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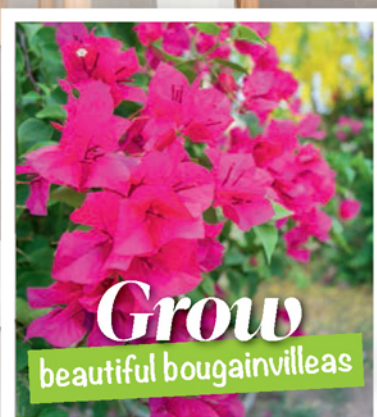
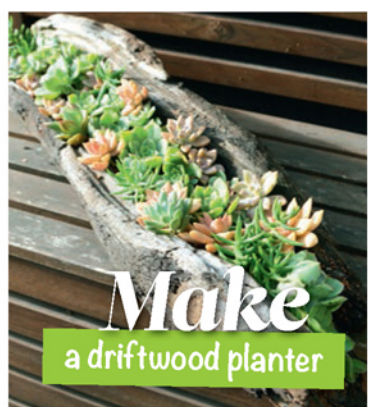
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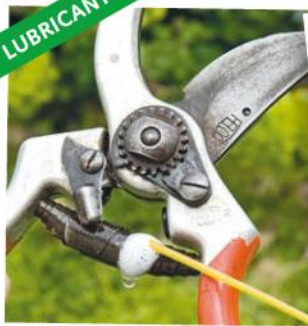
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THIS ISSUE

EDITOR'S LETTER



HANDY HINT OF THE MONTH



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When I was about eight, my family had a new kitchen installed. It was bright yellow, featured a lot of pine and, these days, would make a very impactful 'before' pic. But we loved it and it changed the dynamics of how our family prepared meals, ate and interacted.

Today more than ever, kitchen design is geared towards positioning this space as the heart of the home, an integrated, social hub where people can come together.

Given its status as the most important room of the house, embarking on a kitchen renovation can be incredibly daunting – and costly – but it doesn't have to be.

Whether you're planning to design from scratch, assemble a flatpack kitchen, perform a cosmetic refresh or make some tweaks and improvements on a limited budget, we have plenty of tips, tricks and inspiration to help you on your way, starting from page 26.

Hit the road

If you've ever harboured a dream of taking off in a caravan for the ultimate road trip, be sure to check out our feature on revamping a vintage caravan, on page 48. With a mobile home this fabulous, you'll never want to return!

Are your outdoor areas in need of some loving? We show you how some simple and affordable upgrades can deliver dramatic results to your exteriors – check out page 94.

While you're outdoors, why not get stuck into some planting? Whether you want to grow vibrant bougainvilleas, page 102, or put down some root crops, page 106, we have all the know-how you'll need.

Happy DIYing!

Zoe

MANAGING EDITOR
ZOE MEUNIER

Product of the month

InSinkErator is proud to introduce a new range of food waste disposers exclusively for Bunnings. The new range includes the BW2 (\$329), BW3 (\$429) and BW4 (\$529), and replaces the previous InSinkErator 46, 56 and 66 models. The BW range includes all the same features as the previous range and is made in the USA. Spare parts and accessories are interchangeable with the 46, 56 and 66 models, making maintenance and customisation easy for customers.



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BEACH BEAUTY

A smart renovation of a run-down home in a prime location exudes Australian easy living and coastal style

WORDS **SITA SIMONS** PICTURES **TOM FERGUSON**



A green wall creates drama and privacy.



The kitchen opens onto the balcony to integrate the spaces.



A run-down Federation-style home in a beachside suburb of Sydney was a prime opportunity to create a family home that ticked all the boxes of easy, stylish living.

Melissa Bonney, director of The Designory, set about transforming the property into a home for herself and her family. With her strong but flexible aesthetic, Melissa's focus was on creating a home in which she wanted to live, while encapsulating her company

tagline, designing from the inside out.

'Get the function right and the beauty follows,' says Melissa.

What began as a series of cramped rooms suffering from not enough light and storage, damp issues and a lack of connection to the outdoor spaces is now a light and bright home brimming with Australian coastal sophistication.

Highly detailed yet relaxed and comfortable, the underpinning template is a study in simplicity. ►



The house laboured under the restrictive problems typical of the era in which it was built



After

A modern look with personal touches transform the kitchen.

Living on top

With the budget always in mind, Melissa and her builder husband made savvy decisions about where to spend and where to save. Rather than reconfigure the whole house, the layout remains relatively unchanged.

The living, kitchen and dining areas were upstairs, and with the removal of a couple of walls, the space was opened up so each area relates to the next.

