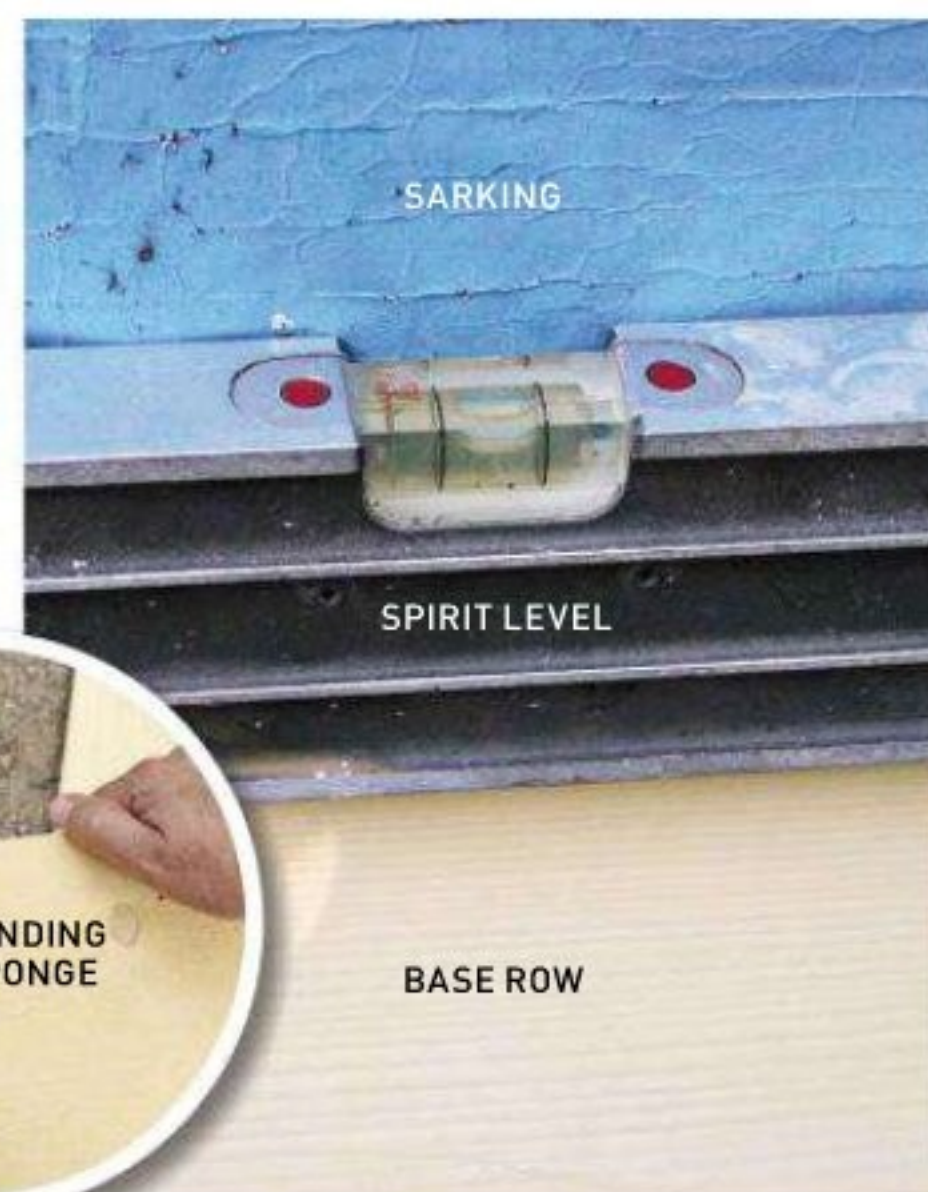
1 Measure the boards

Measure the length that must be covered by the first row then square a cut line across the board. If the distance is longer than one board, cut two boards so the joint between them is located over the centre of a stud, staggering the joints over different studs on consecutive rows.



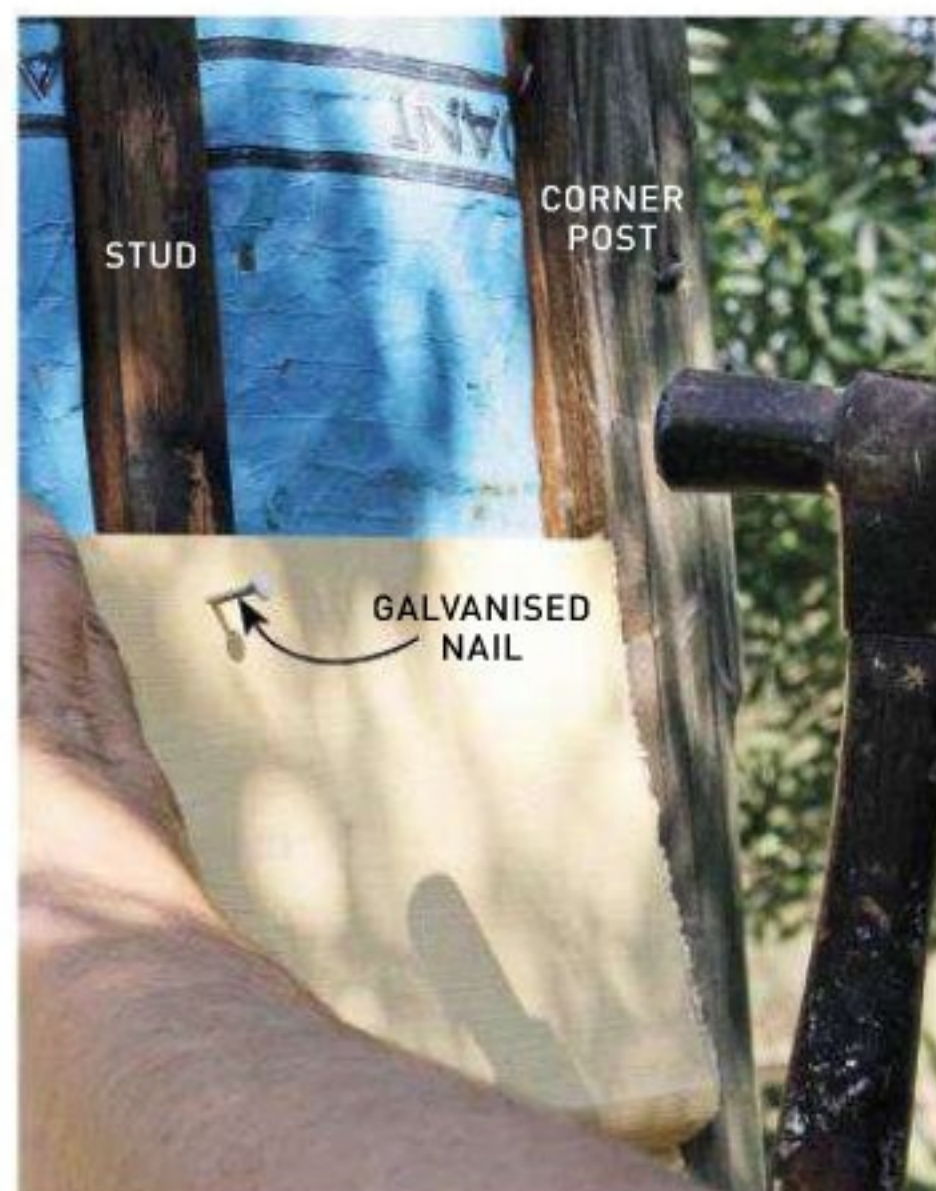
2 Cut and sand the boards

Use a circular saw or sliding compound mitresaw to cut the boards to length, sanding the cut ends using a sanding sponge to remove splinters. **TIP** Instead of cutting all the boards at once, it is better to measure and cut as you go to correct for any slight variations in length.



3 Attach the first row

Position the first weatherboard or row of boards to overlap any brickwork at the base of the wall, temporarily securing with two nails, then use a spirit level to check the board is level and adjust as needed. Secure nails through the top of the board into the studs.



4 Secure the next rows

Position the next board over the top of the first to establish the overlap so the fasteners are hidden. Mark the top on the studs then keep marking to the top of the studs at intervals, indicating the effective coverage of the boards, and secure the next boards with galvanised nails.



5 Clad around windows

To make the weatherboard immediately above or below the window fit snugly against the frame, mark the required cutout. Cut the board using a jigsaw, working back into the corners for sharp 90° angles, then apply primer to the cut edge of the timber before securing.



6 Apply the finish

Use a brush to apply primer to any exposed cut edges of the weatherboards, leave to dry, then mask around the window frames and door frames with painter's tape. Use a brush to apply at least two coats of UV-resistant exterior acrylic to the weatherboards. ➤

Tough like us.

Made for New Zealand.
 A pristine look that lasts.

Scyon® Axon® Panel

Scyon® Axon® Panel is a vertically grooved panel with a 133mm or 400mm wide groove pattern that looks sharp and uniform. Pre-primed and easy to install, Scyon® Axon® Panel is a pristine look that lasts.



Advanced
Material



Made In Nz



Certified
& Tested



Sustainable



Technical
Support

Advanced Material

Made from an advanced lightweight cement composite with heavy duty performance, Scyon® Axon® Panel is resistant to damage from fire, moisture and rot¹. It is also easy to cut and gun-nailable.



Fire
Resistant



Rot
Resistant



Damage
Resistant



Easy To Cut



Gun-Nailable

The designer says



A design alternative to traditional vertical features and the option of brad nailing also minimises visual interruptions. James Hardie provides me with a great online technical & design resource via ACCEL.co.nz. It gives me the confidence to design with the range of Scyon products.

The builder says



The stepped shiplap on the long edges of the panel allows sheets to be easily installed. It's pre-primed for fast paint application. The product is backed by great customer service & technical support to ensure I complete the project on time. It is a product that I trust to build with.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Keep your new cladding in tiptop condition by regularly taking the time to perform these minor jobs.

EXAMINE THE BOARDS once a year, using a screwdriver or an awl to prod any spots on the boards that show signs of rot and determine the depth of the damage. Scrape away decayed timber and fill the cavity with two-part filler such as Turbo Builder's Bog.

WASH THE CLADDING every spring or summer by wetting the boards with a garden hose then scrubbing off the dirt using a long-handled brush.

BLAST OFF TOUGH STAINS if the timber is very dirty using a pressure washer. You can also mix together one litre of household bleach and 70ml of detergent in three litres of warm water and use it to scrub the boards, rinsing off with a garden hose.

