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NEW ZEALAND

We show you how!

Handyman

PLANT A HEDGE
Create a living border



Welding techniques



Grow tomatoes



Build an outdoor table



Transform furniture

The perfect **LAWN**

**EXPERTS' SECRETS FOR
LUSH GREEN GRASS**

48 **SPRING CLEAN TIME SAVERS**

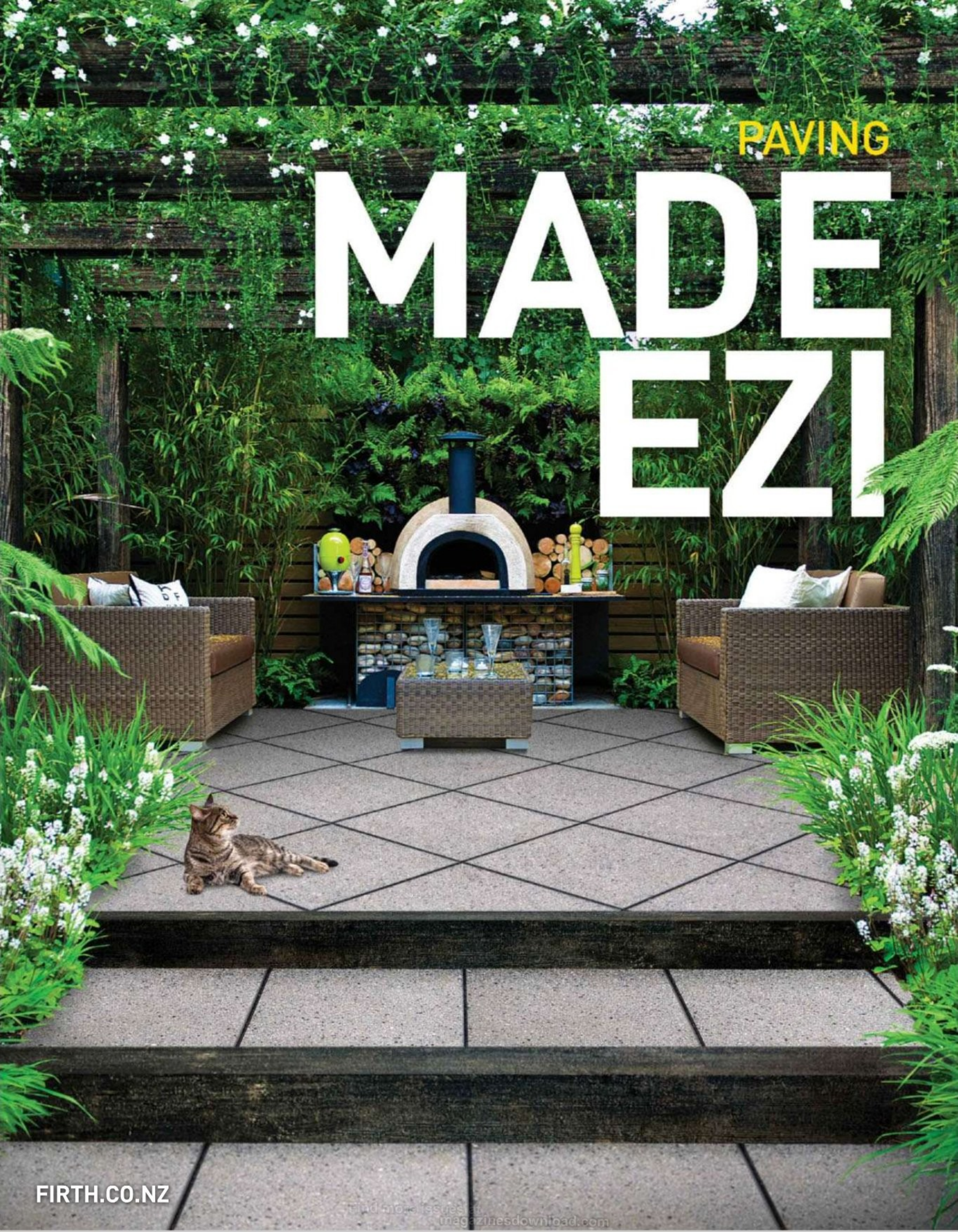
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SEE OVER FOR A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO PAVING ►

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EASY STEPS TO PAVING

1

Excavate & prepare the sub-grade



2

Prepare the base course



3

Prepare the sand base



4

Lay the pavers



5

Compact the pavers



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PAVING VIDEO!

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What's the first thing that catches your eye when you pull up to a house in your car? The lawn.

New Zealanders have an obsession with a lush green lawn, and it's not hard to see why. It instantly gives the appearance of a well-maintained yard.

With a bit of time, effort and knowledge, you can reap these rewards. And your lawn will then not only look great, but it can also raise the value of your property, as it improves the overall first impression.

Handyman is here to share the secrets of achieving your greenest lawn ever. How do you keep out the weeds for good? When should you water it and for how long? Should it be mowed short or long?

Lawn expert Adam Woodhams guides us through the best process so you can achieve maximum results, starting on [page 104](#).

Make a clean sweep

I don't know about you, but cleaning the house is the last thing I want to do on my weekend.

It's also mostly unrewarding, as the dust just comes back, especially in a house full of animals, like mine.

But there are lots of new products designed to make cleaning a breeze, so Deputy editor Artemis Gouros and Senior writer Daniel Butkovich broke the house down room by room to find the best products for all surfaces.

They even found great ways to make the car look fresh and new. Maybe cleaning's not so bad, after all. This special section starts on [page 43](#).

Grow your own tomatoes

If you buy your tomatoes from the supermarket, just think about the time it has taken to transport them, plus the logistics of getting them on the shelves.

They've been picked before they are ripe, whereas homegrown tomatoes ripen on the vine, which is when the delicious flavour kicks in.

And they're easy to grow as well, turn to [page 88](#) to find out how.

Enjoy the issue,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL



Get your lawn growing lush and green this summer.

More inspiration

Are you planning on revamping the garden and need some more inspiration?

Pinterest lets you create and organise boards of your favourite pictures. It's a great way to find and share ideas for your next DIY project.

Check out *Handyman* at pinterest.com/diyhandyman or scan this code with your phone.



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November*issue*



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Handyman

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*Requires post-kit and mounting bracket.
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HANDYSTUFF

Make life worry-free with these DIY solutions for staying safe and sound around the home and garden

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



Take it easy when working in the garden with tools designed for your comfort.



Kneel easy

Give your knees and back a break with the Yardworks Garden Kneeler Pad-Seat, about \$43. The soft foam pad cushions your knees during extended periods of kneeling. Flip it up and it can be used as a seat. It's lightweight and the spring-loaded folding legs make it easy to store.

bunnings.co.nz

Spout it out

Get better control of water flow in the garden with the Holman High Impact Eight Pattern Watering Gun, \$18.

Use the flow-control knob to reach the back of the garden or select from eight spray patterns for delicate plants.

The ergonomic handle features a long trigger with a self-closing action that stops the flow of water when it is released.

It also includes a non-slip rubber grip for ease of use.

holmanindustries.com.au



Get a grip

Let the Fiskars PowerGear Pruner, \$40, do the hard work for you. With Arthritis Foundation Ease-of-Use endorsement, this tool has a gear mechanism between the rotating handle and blades that allows the use of all fingers simultaneously, reducing effort and fatigue.

fiskars.co.nz



Thorny subject

Save your hands and lower arms from scratches and prickles with Lynn River Rose Pruner Gloves, \$30.

The supple suede sleeve gives exceptional comfort and the natural leather palm provides added protection against pesky thorns. ➤

lynnriver.co.nz

AGED CARE

Home safety

Step up the security at your place with a few quick upgrades.



Light the way

Stop the midnight stumble to the bathroom with the E-Tech Push Light, about \$9 for three.

Keep it by your bed or use the adhesive backing tape to attach it in a wardrobe, cupboard, bathroom cabinet or a corridor. The light is push-activated, has three LEDs and runs on two AAA batteries.

cdb.co.nz



Sound the alarm

You'll sleep easy knowing your Quell Worry-Free Bedroom Smoke Alarm, \$53, will wake you if there is a fire.

The photoelectric sensor responds quicker than other types while the talking voice alert improves wakening.

With a lithium battery that lasts for 10 years, they're available for hallways and living spaces, and the kitchen model detects carbon monoxide.

quell.co.nz



Security minded

For peace of mind, make sure your property has good protection against intruders with the Arlec Wireless Home Security Alarm Kit, \$184.

Its movement-activated sensor has a range of about 7m and an exit delay time of 30 seconds.

This cost-effective DIY security solution is easy to install and has a flashing low-battery indicator.

arlec.com.au



Lock it down

Protect your valuables with the 34.8L capacity Sentry Safe Extra Large Digital Safe, \$824.

Water-resistant and fireproof for one hour at 927°C, this safe can withstand a drop of 4.5 m. It has four live-locking bolts, an electronic code pad and tubular key lock, and can be bolted to the floor for added security.

sentrysafe.com.au

AGED CARE

Bathroom safety

Stay slip-free and comfortable when you're in the shower or bath.



Take a seat

Showering won't be a strain when you use an Award Eziliving Folding Bath & Shower Seat, \$120.

Supporting up to 100kg, it has non-slip rubber feet on collapse-resistant aluminium legs. With adjustable height settings from 400-450mm, it can be folded away when you're finished.

bunnings.co.nz

Stop the slip

Avoid the risk of a nasty accident in the bathroom with the Zone Hardware Suction Bath Mat, \$11.

The rubber mat's suction-cup base anchors it firmly to the shower or bathroom floor, or the bathtub, and will help prevent you slipping and falling.

It's suitable for use in all wet areas and measures 700 x 400mm.

galepacific.com



Pamper your feet

Give your feet a treat after a bath or shower with a Zone Hardware Memory Foam Bath Mat, \$19.

Available in grey, latte or white, the 400 x 600cm highly absorbent mat features a soft memory foam filling that cushions your feet. It's machine washable and also has a slip-resistant backing.

galepacific.com



Stand steady

Wet tiles can be an injury hazard which can be prevented by laying Norton Bear Anti Slip Tape, about \$16.

The 48mm x 5m tape is easy to secure with its self-adhesive backing. Press the waterproof strip onto the floor in bathrooms and other damp areas around the home.

abrasives.net.nz



Hold on tight

Does it get a bit slippery in your shower or tub? Give yourself a helping hand and guard against injury with the Award Eziliving 300mm Knurled Grab Rail, \$40.

Made of stainless steel, this sturdy handle has a concealed flange and is easy to attach.

bunnings.co.nz

Summer's just around the corner

Before Summer well and truly sets in, take a look at this huge range of new products designed to help you get ready for the 'silly season'. And the best news is, they're all at a great everyday low price.



LET DALTONS DO THE HARD YARDS FOR YOU

Get your lawn in top condition this season with Daltons Lawn Patching Gold. For a lush lawn in quick time, just add water to your Lawn Patching Gold and watch it go to work. Made from natural renewable ingredients, it is a 4-in-1 lawn repair for existing lawns. \$18.78.

GIVE YOUR GARDEN A BOOST

Yates manufacture an extensive range of garden products to help your garden flourish. These specialist products include formulas to help make your hydrangeas pink, fix trace element deficiencies, boost fruit and flower production on fruit trees or prevent yellowing leaves on your roses. The list is endless. A Bunnings garden expert will be able to help select what you need. From \$12.80.



BACK PACKER WITH PUNCH

With its commercial-grade 42cc 2 stroke engine and 298Km/h air speed, the Ryobi Back Pack Blower has way more power than a hand held. It features variable speed cruise control and a contoured back strap to help distribute its weight evenly for comfort and to help make it safer to use on sloped areas. \$399.



SUMMER NIGHT SAFETY

The 850 Lumen LED Motorized Security Light is one of the best in its category. Not only is it stylish but energy saving too, with its 8 super bright 1W Nichia LED's, built-in microprocessor and a PIR tracking motion sensor, it will light the way as you move through the detection area. \$249.

A TOUGH LITTLE COMPANION

The compact Kincrome Utility Toolbox is handy to keep around the house or in the car. It takes all your key tools for most maintenance jobs and the self-opening inner tray is useful to store all your little bits and pieces. \$69.



HANDY FOR TIGHT CORNERS

The Kincrome 7pc Ratcheting Screwdriver has a world-class pivoting handle making it great when you're working in a tight spot. It also features 45 teeth ratcheting screwdriver handle with Phillips, Blade and Robinsons heads plus a 120mm fixed bar extension. \$39.97.



GET ON-TREND

Create your own fashionable outdoor room with these durable, Lifestyle Loop Pile Rugs with anti-fade and mould inhibitors. They come in 4 contemporary designs that will compliment all styles of outdoor furniture settings and can also be used indoors. \$99 each.



KEEP YOUR WALLS LOOKING BRAND NEW

The new British Paints Retouch Paint Atomiser Kit allows you to spray water based paint over small wear and tear marks to make them completely disappear. Easy to use it leaves a completely seamless finish. \$12.95.



GET READY FOR THE PARTY SEASON

The festive mood is guaranteed this year with the Arlec Solar Ropelight. Run by 120 LED lights, this 6m long decoration can run for up to 6 hrs and is totally solar powered so won't increase your power bills. Available in white or multi-coloured. \$24.97.



A GREAT WAY TO START THE DAY

With a proud track record as true innovators, Methvan understand the power water has to calm, refresh or invigorate. With its 20 year warranty and revolutionary Satinjet® spray design, the range is designed with a wide variety of features so whichever shower you choose you'll be ready to start the day. From \$199.



SPARKLING CLEAN SURFACES IN A FLASH

Get your home looking ship shape for guests with the Vax Window Spray & Cleaner. With a pivot head, twin tanks and no cords, you can take it everywhere to vacuum excess water off smooth surfaces for a streak free finish. 3.6B lithium battery gives 30 minutes of cleaning time and recharges in 3 hours. \$89. Accessories available by order: Vax glass cleaner 500ml & Microfibre Scrubs pad 4pk.



SUMMER ESSENTIAL

The Ozito DMC-1000 12VDC Digital Mini Compressor is a handy device to have stored in the boot of your car or in your garage. With its high 100PSI pressure and high flow feature it makes inflating objects such as air mattresses and pool toys a breeze. It also features a large LED indicator screen, bright LED lights and built in adaptor, hose and cable storage for easy portability. \$38.95.



YOU'LL BECOME A FAN

Moretti have a wide range of fans to help keep you comfortable all summer. Their advanced DC motor technology makes them whisper quiet and cost effective to run. The ones shown all have a variety of extras such as remote controls, fixed and oscillating tilt-adjustable heads, timers and various fan speeds to help you keep your cool. 35cm Pedestal Fan \$89.00. 40cm Pedestal Fan \$139. 30cm Desk Fan \$89. 104cm Tower Fan \$129.

The house in the hill

A dream of a simpler life took shape in a small one-level home that slots perfectly into its surroundings

WORDS SITA SIMONS

Living between two apartments in the city and with a baby on the way, Wendy Martel and Roberto Testo knew it was time to combine resources and find a family home.

'It was one of those moments when we could have stuck with what we knew and found a bigger apartment, but it was also an opportunity to do something different,' says Wendy.

'We'd talked of moving to a more rural spot, but I never really thought it'd happen. When a friend said they'd seen a country block for sale only 25km away, suddenly, here was our chance.'

A surprise solution

It was love at first sight, but the couple initially found it hard to imagine a house on the land.

'We had a tight budget and very strong ideas, which is a frustrating combination,' says Wendy.

'It was important that we lived in harmony with the block, so we pored over eco designs but couldn't find the cash to get what we wanted.'

Meeting with structural architects, a plan was formed. Rather than build on the land, they were going to build in it, using a natural slope to frame

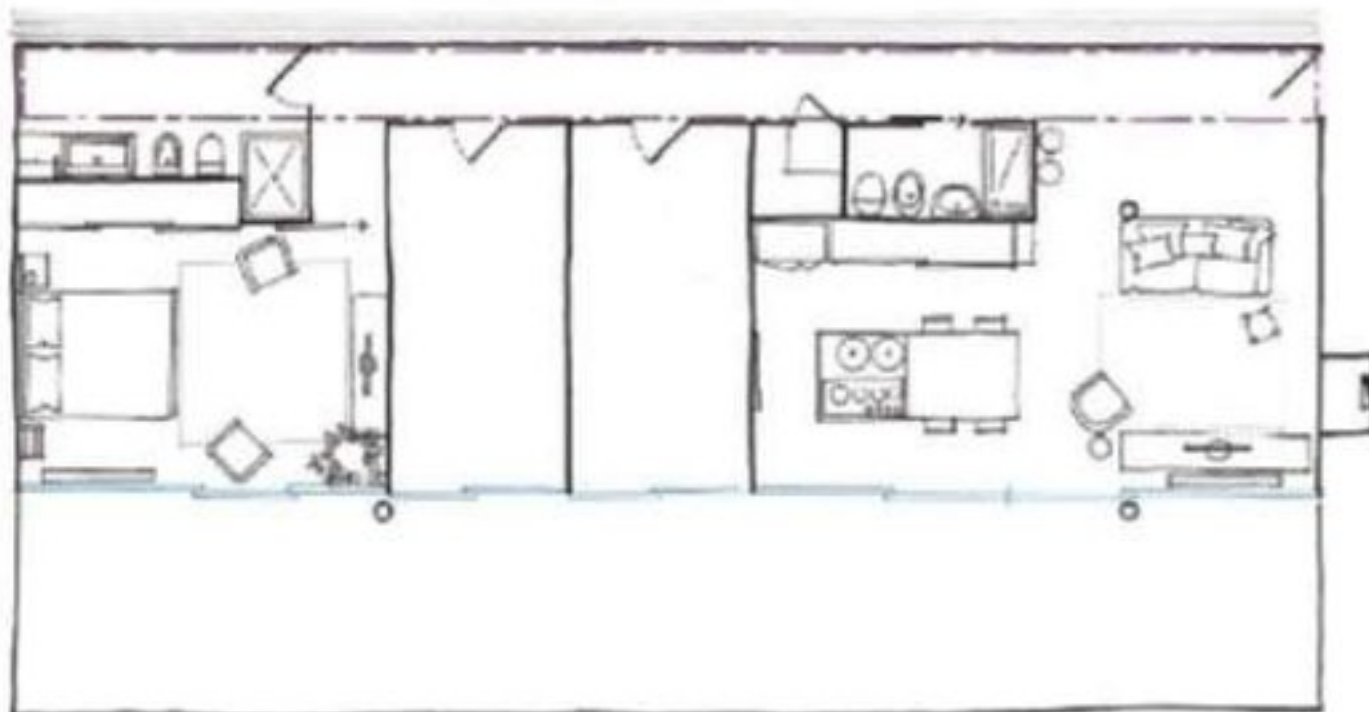
the one-storey, glass-fronted home so it blended into the landscape.

After the site had been excavated and utility lines installed, reinforced concrete was then poured for the foundations, walls, floors and roof.

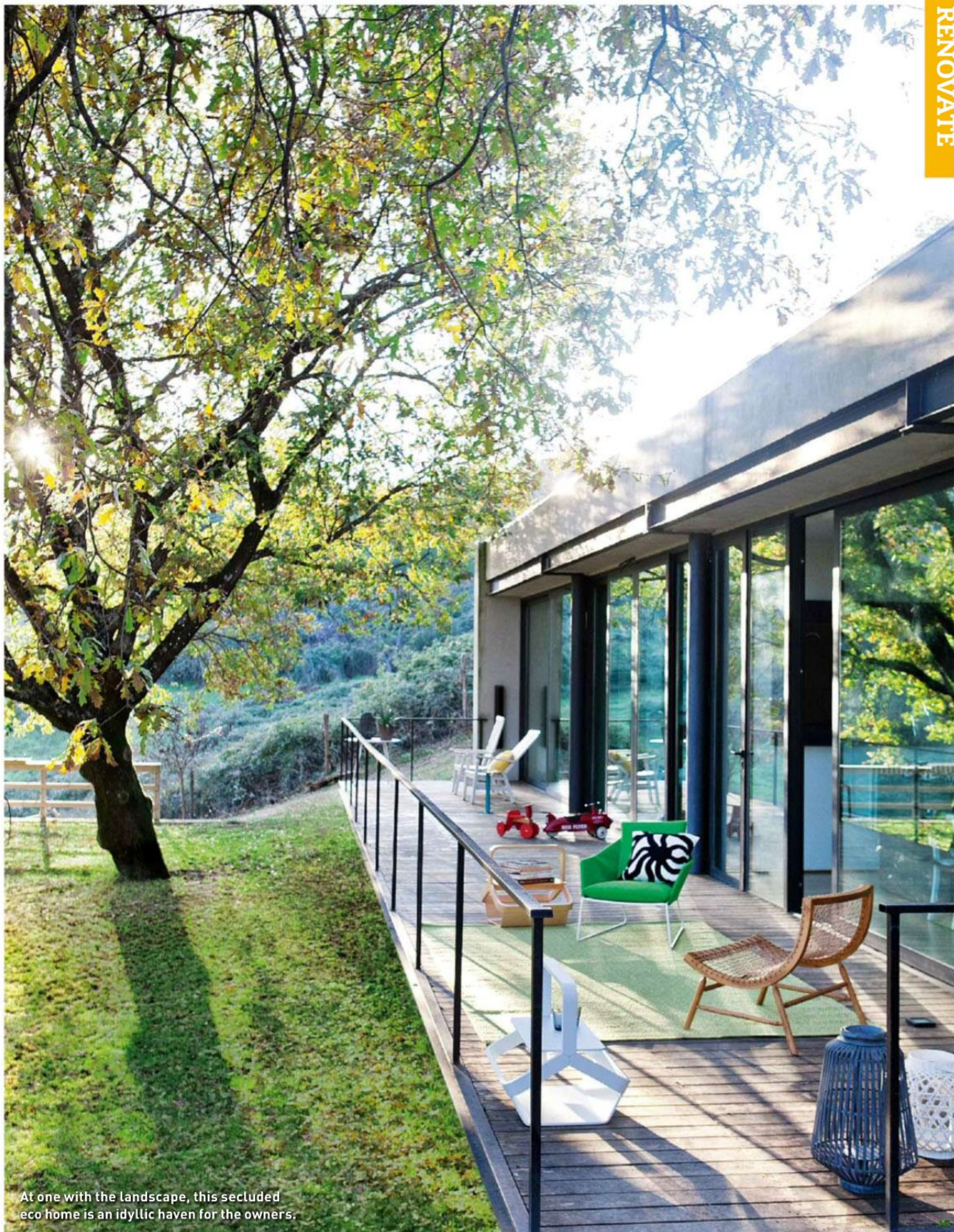
With drainage in place, the exterior was waterproofed and the back and sides backfilled using earth.

The living area, kitchen and bedrooms would be at the front, and the bathrooms, laundry, study and storage to the rear, with the addition of skylights. ➤

FLOORPLAN



The living area and bedrooms at the front all take in the lovely view.



At one with the landscape, this secluded eco home is an idyllic haven for the owners.

Rooms with a view

The north-facing aspect together with glass bifolds means there is abundant light and sunshine most of the year.

While this added to the thermal massing qualities from passive solar, it had an impact on decorating decisions.

The couple had planned to maximise the space with an all-white colour scheme, but then realised that this wasn't the right choice.

'The glare was so strong, I had to wear sunglasses inside. I felt like I had to have the blinds drawn for most of the day,' says Wendy.

The floors were softened with light timber and the west wall left as bare concrete to reduce the brightness.

Two-tone timber doors and storage units were teamed with black frames on the bifolds to set the colour palette.

'We'd also come from two places and brought everything with us, but once it was in the house, it didn't fit. So we hired a stylist, which was one of the best decisions we made,' says Wendy.

Deciding on a Scandinavian aesthetic, the refreshed look brought together new pieces featuring light timbers, tones of grey, white and black with pops of citrus.

Rugs and artworks complement a concrete TV stand and a large lamp echoes the geometric shapes of the theme and the build. ➤





Sunlight floods the concrete-walled and timber-floored living area for most of the year through the glass bifolds.



Metallics work well in compact spaces, reflecting light and giving a feeling of fluidity.

An entertainer's delight

The kitchen shares the same aspect as the living area, and makes good use of the timber deck that runs the full length of the house.

Again, because of all the sunlight, bold colour touches work well. Black floor-to-ceiling storage conceals the pantry and cooking equipment.

Sliding frosted pantry doors soften the look while a shiny black fridge almost disappears into the wall.

A cube-shaped metallic island bench reflects light and provides more storage space, as well as housing the sink, stove and benchtops.

The glass table, reminiscent of the original 1963 Kartell Ghost design, runs off the island to make a space for family meals and entertaining.

'Our stylist suggested slightly mismatched white timber chairs and it immediately felt right,' says Wendy.

'We spend a lot of time in here and it's a great room. I love the fact that whoever is cooking isn't cut off from whatever is happening, and everything you need is close to hand. It's small and simple, but it works perfectly.'

In the warm months, the family often eat outside on the deck, and the placement of the island means it's easy to keep an eye on the stove while relaxing in the sunshine.



Layering textures and colours gives the bedroom a luxurious, inviting feel.

Green is the go

Choosing the colour for the bedroom walls was an easy decision for Wendy.

'It was just obvious the bedrooms needed to be green. I first picked an olive green thinking it would look sophisticated, but it was too dull.

'The stylist suggested a brighter apple green. I was apprehensive at first, but the difference was amazing, just in a change of tone,' she says.

Originally, Wendy's and Roberto's mismatched furniture, which was a mix of metals and old timber pieces, sat uncomfortably in the room.

'One of the most useful things the stylist taught me was about texture and how you have to think about mixing different layers to make a room come together,' says Wendy.

'I'd always regarded the bedroom only as somewhere to sleep. Layering creates a luxurious, inviting feeling, which is what you want. Once you know, it's so easy to do,' she says.

The updated look included a timber bed, dressed in earth-toned linen and wool, with textural cushions and pillows. Soft rugs in contrasting colours and patterns tie everything together.

Skylights were installed to ensure that the two bathrooms running off the corridor at the back of the house are light and airy. ➤



Ask an expert

The couple saved money where they could and while it was something they'd never considered, they decided to invest in hiring a stylist.

A stylist charges from about \$50 to \$150 an hour and will often offer a free initial consultation.

The job can be planned on a room-by-room basis, or as a whole house project, in which case you can negotiate for a fixed fee.

A stylist differs from an interior designer in that they specialise in the finishing touches, conceptualising a look or theme, sourcing pieces and working with existing items.

An interior designer often works with the architect from the start of the project with particular emphasis on space creation and planning, and factors that affect our responses to living and working environments.



A glass table in the kitchen keeps the space open and light.

Reasons to hire a stylist ▼

1 SAVE TIME AND MONEY

From making a solid plan and setting a realistic budget to avoiding costly mistakes, hiring a stylist will save you money in the long run. Styling can also add to the value of a home when it comes to selling.

2 GAIN ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Stylists already have a list of valuable contacts and know where to look for items. Pooling their resources means they can pull all the elements together, resulting in a look that is both balanced and unique to you.

3 ADD WOW FACTOR

A stylist is trained to look in a different way spatially, to visualise the overall picture. When you think outside the box, you can create spaces that not only look amazing but also enhance how you live and function in your home.

NOW IS THE TIME TO
CHECK YOUR POOL IS SAFE
CHECK IT. FIX IT. WATCH IT.



Pool season is fast approaching. Protector Aluminium is working with Royal Lifesaving Australia to improve safety in and around pools. During the past five years over 150 Australian children under the age of five drowned, 50% occurred in home swimming pools. Pool fencing and effective supervision can reduce these tragic drowning deaths to zero. Royal Life Saving and Protector Aluminium are targeting every home pool owner with a basic reminder to check, fix and maintain their home pool and surrounds in order to eliminate child drowning. **Download a pool safety checklist at www.homepoolsafety.com.au or scan the QR Code.**



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Top of the apps

Make your phone into a home renovation helper by installing these essential DIY tools

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

Smartphones are par for the course these days and the number of apps that are available to make life easier now seems limitless.

Here's a run-down of some apps every DIYer should check out, plus an easy guide on where to find them and how you install them on your phone.

Android devices

You need a Google account for these, and anyone can sign up for free. Head to google.com and follow the prompts.

FIND THE APP by tapping the Play Store icon, then use the search feature or browse through the lists of applications on the Google Play homepage.

GET THE DETAILS by tapping the app's icon to open a page with more information about the app, as well as reviews. Find the Install button on this page and select it.