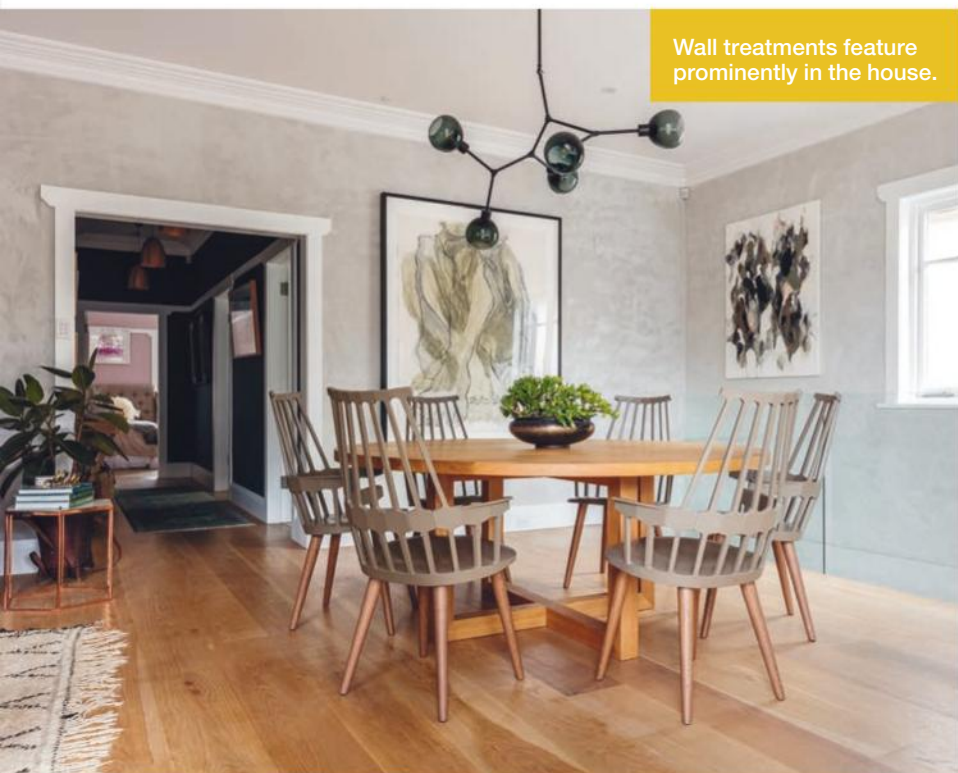
'In the original house, you could see a lovely balcony through the kitchen window, but it wasn't part of the room or the space as a whole,' says Melissa.

'It was clear that bringing those two elements together would change the whole dynamic of the entire floor, so we put in huge doors.'

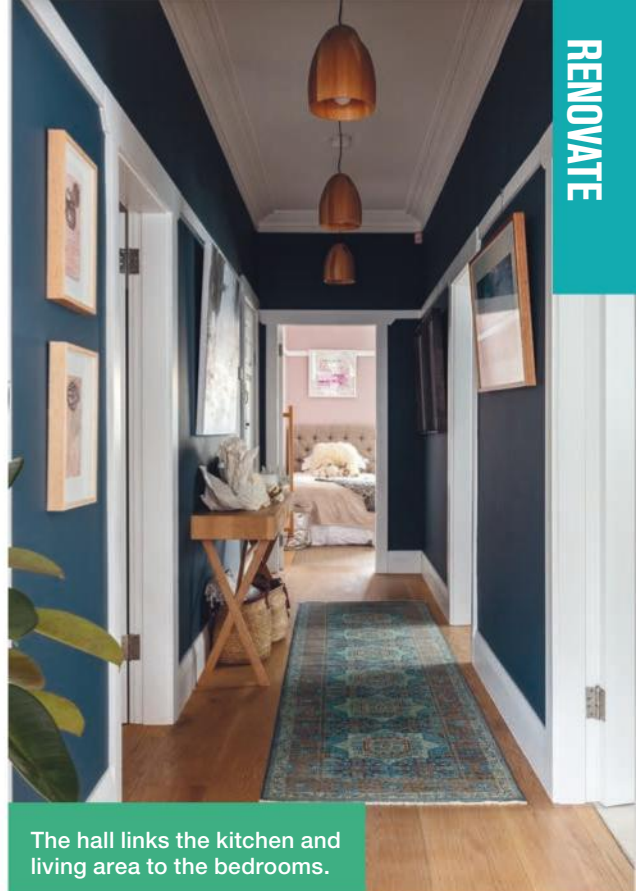
'The kitchen design reflects my needs and my love of cooking.' ►

Before





Wall treatments feature prominently in the house.



The hall links the kitchen and living area to the bedrooms.



A black panel makes the TV and fireplace recede, so they don't dominate the room.



By making the master bed the main event, the rest of the space could be kept simple

Beautiful bedrooms

Each of the three bedrooms has an individual style without being overworked, with little change required.

‘I was happy with the bedrooms in this house and it mostly comes down to paint and wallpaper,’ says Melissa.

The striking darkness of the feature wall in the parents’ room creates dramatic contrast and grounds the bed, while the kids’ rooms were designed with the particular child in mind.