REPAIR SPLITS as soon as you spot them in any boards to prevent water from seeping in. Gently lever the split open with a putty knife and if it is

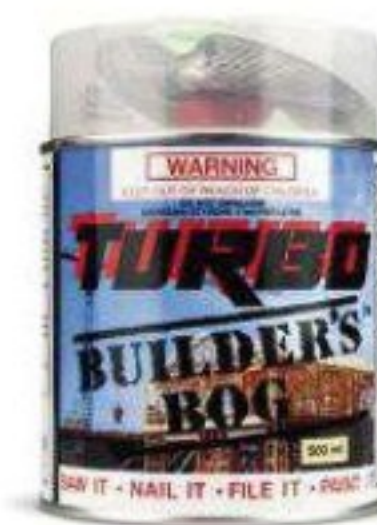


Repair splits using exterior adhesive to prevent the split opening any further along the grain.

wide enough, tap a thin timber wedge under the base edge of the damaged board to keep the inside of the split exposed.

Apply exterior PVA adhesive along the edge of the split then remove the wedge and push the board back in position, wiping off excess adhesive.

TIP Use duct tape to hold the repair together while the adhesive dries.



Turbo Builder's Bog,
\$17 for 500g. chemspec.co.nz

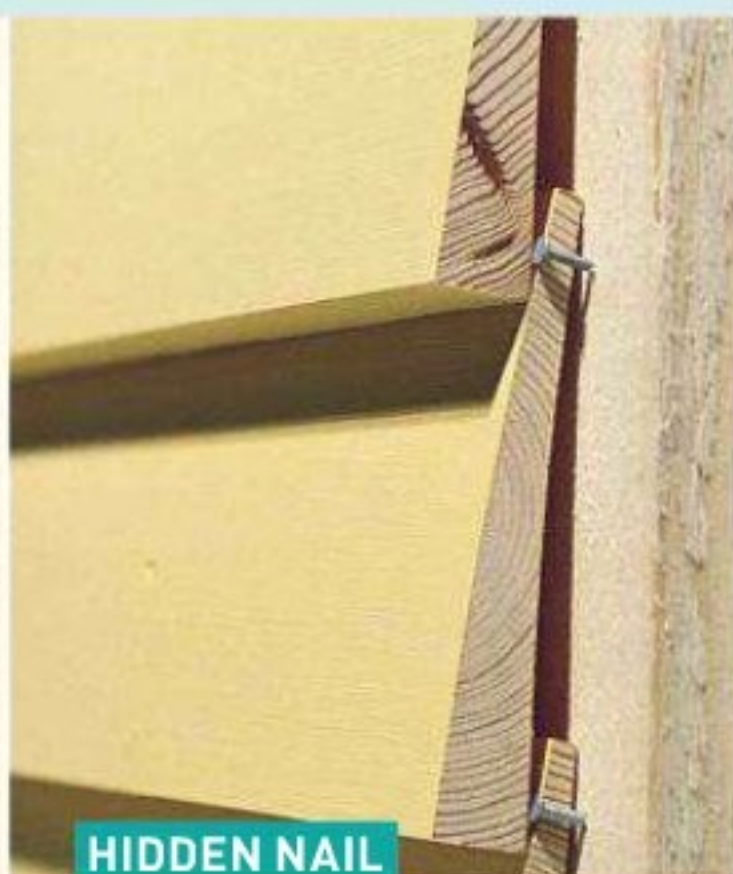
FOUR WAYS TO SECURE BOARDS

There are several ways to nail boards in position when installing timber cladding, but the framework behind them usually consists of timber studs wrapped in waterproof sarking secured using specialty metal fasteners or simply stapled to the framework of the wall. Here are four methods for securing boards to a timber framework.



SINGLE FIXED

These boards are secured by nails driven through their faces at the base and just above the top of the board below. The nail should not pass through the board beneath.



HIDDEN NAIL

A neat solution, hidden nailing is when boards are nailed at the top edge, so that the nail is covered by the board above. This method is only recommended for narrow boards.



SHIPLAP

Positioned flat against the wall, shiplap boards have a notched base edge that fits over the board below. Nail the boards 20mm above the notch to lap it tightly to the board below.



TONGUE AND GROOVE

These types of boards interlock to create a flat panel. Each tongue-and-groove board is secret nailed by securing a nail down at an angle through the top edge of the tongue.

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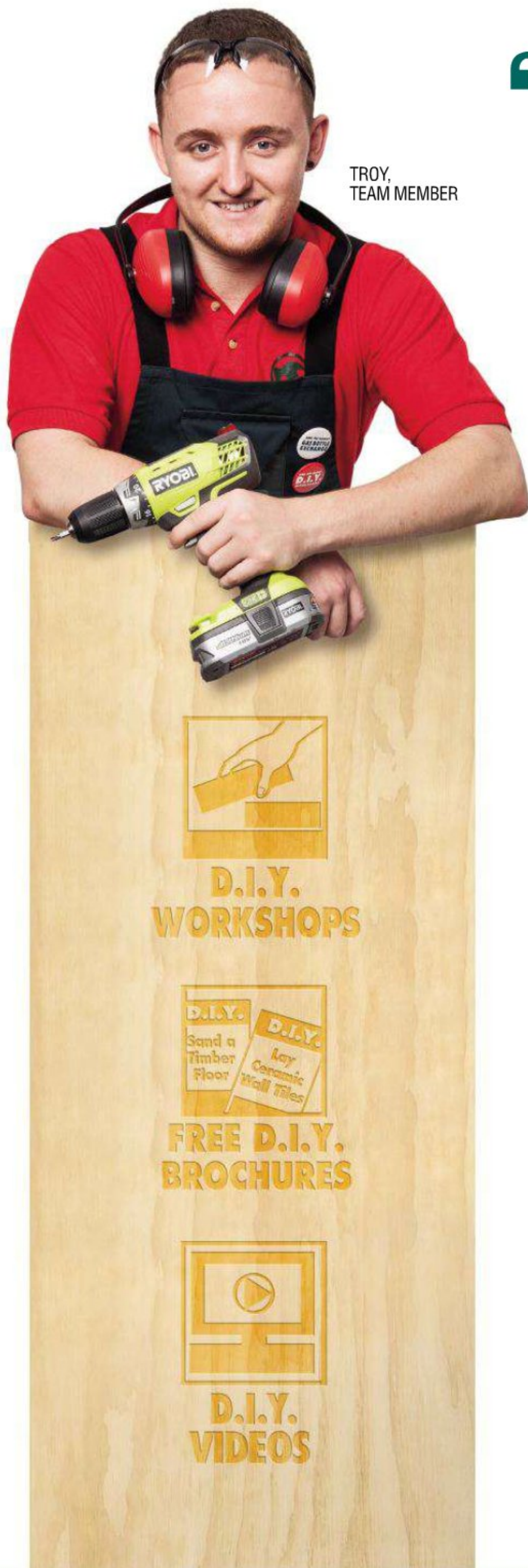
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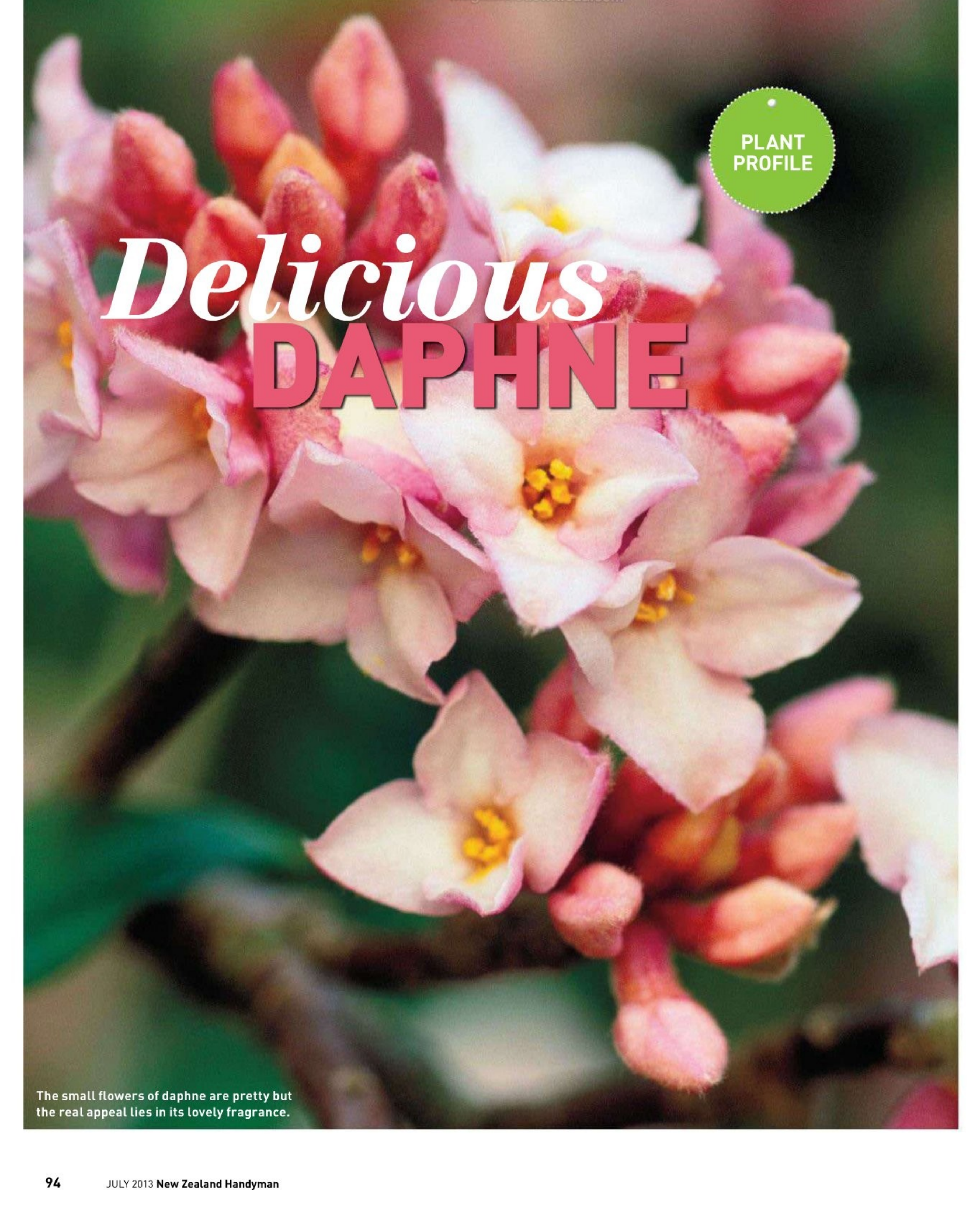
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PLANT
PROFILE

Delicious **DAPHNE**

The small flowers of daphne are pretty but the real appeal lies in its lovely fragrance.