You'll then be asked to accept the terms and conditions by selecting the Accept button. Once this is done, free apps will start to download immediately.

PAY FOR THE APP by signing into your Google Wallet account via its app. If you do not have an account, then you may be prompted to create one by using the drop-down menu to select a payment method or add a new card.

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iPhone

For iPhones, an Apple ID and password is required. If you don't have an account or have forgotten your password, go to apple.co.nz for support.

FIND THE APP by clicking the App Store icon on the home screen, then use the search field or browse by category.

GET THE DETAILS by tapping the app's icon to show the information page. Tap the Install App button, then you'll be asked to sign in with your Apple ID. Free apps begin to download right away.

PAY FOR THE APP by tapping the Buy button, then enter your Apple ID and password when prompted. The payment is then verified and the app will download. ➤

PHOTO MEASURES

\$9 for iPhone and iPad

This app allows you to annotate images with measurements and any other relevant details. Just take a picture of what you need to measure, then add lines, arrows, labels and the dimensions. You can save the image for further editing or export it as a JPEG file. The app doesn't take actual measurements, so you'll need a tape measure and ruler on hand.

PAINT MY PLACE

Free for iPhone and iPad

Picking a colour by holding up tiny samples against a wall is tricky. This app makes it simple and lets you get on with the job of painting without a colour-choice hangover. Upload an image of the room, then paint it virtually to see how the colour works. You have access to 15 brand-name colours, but for the full range of 30,000 from 35 brands, it will cost you \$3.

SUN SEEKER 3D

\$9 for iPhone and \$8 for Android

Great if you're organising outdoor shading, solar panel installation or deciding on window locations, the Sun Seeker app uses GPS and magnetometer functions to find the correct solar position and path for your location. It creates a map view with solar direction arrows and elevations for each hour of the day and lets you track the sun's path on specific days.

SPIRIT LEVEL 3RD

Free for iPhone, iPad and Android

Great for new DIYers, this app checks whether a surface is level. It includes a magnification feature that adjusts its sensitivity to changes in incline, making it more accurate for intricate work. Sound linked with the spirit level bubble means you don't have to watch the screen when adjusting materials. Just put your phone in a protective case before using it as a tool.

MAGICPLAN

Free for iPhone, iPad and Android
MagicPlan uses your phone's camera to measure a room and draw a floorplan. Stand in the middle of the room and point the camera at each corner. It takes a few goes, but you end up with a floorplan that can be exported as a PDF, JPG or DXF. It's a good idea to check the measurements with a tape measure before ordering furniture or materials.

MAGPIE BY CONRAN

Free for iPhone and iPad

This app is ideal for the planning stages of a reno. You can collect and collate all your sources of inspiration, including photos, videos and audio clips, so you can create a complete package on your projects. You can edit them anytime, and if you want to share your ideas or need a copy, it puts the collection into a beautifully styled PDF to print or email.

HANDYMAN SIDEKICK

\$3 for iPhone and iPad

A DIYer's best friend, especially if you're a beginner. You enter the dimensions of the area you're overhauling and it then calculates how much of each material you need, including wallpaper, paint, plasterboard, flooring and mulch. This saves you several trips to the hardware store, letting you get on with the job. There's also a handy flashlight tool.

YATES MY GARDEN

Free for iPhone, iPad and Android

Whatever your skill level, this app could be your inspiration to design, grow and maintain a thriving garden. Use the Garden Visualiser to map out how you want it to look and keep weeds, pests and diseases at bay with the Problem Solver tool. You can even track the progress of your plants and receive timely reminders to help care for them.

HARVEY NORMAN PHOTOCENTRE

Free for iPhone, iPad and Android

Harvey Norman Photocentre makes it easy to turn your photos into prints, canvases or posters from your phone. If you're looking for the right photo to finish off your revamped room, choose the style and size you want printed and the app then accesses your phone's photo library. Select the image, proceed to the check-out and wait for delivery.





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PAINT A DOOR

Give an entrance door a bright, new look with a smooth, professional finish

There's more to painting a door than just slapping on a new coat. Getting a good result will depend on the time you're willing to put in, the prep work and the tools you use.

To ensure a professional-looking finish without drips, remove the door from its hinges before painting.

Lie it flat across a pair of sawhorses and remove all the hardware, including the hinges and handles.

Drill a 5mm hole in the base and two at the top, and drive M6 x 75mm coachscrews 40mm into the door.

Move the sawhorses so that the door rests entirely on the screws.

Finish preparing one side, then hold the top two screws to rotate the door on the single base screw.

Clean it first

A spotless surface that's free of dust and grime is essential to ensure smooth paint adhesion.

Using a heavy-duty household cleaner, scrub the entire door to remove oily smudges and dirt, especially around the handle and base of the door. Let it dry completely before filling any holes.

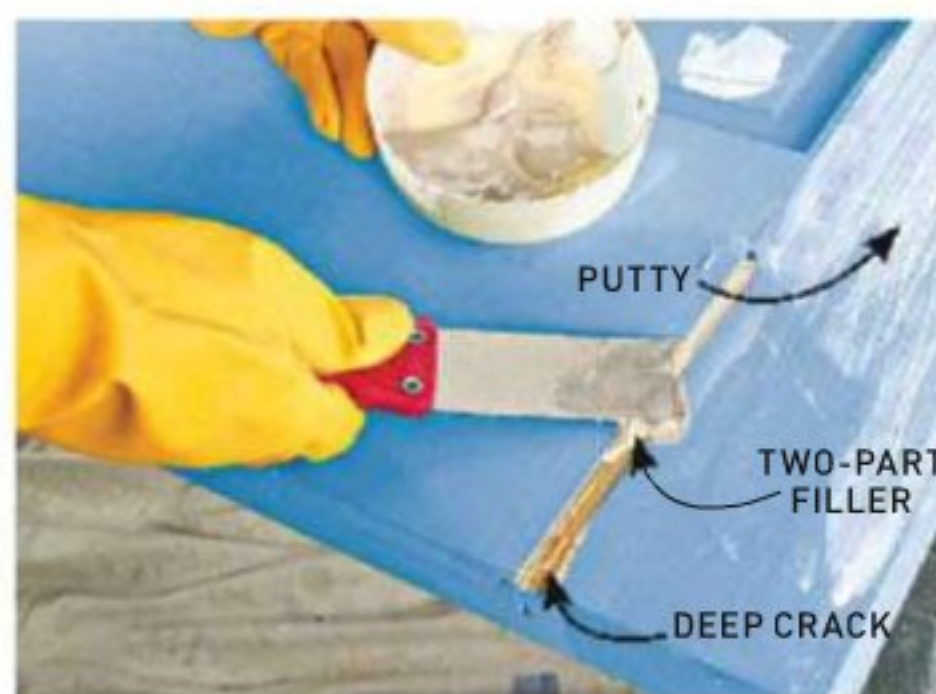
TIP Before rehanging the door, take the opportunity to update the door handle.



Selley's Professional Sugar Soap, \$5.98 for 1L.



1 SCRAPE AND SAND flaking paint with a scraper then sand smooth with 180 grit paper. If the house was built before 1970, check the paint for lead with a testing kit, from Bunnings Warehouse stores.



2 REPAIR ANY FLAWS using putty to fill shallow holes, scratches and dents less than 3mm deep. For deeper holes, use a putty knife to apply an epoxy two-part filler or timber filler.



3 APPLY A PRIMER to the surface using a roller. When dry, shine a light on the door to check for any missed flaws. Cover them with more putty, sand and reprime these areas.



Repainting the front door gives the house an instant upgrade.



4 SAND THE DOOR after priming and filling, using 180 grit paper and a sanding sponge for shaped areas. Brush or vacuum, then wipe down with a damp cloth to remove dust.



5 PAINT THE DOOR using a foam roller to avoid brush marks. Edge around panels and windows with a brush, then apply two coats of paint with a 100 or 150mm roller. Sand between coats with 180 grit paper.



6 REHANG THE DOOR when the paint is dry. As a precaution to avoid the paint sticking, cover the weather stripping with painter's tape. Remove after a few days. Lubricate the hinges and handle.

Before

After

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Veneer effects

Three ways to transform plain pieces of furniture using a sheet of timber veneer

PROJECTS TINA HUTTON PICTURES CHRIS L JONES

Most people associate timber veneer with retro 1950s furniture but these pieces tend to feature fake woodgrain laminate.

Real veneer is the technique of cladding furniture with thin layers of timber and has been around since the ancient Egyptians.

During the Renaissance European craftsmen created ever more intricate and ornate veneer inlays for cabinetry.

By the 1800s veneer was used as a way to give common timbers an expensive face while modern timber veneers are used to decorate furniture.

To give a plain or mismatched piece a makeover you need timber veneer, contact adhesive, a craft blade and stain or varnish.

Here we used a 1220 x 1220mm sheet of craft ply, about \$150, from timber veneer suppliers. ➤

Stained veneer table

To turn a bargain melamine table into a designer piece all you need is a homemade stencil, contact adhesive, timber stain and a sheet of veneer.

Measure the tabletop accurately and cut a sheet of veneer to size using a craft blade and metal ruler.

For this tabletop the veneer top was inset 25mm all around and a 20mm wide border added, leaving 5mm of the melamine edge showing. The border was stained to match the stencil cutout.

Dilute the stain with methylated spirits to control the depth of colour.

Mix one part timber stain and three parts methylated spirits in a plastic container. Apply the diluted stain to the border and stencil cutouts with a paintbrush using long strokes.

Reapply the stain until the desired depth of colour is achieved.



Cabot's CFP Floor Waterbased, \$72 for 1L. cabots.co.nz



Designing a stencil

To create the stencil, select the word or image from a computer program, printing one letter per A4 sheet.

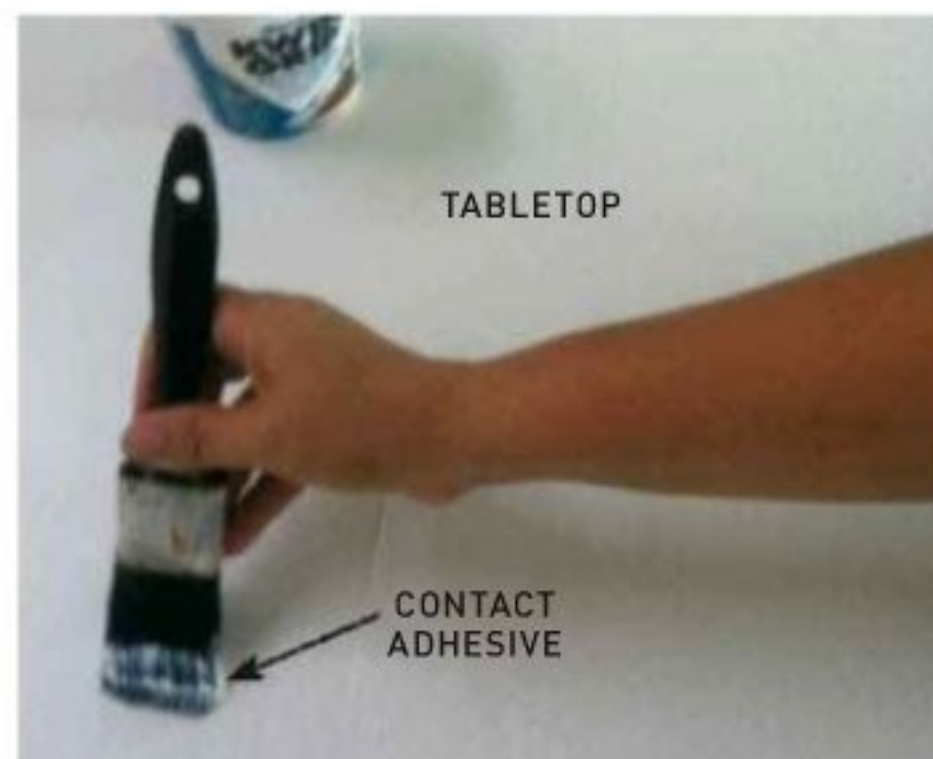
For this project a compressed helvetica font was chosen for its straight edges and simplicity.

Straight edges are easier to cut and refit than curved edges so keep this in mind when choosing a design.

Position the veneer tabletop piece on a self-healing mat.

Secure the printed pages on the veneer using masking tape, cutting out the stencil with a craft blade.

TIP Using a self-healing mat protects the surface underneath, gives you more control over the cut, and helps blades last longer. ➤



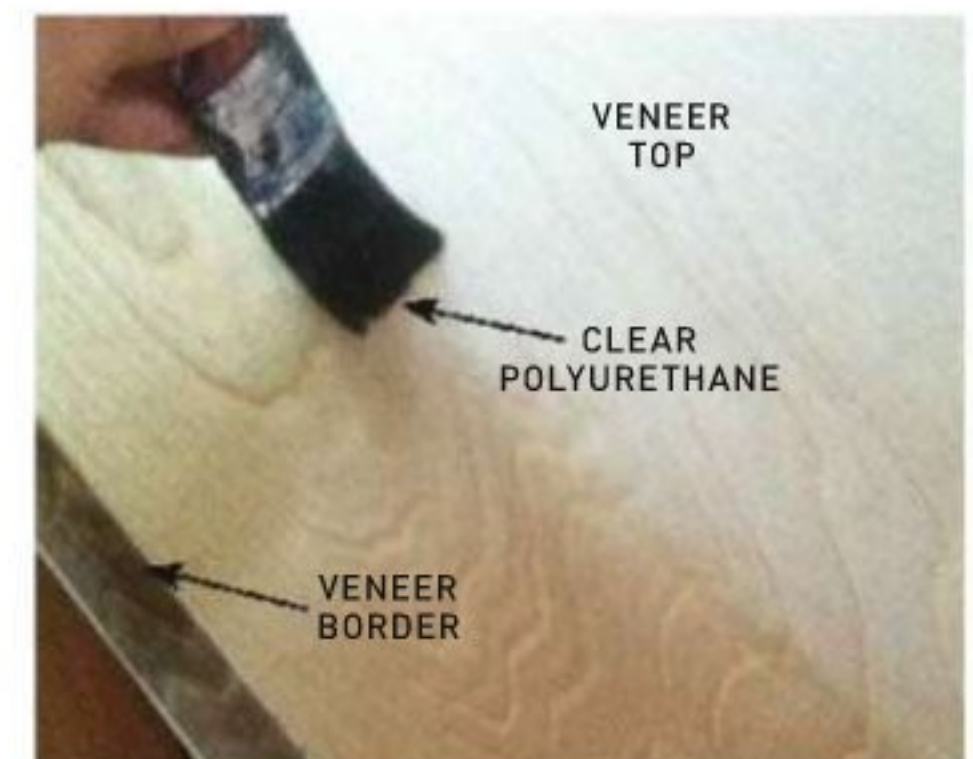
1 Prepare the surface

Sand the tabletop with 180 grit abrasive paper to create a key for the adhesive. Apply a 2mm thick coat of contact adhesive using a paintbrush, then leave for 20 minutes until tacky.



2 Secure the veneer

Lay the stencil and border pieces face down, then apply contact adhesive to the back and leave it to go tacky. Position the veneer top, the stained border then the stencil cutouts.



3 Apply the finish

Let the adhesive dry for 24 hours then apply two coats of water-based polyurethane with a paintbrush, sanding lightly between coats.

TIP Use a floor product for durability.



STYLING ISILVER HIDE, TOLIX STOOL AND CHAIR | MATT BLATT | ICERISE RUG | ARMADILLO & CO

Customise a plain table in just a few hours by adding a veneer top.



Cover the doors of a basic cabinet with scallop-edged veneer strips.

STYLING IMARIGOLD RUG | ARMADILLO & CO

Hallway cabinet

Decorate the doors of a melamine cabinet with rows of timber veneer with a scalloped edge.

Measure the doors then make a template of the scallop design and calculate the number of rows needed.

Here, the total width of both doors was divided by 10 to give the width of each scallop. To get the height of the scallops, divide the door height by the number of rows you want.

For this project there were 12 rows of scallops and two 100mm wide strips of veneer cut to fit across the base of each door to conceal the white surface area scalloping didn't cover.

Remove the cabinet doors and lay them side by side to attach the scallop rows, checking the half-scallops on the inside edge are aligned.

TIP To seal the veneer doors, apply a water-based polyurethane.



Selleys Kwik Grip Contact Adhesive, about \$28 for 1L. selleys.co.nz



Making a template

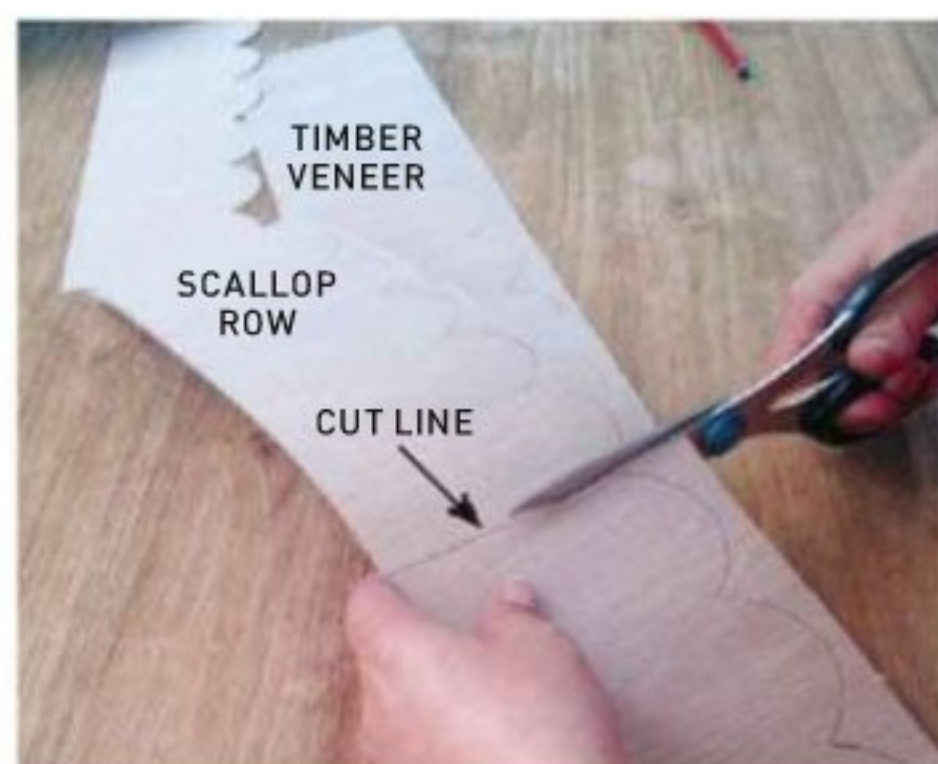
Draw a rectangle on a piece of paper using a marker pen then trace around a drinking glass to make a curved edge at one end, ensuring the diameter of the glass is the same width as the rectangle.

Cut out the paper shape using scissors then position it on one corner of a sheet of timber veneer.

Mark the rectangle with the curved end on the veneer in pencil and cut out with scissors.

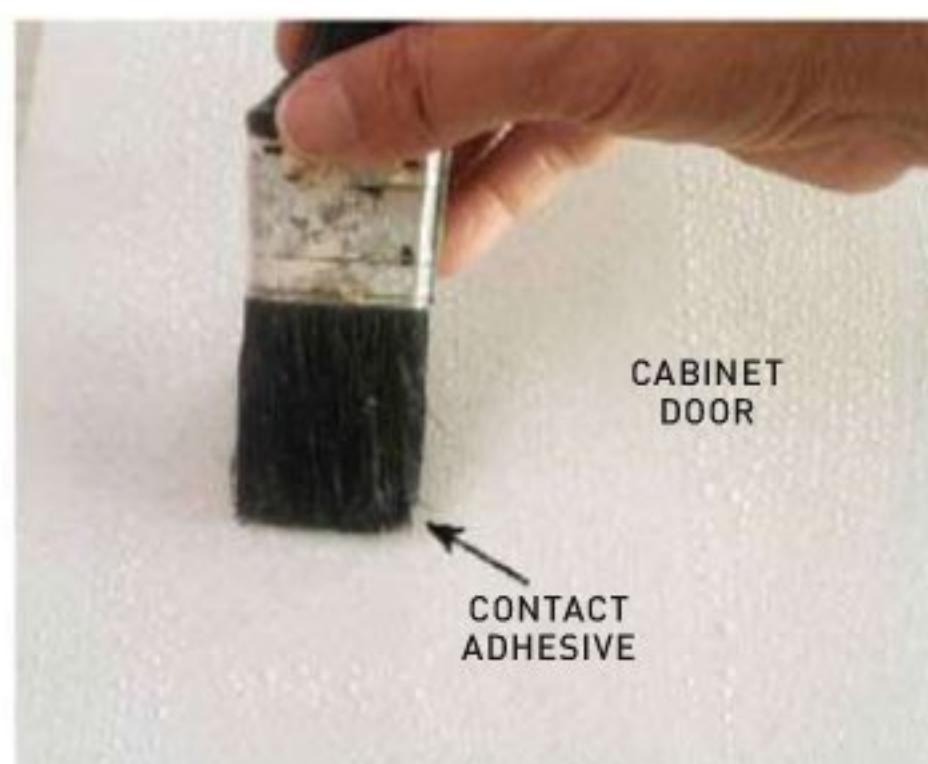
Use the veneer template to mark rows of 12 scalloped rectangles butted up against each other.

TIP Veneer is used for the template as it's thick enough to give a good edge for tracing.



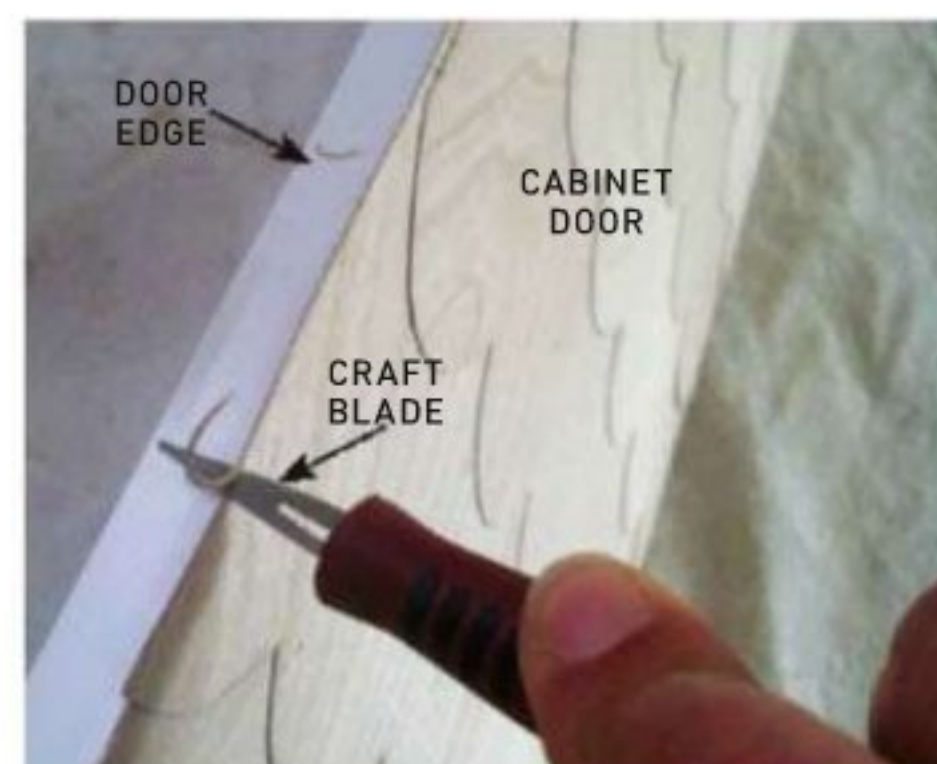
1 Cut the veneer

Use the template to trace the scallop design on lengths of veneer. Cut each strip in half, alternating full and half-scallop ends, cutting around the scallops using a craft blade.



2 Secure the scallops

Apply a 2mm thick coat of contact adhesive to the doors and the scallop rows with a paintbrush and let it go tacky. Attach the scallop rows, starting from the base and overlapping.



3 Trim and finish

Use a rolling pin to go over the doors to remove any air bubbles. Let the adhesive dry, then trim any excess veneer on the door edges with a craft blade and lightly sand to smooth. ➤

Pendant light shade

Give a pendant light a new look by using two embroidery hoops and a small piece of 6mm thick plywood to make a frame for a shade.

A sheet of timber veneer is cut and wrapped around the frame to make a two-tier drum shade then finished with Scandinavian timber oil.

Designed to fit an existing light fitting, the plywood is cut to house the socket. Only use CFLs with this light shade as they produce 75% less heat than incandescent bulbs.

Buy timber embroidery hoops, sized from 125mm in diameter, for \$15 each, from suppliers like The Embroiderer (theembroiderer.co.nz).



Cutting the veneer

Use a tape measure to find the hoop circumference, add 20mm extra for overlap when gluing, then mark and cut a 300mm wide piece of veneer to length for the shade. Cut a 100mm wide strip to the same length.

For straight strips of veneer, cut right through the sheet with a utility knife for the best finish.

Or you can score the marked line then fold it against a straight edge and back on itself.

TIP If you want the grain of the timber veneer to run around the light, cut the long edge in the direction of the grain.

Give a pendant light a new designer shade using plywood and timber veneer.



1 Mark the plywood

To make a top for the pendant light shade for the light socket and socket cover, lay the piece of 6mm thick plywood on a flat surface and position a timber embroidery hoop on top, tracing around the outside edge with a marker pen.



2 Cut the shade top

Clamp the plywood to the work surface and drill a starter hole at any point on the marked outline. Cut out the top of the light shade using a jigsaw, keeping the blade directly on the outline for a top exactly the same size as the hoop.



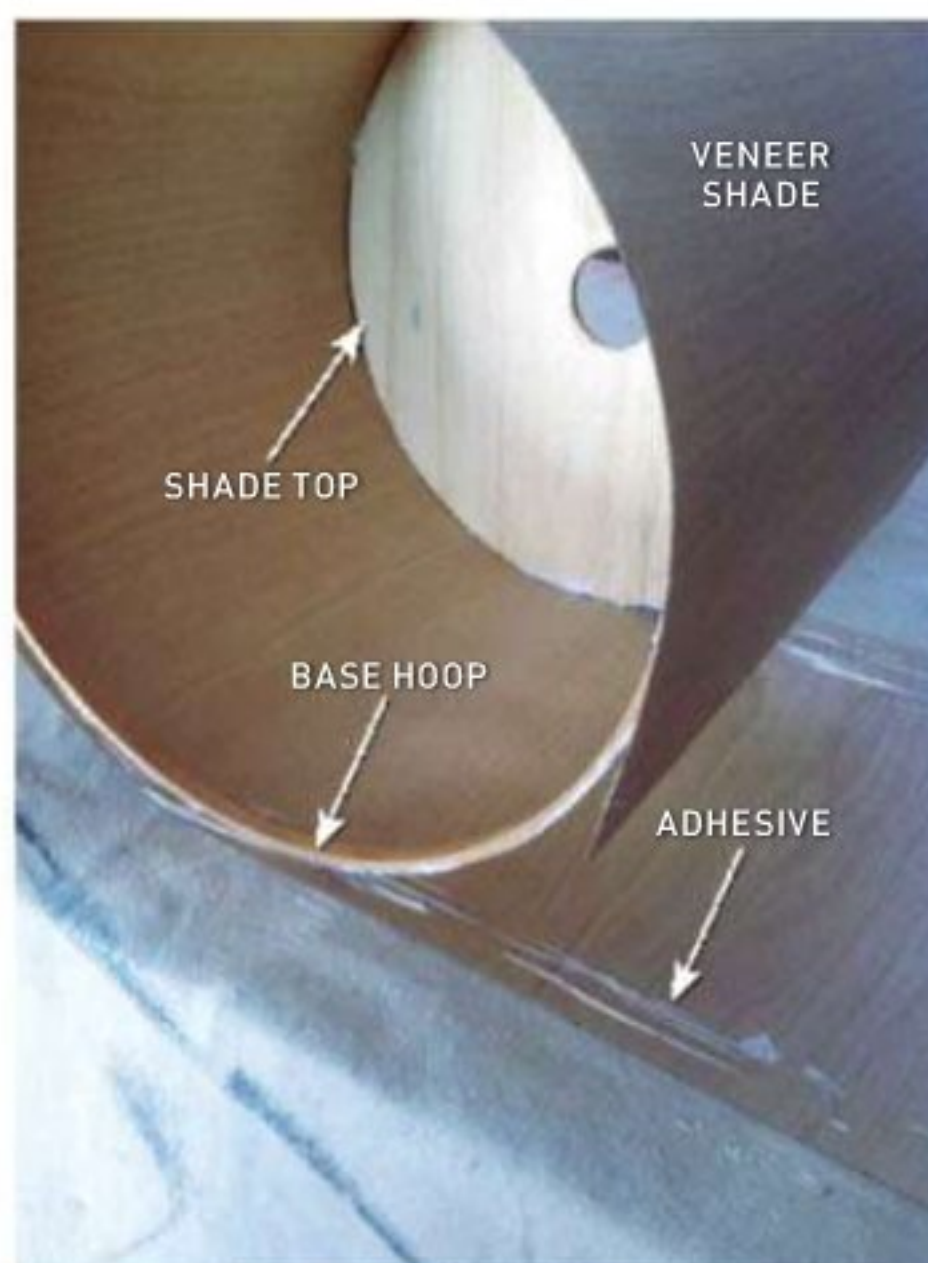
3 Make the light hole

Find and mark the centre point of the shade top then measure the light fitting to cut a hole for it to pass through using a holesaw. Make sure the hole is big enough for the socket to pass through but small enough for the cover to sit against the plywood.