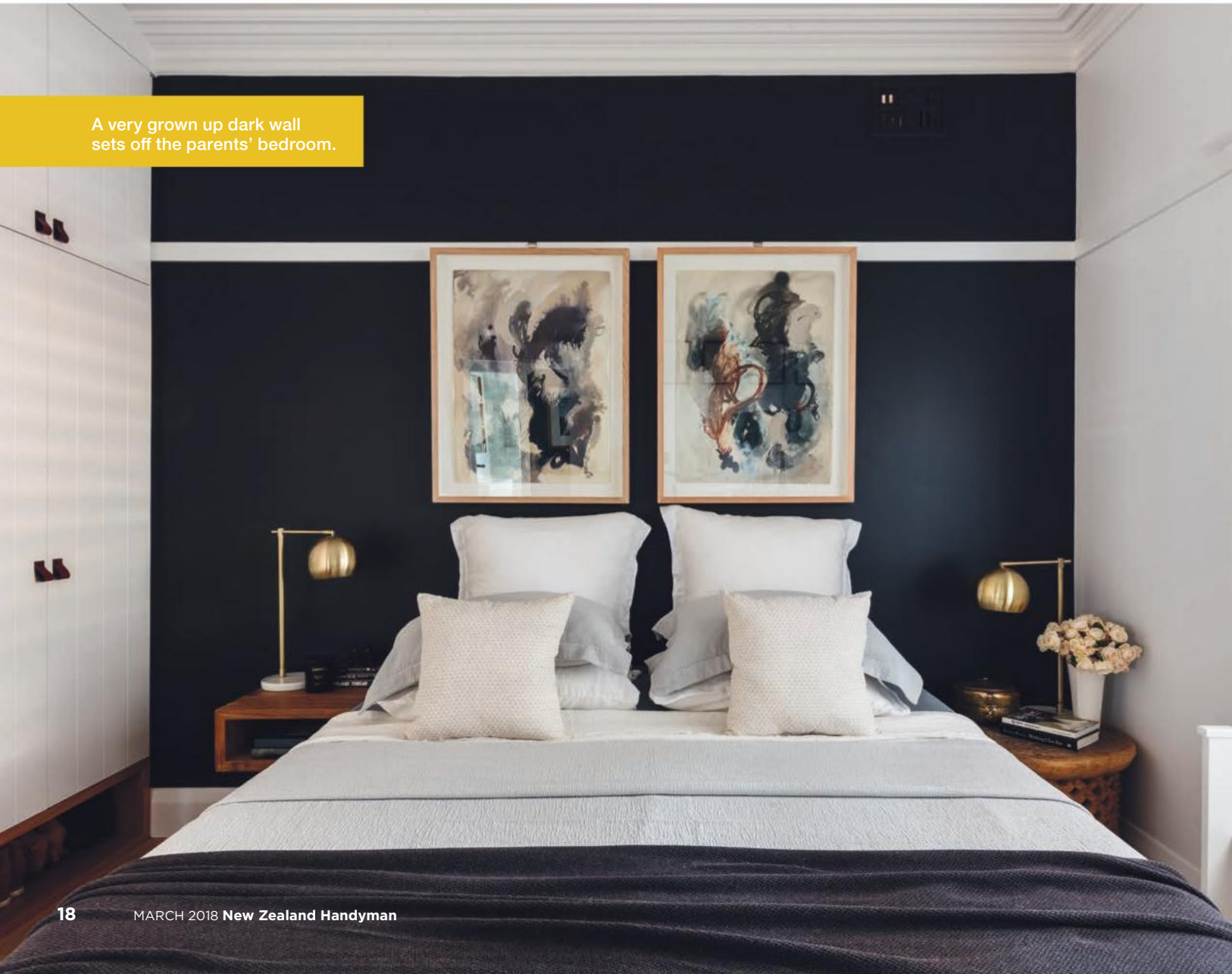
‘Our youngest was a toddler and a bit unsure about moving house, so we

created a brilliant bedroom for him, with this extraordinarily beautiful wallpaper featuring a blue whale.’

The couple’s two daughters had to contend with sharing a room, so this presented another design challenge.

‘With two teenage girls, creating distinct halves was important, and this was mostly achieved with a window seat. The decor was kept soft and appealing. Other than the paint and the window seat, it was simple and cost-effective,’ says Melissa. ►

A very grown up dark wall sets off the parents’ bedroom.