One whiff of daphne's dainty scent is all it takes to fall head over heels for this cool-weather bloom

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Famed for its intense rose-citrus perfume, *Daphne odora* flowers in winter and spring, filling the air with its delightful fragrance. The waxy star-shaped flowers bloom in tight clusters amid leathery dark green leaves.

This evergreen woodland shrub is fairly slow growing and does best in cool to temperate climates. Daphne doesn't like its roots being disturbed, so avoid installing anything around the base of the plant.

Daphne tolerates light frosts and grows to about one metre high and wide. As the flowers offer fragrance but little visual impact, plant near other evergreen flowering shrubs or groundcovers like hellebores for colour.

If you have kids, remove the bright red berries as they're poisonous and wear gloves to trim the plant because some people are sensitive to the sap.

TIP The bitter taste of the berries discourages animals from grazing. ➤



Yates Clonex Rooting Hormone Gel, \$23 for 50ml. yates.co.nz

Striking new plants

Propagate daphne from healthy stem cuttings in December. Allow six to eight weeks for roots to develop before gently tugging at the cuttings to check them.



1 TAKE CUTTINGS about 100mm long from a healthy, well-watered plant using sharp, sterilised secateurs. Make each cut beneath a node, choosing vigorous growth near the tips of the plant.



2 SCRAPE BACK a 20mm section of bark at the base of the stem using secateurs then trim the lower leaves and the soft growth from the top, keeping a pair of leaves. Daub the base of the stem with hormone gel.



3 MAKE HOLES to 40mm deep in potting mix using a dibber, position the cuttings and water gently, then move the pot to a shady spot. Cut the bases from plastic bottles to use as mini-greenhouses for the cuttings.

IN THE GARDEN

Use this easy-to-follow planting and maintenance guide to grow healthy daphne at home.

POSITION daphne in moist, rich, well-drained soil in a spot that gets morning sun, part shade or all-day winter sun and provides shelter from strong winds.

PLANT with care, ensuring you don't damage the roots when you take the plant from the pot. Don't tease the roots out before planting.

If your soil is heavy or has clay subsoil, plant daphne into an elevated mound, as good drainage is essential.

CARE for plants by feeding with a slow-release fertiliser in early spring and spray with a weak foliar fertiliser every two weeks during the growing season. Potted plants need fertilising more than those in the ground, which can often do without.

WATER regularly but check the moisture level in the soil with your finger first so as not to over or under water the plant. Cut back water a little in summer for more blooms.

Daphne likes damp, not wet, soil and tolerates short periods of drought much better than wet feet. **MULCH** plants with a 70 to 100mm layer of well-rotted organic material to keep roots cool.

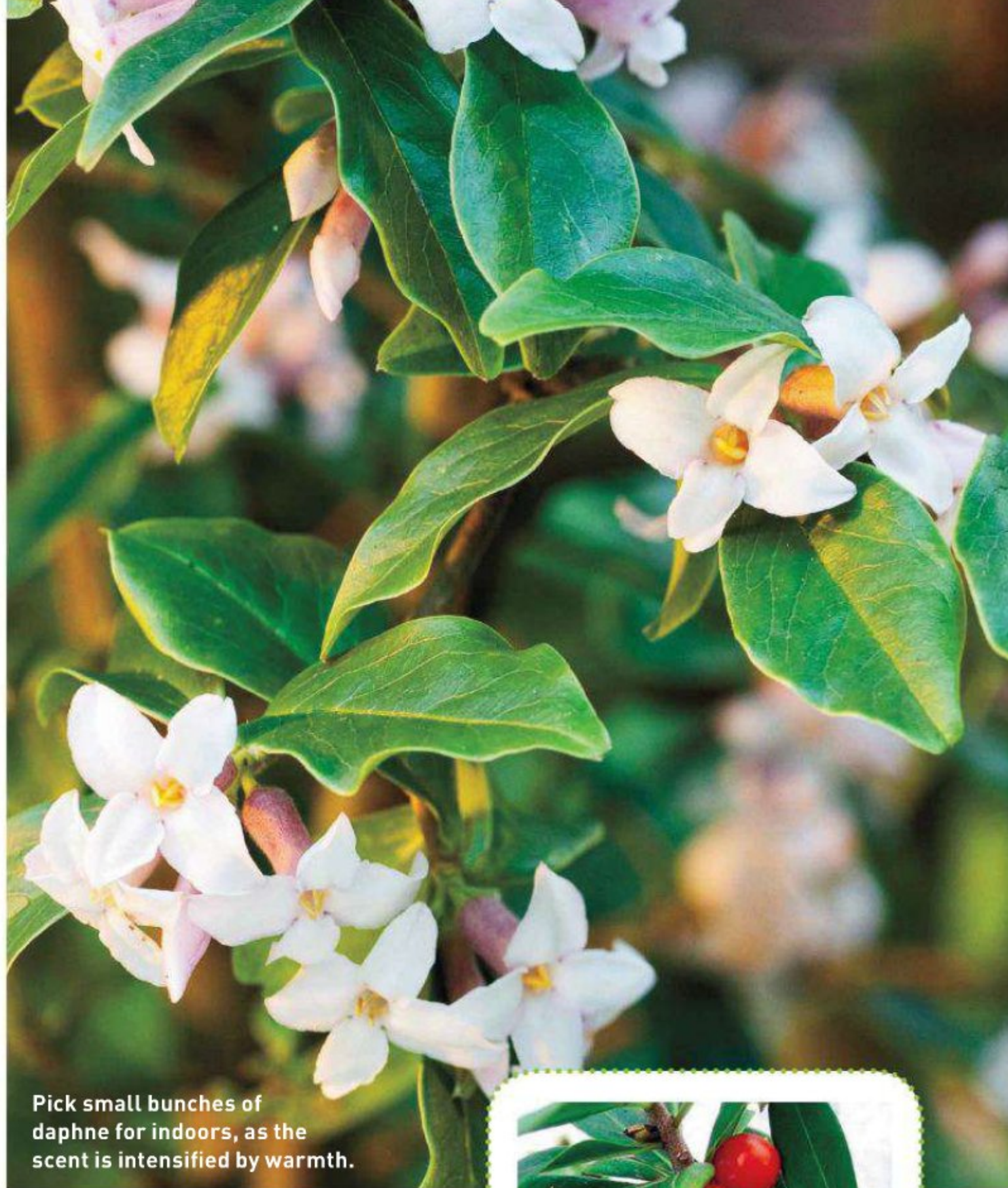
Keep mulch away from the stem to avoid any rot problems.

PRUNE lightly, just clipping flowers for indoors, or trim when blooms finish in spring and cut back any wayward growth to keep the plant's shape.

WATCH FOR root rot from over watering and poor drainage, which can kill the plant. Let daphne dry out slightly between waterings or, if drainage is poor, plant in a raised bed.

Yellow leaves can be a sign of magnesium deficiency. Correct by spraying the plant with 20g of Epsom salts mixed with one litre of water.

Aphids and scale can attack the plant and lead to sooty mould. Hose or scrape off offenders and check leaves regularly so numbers don't build up.



Pick small bunches of daphne for indoors, as the scent is intensified by warmth.

CONTAINER GROWING

Daphne can be grown in a pot but choose a large container with room for root growth as it doesn't like being repotted. Use a good quality potting mix with water crystals and fertiliser.

Move the plant into the shade over summer, or keep the water up during hot, dry periods as potting mix will dry out more than garden soil.

TIP Position flowering potted daphne near windows and doors so the perfume can be enjoyed.



McGregor's Plantmax Controlled Release Fertiliser, \$10 for 400g. mcgregors.co.nz



Beware the berries

Daphne's red berry-like fruit is highly poisonous if eaten, although the plant will rarely produce berries after flowering.

If you notice berries growing on daphne plants, remove them straight away, especially if there are small children around.

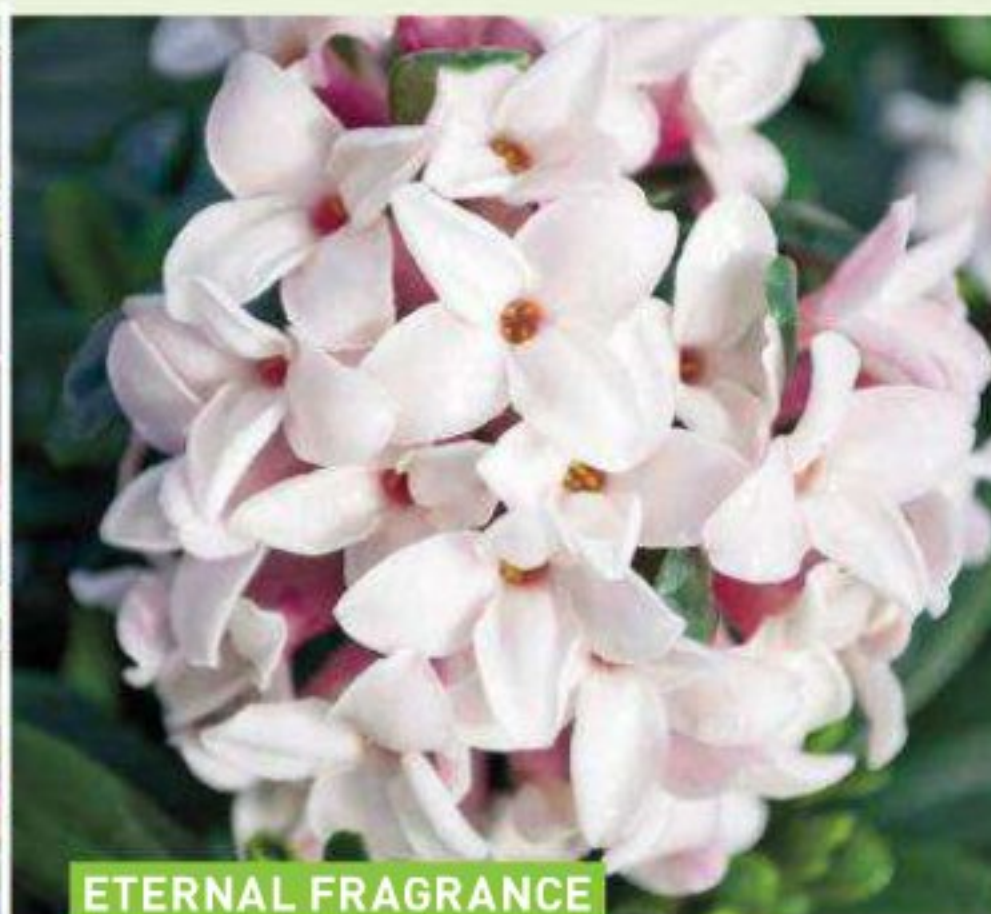
In the case of berries actually being ingested, seek medical attention immediately.