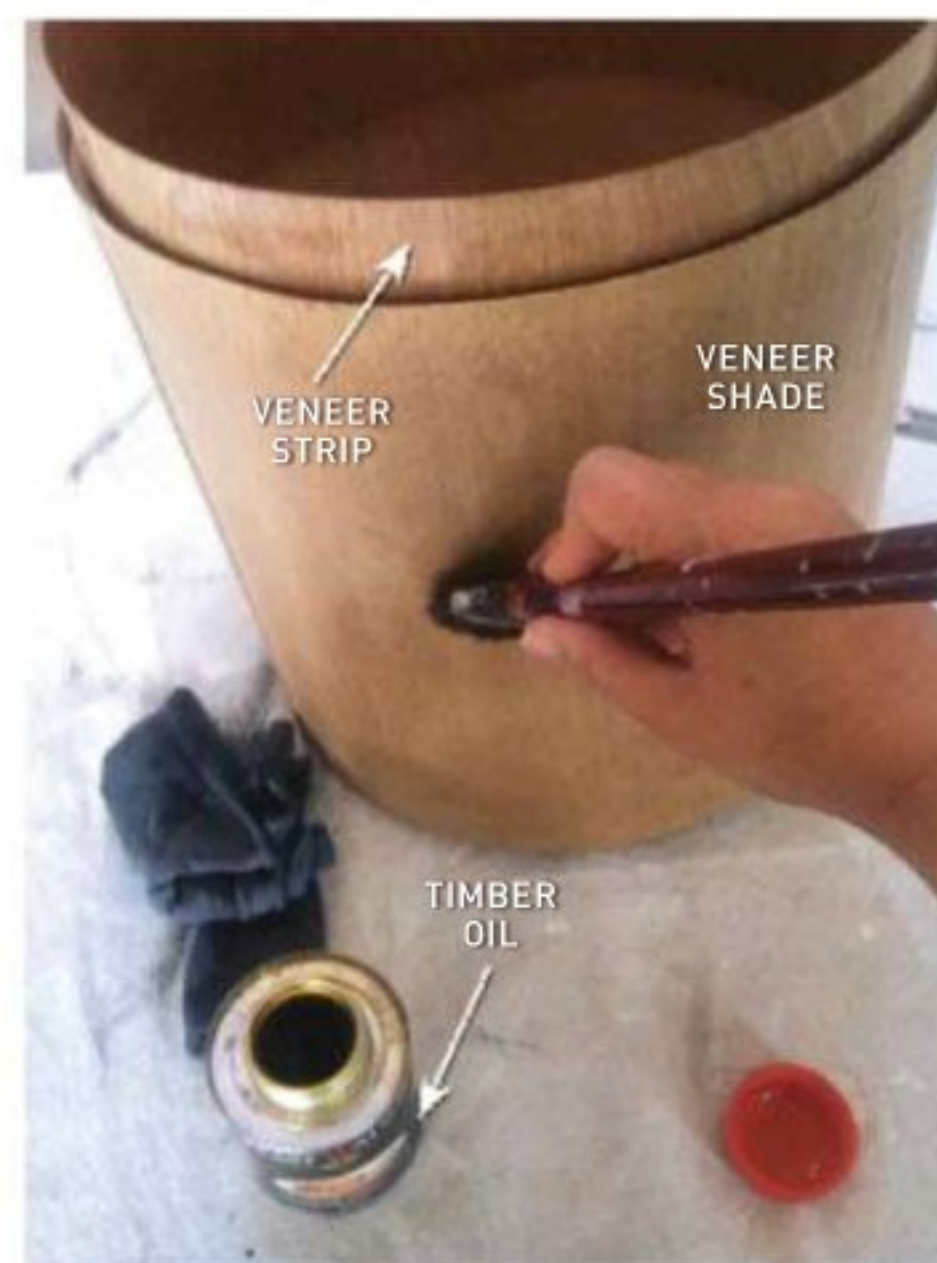
4 Apply the adhesive

Use a paintbrush to apply contact adhesive to the edge of the shade top and the inner edge of an embroidery hoop, leave for 15 minutes to go tacky then slot the hoop over the ply. Apply adhesive to the outer hoop edges and 20mm from the veneer long edges.



5 Secure the veneer

Position the shade top and base hoop at one end of the veneer shade and roll along the glue line. Apply adhesive to the base hoop inner edge and the top outer edge of the veneer strip and let it go tacky then secure, ensuring both shade seams line up.



6 Finish the light shade

Peg the shade on the seam until the adhesive dries then apply two coats of Scandinavian timber oil to the veneer using a paintbrush. Leave to dry then attach the light fitting to hang the pendant shade.

TIP Stain the veneer before oiling.

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Home maintenance

Stay on top of common repairs around the house to save time and money down the track

WORDS STEPHEN CALLOW AND ALISON WRIGHT

Every home needs maintaining to keep it in good repair, but often we don't notice small problems until they turn into big ones.

If a fault is overlooked, it may lead to major structural damage that costs thousands to fix, with huge disruptions while the work is carried out.

Inspect your home once a year as though you were a potential buyer, using our guide to identify telltale signs.

Building basics

The majority of homes are made primarily of timber and brick.

TIMBER can be damaged by sunlight, which causes it to dry and shrink, or water, which causes it to rot. Untreated timber shouldn't be installed in contact with the ground or left in direct sun.

BRICK is more weather-resistant, but it's permeable and can leach water from the ground if not properly dampcoursed. This will cause damp inside the home. ➤



If not treated, rising damp may cause structural damage to a wall.



2 Wet & dry rot

Timber that has black mould is a sign of wet rot, while white or orange mould indicates dry rot. Both will cause timber to be soft to the touch and crumbly when dry.

CAUSE Wet and dry rot are caused by moisture and are generally a result of an inadequate paint layer or incorrect timber selection.

Dry rot spreads more rapidly than wet rot and is more destructive, but both are easy to treat if caught early.

SOLUTION First, seal any source of moisture penetration and then increase subfloor ventilation using a fan and air vents.

Scrape away surface fungus and spray the timber with a fungicide two or three times over several days.

Once dry, treat the timber with wood hardener. For dry rot, replace any affected joists.

If the timber seems soft or the spread is significant, there will probably be structural damage and a building surveyor should be called in for advice.



Earl's Wood Hardener, about \$97 for 1L. jacjay.co.nz

1 Rising damp

Soft brickwork and mortar, bubbling paint, and damp and mouldy internal walls are signs of rising damp. A musty, dank odour may also be present.

CAUSE Rising damp occurs if there is a damaged or inadequate dampcourse. This is the impermeable layer of metal or plastic that is installed below the floor level of an external brick wall.

Renovated concrete patios are often built above the dampcourse line and can contribute to rising damp. It is quite difficult to fix and the dampcourse will need replacing.

SOLUTION Use an anti-fungal spray on visible mould and increase ventilation to the affected rooms until the work's done.

Boost subfloor ventilation to reduce the chance of a recurrence.

If left unchecked, toxic black mould will bloom, and interior lime plaster can crumble and fall off. In the long term, it may damage the wall's structure.

In concrete walls, steel reinforcing within may rust and expand, causing cracks.

Selleys Rapid Mould Killer, \$8 for 500ml. selleys.co.nz



3 Borer

Small holes on the surface of timber and piles of fine sawdust are signs that you may have borer in your house. They attack untreated and damp timber, eventually weakening it.

The odds are high that any infestation will be bigger than it first appears because borer tend to attack from inside the timber.

CAUSE New Zealand has seven species of borer, the most prevalent being the common house borer.

The females lay up to 100 eggs in old borer holes or on bare timber.

The eggs take about a month to hatch and the larvae burrow into the timber where they remain, munching away for up to four years.

They then pupate before boring their way out of the timber, creating those telltale holes. The adults are airborne from November to March, mating before the cycle starts again.

SOLUTION Some timber, such as macrocarpa and cedar, is naturally resistant to borer attack.

Borer-infested timber can be treated, but if it's badly weakened it should be strengthened or, in severe cases, completely replaced.

The best long-term treatment is a surface application of an insecticide or preservative.

Airborne treatments such as bombs or misting will only kill the adults on the wing and won't stop the larvae from eating away at the inside of the timber.

A large-scale infestation should be treated by a pest control professional.



Kiwicare No Borer Concentrate, \$50 for 500ml. kiwicare.co.nz



Use an insecticide to deal with a borer infestation.

4 Defective wiring

Wiring systems that use rewireable ceramic fuses and have ageing wiring can be dangerous and a potential fire hazard.

CAUSE Old houses are most likely to have outdated wiring if the fuse box hasn't been replaced in recent years.

Old fuse boxes with ceramic fuses, no circuit breakers and no Residual Current Device (RCD) don't comply with New Zealand safety standards.

Wires protruding from a ceramic fuse holder are a significant shock hazard and very dangerous. They are sometimes incorrectly loaded with over-rated wire, such as when a 15amp wire is fitted to a 5amp fuse holder.

Loose electrical terminals create heat and pose a serious fire risk.



SOLUTION Fuse boxes should be fitted with miniature circuit breakers (MCBs) and an RCD, which detects any change in the electricity flow and disconnects the circuit if there's an imbalance.

RCDs are compulsory in all new homes and renovations. Check yours is in working order by pressing the button that says 'test'. This will power off the entire house.

If you don't have an RCD, then your wiring is likely to be out of date and dangerous, so consult an electrician for a quote. ➤



Deta 20amp Miniature Circuit Breaker, about \$7, from Bunnings.



If a gutter is blocked with debris, it won't be able to perform as designed.

Tackling outdoor jobs

Outside structures are exposed to the elements and need inspecting and maintaining to prevent deterioration.

IVY ON WALLS can look lovely but may damage the brickwork and mortar. If left unchecked, it will put strong roots into the masonry, reducing its stability.

Take care when removing it and test a section to see how much damage there is. Cut off the leaves and let the rootlets wither. It may be best to leave the ivy if removing it will cause more problems.

TIMBER such as fascias, weatherboard panels, windows and doors should be repainted or refinished every five years, especially if it isn't under the eaves and is exposed to direct light and rain.

If timber isn't properly treated, water will penetrate and cause it to rot. A five-yearly paint job is much less expensive than new windows.

DECK SUPPORTS need to be checked to see if they're spongy to the touch. They may not get a chance to dry out for months at a time, so long-term degradation is inevitable.

To ensure a long-lasting deck, the timber shouldn't be in contact with soil unless it is treated to an H4 level. Use steel brackets to support posts so they don't suck up moisture.

Soil, leaves and other vegetation tend to build up underneath a deck, and must be cleared regularly.



5 Roofs & gutters

Water dripping into the home during heavy rain usually signifies a leaking roof or an overflowing gutter.

CAUSE Poorly maintained gutters and downpipes are the main cause of all kinds of water damage in the home.

If a gutter is blocked, water will simply flow over the top into the eaves during a downpour, then run down the exterior walls, finding easy access points to the interior.

SOLUTION Look at your roof from a distance, checking for loose tiles or anything that appears broken.

Using the right equipment, climb onto the roof to check that the flashing around chimneys, ventilation pipes and skylights isn't loose or missing.

On a tiled roof, look for broken or slipped tiles and ensure the pointing is intact. On a corrugated iron roof, look for corrosion on screw heads or sheets.

Clear unguarded gutters every three months and inspect those with steel mesh guards occasionally.

Direct water collected on the roof away from the structure and don't let it pool on the ground around the house.



GumLeaf Steel Mesh Gutter Guard, about \$23 for 1200 x 200mm. gumleaf.co.nz



Make sure paved areas have adequate drainage.

6 Subsidence

Cracks in walls are a sign of shifting foundations, and are commonly related to the type of subsoil on which they're laid.

CAUSE Reactive soil like clay expands when wet and contracts when dry. So in a drought, the soil may shrink, undermining the stability of the foundations.

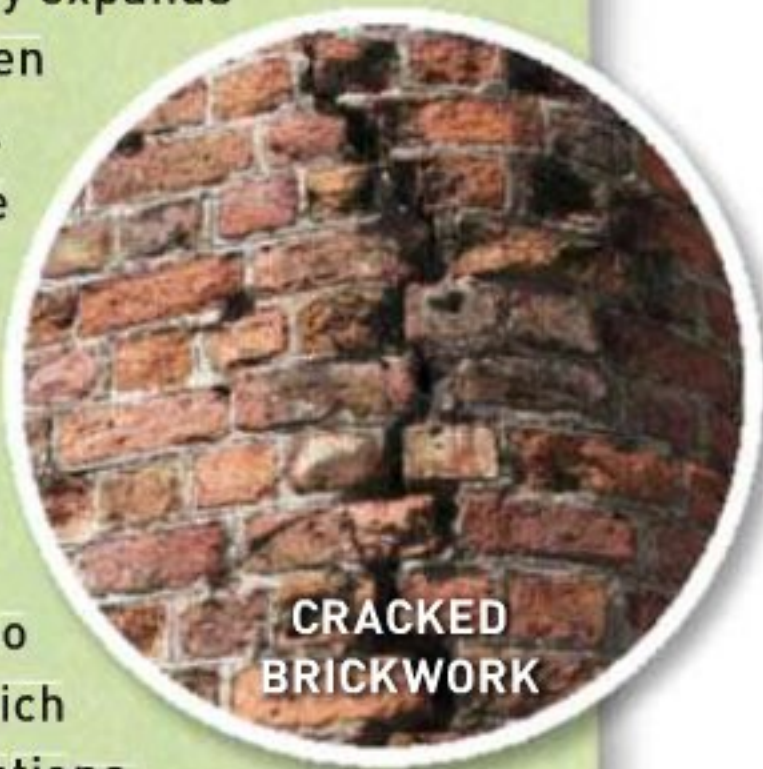
Tree roots also suck moisture from the soil, worsening the problem.

Leaking subterranean pipes cause soil to expand too much or lead to erosion, which opens up voids in the foundations.

SOLUTION Concrete blocks the soil from rain and evaporation, so on clay, replace paths and patios with garden beds. Watering the plants during dry spells will help the subsoil maintain a stable amount of moisture.

Ensure patios, paving and roofs have good drainage and there are no dripping outdoor taps. Have a plumber repair any leaking underground pipes.

All properties will settle to some extent, so small cracks aren't a big deal, but big ones might indicate that the house requires underpinning. Call in a builder for a full assessment.



CRACKED BRICKWORK



Fix-A-Tap Dexine Tap Washers, about \$3 for four, from Bunnings.



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Speed clean

Beat the clock with cost-effective grime busters for the whole home

WORDS DANIEL BUTKOVICH PICTURES STUART SCOTT STYLING ARTEMIS GOUROS

Cleaning is one household chore most of us put off doing until we absolutely have to because it's time-consuming and hard work.

But getting the house clean doesn't have to take hours on the weekend and a lot of elbow grease. If you work room by room and put in a bit of

effort more frequently, then your place can stay in good shape.

The trick is to choose the right products for each surface and buy multipurpose tools to save both time and money. Plus, take steps to prevent dirt and odours and enjoy a mess-free home for longer. ➤



REMOVE OVEN GRIME and cut through grease without leaving residue using Simple Green Oven and Microwave Foaming Cleaner, \$8 for 591ml. horticom.co.nz

POLISH STEEL APPLIANCES and remove fingermarks, smears or spatters with Hillmark Steel Klean Stainless Steel Cleaner, about \$7 for 250ml. hillmark.com.au

SWEEP AND WASH FLOORS with a swivel-head mop that has a dry pad, a damp pad and a drying pad like the Oates Enviro Triple Action Flat Mop, \$33. icbclean.co.nz

KITCHEN

THICK GREASE on splashbacks is tough to shift with regular kitchen cleaners. Remove sticky goo and residue with De-Solv-It, \$17 for 300ml. harco.co.nz



KITCHEN CUPBOARDS attract fingermarks and food stains that are hard to remove. Try the Mr Clean Eraser Pad, \$8 for four. sims-distributing.co.nz

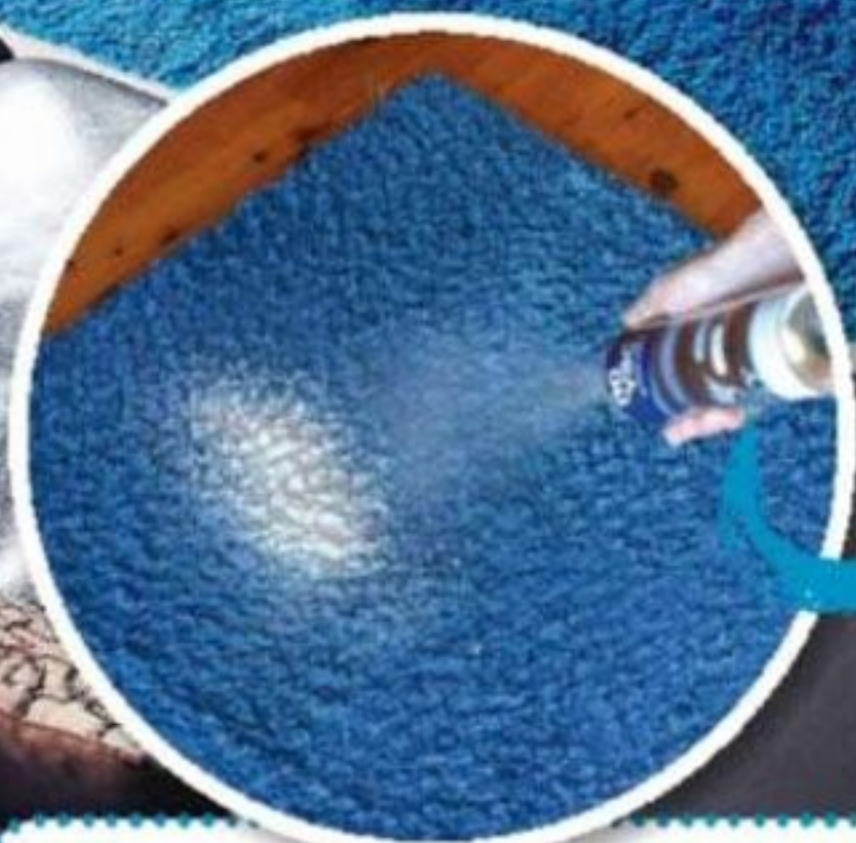
CLEAN STONE SURFACES without causing damage by using a pH-neutral cleaner like Hillmark Stone Kleen & Protect, \$10 for 375ml. hillmark.com.au



LIVING ROOM



WIPE THE TV using a dry Sabco Window & Screen Microfibre Glass Cloth, \$8 for two, to safely remove dust and fingermarks. sims-distributing.co.nz



BANISH ODOURS from carpet and rugs with No Vac, \$14 for 500ml, a foaming spray that penetrates deep to kill bacteria but doesn't need vacuuming. eproducts.co.nz

LEATHER FURNITURE needs special care, as regular cleaners will cause discolouration and damage. Glitz Leather Cleaner, \$12 for 500ml, also preserves, from Bunnings.



Dusting tricky places



Use a duster with a small head for shutters and blinds.

Dust quickly collects on horizontal surfaces, triggering allergies and attracting dust mites.

CLEAN SHUTTERS and blinds using a duster that fits into tight spaces and traps dirt like the Sabco Microfingers Mini Duster, \$8. sims-distributing.co.nz

REACH CABINETS and other high places using a duster with a flexible head and extendable handle.

SWEEP RUGS and carpets with an electrostatic broom to trap particles and fluff that the average vacuum cleaner can't suck up. It can also be used on tiles and glass.



Oates Electrostatic Blade Broom, \$20. icbclean.co.nz

Raven Perfect Telescopic Duster, \$10. raven.co.nz



COMPLETE Stainless Steel Care

SteelKleen Stainless Steel Cleaner & Repellent

Removes fingerprints, smears, waterspots and splatters from stainless steel

Leaves behind a protective layer that actually repels new marks!

Ideal for all stainless steel appliances and surfaces including fridges, ovens and microwave fronts, dishwashers, rangehoods, splashbacks and more!



Hillmark SteelKleen is recommended by leading appliance manufacturers



For more information visit
www.hillmark.com.au

DINING ROOM



SCRUB THE WALLS to get rid of marks made by food-covered or grubby hands without damaging the paint using Selleys Sugar Soap Wipes, \$8 for 25. selleys.co.nz



CLEAN A KEYBOARD without damaging the electronics, using a blast of air from the 3-IN-ONE Professional Air Duster, about \$25 for 350g. eproducts.co.nz



TIMBER FURNITURE is easily damaged by chemicals and spills. Revive and protect it with Glitz Furniture Polish, \$7 for 250ml, from Bunnings.



Preventing spills and odours



Protect upholstery to repel liquid and prevent stains.

They say prevention is better than a cure, and that rings especially true when it comes to cleaning. **STOP SPILLS** from penetrating into upholstery and causing stains by applying Scotchgard Fabric Protector, \$10 for 283g. 3mnz.co.nz **AVOID SMELLS** in your kitchen bin by adding a garbage deodoriser. **DISCOURAGE MOULD** and mildew by positioning disposable moisture absorbers in damp areas. **PREVENT GRIME** from building up in the wheelie bin by spraying it with a specially formulated cleaner.



Long Life Garbage Pals, \$4, from Bunnings.



DampRid Moisture Absorber, about \$7 for 300g, from Bunnings.



Simple Green Wheelie Bin Cleaner & Deodoriser, \$18 for 946ml. simplegreen.co.nz

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Raven bristles, clean more effectively with less effort.



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REMOVE SOAP SCUM on glass shower screens by scrubbing it while wet then drying, using the Raven Bathroom Squeegee, about \$7. raven.co.nz

TOUGH STAINS in the bathroom can be caused by calcium deposits, lime scale or rust. To get them out, use 30 Seconds, \$15 for 1L. 30seconds.co.nz



SHINE A MIRROR with microfibre cloths to wipe on glass cleaner, then buff it dry. Try Morgan Microfibre Cleaning Cloths, about \$15 for 20, from Bunnings.

KILL BACTERIA and beat odours with a two-in-one surface spray disinfectant and deodoriser. Try Oomph Spray Disinfectant, \$8 for 300g, from Bunnings.



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cleans best!

NEW



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The new Slide Wringer Flat Mop from Oates has delivered a convenient and superior cleaning experience. It combines the efficiency of a microfibre pad with a new slider mechanism to easily extract the water. You'll find it's easy to use, hygienic and best of all, hands-free.

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Ideal for use on tiles, timber and linoleum the Slide Wringer Flat Mop is a joy to use for fast and efficient cleaning.

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CLEAN THE BARBIE in just a few minutes without harsh chemicals, cutting through grease using Selley's BBQ Tough Wipes, \$6 for 12. selleys.co.nz



EXCESS GREASE in a barbecue drip tray forms a thick layer that can cause flare-ups and is hard to remove. Soak it up with BBQ Buddy Natural Fat Absorber, \$5 for 2kg. mayohardware.co.nz

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Powerful. Full size.
Now cordless.



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The new Vax Air Cordless uses powerful TriSuction technology to lift and remove deep down embedded dirt. Lightweight and manoeuvrable, it can swivel with a flick of the wrist. And powered by two LithiumLife batteries, the Air Cordless averages an impressive 50 minutes of fade free run time across your hard floors and carpets.

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse

LithiumLife

CAR EXTERIOR

CLEAN AND POLISH

the car in one go to save time and avoid buying two separate products with Armor All Wash & Wax, \$11 for 1L. armorall.com.au



SOAK UP MOISTURE for a shiny and streak-free paint finish with the Mr Clean Sparkle Synthetic Chamois Cloth, \$10 for three. sims-distributing.co.nz

HANDS GET DIRTY

pumping tyres and petrol, so keep a pack of Mr Gorilla Extra Tough Wipes, \$10 for 50, in the boot or glove box. holdfast.co.nz



CAR INTERIOR



WIPE THE DASH with Armor All Protectant Wipes, \$20 for 50, to clean and shine all plastic and leather, and protect against UV damage. armorall.com.au

REMOVE STAINS and get the car interior looking like new with Selleys Turtle Wax Oxy Power Out! Carpet & Upholstery Cleaner, about \$17 for 510g. selleys.co.nz



CLEAN THE CARPET without the hassle of lugging the vacuum cleaner outside using the Black & Decker 7.2V DustBuster, \$80. blackanddecker.co.nz



DIY green cleaner recipes ▼



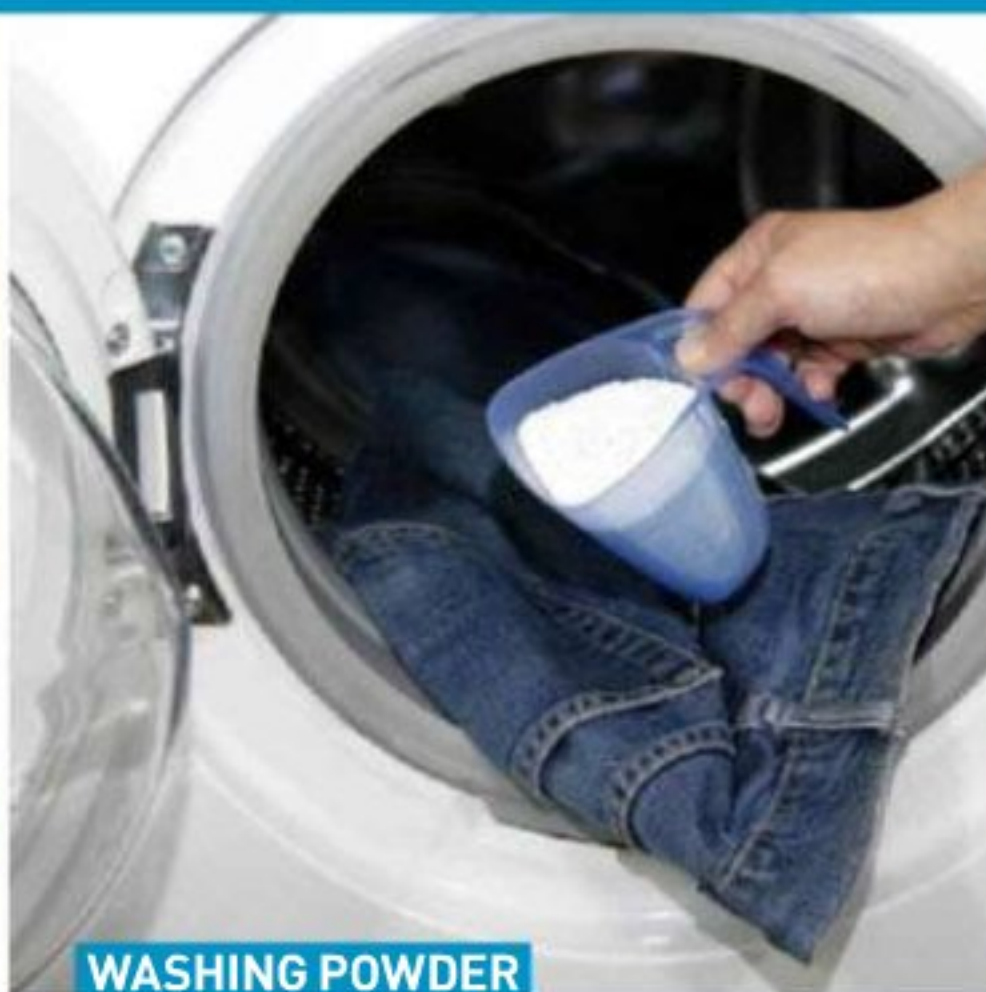
ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER

INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon dishwashing liquid
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 drops eucalyptus oil

MAKE Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake, then allow to settle and top with water.