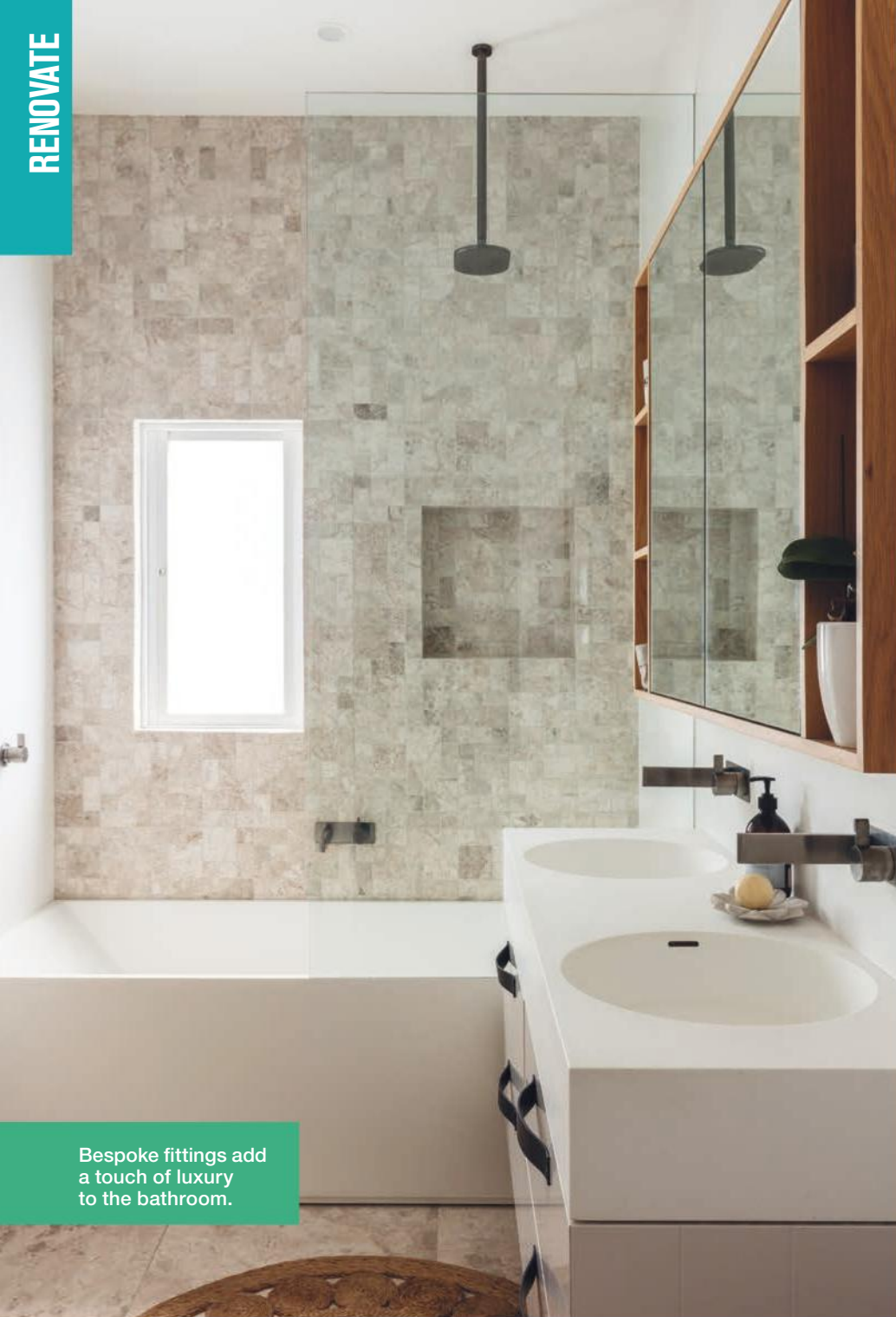


Pink is saved from being too sweet with the use of earthy neutrals



Joinery makes use of all spaces. LEFT A dramatic wallpaper can be the only decorating solution you need.





Bespoke fittings add a touch of luxury to the bathroom.

CURATING COLLECTIONS

There's always a temptation, says Melissa, that when building anew or renovating, you should get rid of everything you own and start again.

'We work with clients to reverse this thinking - to keep things they like and make them work in the new space,' she says.

'Curating collections is a great way to add personality to your environment.

'This collection of shells on a hallway table has much more impact than a single shell here or there, and it also reflects the waterside, beach-loving attitudes of the owners.'

Bathroom harmony

A large family bathroom has to have all the design elements in complete harmony in order to function well with high use.

Like the rest of the home, the family bathroom continues the bespoke tone and makes great use of customised joinery to add elegance and storage.

'When you're looking for the most efficient use of space and the best storage solutions, nothing compares to having inbuilt joinery. It may be more of an outlay, but it pays back in function and aesthetic,' says Melissa.

Sleek double basins, handmade leather handles, customised fittings and a stunning designer bathtub complete a neutral but luxurious bathroom. ►



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The two floors in the home are now linked by a staircase.

Ground-floor gains

The sloping site presented some challenges for the existing building.

Not only was the bottom level a series of cramped and dark rooms, it also needed to be levelled to create a big open-plan rumpus room downstairs, along with a new laundry, bathroom and under house storage area.

This now connects seamlessly via glass doors to the rear landscaped yard.

A new indoor staircase connects the two levels and the decor is both comfortable and family friendly. Again, the wall treatments stand out.

‘This is a render, which looks like natural stone and just diffuses the walls to take away any starkness. Having things too white can be oppressive, but you want enough white to feel light and fresh,’ says Melissa. ►



A large family of differing ages benefits from extra spaces for privacy and play.

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After

Painted black, the exterior is sophisticated and modern.

Backyard hues

Melissa notes that Australians and New Zealanders are backyard dwellers, so the rear view of our houses matters.

The house was unappealing from the back, so the exterior was painted black, making a brilliant contrast to the green lawn and the striking tree.

‘The crisp white trim finishes underscore the sophisticated treatment, with bench seats, outdoor storage and in-ground trampoline’, says Melissa.

‘It’s simple and mostly grass and bench seats, but we spent a good amount of the backyard budget on established landscaping. It changes everything and invites you into the outdoor spaces.’ ❖

The Designory
thedesigory.com.au

Before



DIY TIP

Black as an exterior colour choice has boomed in popularity over the past few years. Make the most of the dramatic appeal by ensuring an expert job.

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DREAM DESIGNS

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WORDS **SITA SIMONS** PICTURES **TIM TURNER**

It's the heart of the home and getting the design right relies not just on the individual parts, but how it fits with your family, within your budget and to your tastes.