CHOOSING A VARIETY

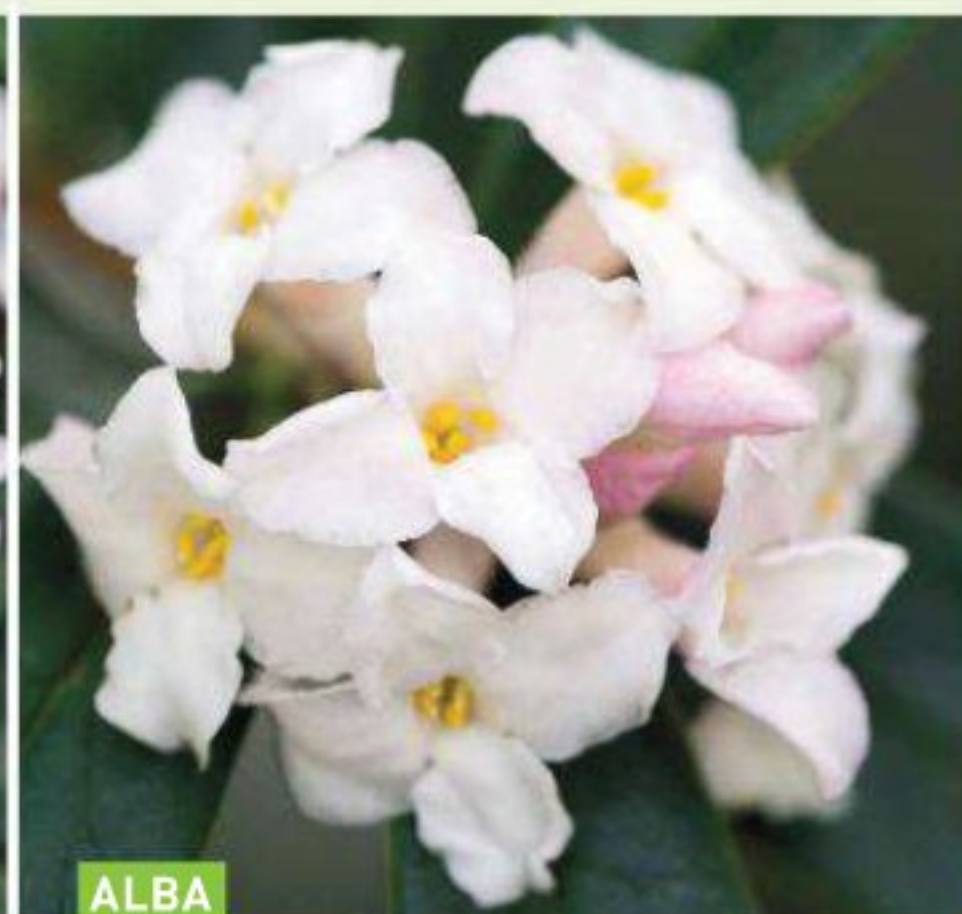
Daphne has pink or white flowers, with some that open pink before fading with time. The leathery leaves can be completely green, or have cream or white margins. The variegated leaf forms add colour year-round.



With masses of fragrant pink flowers in winter and early spring this plant has a medium growth rate, reaching to a height of about 1000mm. It likes a spot in part shade in moist but well-drained soil. Shelter from hot midday sun and drying winds.



This new daphne is tougher than the old cultivars and spot-flowers throughout the year after the first flush in winter. It has a compact growth habit, just 600mm high, and is heat, frost and dry tolerant. It will also cope with alkaline soils.



Featuring cream or white flowers with a rich fragrance, alba is best in a spot with dappled light and prefers acidic soil. Its low and compact growth habit makes it particularly good for pots, where it will flower over many weeks.

PICTURES (RIGHT, FAR RIGHT) GETTY IMAGES (CENTRE) PMA



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GROWING
GUIDE

BROAD BEANS ARE BACK

WORDS JECCA BLAKE

One of the true tastes of spring, broad beans are ready to pick when the pods look swollen and glossy.



This traditional pod vegetable is staging a gourmet comeback so get on the broad bean bandwagon

Broad beans are easy to grow in the vegie patch and simple to prepare but many of us are only familiar with the frozen variety.

Also called fava beans, broad beans are part of the legume family and high in both protein and fibre.

Growing through winter to crop lavishly in spring, they are easy to cultivate anywhere in New Zealand.

They withstand frosts once established, though in frost-prone areas it's best to sow them in autumn or wait until spring.

Beautiful black and white flowers appear on the plant stems in winter and spring, or to really brighten up

the vegie patch go for the bold, crimson-flowered variety.

They can take months between flowering and podding, so it's best to sow and grow successive crops to keep the harvest going.

Broad beans enrich the soil with nitrogen. They are ideal to use as part of a crop-rotation system as you'll need less fertiliser for future crops.

Cut down healthy stems as soon as you finish harvesting the pods, chop them with a spade, then dig the stems and the roots into the soil.

Baby broad beans can be eaten whole, pods and all. Young broad beans can be eaten straight from the

pod, but develop a tough skin as they age and need to be double shelled.

To do this, peel open the pod and remove the beans then blanch them for one minute in boiling salty water. Drain then plunge them into iced water for five minutes.

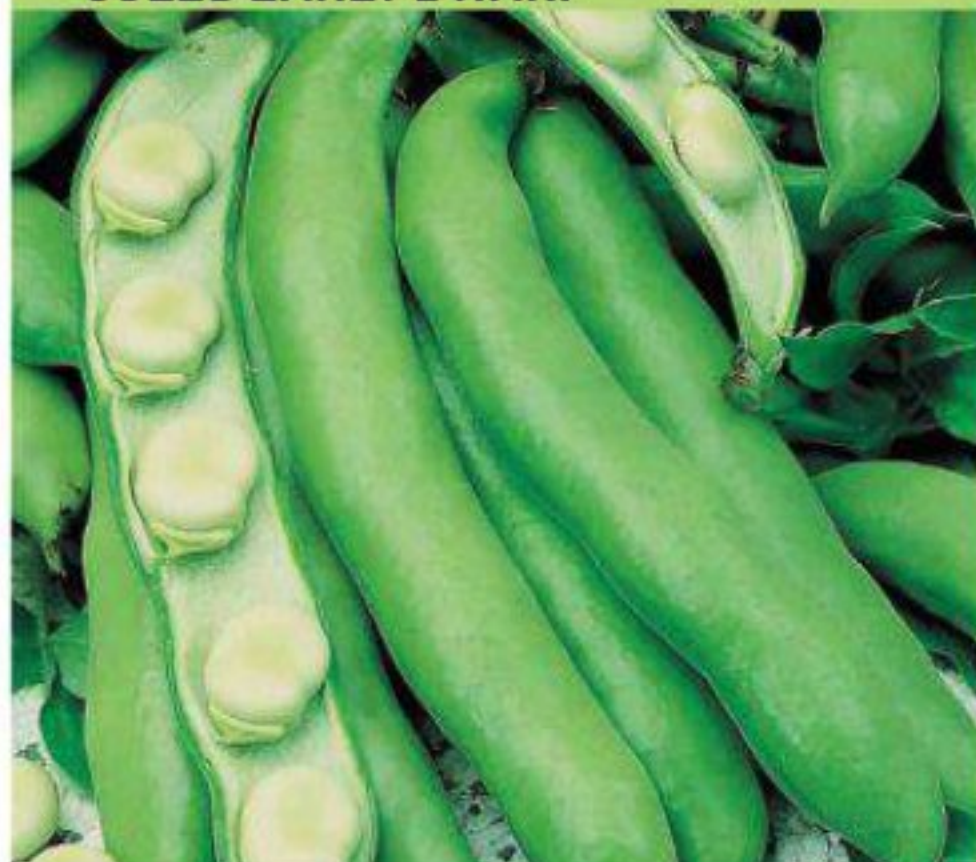
You can freeze them at this point for later, or peel them again for eating now. Slit the grey-green outer skin at the dimpled end with your thumbnail then squeeze out the bean inside.

Use them in salads or mash them to make a dip. They keep for about a week after picking.

TIP When steamed, the young leaves have a spinach-like flavour. ➤

CHOOSING A VARIETY

COLES EARLY DWARF



- Grows to about 1500mm tall
- Heavy cropper, full of flavour
- Withstands wind well
- Pods are about 130mm long

EARLY LONG POD



- Good all-round variety
- High pod yield
- Very tasty beans
- Pods up to 300mm long

CRIMSON FLOWERED



- Pest-resistant heritage seed
- Fragrant red flowers
- Abundant light green beans
- Withstands wind well

IN THE VEGIE PATCH

Most garden soils are suitable for growing broad beans as long as there is good drainage.

Add dolomite or lime to acidic soil a month before sowing and choose a position in full sun with shelter from strong winds.

SOW SEEDS in the garden about 60mm deep and spaced about 150 to 250mm apart.

Avoid sowing during wet weather as the seeds are prone to rot and do not plant where any beans or peas were grown last year.

WATER REGULARLY when the flowers appear and spread an organic mulch around seedlings to retain moisture.

Keep the bed free of weeds and add potash to encourage plenty of flowering and pod development, but no nitrogen as this will just encourage leaves, not pods.

SUPPORT PLANTS as they grow taller with stakes and twine or bamboo obelisks. The pods are heavy, so tie up plants before they start cropping.

HARVEST CROPS as they mature from 12 to 22 weeks after sowing. Pick frequently to encourage more pod production.



The pea like flowers of broad beans add colour to the vegie patch.

WATCH FOR fungal diseases like rust and chocolate spot. These both start as brown spots on the leaves, but the rust is redder, and spread quickly, especially in humid conditions.

Remove infected plants, make sure the plants have good airflow and avoid overhead watering.

Aphids like to feed on the new growth, so pinch out the growing tips to remove the tender leaves they eat.

TIP Grow broad beans with dill, parsley, carrot and potato.



Orca 900mm GardenAce Expanding Bamboo Obelisk, \$10, from Newfield Group. newfield.co.nz

Growing in a container

Broad beans can be grown in a pot if you are short on space or if the sunniest position in your outdoor area is a deck or patio. Sow the seeds into the container and use an expandable trellis for support as the beans climb.



1 FILL A LARGE POT with a good quality potting mix for growing vegetables and gently firm down. **TIP** Cover the drainage holes with shade cloth to stop the mix washing out when the plant is watered.



2 ADD SUPPORT by pressing an expandable bamboo obelisk into the mix, then sow seeds around the legs of the obelisk spaced 150mm apart. **TIP** You can also tie bamboo or garden stakes into a teepee shape.



3 TIE THE STEMS onto the obelisk as the plants grow, using adjustable wire ties or nylon stockings. Thin out seedlings if the pot gets crowded and allow the potting mix to dry out between waterings.