USE Spray on surfaces, then wipe off with a clean cloth. For tough stains, leave for one minute before wiping.



WASHING POWDER

INGREDIENTS

- 1 bar laundry soap
- ½ cup washing soda
- ½ cup borax
- 2 drops lavender oil

MAKE Grate the bar of soap, then combine with washing soda and borax in a jar. Add the lavender oil and stir with a spoon until combined.

USE Add 1 tablespoon to light loads or 2 tablespoons to very soiled loads.



OVEN CLEANER

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup baking soda
- 2 teaspoons salt

MAKE Combine the ingredients in a small bowl, then slowly add water until the mixture forms a paste. Allow to set for five minutes.

USE Apply to the oven walls with a sponge, then scrub to remove grime. Do not use this mixture on the heating elements.



GLASS CLEANER

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups water
- ½ cup white vinegar
- ¼ cup isopropyl alcohol
- 2 drops orange oil

MAKE Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake.

USE Spray onto a microfibre cloth and wipe over glass surfaces, then buff with the dry side of the cloth.



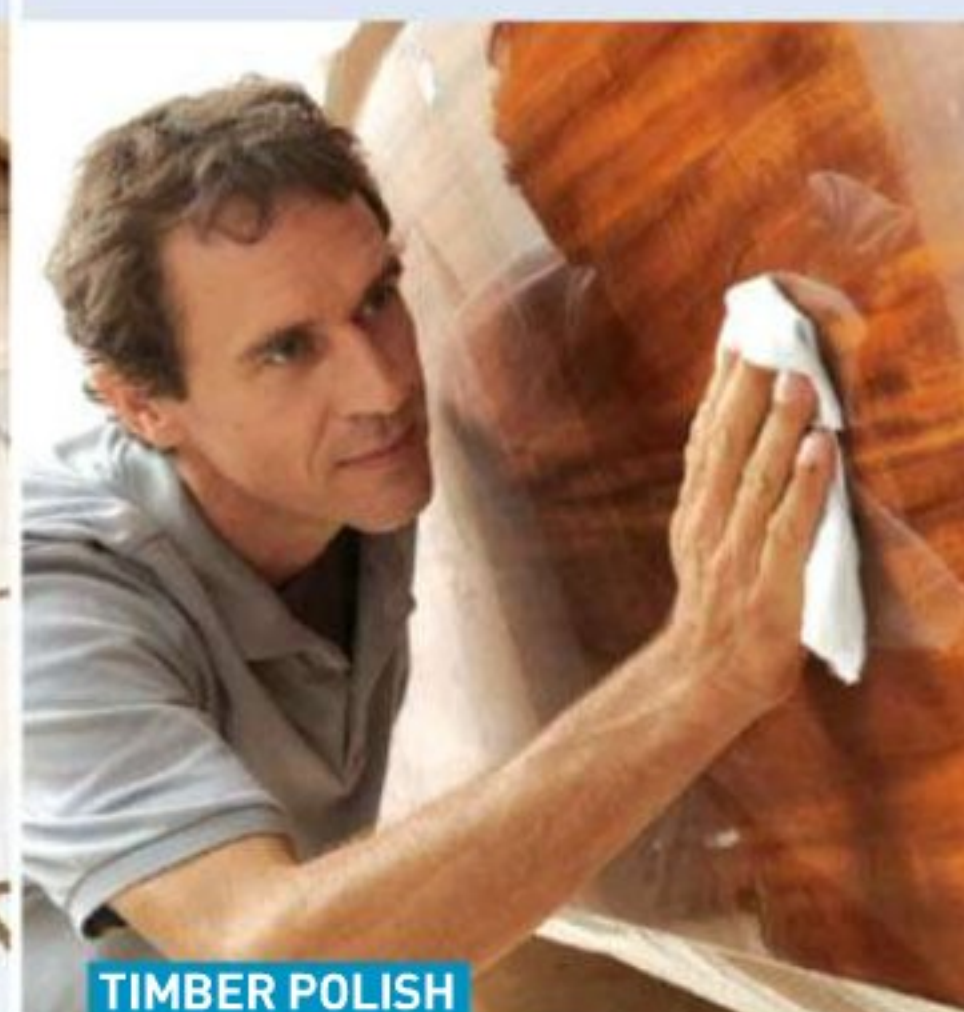
MOULD KILLER

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup borax
- ½ cup vinegar

MAKE Combine the ingredients in a small bowl and mix to form a paste.

USE Apply to mould or mildew on tiles using a sponge, then scrub off with a stiff-bristled brush. For tough mould or mildew, leave the paste for an hour before scrubbing off.



TIMBER POLISH

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup olive oil
- ¼ cup white vinegar

MAKE Combine the ingredients in a spray bottle and shake.

USE Spray onto a soft cloth and wipe onto timber surfaces in the direction of the grain. For detailed areas, work it in with a soft-bristled brush. Buff with a soft, dry cloth until shiny.

Time-saving tips and techniques



■ **ASSEMBLE A CADDY** of commonly used cleaners and tools so they are ready to go. Store them in a bucket with a handle for portability.

■ **TACKLE BIG JOBS** while you are motivated to get them out of the way. If you run out of time, small jobs are easier to come back to.

■ **DRY-DUST** before applying any liquid cleaning solutions, so that airborne particles don't cling to wet surfaces.

■ **WASH WINDOWS** on a cloudy day to minimise streaking. Cleaning solutions will dry out too fast on sunny days, leaving marks behind.

■ **WORK FROM THE TOP** down, dusting before sweeping and vacuuming so you won't have to cover the same area twice.

■ **DRY SHOWER SCREENS** after use to minimise soap scum build-up, prevent the glass becoming etched and avoid excess scrubbing.

■ **USE A DOORMAT** to leave dirt at the door, reducing the amount of time spent sweeping and vacuuming while keeping floors scratch-free.

■ **SET A DEADLINE** for your list of tasks. This will keep you on the move and make the job less daunting, as you know you have a time limit.



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Sink Mixer SPN01
All Pressures
Min. Pressure 35kpa
RRP\$189

*European influence;
NZ design*



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- 🐾 Rescue
- 🐾 Rehabilitate
- 🐾 Shelter and re-home
- 🐾 Seek justice

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email guardians@sPCA.org.nz
or phone 09 256 7307

WELDING AND SOLDERING TOOLS

Tack, weld, braze and solder a variety of materials with these heat-generating tools

*SOME LIKE IT HOT

Ever paid for repairs to metalwork, seen how easy it looked and thought you could have done it yourself?

'Well, now is the time to learn how. Stick welders and gasless MIG units have never been more

affordable, ranging in price from \$100 to \$500 for a unit,' says *Handyman* Technical editor Frank Gardner.

Soldering irons can also greatly expand your DIY repertoire, whether you're

rewiring an electric guitar or creating wood-burning artwork.

'A blowtorch is another versatile tool that's great to have on hand, and some models can be just as useful in the kitchen as they are in the workshop,' says Frank.



WELDER



SOLDERING IRON



BLOWTORCH

MELTING MOMENTS

Tools that generate sufficiently intense heat to melt metal are useful for many DIY tasks, such as assembling pipework and gates, or repairing electronics. **WELDING** is a fabrication process that joins metals by melting the workpieces and a filler into a weld pool of molten material that cools to form a very strong joint. The three main types suitable for

DIY projects are arc, MIG and inverter welders. **SOLDERING TOOLS** are as varied as the applications of this technique. Similar to welding, it involves melting a filler alloy to join metal objects, but much lower temperatures are used.

This means that only the filler, called solder, melts into the joint, so the workpieces can subsequently be separated. ➤

WELDING TOOLS

Choose an affordable and easy-to-use welding rig from one of the three categories available for DIY and develop a useful new skill that will enable you to make repairs to metal assemblies and build steel projects without having to outsource.

*THE BASICS OF ARC WELDING

Joining metals requires the intense heat produced by an electric arc established between the metal being joined and an electrode.

A welding rod is used as the electrode for stick welding, and wire for metal inert gas (MIG) welding.

Electricity for the arc is provided by a power supply and the electrode conducts the current, melting into a weld pool to create a welded joint.

To prevent hot metal reacting with air and forming compounds that weaken the joint, welding rods have a covering that provides a shielding gas at the point of contact as well as slag to cover the fresh weld.

For MIG welding, an externally supplied gas shields the weld. In gasless units, the job is done with flux-cored welding wire instead.

Tungsten inert gas (TIG) welding uses a shielding gas, with a tungsten electrode to strike the arc and a filler material fed separately by hand into the weld pool.

Not all metals are suitable for welding DIY. One good indication of workability is whether a magnet will attach to the metal, but cast iron is an exception, as it attracts magnets but is very problematic to weld.



Develop a new skill so you can build steel projects DIY.

JARGON BUSTER

Discover the origins of slag and learn why flux is important with our handy guide to welding lingo.

FLUX-CORED WIRE is used with a gasless MIG welder. A metal sheath surrounds a flux core that provides the gas shield to the weld pool during welding.

SLAG is a crust created during stick welding to protect the weld

metal from atmospheric contaminants as it solidifies. It is chipped off using a welder's hammer after cooling.

TACK-WELDING involves making a quick partial weld to hold parts of a metal assembly in alignment before the stronger finishing welds are completed.

WELDING RODS or electrodes are used with a stick welder for jobs involving mild steel and galvanised steel. There

are also rods available for braze welding copper, as well as brass, bronze, and other alloys.

WELDER'S FLASH is an eye condition that is usually temporary but causes extreme discomfort. It's a type of eye burn resulting from brief but unprotected exposure to the bright light of the welding arc that is very high in UV.

*WORKSHOP ESSENTIALS

Regardless of whether you choose a traditional stick welder or gasless MIG model, you will need specialised safety gear and other accessories.

Wear fire-resistant clothing with long sleeves, like coveralls, when welding, as well as sturdy boots and always work in a well-ventilated space.



WELDCORP,
\$399



WELDCORP,
\$10

Chipping hammer to remove slag.



GARDWELL,
ABOUT \$14

Gloves for hand and arm protection.



WELDCORP,
\$119

Welding trolley to move heavy welder around workshop.



OZITO,
\$23

Helmet to protect eyes from injury.

WELDING SYSTEMS

Choose an old-school arc welder that uses metal electrode rods, a beginner-friendly MIG model or the latest in versatile inverter welding technology to make strong, permanent bonds between steel workpieces.



STICK WELDING

Using an electric arc to melt the workpieces and electrode rod, this type of welder tends to take longer to master because of the practice needed, but it works better on dirty or rusty surfaces.



MIG WELDING

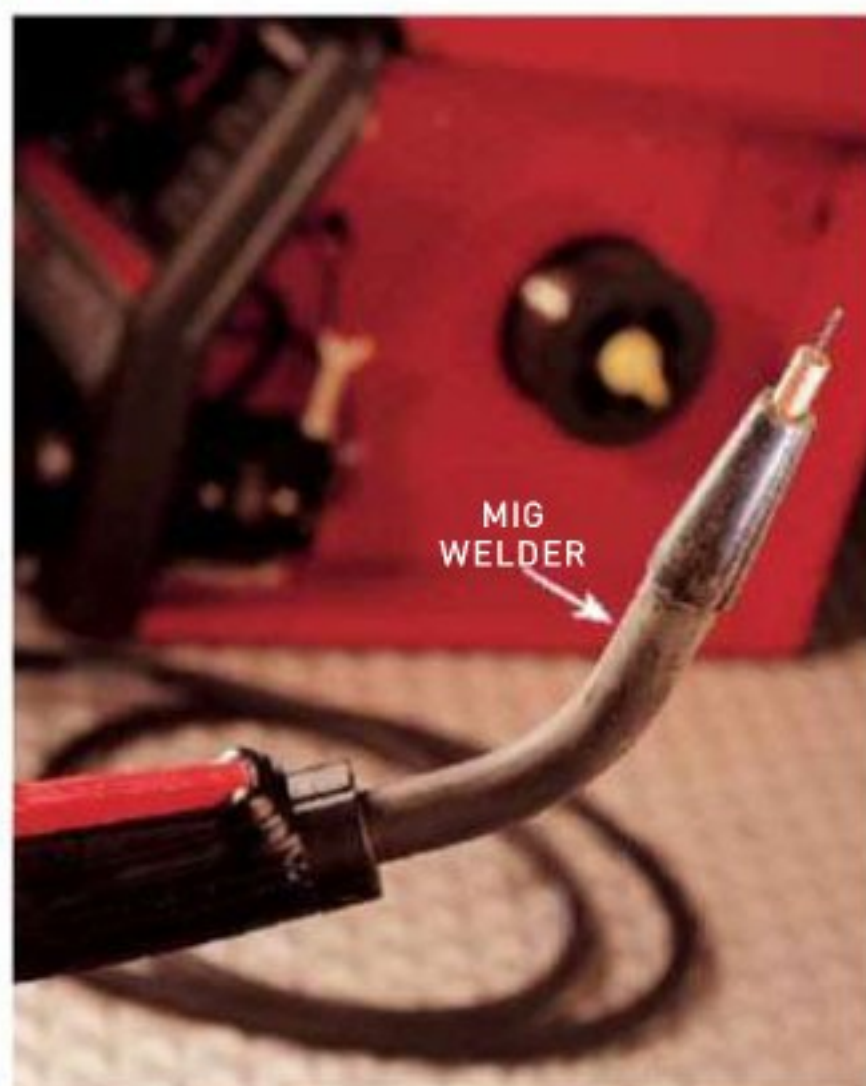
This requires less voltage than stick welding, meaning it tends to be safer. A motor is used to feed the wire to the weld, simplifying the process. MIG units can use a shielding gas or have a design that uses hollow wire filled with flux.



DC INVERTER WELDING

Inverter welders are smaller than their traditional counterparts. The arc is easy to start and they typically feature digital current control. Some multipurpose inverters can be used for both stick and TIG welding. ➤

*HOW TO WELD



1. KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT

Whether stick or MIG welding, read the instructions on the unit. Know how to adjust the settings to suit the job, then practice. It takes four to six hours to feel comfortable with the tools. Learn how to hold the gun at the correct angle and how to move it to produce a solid weld.



2. CHECK THE METAL

Use a magnet to test the metal. If it attaches itself, then metal can usually be welded. Another test is to nick the metal using a file. If it's easy to nick, it will also be easy to weld.

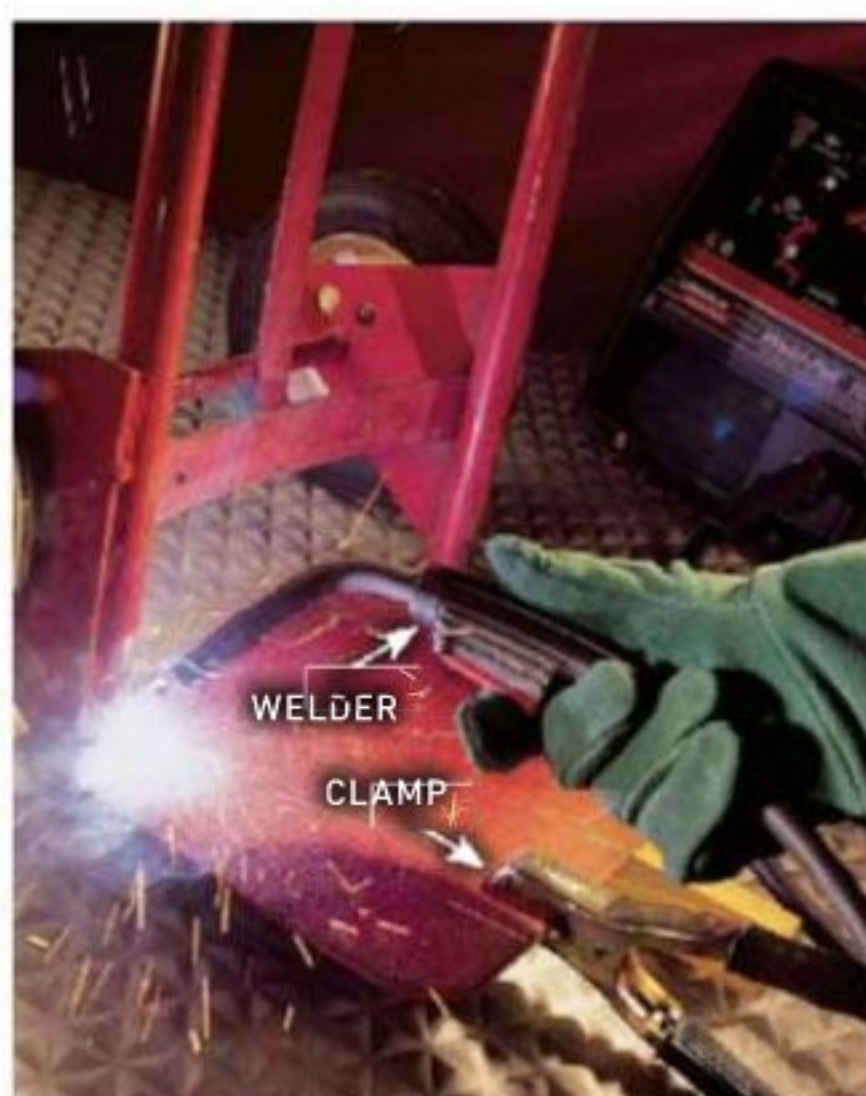
TIP Specialised techniques are required for welding hardened steel, so it's not worth attempting DIY.



3. CLEAN THE WELD AREA

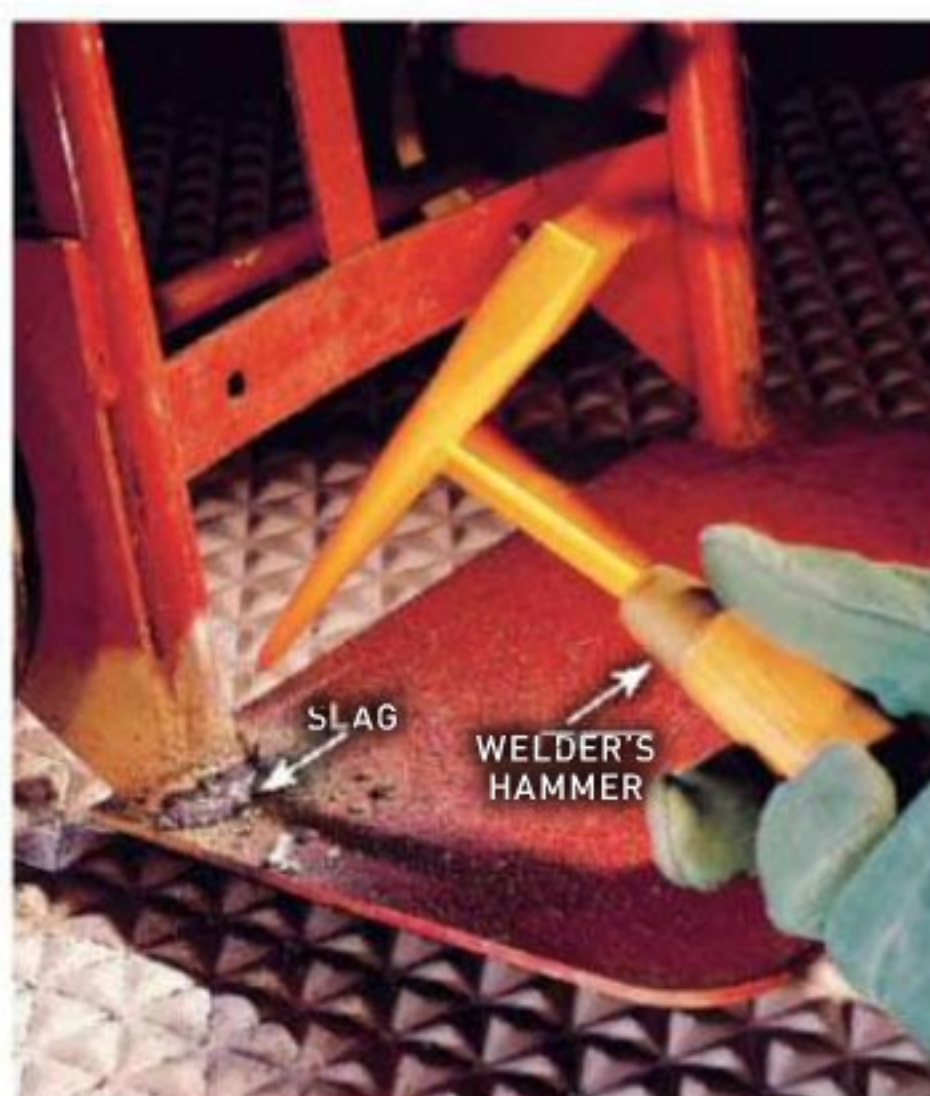
Using a wire brush, clean the metal surface to remove any paint, dirt, oil or other contaminants. The cleaner the surface is, the easier the welding process will be.

TIP For a faster job, try fitting a wire brush attachment to a power drill to clean up the metal surface.



4. ATTACH THE WORK CLAMP

Secure the work clamp to the metal surface, as close as possible to the weld area without impeding visibility or movement. There should be a loud snapping or crackling sound as you weld if the electricity is being conducted effectively. If there isn't, stop and recheck clamp contact.



5. REMOVE THE SLAG

Once the welding job is complete, the joint may be encrusted with slag, which can be chipped off using a welder's hammer. Clean up the area with a wire brush, then repaint to protect against corrosion.

TIP MIG welding with a shielding gas does not leave a slag coating.



SAFE WELDING

The welding arc's brilliant light includes ultraviolet and infrared rays that can cause permanent damage to unprotected eyes.

It also produces smoke and fumes, so work in a ventilated area and avoid leaning over the work so you don't inhale them.

Always wear a welding helmet with a dark lens and long, leather gloves. Keep flammable material away from the work area and have a fire extinguisher on hand.

SOLDERING TOOLS

Suitable for applications ranging from plumbing to electronics and even artwork, soldering irons and blowtorches are available in a wide variety of designs and power outputs, and compatible with a number of accessories.

*SOLDER ON

Soldering involves joining metal objects by making them hotter than the melting point of a filler alloy.

The alloy, called solder, is then applied to the metal, where it melts and is drawn in between them.

Traditional solder comprises 63% lead and 37% tin, and melts at exactly 183°C. A different alloy that melts at a higher temperature and does not contain lead is used for soldering water pipes.

Brazing is essentially the same process as soldering, except using filler made from metals with higher melting points, like silver or brass. It is commonly used for industrial tasks such as radiator repair.

At the DIY end of the spectrum, brazing using a silver-based alloy, which melts at or over 450°C, is a popular technique for creating handmade jewellery. This is often

BERNZOMATIC,
\$19



Lead-free solder for strong joints.

JAYCAR,
\$9



Heat sink to keep high temperatures localised.



RACO,
ABOUT \$26

Hobby vice to hold materials steady.

WELLER,
\$12



Desoldering pump to make corrections.

described as hard soldering, as distinct from soft soldering with filler materials that melt at or below 200°C.

Soft soldering is used for joining copper pipes to valves and connectors in plumbing. Even more frequently, it is used in electronics, ensuring strong and conductive joints between wires, circuit boards and various components.

When soldering electronics DIY, it's worth investing in a few accessories in addition to a reliable soldering iron.

Use a hobby vice or adjustable clip array to leave your hands free to work, and a desoldering pump to correct any mistakes. A heat sink is also useful for protecting delicate components from damage through overheating. ➤

SOLDERING COPPER PIPE

This is an easy DIY job that can be used for building unique furniture and other metal framing, creating sculptures, or plumbing fittings such as an outdoor shower or sprinkler system that is connected to a standard garden hose.



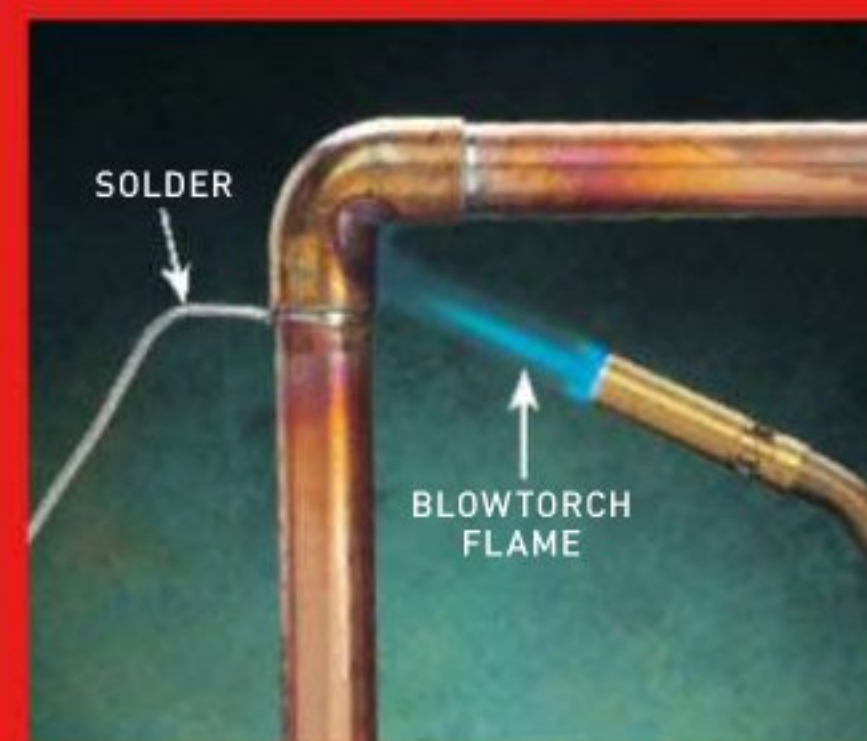
1. CLEAN THE JOINING SURFACES

Use abrasive paper to remove any surface oxidation, dirt or grime from the pipe end. Clean the inside of the connectors using a pipe brush, or a piece of abrasive paper wrapped around a dowel offcut.



2. APPLY THE FLUX

Use the supplied brush to apply a thin, even layer of flux to both the inside of the pipe fittings and the end of the pipe. **TIP** Flux shields the molten solder from impurities and helps it melt into the joint more readily.



3. SOLDER THE JOINT

Bring the blowtorch flame into contact with the joint. As the metal starts to change colour, push the solder against the joint opposite the flame. Once the metal is hot enough, the solder will be rapidly drawn in.

*TYPES OF SOLDERING IRONS

Modern soldering tools not only offer cordless operation but often also feature variable heat settings.

MAINS POWERED soldering irons are the classic variety that have been around for decades. New developments in this type of tool include the option to switch between high and low power settings.

GAS FUELLED tools tend to offer the most power of all cordless soldering irons. Some have interchangeable tips for soldering, hot-knife cutting and similar jobs, as well as a burner nozzle that allows them to be used as mini blowtorches.

BATTERY POWERED soldering irons offer the cordless convenience of gas-fuelled tools, while running on standard AA batteries. Some offer a dual-power function for operating at higher or lower temperatures.

LI-ION RECHARGEABLE cordless soldering irons offer fast heat-up time and a convenient charging dock, plus push-button operation.



*WOOD-BURNING

Touching the tip of a soldering iron to a timber surface makes small, blackened burn marks that can be used to make patterns, lettering or even intricate artworks.

The technical term for this is pyrography, meaning 'writing with fire', but it is also called pokerwork or wood-burning.

With practice, fine shading can be achieved by using different shaped tips and controlling the temperature of the tool.

Wood-burning kits available from hardware stores include a specialised soldering iron that is designed to stay hot for long periods, plus several tips that create different patterns.