John Lorych, owner of Smith & Smith Kitchens, has been in the business for more than 40 years and has developed a keen sense of what makes a kitchen work. Number one on his list is the aesthetic and design quality.

'The most important element is how it looks. I think people are happier and work more efficiently in a space that looks as good as possible,' he says.

A steam oven is a popular appliance in a new kitchen.



Timber tones

Natural timbers in the kitchen can take a very modern and high-tech design while giving a soft, organic feel.

Modern veneers often look just as good as the real thing while requiring less maintenance than timber. Either way, the result is an aesthetic in keeping with the popular Scandinavian style.

Pair timbers with matt finishes and clean lines to maximise this look. Keep the flooring choices in mind when selecting the main materials for surfaces in the kitchen, as a theme will unify all areas. ►



The warmth of timber is offset by polished concrete floors.



An oversized kitchen island offers plenty of seating and workspace.

Never dated

John says that the days of matching your kitchen design to the era or style of the home are gone.

‘There are three main branches. Those who prefer a very modern kitchen, those with more traditional tastes such as Hamptons style, which is more detailed and intricate, and then the industrial style,’ he says.

More and more, the kitchen is at the back of the house opening onto the backyard, so a renovation can be very modern, or any style at all, regardless of the actual period of the home. It’s very

much about expressing exactly what you want, rather than being dictated to by any other factors.’

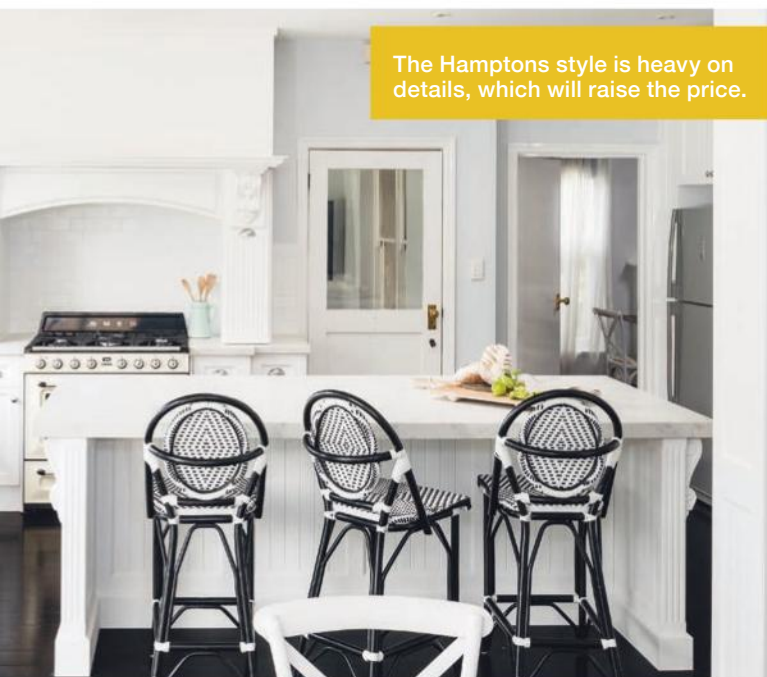
A white kitchen will never date and can be successful in any space. The addition of dark features makes for a pleasing contrast that creates impact. Size and budget shouldn’t be a barrier to great kitchen design either.

‘Don’t assume that bigger is always better. It’s often not the case and if I had the choice, I’d often go with more living space than kitchen space. It all comes down to good design and planning.’ ►



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Personality plus

A well-designed, modern kitchen should deal with issues such as dead space, and John is a proponent of eliminating corners wherever possible.

‘Look to try to void a corner, and opt for deep drawers either side instead. Otherwise, use carousel fittings inside so the whole contents of a corner cupboard can be easily accessed. Islands are a great way to deal with corners, too.’

Lighting is another way to add efficiency and personality in one.

‘The pendant over the island trend is very effective when hung at the right height, and makes a style statement often right in the centre of the space,

so it’s important to choose well and, if necessary, spend the money for the ones you really like,’ says John.

Using the splashback as a feature element is also something that comes in cycles. Glass has been popular for several years, but there has been a product development recently that has meant more can be done in this area.

‘The development of new grout that is easy to clean and doesn’t stain is a small but highly efficient new addition, meaning ceramic tiles are again very popular for splashbacks,’ says John. ▶

Smith & Smith Kitchens
smithandsmith.com.au



A rounded profile makes the kitchen island stand out.

Tiled feature walls are easier to keep clean with new grouts.



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This Euro Oak benchtop adds a fresh perspective.

FANTASTIC FLATPACKS

A stunning kitchen doesn't have to cost the earth, as flatpack kitchens these days offer more variety and quality than ever before.

While assembling the cabinetry yourself will save you money, you may need to hire a carpenter to install the cabinet and benchtops, depending on the project. And you'll need to call in the pros for the plumbing and electrics.

This stylish Kaboodle Kitchen from Bunnings would suit any fresh, contemporary home, and with its 2250 x 600mm Euro Oak Benchtop, \$745, 300mm Antique White Alpine Door, \$121, and Antique White Base End Panel, \$102, a transformed kitchen is easily within reach.