Broad bean, artichoke and spinach pasta

PREPARATION TIME 15 mins

COOKING TIME 25 mins

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

2 Tbsp olive oil

1 onion, roughly chopped

1 large clove garlic, crushed

1 red capsicum, deseeded and sliced

400g dried rigatoni or other pasta shapes

400g chopped tomatoes

Pinch of oregano

½ tsp soft brown sugar

Freshly ground black pepper

225g broad beans, shelled

350g baby English spinach

1 jar (280g) artichoke hearts, drained
and quartered

½ cup grated parmesan

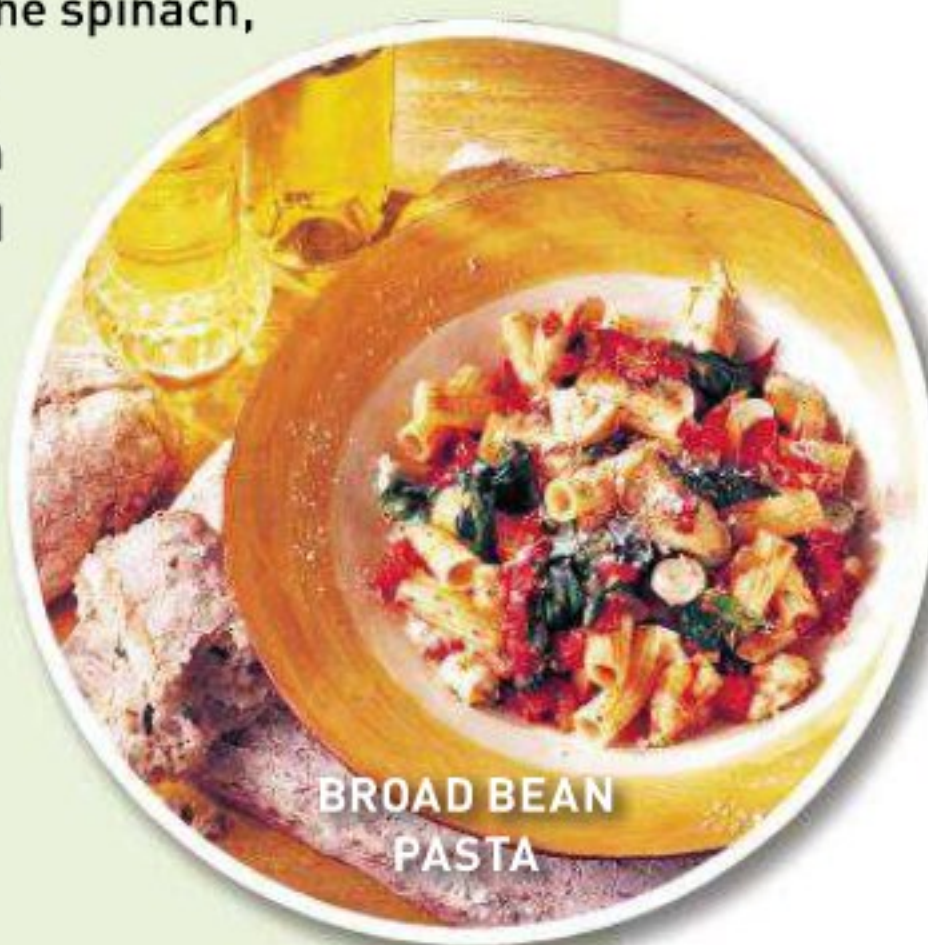
1 HEAT THE OIL in a large saucepan. Add the chopped onion and garlic to the oil and fry gently for five minutes or until soft. Add the capsicum to the onion and fry for a further two minutes.

2 MEANWHILE bring another large saucepan of lightly salted water to the boil. Add the pasta and cook for 10 to 12 minutes or until the pasta is al dente. Drain well.

3 ADD THE TOMATO to the onion mixture then stir in the oregano, brown sugar and pepper to taste. Bring to the boil, then partially cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the broad beans and simmer for three minutes.

4 RINSE AND DRAIN the spinach, then remove any tough stalks. Add the spinach leaves to the sauce and cook for a further three minutes. Add the artichoke and pasta to the sauce and heat through for one to two minutes.

5 DIVIDE THE PASTA among four bowls and sprinkle with the parmesan to serve.



BROAD BEAN
PASTA

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Problem solver

ZAP INDOOR PESTS

Keep an eye on your plants and take action at the first sign of insects or disease to keep them thriving

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Plants that live indoors can become a smorgasbord for insects, who find the warm, predator-free conditions of your house perfect for breeding.

And when delicate plants are moved inside to protect them from the chill of winter they can bring unwanted guests along.

The good news is that indoors is also the easiest place to spot and treat pests and problems.

Diversity in potted plant displays inside provides some degree of protection from pests.

There is no need to treat all your indoor plants at the first sign of insect attack as many insects like a specific host, so you might find one plant with spider mite but no others.

SPRAY FOR HEALTH

If all the insects can't be removed by hand, use a soap spray or an appropriate insecticide, keeping the plant isolated for a week or two so the pests don't spread.

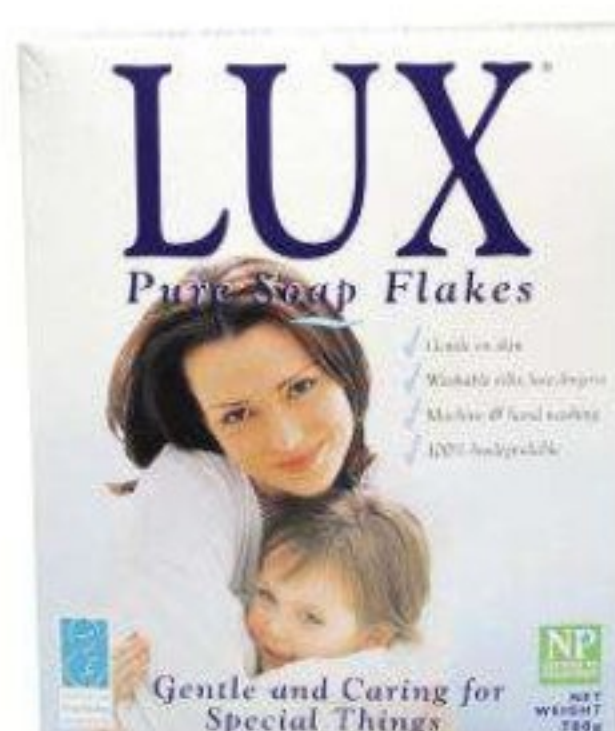
Soap sprays can be easily made at home by mixing two tablespoons of

pure soap flakes in a litre of water. This solution cuts through waxy coatings on insects, causing them to dry out and die.

If problems persist and more toxic pesticides are needed, spray plants outside where there is good ventilation.

Honeydew is a sugar-rich secretion from sap-sucking insects like aphids, mealybug and scale. A sticky substance, it attracts and feeds a type of fungus called sooty mould.

After controlling the pests, wipe all honeydew or sooty mould off with warm, soapy water and a soft cloth.



Lux Pure Soap Flakes,
\$7 for 700g, from supermarkets.

Spraying oil

To keep on top of indoor insect infestations, treat your plants with spraying oil. It works by smothering insects, including tiny juveniles you can barely see.

If you have a big problem in the garden as well, you can make your own solution, diluting and applying it as needed.

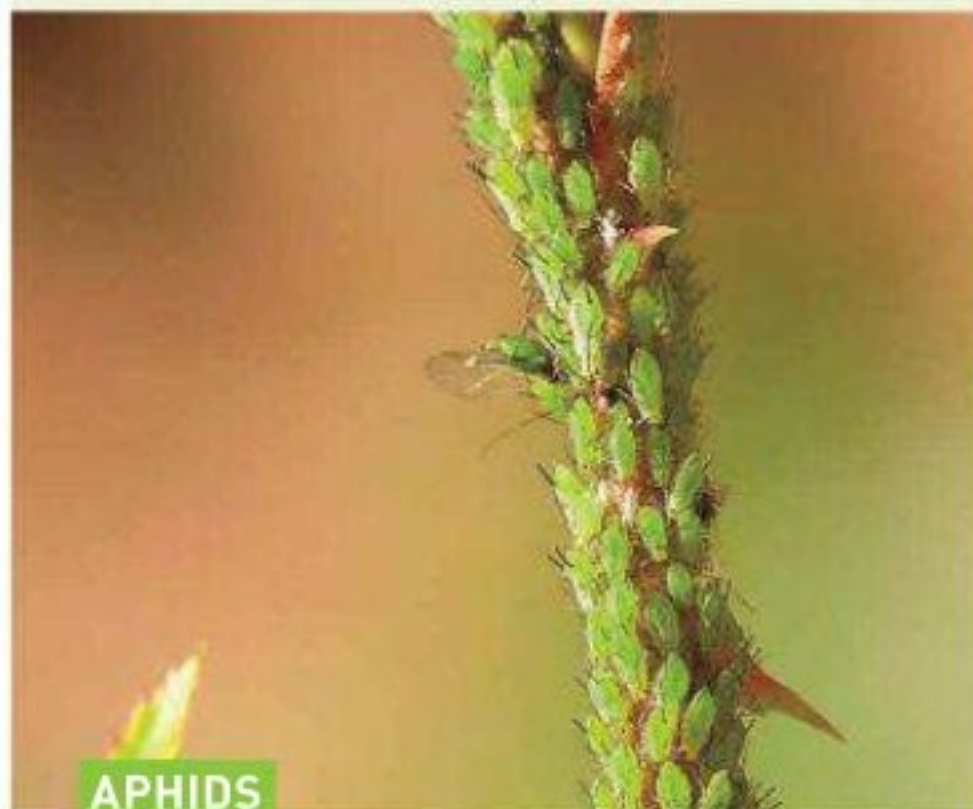
Mix two cups of vegetable oil with half a cup of detergent in a bottle with a cap, storing it for two months. To use the mix, dilute two tablespoons in a litre of water in a plastic spray bottle.



Yates Conqueror Spraying Oil,
\$13 for 200ml. yates.co.nz

THE MAIN OFFENDERS

Check indoor plants regularly for signs of pest attack, remembering to look under leaves and in the crevices of leaf stalks and plant stems. Treat immediately using the recommended control to knock any problems on the head.



APHIDS

Usually occurring in large numbers these tiny soft-bodied insects are found on new growth, flower buds and the underside of leaves, causing curled or distorted growth.

CONTROL by wiping off with a cotton ball dipped in methylated spirits, or pinch off and bin heavily infested stems, treating regularly with spraying oil. When the entire plant is under attack, take the pot outside and spray with a jet of water.



