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NEW ZEALAND

Handyman

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& SPRING BULBS

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FRUIT TREES NOW

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A TERRARIUM
STEP BY STEP

15 SMART
HEATING
SOLUTIONS

Get this floor
in 3 easy steps
page 60

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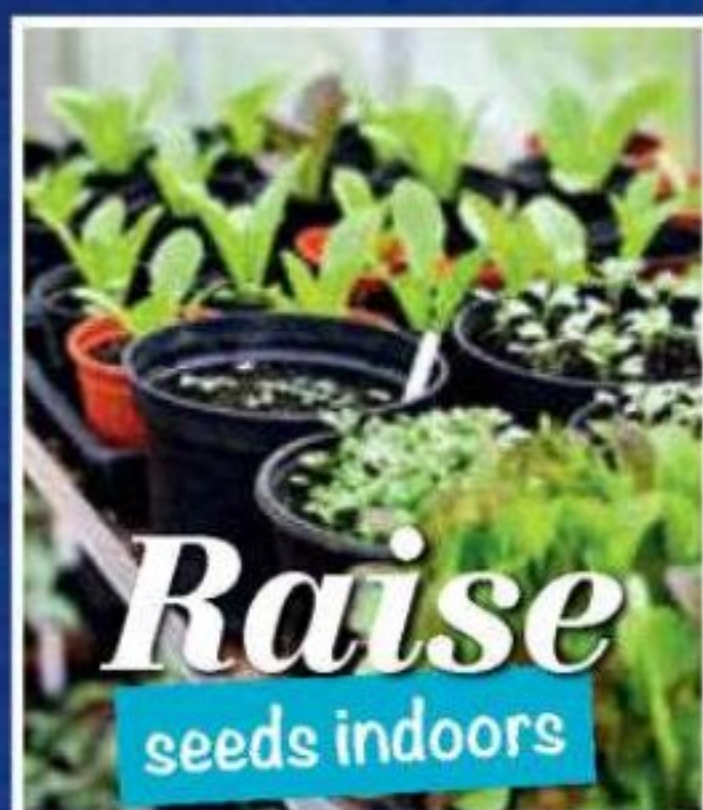
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WARDROBE & GARAGE

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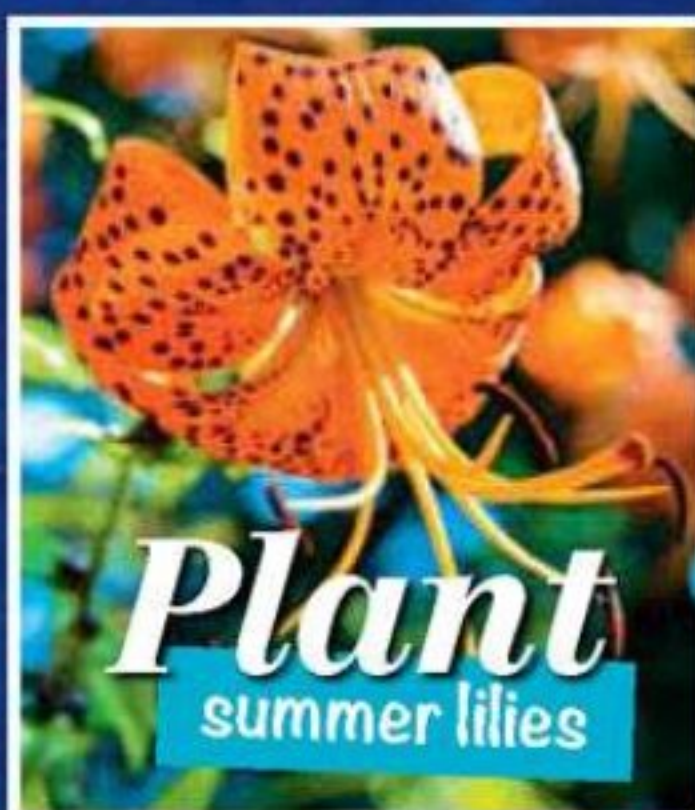


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Raise
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Plant
summer lilies



Winter decks for outdoor living

page 72



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STUART SCOTT

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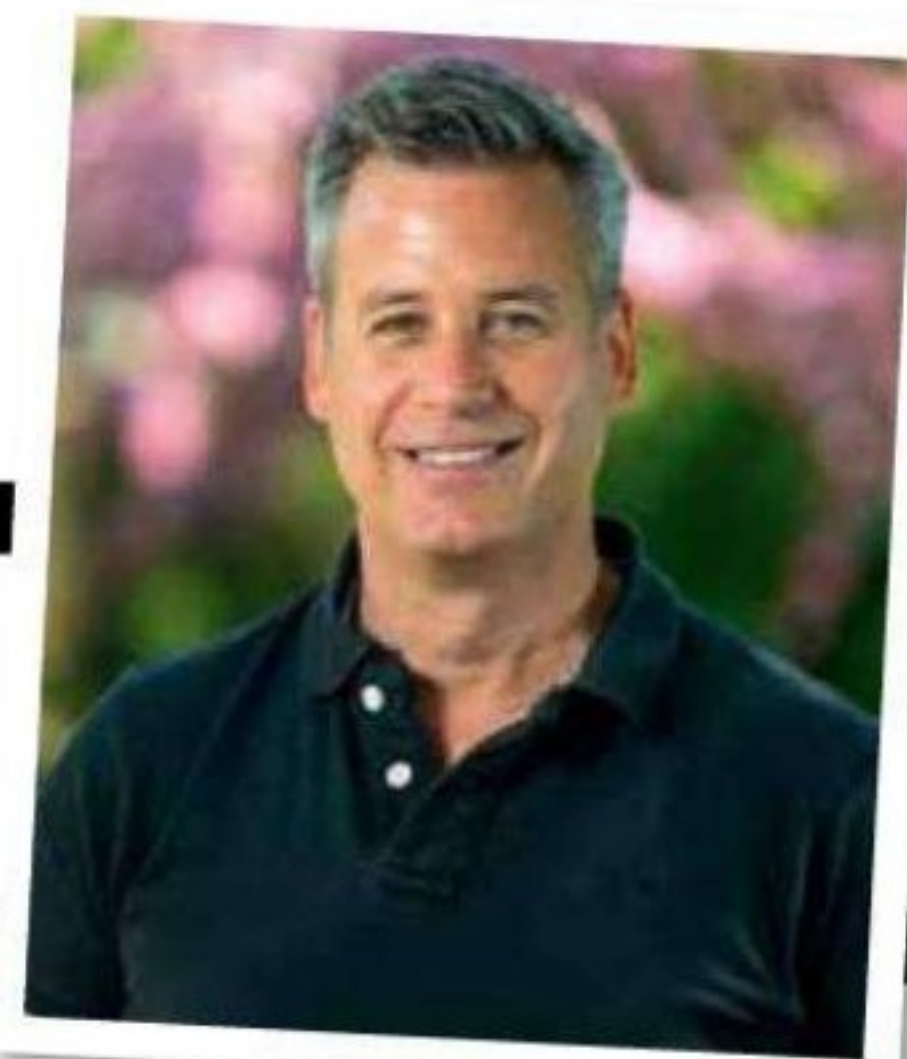
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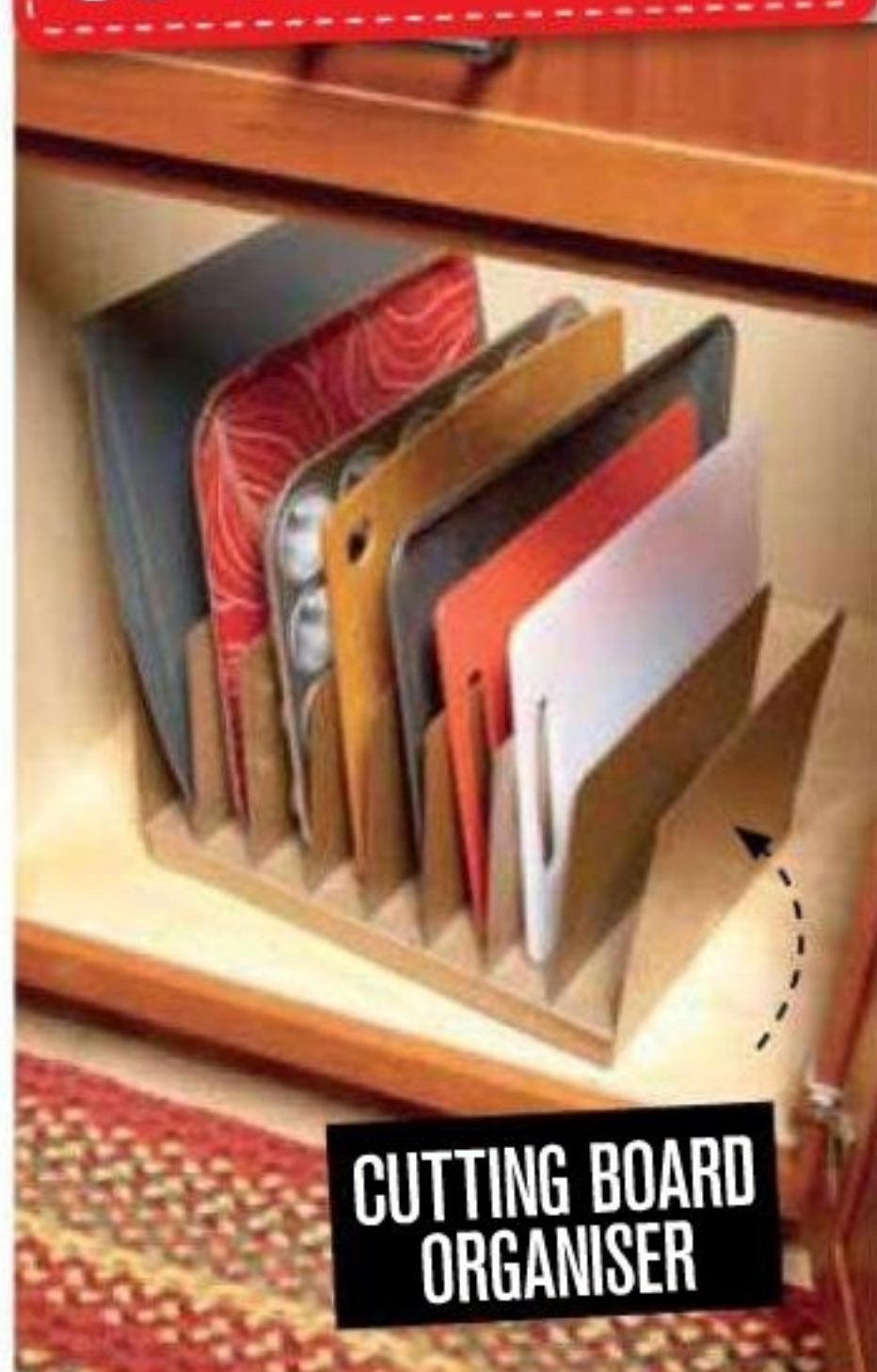


THIS ISSUE

EDITOR'S LETTER



HANDY HINT OF THE MONTH



CUTTING BOARD ORGANISER



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They say a cluttered house is a sign of a cluttered mind.

If this sounds a bit like someone you know, it's easy to fix.

When you can clearly select what is essential, non-essential and rubbish, you can quickly dictate what to keep and what to throw out.

Kitchen makeovers

This issue of *New Zealand Handyman* is dedicated to helping you get the house in shape with clever and easy storage solutions for the kitchen, wardrobe and workshop.

These projects are quick and simple to install and look fabulous. And now that your mind is less cluttered, you can focus on the things you enjoy.

As the kitchen is the hub of the home, you want to make sure it is as nice as it can be. So we hope you are inspired by our kitchen surface makeover story, on [page 26](#).

Cherie Barber also shows us three kitchens that she's transformed on very tight budgets, on [page 40](#).

And after comparing the before and after pictures, you'll agree what she's accomplished is tremendous.

Welcome to winter

Winter has arrived and we're sharing great ways to enjoy the cooler weather.

There are outdoor projects, such as growing from cuttings and seeds in the greenhouse, and how to build a simple cold frame, on [page 80](#).

Learn how to create kerb appeal with your house number, on [page 88](#).

And if it's colour you're after, we show you how to grow African violets, on [page 96](#), and force spring bulbs to grow indoors, on [page 110](#).

Enjoy the issue,

MANAGING EDITOR
LEE DASHIELL



PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Save yourself time and effort by using the P&N Quickbits TCT Cut-Smart Drill Bit which drills and countersinks without having to change tools (pandn.co.nz).

For use in cement sheet, timber, plastic and other materials, it has an adjustable depth stop for accurate control of the countersink depth.

The countersink is tungsten carbide-tipped and a clever nylon stop collar prevents the tool from marking the surface of the material you're working on.

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P&N Quickbits TCT Cut-Smart, \$48.



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HANDY STUFF

WINTER WARMERS

Keep the cold at bay this chilly season with these heating solutions

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT



Warming ways

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bunnings.co.nz



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mobilefun.co.nz



Foodie fire

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bunnings.co.nz



Toasty tones

Freestanding or mounted on a wall, the Akai Flat LED Glass Panel Heater, \$99, will bring both warmth and style to your home. With a 24-hour timer and adjustable thermostat, it's splash-proof so it can be installed in the bathroom.

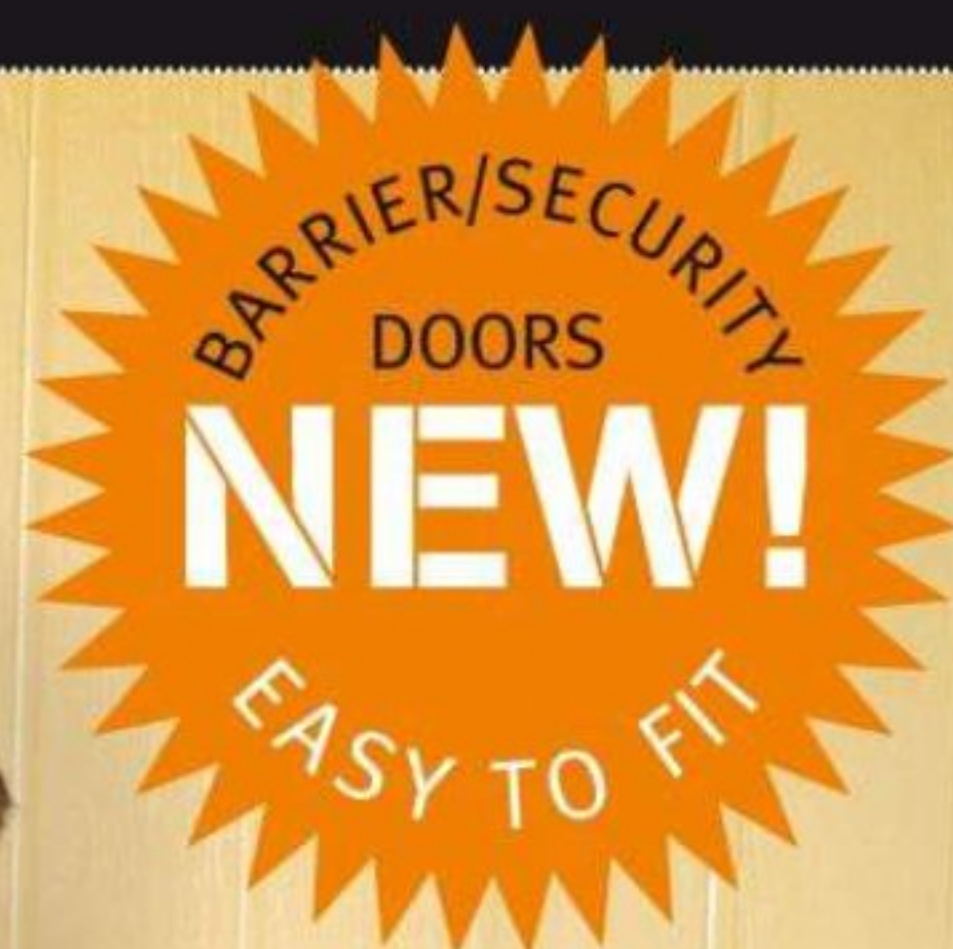
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Warm wrap

No heater? No problem when you have a plush Ovela Heated Electric Throw, \$67. It has detachable wires, nine heat settings, and automatically turns off after 10 hours. ➤

kogan.co.nz





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Party pleaser

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heatstrip.com.au



Backyard blaze

Organise a dinner party around a Cast Stone Fire Pit, \$249. The durable cast stone base surrounds a 760mm-diameter steel fire bowl that is topped with a domed safety screen to contain sparks.

bunnings.co.nz



Garden glow

Warm up around a Chapala Tibor Mexicana Chimenea, \$260. Measuring 570 x 1110mm and hand-crafted from Mexican clay, it brings a glow to outdoor living.

riverleagroup.co.nz

Cold cure

Put a Jumbuck Outdoor Patio Heater, \$139, in your pergola for a warm winter. Powdercoated, portable and weather-resistant, it features easy one-step ignition and has a built-in shut-off valve in case of an accident.

gasmate.com.au



Breeze barrier

Create a cosy alfresco room around your deck with Windoware Outdoor Bistro Blinds, available in various sizes from \$193. The heavy-duty, UV-protected PVC joins together with zips to block breezes and keep out the wet weather. ➤

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aegpowertools.co.nz

Mighty mitts

Skip fingerless gloves and wear functional Kathmandu Advection Gore Windstopper V3 Gloves, \$80. They feature a breathable mesh palm with a silicone grip, windproof fabric backs, stretch fleece cuffs and a touchscreen compatible fingertip.

kathmandu.co.nz



Frosty fix

Find relief from cold feet when working in the winter garden with Skellerup Red Band Gumboot Socks, \$18. They have a special elastic support that prevents them from slipping down your legs.

skellerup.co.nz



Cool cover-up

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What's new

Indoor projects are the way to go this winter. Install insulation, do a spot of plumbing or paint your way through the cold weather. Whatever the project, get it sorted at Bunnings Warehouse.



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Mould Stop Primer, made by Zinsser, is a fungicidal protective coating that allows you to paint over and kill mould, mildew and odour causing bacteria. The formula contains antimicrobial which prevents these nasties from growing on the film. This paint is perfect in bathrooms, office buildings, factories and more. Plus, the primer is waterproof too. From **\$39.97**

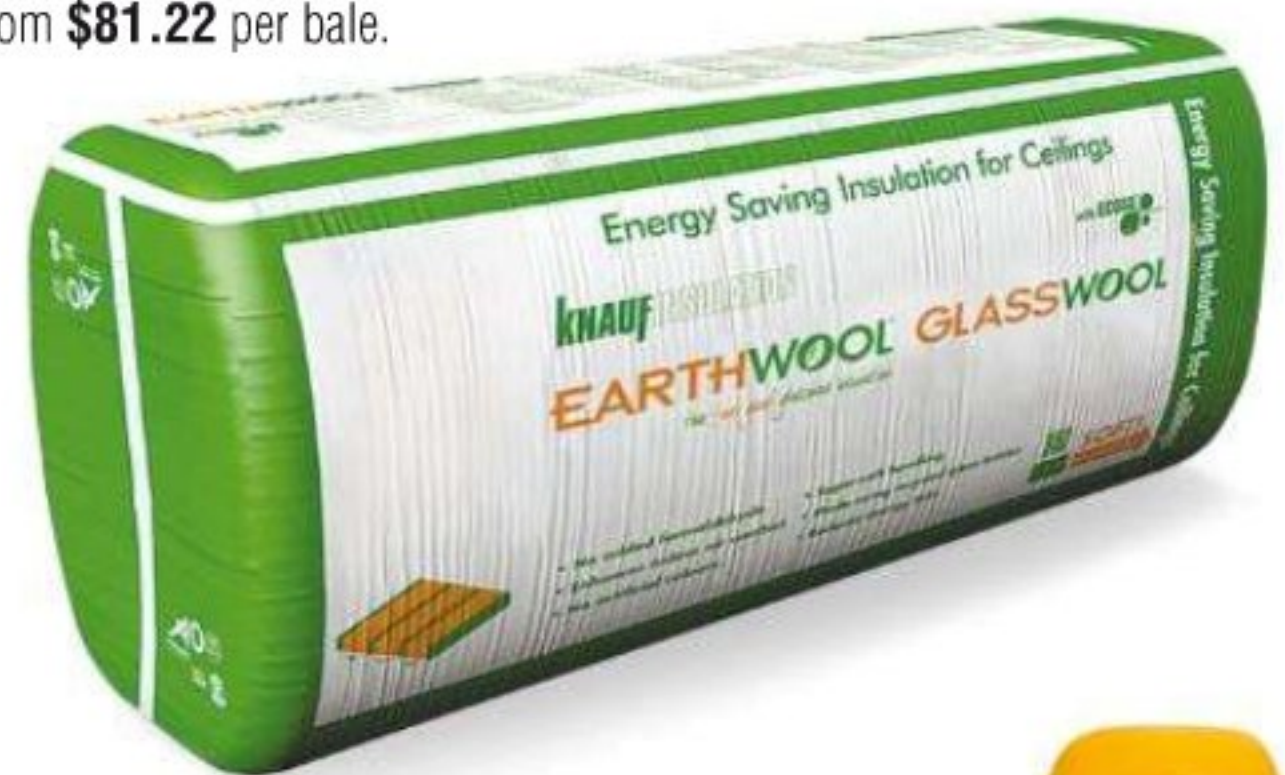


SAND FREE FILLER

Polyfilla's Small Interior Crack Filler Spray allows you to tidy up minor cracks and imperfections quickly. This is a broad wall filler that comes in an aerosol format. Simply spray, smooth off and walk away. Easy application means easy clean up. It also dries in 10 minutes – that's super quick. **\$16.97**

ENJOY A WARMER WINTER

Earthwool Glasswool's R4.1 Ceiling Segment Insulation will help lock in the warmth this winter. Its super soft, easy to install and will save you money on your energy bill. It doesn't contain any formaldehyde and is made using recycled glass with ECOSE® Technology and is non-combustible, making it safe for the whole family. From **\$81.22** per bale.



SEAL IT

Stay on top of home maintenance with Polyfilla's Kitchen and Bathroom Crack Filler. Plug up holes and cracks where moisture is an issue like your laundry, bathroom and kitchen. This filler dries in 2-3 hours and is also water and mould resistant. From **\$15.97**



SAFE AND SECURE

Protect your home and loved ones with Protector Aluminium Security Doors. With black or white to choose from, they're guaranteed to match the colour of your home. These doors are also incredibly strong in construction and therefore able to withstand the wear and tear of everyday living. **\$350**



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SAFETY AT HEIGHTS

This super strong, dual purpose fibreglass ladder by Rhino has an industrial load rating of 150kgs. The fibreglass construction makes the ladder electrical safe, as well as the additional feature of non-slip treads to ensure your safety when working at heights. 1.8 – 3.3m **\$260**





CLEAN MODERN LOOK

The Amio Shower Mixer, made by Methven, has a clean design. It features concealed fixing screws for a cleaner chrome look. It's fitted with a quality ceramic cartridge for all round durability – and, like the Amio Sink Mixer & Amio Basin Mixer, it has a 20 year warranty. The shower mixer is ideally suitable for water pressures above 55kpa. It also has a WELs Mains rating of 3 star/low 4 star. **\$279**

A sleek new look



THE PERFECT MIX

Methven's Amio Basin and Sink Mixer's suit every home. With a 20 year warranty, they're designed for all round durability and longevity. These mixers are suitable for water pressures between 35-500kpa. They feature globally certified 450mm braided stainless steel hoses which increases flexibility and performance, whilst allowing for easy installation. They are also rated WELs Mains 3 star/low 4 star. From **\$299**

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EYE CATCHING KITCHEN

The Noir Black Granite Kitchen Sink will give your kitchen a sleek new look. Made from 77% quartz and 23% acrylic, it is extremely hard wearing and easy to clean. In fact, it will maintain its colour and resist scratches and stains for many years. This is an order only product. **\$348**

CLEAN STEAM

The 1300W 2in1 Steam Mop, made by Dirt Devil, is steam ready in 30 seconds. There's no messing around with this powerful Mop. It has a run time of 17 minutes, which is plenty of time to attack any mess. Its quick swivel capabilities and 6.1m chord allows it to get into tight spaces. It also has flexible edges to cover baseboards and floors at the same time. **\$99**



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FOR YOUR INSPIRATION ▶▶▶

GET INTO *THE* CUBE

A single-level house, untouched since the 70s, gets a modernist update without sacrificing simplicity

WORDS SITA SIMONS



ABOVE Located on a hill, the home is surrounded by mature trees and rolling green land. **RIGHT** Sharp angles and jutting features on the exterior align and take on a new perspective, depending on the vantage point.



Set on an 850sqm block, high on a hill, a cantilevered cube is the main feature of this modernist, architect-designed home.

'The site itself was amazing, but the existing single-storey structure didn't do it justice. I wanted to create drama with both the build and the interior,' says homeowner Munro Laing.

He wanted playfulness in form and for the view to be an integral part of the design. And, as they are a family of five, he also wanted lots of space.

But not too much space, says Munro, reflecting a growing move away from huge for the sake of it.

What was to be as big as possible were the windows, and the design was centred around the expanses of single-pane glass that flood the house with light and green outlooks.

'What we didn't want was a big white box, despite the fact that a cube is the dominant feature,' he says. ➤



Height and light

The original house was a one-storey pavilion, and that footprint remains. Entering via oversized glass doors, the space soars to a double-height ceiling.

A floating staircase with a glass balustrade leads to a mezzanine level and the cube extension. The grandness of the space is emphasised by the use of colour and unexpected features.

An angular recess by the stairs is painted deep aubergine and is reflected opposite on floor-to-ceiling pivoting panels that open to the lounge.

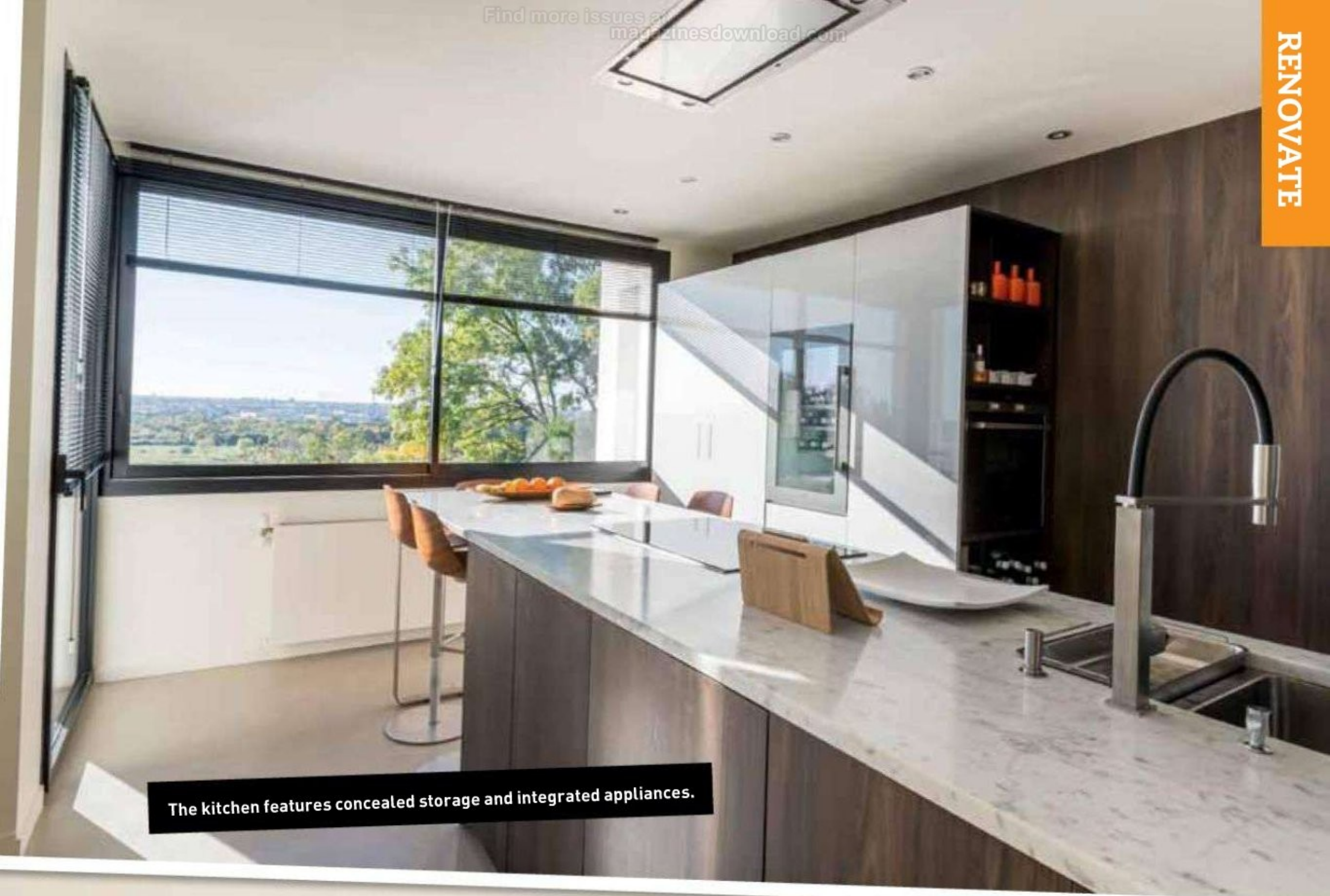
‘I just love the sense of theatre when you walk in. And actually the interior is not vast, but the height and light make it feel much bigger.