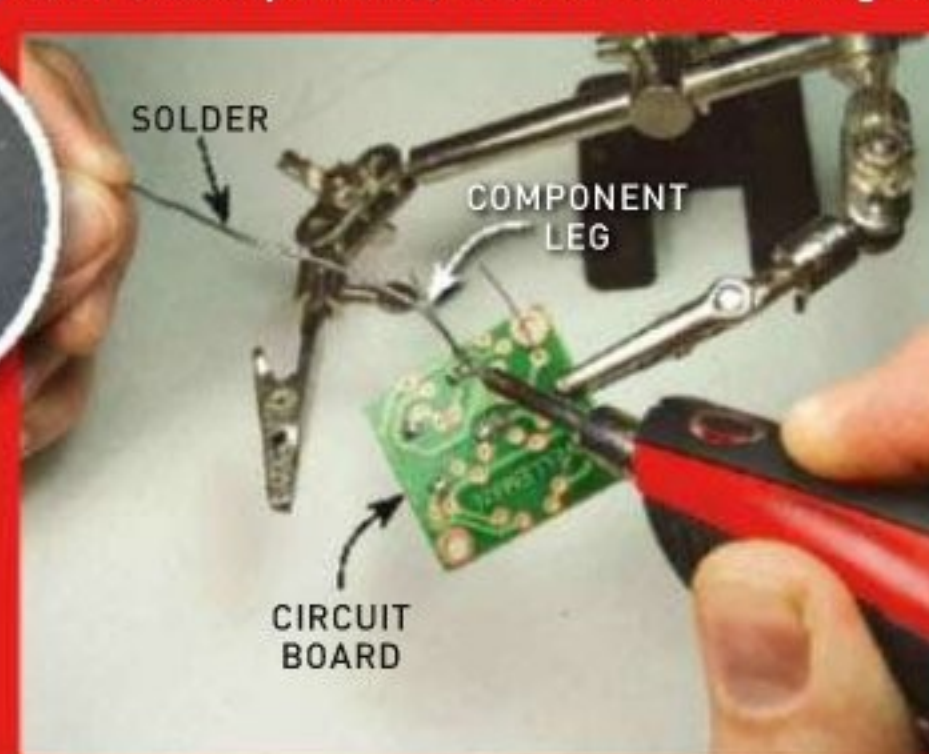
SOLDERING TECHNIQUES

Soldering electronics is a reasonably simple process, but some butane fuelled tools need to be started in a specific way, and if you make a mistake or need to replace a component, it's worth knowing how to use a desoldering pump.



LIGHT A GAS SOLDERING IRON

Slide the springloaded sleeve up to expose the gas jet, start the flow of gas then light it through the ignition port. Let the element warm up for a few seconds then release the sleeve so it springs back into position.



SOLDER A COMPONENT

Push the legs of the component into the terminal holes in the circuit board, angling them slightly to lock them. Warm up the soldering iron and touch the tip to the terminal, then feed the solder into the opposite side of the joint.



USE A DESOLDERING PUMP

Warm up the soldering iron and press the tip directly to the solder. Arm the pump by pressing the springloaded plunger, and when the solder is fluid, trigger the pump to suck the solder out of the joint.

BLOWTORCHES

Blowtorches can be categorised according to the type of fuel they use, which affects how much heat they can generate. The three main types commonly used for DIY are powered by butane, propane or MAP-Pro gas.

*BLOW BY BLOW

Even though only licensed tradesmen can legally solder mains plumbing, this is just one of many jobs that a blowtorch is good for.

Blowtorches for DIY range from tiny butane micro torches not much larger than a cigarette lighter, to heavy-duty models that can burn at temperatures of more than 2000°C.

The brazing techniques that this kind of high-powered tool facilitates can be used to make metal furniture, sculptures and even jewellery.

But even a basic blowtorch can be used to solder copper pipe into a frame for unique shelving, or to plumb an outdoor shower that is connected to a garden hose.

In addition to soldering, blowtorches can be used with a purpose-designed attachment for incinerating weeds. Attaching a spreader nozzle that disperses

the heat generated by the flame makes jobs such as stripping paint a breeze.

Another common use is to direct the flame onto a seized nut, causing it to expand relative to the bolt and loosening it enough to be turned.



Blowtorches are also useful for craft projects ranging from glass blowing to decorative powdercoating. They even have culinary applications, as a butane-fuelled torch is needed for caramelising the top of a crème brûlée.

TYPES OF TORCHES



BUTANE is the same fuel as used in cigarette lighters, and it is often used in gas-powered soldering irons and small blowtorches, such as those used in the kitchen. These torches usually have an internal tank that is refilled from an aerosol can.



PROPANE comes in disposable or refillable cylinders that are attached to a burner head. A propane flame burns slightly hotter than butane, and its compressibility and stability make it suitable for general-purpose use such as soldering and paint stripping.



MAP-PRO torches no longer use the mix of methylacetylene-propadiene (MAP) and propane for which they were named. The current formula has similar properties to the original gas, and burns at 2020°C for brazing and other high-temperature jobs. ➤

BUYING GUIDE

If you do a lot of metalwork, then a welder is a workshop essential, while a soldering iron and blowtorch are invaluable for diverse projects ranging from electronics and wood-burning to paint stripping and even weed killing.

WELDERS



An entry-level tool suitable for small jobs such as building a gate, this single-phase stick welder comes with an instructional DVD.

Weldcorp 140amp Arc Welder, \$189. weldcorp.net



Designed for use around the home, this MIG welder has an adjustable welding current, internal cooling fan and overload protection LEDs.

Ozito 90amp Gasless MIG Welder, \$479. ozito.co.nz



Ideal for general steel fabrication and repairs around the home, this inverter arc welder is lightweight, easy to use and generator-safe.

Weldcorp 125amp Electronic Inverter Welder, \$469.

SOLDERING IRONS



Perfect for fine detail work, this refillable butane tool comes with six tips, a heat shrink assembly, cleaning sponge and a roll of solder.

Tradeflame Micro Hot Air Soldering Kit, about \$79. pandn.co.nz



Powered by four AA batteries, this generates up to 480°C on the high setting and 425°C on low. Batteries and lead-free solder are included.

Weller Cordless Soldering Iron, \$50. toolware.co.nz



With interchangeable cone and chisel tips, plus a heat-resistant handle, this can be switched from 50-100W and has solder included.

Tradeflame Dual Power Soldering Iron, \$50.

BLOWTORCHES



This refillable butane torch is great for paint stripping, plumbing jobs and, of course, crème brûlée. It comes with a stability base.

Go System Blow Torch, \$55. bunnings.co.nz



Featuring one-touch ignition and a trigger lock, this has a swirl-flame burner mounted on a MAP-Pro cylinder for high-temperature jobs.

Bernzomatic MAP-Pro Swirl Torch Kit, \$139. bernzomatic.com.au



Ideal for a range of jobs, this torch comes with a butane gas refill and it features auto ignition, adjustable flame control and a safety lock.

Tradeflame Turbo Max Heat Torch, \$87.

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Perfect equipment - perfect cleanliness

Who wants to spend a lot of time cleaning when you have better things to do, although water blasters can even make cleaning work fun. Kärcher water blasters make cleaning a simple pleasure. These high quality, convenient and powerful machines eliminate even the most stubborn dirt and encrustations within seconds – quickly, easily and effortlessly.

But did you know that Kärcher water blasters can operate even more effectively with accessories specifically designed for various cleaning applications, ultimately saving you even more time and effort whilst providing a superb cleaning result.

Hard Surface Cleaners, including T-Racers and Power Scrubbers, are the new generation of cleaning. The T Racer surface cleaner simply attaches to the end of the Kärcher Waterblaster gun and is brilliant for cleaning flat surfaces such as driveways, timber decks and patios without splash back, whilst saving you



time by cleaning up to four times faster than a standard lance. This is achieved by the use of two rotating nozzles contained within the T Racer head which enables it to clean a wider surface area whilst eliminating streaky, uneven cleaning therefore providing a professional result.

An alternative to the T-Racer is the Power Scrubber, a high pressure broom that is



especially well suited for cleaning smaller areas like patios, entrance ways, and stairs. The unit incorporates three high pressure nozzles that effectively and quickly remove even stubborn dirt from surfaces.

For effective yet gentle cleaning of other outdoor surfaces such as vehicle paintwork, garage doors, windows and even the boat, use a Kärcher Delta Racer. The revolutionary brush cleans with high pressure, saving energy, water and up to 30% less time. With its practical triangular form, in built rotating jet nozzles and soft bristles, it has no problem cleaning corners and edges whilst being ideal for use on delicate surfaces – the ideal solution for brilliant results all round.

Cleaning those high, hard to reach areas can be difficult, particularly if you want to clean with pressure. The Kärcher high



pressure telescopic lance extends up to 4m long gives you the ability to effectively clean those difficult to reach areas such as high walls and facades in a safe manner. The removable nozzle at the end of the lance also has the ability to take other Kärcher attachments like brushes to aid in the cleaning process.

For other difficult to access areas, there is the angled spray lance, ideal for cleaning hard to reach areas like gutters, tanks or vehicle chassis.



If you've ever wondered how to clean drains and downpipes, then try the Kärcher pipe cleaning hose accessory. This also attaches to your Kärcher water blaster gun and allows the effective cleaning of pipes, drains, downpipes and toilet blockages. Four reverse



high pressure jets forward propel the hose down the pipe which help clear blockages in the process. Consecutive marks and marker rings help to show how far the hose has travelled down the pipe.

With the wide variety of Kärcher water blasting accessories that simply attach to your Kärcher water blaster, the cleaning applications are numerous and make for faster and more effective cleaning.



Kärcher water blasters are brilliantly effective at tackling any dirty surface.

Grimy driveways, mouldy decking? Try the new Kärcher Deck and Patio Cleaner accessory for faster and easier cleaning of driveways, paths and decks.

Whatever you're faced with, wherever the dirt is, Kärcher water blasters are easy to use but hard on dirt.



 **KÄRCHER®**

makes a difference



The look and feel of your garden oasis is limited only by your imagination.

Design a garden retreat

Big or small, grand or simple, create your very own sanctuary where you can get away from it all

For many people, particularly inner-city dwellers, a courtyard is the only garden option. But even a small and dingy area can be transformed into an enchanting and restful outdoor space.

Getting started

The biggest part of the job is in the planning, and time well spent at this stage will help you down the track.

All you need to plan your design is graph paper, a tape measure, coloured pens, white-out and Blu-Tack.

So where do you begin? Well it may sound obvious, but the place to start is with what you've got.

Make a rough sketch of the area, take measurements and plot all the existing features, including plants, structures and paths, then make a scale drawing on graph paper.

Once your plan is complete, make two copies on paper and four copies on transparent plastic overlay sheets at your local copy centre. ➤



Choose furniture in colours and styles that complement the look of your garden.

Likes and dislikes

Use two different-coloured pens and an overlay sheet to mark the features you like and the ones you don't.

Include what you can see beyond your boundary that you enjoy, such as a tree or church spire, and the things you can do without, like a telegraph pole. Label this Likes and Dislikes.

Sight lines

Go for a wander around your house and yard and study the space from a range of angles. Evaluate the view you get from the kitchen window and what you're looking at when sitting in your favourite spot outside.

Draw your sight lines onto a second overlay and label this Sight Lines. This ensures you're not going to see only rubbish bins or the clothesline from where you most often view the garden.

Traffic control

Consider the flow of traffic through your proposed retreat, as your plan needs to cater for any essential access.

Is there a well-worn track from the back door to the shed? Do the wheelie bins regularly traverse the space?

Use different colours to mark essential and non-essential routes on a third overlay. Label it Traffic Control.

Sun and shade

You need to know what part the sun plays throughout the seasons. Where does it rise and set? Which areas are in shade and which are in full sun? Are deciduous trees providing shade? If so, the sun will shine through in winter.

Mark the sun's rising and setting positions, as well as the sunny and shady areas of the yard, on a fourth overlay. Label this Sun and Shade. ➤

Seek approval

There will always be certain things you'll want to remove from the yard, but there are a few things to remember before you get too carried away.

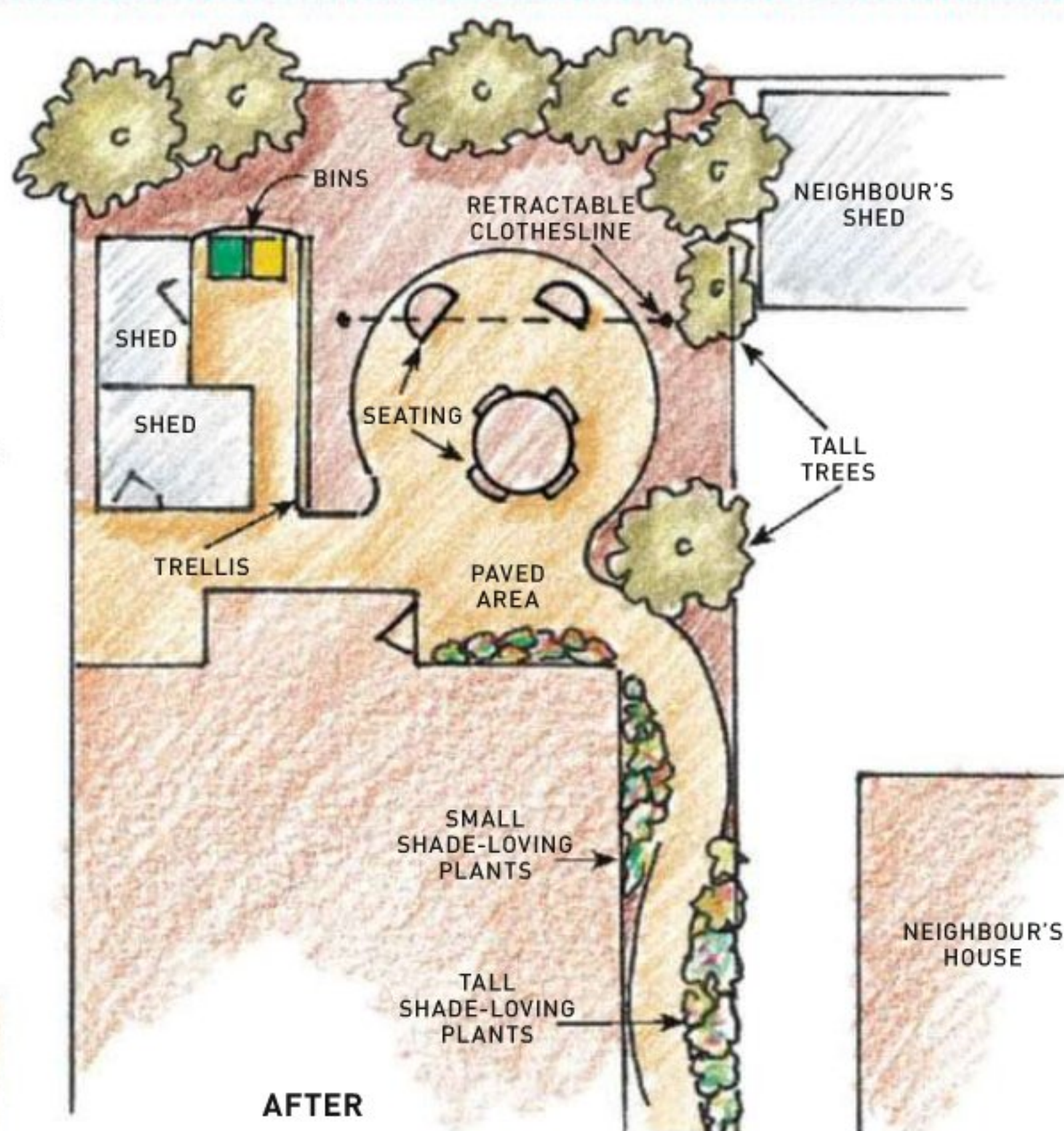
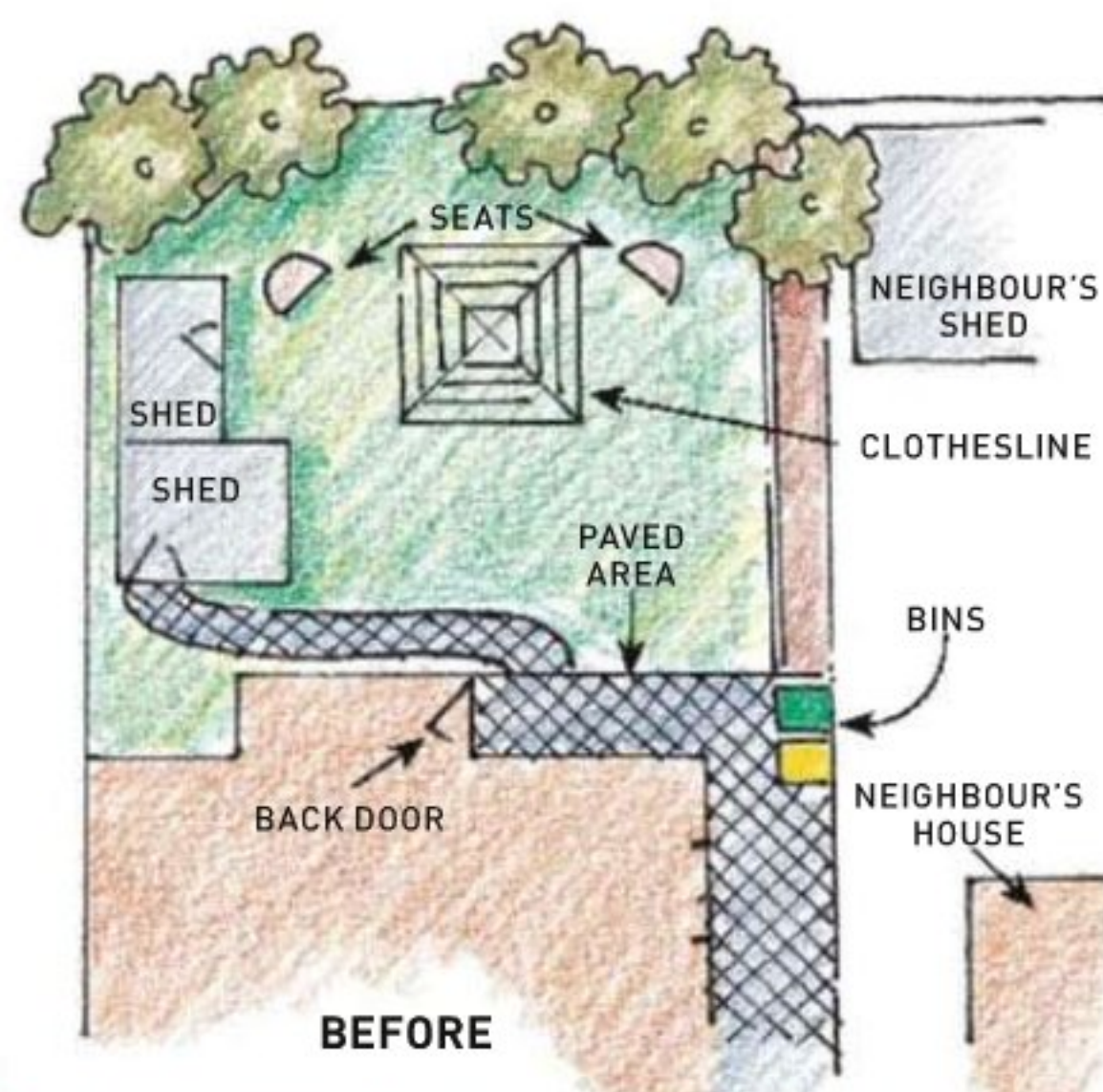
■ **CUTTING DOWN TREES** generally can't be done without getting prior council permission. So call and check with them before you start chopping.

You're also not allowed to cut down your neighbour's trees, however obstructive they may be.

■ **CHECK THE LOCATION** of electricity, gas, water and telecommunication cables and pipes before you do any digging or excavating for safety reasons. Call the relevant utility company for the information.

From start to finish

In this yard, the bins were moved by the sheds and a trellis put up as a screen. The rotary hoist was replaced with a retractable clothesline and a new paved area was created for seating, with morning and afternoon sun options. Shade-loving plants now conceal the neighbour's house.



BITUPATCH

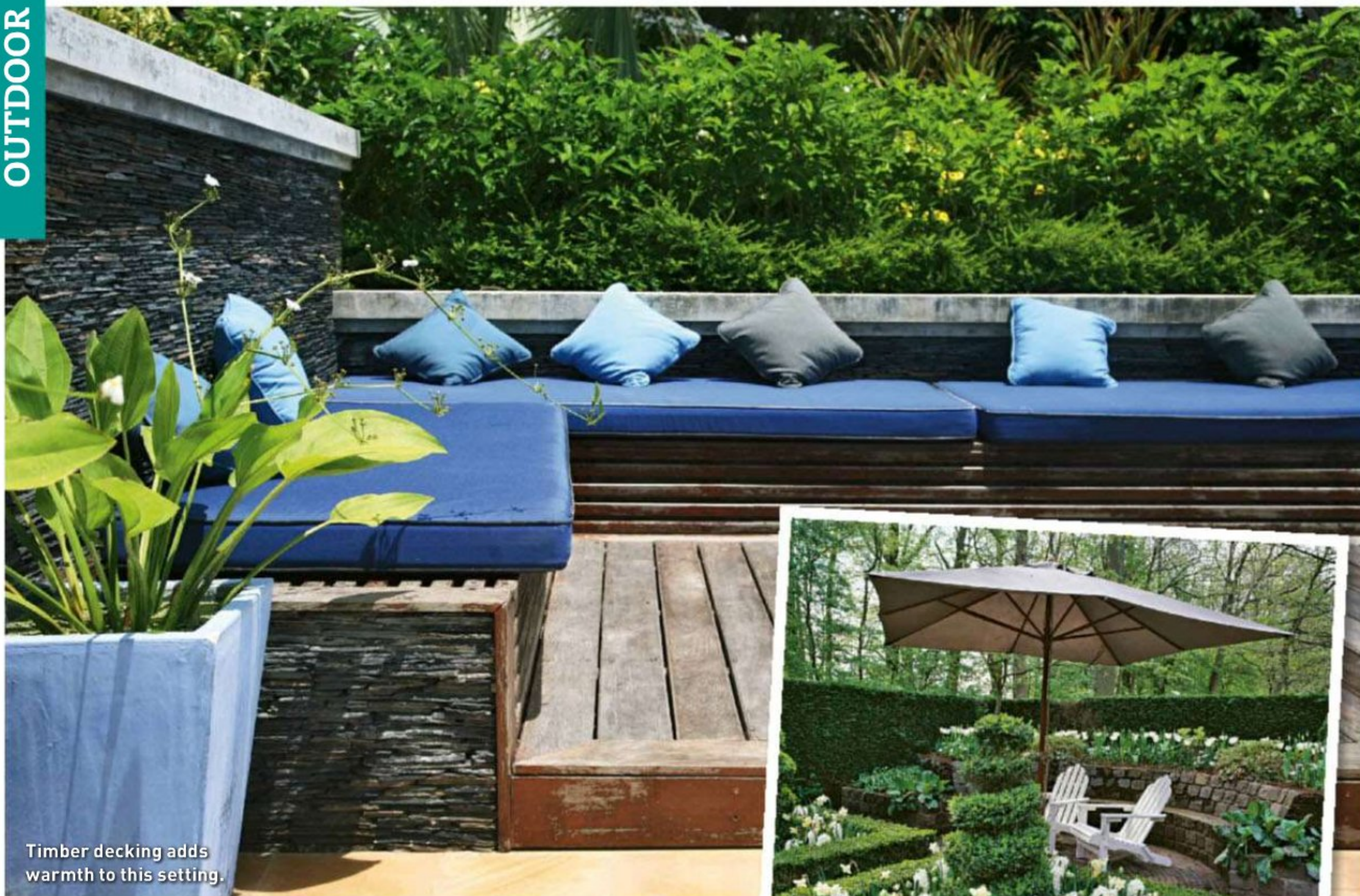
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Timber decking adds warmth to this setting.

Wants and needs

Now you know what you've got to work with, you need to think about how you'd like to use your alfresco space.

Would you like to eat and entertain there or create a play area for kids? Do you want to grow vegies or dry your washing? Write an 'I want' list.

Read over your list, then perform a reality check on it. Which items are feasible and which aren't?

If you have an in-ground pool and an entertainment area that will seat 40 people on your 'I want' list, and the space measures 3 x 5m, cross out both.

Write down each 'I want' item at the top of a fresh page, then create a corresponding 'I need' list of things required to make your wants possible. This will become the Wish List.

If you have conflicting needs, you need to be realistic and prioritise.

And don't forget to consult other members of the household during planning, as a miniature golf course may not be at the top of everyone's list!

The grand plan

Go back to your first overlay, Likes and Dislikes, and look at the items you selected as undesirable.

Decide which of these can be removed, which can be obscured, and which you're just going to have to live with.

Write a list of all of the things you would like to remove, then take to one of the paper copies with the white-out and blot them out.

Make sure you write your list first, as any removals will need to happen before you start on the rest of the job. If they're not visible on the plan, the chances are you'll forget them. Label this Removals.

Take the paper plan from which you've deleted all the dislikes that are removable, then make two clean copies on paper. These will be the Master Plan and a spare.

Make another four copies on transparent plastic overlays.



Wish list

I WANT

A relaxing spot to sit and read.

I NEED

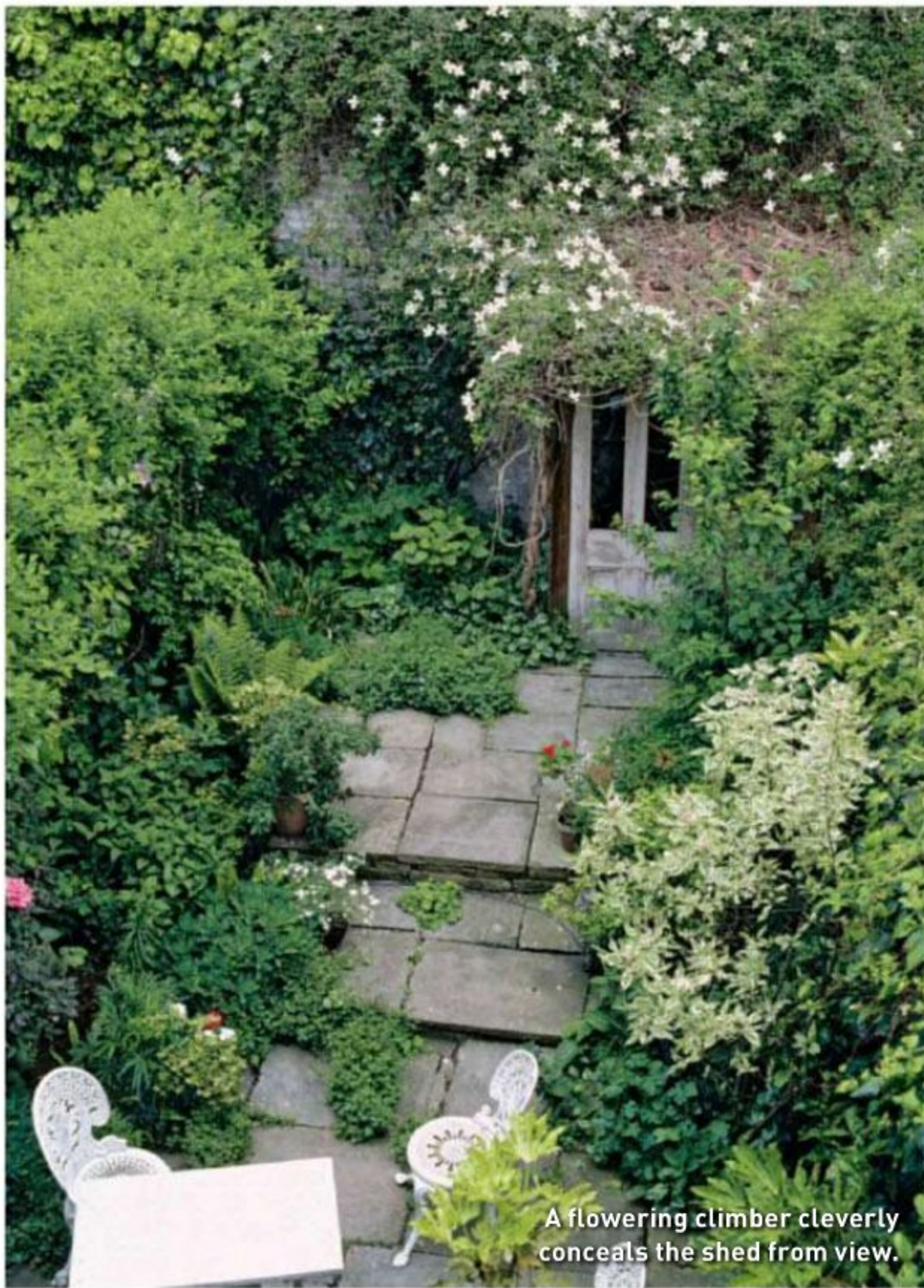
- ✓ Sun in winter and shade in summer
- ✓ Shelter from the wind
- ✓ A pleasant view
- ✓ Fragrant plants
- ✓ Comfortable seating with a footrest and table for snacks and drinks

I WANT

A place where the dog can play.

I NEED

- ✓ Shady and sunny areas
- ✓ Room for the dog to run about
- ✓ Secure fencing
- ✓ A suitable spot for pet dishes, so they don't get in the way
- ✓ Raised garden beds to stop the dog digging up plants



A flowering climber cleverly conceals the shed from view.