MEALYBUGS

Experts at hiding in plant nooks these grey, sap-sucking and honeydew-excreting pests are a type of scale insect but covered in a white fluffy-looking wax. Gently move plant leaves away from the stem to look for young mealybugs that hide in these crevices.

CONTROL by scraping off with your fingernail or an old toothbrush. Spray with an insecticidal soap every fortnight until the pest is gone.



SCALE

Found as small bumps along the stems, leaf veins and underside of leaves, they attach themselves to a plant and grow a large waxy coating that acts as a protective shield. They suck nutrients from the plant and excrete honeydew, which attracts sooty mould.

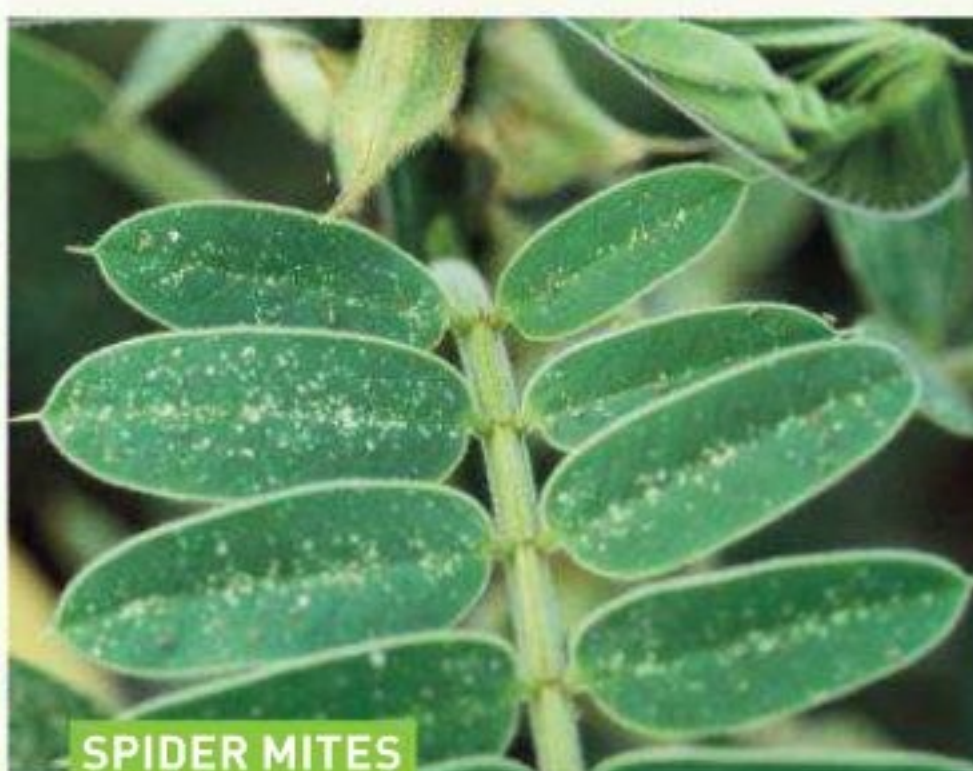
CONTROL by wiping off with a soft cloth dipped in warm soapy water or use spraying oil every 10 days to smother the pests.



WHITEFLY

These little white flying insects feed on the underside of leaves, and when plants are disturbed or watered from above they swarm in the air. Leaves they have been feeding on will yellow and wilt.

CONTROL by pruning off badly infested leaves and rinsing the plant under the tap or taking it outside and hosing off the pests. Treat with spraying oil every seven to 10 days until there are no signs of whitefly.



SPIDER MITES

Measuring just half a millimetre long, you often only know these tiny insects are attacking plants when you see white spotting or webbing. They congregate on the underside of leaves and feed on sap, turning leaves yellow and dry.

CONTROL by misting plants regularly as spider mites don't like a moist environment. Prune off any affected leaves and throw in the rubbish. Dispose of plants that have been badly attacked.



ANTS

Ants are often a symptom of other pests, as they milk aphids, mealybugs, whitefly larvae and scale for honeydew. But they also make nests in soil and damage roots, killing delicate plants.

CONTROL by taking the pot outside and dunking it in a bucket of water for an hour. An alternative is to water it from above until the soil is saturated and the ants move out. Water the plant regularly to stop the ants returning.



PROTECT
PLANTS

It may create a pretty visual effect
but frost can destroy unprotected
or vulnerable plants.

WRAP UP FOR WINTER

Cover, insulate or shelter delicate container plants to guard them from harsh frosts this season

WORDS **JECCA BLAKE**

Unlike garden plants that are warmed by the soil, both the roots and foliage of potted plants are above ground level, leaving them vulnerable to the weather.

If you live in a frost-prone area, most plants in containers need some protection during the cooler months.

Deciduous plants in pots are not as defenceless as evergreens, as they have the advantage of becoming dormant and losing their leaves during the cold season.

Evergreen plants are particularly vulnerable as they continue to lose water through their leaves and can't replace it if the potting mix they are growing in has frozen.

When the weather is particularly cold it can cause the water held in a plant's leaves to freeze. This damages the cells, causing plants to appear wilted before the leaves turn brown.

The problem can be made even worse by bright morning sun defrosting the plant too quickly and rupturing the cells.

If you can catch it in time, cover pots with shade cloth or spray the plants with water before the sun hits them. The ice will melt more slowly, minimising the damage.

Leave frost-damaged parts on plants until all danger of more frost has passed to protect the rest of the plant. When you prune it off, tender new growth will start immediately.

DRAINAGE AND INSULATION

Good drainage is essential because any water sitting in a pot is at risk of freezing and killing the plant. Raise containers so surplus liquid can drain or stand them on a layer of gravel.

Pots with thin walls don't offer great insulation, so plants struggle on very cold days. Concrete, polystyrene and fibreglass are good insulators, and the thicker the pot the better.

If you don't want to re-pot, put plants in a larger pot with thick walls. **TIP** Stuff some straw, bubble wrap or cloth rags between the two pots to provide extra insulation. ➤



Plants to protect

Tropical varieties grown in frosty areas need extra care in winter.



HIBISCUS



FRANGIPANI



CROTON



Cover tender stems of standard evergreens with pipe insulation.

BLOCK THE FROST

Whether you have mature specimens or seedlings in their first winter, there are simple steps you can take to protect plants from the worst of the weather.

- **GROUP** containers closely against a wall that retains heat from sun exposure through the day.
 - **TOSS** a space blanket, hessian sack or old shade cloth over the whole plant and pot, or cover small plants with larger plastic pots. This technique is also good for saving spring growth from a sudden cold snap.
 - **WRAP** hardwood cuttings and tender plants in bubble wrap, pot and all.
 - **TIE UP** strappy-leaved plants like cordyline or dracaena with pantyhose or twine, wrapping the plant in horticultural fleece or shade cloth.
 - **FOLD** the fronds of tree ferns together at the top of the plant and wrap the whole plant in bubble wrap.
 - **RELOCATE** any susceptible plants under cover or to a greenhouse, cold frame or conservatory without additional heating.
 - **WRAP** the stems of standard evergreen plants in pipe insulation. Usually made of neoprene and often sold as flex it's available at hardware, car and plumbing stores.
 - **INSULATE** frost-tender plants in frigid conditions by placing the whole plant inside a hessian sack filled with straw.
 - **BUILD** a cold frame to cover all your small pots and early seedlings.
 - **LEAVE LIGHT SNOW** in place. It forms an insulating blanket over the plants underneath and will protect from further cold damage.
- TIP** Unwrap and uncover at least the leaves during the warmth of the day, especially if you are using plastic, to avoid the risk of fungal disease.

PLAN AHEAD

If you live in an area prone to frosts, build your garden around plants that are able to cope with a regular winter chilling. Those from alpine regions are safe bets, as are many plants with small leaves, like conifers, hebe and box.



Protect tropical plants with bubble wrap if frosts are forecast.



TYING UP
DRACAENA

Deciduous plants are dormant over the cold months, and their bare limbs can provide features in the winter garden with no risk to the leaves.

Plants with golden, lime green or variegated foliage tend to be more tender, so select species that can survive the weather in your area.

Avoid pruning evergreen plants close to winter as older growth helps protect the centre of the plant.

If severe weather does affect new growth, prune off when the risk of frost has passed.

Position plants in the highest area of the garden as cold air and frost settle at the lowest points. When the soil warms up, add a good layer of organic mulch to keep warmth in.



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Store tools in the shed over winter to keep them dry and protect against rust or rot.

IN THE
SHED

TOOL TUNE-UP

Sand then oil timber handles and sharpen blades to get garden equipment ready for next season

As things slow down in the garden over winter it's a great time to do the jobs you never get to during peak season, like giving timber-handled tools a bit of TLC to help them last longer.

Check the tools over and replace any with handles that are suffering from rot or severe cracks, especially tools that are used under pressure such as spades and mattocks.

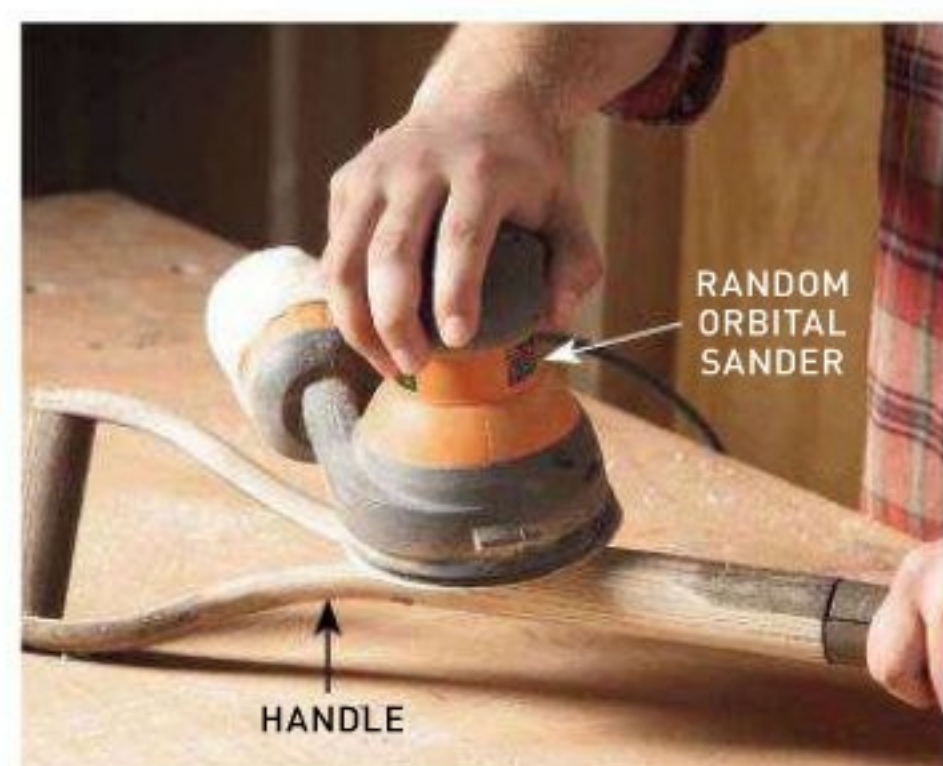
For those that pass the test, sand the handles to remove any rough spots and flaking finish, then coat them in boiled linseed oil to inject some moisture and prevent cracking.