‘This is something I didn’t fully understand about good architecture. It’s not just about designing something that looks good, it also has to feel good and work emotionally.

‘We have never felt more at home than we do here,’ says Munro.

A grand entrance sets the visual tone and creates a sense of drama in this sleek, modern residence. **RIGHT** The minimalist dining room is visible from the front door and leads the eye to the amazing views outside.





The kitchen features concealed storage and integrated appliances.



Simple and streamlined

The view from the entry is directly into the dining room, a low key and simply arranged space housed in the original single-storey building.

An eight-seater dining table and high-gloss white chairs and storage unit are offset by a wallpapered shelving nook. It ties into the colour scheme and is an unexpected addition in the mostly neutral palette.

The eye is drawn outdoors through the doors and windows to the green landscape and the turquoise pool.

Continuing the minimalist look, the adjacent kitchen has a long island bench with storage clad in walnut and topped with Carrara marble. The island extends into a breakfast bar, positioned to take advantage of the views.

A high-gloss cabinet with an integrated fridge provides more storage, so every surface is kept clear, with the oven economically and ergonomically tucked into the end. ➤

Drama and glamour

The living area is a long space that opens off the entrance. The new extension provides a double-height ceiling, accentuated by the pivoting panels that can either close off the room or create a little more privacy.

Munro was concerned that the high ceiling may make the space feel ungrounded or cold.

'I understood we would have the recess under the mezzanine but didn't

anticipate the success of the stone cupboards, which look more like a sculpture than storage,' he says.

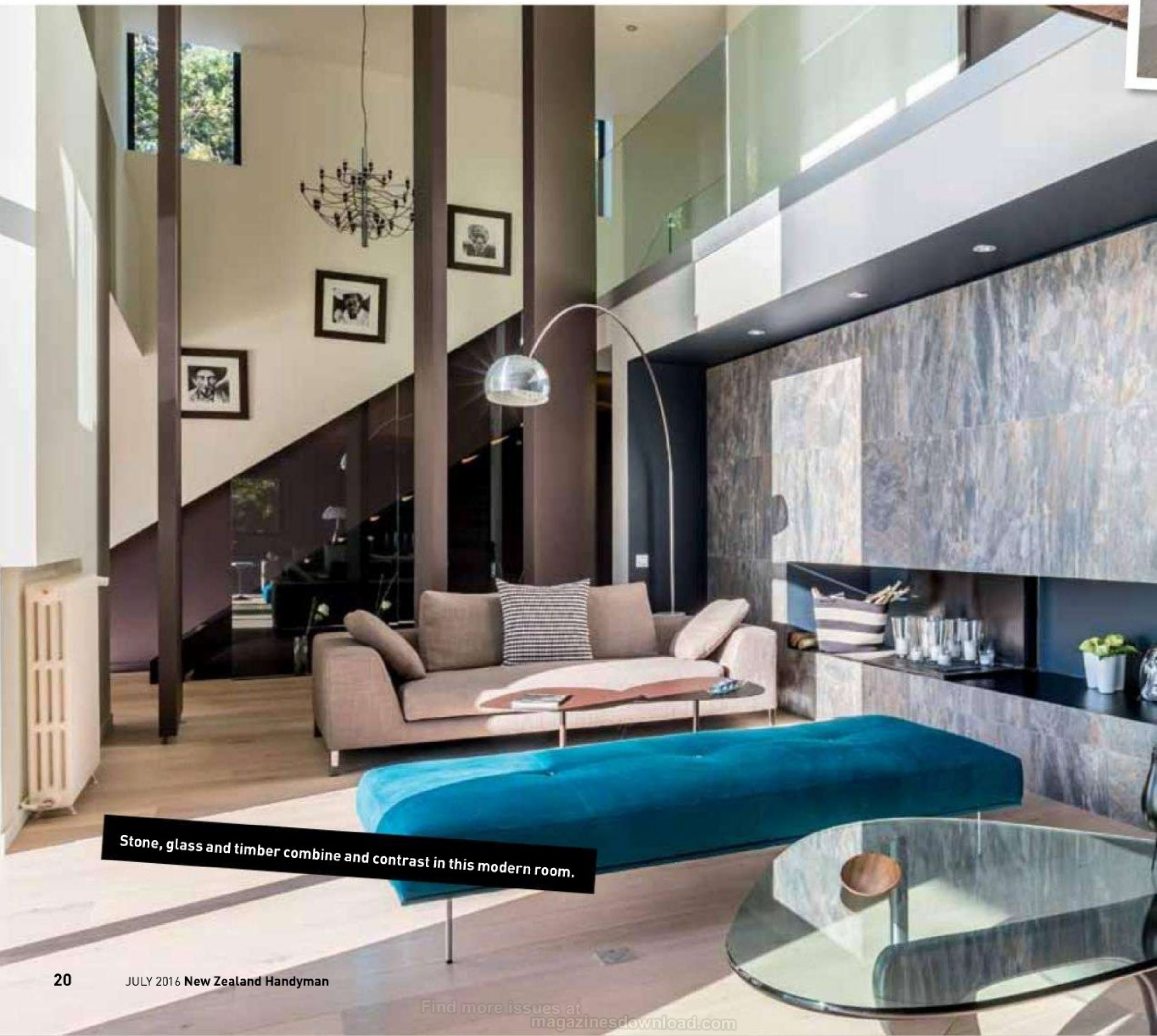
At the other end of the living space, the cantilevered cube forms a low and cosy zone. This area picks up the walnut element from the kitchen as cladding on the ceiling.

Lighting and sound are recessed into the cladding and, in keeping with the intimate feel, the back wall is painted a deep Prussian blue, which

serves to absorb some of the light and add depth to the room.

'I'm so happy with the contrasting materials in the living space. The room really does have many personalities, depending on where you decide to sit and what time of day it is,' says Munro.

Furnishings are few but very well chosen. Comfortable and unfussy in form, they allow for a variety of arrangements and activities without overwhelming the space. ➤



Stone, glass and timber combine and contrast in this modern room.



One end of the living space has a soaring double-height ceiling and is open to the new mezzanine level, which features glass balustrading. **RIGHT** An area with a low ceiling clad in walnut creates a cosy zone at the other end of the open-plan lounge.



A deep blue on the walls adds visual depth in a low-ceilinged space.



Choose an accent colour in a jewel tone to bring out the serenity of a neutral backdrop and natural materials such as stone and timber



The breathtaking view is the focal point in the master bedroom.



Two floating vanities feature in the bathroom.

Calming and luxurious

The master bedroom, which is more like a parents' retreat, is in the cube. The 70sqm area features stunning views front and back, benefiting from the floor-to-ceiling windows that open onto a Juliette balcony.

'There is little need to go over the top decorating this house, as the view often takes centre stage and the light moves through the day,' says Munro.

A large part of the success of this calming and undemanding home is plenty of storage, and most of it hidden. Clever planning allows for the integration of storage in every room.

Built-in robes look like a partition wall in the bedroom, opening on the

other side to create a dressing room.

And further down the hallway, the bathroom is more than just an ensuite.

With a view back up the hill, the green bush creates a scenic backdrop and imbues the bathroom with a sense of privacy and retreat.

A sage green wall is calming and plays into the Scandinavian theme suggested by the gloss vanity and a tribute to an Eero Saarinen tulip table.

The freestanding bath takes in the spectacular view, while an oversized shower makes room for two.

'It's these small details that impact how we feel and function. This is the home we always wanted and the house that fits this site,' says Munro. ➤



The secret to creating and maintaining a simple decorating scheme is to have concealed, built-in storage, and lots of it



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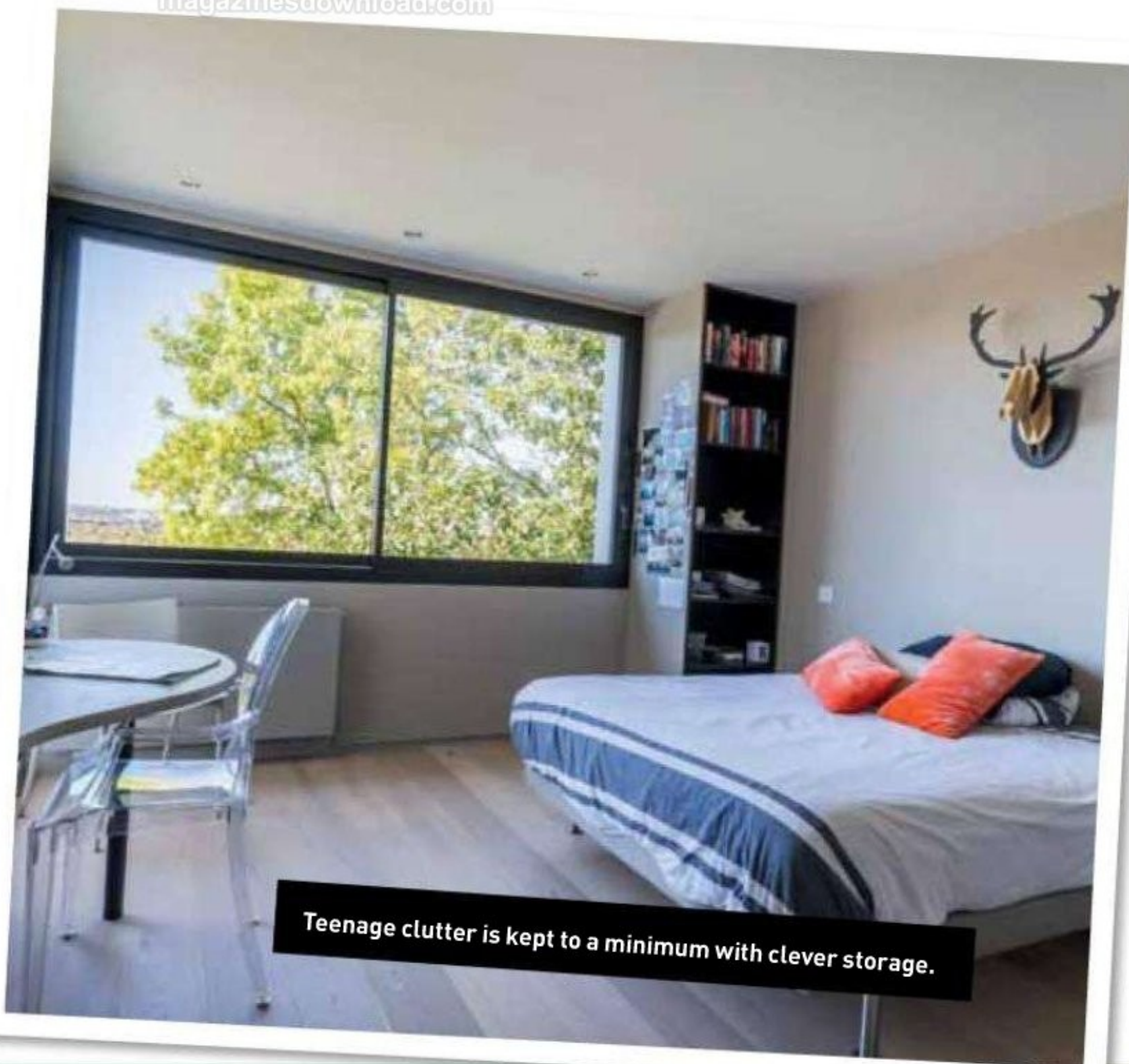
Three bedrooms and a bathroom extend off the cube in a loft space that was part of the original home.

Designed for teenagers, the bedrooms are practical and gender neutral. Earthy colours reflect the outdoor scene and built-ins provide extensive mixed storage.

'Having the kids in a separate part of the house is great for them and us, even more so because they have their own bathroom,' says Munro.

The design approach in the loft is simple, with success dependent on attention to detail, such as the grout lines of the wide-format bathroom tiles aligning perfectly with the vanities.

'It's quite extraordinary to have teenage children and not be living in a certain level of chaos, but this place never feels overwhelmed.'



Teenage clutter is kept to a minimum with clever storage.

Understated luxury, a soothing palette and leafy outlook turn the master bathroom into a haven for relaxation.



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KITCHEN REVIVAL

Give your dated kitchen a full facelift in just a weekend with these inexpensive and simple surface repairs

WORDS ASHLEIGH PERRIOTT

The kitchen plays a key role in the daily routine of a family, and is also often the hub of a party.

Whether you're looking to update or just repair it, fixing up the kitchen doesn't have to be a hard or expensive exercise.

Making it a showpiece again can be as simple as resurfacing your benchtop, replacing doors or installing a vibrant splashback.

Stainless steel benchtops require regular maintenance.



Create your own stone-look benchtop in just a few hours.

Benchtops

In a busy kitchen, countertops can show wear and tear fast, especially on an island bench. And as a focal point, a damaged island can really make a space look shabby or dated.

Resurfacing kitchen benchtops is a budget-friendly upgrade you can do yourself over a weekend.

To make over a laminate benchtop, replace any peeling edges and give the entire surface a light sand.

Repair any dents, then apply a laminate paint or use a special-effect coating to get the look of stone.



Metal magic

A stainless steel benchtop can add an industrial edge to complement a contemporary design. It can come with challenges, though, as rust and fingermarks can build up.

To remove rust and water spots from the bench or sink, make a paste of one part cream of tartar with a bit of lemon juice in a small bowl.

Apply the paste to the spots and let it soak before wiping clean with a cloth dipped in white vinegar. ➤

GET THE LOOK



Rust-Oleum Benchtop Coating System in Diamond White, \$236. haydn.co.nz



Hillmark SteelPower Stainless Steel Cleaner, \$14 for 250ml. hillmark.com.au



Vinyl is affordable and easy to install, repair and maintain.

Flooring

If your kitchen floor has burn marks, holes or tears, patch the damaged section with a new piece of vinyl.

You can buy a sample piece of vinyl, but make sure it shows any repeat patterns. If you can't match the flooring, find a hidden spot inside the pantry or under appliances and cut out a piece to use.



Irwin ProTouch Retractable Utility Knife, \$17. irwintools.co.nz



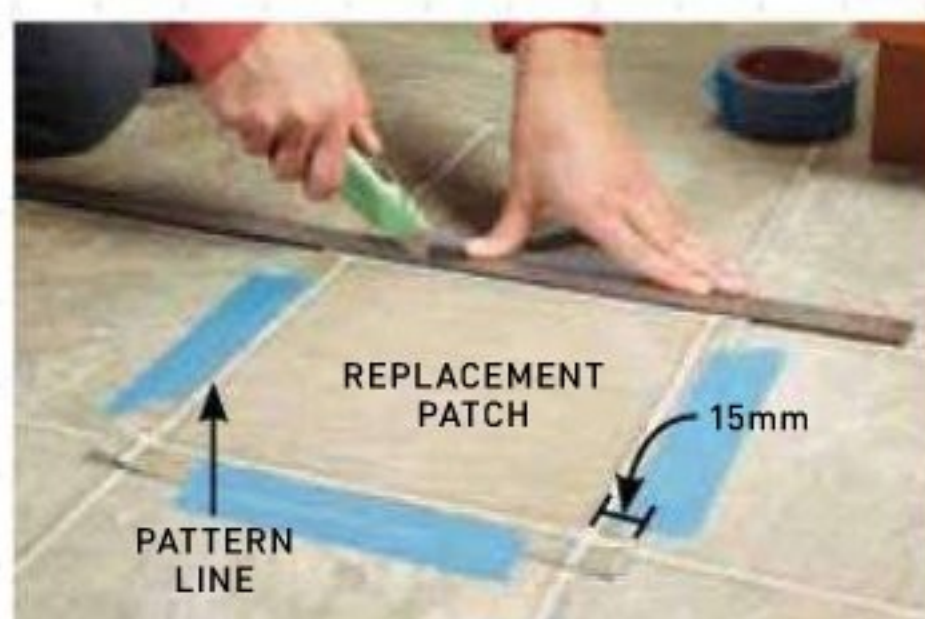
Cemix Floor Covering Adhesive, \$29 for 1L. cemix.co.nz

1 2 3



1 Cut the vinyl

Use a utility knife to cut around the damaged area, then loosen the adhesive in one corner using a hairdryer and lift with a putty knife. Cut a patch to match the damaged area, extending it 15mm around the pattern or grout line.



2 Position the patch

Tape the replacement patch over the damaged area with painter's tape and cut through the new patch with a sharp utility knife, following the pattern line. **TIP** Use a ruler to guide the knife to ensure smooth, straight cut lines.



3 Apply the adhesive

Remove the replacement patch and the damaged section and any backing material. Apply a vinyl-flooring adhesive with a small-notched trowel and secure the replacement patch, going over the seam with a vinyl floor sealer.



PICTURES (LEFT) ISTOCK (RIGHT) ALAMY

Acrylic panels add a block of solid colour for a glossy, eye-catching effect. **RIGHT** Mosaic tile splashbacks inject colour and texture into a kitchen.



Splashbacks

Replacing an old one or installing a new splashback can change the whole look of a kitchen.

Acrylic sheets are quick to install and come in a range of colours and patterns.

Tiled splashbacks are classic and easy to DIY. Use subway tiles for a modern look or add colour with a mosaic design. ➤

DESIGN TIP

A mosaic splashback creates instant impact and also adds colour to a kitchen. Using tile sheets takes the job from fiddly to fast.



Haydn
www.haydn.co.nz

Rethink the kitchen remodel

Rust-Oleum® Benchtop Transformations



Rust-Oleum® Benchtop Transformations is the simple, affordable and hassle-free way to transform your worn or damaged laminate benchtop into a beautiful, durable, glossy surface in just one weekend. It's ideal on kitchen and bathroom benchtops, bars and tables.

FEATURES:

- Breakthrough silicone epoxy will not yellow
- Handles the toughest household cleaners
- Low odour
- Ideal for tiled walls, splashbacks and benchtops
- Covers 4.6 sqm
- Available in Diamond White and Galaxy Black

RUST-OLEUM®

Available at
BUNNINGS
warehouse
bunnings.co.nz

Well-maintained timber fits seamlessly into a modern kitchen design.
RIGHT Raw or slightly stained timber cabinets work well in an urban style.



Cabinets

Timber doors show knocks more than high-gloss cabinetry but are easy to touch up, then stain or varnish for a natural finish.

Polyurethane is similar to clear varnish but is easier to apply, making timber doors durable and giving them a medium-level shine.

Before resurfacing timber cabinet doors, remove any handles, then repair cracks, scratches and dents with a filler in a matching colour.

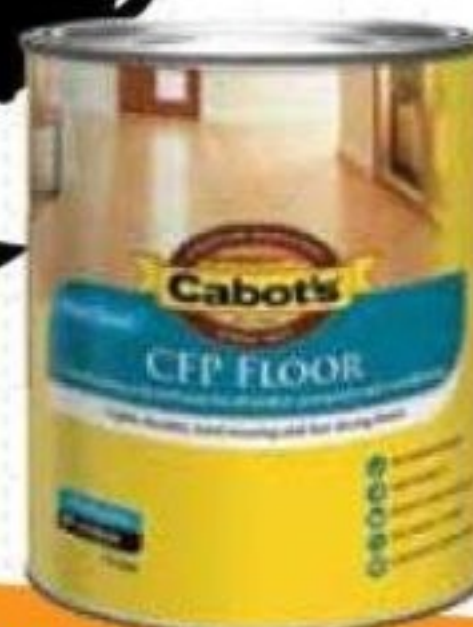
Sand the surface smooth, wipe off the dust, then use sugar soap to clean oil build-up, particularly on cabinets near the rangehood and fridge.

Stain the timber, then use a brush or short-nap roller to apply 2-3 coats of a clear polyurethane, letting it dry and sanding lightly between coats.

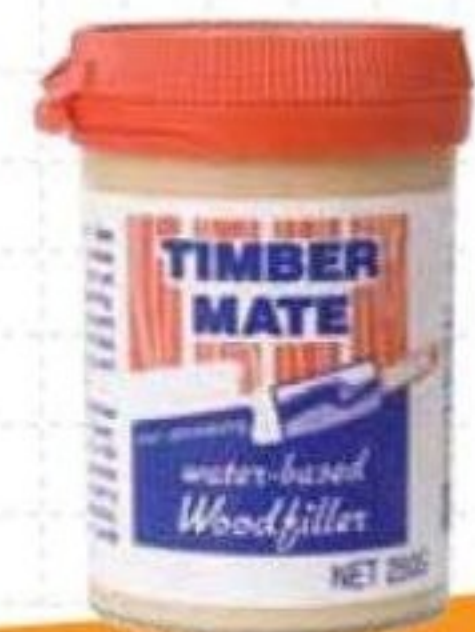
REPAIR ESSENTIALS

DIY TIP

Repair minor scratches in timber with a walnut. Just rub it diagonally over the damage, then repeat with your finger to set the natural oils.



Cabot's CFP Floor Clear Gloss Polyurethane, about \$61 for 1L. cabots.co.nz



Timbermate Water-based Woodfiller, \$17 for 250g. jacjay.co.nz



A simple fresh coat of paint can bring new life to kitchen doors.



Paint timber doors

To change the style of a timber kitchen, just use paint. White cabinets will give you a country look, while green and blue have a retro feel.

Black is sophisticated, and a gloss finish is sleek and modern. A matt paint works well in an industrial-style space.

To DIY, sand back the doors and drawers to bare timber, prime, then apply two coats of a mould-inhibiting paint. ➤

Specialty Cleaning and Protection Solutions



Market-leading cleaning solutions specifically designed to clean, care, protect and maintain appliances and surfaces in the home.

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The range has been tried, tested and recommended for all of the big names in the appliance business.

For more information visit
www.hillmark.com.au



Budget revamp

This kitchen had a good layout and new appliances, so homeowner Kate Griffith couldn't justify spending on a reno, but she felt the all-white scheme made it stark and cold. The solution was a DIY makeover.

✦ **REPLACE THE FACE** Paint doesn't adhere well to high-gloss cabinetry, so replace the existing doors. If the cabinetry is in standard sizes, this can be done with flatpacked options.

✦ **CREATE A CONTRAST** Add colour to a neutral backdrop for a big impact. Here, the red doors make the stainless steel splashback pop, while the white bench and blinds look fresh. New handles with a modern profile update the look. ✦



Before

After

Red gloss doors replaced the old white ones to add energy and colour to the room.

DESIGN TIP

Use warm colours such as red in the kitchen to create an inviting space that guests will gravitate towards and feel comfortable in.



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5 EASY KITCHEN STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Try these ways to create an organised and more efficient workspace

DESIGN TIP

Keep cabinet interiors looking streamlined by matching new and existing materials when installing extra storage.

When you want additional storage in your kitchen, you don't need to strip out and replace your cabinets.

Instead, you can add dividers, shelves, baskets and racks using just a few materials and basic tools.

All of these solutions will help to keep your kitchen organised and they're budget friendly as well.

1 Add extra shelves

Utilise wasted space and make cabinets much more functional simply by adding another shelf or two.

All you need is 17mm thick plywood or melamine and a packet of shelf-support brackets.



Before

After

Flat cookware is now tidy and accessible by storing it upright.



2 Create a divider

Tidy up cabinets and create easy access to flat pans, boards and trays by storing them upright instead of stacking them up.

Measure and cut a piece of melamine to fit inside the cabinet and serve as a divider.

To attach it, screw a bracket to the face frame of the cabinet floor and one to the back wall. Or you can drive screws through the divider from the shelf above. ➤





3 Store cutting boards
Create a dedicated storage space for your cutting boards by adding a rack to the inside of a cabinet door.

Cut to size 12mm thick acrylic or plywood, then smooth the edges using sandpaper and round the lower corners with a belt sander.

Use ferrules or timber blocks as spacers and secure the rack with screws and washers.



4 Organise spice jars
Save time hunting through your spice collection to find the right one by reorganising them in simple wire drawers.

Install two of the drawers in a cabinet, then add the spices in matching clear-glass jam jars.

Write the name of the spices on the jar lids and arrange them alphabetically for easy access.

Slide-out cabinet baskets are readily available and ideal for storing spice jars.



After

The spices are easy to find now they are organised in drawers.





5 Install a knife rack

House knives in a safe place by installing a knife rack inside a cabinet door.

To make it, run timber offcuts across a tablesaw on edge to cut kerfs, adjusting the blade height for different knife widths. Also cut a thin strip to act as an end cap.

Glue and clamp the kerfed offcuts together, then sand the rack until the joints are flush.

To mount it on the door, use two 35mm screws and washers. ●

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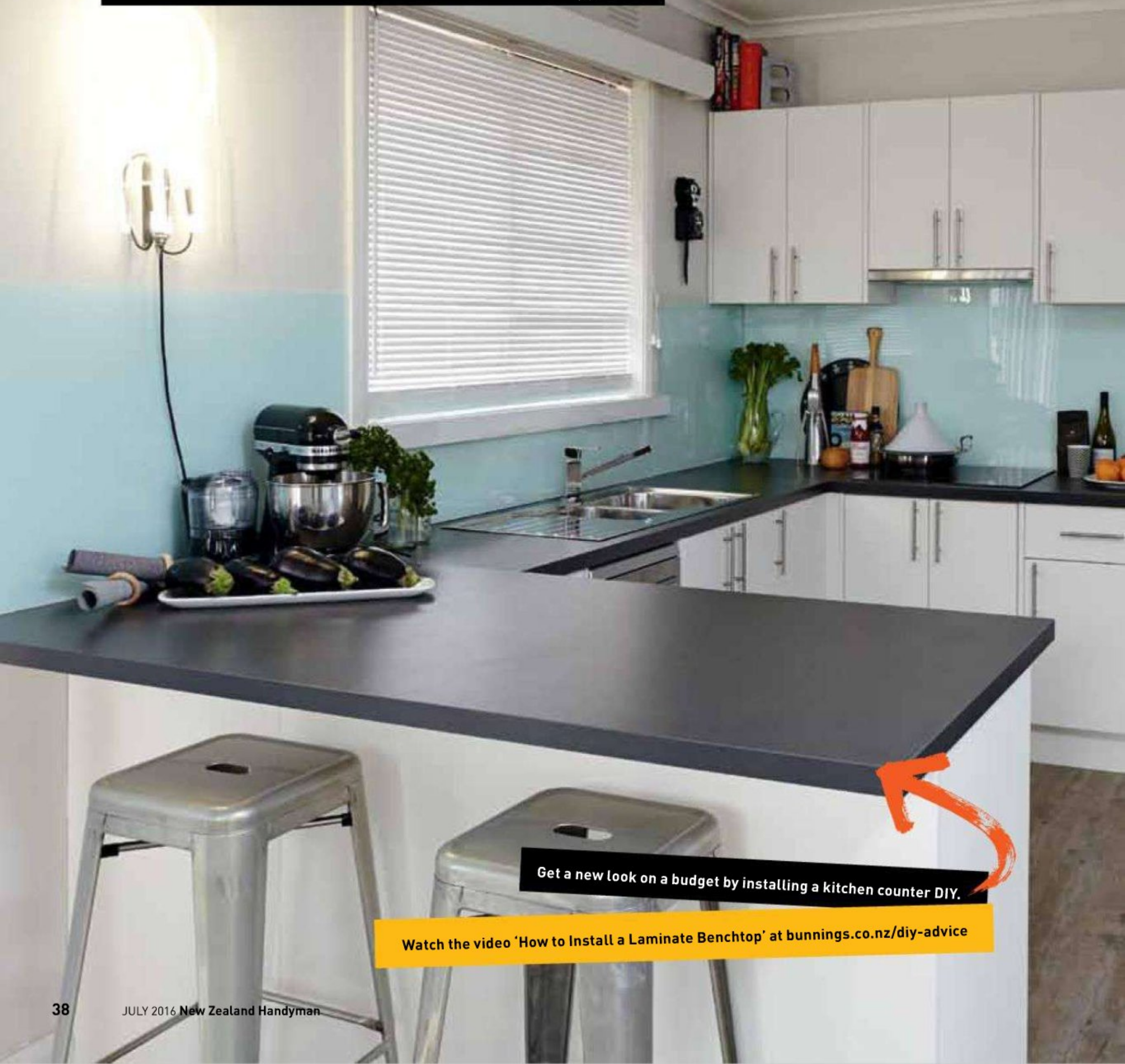
SELLEYS

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FOR THE DOER™

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Brand-new benchtop



Get a new look on a budget by installing a kitchen counter DIY.

Watch the video 'How to Install a Laminate Benchtop' at bunnings.co.nz/diy-advice

DIY TIP

Laminate is an affordable and durable benchtop material that is easy to cut and install, making it ideal for DIY installation.

Join and install a laminate bench to give the kitchen a modern update

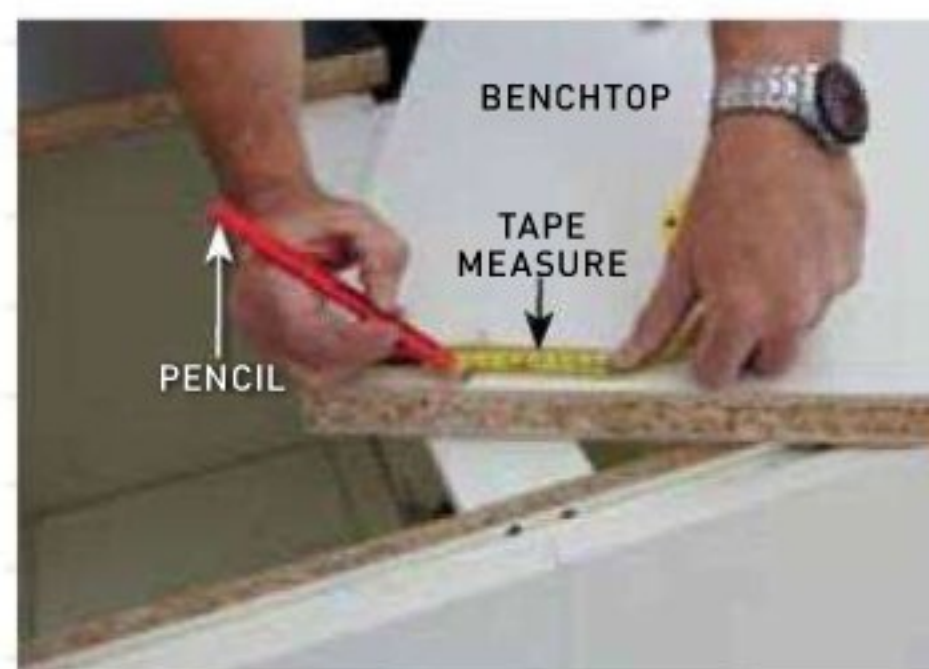
Laminate benchtops are durable and come in a wide range of designs and colours, making them ideal for any kitchen. They're also easy to install DIY.