Bright pops of yellow on the stools and selected appliances inject personality and interest. Matt Black Mushroom Knobs, \$5.70 each, provide contrast to tie the look together. ❖



The use of timber in the kitchen creates a modern, natural feel.



PICTURES KABOODLE KITCHEN



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BUDGET KITCHENS

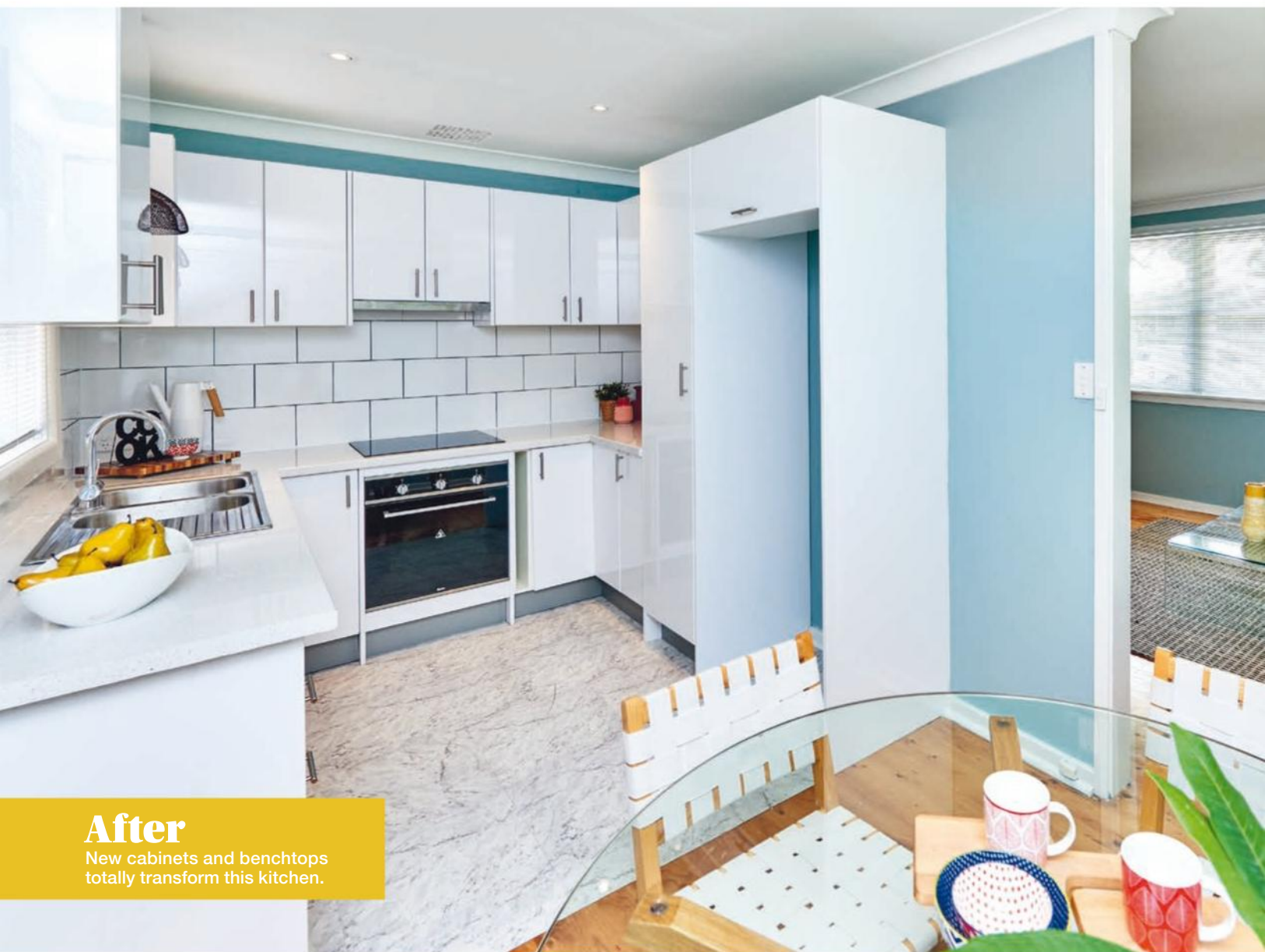
Celebrity renovator Cherie Barber revamps three kitchens to add value

WORDS AND PICTURES **CHERIE BARBER**

A brand-new kitchen can be an expensive gamble if you don't carefully research, budget and execute your master plan.

Depending on the size of your kitchen and how grandiose your tastes are, it could cost you anywhere from \$5000 to, well, the sky's the limit!

Fortunately, there are many inventive ways you can transform a kitchen that don't require replacing the whole lot. Here are three kitchens under A\$10,000 and, the good thing is, you can do much of the work DIY if you're at all handy.



After

New cabinets and benchtops totally transform this kitchen.

**A\$7000
NEW KITCHEN**



Cherie Barber is a reno expert and owner of Renovating For Profit.

Before



After

White tiles and new flooring complete the renovation.



STARTING FROM SCRATCH

There are kitchens that are simply beyond salvaging, and the master plan for this old-timer started in one place – the skip. Putting in a new kitchen was just part of a whole house transformation I did, inside and out.