Screening solutions

Take your Sight Lines overlay and lay it on the Likes and Dislikes one. Start from the outside and work inwards to check which remaining dislikes you can hide with a screen. Remember, it's not worth the effort for something you only glimpse once a week while putting out the bins.

There are many screening options, including walls, fences, hedges, trellises, decorative panels and self-supporting climbers.

If you can see the bins from the kitchen and you can't move them, a trellis with a climber will hide them. A line of bamboo in pots could screen a shed and a creeper can conceal a fence.

Blu-Tack one of your copied overlays on the other two, work out what and how you're going to screen and draw these onto the overlay. Label this Screens. ➤

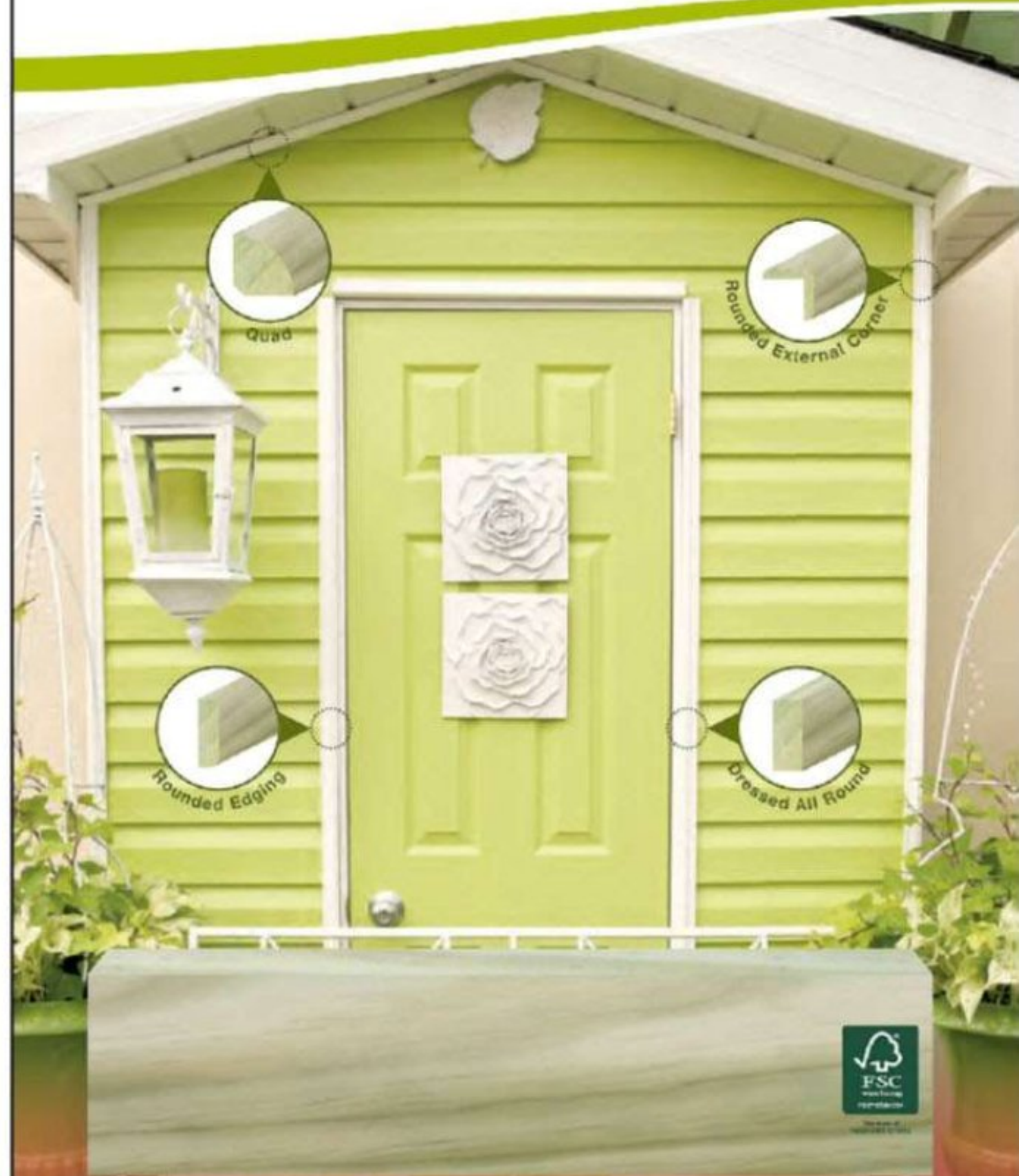
Protector Aluminium Fern Designer Screen, 1840 x 940mm, \$193.
protectoraluminium.com



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■ **H3 Treated** as per AS1604 with ACQ preservative

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■ **FSC® Certified** – supporting improved management of the world's forests.

✓ Suitable for long term performance in external above-ground applications.

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A shady corner is a lovely private place for an outdoor setting.



Paving sets the tone for the whole design.



Consider leaf size and colour, and if plants are evergreen or deciduous.

Paved sections

The paved areas are the next to be considered. It is important that these areas not only look great, but are functional as well.

In terms of shape, think in circles and curves rather than squares and straight lines. This will give a much more natural feel to the space, and make it more appealing to the eye, as well as add to the atmosphere.

Start with the positioning of the paths. Take the overlay labelled Traffic Control, then stick it on the top of your pile.

Do any of your screening elements interfere with the current traffic routes? Have any of them become

redundant and could now be moved? Which areas require hard paving? This might be the area straight outside the door into the house.

Consider which of the traffic routes can be eliminated or made to look more appealing.

This might mean replacing an uninteresting straight path leading to an unattractive back gate with a meandering one so that the gate is not in your line of vision.

Stick another fresh overlay on top and draw in your new paths.

After this is completed, the ideal positioning of the paved central area will become obvious. Draw in your main patio area and round off any

corners where it meets or overlaps the path. Label this Paved Sections.

Decide what sort of paving you're going to use. There is a huge range to choose from, but try not to use them all at once, as too many textures tend to create a confusing, rather than soothing, backdrop.

Garden beds

At this point, you get a bonus for all your hard work. If you look at your plan now, you'll find that the garden bed positions have pretty well designed themselves.

Draw them in, remembering to round off any unwanted sharp corners. Label this Garden Beds.



Clever use of decorative features provides a focal point.

Final layout

Taking your paper Master Plan, plus your overlays for Screens and Paved Sections, draw up your final layout. Remember that you have a spare Master Plan sheet, just in case you mess this one up.

Position your Likes and Dislikes, Sight Lines, Traffic Control and Sun and Shade overlays on your Master Plan to check it still works. You may need to make minor adjustments.

Now try out your idea to avoid potentially expensive mistakes. Using a garden hose, boxes, bits of old rope or whatever you have to hand, lay out your design on site.

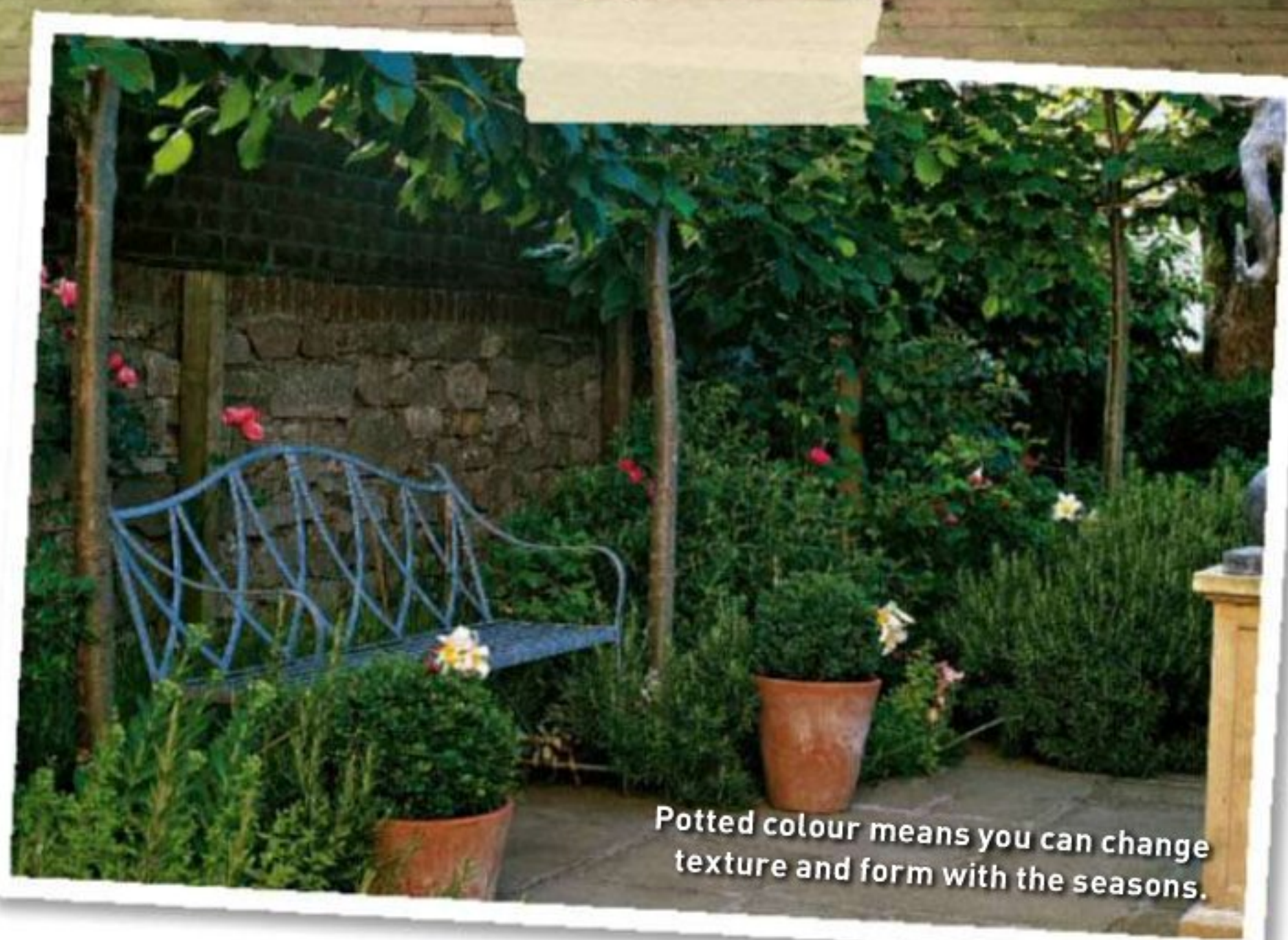
Will a wheelbarrow fit down the path behind the trellis? Does the shed door open? Give yourself a couple of weeks to test run your new design.

If you keep walking across an area designated as a garden bed, you'll need to adjust the ground plan. If it annoys you now, it will annoy you forever.

When you're happy with the final layout, the last stage is to add plants. If you're not sure what to buy, take your Master Plan, plus your Sun and Shade and Sight Lines overlays, to your local garden centre and ask for advice.



The clean lines in this yard are softened by a climber framing the metal gate.



Potted colour means you can change texture and form with the seasons.



MOSAIC TILE TABLE

Build a decorative but durable outdoor feature that's tough enough to weather the elements

Garden furniture has to be tough if it's going to withstand a battering from the elements, but often this durability comes at the cost of the item's decorative value.

This outdoor table is different, as its tiled surface won't fade from exposure to sunlight, and the strong steel frame is finished with metal paint to prevent it from rusting.

You can build the table using a few basic tools and skills and a simple homemade jig to bend the steel.

The round tabletop is marked up using a carpenter's compass or DIY trammel, and has a base of two 12mm thick layers of exterior plywood laminated together.

The plywood is topped with a layer of 6mm thick fibre cement (FC) cladding suitable for exterior use, then waterproofing membrane is applied and covered with mosaic tiles.

The leg base is made from sturdy 40 x 6mm and 20 x 3mm mild steel flat bar, available from steel suppliers.

The legs are bent by hand and bolted together, then secured to the top using screws, with pine braces for support.

Sand the leg assembly using 180 grit abrasive paper, then clean the steel and apply primer.

Finish with two coats of a metal paint such as White Knight Rust Guard Epoxy Enamel, \$24 for 500ml (whiteknightpaints.co.nz).

Tiling the tabletop

For the top, we used tiles in three different sizes to neatly fill out the curves without having to cut the tiles into wedge shapes. The largest tiles were used on the edge so they enclosed the top tiles, giving a neat finish.

Once the adhesive has cured, mix up a sand-and-cement based grout. Squeegee it into the gaps between the tiles, leave to dry for 20 minutes, then wipe off the excess with a sponge.

Polish off the haze using a cloth dipped in a solution of water and white vinegar. ➤

Make a bending jig ▼

To make curves in mild steel, make a jig from a 900 x 450mm sheet of 19mm plywood and two 220 x 90 x 45mm timber blocks with rounded ends.

Secure the timber blocks to the plywood with an 8mm gap in between, using adhesive and 50mm x 8g screws driven through the ply.

Mark the midpoint of each rounded end on the blocks, then temporarily secure the plywood base to the workbench with 50mm x 8g screws.



PICTURE (TOP) THINKSTOCK

TIME 2 DAYS
SKILL INTERMEDIATE

DIY \$240

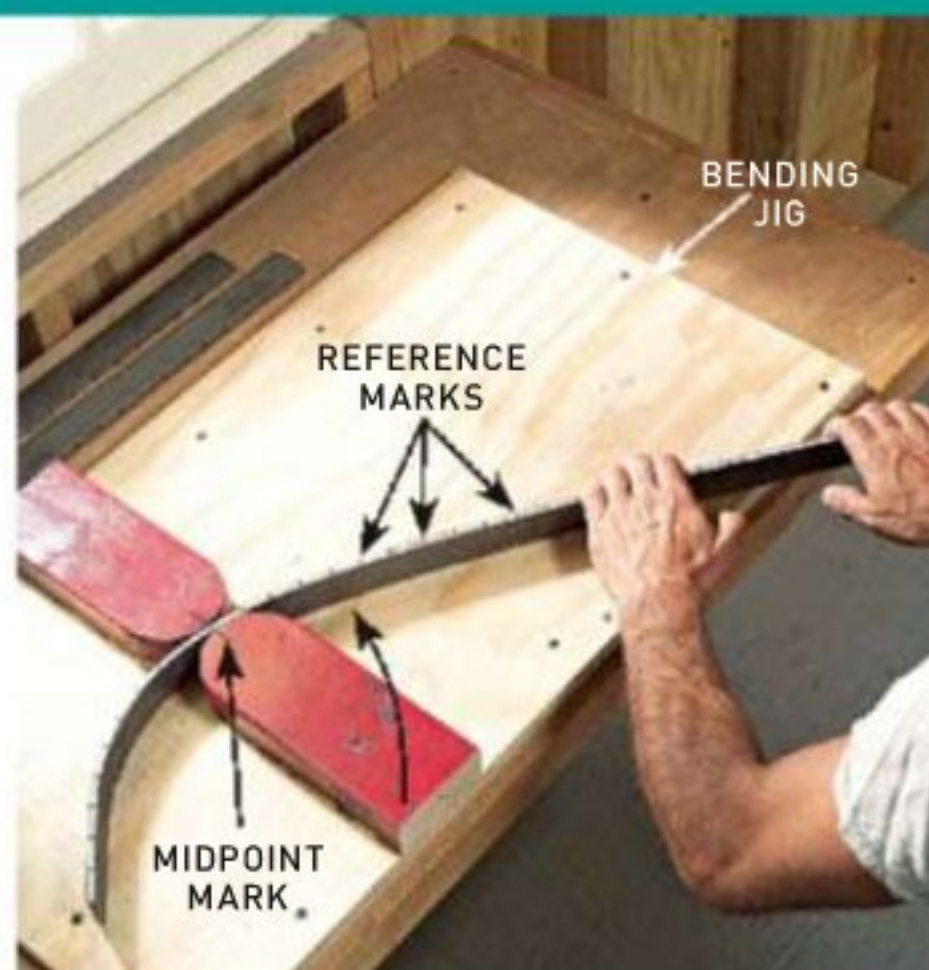
TOOLS DRILL, JIGSAW,
DRILL PRESS

Bend the legs by hand and design
your own mosaic top for this table.

Make the table



1 Cut the base discs
Use a trammel to mark two 660mm diameter discs on exterior plywood, then cut out using a jigsaw. Apply exterior PVA to both discs using a 3mm notched trowel, then align them carefully and secure with screws at 200mm centres. Leave to dry, then remove the screws and sand the edge.



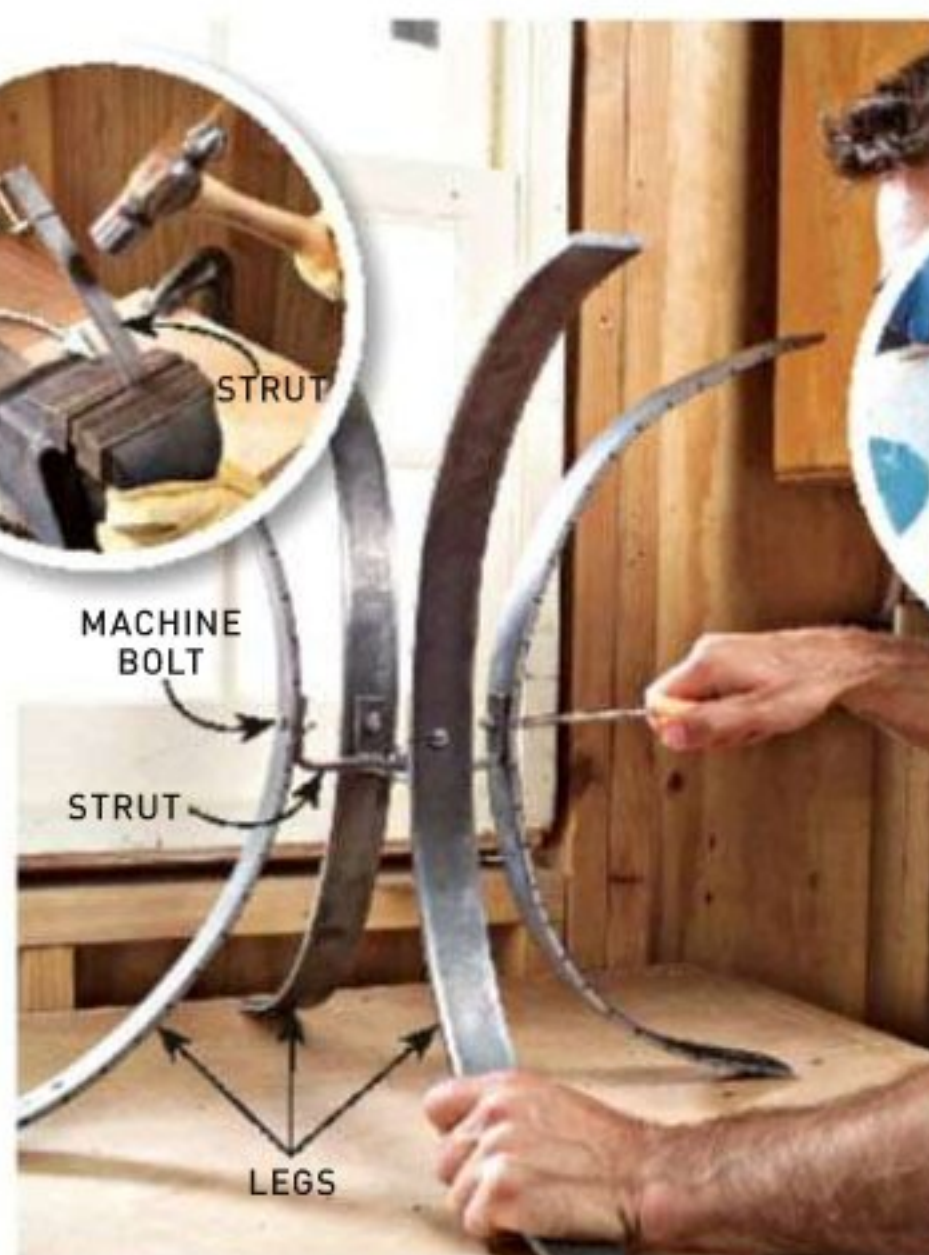
2 Bend the legs
Use a permanent marker to make reference marks every 25mm on the steel legs. Align the first mark on each leg with the midpoints on the jig blocks, then pull the steel bar firmly until you feel it bend slightly. Move it to the next mark, repeating the process with slight bends at each mark.



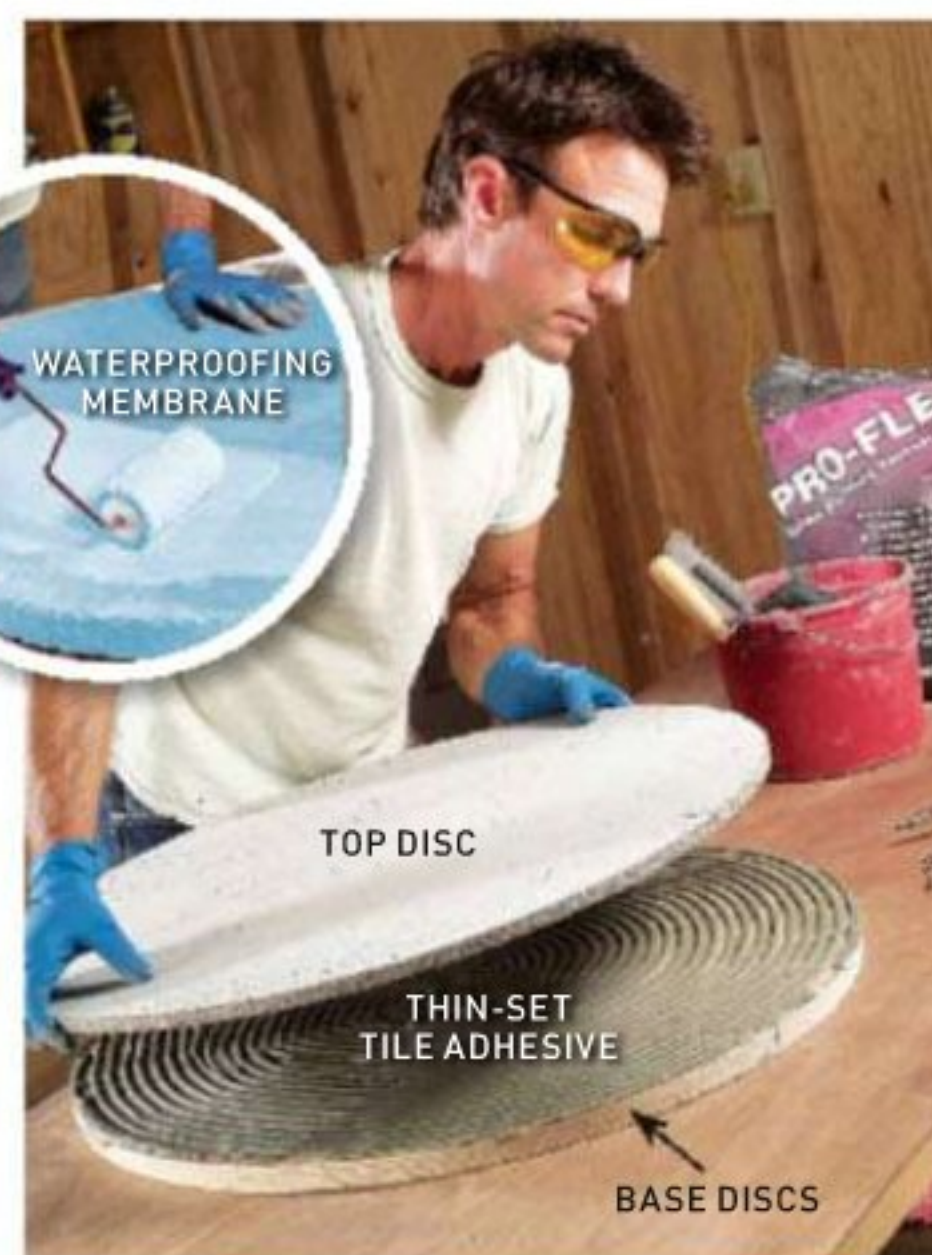
3 Check the leg shape
Enlarge the template to full size on a scrap sheet of 3mm plywood or MDF, then check the curve of each leg and adjust by bending or unbending the steel as required. Use a hacksaw or a jigsaw with a metal cutting blade to cut each leg to 710mm long and smooth the rough edges with a file.



4 Drill the holes
Use a centre punch to mark hole locations 12, 40, 100 and 355mm from one end of each leg. Use a drill press or handheld drill at low revs with a 6mm HSS twist bit to drill bolt holes at the marked locations, starting with a 3mm bit to bore pilot holes and lubricating the bits with machine oil.



5 Join the legs
Use a hacksaw to cut the struts, then mark 40mm from each end. Clamp in a vice with the mark at the edge of the jaws, then hammer each end into a sharp 90° bend. Drill 6mm clearance holes, then bolt a pair of legs to each strut. Overlap the centre holes of the struts and bolt them together.



6 Make the top disc
Trace around the base discs on the FC sheet, then cut out the top disc using a jigsaw with a carbide-grit blade. Secure the top disc to the base discs using thin-set tile adhesive, spread with a notched trowel. Reinforce the joint with screws, leave to dry, then roll on two coats of waterproofing membrane.



7 Tile the edge

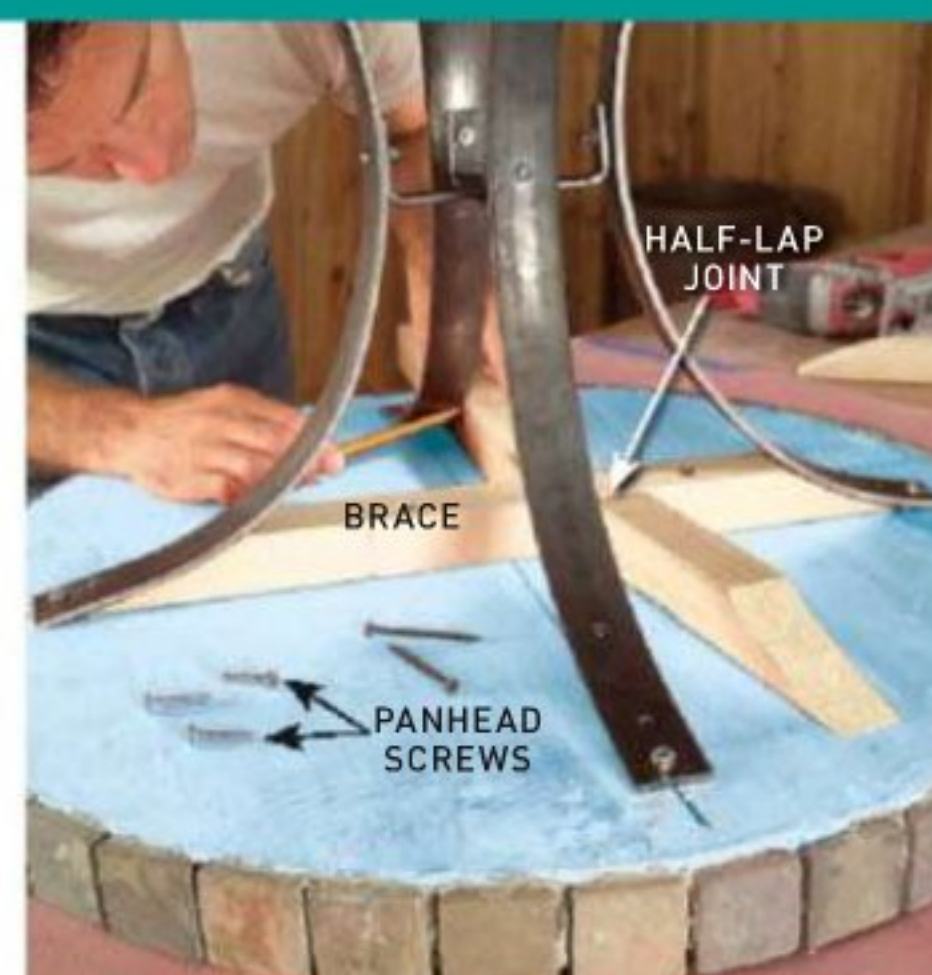
Remove the edge tiles from their mesh backing, then butter the back of each with floor-tile adhesive and push it into position, using nippers to cut the last one to fit. Leave to dry for 24 hours before tiling the top.

TIP Use 35mm square tiles and shim, as needed, for an even top edge.