Benchtops are available in lengths of up to 2400mm and will need to be

measured and cut to size before they are attached to the cabinets.

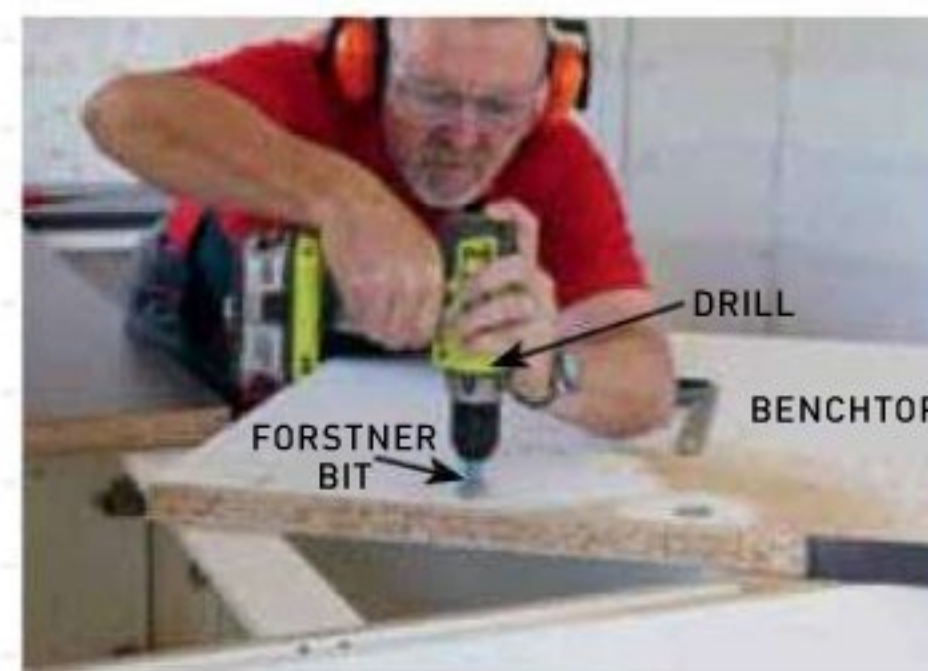
Most kitchens require multiple benchtop sections, which are joined underneath for a smooth finish.

TIP You can order laminate benchtops cut to size at your local Bunnings.



1 Mark the joins

Lay the benchtop sections in position on the cabinets and from underneath mark where they join. Turn the sections over and line up the marks. Measure and mark out the drill points on the underside of the benchtops, according to the manufacturer's instructions.



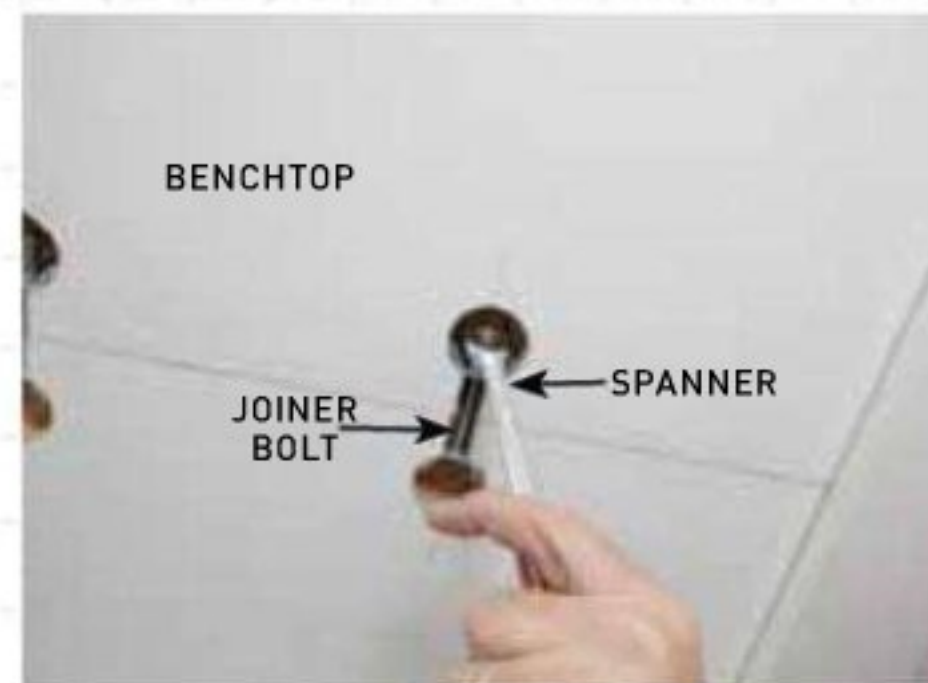
2 Drill the holes

Drill holes in the underside of the benchtop with a Forstner bit, using masking tape to mark the depth. Use a handsaw to cut two grooves 10mm apart between the hole and the edge of the benchtop. Make a channel by tapping out the waste with a chisel.



3 Mount the brackets

Drill pilot holes in the centre of the back panel of each cabinet at the top, then attach the brackets using screws. Drill guide holes in the horizontal braces at the front of each cabinet. Position each benchtop section the right way up on the cabinets.



4 Join the benchtop

Apply PVA adhesive to each side of the joint, install the joiner bolts and tighten using a spanner. Secure the benchtop to the rear brackets with screws. Use the guide holes at the front to drill pilot holes in the benchtop, then secure with screws.

What you need

Drill
Forstner bit
Tape measure
Carpenter's square
Pencil
Handsaw
Spanner
Chisel
PVA adhesive
Benchtop joiners
Safety gear



**\$2333
COST**

BUDGET KITCHEN TRANSFORMATIONS

Save money when revamping the hub of the home, whether it's a cosmetic reno or a major overhaul

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERIE BARBER

After

Modern colours lift the mood and the splashback creates an impact.

Before

Kitchens can be notoriously expensive to renovate, especially once you've factored in new appliances, cabinets, benchtops, splashbacks and flooring, not to mention tradies' fees.

There's also the inconvenience of having your kitchen out of action for

weeks, and the inevitable dirt and dust that comes with a major reno.

These makeovers demonstrate what can be achieved by thinking outside the box. By building on what is already there, or just updating the colour scheme, you can transform the kitchen on a modest budget.

Update the surfaces

When a kitchen is structurally sound but just outdated, you can achieve miracles for next to nothing. Start with specialty paint, then complement it with a few strategic updates.

In this kitchen, the cabinets were painted with white laminate paint, while the benchtop was painted dark grey and sealed with a gloss top coat.

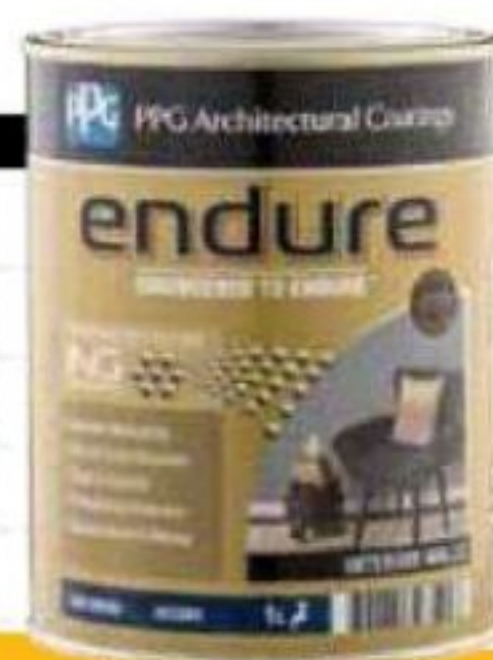
The old wall oven would have clashed with the new look, so it was replaced for \$500 and the wall was

reconfigured to fit the microwave. The brown rangehood was modernised with stainless steel appliance paint.

Thankfully, tiles are cheap and come in wonderful patterns, so a new splashback was installed to create a modern look for less than \$350.

Self-adhesive flooring transformed the base of the breakfast bar for only \$55, and a new coat of paint, feature lighting and micro venetian blinds completed the transformation. ➤

GET THE LOOK



PPG Endure Low Sheen White Interior Paint, \$30 for 1L. ppgpaints.co.nz



White Knight White Laminate Paint, \$52 for 1L. whiteknightpaints.co.nz

Dulux Duramax Stainless Steel Finish Spray Paint, \$25 for 300g. dulux.co.nz

**\$5000
COST**

After

The new kitchen is more spacious
with smarter storage options.

GET THE LOOK

Johnson Tiles 300 x 100mm
Gloss Ceramic Wall Tile, \$40
for 40. johnsontiles.com.au

Windoware PVC Venetian
Blind, 1630 x 1200mm,
about \$14, from Bunnings.

Foreno Espree Chrome
All-pressure Sink Mixer,
\$89. foreno.co.nz

Everdure 9-function
Built-in Oven, \$599.
everdure.com

DIY TIP

Installing cabinets and laminate benchtops DIY can save money, but you'll need to call in the professionals for any plumbing and wiring.

Start from scratch

If you have to gut a kitchen, it doesn't mean you need to pay top dollar for a new one. Hunting for bargains can shave thousands of dollars off your budget.

This kitchen was beyond saving, so the whole lot had to go, including the lino floor. Underneath, there were pine floorboards in near-perfect condition, so it was a great base to work with.

A new flatpack kitchen was found online for \$1500 and a pantry was added to boost storage. The breakfast bar was permanently removed to provide a more open-plan space.

New stainless steel appliances and a tiled splashback were installed to modernise the kitchen, while the walls were patched up and given a fresh coat of paint throughout. ➤



Always ask yourself what components can be retained or recycled

Before



\$6700
COST



After

A layout change improved the kitchen and created more space.

Before

Change the layout

This kitchen reno required thinking outside the square, as it was flipped at right angles and moved to an otherwise dead space in the entry.

It was a key part of a major renovation of this small warehouse studio, as it allowed the floorplan to be changed to turn the space into a one-bedroom apartment.

To reduce costs, the cabinets were retained and expanded to create the new kitchen.

And almost all the new fixtures and fittings were bargain buys.

The biggest purchase was the LED under-bench lighting at \$600, a necessity for both task lighting and a dramatic effect.

A great addition for a small apartment, the new long benchtop created a breakfast bar, while the faux-brick tiles, picked up for \$90, make a fabulous focal point in an otherwise plain kitchen.

The plumbing and electricity had to be relocated, but the cost was justified, as the reno delivered \$39,000 in profit at sale time. ➤

The cabinets were retained and relocated to save money.



STEAL THIS STYLE

Use feature lighting and a DIY designer splashback to add wow factor and create a modern look when on a tight budget.

Cherie Barber,
Renovating For Profit

GET THE LOOK



Project Square 440mm
Square Sink Bowl, \$339.
totaramarketing.co.nz

Formica 3600 x 930 x 36mm
Top Solutions Marble Benchtop,
\$555, from Bunnings.



Bellini 600mm
Stainless Steel Dishwasher,
\$569, from Bunnings. ●



SORRENTO OLIVE



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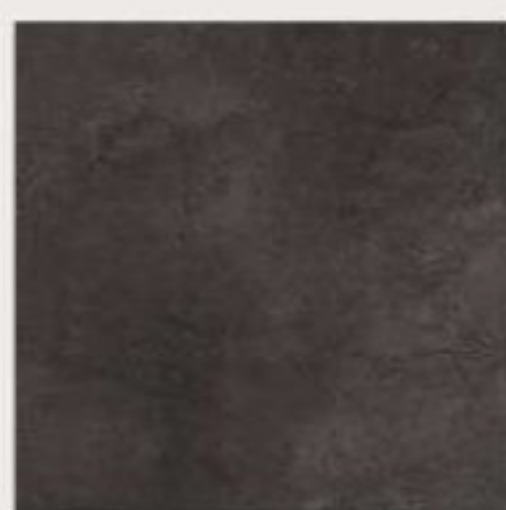
300x400 Sorrento Olive
(Ceramic Wall Tile)

400x400 Sorrento Olive
(Ceramic Floor Tile)

FINISH:

Wall - Gloss

Floor - Gloss, Matt, Grit



AVAILABLE IN:

300x400 Sorrento Charcoal
(Ceramic Wall Tile)

400x400 Sorrento Charcoal
(Ceramic Floor Tile)

FINISH:

Wall - Gloss

Floor - Gloss, Matt, Grit



SORRENTO CHARCOAL

Customise a closet

Install drawers and shelving DIY
to maximise wardrobe storage

WORDS AND PICTURES MELISSA DARR

For five years, crafty blogger Melissa Darr put up with a less than user-friendly walk-in robe in the master bedroom. It had ample hanging space, but that was about it.

'There wasn't much in it, so we lived with stuffing our clothes into a little tower of drawers,' says Melissa.

After doing more important reno jobs, such as the kitchen and bathroom, Melissa had the time to take on the wardrobe.

'I was tired of living with a dysfunctional closet, so the first step was to decide what we wanted from the space.'



Building storage is a big carpentry job,
so tailor off-the-shelf options instead

Melissa



EXPERT SECRETS

Assess what needs
to be stored, then
design a closet to suit
your actual needs.

CREATING THE CLOSET

Melissa's goal was to increase drawer and shelving space in the wardrobe without it turning into too big a job.

'I wanted something pre-made that we could customise to fit our space and that was easy to install,' says Melissa.

After researching different options, they decided to go with Clever Closet by Handy Storage (handy-storage.co.nz).



Before

Melissa and her husband Bevan measured the wall, worked out the best configuration and costed the parts. They worked around powerpoints, as hiring an electrician would blow the budget.

Several sketches and a couple of trips to Bunnings later, they had a final design, and the planning meant that the installation took only an afternoon. ➤

Wardrobe wishlist

Melissa created and stuck to a design brief for the new closet.

- ✦ Fittings that were simple and easy to install and customise.
- ✦ A design that didn't block the natural light from the window.
- ✦ Lots of open shelving drawers.

After

The new closet storage system is super organised and streamlined.



Get more DIY from Melissa
Follow her blog thewhimsicalwife.com



Custom vs standard

'There are two ways you can go with Clever Closet. You can buy a pre-packaged system to fit into an area or you can tailor the parts to suit your needs, which is what we did,' says Melissa.

'What I loved was that we could install open wire shelving next to the window and not block out the light.

'While the Clever Closet system is a little more expensive than buying melamine wardrobe inserts, it's worth spending the extra money.

'It can be completely customised, there are no bulky cabinets, and it is super simple to install.

'With all our clothes now so easy to access, there is no more need to rummage around or make a mess.'

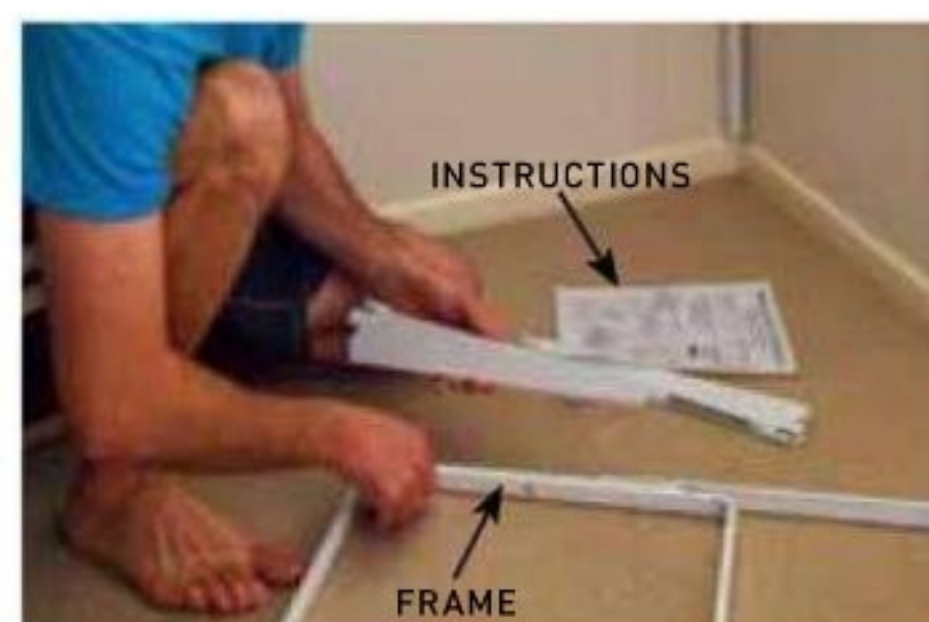
DESIGN TIP

Go for symmetry when designing a closet system with open shelving to create streamlined storage that always looks tidy.



1 Install the hang track

Mark the top of the closet system and secure the horizontal hang track, checking for level with a spirit level. Hang the wall strips vertically from the hang track, checking for plumb. Secure the strips with screws.



2 Make the frames

Build the sliding basket frames for the drawers, following the manufacturer's instructions. Install the shelf brackets in the wall strips, then add the wire shelves and engage the locking clips, working from the top down.



3 Add the drawers

Secure the sliding basket frames to the wall strips with screws, leaving enough room in between so they run smoothly on the tracks and keeping them clear of the ground. Slide the drawers into the frames. 🛠️

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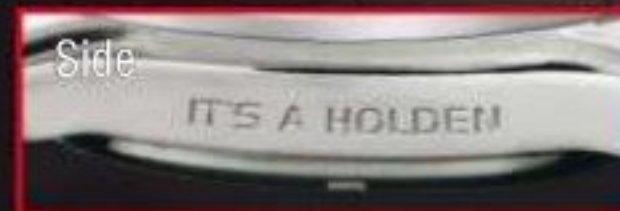
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or phone 09 256 7307

MAKE *A* MINISCAPE

Create landscapes under glass with this step-by-step guide to terrarium gardening

WORDS CLEA CREGAN PICTURES RICH MACDONALD



A glass vessel filled with plants, rocks and soil, a terrarium is a tiny garden that mimics a real landscape, bringing nature inside.

Easy and low-maintenance, you don't need a green thumb to become a terrarium gardener. And there's no right way or wrong way to make one.

Experiment with containers, plants and decorations and see what happens. Use these projects as a guide and add your own creative twists, or improvise with plants readily available to you.

Either way, the terrariums on these pages will inspire you to give miniscape gardening a try. ➤

Building your landscape

The process for planting a desert or forest terrarium is generally the same. It is important to have all of your elements ready to go before starting and to give yourself enough time.

Assembling a terrarium can take between 20 minutes and two hours, depending on the complexity of your project. Make sure you thoroughly wash, clean and dry the glass vessel.

Lay out the equipment and inspect your plants, checking that they look healthy and are free from any dead leaves or pests and diseases.

Arrange your plants in the order you'd like to plant them. Once you're happy with the layout, you can begin.

The step-by-step instructions on the opposite page illustrate the basic steps in terrarium gardening, and can be adapted to any of your projects.

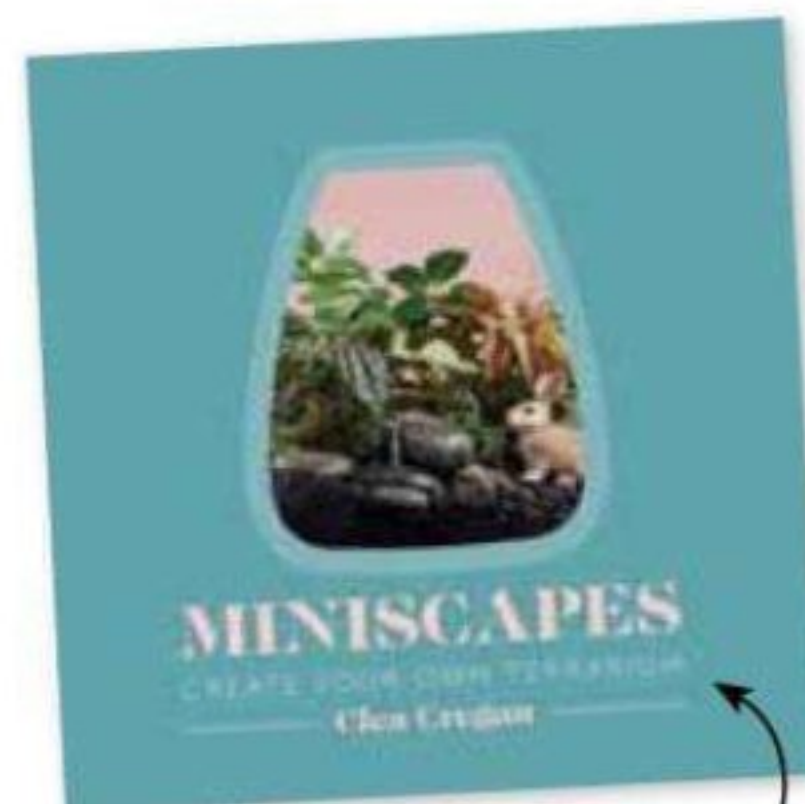


 **See more terrarium designs**
Visit pinterest.com/DIYHandyman

Tiny gardens



Design your own
living sculptures
and miniature
green worlds to
enjoy year-round



This edited extract is from *Miniscapes* by Clea Cregan (Hardie Grant Books, \$35), from Wheelers (wheelers.co.nz).

CREATE A TERRARIUM

1 Start with a clean glass container. Spread crushed gravel or pebbles on the base, to one-fifth of the height.

2 Cut a piece of butcher's paper a bit smaller than the container and position on the gravel or pebbles.

3 Press moistened sphagnum moss tightly around the inside edge to prevent any soil dropping through.

4 Sprinkle in 4 tablespoons of horticultural charcoal, then add a 50-70mm layer of soil.

5 Add more soil in some areas to make a mound and create variations in height.

6 Remove the plants from the pots. Scrape excess soil from the rootballs and trim any roots longer than 50mm.

7 Dig holes, position the plants and fill in with soil, firming it down to remove any air pockets.

8 Put tall plants at the back and small at the front. Wash down the sides and water the plants with a spray bottle.

9 Finish the miniscape with feature rocks, decorative stones, pebbles, crystals or figurines. ➤

MINISPHERE

Air plants don't require soil, as they use their roots to anchor themselves to rocks and branches.

Soak air plants in a bowl of water for 30 minutes. Drain the plants and shake off any excess water, as they may rot if they hold extra moisture for too long.

Pour grey stones into the orb. Add glass pebbles around the front, then arrange the air plants. Add coral, shells, a sea urchin and starfish.

Attach fishing wire or string to the glass loop at the top of the orb, then hang it.

Air plants don't need soil so are lightweight for hanging.



Guidelines

- Give it a position in bright, indirect sunlight.
- Remove the plants and soak in water once a week for 30 minutes. Spritz with water using a spray bottle in the warmer months.
- Curled leaves indicate that the plants are not getting enough water.



What you need

- 15cm glass tealight orb
- ¼ cup decorative grey stones
- ¼ cup glass bead pebbles
- 1 *Tillandsia stricta*
- 1 *Tillandsia ionantha* 'Rubra'
- 1 *Tillandsia ionantha* v Mexico
- 1 *Tillandsia ionantha* 'Peach'
- Small handful of coral rubble
- Handful of small shells
- 1 dried sea urchin
- 1 dried starfish

PRICKLY PEAR

Cacti and succulents come in different shapes, colours and sizes. A tall vessel protects fingers from spiky leaves.

Pour the black stones into the vase and gently shake to create an even layer. Sprinkle the charcoal evenly over the top. Add three-quarters of the potting mix to the container.

Remove the plants from their pots and gently scrape away the soil, so you are left with the rootballs.

Put small plants around the inside edge and tall in the centre. Firm down

the remaining soil to cover the roots. Place large rocks and river pebbles in between the plants.

Add a section of cream gravel, then an area of grey pebbles and dark grey stones. Water the plants thoroughly using a spray bottle.



What you need

- 35cm pear-shaped glass vase
- 3 cups small black stones
- ½ cup horticultural charcoal
- 4 cups succulent potting mix
- 1 *Gymnocalycium mihanovichii* 'friedrichii' 'Moon Cactus'
- 1 *Haworthia fasciata* 'Zebra Plant'
- 1 *Pilosocereus azureus* 'Columnar Cactus'
- 1 *Aloe longistyla*
- 3 *Lobivia silvestrii* 'Peanut Cactus'
- 2 *Echeveria glauca*
- 1 *Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri* 'Easter Cactus'
- 5 large rocks
- Handful of black river pebbles
- ¼ cup cream gravel
- ¼ cup light grey pebbles
- ¼ cup dark grey stones

Cacti create a low-maintenance landscape with impact.



Guidelines

- Give it a spot with bright, indirect sunlight.
- Slowly pour ½ cup water onto the soil once a month in winter and every two weeks in summer.
- Wear garden gloves when handling cacti.
- Let the soil dry out between waterings.



TIN CAN PLANTER

Make a one-of-a-kind hanging display using old food containers

To make this rustic hanging planter, all you need is an old bicycle rim, with the spokes removed, and an assortment of old containers.

For a hanger, four lengths of 3mm wire were wound around the bicycle rim at equal intervals, then twisted together at the top to form a loop.

As a decorative effect, the wire was twisted at the rim to create a spiral.



The exposed metal surfaces will weather to make the rustic planter look aged

1 2 3



1 Paint the cans

Remove the labels, then wash and dry the cans thoroughly. Position them on stakes and apply spray paint, using three or four similar colours. When dry, lightly sand the cans to expose the metal on the ridges.



2 Make drainage holes

Use a 4mm metal drill bit to make a drainage hole in the base of each can. Drill hanging holes in the side of the cans by sliding them onto a 90 x 45mm timber offcut and drilling two holes 20mm apart, 40mm below the lip.



3 Attach the cans

Thread a length of wire through the two holes in the can, then wrap each end of the wire around the bicycle rim and twist the ends together to secure. Position the cans on both the inside and outside of the rim.



GARAGE REVAMP

Overhaul the workshop by adding storage and resurfacing the floor

PROJECT AND PICTURES STUART SCOTT

Often a dumping ground for everything from sports gear and broken appliances to car parts, most garages have little room for tools.

This poorly organised workshop was taken over by clutter and had become unusable, with no space to work.

We cleared it out and revamped the space with a fresh paint job on the walls and a new-look floor, using a coating system that took just a weekend.

The junk was thrown out and purpose-built cabinets and lockers were introduced, as well as a workbench and wall-mounted tool storage.



A pegboard above a workbench keeps hand tools organised and easy to access



Adding storage

One of the main considerations when redesigning a garage is where to put everything. This is when storage systems become essential.

In an area of the home that's often short on space, it pays off to think vertically by installing tall cabinets and multi-tiered shelving units.

We added a range of storage systems from Ultimate Storage and Ryobi that keep the workshop organised and uncluttered, and provide security.

A number of heavy-duty Zenith SureHooks, designed to hold anything from rakes and brooms to bikes and ladders, were also installed to turn the walls into extra storage zones. ➤

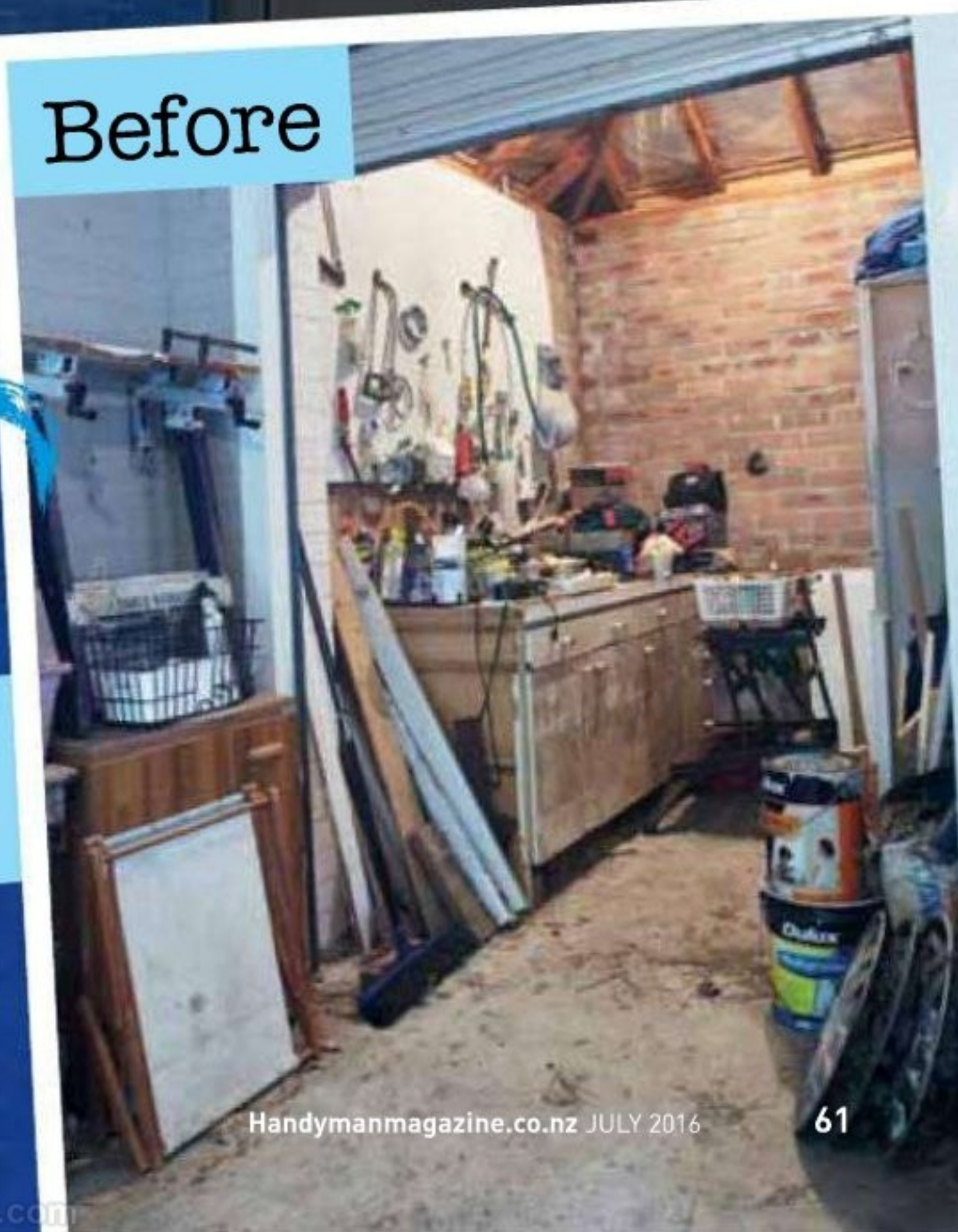


SAFETY TIP

Lockable cabinets and drawers keep any dangerous items out of reach of children and expensive tools safe from thieves.