Defining the space was top of the list here, so I closed off the door to the laundry to make space to install a U-shaped kitchen.

Keeping the sink in its existing spot under the window made practical sense, and also meant I could keep

plumbing costs down. The same design logic applied with the cooktop and oven – there was no need to relocate either.

A new Kaboodle kitchen, Kaboodle benchtops and a A\$1000 kitchen appliance package from an online appliance company gave this kitchen the facelift it needed.

After adding a splashback of plain white tiles from Bunnings, plus new flooring using marble-look vinyl floor tiles, the kitchen was totally unrecognisable. ►

After

Resurfacing the cabinets and benchtops gives an instant lift.

STYLISH UPDATE

Apart from being terribly dated, this kitchen had a dead space in the corner, where a rubbish bin took pride of place.

The plan was to update the kitchen and make smarter use of the space. This meant fleshing out what was there and reworking the existing cabinetry.

For the splashback, I used a Spanish tile-patterned wallpaper and added a sheet of 10mm toughened glass.

The cabinets and benchtops were still in good shape, so I painted the doors with White Knight paint and the benchtops with a Rust-Oleum Benchtop Transformation Kit.

I used MDF to change the bevelled cabinets to a Shaker style and replaced the brass handles with chrome ones. Corner shelves and a section of benchtop were installed where the bin once was.

A new oven, cooktop, rangehood and dishwasher bundle from an online appliances company, and white tiles installed above the new benchtop completed the old-for-new revamp. ►

Before

**A\$4000
MAKEOVER****After**

Tile-look wallpaper makes an effective splashback.

**A\$2000
REVAMP**

After

The end result is a clean, fresh and inviting kitchen.

BUDGET REFRESH

This kitchen is in one of my rental properties in Sydney's west. I wanted to do a quick cosmetic refresh at minimal expense, and there's no better way to achieve that than to break out the paint.

Laminate paint transforms tired cabinet doors instantly. Remove the handles, sand, undercoat with White Knight primer, then add two coats of White Knight Laminate Paint, which you can tint to any colour. I chose a fresh blue-green for a modern look.

I used Rust-Oleum Benchtop Transformations in Diamond White on the benchtops, which has a granite fleck through it. The job involves thoroughly cleaning the old surface and sanding

back the gloss so the new paint seals to the surface underneath. In less than 24 hours, your benchtops will look like new.

One way to sidestep the mess and expense of replacing ugly tiles is to camouflage them using White Knight Tile & Laminate Primer and Tile Paint. It also means you don't have to re-grout.

Appliances can be much cheaper – and available faster – if you buy them as part of a bundle. I bought this entire appliance package for A\$1000 with oven rangehood, cooktop and dishwasher from an online appliance company.

To finish, I installed Gerflor Senso Self-Adhesive Vinyl Planks, which can go over the top of any solid substrate. ♦

Before



 **kaboodle**
KITCHEN

nougat truffle
doors and panels

discreet grip handle
handles and knobs

soyanut
splashbacks

soyanut
benchtops

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Raw, earthy timbers and natural textures create a warm ambience. Achieve this look using real timber, or a laminate timber-look benchtop in your space. Mix and match with neutral shades, mixed metals and marble-inspired patterns for a modern rustic combination.

Kaboodle Pepper Leaf Benchtop, 2400 x 900 x 38mm, \$419. For a feature wall, get Johnson 200 x 200mm Ultra White Gloss or Ripple Wall Tiles, \$32.45 for 35.

Watch the video 'How to give your kitchen a makeover on a budget' at bunnings.co.nz/diy-advice



Find it at Bunnings

TOP KITCHEN TRENDS IN 2018

Daring colours, bold patterns and raw materials are leading the style changes

The kitchen is considered the heart of the home these days and its style can determine the design of your entire property.

The look in kitchens emerging this year is strongly influenced by daring colour palettes, shapes and materials.

Here we give a snapshot of trends in benchtops, tile patterns, cabinetry and paint colours.

If you're planning a new kitchen, be inspired by these ideas to create a stylish room of your own on a DIY budget. ►

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Kaboodle Kitchen Black Olive 900mm Alpine Slimline Doors, \$124.50 each.

BLACK

This popular alternative to white is bringing elegance to Kiwi homes. Mix and match timber textures with laminate marble-inspired benchtops for a winning combination in your home, or go further by also selecting black appliances or fittings in your kitchen space.



PAINT YOUR OWN DOORS

Personalise your space by painting your kitchen doors. Natural green hues mixed with darker-green shades are making a big impact in 2018. Mix and match with materials such as concrete look, timber and marble look.

Kaboodle Kitchen 450mm Alpine Cabinet Doors, \$146.50 each, painted green.



METALLIC FINISHES

Metallic doors and benchtops in an industrial-inspired space will take off this year, and will shine when teamed with warm timbers and cool neutrals for a contemporary contrast. ❖

Kaboodle Kitset 600mm Frontal Drawer Panel Luminess 3-pack, \$168.50.

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THE PERFECT VIEW

Windows are not just there to provide light and control airflow

WORDS ADAM WOODHAMS

Windows are a necessity in any home, but all too often they are treated as just a tick-and-flick standard component of a new build or renovation.