8 Lay out the pattern

Draw concentric circles and quadrant lines on a cardboard or MDF disc the same size as the tabletop, then use them to lay out a pattern of mosaic tiles in various sizes. Draw quadrant lines on the tabletop, then working on one quadrant at a time, apply adhesive and attach the tiles.



9 Secure the legs

Centre the leg assembly on the underside of the table and mark the curve of the legs on the braces, then use a jigsaw to cut the curves. Use a handsaw and chisel to cut housings for a half-lap joint at the centre of the braces, then secure the legs and braces to the top with panhead screws. ➤



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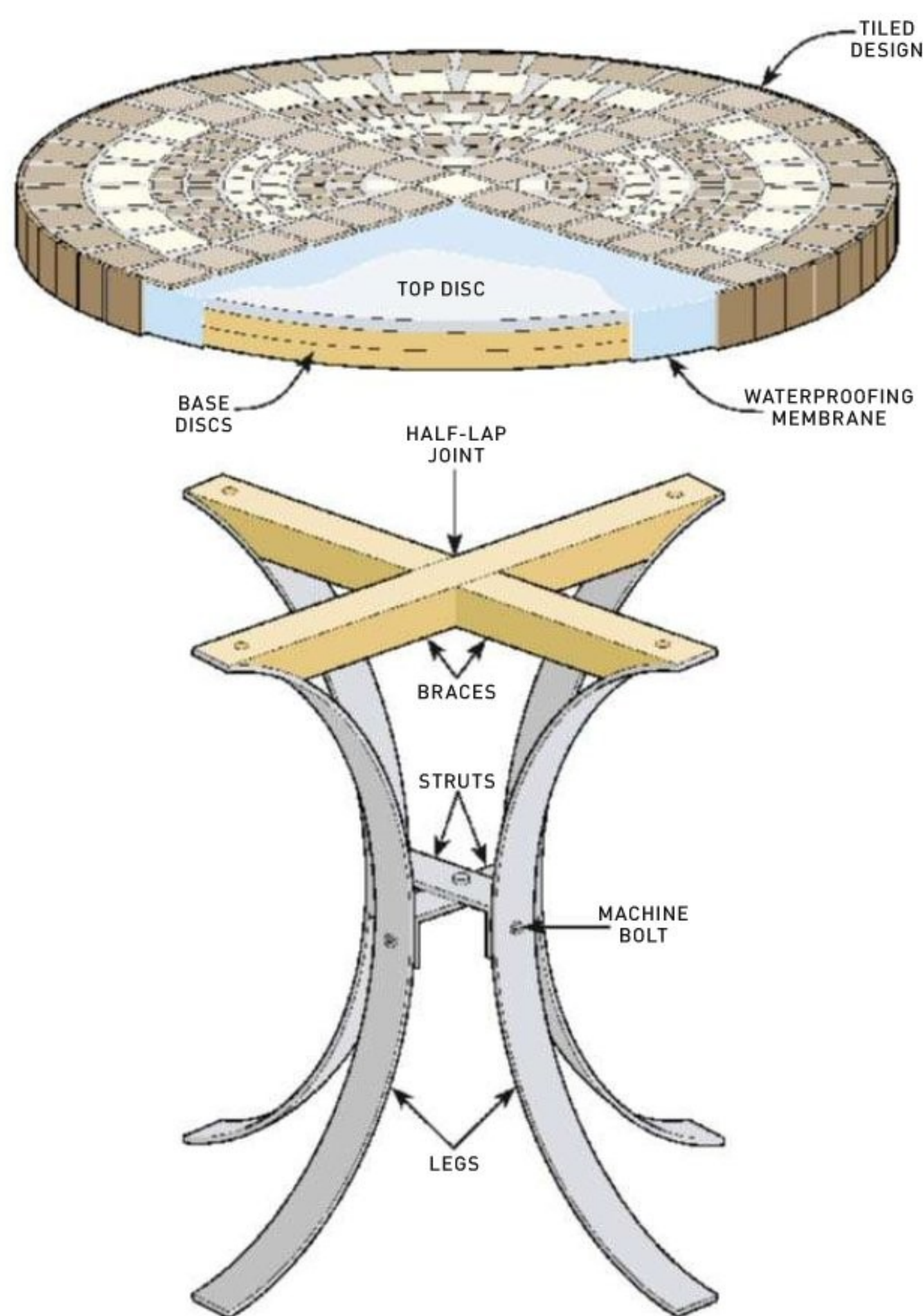
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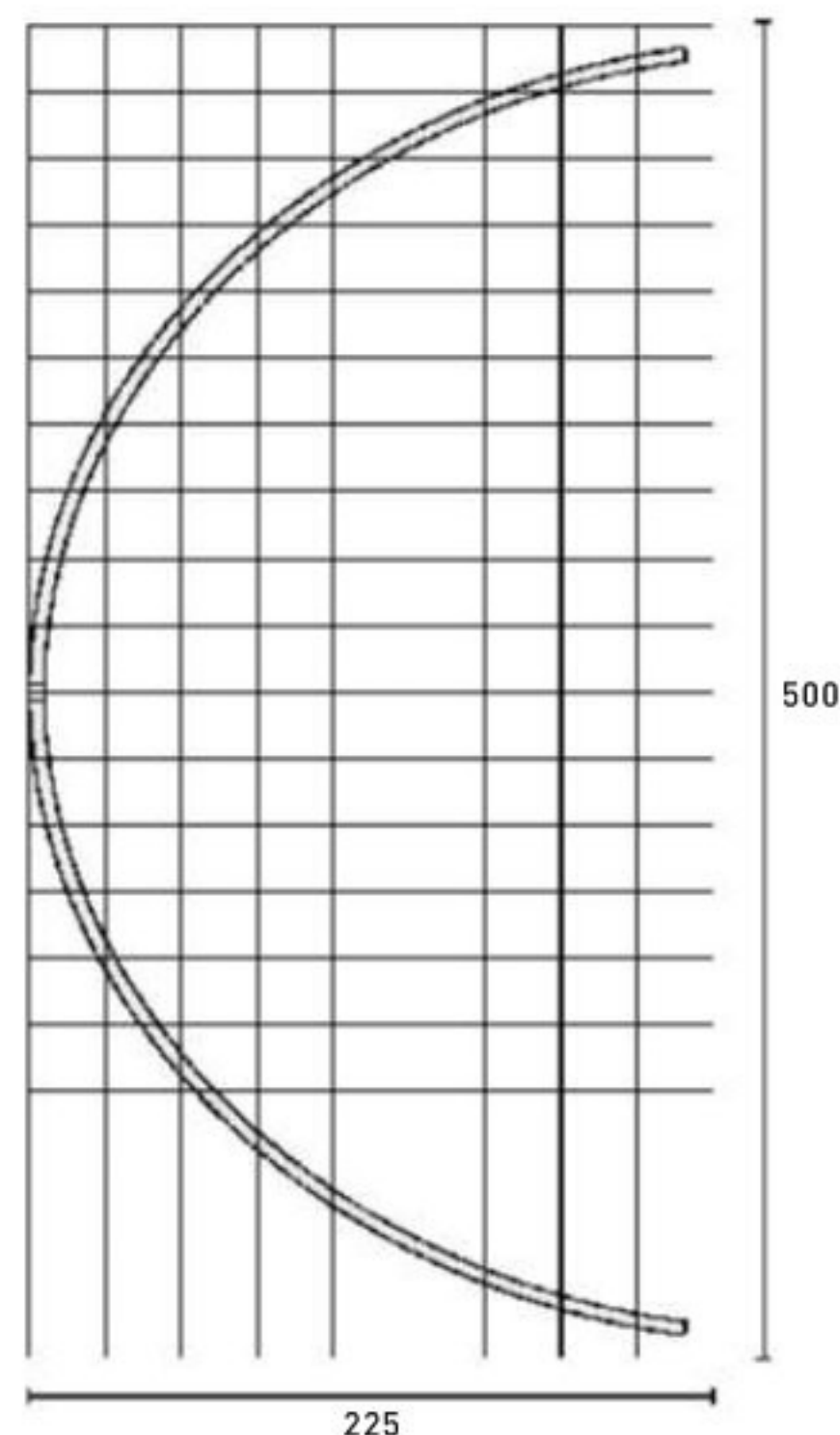
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Mosaic tile table

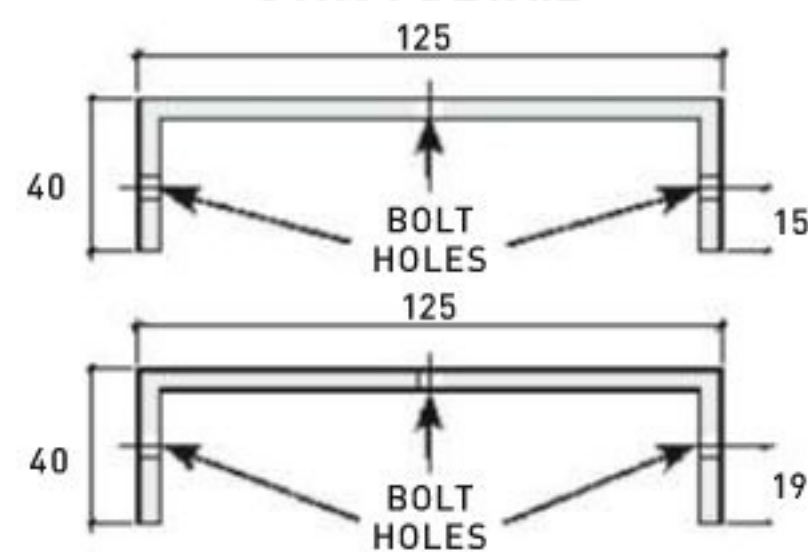
measurements in mm



LEG TEMPLATE
25 x 25mm grid



STRUT DETAIL



FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
Panhead screws, 20mm x 8g	Ply discs, leg tops
Machine bolts, washers and nuts, M6 x 20mm	Struts
Timber screws, 25mm x 8g	FC top
Timber screws, 50mm x 8g	Braces

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO.
Exterior plywood		
Base discs	660 dia x 12mm	2
FC sheet		
Top disc	660 dia x 6mm	1
Pine		
Braces	600 x 42 x 42mm	2
Mild steel flat bar		
Legs	900 x 40 x 6mm	4
Struts	205 x 20 x 3mm	2

Handymanmagazine.co.nz
Download the tools, materials
and costs to make this project.

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Handyman BUYER'S GUIDE



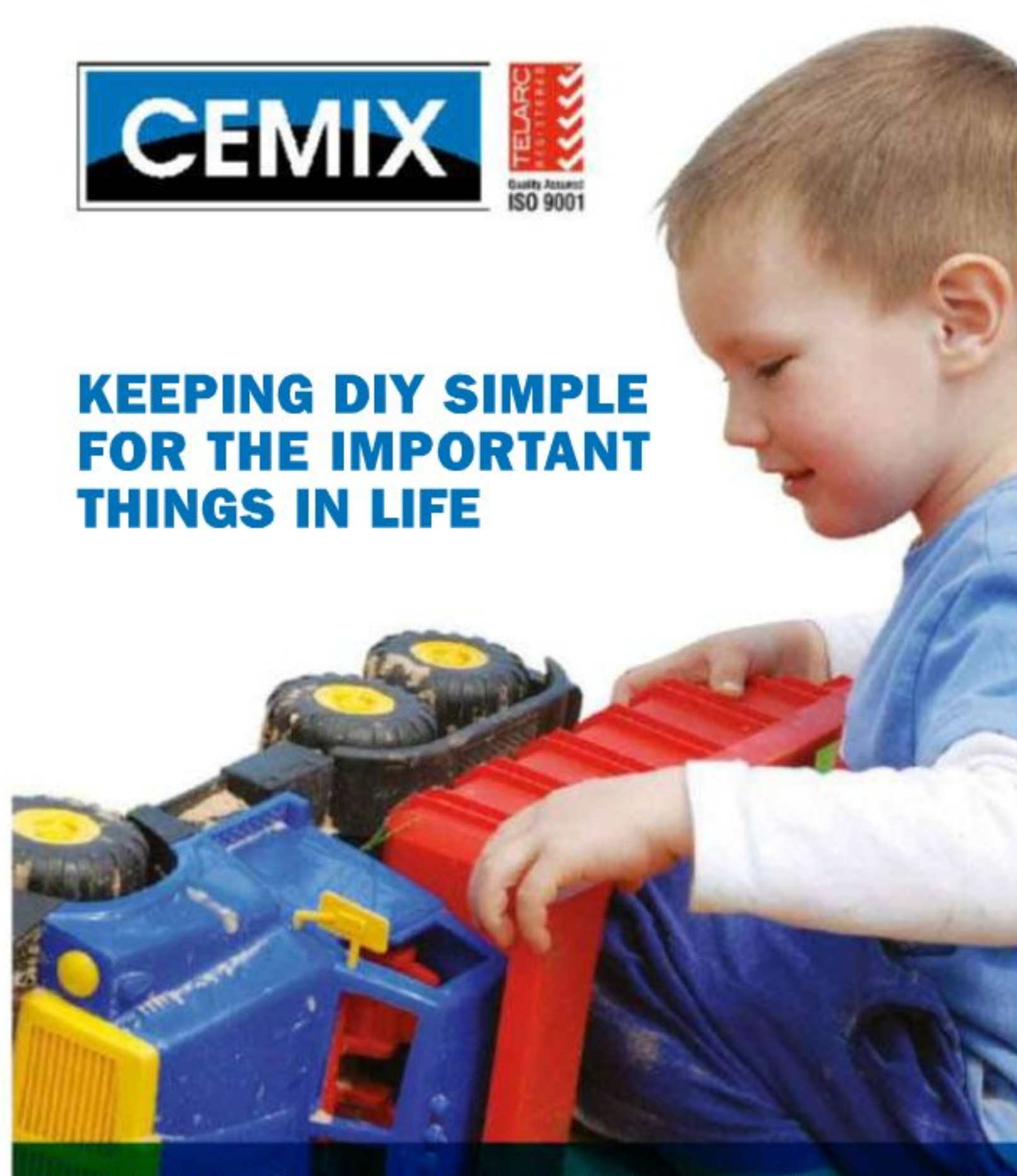
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The countdown to summer brings out all sorts of home improvement projects and our Weekend D.I.Y. Workshops are packed with hints and tips you need to get through them all. Workshops cover a wide range of topics from painting to gardening and everything in between and are perfect for any level.

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**LOWEST PRICES
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Grow top tomatoes

For juicy fruit you can eat off the vine, get a few plants in the ground now

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

The tomato is the most commonly cultivated edible, and it's easy to understand why.

Red, yellow, green and even purple, tomatoes come in a range of colours, shapes and flavours to satisfy the senses.

And it isn't just a Kiwi favourite, it's also the world's most popular fruit.

But while it is botanically a fruit, the tomato is considered a vegetable for culinary purposes.

Tomatoes can be found in pastas, pizzas, curries, risottos, soups, salads and sauces. Without the tomato, many staple dishes would be wiped from the culinary map.

Not just versatile and popular, tomatoes are also good for you. They are rich in vitamins A and C, beta-carotene, potassium and the antioxidant lycopene.

They contain no cholesterol and are low in fat and calories and are also a good source of fibre.

Homegrown heroes

To experience the best tomato flavour, you have to grow your own, and now is the time to plant them.

Tomatoes give a higher yield for space occupied than any other veggie. And they're not hard to raise, growing as well in pots as they do in beds.

For container growing, use large 500mm pots and a good-quality mix.

Tall tomatoes need a stake in the bed or pot, so add one when planting.

Potted tomatoes need regular watering, as they dry out faster than garden beds, and lots of food. ➤



Daltons Incredible Edibles Tomato Mix, \$12 for 30L. daltons.co.nz



PICTURE ALAMY



Now is the time to plant tomatoes for homegrown flavour all summer long.

A wild start ▼

Tomatoes are eaten worldwide but are natives of South America.

The Spanish found tomatoes growing in Mexico around 1550 and introduced the yellow-fruited species to Europe. They were seedy, rough-skinned and sour.

While the Spanish ate them wild, the Italians and English considered tomatoes poisonous because they belonged to the nightshade family.

Tomatoes were grown as ornamentals and used for table decoration until the mid-1800s.

They were then bred with smooth skins and round shapes. Their mild flavour made them acceptable as fruits for the table and tomatoes have been culinary favourites ever since.

Cultivate from seed

Growing from seed gives you a much larger choice of tomatoes, including old-fashioned or heirloom varieties.

The seeds can be sown outdoors until November in cool areas and until December in temperate zones.

You can raise the seeds in any small pot or seedling punnet. Biodegradable fibre pots are ideal, as you can plant them in the garden to avoid transplant shock.

To raise seedlings, fill a clean small pot with moist seed-raising mix and make a shallow indentation in the surface about 5mm deep. Sow the seed in the base and cover with mix.

Wrap the pot or punnet in clear plastic to provide warmth and encourage germination.

The plastic has to be removed as soon as the seeds germinate, which will take anywhere from 6-14 days, depending on the temperature. Position the pot in a warm spot.

Keep the seed-raising mix slightly moist, using a spray bottle to mist it with water, and when the seedlings have reached about 75mm high, they are ready to harden off in a sunnier location.

When they're about 100mm high, transplant them into the garden.



Growing from cuttings

Tomatoes grow easily from cuttings, and it's a good way to extend the season, as the new plant will produce fruit later than the parent.

So if you take the cuttings in November, you get an autumn crop.

■ **CUT OFF** a 100-200mm side shoot and remove the lower leaves.

■ **POSITION THE SHOOT** in a glass of water and leave it on a sunny windowsill. Keep the glass filled with fresh water and after a couple of weeks, roots will develop.

■ **PLANT THE CUTTING** in a 100mm pot and keep the mix moist until more roots develop and new growth is seen, then transplant into a bed.

Another method is to plant the cutting directly into a 100mm pot filled with potting mix. Cover with clear plastic to maintain humidity and when roots have developed, and new growth is seen, transplant it.

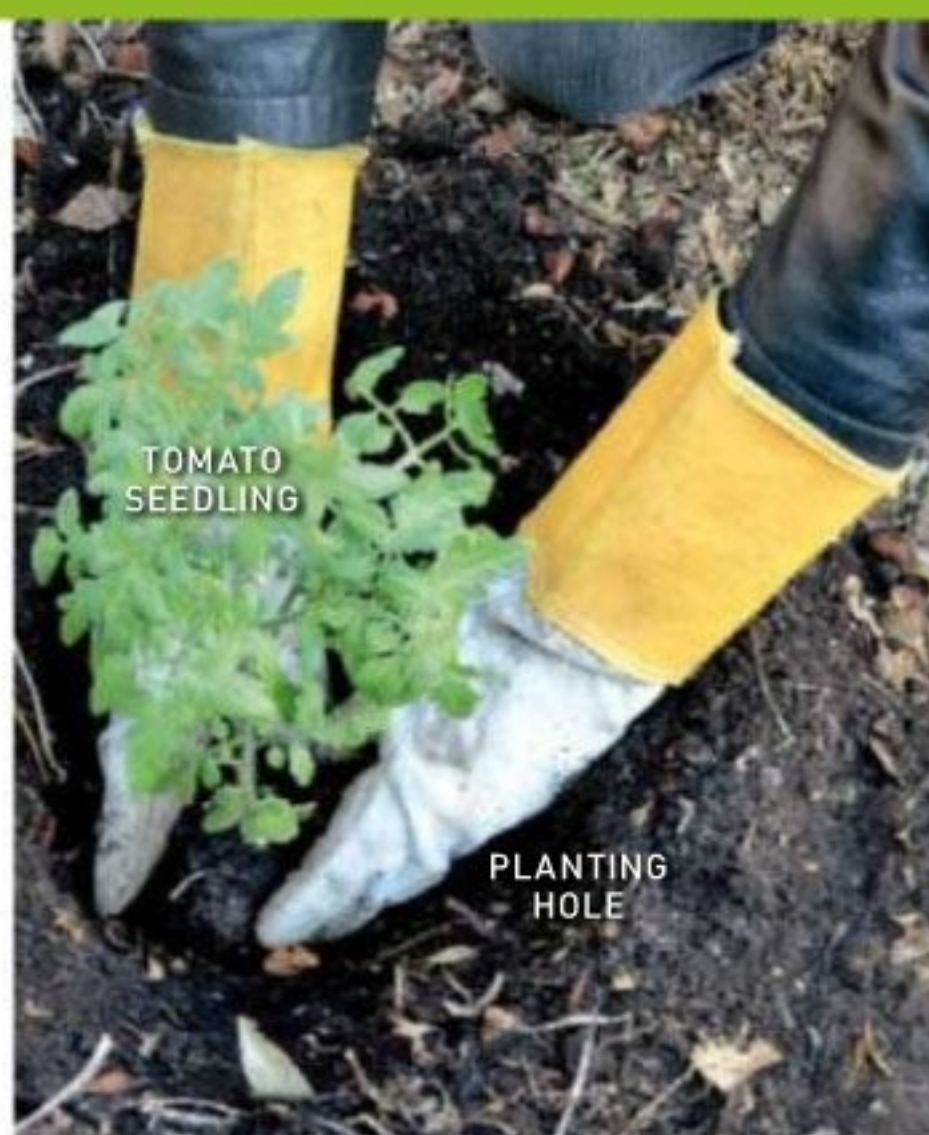
Transplant seedlings ▼



1 Prepare the soil

Add organic matter like compost, aged chicken manure or Dynamic Lifter to the soil and dig one-third of a cup of complete plant food per square metre into the garden bed one week before planting.

TIP Add dolomite to acidic soil before planting to prevent blossom end rot.



2 Plant the seedling

Position the seedling in the hole, burying the stem up to the first set of leaves, as tomatoes can produce extra roots from the stem. To plant up an entire garden bed, position plants about 600mm apart.

TIP To reduce the risk of disease, plant tomatoes in a different spot each year.



3 Stake the tomato

Add a 2m high timber stake to the bed, positioning it 100mm from the stem. Stake at planting time, as later on you can damage the root system. As the tomatoes grow, secure them to the stake for support using soft ties.

TIP Water in the seedling with Seasol to prevent transplant shock.

Raise tomato plants

Find the sunniest spot in your garden, as full sun is essential for tomatoes.

MULCH around the seedlings with lucerne hay or pea straw to help retain soil moisture.

WATER regularly and deeply, as erratic watering will cause the fruit to split. To prevent disease, water at the base of the plants, not overhead.

FEED when the first flower truss appears with a soluble plant food or a quality tomato fertiliser.

PICK tomatoes from the vine when they are ripe. Cut the stalk but leave the calyx attached.

In mild climates, you can harvest tomatoes for about five months if you stagger sowing for an early and late crop. ➤



Burnet's Phostrogen All Purpose Plant Food, about \$12 for 400g. burnets.co.nz



Tomatoes can keep cropping for months if planting is staggered.



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Common problems ▼

**SPLIT FRUIT**

Fruit on the vine splitting as it begins to ripen.

CAUSE Too much water or heavy rainfall after a dry period.

FIX During dry periods especially, water the plant regularly around the base of the plant so it is directed at the roots. Keep mulched.

**BLOSSOM END ROT**

The base of the fruit becomes sunken and blackened.

CAUSE Lack of calcium together with irregular watering.

FIX Add soluble lime to the soil before planting the seedlings and water regularly. Improve the soil's condition by adding organic matter.

**TOMATO RUSSET MITE**

Lower green leaves become a dull grey and eventually turn brown and papery.

CAUSE Small yellowish mites that are difficult to see.

FIX Spray with Yates Nature's Way Insect & Mite Killer Natrasoap Gun when the symptoms first appear.

**VERTICILLIUM WILT**

Lower leaves wilt and dry out and eventually the whole plant dies.

CAUSE A soil-inhabiting fungus that enters through the root hairs.

FIX Remove and destroy infected plants. Don't plant members of the *Solanaceae* family in the same spot for at least three years.

**TOMATO CATERPILLAR**

Holes appear in the fruit and the young growth is eaten.

CAUSE Fruit has been attacked by the tomato caterpillar, also known as a fruit worm.

FIX Apply tomato and vegetable dust as soon as you notice caterpillars attacking the young leaves.

**FRUIT FLY**

Tiny holes can be seen in the fruit.

CAUSE Flies lay eggs under the tomato skin and the hatching larvae feed their way to the centre, causing the fruit to rot.

FIX To detect this pest, use a fruit fly bait early in the season. Destroy any infested fruit, don't compost it. ➤



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SALSA

In the kitchen

Tomatoes are kitchen all-stars that can be eaten fresh or cooked and are one crop that will never go to waste, as any excess can be made into a pasta sauce and frozen for later use.

Make a salsa with 450g chopped tomatoes, one clove of chopped garlic, chopped basil leaves and olive oil. Serve with fish or on a baked potato.

For a simple starter, grill slices of eggplant, put each one on a plate and add a slice of mozzarella and tomato, then top with a basil leaf.

Stuff large tomatoes with rice and other fillings, and use cherry varieties for salads with baby bocconcini.

Tomatoes, olives and goat's cheese make an easy, but tasty, savoury tart.



SAUCE



Prawn, tomato and basil tagliatelle

PREPARATION TIME 40 mins

COOKING TIME 10 mins

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

750g tomatoes
1 tablespoon finely chopped basil
1½ tablespoons white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons olive oil
500g raw prawns, peeled and deveined, tails intact
250g fresh tagliatelle pasta
3 cloves garlic, crushed
Basil leaves, to garnish

1 CUT A CROSS in the base of the tomatoes, cover with boiling water and leave for 1-2 minutes, then peel off the skins. Cut into quarters and scrape the seeds into a nylon sieve set over a large bowl. Strain as

much of the juice as possible into the bowl and discard the seeds.

2 DICE THE TOMATO flesh and add to the juice, then stir in the basil, vinegar and 1 tablespoon of the oil. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and set aside.

3 PUT THE PASTA in a saucepan of boiling salted water and cook according to the packet instructions.

4 MEANWHILE, heat the remaining oil in a large non-stick frying pan over high heat. When hot, season the prawns and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the garlic to the pan and stir-fry for a further 2-3 minutes or until the prawns turn pink.

5 DRAIN THE PASTA and toss into the tomato vinaigrette. Stir in the cooked prawns and the oil from the pan. Garnish with basil and serve.

In the garden

Make use of the shade cast by tomatoes to grow lettuce and rocket, so you can make fresh salads with produce you pick from the backyard.

Asparagus, parsley, cabbage, marigolds and chives are also good companion plants for tomatoes.

Tomato and basil go well together on the plate and in the garden.

For pest control, sow nasturtiums nearby as they lure aphids away from tomatoes.

If you don't have a vegie patch, simply scatter some tomato plants throughout your flowerbeds.



PARSLEY

MARIGOLD

CHIVES



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PICTURES ALAMY, THINKSTOCK

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Plant a hedge

Branch out by planting a living boundary wall as a cost-effective, easy-to-maintain alternative to a fence

WORDS LEE DASHIELL

Hedges can be grown from a multitude of shrubs and used for screening, defining areas of the garden or creating formal spaces.

They can be clipped into various shapes or left to grow naturally.

Deciding which plant to use depends on the required purpose, but look for varieties with a dense growth habit.

Types with small leaves on short stems, foliage all the way to the ground and ones that sprout bushy growth after pruning make an effective barrier.

Other things you should give careful thought to when choosing a suitable hedging plant is the colour of the foliage and the flowers, the maximum height and width it will reach, the speed of growth and the growing conditions. ➤



A hedge provides privacy and shelter while adding colour and beauty to a garden.

Planting a hedge

To grow a hedge, the plants need to be spaced about a quarter of their maximum growing width apart. So if they will eventually grow to about 2m wide, then plant them 500mm apart.



1 PEG OUT A STRINGLINE so the plants are in a straight line. Mark the positions of the end plants, then evenly space the remaining plants along the stringline, a quarter of their maximum growing width apart.



2 DIG A HOLE about 300mm deep for each plant, then fill the holes with water using a garden hose to create a slurry. Add compost and a slow-release fertiliser to the hole and mix with the water.



3 REMOVE EACH PLANT from its pot and tease out the roots so they grow outwards. Plant, then form a hollow in the soil around the base to stop the water running off. Water thoroughly a few times a week until established.

PICTURES LEE DASHIELL



Prune to shape

The uneven V-shaped growth of this hedge plant means that it needs to be clipped before it is planted. If left unpruned, it will become stalky and there will be bare patches.

Cutting off the top half of the longer stem so it is level with the shorter one will make the bush grow denser, and consistent pruning will ensure it thickens up.

To encourage the young plants to become even denser as they grow, you can pinch out the tip of each new shoot by hand.