Before



After

Clever storage tames the former clutter and the new floor transforms the space.



Resurface the floor

To give the bare concrete in the garage a new hard-wearing finish that would take it from drab to fab, we used a floor coating system called RockSolid.

It comes in a complete kit with instructions, concrete etch, a roller and stirrer, and the Polycuramine coating.

Easy to apply DIY, it's self-levelling, VOC free, and comes in four metallic shades. It makes resurfacing the floor a weekend job, as you can walk on the coated concrete after just eight hours.

TIP Another option for resurfacing the floor is to use White Knight Ultra Pave, a paving and concrete paint that doesn't require priming and dries quickly.

STUART'S PICKS



Rust-Oleum RockSolid Metallic Floor Coating Kit in Brilliant Blue, \$295. haydn.co.nz



White Knight Ultra Pave, \$185 for 10L. whiteknightpaints.co.nz

1 2 3



1 Clean the area

Wash the floor with a hose or pressure washer. Using a degreaser, scrub the floor surface and walls with a stiff bristle brush. Rinse thoroughly once the whole area has been scrubbed and wait for it to dry before etching.



2 Etch the concrete

Mix the etch in a watering can. Wet the floor lightly and sprinkle the surface with the etch. Scrub the floor thoroughly with a stiff bristle brush, repeating until finished, then rinse the floor and allow it to dry fully.



3 Paint the floor

Mix one pouch of the floor coating, adding tint and anti-slip if desired. Pour it in 100mm x 1.5m ribbons and work it in 1.5sqm areas, rolling out the paint in an M/W pattern. Repeat until the floor is fully covered.



ASSEMBLE YOUR IDEAL TOOL BLOX.



Paint the walls

In a windowless workshop, white walls help reflect light into dark corners, improving visibility for working on DIY projects and other jobs.

This gloomy garage had both painted and raw brick walls, so before coating the concrete floor, we gave them a new finish. We primed and painted the walls white, using a semi gloss as it is easy to wipe clean.

The new paint brightened up the workshop and also helped prevent

any potential brick dust or flaking paint from the walls falling onto the new floor coating as it cured. ➤



Always paint the walls before replacing or resurfacing a floor



Safe, secure and spacious, the Ultimate Storage Tall Cabinet, \$569, provides plenty of room for locking away your workshop gear (ultimatestorage.com.au).

A simple solution for hanging larger items such as outdoor tools, Zenith SureHooks Garage U Hooks, from about \$11, can easily be attached to the wall DIY (itwproline.com.au).



The Ryobi ToolBlox, from \$99 for a one-drawer cabinet, is a flexible storage system that can be customised by adding extra drawers and cabinets (ryobi.co.nz).



Available in a range of sizes, from 20-160L, the Ezy Storage Bunker Heavy Duty Tub, from \$14, offers a tidy home for garden equipment and tools (ezystorage.com).



With castors for mobility and a compact, space-saving design, the Ultimate Storage Five-drawer Under-bench Tool Chest, \$429, is the ideal solution for a small garage. ●

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Opening the door with a remote control takes the hard work out of parking.

SAFETY TIP

Make sure your new garage door opener complies with updated safety regulations that came into effect in May this year.

POWER UP

Add an automatic door opener to take the grunt out of accessing the garage

WORDS FRANK GARDNER

Tired of getting in and out of the car just to open and close the roller door on the garage, especially on rainy days?

There is an inexpensive solution if you are prepared to DIY install an electronic roller door opener.

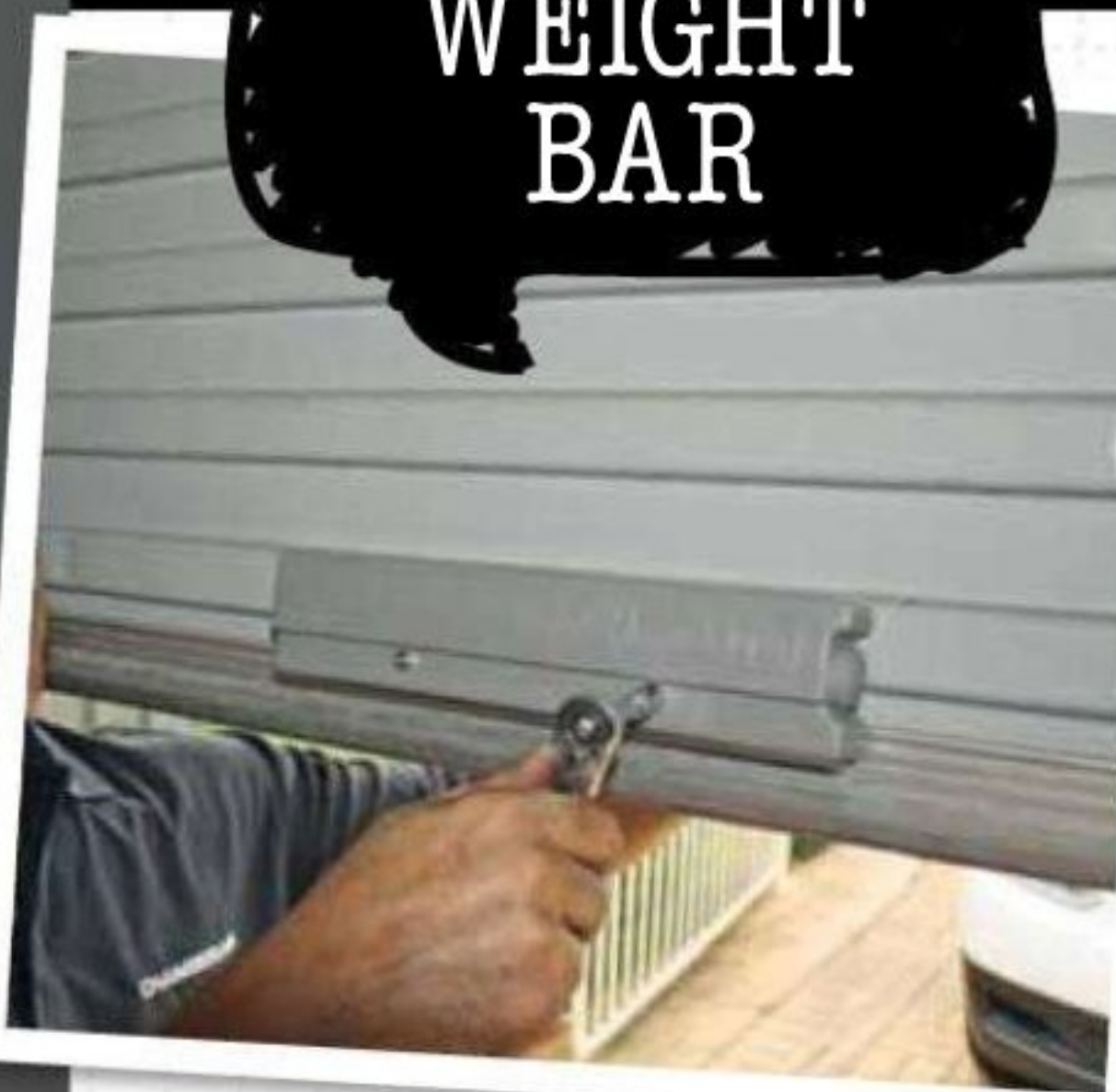
Chamberlain roller door openers cost just a few hundred dollars from the hardware store and can be installed by one or two people in as little as two hours using just a few standard tools (chamberlaindiy.co.nz).

Each door opener kit comes with an instruction manual, which should be read in detail and thoroughly understood before proceeding with the installation.

You'll also need to check the measurements of the garage door, as the maximum allowable height is 4.5 metres, with a maximum door area of 16 square metres.

The door must also be spring balanced and the axle diameter no more than 35mm.

ADDING A WEIGHT BAR



If the garage roller door has a base handle, remove it and attach the weight bar using the handle holes.

Or, if there is no handle, centre the weight bar to mark and drill two 5.5mm holes. Position the bar on the roller door and secure with the supplied bolts, washers and nuts.



DIY door basics

With models designed for both sectional and roller doors, it's easy to choose a product that suits your door.

✚ **AFFORDABLE OPENERS** start from just \$377, they suit all major door brands and come with full installation instructions so are easy for DIYers to set up.

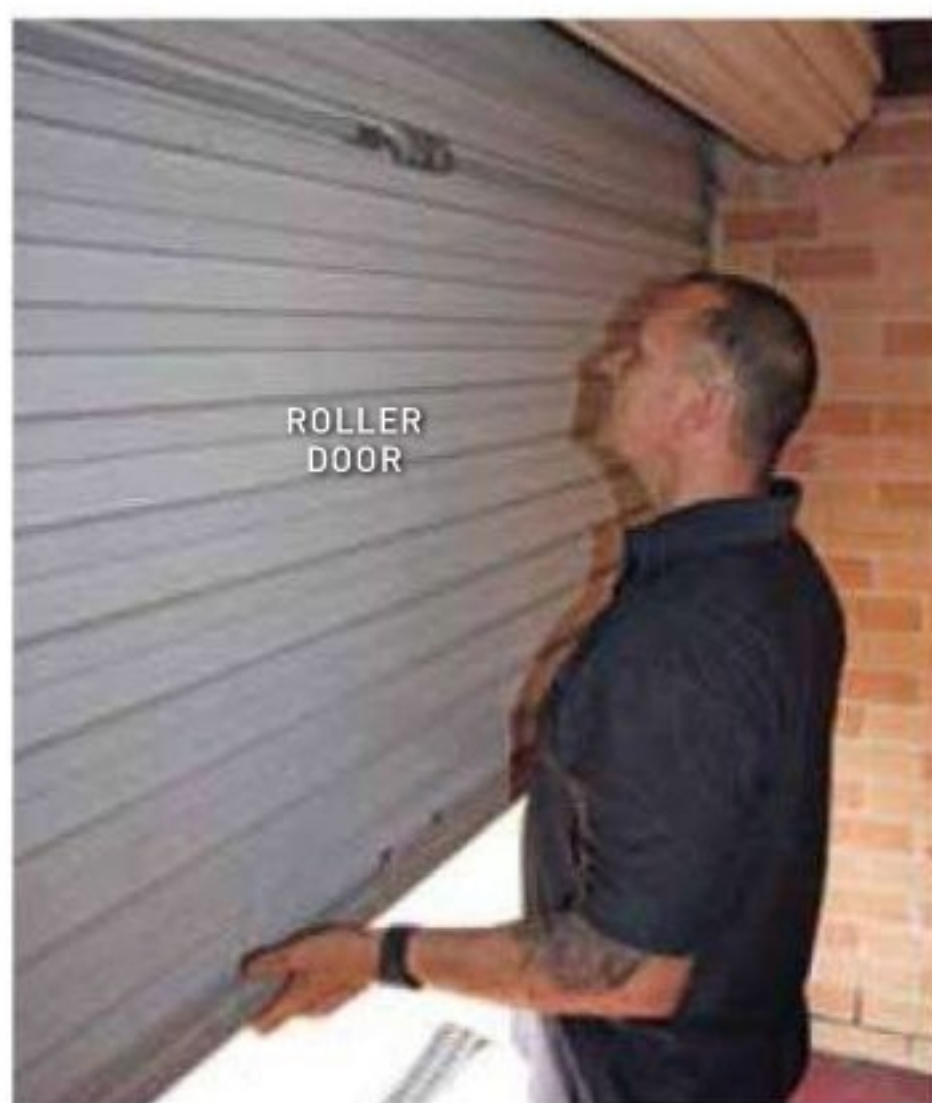
✚ **EXISTING DOORS** don't need to be replaced, as long as they are in good working order.

✚ **QUICK INSTALLATION** allows your garage door to be completely automated in under two hours.

✚ **SAFETY MECHANISMS** include an automatic reversal system that stops and retracts the door if it is obstructed while closing.

✚ **MANUAL RELEASE** means the door can still be opened during a power failure, allowing you to enter and exit the garage. ➤

INSTALL A ROLLING DOOR OPENER



1 Test the door

Check the door to ensure it is well balanced, and not sticking or binding, by disabling all locks. Lift the door to halfway and move it up and down a few times. The door should remain spring balanced. If it doesn't hold or binds anywhere, call a qualified door technician to make adjustments.



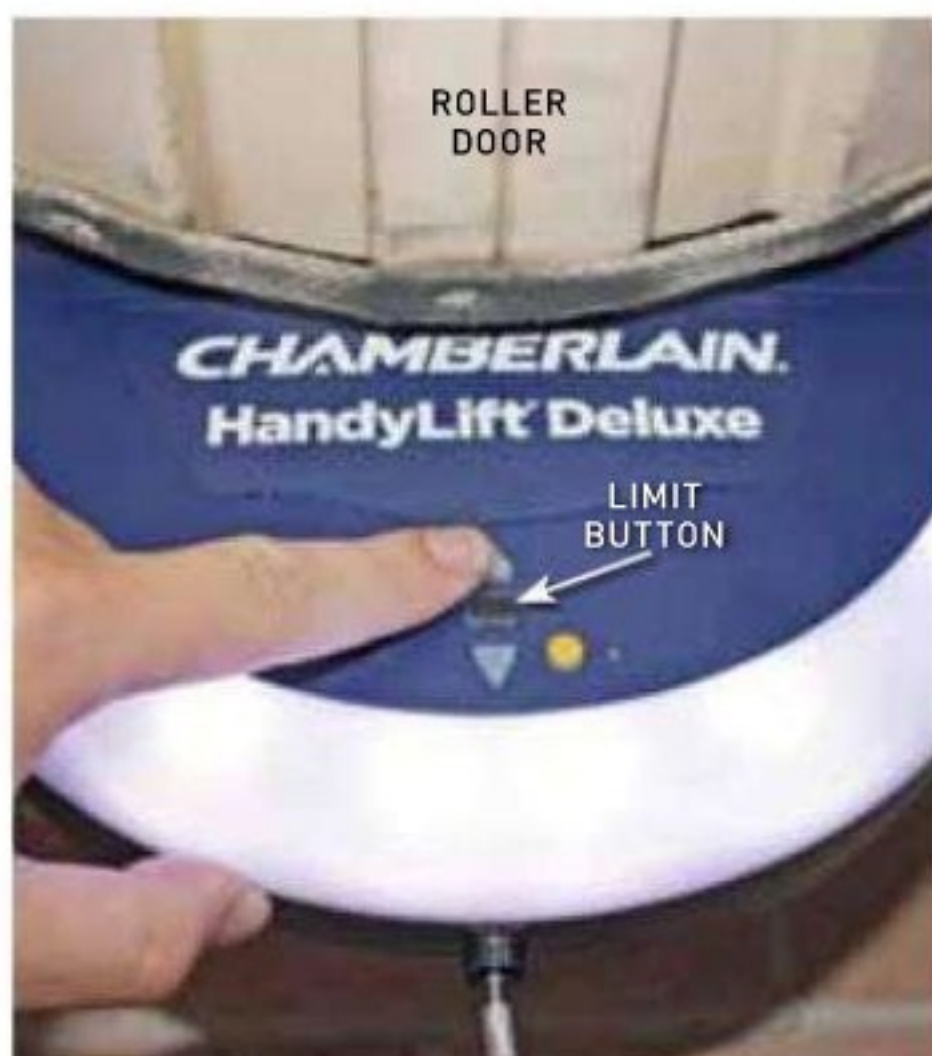
2 Fit the stop collar

Install the stop collar on the shaft of the roller mechanism on the end opposite to where the door opener will be attached. Fit the stop collar hard against the boss of the door drum, tighten with a socket and check that the U-bolt holding the door shaft to the bracket is secure and tight.



3 Install the opener

Take the rope through the release handle and manual release cable. Open the door fully and tie it up, supporting the weight on a ladder. Remove the U-bolt and wall bracket. Slide the opener over the door shaft, engaging the drive legs in the drum wheel, and clamp. Refit the U-bolt and bracket.



4 Program the settings

Untie the door, then raise and lower by hand to check the operation in manual mode. Plug in the opener and turn it on, then use the buttons to program it for right- or left-hand operation, open and close limits, and force settings. Cycle the door up and down so the force is set and learned.



5 Test the safety reverse

Position a 40mm thick timber offcut flat on the floor and lower the door. If the door stops on the offcut, reprogram the limit settings and repeat the test. When the door reverses off the timber offcut, remove it and run the door opener through a full cycle.



What you need

To install a Chamberlain electronic door opener all you need are basic hand tools.

- + Ladder
- + Adjustable wrench
- + Socket wrench with 8, 10 and 13mm extended sockets
- + 300mm socket extension bar
- + Phillips head screwdriver
- + Tape measure
- + Spirit level ➤



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DIY PowerLift for
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DIY HandyLift Deluxe
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DIY
openers
available
from
\$377

chamberlaindiy.co.nz

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Sectional door

Before automating a sectional garage door, it's important to do research to ensure the opener matches the door.

A Chamberlain sectional door opener suits doors less than 16 square metres in size with a curved track and maximum door height of 2.2 metres.

The opener must be securely suspended, so check out the wall and roof above the garage door.

Sufficient structural supports need to be in place and if you have a ceiling, extra support brackets and fastenings may be required.

If you don't have an additional access door to the garage, you'll need a quick-release accessory to allow manual entry in case of power failures or breakdown.

Before installation, lift the door halfway, then release it. It should stay in place if it's balanced and supported by its springs. Raise and lower the door to check for binding, and call a technician to adjust it if necessary.

You'll need a 240V powerpoint located close by to plug in the opener. If not, call an electrician to install a new one, don't run an extension cord.



Chamberlain PowerLift Sectional Garage Door Opener, \$377.



Chamberlain 3-Channel Mini Garage Door Remote, about \$70.



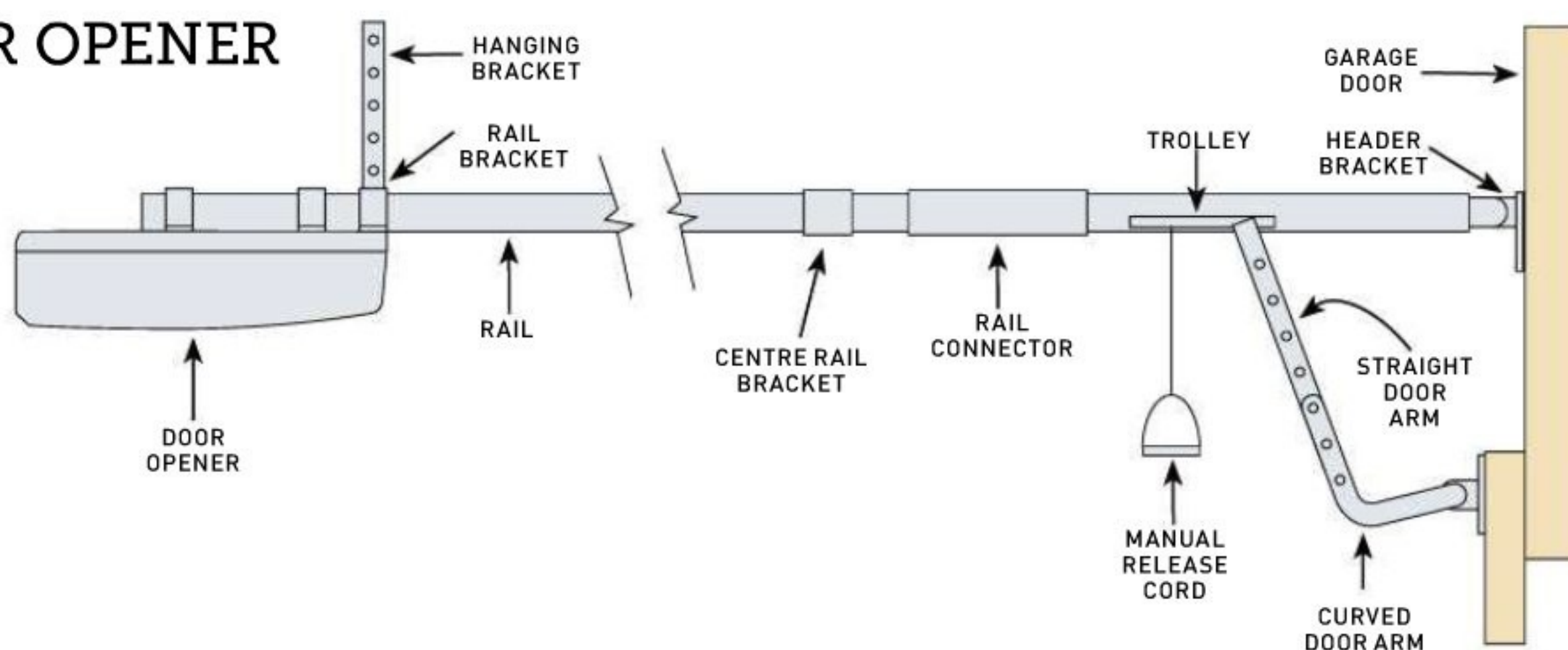
Chamberlain HandyLift Deluxe Rolling Garage Door Opener, about \$379.



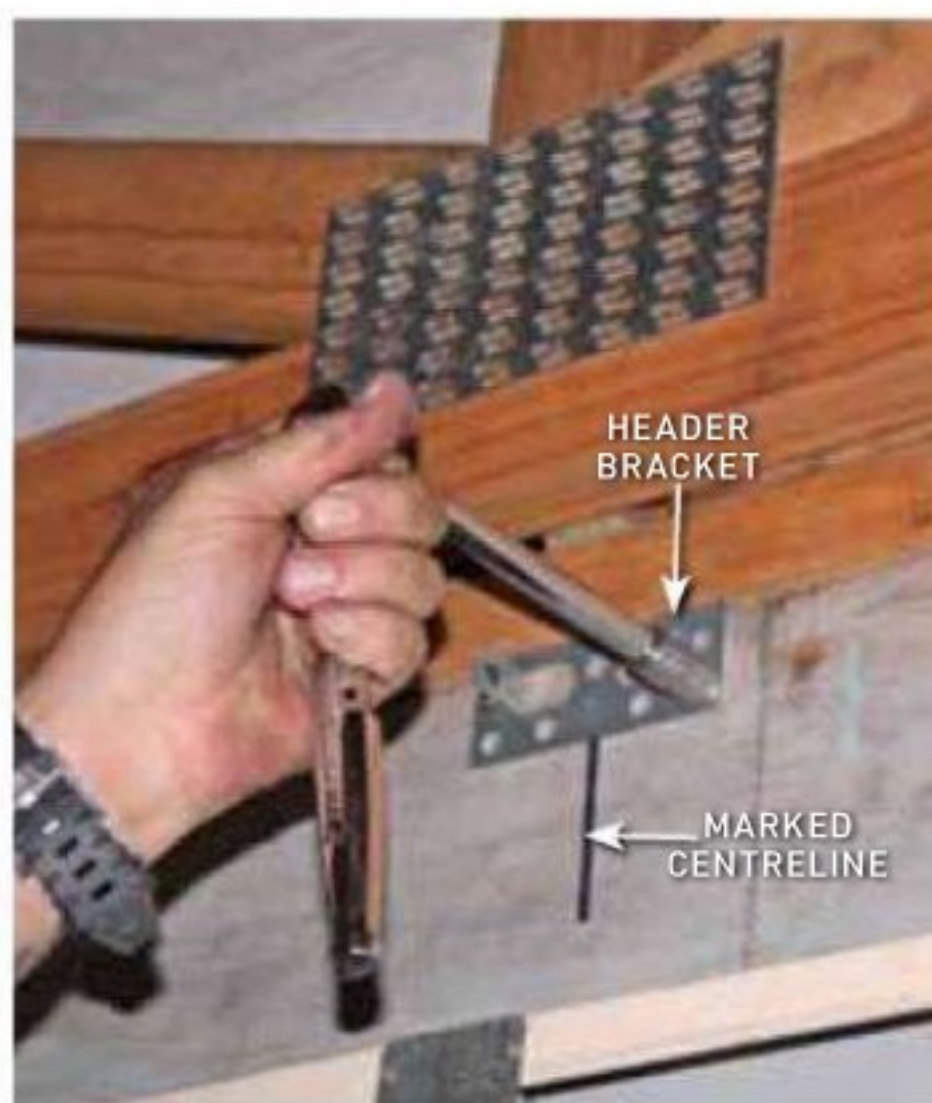
For easy garage access, add an electronic opener to a roller door



DOOR OPENER



INSTALL SECTIONAL DOOR OPENER



1 Install the header bracket

Close the door and mark the vertical centreline of the door on the wall or ceiling above it. Fully open the door and draw an intersecting horizontal line at least 50mm above the high point of the door. Centre the header bracket on the horizontal line and secure with the supplied screws.



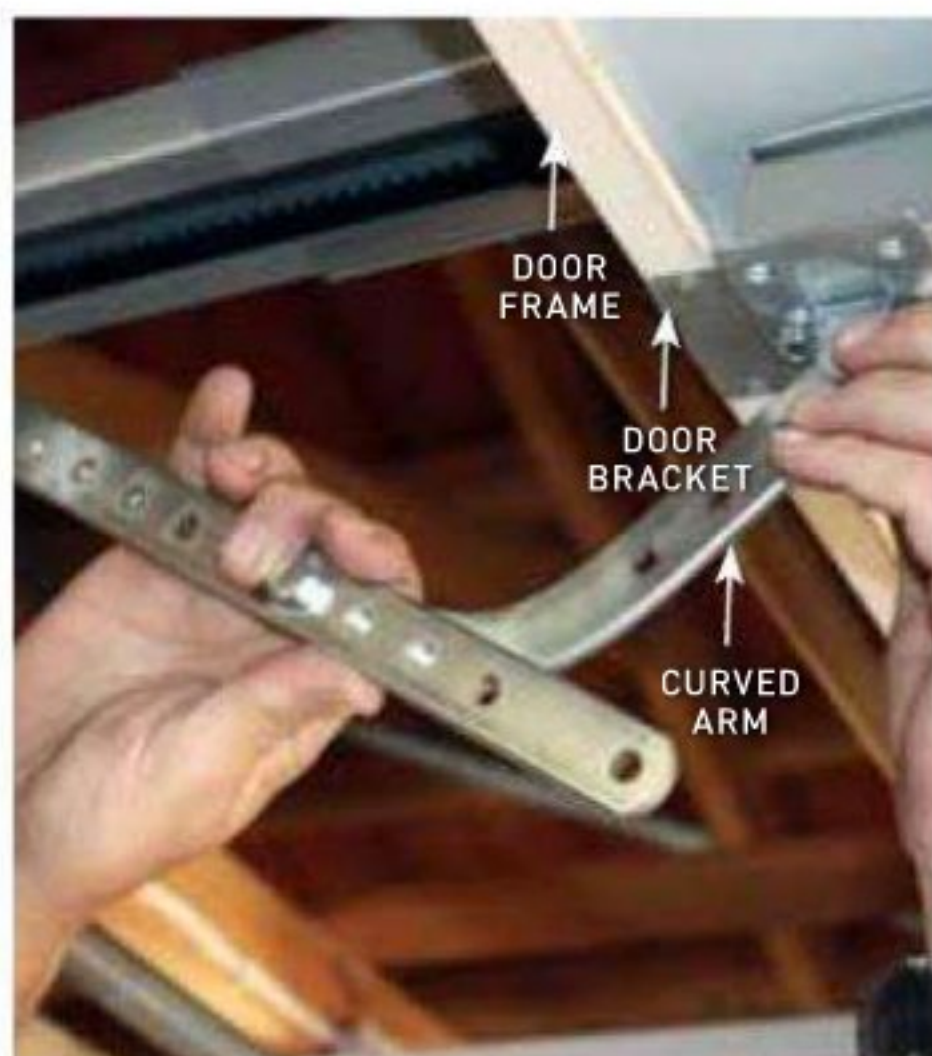
2 Assemble the rail

Separate the rail ends and add the centre pieces, sliding the rail connectors over the joints. Adjust the nut on the pulley assembly to tension the belt. Slide the rail bracket onto the power head and secure with brackets. Position the rail bracket against the header bracket and pin together.