When you have oiled the handles, clean and sharpen the blades. Use a whetstone for secateurs and clippers, and a file or grinding wheel for spades, mattocks and hoes.

Store your tools and wheelbarrow under cover over winter and they'll be ready to go when the garden bursts into action in spring.



JewelStik Sharpener, \$45, from C.E. Lawford. celawford.co.nz



1 SAND THE TIMBER handles with a random orbital sander and 120 grit sanding pads, then sand lightly by hand using abrasive paper to get into the areas the sander didn't reach.



2 OIL THE HANDLES by dipping a cloth into a container of boiled linseed oil and wiping it onto the timber. Let the oil penetrate for a few minutes then wipe off any excess.

Using linseed oil

Linseed oil is a natural product that is extracted from flaxseed.

It has a wide variety of uses, including as a preservative for wood and an ingredient in paints, varnishes, stains, soaps and inks.

Despite the name, most linseed oil isn't actually boiled.

Instead solvents such as turps are added to speed up the drying process, just as boiling does.

Without this addition linseed oil would take a long time to dry. **TIP** The oil is very combustible, so dry used cloths outside in a single layer, as a pile can catch fire.



Diggers Pale Boiled Linseed Oil, \$14 for 1L, from Bunnings.



PLANT YOUR OWN ORCHARD

Winter is the time to buy bare-rooted trees for an easy, budget-friendly crop of summer fruits in just a few years

WORDS **JECICA BLAKE**

Bare-rooted trees are dug up in winter while they are dormant and sold to be planted before they start producing shoots in spring.

Buying trees bare rooted is usually much cheaper than purchasing them in pots. When the trees are dormant they are lightweight and can be packed closely together.

This greatly reduces transportation costs, storage and plant maintenance, so they can be sold at a lower price.

Apple, pear, nectarine, peach and apricot are just some of the deciduous fruit trees that can be bought this way.

Many need more than one plant or variety for cross-pollination, so make sure you check this before heading home and grabbing the shovel.

You can sometimes buy grafted trees that have multiple varieties on the one trunk, creating a tree that will cross-pollinate itself.

Plant bare-rooted trees as soon as you get them home. If you have to wait a day or two, wrap the roots in damp newspaper or towels.

TIP Keep in mind the mature size of the tree or trees and check that there is enough room in the garden.

KEEP TREES HEALTHY

Fruit trees are susceptible to pests and diseases, so take preventative measures.

Aphids and scale distort new growth, so spray the tree with lime sulphur to kill the eggs wintering in the bark, saturating the branches.

Peach leaf curl fungus deforms leaves. Spray nectarines, peaches and apricots with a fungicide containing lime and copper sulphate in late winter and again as the buds swell. Spray the following year just as the leaves fall.

Brown rot affects most stone fruit trees. To prevent it, spray the tree with a copper-based fungicide but also remove and destroy affected fruit beneath and on the tree. ➤



McGregor's Copper Oxychloride,
\$13 for 200g. mcgregors.co.nz



Slurry planting

If the soil is particularly dry, dig a hole twice the size of the root system of your fruit tree and completely fill the hole with water from the hose.

Wait for the moisture to soak into the soil before positioning the plant and backfilling with the excavated soil.

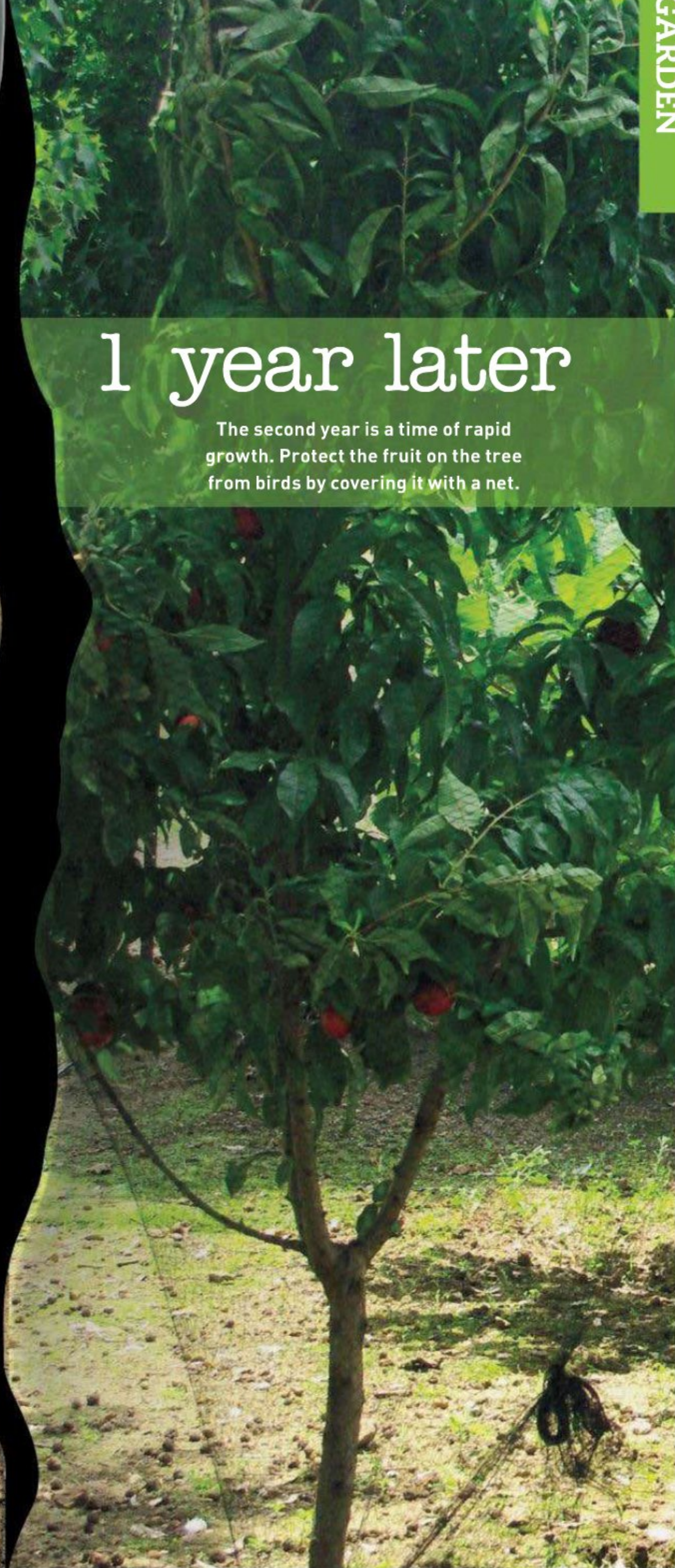
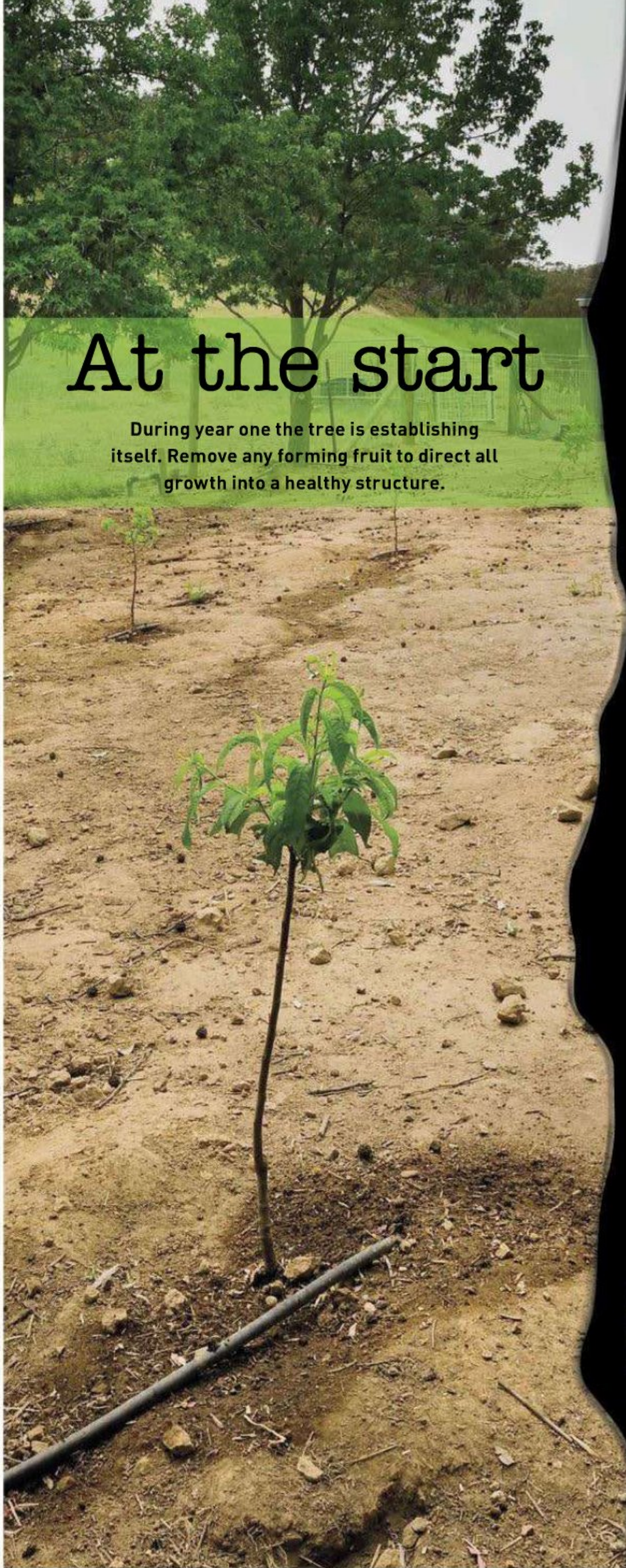
Firm in and water again until it starts pooling on the surface. This increases the moisture and also fills any air pockets between the soil and the roots.

At the start

During year one the tree is establishing itself. Remove any forming fruit to direct all growth into a healthy structure.