Keeping a hedge in shape will require seasonal maintenance. It's not recommended to trim an even hedge without using a guide, as it most likely won't be straight when you step back from the hedge to check.

Instead, tie a stringline at the desired height and use that as a guide. Check for accuracy with a spirit level.



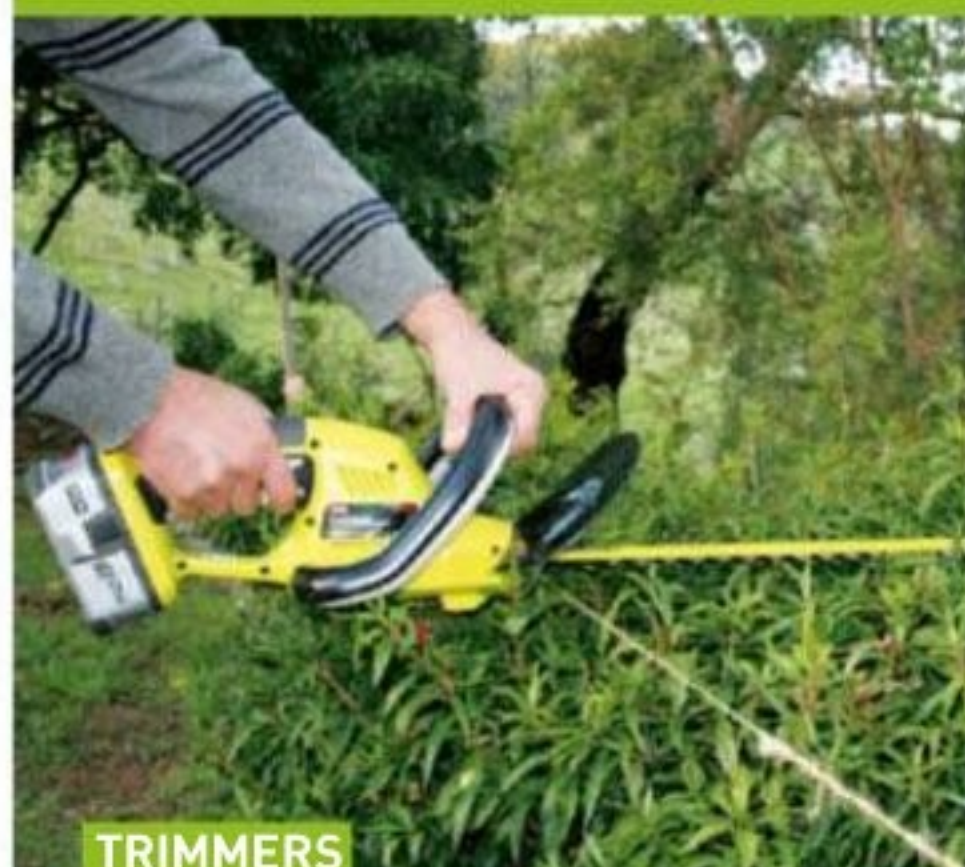
The right tools will make the job much easier. Use a large hedge trimmer to trim the hedge, switching to a handheld trimmer for any hard-to-reach or tricky sections. ➤

After

Trimming the stems helps the plant grow evenly and thicken up.


RYOBI.
18V ONE+


Tools for trimming ▼



TRIMMERS

Cordless trimmers are ideal for a large garden, as you don't have to worry about cutting through the cable. This Ryobi One+ 18V Cordless Hedge Trimmer, \$119 unit only (ryobi.co.nz), is part of the power tool range that only needs one set of batteries and has a dual-action blade so there's less vibration. It cuts branches up to 10mm thick.



SHEARS

To trim your hedge manually, use curvy-bladed shears, which cut thicker stems without tearing and damaging them. These Cyclone Wavy Edged Hedge Shears, about \$53 (cyclone.com.au), have a Teflon-coated upper blade and hard chrome lower blade to ensure an easy, clean cut. Wipe with a well-oiled cloth after each use.



SHAPERS

For tricky areas or creating shapes in a hedge, a smaller handheld tool will help to give a professional finish. The Bosch ASB 10.8V Li-ion Cordless Shrub Shear, \$239 (bosch-garden.co.nz), has a comfy grip and high-quality, laser-cut blades. The blades can be easily interchanged with a grass shear blade for accurate lawn edging.

PICTURES LEE DASHIELL



ryobi.co.nz

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Clipping an artwork

John Brooker has cleverly clipped away at this hedge for 10 years to create an incredible fairytale monster, complete with flaring nostrils and pointed teeth.

John, who lives in a cottage in the grounds of Frizzleton Farm in Norfolk, UK, has even sculpted a massive pair of wings and six sets of legs.

It has taken him nearly a decade to perfect the gigantic mythical beast, adding extra details to it as the hedge has grown over the years.

He spends hours trimming the hedge, which measures 30m long and stands 6m high, to keep it in shape.

The dragon runs down the side of his garden and often gives ramblers that are trekking along the nearby footpath a big surprise.

'A dragon was the last thing I expected to spot in the Norfolk countryside. I got rather a shock when I came face to face with it,' says walker Paul Bevvings. ➤



PICTURE AUSTRAL

A CUT ABOVE

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Hedging plants

Conifer

These make excellent evergreen screening plants. They can be clipped into a formal shape or left to grow naturally.

Box

Due to its dense growth habit, box can be pruned with sharp edges to make a compact hedge. It's often used in formal gardens.

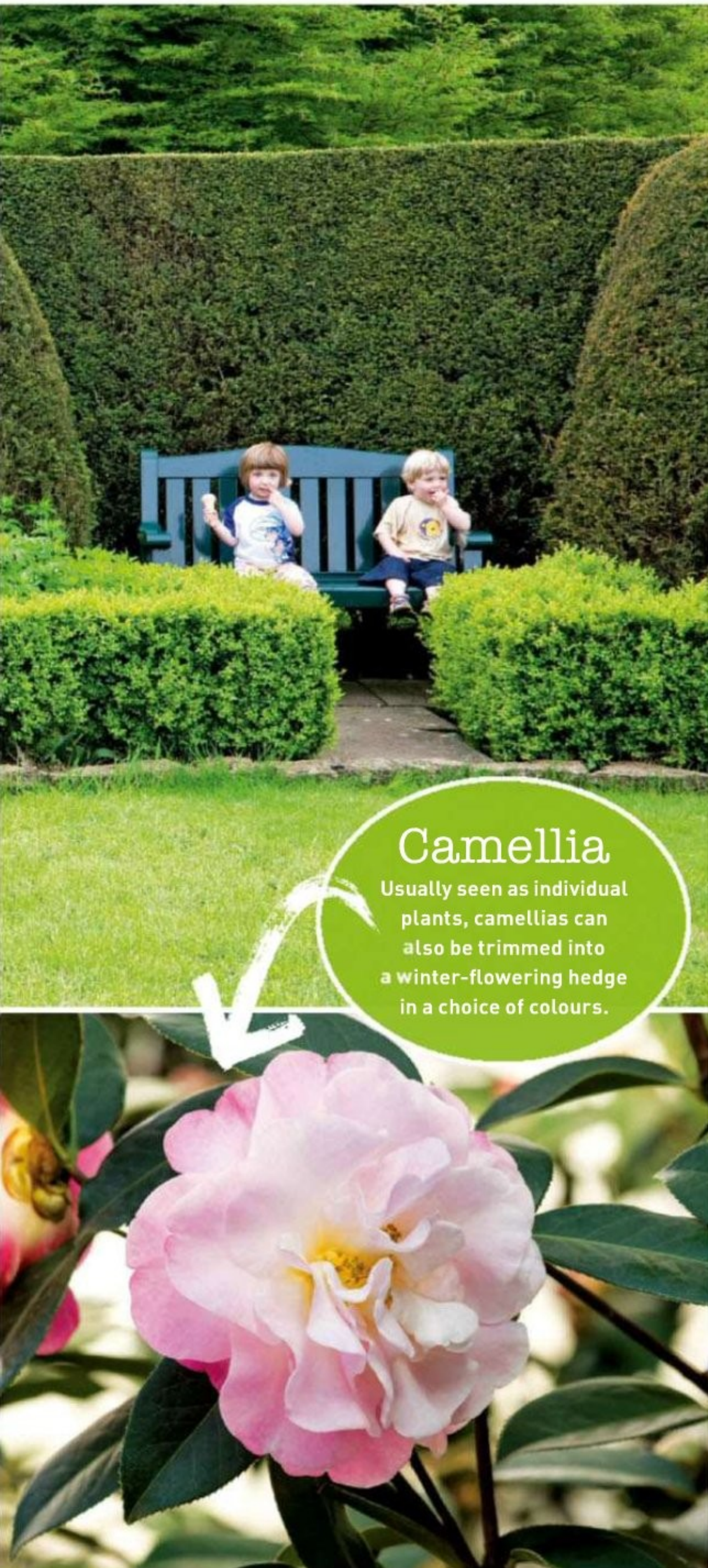
Photinia

For a big screening hedge, this grows quickly and densely, if clipped correctly. In spring, new growth glows red before turning dark green.

Abelia

With its clusters of small trumpet-shaped flowers and dense, bushy growth, abelia brings blooms and scent to the garden.

PICTURES ALAMY, THINKSTOCK



Camellia

Usually seen as individual plants, camellias can also be trimmed into a winter-flowering hedge in a choice of colours.

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Let it hydrate ▼

Water is key to a healthy lawn in the warmer and drier months. The challenge is using water in an efficient and effective way.

Hosing the lawn results in poor water penetration, causing shallow-rooted grass that is less able to cope with hot conditions.

The best time to water is in the cool of early morning. Water slowly and deeply for best effect, using an oscillating sprinkler with adjustable coverage and attaching a timer to your tap.

To get the most from every drop, apply a soil wetting agent to improve water penetration.

And don't waste water with an old leaky hose. Check the fittings connect properly and choose one with a high kink resistance.



Scotts Lawn Builder + Wetting Agent, about \$45 for 2.5kg.
tuigarden.co.nz

For a lush carpet of summer grass, weed, feed and air the lawn in spring.

Love your lawn

Get your grass ready to survive and thrive in a long, hot summer with our ultimate guide to spring lawns

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

So what kind of lawn do you have at your place? The bowling green perfect front yard, the kids-and-dogs patch out the back or just a tiny serene green square to lay upon and gaze up at the sky?

Whatever the type, large or small, perfect or patchy, you're a member of the great Kiwi lawn-owners' club.

It's no secret we've had a long-term love affair with lawns and that they have almost iconic status in our suburban culture, but there's no denying they do take a bit of work.

If you want your lawn to be lush for the warmer months, you'll want to lavish it with TLC during spring.

After a long, hard winter, grass can need a bit of work to bring it back to a picture-perfect state.

It's not complicated and for most average-sized lawns, it may take nothing more than a few hours' work and a shift in mowing habits.

Here's the *Handyman* guide to caring for your spring lawn to keep it loving you back.



SPRINKLER



Turf has many more benefits than just being soft underfoot.

Living with turf

While we all try to save water in the garden, we all like having a bit of grass, so here are lots of reasons to love your lawn, guilt-free.

■ **GRASS PRODUCES OXYGEN** and absorbs CO₂, with a 15 x 15m lawn generating enough O₂ across a year for a family of four.

■ **THE ROOT MASS** of a lawn acts as a filter, trapping excess nutrients and other materials to prevent them reaching waterways.

■ **A HEALTHY LAWN** of 450sqm can absorb more than 11,000L or 25mm of rain without significant runoff, reducing erosion and the burden on stormwater systems.

■ **TURF CAN ABSORB** as much as four times the amount of carbon as your mower puts out.

■ **GRASS DAMPENS SOUND** and reflected noise levels from a lawn can be 20% lower when compared with hard surfaces. ➤

Feed it well

If you do nothing else to your lawn in spring, at least fertilise it. Feeding grass can actually help solve weed problems, as your lawn may be able to out-compete the weeds once it starts more vigorous growth.

There is a huge range of fertilisers available, so ask your local garden centre or lawn specialist for advice.

The two simplest tips are to select a modern fertiliser that has a low weight per square metre application rate, and one that only needs to be applied two or three times a year.



Daltons Premium Lawn Fertiliser,
about \$44 for 8kg. daltons.co.nz

Give it air

Over time, especially in areas of heavy foot traffic, the soil beneath turf can become compacted.

This reduces the movement of water, air and nutrients to the grass roots, leading to tired-looking turf and worn or dead patches. The simple way to solve compaction is aeration.

Once you have aerated your lawn, you may also want to evenly rake in coarse washed river sand or fine top-dressing mix. This fills the voids created by the aeration and ensures a longer-lasting effect.

In small grassed areas, a garden fork and a bag of top-dressing mix or sand is all you need.

For a large lawn, you can hire a spiked lawn aerator. Simply fill it with water, then push or drag it around the lawn.



Also consider the reasons for compaction. If it's heavy use and general wear-and-tear, you may need to repeat this aeration process every spring.

But the problem may be your soil. Clay soils are more prone to compaction and as the wear continues, it worsens.

Gypsum is a naturally derived product that works to break up clay that is tough to handle, so add some when you aerate the affected area.



Winstone Gypsum Clay Breaker,
about \$16 for 8kg. daltons.co.nz

Be fertiliser savvy ▼

If you've regularly used traditional synthetic fertilisers on your lawn, the pH of the soil can become acidic and less than ideal for lawn growth.

This acidification reduces the effectiveness of fertilisers, which often leads to more frequent use and increased acidity.

One way to break this fertiliser cycle is to apply lime or dolomite. This will help correct the pH of the soil as well as supply calcium, which assists with healthier lawn growth.



Yates Gro-Plus Garden Lime, about \$6 for 3kg.
yates.co.nz



Daltons Big Value Dolomite,
about \$15 for 8kg.

Dressing it up

To help grass grow strongly after top-dressing, feed it a week beforehand and water well. The day before, mow lightly and dethatch with a spring-tine rake to remove dead or loose material.

Buy bags for small areas or bulk-buy for a big yard.

Top-dressing mix is generally 70 or 80% fine organic matter with the remainder being clean sand.

Don't top-dress if it looks like rain or water straight after, as this creates a hard crust over the surface instead of washing it into the lawn. Water when new growth appears, after about a week.

Cover the area with top-dressing soil, spreading the mix to no deeper than 10-20mm. Let the mix dry, then rub it in with a soil spreader.



Cyclone Top Soil Spreader,
about \$62. cyclone.com.au



High-traffic areas can get compacted over time, so aerate turf in spring.

Aerate the soil ▼



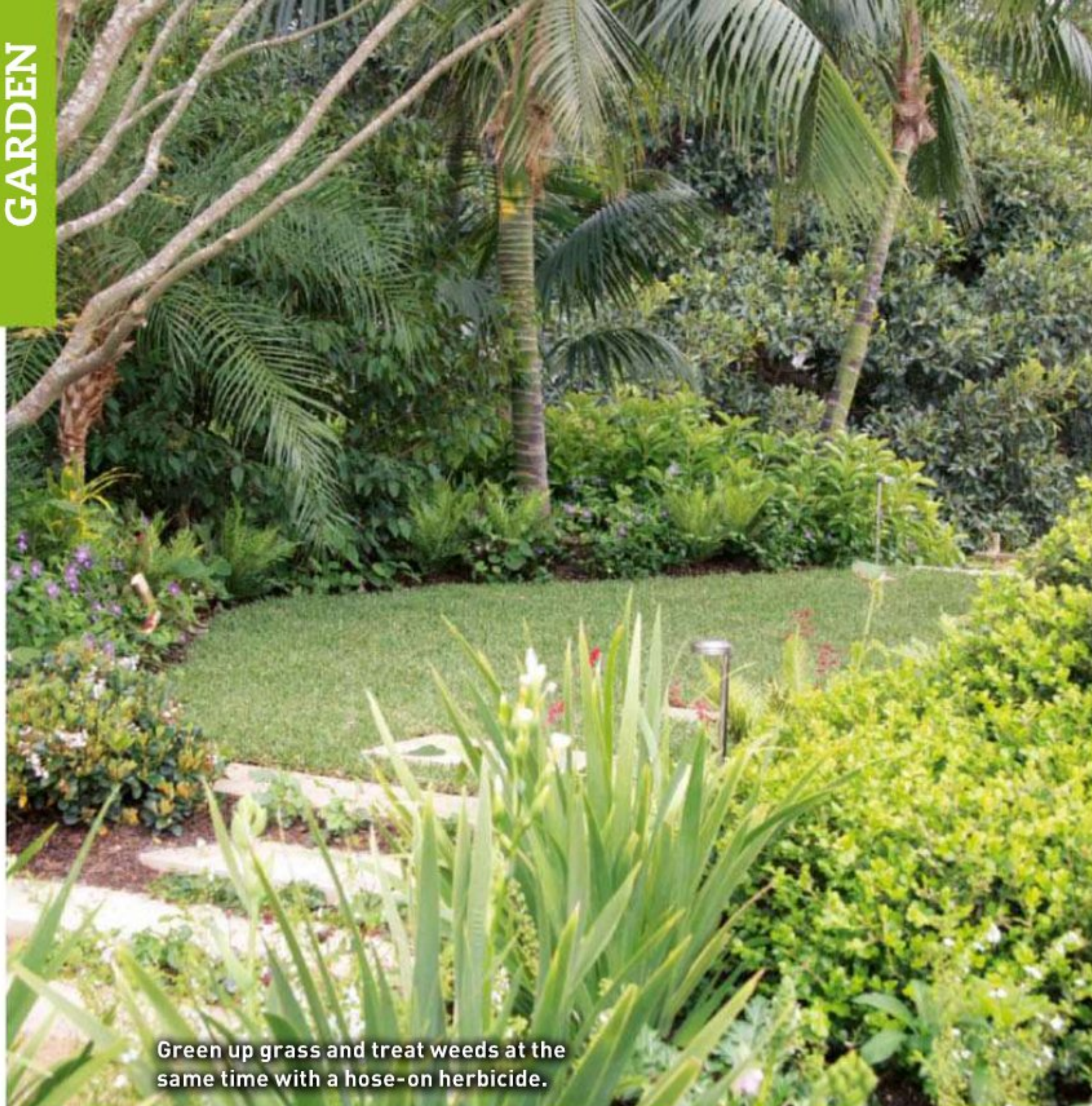
1 MAKE AERATION HOLES in the lawn by using your foot to push a garden fork into the soil to 50mm deep every 100mm, rocking it back and forth slightly.



2 COVER THE AREA with a suitable top-dressing soil or coarse washed river sand. Use the flat back of a landscape rake to spread the soil evenly over the aerated lawn.



3 RAKE THE LAWN to break up the cored plugs of grass, then water the top-dressing mix in well using the hose. **TIP** Water thoroughly after aeration, especially in hot, dry conditions. ➤



Green up grass and treat weeds at the same time with a hose-on herbicide.

Zap the weeds

Weeds don't just look bad, they also create problems. Broadleaf and spreading and running weeds can rapidly cover grass, while Onehunga weed prickles make a lawn unusable.

And any weed takes nutrients away from the grass. With lawns, prevention is key, as healthy grass will out-compete most weeds. But if they've taken hold, there are ways to deal with them.

For small lawns or a chemical-free option, simply dig them out with a weeding tool or daisy grubber.

It's important to get all the roots, so don't just grab the plant crown and tug. And avoid shaking the weed to stop the spread of seeds, tossing them in a bucket to dispose of later.

Spot-treating

When manual weeding isn't an option, spot-weeding with a suitable herbicide is the best approach for keeping chemical use to a minimum.

Glyphosate or vinegar-based herbicides can be useful, but be aware

when using them that overspray can damage areas of surrounding lawn.

Herbicide can be applied directly to weeds using an old paintbrush or a special-purpose device such as a Yates Zero Weeding Brush.

Or use a hooded spray head, as there are attachments to suit many popular garden sprayers. But even with a hood, spot-spraying is likely to result in some damage to surrounding grass.

Use a selective spot-spray pack like Yates RTU Weedkiller For Lawns.

Selective herbicides

For broadleaf weeds, clover and other lawn nuisances, use hose-on or granular Weed 'n' Feed products.

For large areas, use a concentrated herbicide-only product and mix it yourself. As their effect is governed by dosage, apply only the recommended rates or you may damage the lawn.

If you don't have a pressure sprayer or for small patches of turf, attach a sprinkle bar to your watering can.

TIP Spray when the air is still. ➤



Common invaders

You can mow down large weeds when cutting the grass, but don't attempt it if they've gone to seed or you risk spreading the seeds over your entire lawn.



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Mow grass longer and more often in the warm months to keep it healthy.

Keep it long

As the weather heats up, it's time to put the mower back to work. In spring and summer a longer lawn is healthier, so set the mower a click or two higher.

You may be tempted to mow grass very low to reduce the need to cut it as often, but this only leads to scalped patches and a faster-growing lawn as it tries to recover from the damage.

Longer grass leaf blades insulate roots more effectively from high temperatures and feel better underfoot.

Through the cooler months, you should have been using the catcher on your mower and now, with the warmer weather, it's time to switch to mulching mode.

As you mow, the clippings fall back into the grass thatch, providing natural organic nutrients, and also work as fine mulch, helping to conserve moisture.

Give the mower a wash and service in spring, as dirty or dull blades damage grass, which takes time to recover and often turns brown at the top.



WD-40 Multi-Use Aerosol Lubricant, \$10 for 337ml. eproducts.co.nz

Choose a mower ▼



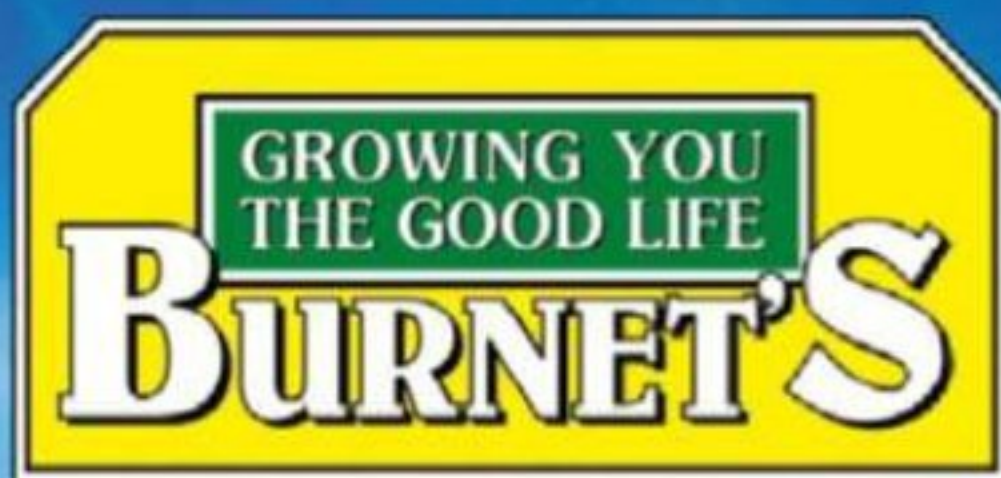
If mulching is important, choose the Makita 4-Stroke Mower, \$528, with a 140cc Briggs & Stratton engine. It's the ideal walk-behind lawnmower for medium-sized grassed areas. makita.co.nz



Tackle large yards in comfort with a lawn tractor. The petrol-powered M19542H model from McCulloch, \$3798, is simple to operate and can be fitted with an optional mulching and collection kit. mcculloch.com



For the ultimate in environmentally responsible lawn mowing and incidental exercise, go old-school in a small garden with a Flymo H40 Push Lawn Mower, \$175, with optional grass catcher. flymo.com



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5

fascinating
pollination facts**Common carriers**

Birds, bees, butterflies, beetles, moths, flies, wasps and small mammals are all common pollinators. Other animals, as well as the wind, can carry pollen from flower to flower as well.

Spread the word

You can protect pollinators by planting native flowering plants, reducing your use of pesticides and telling others of the danger these animals and insects are in through chemical misuse, loss of habitat and diseases.

Pollen movers

The movement of pollen from one flower to another flower of the same species is an essential step in the fertilisation of plants and the development of the fruit and seeds needed for reproduction.

Birds and the bees

An overwhelming proportion of at least 75% of flowering plants depend on pollinators for fertilisation. It's a good reason to encourage the birds and the bees into your garden to help it flourish.

Everyday essentials

About a thousand plants we rely on worldwide for the production of goods require pollinators. These include those grown for food, beverages, spices and medicines. Think coffee, chocolate and tequila!



DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE OF

Handyman

ON SALE
8 DECEMBER

Barbecue

Create an outdoor kitchen with a built-in BBQ and make mouth-watering recipes.

PLUS Easy ways to keep the barbie clean.

Tools

Check out the best equipment and gadgets to tidy up your backyard.

PLUS Routers and planers for the workshop.

Garden

Install drip-line irrigation, make hanging baskets and grow salad greens.

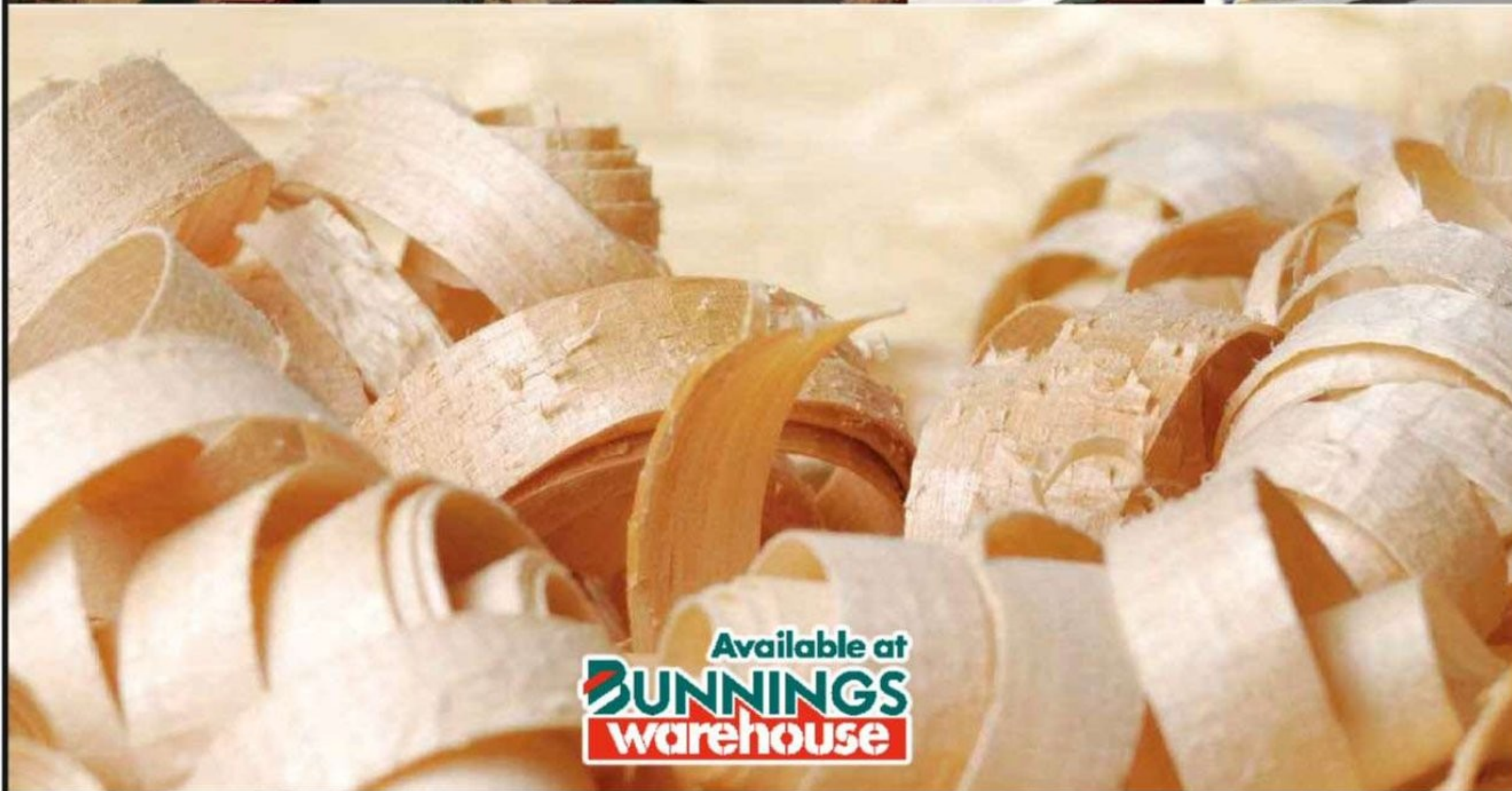
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