3 Secure the brackets

Prop the opener in position and open the door, centre the rail over the door and position a 50mm spacer in between. Bend the hanging brackets and secure to both the ceiling and rail brackets. Add a centre rail bracket in the mid position of the rail, securing to the ceiling with hanging straps.



4 Attach the door arm

Secure the door bracket to the frame of the door, then pull the manual release cord to disengage the trolley. Slide the trolley 300mm from the header bracket, then install the curved arm onto the door bracket and connect with two bolts to the straight arm at a 20° angle.



5 Program the settings

Plug in the opener and turn it on. Open the rear access panel to set the travel limits of the door using the program and arrow buttons. Run the door through an up and down cycle and use the buttons to set the force. If the door won't open or shut properly, check it isn't binding or sticking.



6 Test the safety reverse

Position a 40mm thick timber offcut flat on the floor and lower the door. If the door stops on the offcut, reprogram the settings and repeat the test. When the door reverses off it, remove the timber offcut and run the door opener through a full cycle. 🟢

BUILD AN OCTAGONAL DECK

A simple position-and-cut system creates this freestanding design

PROJECT FRANK GARDNER

The octagonal shape of this striking timber deck brings a sense of contemporary style to the backyard. It took two people four days to build the deck and it cost about \$2500.

Concrete footings form the foundation for square brick piers to support a treated timber frame that was clad with kwila deck boards.

TIP Cut the parts slightly longer than the cutting list to allow for cutting mitres during assembly. The battens are cut from 100 x 50mm kwila.

Choosing the timber

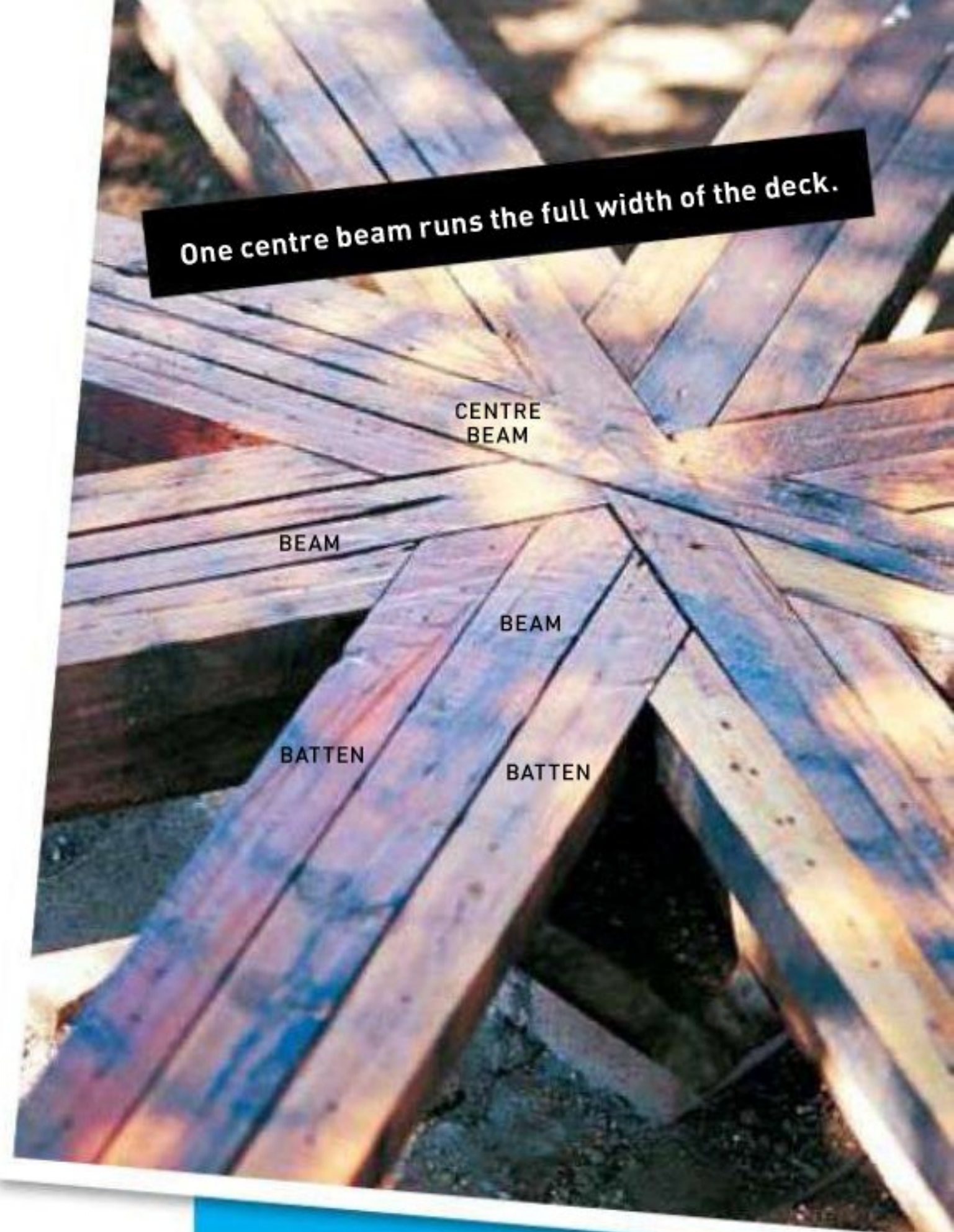
Many builders prefer to use treated pine for decks because it's light to work with and easy to cut, but recycled hardwood can sometimes be cheaper.

When using recycled timber, check for straightness, remove old nails and chamfer splintered edges. Position any bows in the beams and joists face up and check they're flat on top using a spirit level, smoothing with a planer.



Treated pine used for deck joists should be at least H3 rated

One centre beam runs the full width of the deck.



Preparing the site

Although the deck is self-supporting, draw a plan showing all dimensions and the height above ground to check with the council for approval.

Clear the site of debris and grass, levelling it roughly with a slight slope for water runoff.

To control weeds, cover the ground with geotextile fabric or weedmat and add a 50mm layer of 10mm gravel for drainage.

FINISHING THE TIMBER

To avoid splitting the timber, drill pilot holes for all the nails. Punch the heads below the surface, then lightly sand the timber and wipe clean to apply a finish. **DECKING OIL** maintains the natural tones and doesn't take long to apply but should be reapplied every 6-12 months.

TIMBER STAIN is oil-based with pigment that changes the colour of the decking but lasts about two years before a recoat is needed. **ACRYLIC PAINT** provides the best protection, lasting at least three years, but it conceals the timber grain. ➤

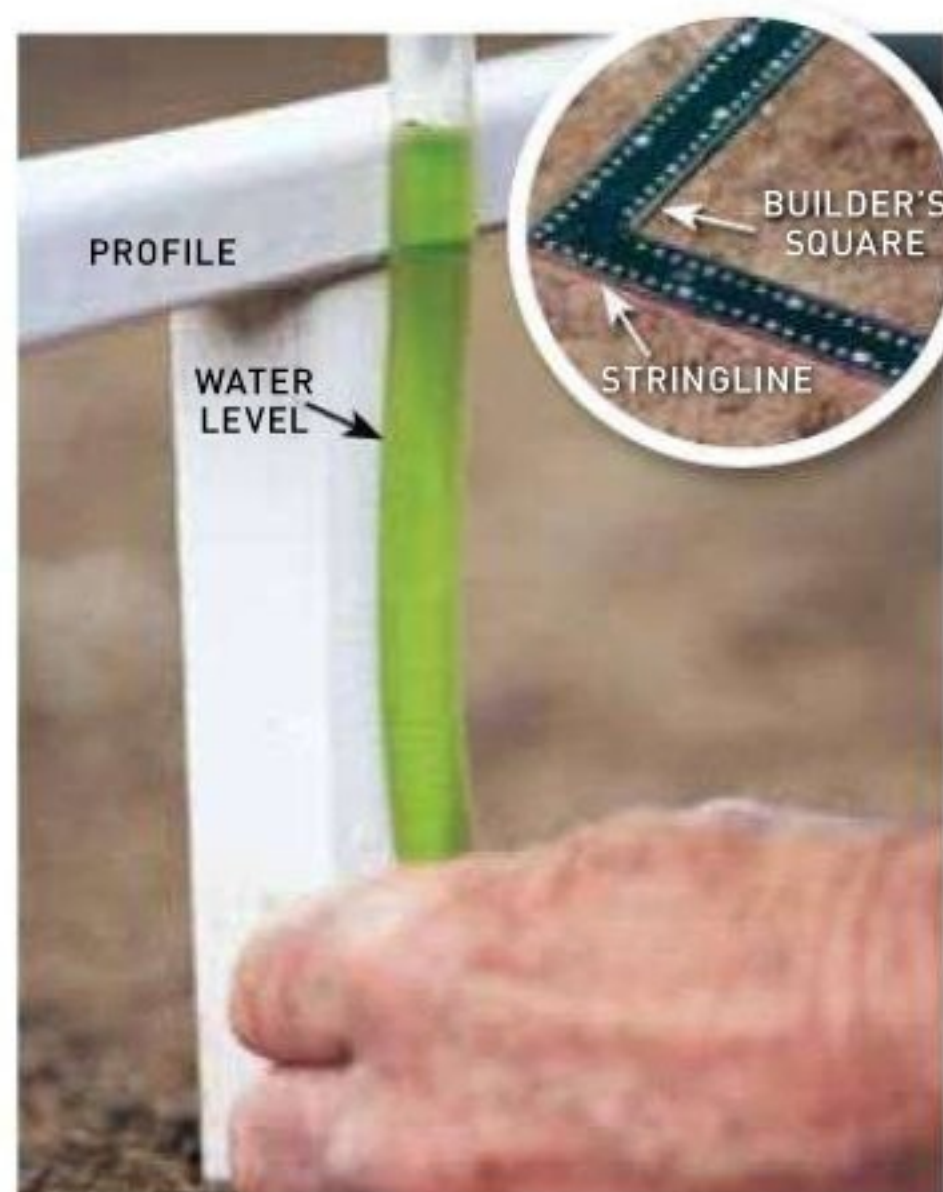


DIY TIP

If using screws to secure decking boards, predrill and countersink in one easy step with a P&N Quickbit, from Bunnings.

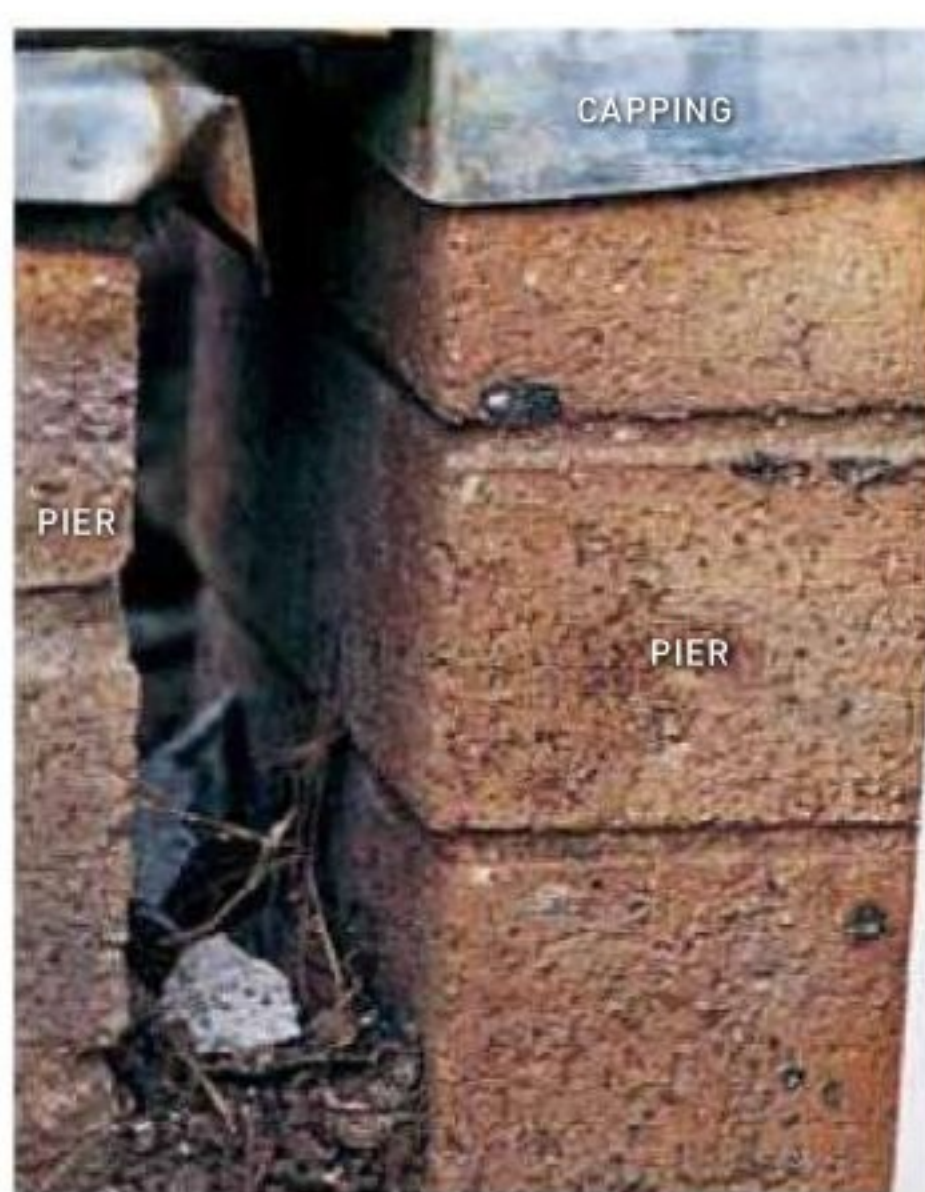
The freestanding deck is 4800mm wide and about 300mm high, the height of a step.

BUILD THE DECK



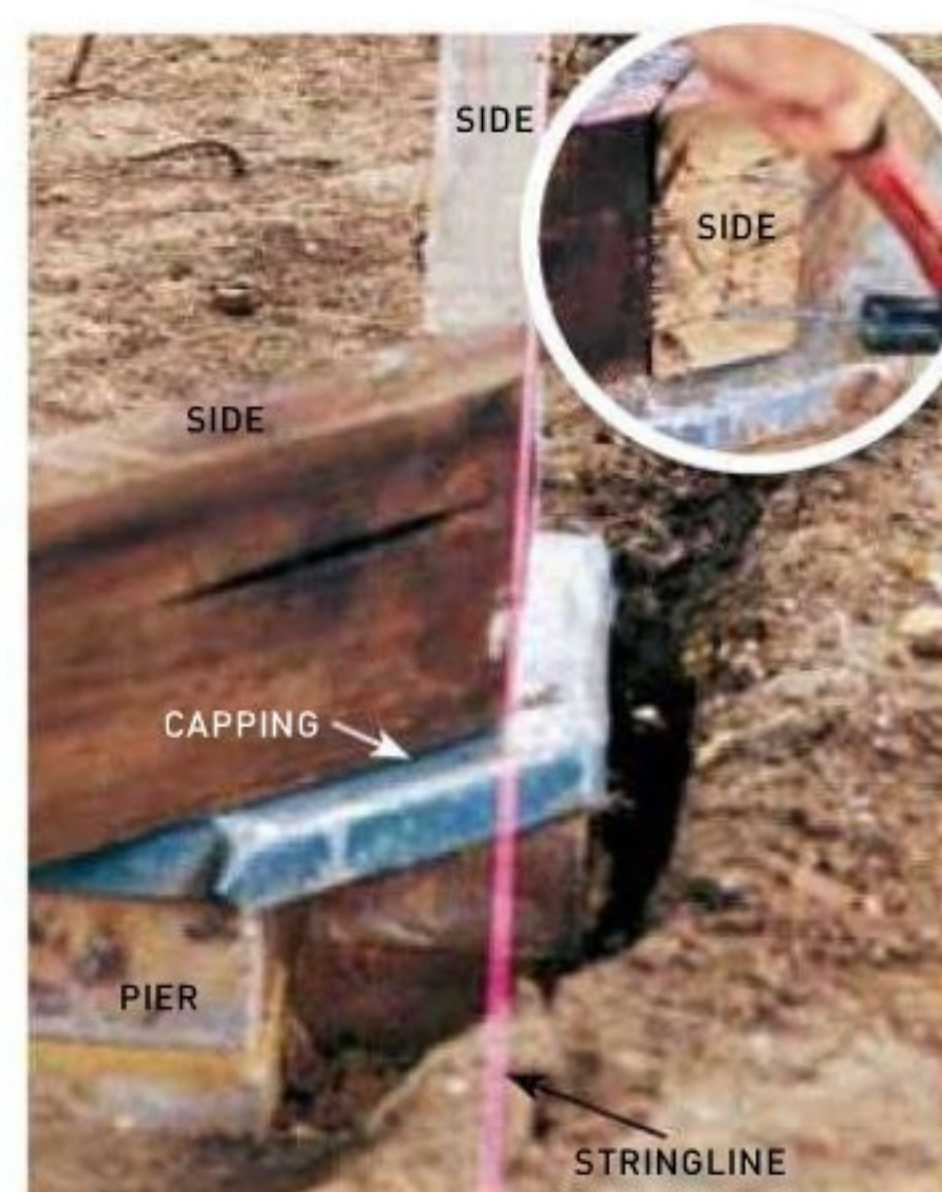
1 Set up profiles as guides

Mark a 4346mm square and set profiles in the corners 600mm outside the building line, using a water level to keep them the height of the beams. Use a builder's square to set parallel stringlines on the profiles, ensuring they measure 6152mm diagonally.



2 Pour footing to build piers

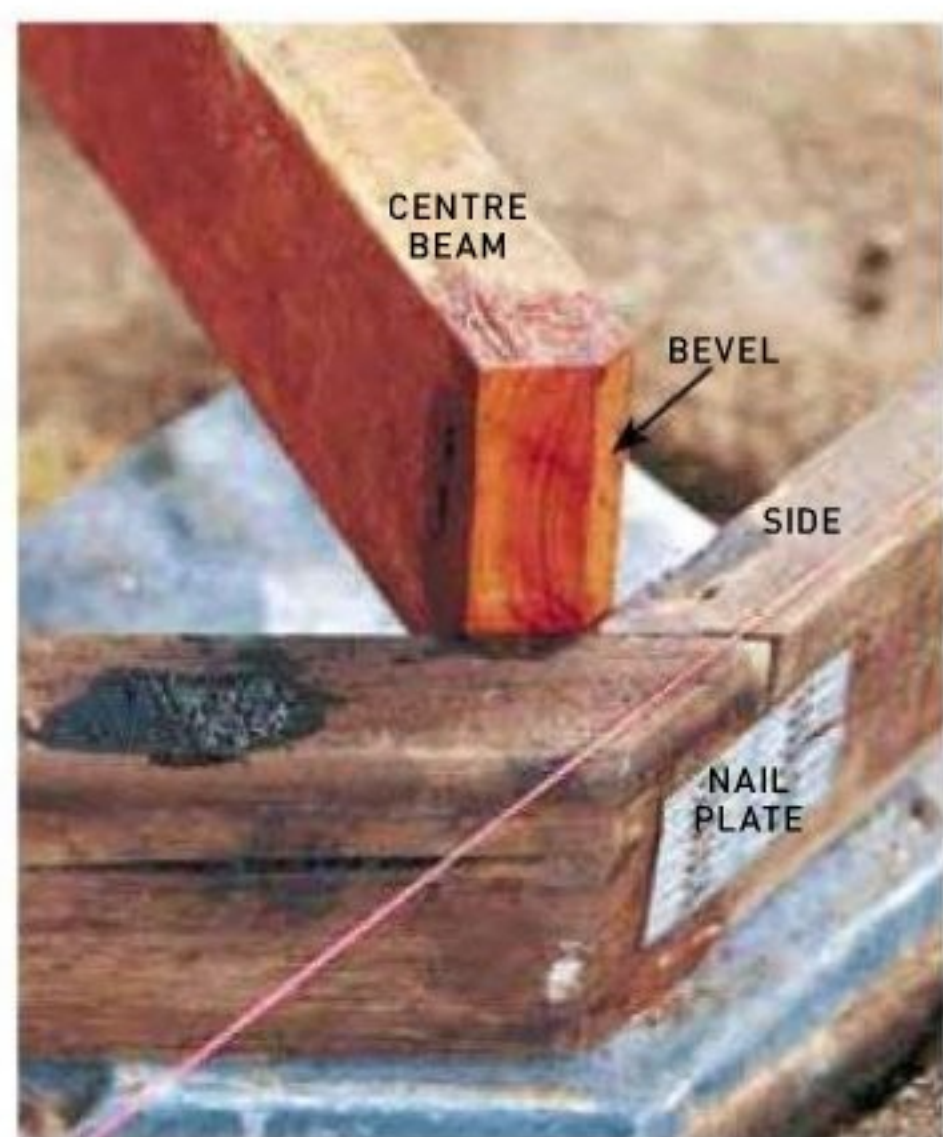
Dig 400mm deep holes 300mm square for the side footings and 400mm square for the centre, mix and pour concrete then leave it to dry. Lay three rows of bricks 230mm square for the side piers and 350mm for the centre then position capping on top.



3 Position the sides

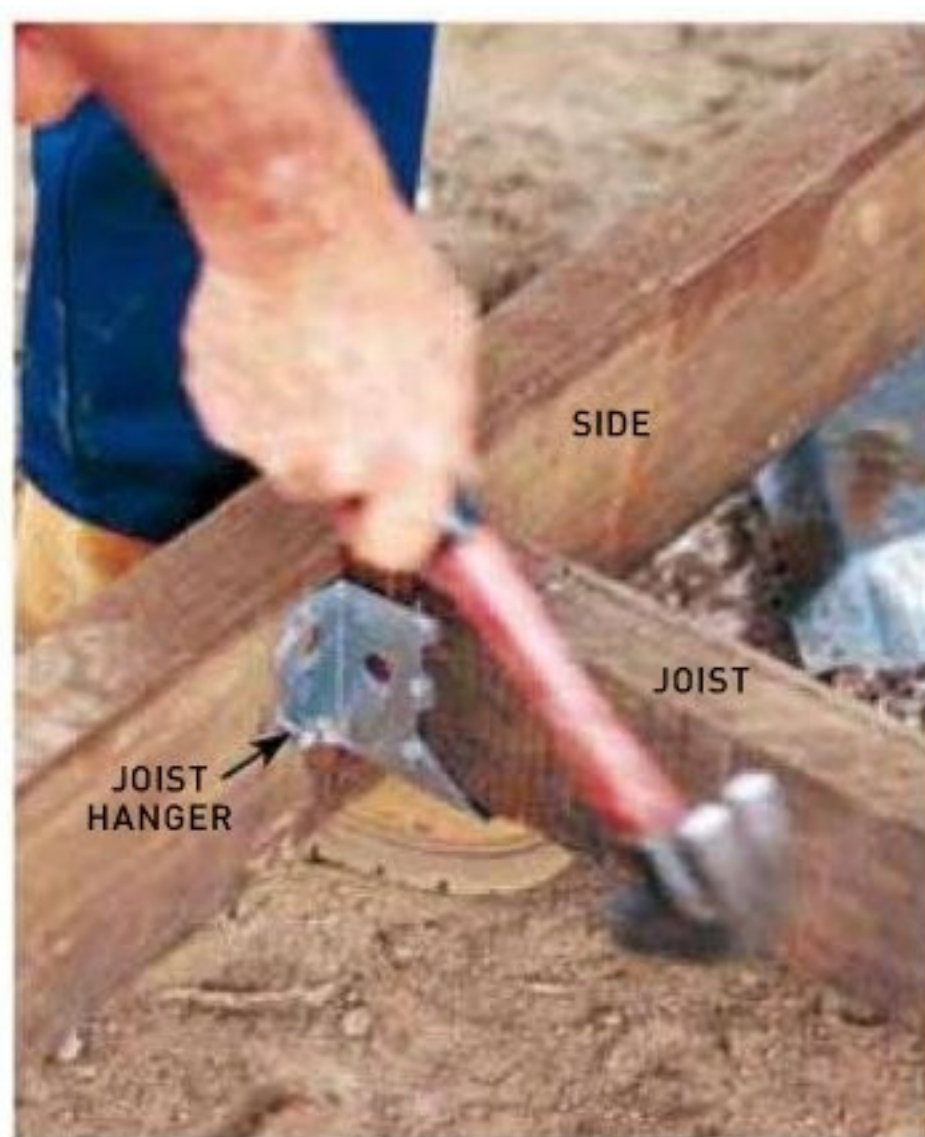
Cut the sides 1800mm long with a 45° outward splay at the ends and position on the piers, securing with 75 x 3.75mm galvanised bullethead nails and nail plates.

TIP The ends alternate between inside and outside adjacent sides.



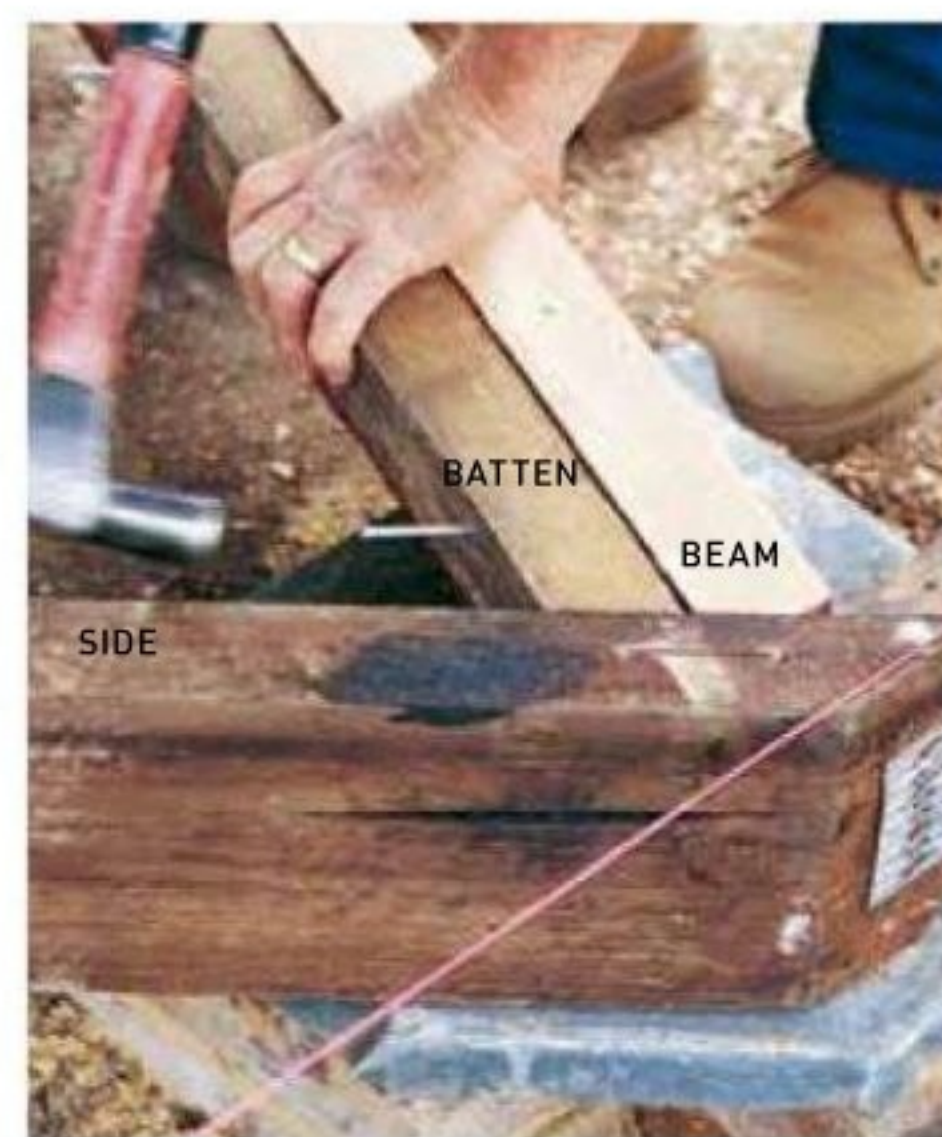
4 Secure the beams

Check the framework is square by measuring the diagonals then cut the centre beam to fit between opposite corners, bevelling the ends to fit and positioning it on the centre pier. Cut six beams to span from corners to the centre, securing with nails.



5 Add the joists

On the sides of the beams, measure equal points from their ends to position the joists then mark and cut angles on the ends that attach to the beams. Secure the joists to the sides using joist hangers and nail into the beams.