1 year later

The second year is a time of rapid growth. Protect the fruit on the tree from birds by covering it with a net.





STAKE FOR SUPPORT

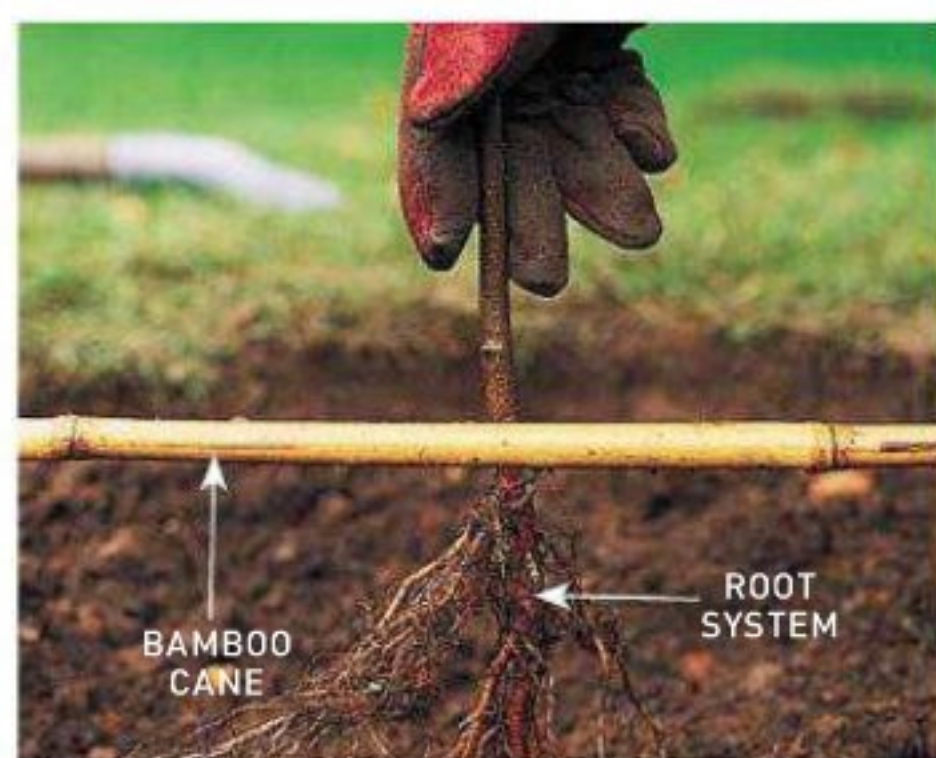
For advanced or weak-stemmed trees or those in a windy spot, a stake can provide support until the roots grow enough to anchor the tree.

Position the stake where it won't cast a shadow on the trunk through most of the day, and on the side of prevailing winds.

Use a sturdy timber or metal stake that will come about a third of the way up the trunk. Secure with flexible plant ties, pantyhose or bicycle inner tube, which won't damage the bark.

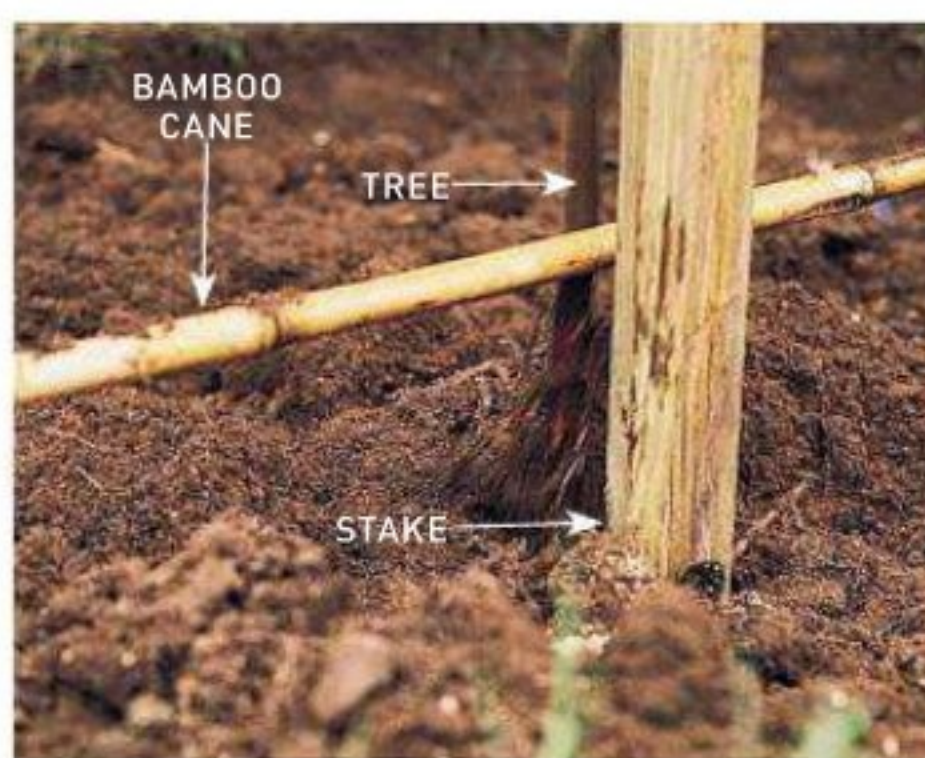
If planting a potted tree, drive in two opposite stakes, clear of the rootball, and secure with a long tie in a figure eight pattern.

Remove the stake after one growing season or a year, as soon as the tree's root system is established.



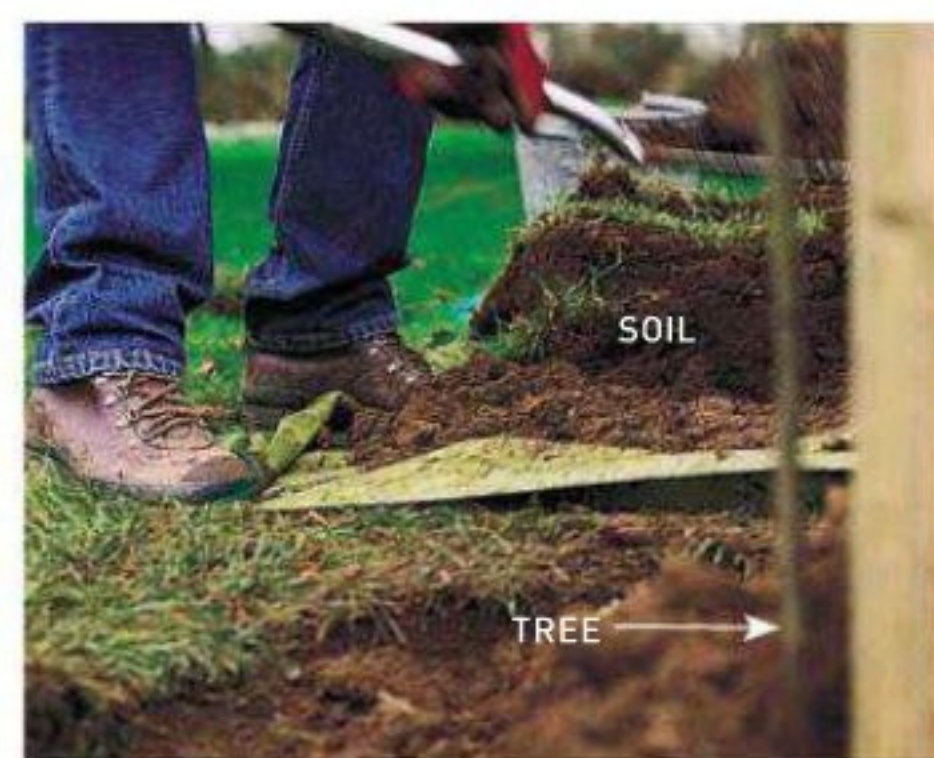
1 Prepare the site

Dig a hole about twice the width of the root system and a little deeper. Lay a bamboo cane across the hole to show the ground level. Make a mound of soil in the bottom for the roots to sit on. If required, add a stake on the side of the prevailing wind direction.



2 Plant the tree

Spread the roots evenly in the hole, ensuring the graft union is 100mm above soil level. If the tree is ungrafted, scrape a fine vertical line in the bark above the roots. The original soil level is where the lower layer of bark changes from white to green. Match this level.



3 Backfill with soil

Shake the plant gently to remove air gaps while adding soil then gently firm down on top to create a shallow well. Give the tree a bucket of water, then another bucket once a fortnight for the next six months. Fertilise in spring once new growth begins.

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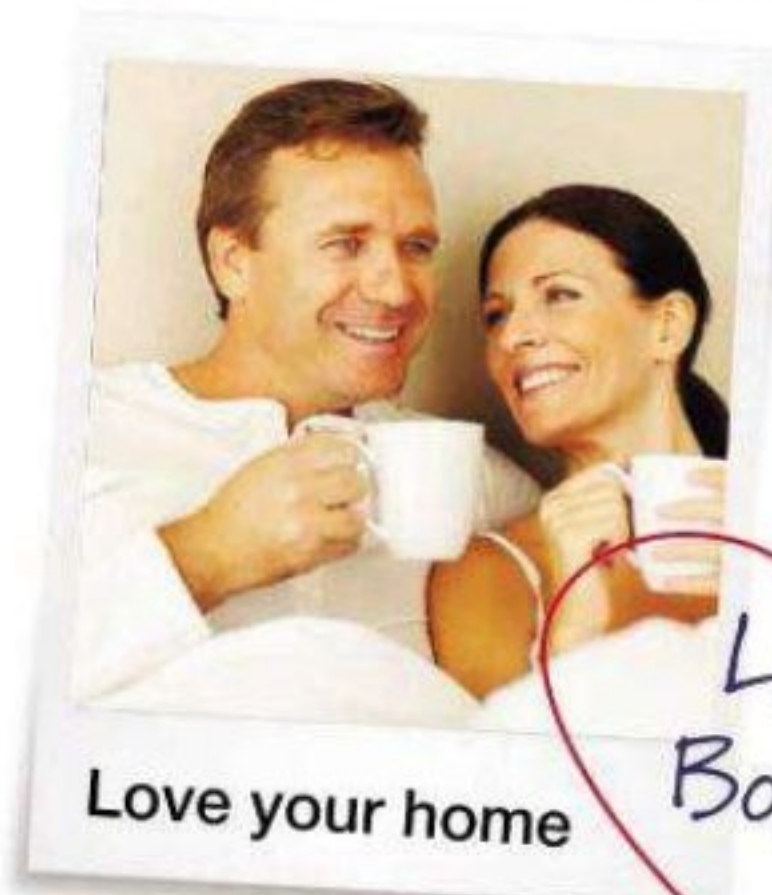
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