6 Attach the battens

Cut 100 x 50mm timber in half along the grain then position the battens along the beams, marking and cutting the angles, keeping the top flush and securing with nails. Plane the surface flat then coat all timber for weatherproofing. ➤

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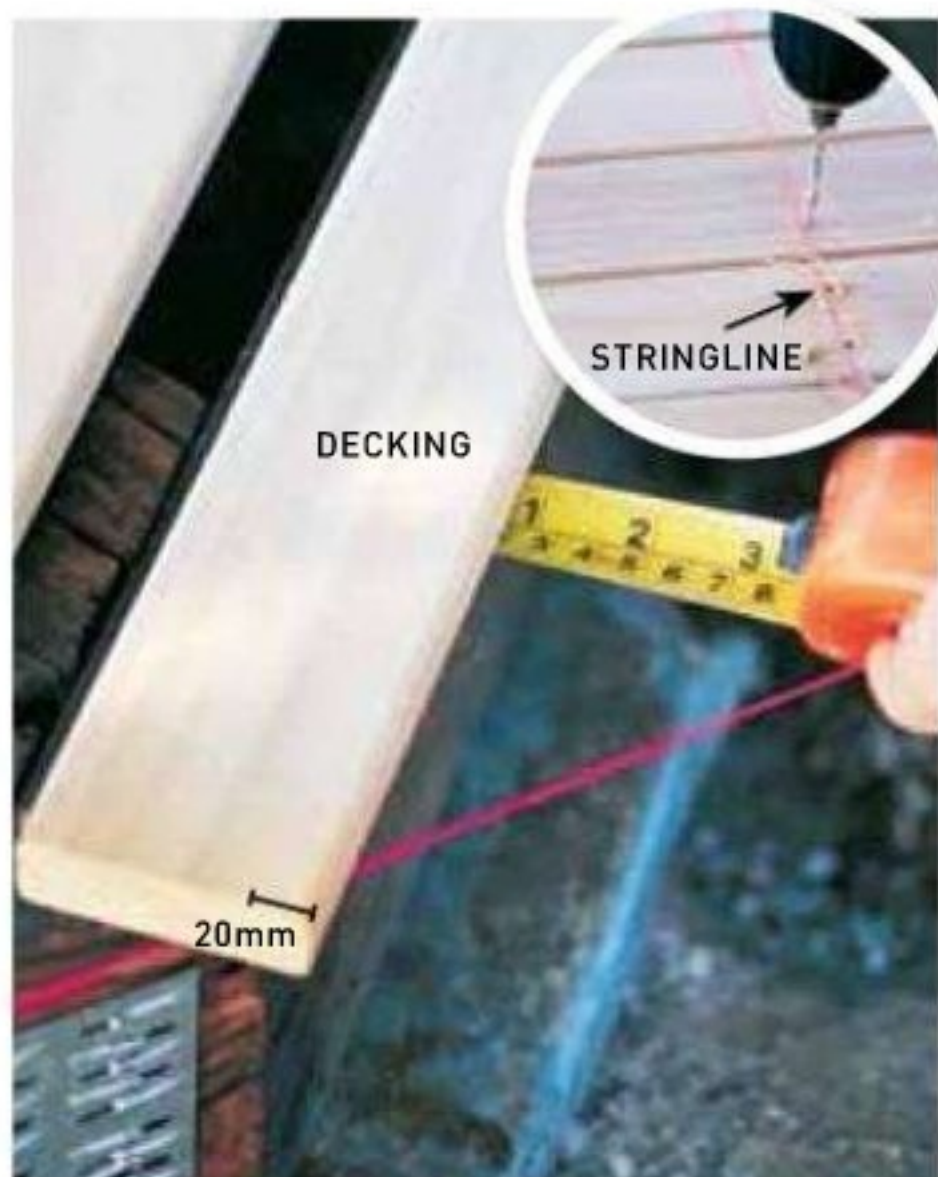


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Web: www.dml.co.nz/tuffblock

BUILD THE DECK



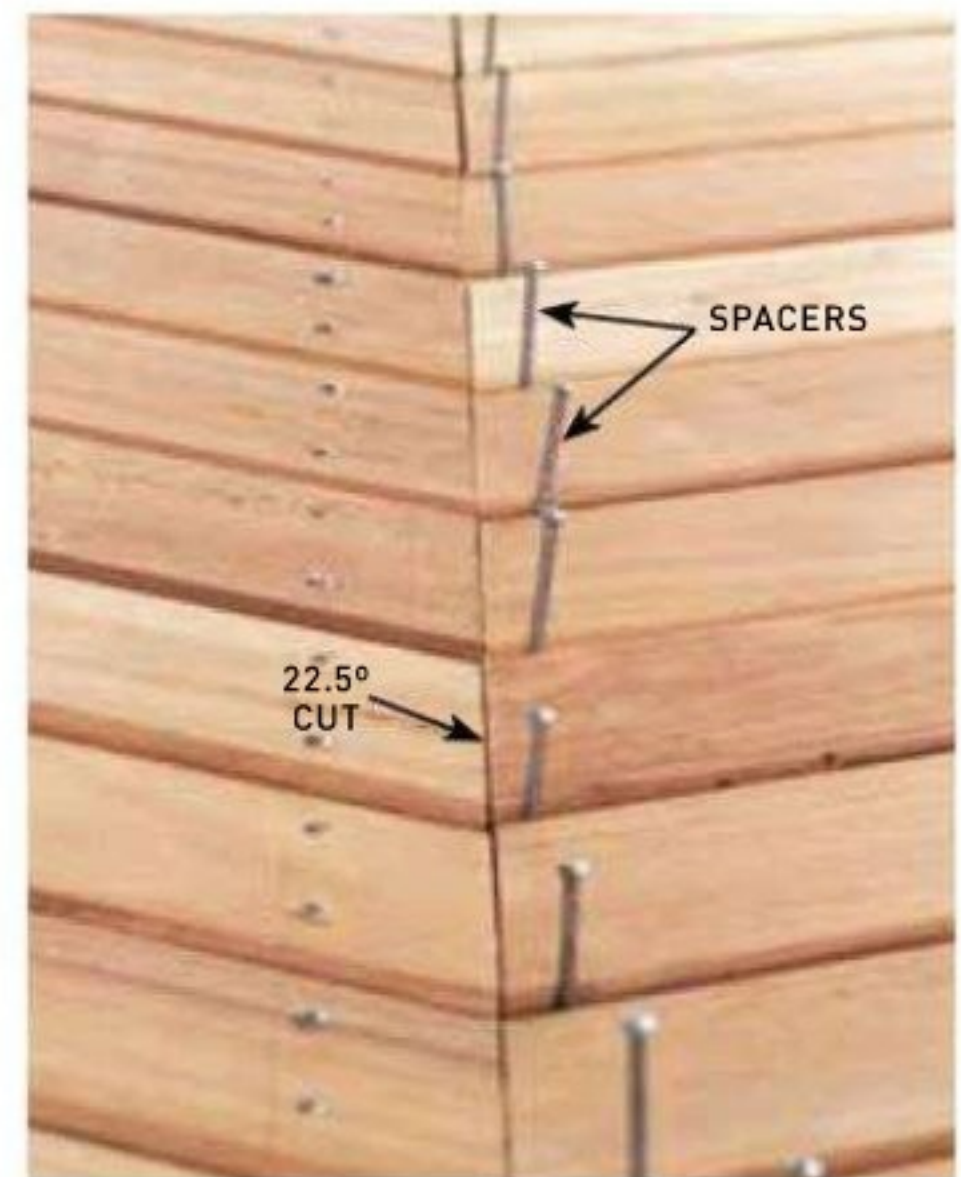
7 Set out the decking

To secure the first section, position the decking with 20mm overhanging the sides, temporarily securing to the joists with nails. Set stringlines along the centre of the joists and battens as a guide to drill two 2mm pilot holes in the boards, securing with nails.



8 Cut the section to fit

Secure a guide fence to trim the decking along the centre of the beams, setting the blade to 20mm deep and cutting to a triangular shape. Position stringlines along the battens, drilling pilot holes and securing with two nails into the ends.



9 Complete the sections

For the next section, cut decking with 22.5° at one end to position against the first section. Trim the overhang then repeat for the next, cutting the last section before securing.

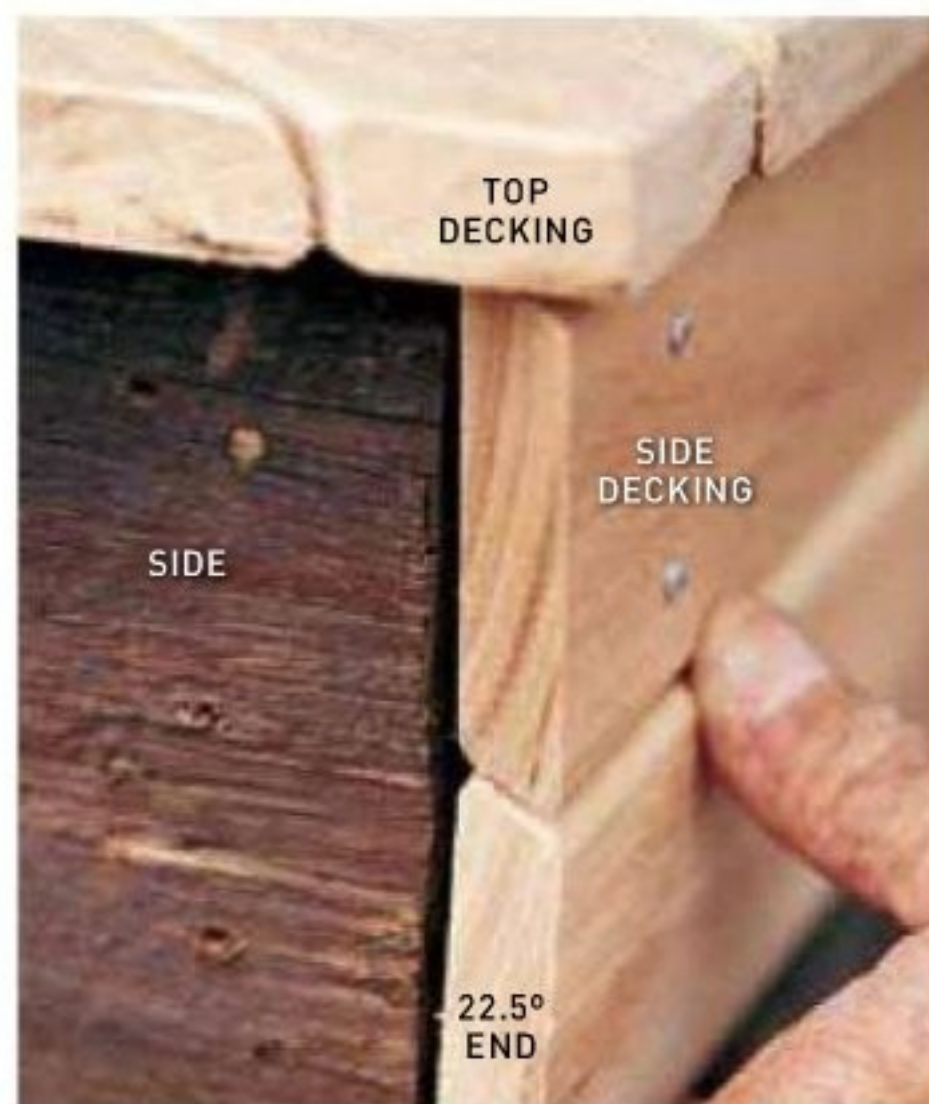
TIP To position decking with even gaps, tap nails into beams as spacers.



10 Finish the hub

When all the sections are complete, measure and mark the centre hub in the shape of an octagon, use a jigsaw to cut it then drill pilot holes to secure it with nails.

TIP Use a nail punch to tap all nail heads below the surface.



11 Attach the side decking

Cover the sides one section at a time, cutting three decking boards with the ends at 22.5°. Position the first one under the overhang of the top decking, using nails as spaces to position the others, securing with three pairs of nails.



Align decking

Some decking isn't quite straight and needs to be forced into line to secure.

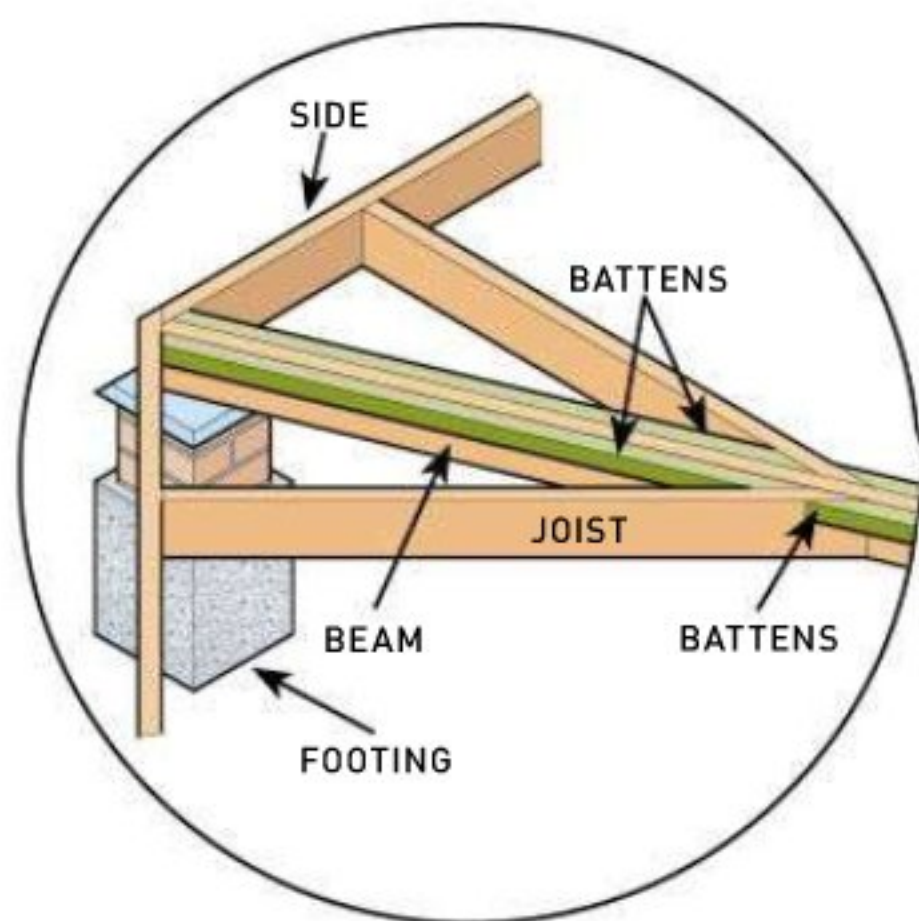
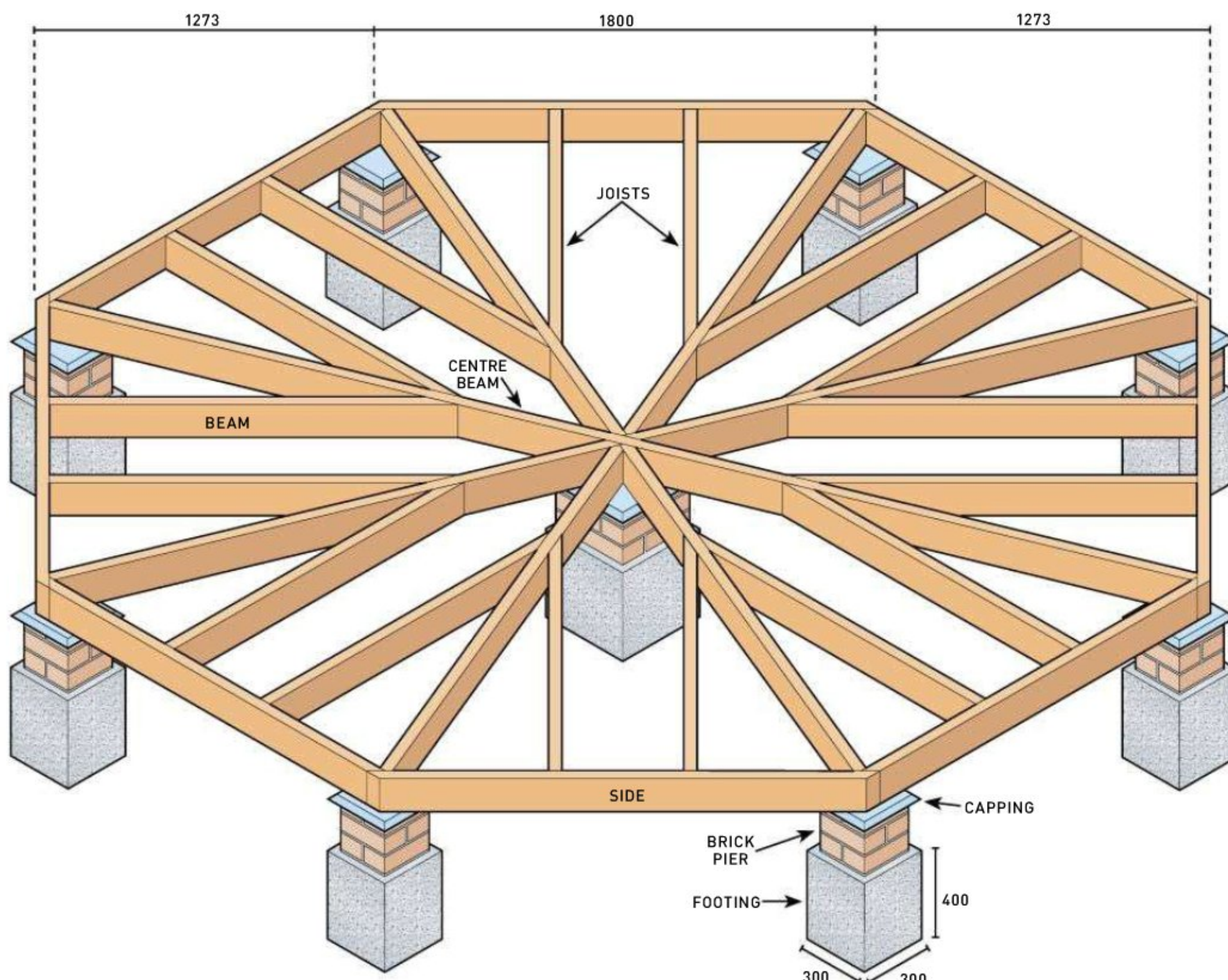
Hammer a chisel into the joist and lever it back to push the board into position, securing a nail before releasing the chisel.

TIP Tap a nail into a small timber offcut to use as a spacer.



OCTAGONAL DECK

measurements in mm



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO
Hardwood		
Sides	1800 x 150 x 50	8
Centre beam	4800 x 150 x 50	1
Beams	2400 x 150 x 50	6
Joists	1500 x 100 x 50	16
Battens	2400 x 50 x 50	16
Decking	64 x 19	320m



EXPERT SECRETS

Do this easy DIY job once every couple of years to protect timber from rot and keep it looking fresh.

Quick *AND* easy timber fix

Restore worn and weathered exterior surfaces in three simple steps

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



1 2 3



1 Clean the area

Thoroughly clean the area, brushing away any dust or dirt from the surface of the timber. If the timber is soiled or mould is present, treat it with an exterior surface cleaner and allow it to dry thoroughly before sanding.



2 Sand the timber

Use a belt sander to sand the timber. If the surface is very badly weathered or the old stain is difficult to remove, start with coarse-grit sandpaper, progress to medium-grit paper, then finish with fine-grit paper.



3 Apply the stain

Wipe down the timber to remove the sanding dust before applying two coats of a suitable exterior finish.

TIP We used a water-based oil in a natural finish, but you can use tinted stains to get a different look.

Exterior timber can start to look weathered after a few seasons of being exposed to harsh weather conditions.

This built-in bench seat, clad in treated-pine decking boards, was looking worn out and unwelcoming.

To spruce it up and extend the life of the timber, we gave it a clean, sand and stain in just 30 minutes.

Bringing timber back to life is a simple three-step DIY job, requiring only basic equipment. Depending on the size of the surface, the only power tool needed is a sander.

DIY TIP

Use water-based oils to restore weathered timber, as they're easy to apply, give a good finish and clean up is simple.

ADAM'S PICKS



Cabot's Aquadeck Exterior Decking Oil, \$78 for 4L.
cabots.co.nz



30 Seconds Outdoor Cleaner Concentrate, about \$14 for 2L. 30seconds.co.nz



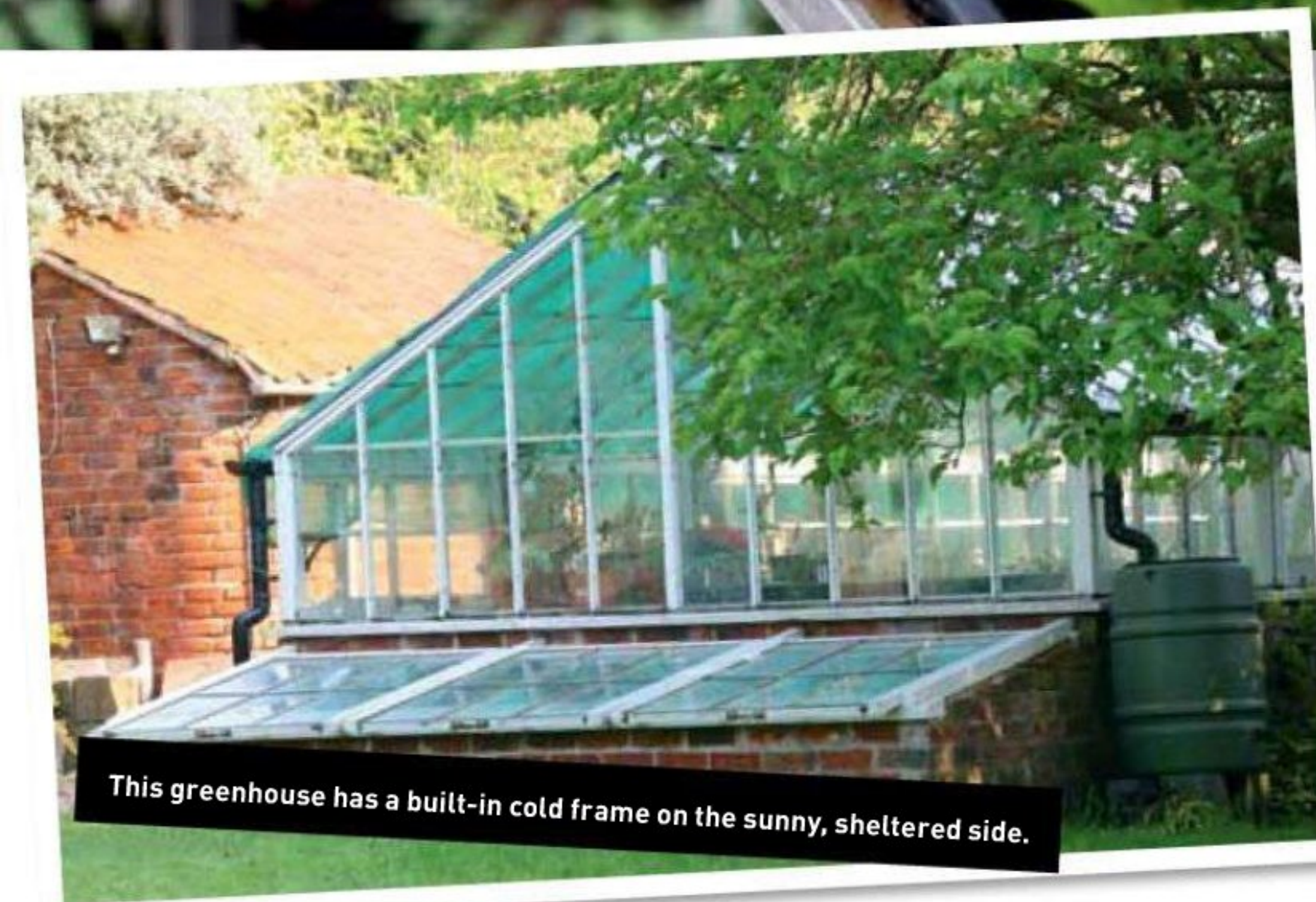
WINTER GREENHOUSE PROJECTS

Provide a cool-season home for plants
and for growing from cuttings and seeds

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS



Plants can thrive through the winter in a protected environment.



This greenhouse has a built-in cold frame on the sunny, sheltered side.

Large or small, permanent or just seasonal, a greenhouse can be the ideal solution for cool-season gardening.

The way a greenhouse works is simple, with the structure providing protection from the cold and trapping available natural sunlight and warmth that's often in short supply in winter.

Using a greenhouse also makes it easier to control other aspects of plant care, such as watering.

This means you can keep plants that prefer warmer conditions alive and healthy during the cooler months. You can also make use of the protected environment to get a head start by growing from seed ahead of time.



Protect plants

In temperate regions, we generally talk about greenhouses or glasshouses, but different types of structures can be used, depending on the climate.

- **GREENHOUSE** This structure is covered with high-strength polycarbonate or glass and protects and insulates plants from temperature extremes, while still allowing light through.
- **HOTHOUSE** In cooler regions or some commercial situations, greenhouses are often heated and are referred to as hothouses.
- **COLD FRAME** This is a mini greenhouse that is usually low to the ground with a hinged top.

Traditionally, in cold climates, the frame is attached to the rear of a hothouse and left unheated.

Seedlings or cuttings can then be raised in the hothouse and, as the warm season approaches, moved to the cold frame for hardening off before being planted in the garden. ➤

Use hardwood cuttings

We generally think of growing from cuttings only during the warm months when growth is vigorous but, using a greenhouse, you can grow a range of plants from cuttings in winter.

The type of material you need to propagate from is all-important.

In the warmer months, you'll strike cuttings that are either soft-tip, which are the new vigorous, non-flowering

growth tips, or semi-hardwood shoots, which have started to become rigid but still retain a bit of flexibility.

In winter, hardwood is the best material to propagate. These are stems that are thoroughly rigid.

The success rate with hardwood cuttings is usually much higher than with other cutting types, although they take longer to establish.

DIY TIP

To see if rose stems are suitably matured, break a thorn off sideways. If it is mainly brown, not green, underneath the stem it is ready.

Hardwood cuttings should be shooting come spring.

1 2 3



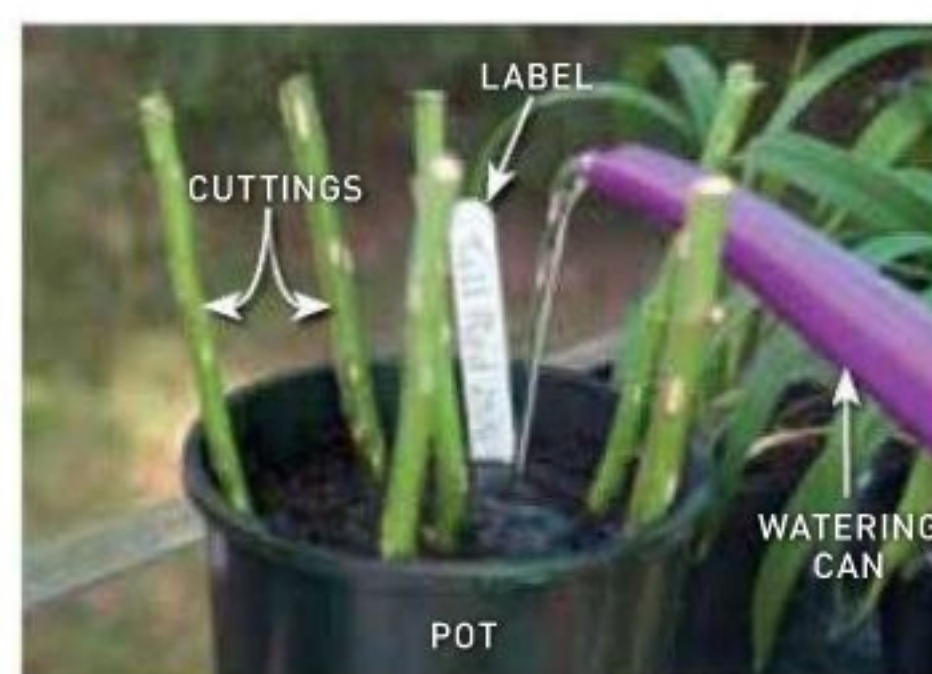
1 Take the cuttings

Take cuttings that are rigid, about as thick as a pencil and at least 100mm long, but no longer than 200mm. Make clean cuts at a right-angle on top and sloped on the base, so you don't get the top and base mixed up.



2 Trim the cuttings

De-thorn the cuttings and trim them as required, making a fresh-angled cut at each base. Add propagating mix to a pot, making 50mm holes in the mix. Dip the cuttings in root hormone gel, then insert in the holes.



3 Label the cuttings

Firm the propagating mix down around the cuttings, top up if needed, then water in. Add a label with the name of the plant and the potting date. Keep the pot in the greenhouse out of direct sunlight.



Using a specialised mix is crucial for raising cuttings.

GROW TIP

Top choices for winter hardwood cuttings are roses, especially older varieties, hydrangeas, fruiting figs and grapes, and wisteria.

Pick the right potting mix

Cuttings and seeds have very different growth requirements to mature plants, and to maximise success you need to use the right potting mix.

You need a mix with very good drainage, yet adequate moisture, an

appropriate, gentle balance of nutrients, and lots of small spaces between the particles so new roots can take anchor.

Only a specialised propagating mix or a seed and cutting potting mix will provide these ideal conditions.

1 2 3

CUT CLEANLY When taking cuttings, you need to make very clean cuts. If your secateurs are blunt, they'll crush the stem, making it hard for the plant to grow roots. It's also more likely that rot or fungus will penetrate your cuttings and cause them to fail.



1 Dismantle the secateurs

Use a wrench to remove the spindle nut and washers. Put them in a dish in the order they came off so they aren't muddled when reassembling. Remove any screws or nuts that are securing the blade to the handle or body.



2 Sharpen the blade

Wash and dry all the parts. Work the blade over a sharpening stone, then flip it, laying it flat on the stone and rubbing it in a circular motion to remove any burrs. Sharpen again if the blade won't cut a piece of paper.



3 Clean the secateurs

Use steel wool to clean any surfaces with excess dirt or rust. Wipe all parts clean and reassemble the secateurs, ensuring that you do not over-tighten the spindle nut. Lightly spray with lubricant, then wipe off any excess. ➤

Raising seeds

It's no secret why nurseries always manage to have beautiful annual seedling vegetable and flower plants to sell at just the right time of year. It's because they use greenhouses.

If you're a regular vegie or flower gardener, a greenhouse can allow you to have your own seedlings ready to go when the weather is right.

This means you can grow your tomato seedlings in late winter ready for the last cold night or frost to pass.

Growing from seeds much earlier in the season like this will save you money, as you won't have to worry about buying punnets.

You can also grow seeds on a smaller scale in windowsill trays.



GROWING IDEAS



An old egg carton makes a great container for growing seedlings. When they're ready to plant out, cut up the sections and plant the carton, cardboard and all.



Harden off seedlings before planting them in an open bed by placing them in a sunny but protected position. Bring them into the greenhouse if a very cold night is expected.



For a mini greenhouse on a budget, cut the base off an empty, clear plastic bottle and place it over cuttings or seeds, making sure it is kept out of direct sunlight. ➤





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Making a cold frame

This cold frame is made from plywood and features an acrylic lid instead of glass, making it lightweight enough to move around as needed.

Built as a ply-clad frame with a lid, it's designed to sit on soil, concrete or gravel. Position the cold frame in dappled light or cover with shade cloth in full sun. During heavy frosts, cover the frame with hessian at night.

Keep the lid clean to let light penetrate and open it whenever possible to minimise fungal problems. This cold frame has a notched post that is used to hold the lid open.

During summer, protect seedlings from drying out by raising the lid just slightly or opening it only at night.



Fasteners

Secure the plywood panels to the frame with exterior adhesive and 25 x 2mm galvanised nails at 100mm centres. Make the frame using 50mm x 8g treated pine screws and the lid with 40mm x 8g.

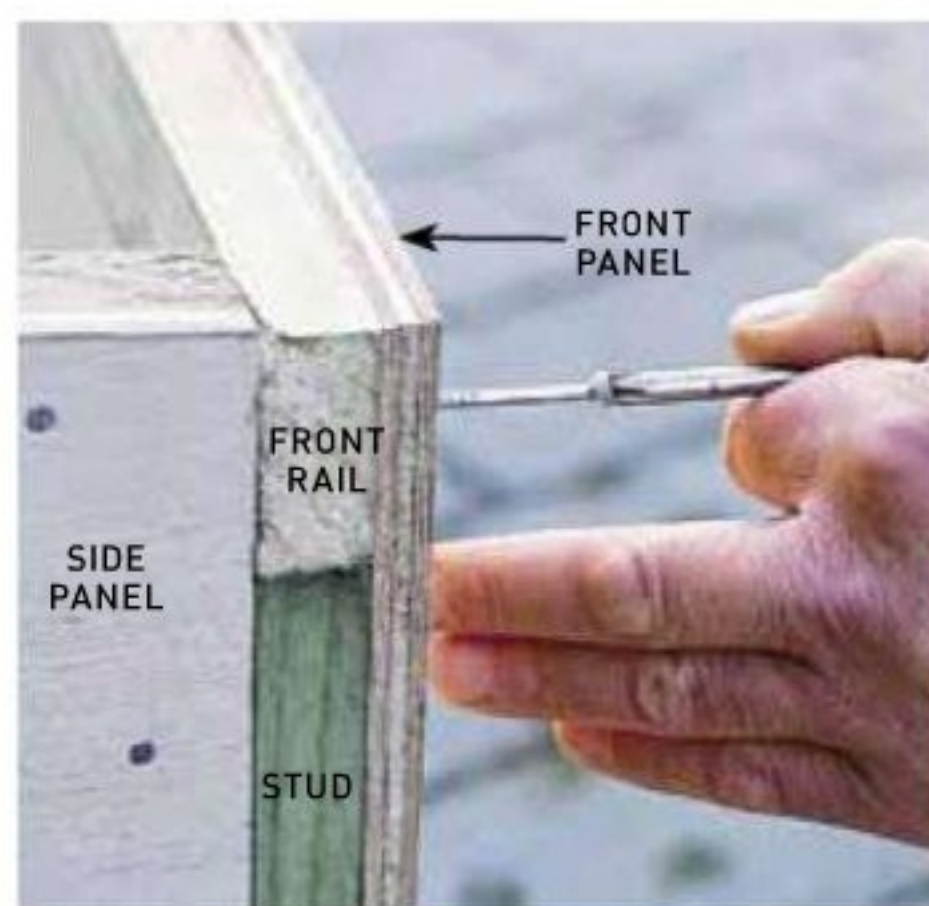
DIY TIP

Buy acrylic from a plastics supplier and have it cut to size. If seedlings grow higher than the frame, raise it up on bricks.



1 Make the frame panels

Use a circular saw and straightedge to cut the ply panels to size with the top edge of the sides sloping from back to front. Use adhesive and nails to secure the panels to the studs and rails, with the top edge of the side studs and ends of the side top rails cut at 5°.



2 Construct the frame

Drill four equally spaced 2mm countersunk pilot holes, 20mm in from the edges, to secure the front and back panels to the ends of the side panels with screws. Measure both diagonals to check the frame is square, adjusting if necessary.



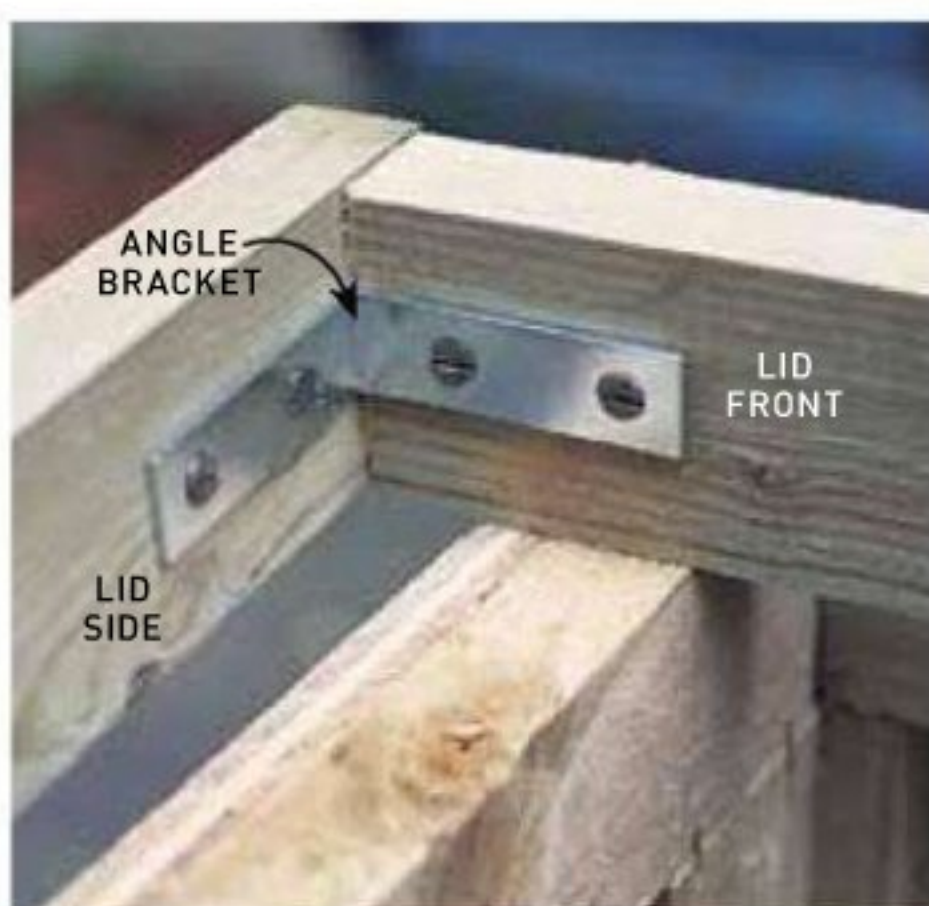
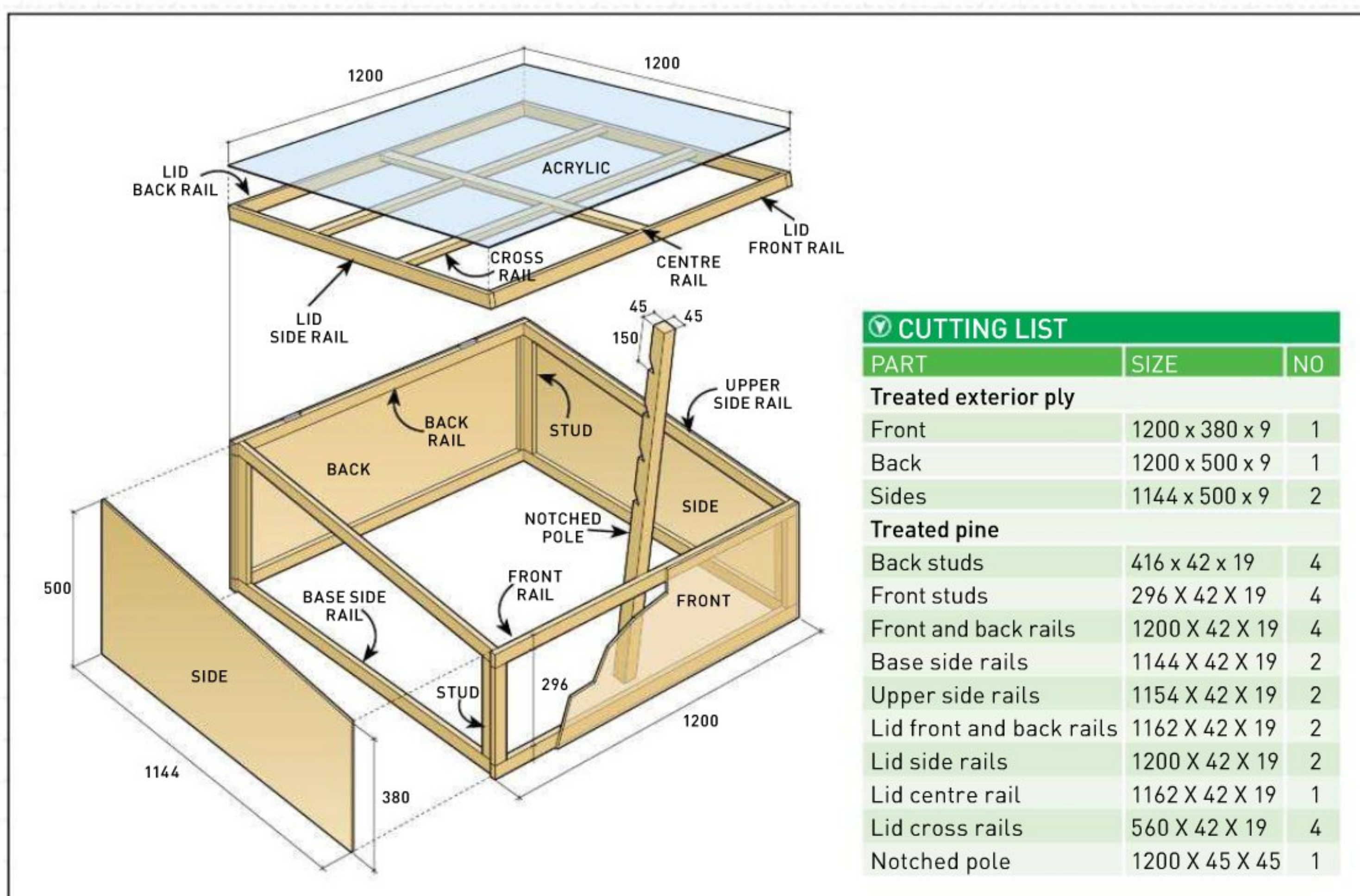
3 Weatherproof the frame

Paint the inside of the frame with exterior paint in white. Treat the exterior with a timber stain and clear sealer or paint it a colour.

TIP White paint on the interior reflects light inside the cold frame, helping plants to grow more quickly.

COLD FRAME

measurements in mm



4 Build the lid

Position the lid front and back rails between the side rails, checking the lid for square by measuring the diagonals. Secure the butt joints using adhesive and screws then reinforce with angle brackets at each corner.

TIP Use brackets rated for exterior use.



5 Reinforce the lid

Secure the centre rail to the front and back rails flush with the top edge using adhesive and screws. Secure four cross rails with screws through the lid sides and skewed into the centre rail. Attach the lid to the frame back with brass hinges. Paint and stain the lid.



6 Glaze the lid

Run a bead of clear exterior silicone around the lid frame and on the centre rail. Position a 1200mm square of clear acrylic, sealing the edges with heavy-duty waterproof tape. Cut four 45° notches into the lid pole at 150mm spacings from the top.

DESIGNER HOUSE NUMBER

Create a piece of landscape art to give your home kerb appeal

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

They serve an important function, yet house numbers are often overlooked as a design feature.

So make yours stand out to make sure visitors and delivery people can find your place every time.

We created a house number that can't be missed, and doubles as a piece of modern landscape art, by using a simple concrete casting technique.

Cut a plywood mould, mix up a batch of coloured concrete and pour it over letters or numerals. We used 200mm high characters, so if smaller characters are used, bear in mind some raised sections may be too fragile.

You can easily adapt this technique to create other pieces of garden art. Just make sure you work on a surface that can support the load of the concrete. Or lay a tarp and work on the ground.



Take this concept to the next level and include a house number block in a new boundary or retaining wall



Mixing concrete

Dry-mix sand and cement in a wheelbarrow in a 3:1 ratio, using a bucket to measure it out. We used a 9L bucket.

Add the oxide and continue to dry-mix, ensuring the colour is consistent. Add water, blending as you go, until it is a consistency just short of pourable.

Off- and real-white cement allow you to create bolder colours without grey undertones. ➤

ADAM'S PICKS



Zenith 8-10 x 50mm Treated Pine Countersunk Head Screws, about \$24 for 50. itwproline.com.au



Sika SuperGrip 30-minute Construction Adhesive, about \$21 for 310ml. sika.co.nz



Cemix Drimix Black Oxide Powder, \$20 for 1kg. cemix.co.nz



Cemix General Purpose Cement, \$8 for 20kg.

SAFETY TIP

Always wear safety breathing and eye protection when handling and mixing any cement-based products.

Make a landscape statement with a DIY house number block.

What you need

Papier-mâché characters
Form ply panel
Timber screws
High-strength adhesive
Washed river sand
White cement
Black oxide

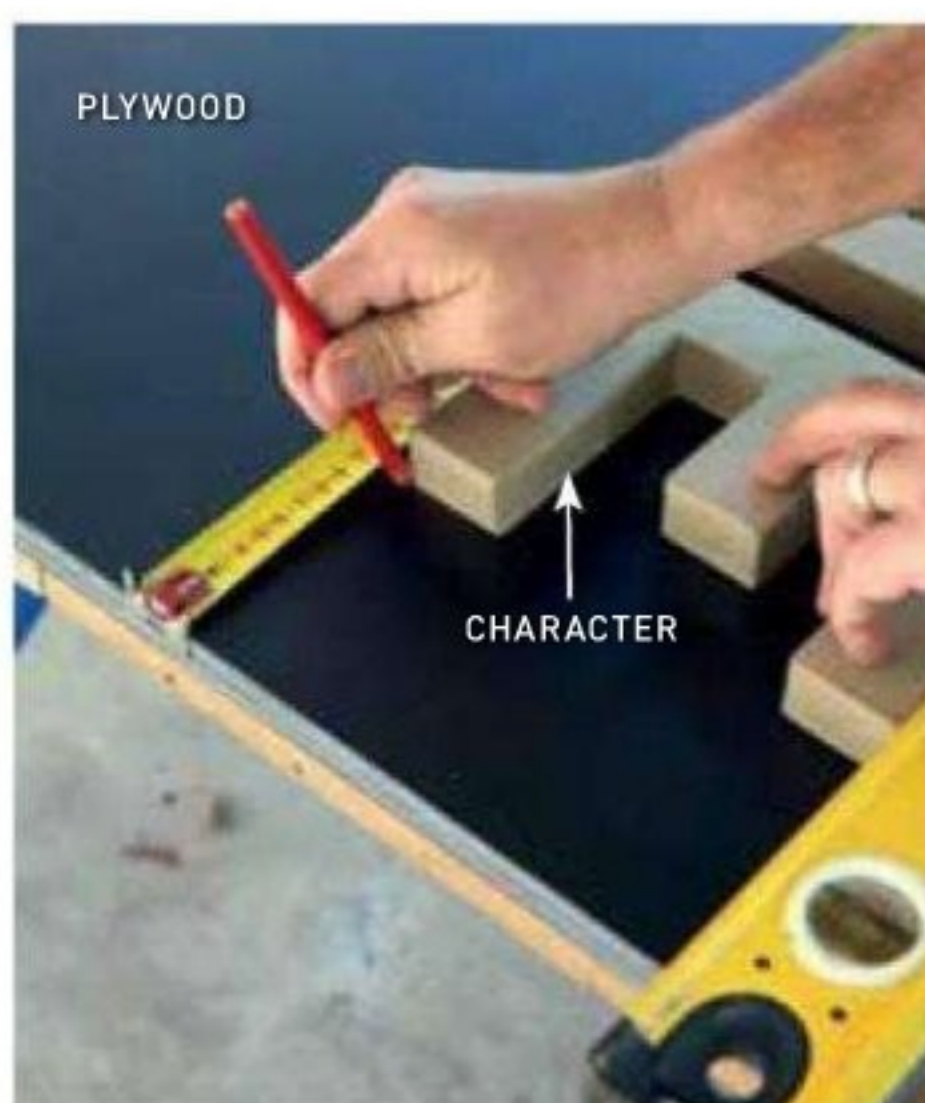
▶ See how to create this block
Watch it at [youtube.com/HandymanMagazineAU](https://www.youtube.com/HandymanMagazineAU)

MAKE THE BLOCK



1 Mark the plywood

On a flat surface, mark a 690 x 315mm base, two 690 x 140mm sides and two 340 x 140mm ends on plywood. Mark one edge of the ply as the top and, with the base edge as the starting point, draw a line for the characters using a spirit level. The base of the mould will create the face of the finished block.



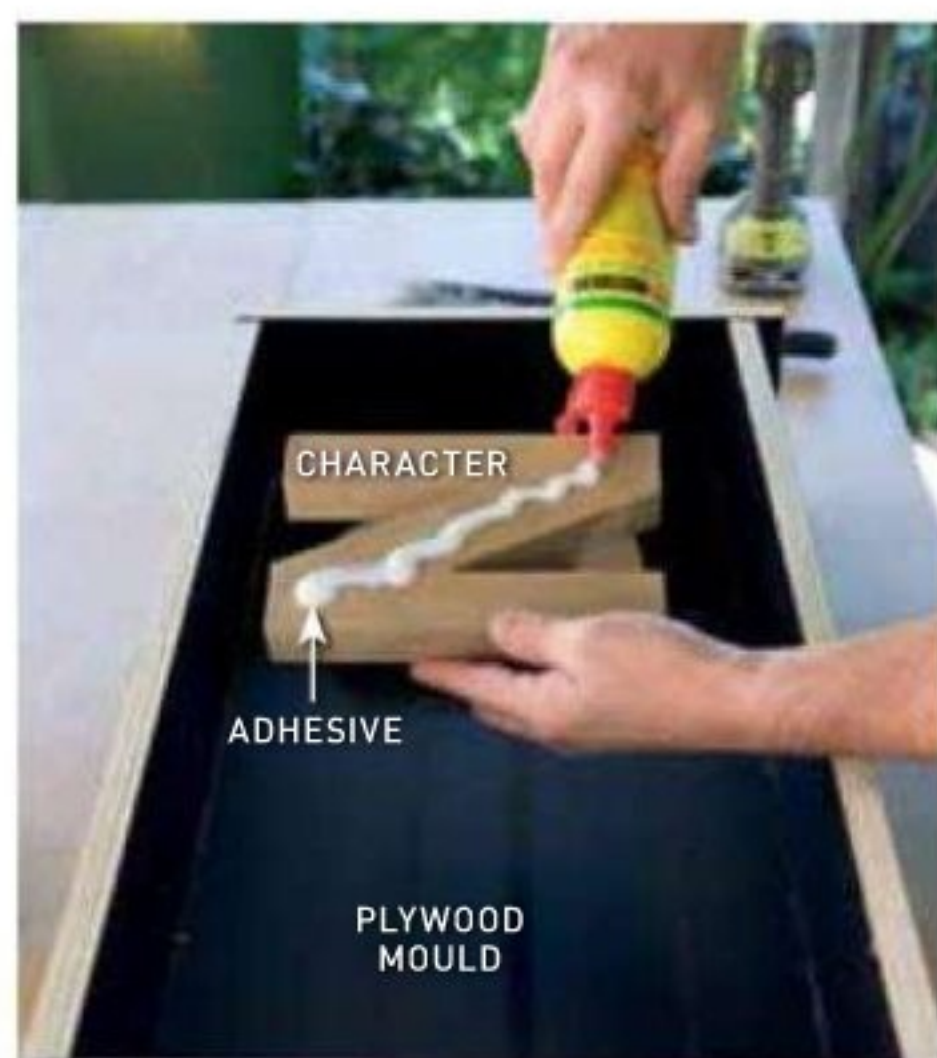
2 Position the characters

Position the characters, remembering they must read backwards, then mark their locations on the plywood. They should be 50mm in from the edges to avoid cracking and about 30mm apart. **TIP** We used 200mm tall papier-mâché characters, but to create letters DIY, cut them from plywood with a jigsaw.



3 Make the box mould

Use a circular saw to cut along the marked lines on the plywood for the mould base, sides and ends, using a guide to maintain a consistent cut. Position the side panels flush with the base, clamp and secure with screws. Position the ends and secure to the base and sides with screws.



4 Secure the characters

Apply a generous amount of adhesive to the back of the characters and position carefully, remembering they must read backwards. Carefully wipe off any excess adhesive and position the mould in the sun to dry. **TIP** Use a quick-drying adhesive suitable for smooth and porous surfaces.



5 Add the concrete

Mix the concrete, then tint using oxide powder, ensuring the consistency is just short of pourable. Add it to the mould, pushing it around the characters and into all four corners. Add the remaining concrete, firming it down, then trowel off the surface. Cover with plastic and leave overnight to cure.



6 Remove the mould

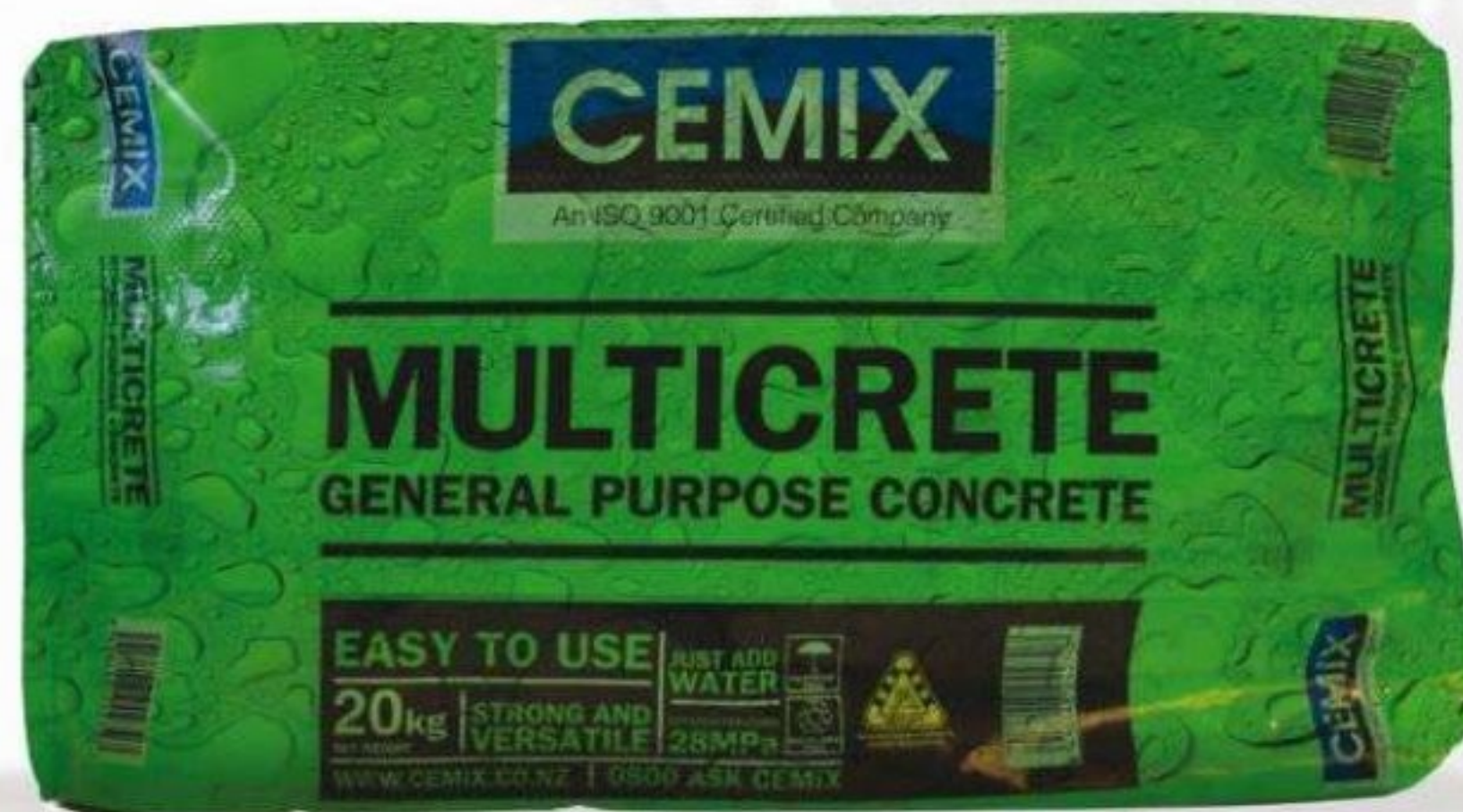
Once the concrete is cured, remove the screws and side panels. Carefully roll over so the mould base faces up. Starting from one end, pull off the base slowly and gently. Don't attempt to lever the base off, even if it offers a lot of resistance. Remove the characters from the face of the concrete block. 🍀



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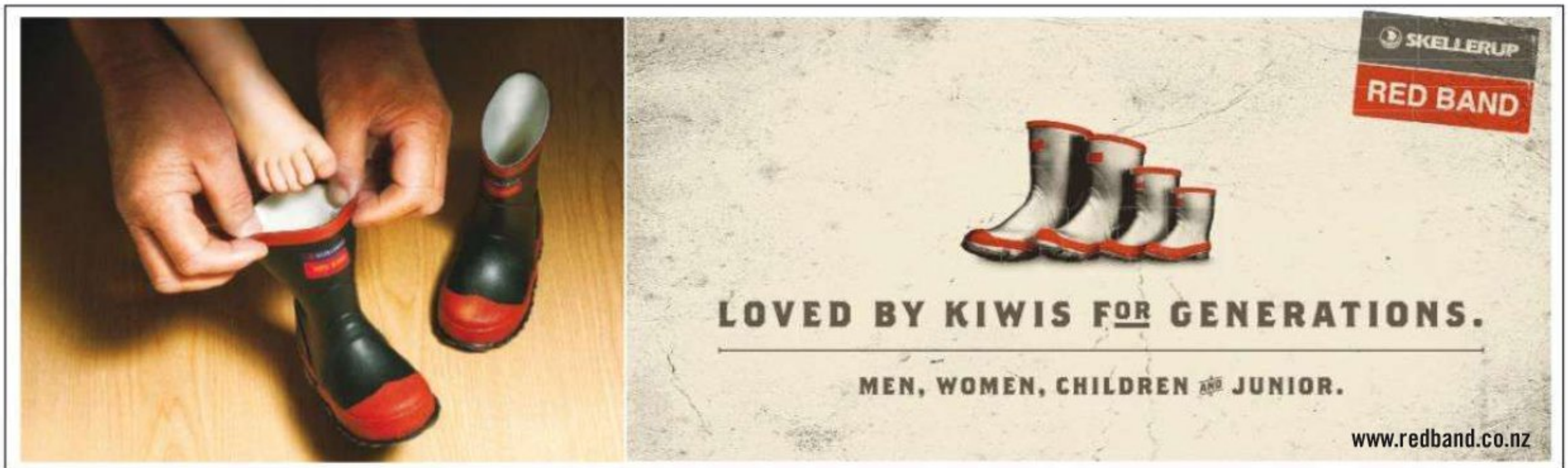
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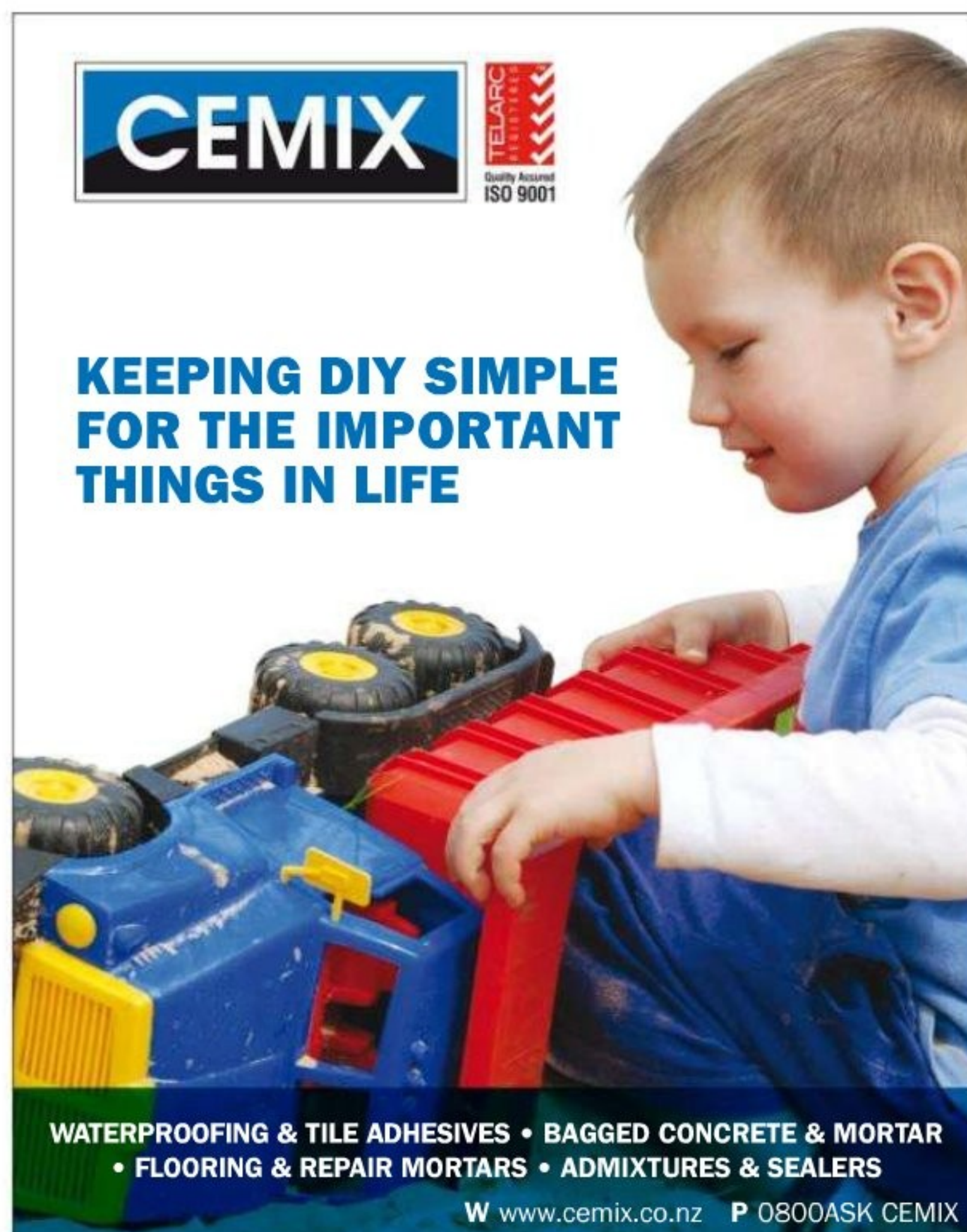
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Raising African violets

Give them the right care and you'll find these indoor favourites are easy to grow

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Among the world's most popular flowering indoor plants, African violets (*Saintpaulia ionantha*) will flower for months if given the right conditions, adding brilliant colour indoors.

They belong to the Gesneriaceae family and there are about 20 species in the *Saintpaulia* genus.

While the original flowers were purple-blue, there are now many cultivars in a range of colours and bicolours. They can bear double flowers and the petals have either smooth, fringed, ruffled or frilled edges.



Cheryl

EXPERT SECRETS

An excess of leaves often causes a failure to flower, so remove every third leaf and a few small ones in the crown of the plant.

Help them thrive

Native to a tropical climate, African violets grow best in temperatures ranging from 15-24°C. Cold conditions can stop growth, but it will increase when the weather warms up.

✦ **POSITION** Give them a well-lit spot that doesn't get direct sun, or just a little early morning sun. Turn the pots regularly to ensure even growth.

✦ **SOIL** Use a potting mix specially formulated for African violets and plant in small pots, as they prefer to be slightly root-bound.

✦ **WATER** When the top of the soil feels dry, water with lukewarm water. The best way is to add water to the saucer and let the plant soak up the moisture.

Remove the saucer after about 30 minutes, when enough water has been absorbed. Don't stand the plant in water for too long. In cool weather, allow the potting mix to just about dry out before watering.

✦ **FEED** Give them specially formulated African violet food every four weeks, except during the winter. ➤



Make sure African violets get lots of light or they won't produce flowers and the foliage will turn yellow

GROW TIP

Correct watering is the key to success. Water spilt on the leaves will turn them blotchy while overwatering will cause crown rot.



TAKE CUTTINGS

African violets grow easily from leaf cuttings and it is an inexpensive way to increase your collection.

There are two methods of propagating these plants, either in potting mix or water.

Take cuttings from a plant you already have or share leaves from different cultivars with your friends.



Transplant new plantlets into their own pots when 25mm high

Propagate in potting mix



1 Cut the leaves

Select 1-3 healthy mature leaves from the centre of the plant and cut off with a 25mm long stem using secateurs. Trim the bases with an angled cut. Fill a small pot with seed raising and cutting mix.



2 Plant the leaves

Make a hole in the mix with a pencil and insert the stems so the leaves are above the mix, ensuring they don't touch. Water lightly using a mist spray and position the pot in a well-lit but shaded spot.

Propagate in water



1 Take a cutting

Choose a healthy mature leaf from the centre of the plant with a 50mm long stem. Make an angled cut at the base of the stem. Select a container that will support the leaf above the rim.



2 Add the leaf

Fill the container with water to cover the base of the stem and add the leaf. Wrap the container in foil to help root development and prevent algae growth. Transfer to a small pot when roots form.

New plantlets will form around the base of the leaf in 4-10 weeks.

Windowsill wonders

African violets like humidity, which is why they can be grown successfully on bathroom or kitchen windowsills.

Standing the pot on a saucer filled with damp pebbles will increase the humidity, as will growing a group of African violets in the one spot.

A light and humid windowsill makes an ideal home.



CHERYL'S PICKS

Did you know?

In 1892, the District Commissioner of Tanganyika, now Tanzania, Baron Walter von Saint Paul-Illaire, who had an interest in botany, sent seeds of a plant he'd discovered to his father in Germany for study.

He handed them to the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen, Hanover.

The flowers from these seeds acquired the genus name *Saintpaulia* after the Saint Paul-Illaire family, and received the species name, *ionantha*, because of their similarity to the garden violet. 🌸



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daltons.co.nz



Yates Brigitta African Violet Food, \$11 for 200ml. yates.co.nz

Blooming delicious

Plant fruit trees for fabulous flowers
in spring and fresh fruit in summer

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM WOODHAMS

One of the great delights of summer has to be the succulent stone fruits, such as peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots and all the amazing hybrids in between.

Many of these, and others such as apples and even nut trees, are actually pretty easy to grow at home in the garden, in courtyards or in pots.

They also come with a beautiful spring surprise, as they put on an incredible flower display, adding real wow factor to your backyard.

Plants with benefits

Flowering fruit trees are an excellent landscape choice and, as a bonus, have many sustainable advantages as well.

Being deciduous, they provide leafy summer shade while letting the sun and warmth stream through in winter.

Many are the perfect size for today's smaller gardens, most are tolerant of a wide range of conditions and they're also very hardy once established.

As they lose their leaves in one big autumn drop, they're quite tidy for the rest of the year. The fallen leaves make a great addition to your compost heap.

Their beautiful spring-flowering display is followed by delectable fruit in summer and throughout autumn.



Lots of fruit trees benefit from an annual prune, so check the label for details

Espaliered along a wall, these pears make a striking design feature.

BREEDING MATTERS

Most fruit trees used to be literally as tall as a house but, today, grafting and hybridising has given us designer trees to suit any situation. The size description only relates to the tree, not the fruit, so a dwarf or miniature tree will still bear full-sized fruit. Here's a selection from Waimea Nurseries (waimeanurseries.co.nz).



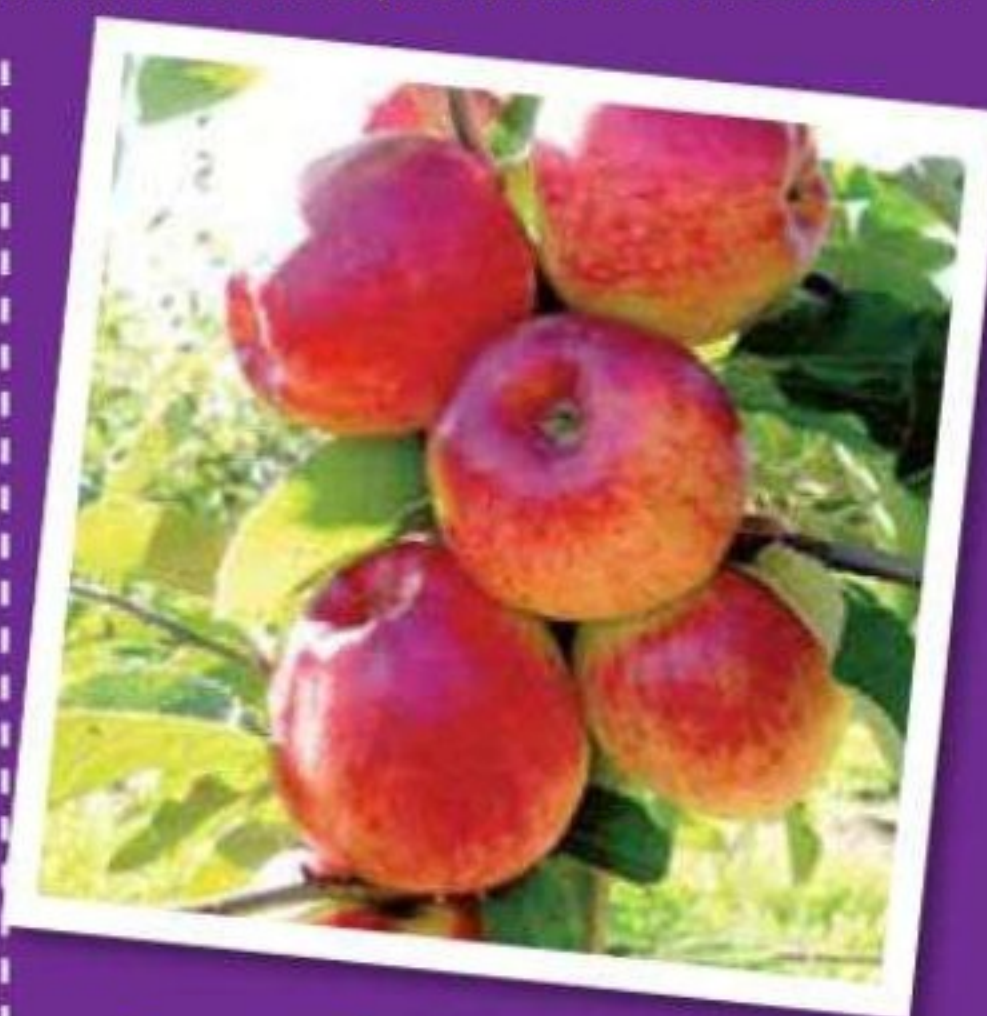
Miniature

The dwarf 'Pixzee' Peach bears masses of full-sized fruit but only grows to 1.5 x 1.5m. It fruits well in cool to warm temperate regions and is even suitable for large pots.



Columnar

Fruit trees with a columnar form, such as Ballerina Apples, are ideal for narrow beds or where space is at a premium. They only reach a little over 3m tall and 60cm wide.



Low maintenance

The Initial apple tree reaches a tidy size of 4 x 4m and has been bred to resist apple scab, making it easy to care for and an ideal choice for the home gardener. ➤

Pollination

Many fruit trees do best growing in the company of other suitable fruiting trees, as it increases their pollination and, in turn, the fruiting rate.

Check the labels before buying, as some are self-fertile but others perform best with specific varieties nearby.

This doesn't mean you need a huge garden, as you can buy double-grafted plants with two or more varieties combined to maximise pollination.

You can also use duo or trio planting techniques and put multiple trees in one planting hole.



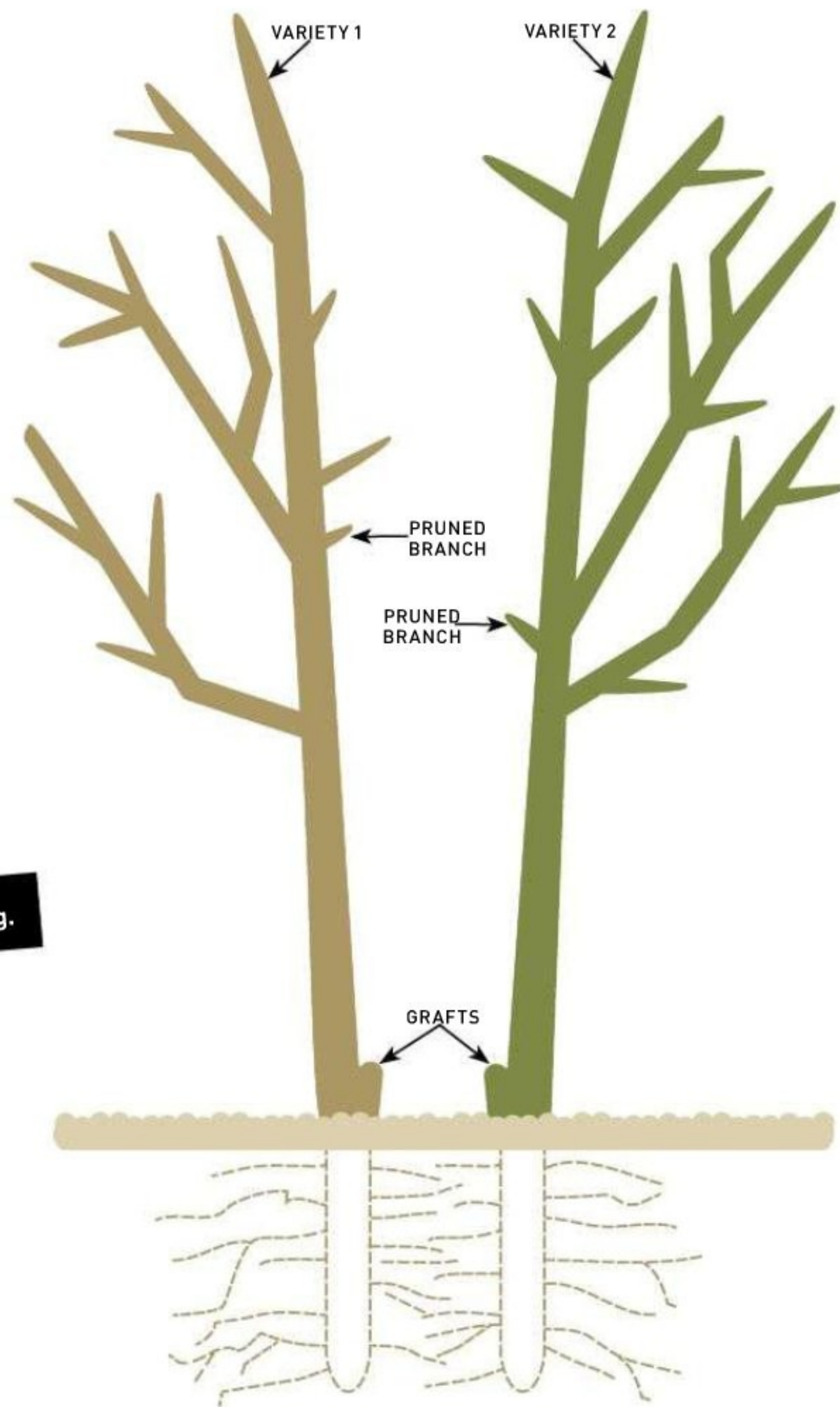
The Granny Smith is a great pollinator for other apple varieties



Apples are usually the last of the fruit trees to bloom in spring.



MULTIPLE PLANTING



Grow a duo or trio

Is your garden small, but you fancy a couple of different trees? Does your preferred tree need a partner to assist with pollination, but you don't want to lose too much yard?

There is an amazingly simple solution, called multi-planting.

Following the regular steps for planting, dig a slightly larger

hole and place 2-3 compatible varieties back-to-back, leaning a little outwards, then prune any inward-pointing branches.

This technique is suitable for apples, cherries, almonds, apricots, nectarines, peaches, pears and plums. The smart idea is to combine varieties that will cross-pollinate to improve your harvest.



Tips for fruiting success

1 **ENSURE** soil is broken up well when digging a planting hole to allow the roots to establish and grow quickly in the spring.

2 **PRUNE** the tree. Don't worry about being too hard on it, as not pruning it will be more detrimental.

3 **WATER** the tree consistently through spring to get it going and help it establish. A large bucketful a week should do it.

Continue to water as the weather hots up in summer, again with a bucketful a week, then let nature take care of the rest.

With a little TLC, peach trees will yield an abundant crop around much of the country.



Share photos of your fruit tree

Post a pic to Instagram and tag @HandymanMagazine

Chilling out

For trees to flower well and set fruit afterwards, a certain level of chill hours, or chill units, are needed.

These units are a rather complex calculation of the number of hours below 7-10°C and over 14°C necessary while the plant is in its dormant stage.

Don't get too concerned about chill units, but ensure that any varieties you plant are matched to the typical chill hours for your area. There are varieties that are classed as low chill, so ask your local nursery expert for advice.

Did you know?

The *Prunus* group is considered to produce the most spectacular of the spring blossoms. Ideal for small to medium gardens, this genus includes peaches, plums, apricots, cherries and almonds.



Grow luscious liliums

Get them in the ground now
for a dramatic summer display

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

There are plenty of reasons to grow lilies. They look and smell sensational, they're suited to informal and formal gardens, they make exquisite long-lasting cut flowers, and you can plant them in containers.

They're available in a wide range of colours, including red, white, pink, yellow and orange. They

also come in a mixture of two or three colours and some feature spots.

Lilies are very easily cultivated and, once planted, they will flower repeatedly for years.

Considered to be one of the oldest domesticated plants, there are about 80 recorded species in the genus, which are mostly native to North America, Asia and Europe.

TIDY TIP

Watch out for the pollen on the stamens, which the plants freely release, as it can stain clothing and furniture.

How to plant the bulbs

The bulbs are available in winter and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. If you can't plant them at once, store them in the crisper in your fridge.

The lily bulb is made up of fleshy overlapping scales, which are actually specialised leaves. Unlike daffodil bulbs, they don't have a protective fibrous outer coat.

One adage for growing lilies recommends keeping their heads in the sun and feet in the shade.

A spot with morning sun is ideal, especially in hot climates, and they can be grown in full sun in cool climates. Plant lily bulbs in a rich and moist but free-draining soil.

✦ **DIG** a planting hole twice the length of the bulb. Add a mixture of well-rotted compost and a nine-month controlled-release fertiliser to the hole.

✦ **COVER** with a 20-30mm layer of topsoil, then position the bulb. ➤

Select a pot that will be in proportion with the height of the lilies.

GROW TIP

Avoid the Formosa lily (*Lilium formosanum*), which is found mainly in the North Island, as it has been listed as an invasive weed.

Looking after lilies

Once planted, lilies are best left undisturbed for many years. If you need to lift the bulbs because the clump is overcrowded, dig them up in late autumn or early winter when dormant and replant immediately.

- ✦ **FEED** Established clumps need feeding twice a year in winter and again after they've flowered.
- ✦ **WATER** The soil must be kept moist.
- ✦ **MULCH** Keep lilies continually mulched, especially during summer to keep the bulbs cool.
- ✦ **MAINTAIN** Cut off the stems in late autumn when the foliage turns brown to produce new foliage in spring. Watch for snails and slugs on new growth.



Pick the blooms as the buds are opening, cutting halfway down the stem so the bulbs continue to develop for next year's display



Did you know?

We've all heard of the saying, 'gild the lily', and it's really no surprise it implies that any attempt to improve upon perfection is foolish.

It is generally believed this saying was a quote from the Shakespeare play, *King John*. But the true quote is actually '...to gild refined gold, to paint the lily...'

The first known use of 'gild the lily' dates back to 1928. Most likely a misquotation from the play, it stuck and is still used today. ➤



In the kitchen

The orange tiger lily can be eaten, and the buds and bulbs are often found in stir-fries in China. The bulb tastes similar to a potato and can also be added to soups and casseroles.

TIP All other liliiums are poisonous to people and animals.



Tiger lilies not only look striking, they're also edible.

WHAT TO GROW

Oriental lilies

Popular cut flowers, these lilies can have wavy petals or double flowers. All sweetly perfumed, they come in a wide range of colours and grow up to 1.1m high.

LA Hybrids

Breeding has crossed Asiatic hybrids with *L. longiflorum*. Called LA Hybrids, they feature vigorous, fragrant flowers in various colours and reach a height of 500-800mm.

Tiger lily

This lily bears spotted orange blooms, and cultivars come in shades of pink or yellow. Tiger lilies (*Lilium lancifolium*) grow to 1m or more and like cool climates.

Christmas lily

Also known as a November lily, *Lilium longiflorum* produces up to 10 waxy, sweetly scented white flowers on each stem. It tolerates some lime and grows up to 800mm.

Asiatic lilies

Available in a range of colours, Asiatic lilies are very hardy plants and will multiply quickly in the garden. They grow to a height of 500-800mm.

The Madonna lily

The flowers of the Madonna lily (*Lilium candidum*) are pure white with golden anthers. Unlike other lilies, it likes slightly alkaline soil. It grows to about 1.5m high. 🍀



Oriental lily



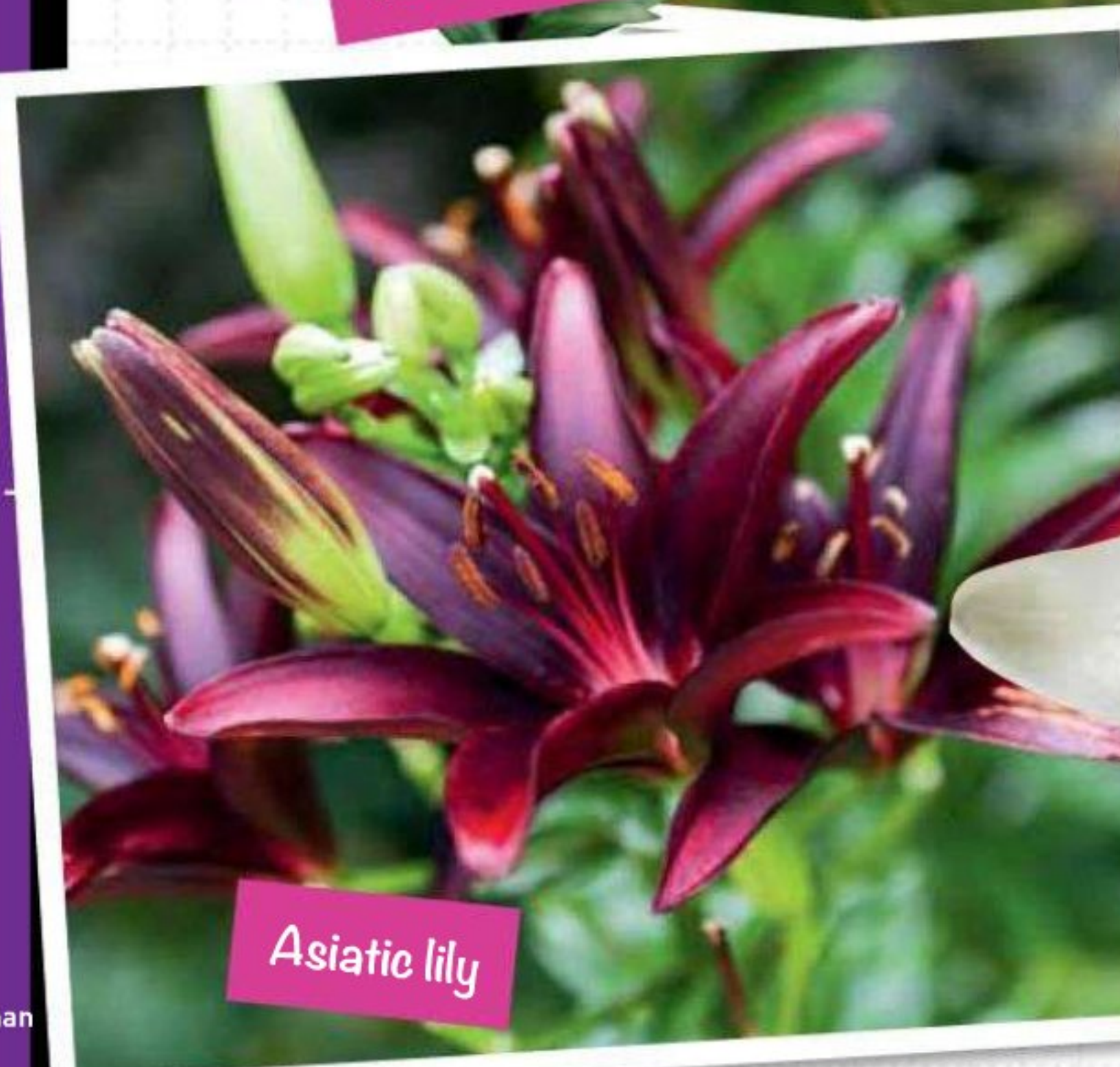
LA Hybrid



The Madonna lily



Tiger lily



Asiatic lily



Christmas lily

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BRINGING *BULBS* INDOORS

Fill your home with beautiful spring colour during winter

WORDS ADAM WOODHAMS

You don't have to wait until winter is over to see your spring bulbs begin to flower.

Using a process known as forcing, you can grow plants indoors, out of season.

Most often used to grow fragrant hyacinths, the technique is just as effective with almost any other bulb.

We used a clear cylinder vase and large glass marbles to force paperwhite bulbs, but you can use just about any type of container or growing medium.

Here's how to create a gorgeous indoor showcase of blooms.

GROW TIP

Glass marbles make an ideal growing medium for forced bulbs, and come in various colours. Pre-soak, drain, then add the bulbs.



Easy bulb care

As foliage starts to appear, add a small amount of controlled-release fertiliser and position the container in filtered light, but not direct sunlight.

As the bulbs grow, prune off any dead leaves and flowers. Once flowering has finished, plant the bulbs outdoors in a bed or pot.

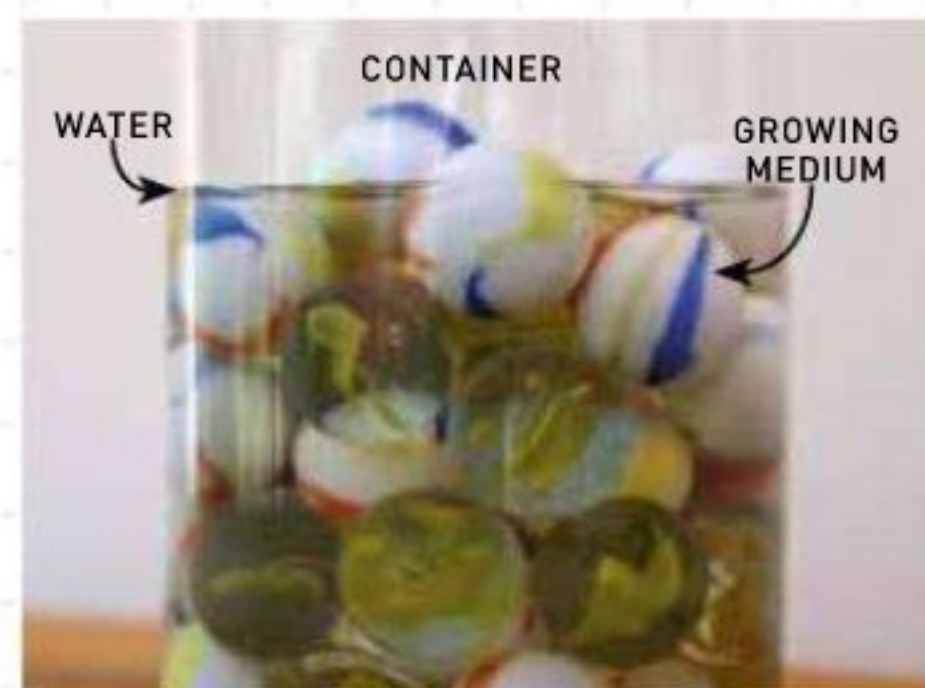
1 2 3



1 Chill the bulbs

Put the bulbs in a paper bag, marking their name on the outside. Put them in the vegetable crisper in the fridge and leave for 3-10 weeks.

TIP The later in the season you bought the bulbs, the less chill time they'll need.



2 Add a growing medium

Fill the base of the container with the growing medium, such as glass marbles, gravel or pebbles, to about a quarter or a third of the depth of the container. Fill the container with water to just below the top of the marbles.



3 Position the bulbs

Remove the bulbs from the fridge and stand them root-down on the growing medium, pushing them in until the base of each bulb contacts the water. Position the container in a cool indoor spot, ensuring the water is kept topped up.

FORCING FLOWERS

The process of forcing involves pushing the bulb to throw out its foliage and burst into bloom without planting it in soil.

Quality bulbs should store enough energy to produce next season's flowers, regardless of how or where they are grown.

What you need

Quality bulbs
Leak-proof container
Marbles, gravel or pebbles
Controlled-release fertiliser



POP QUIZ!

Name these *dogs*

Can you identify these canine breeds?
The answers are at the bottom of the page



ANSWERS 1 ROTTWEILER 2 CAVALIER KING CHARLES SPANIEL 3 SHETLAND SHEEPDOG 4 LABRADOR RETRIEVER 5 STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER 6 PUG 7 PAPIILLON 8 BEAGLE 9 SIBERIAN HUSKY 10 BLUE HEELER

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