From a functional perspective, the two most important roles windows perform are to allow you to maintain

healthy air movement and improve natural light levels, but they do much more than just that.

If you're planning any work that involves new windows, take time getting to know the different materials, styles and functions, as well as the lifestyle features they can add or enhance.



WHAT YOU SAVE

Windows and other glass surfaces make up less than 10% of the surface area of the average home.

Despite representing this relatively small area, research shows that nearly 50% of heat lost during winter and more than 85% of heat gained during summer can be attributed to glass surfaces, depending on the thermal performance of other surfaces – ceilings, walls and floors.

Selecting the right windows for your home can literally lead to a lifetime of savings through reduced energy use.

There are also thermal, wind and safety performance standards for windows in any new building. All will have a bearing on the window choices you can make.





Large expanses of glass in living spaces brings the outdoors in.

Key considerations

While the main functions of your windows are to control airflow and provide light, there are a number of other important points to consider.

- ◆ **STYLE** Materials, colours and the overall design should work with the overarching style of your home.
- ◆ **PRIVACY** Consider the size of the windows and type of glass used.
- ◆ **ASPECT** If your windows are exposed to direct sunlight or extremes of weather, talk with your glazing

professional about the different glass thicknesses and types.

- ◆ **NOISE** If you face a busy main road or back onto a noisy neighbouring property, consider noise-reducing windows such as double-glazed.
- ◆ **SECURITY** Explore what locks come pre-installed or what will work retrofitted to your window type.
- ◆ **SAFETY** There are many situations around the home that will require the use of suitable safety glass. ►



Select windows that suit the architectural style of your home for both the exterior and interior



For an unobstructed view, picture windows are ideal.

FRAME MATERIALS

Choose the right material to suit your style of home.

- ♦ **ALUMINIUM** is lightweight and durable and can be ordered in a range of designer colours. It is low maintenance.
- ♦ **TIMBER** is valued for its warm, rich shades. The biggest consideration is maintenance, and you will need to repaint or revarnish timber frames every 8-10 years.
- ♦ **COMPOSITE** provides the best of both worlds – timber inside and aluminium outside. It combines exterior durability and designer options with the warmth of timber indoors.
- ♦ **uPVC** frames are seen less commonly in New Zealand. They are reputed to have a long, maintenance-free life span and are most often used in double-glazed windows.

Style choice

From elegant to bold and architectural, there is a window frame to suit any design requirement.

The first step is to decide on the most appropriate window type.

- ♦ **DOUBLE-HUNG** This type is typically found in our older houses such as villas. The top and bottom sections or sashes overlap in the centre for locking, and both can be moved independently to open. This allows you to direct airflow through the top and bottom, or both.
- ♦ **SLIDING** This is a fairly common type of window. Simply, one glazed section is fixed and the other slides so one side can be opened.
- ♦ **LOUVERED** Narrow slats of glass are arranged in parallel so that when closed, they slightly overlap, forming a seal. When fully opened, they allow a huge amount of airflow.

♦ **STACKABLE SLIDERS** A modern take on the popular sliding window design, these windows feature multiple panels, which allow for a greater area of open space within the frame.

♦ **BIFOLD** These windows can be opened and self-fold, accordion-style, against one end of the cavity. This leaves the frame area almost totally open.

♦ **CASEMENT** A more traditional design, this window is pivot-hinged on one edge, allowing it to open like a door. It is generally used in a pair, opening from the centre with one swinging to the left and one to the right.

♦ **AWNING** A casement window hung horizontally, these are hinged at the top so that the bottom swings out.

♦ **FIXED OR SASHLESS** Generally used for large picture-type windows, this type can't be opened.



ABOVE Consider the direction of the sun when buying windows. BELOW Take into account how much light you want to let in.

Types of glass

Glazing options available today provide design flexibility and energy efficiency.

◆ **CLEAR** Typically, windows will be glazed with clear float glass, which gives maximum distortion-free clarity but doesn't stop heat and glare.

◆ **TONED** This type has colouring added to it while being made, which creates a premium-quality glass that can reduce glare and heat gain from direct sunlight.

◆ **DOUBLE-GLAZED** The frame of these windows holds an internal and external sheet of glass with a sealed gap between, making them very good at preventing heat gain or loss and reducing noise.

◆ **FROSTED** This type has one side frosted and is used for privacy. It is also excellent for reducing glare while allowing a good level of diffused light.

◆ **LOW-EMISSIVITY** These are designed to deflect heat while allowing maximum light penetration. They are ideal for west-facing windows or windows in a room you want to keep warm in winter.

◆ **LAMINATED** This type has a very thin layer of film-like material between sheets of glass. If the glass breaks, the pieces adhere to the film, making it much safer.

◆ **TOUGHENED** This type of glass is as much as five times stronger than regular glass. If it does break, it shatters into small fragments rather than dangerously sharp large shards. ❖



The Duffy family with the refurbished Vonnie the Van.



VINTAGE VAN

Two TV reno stars transform a humble vintage caravan into a comfy and stylish holiday home

WORDS SITA SIMONS

There's nothing much more Kiwi or Aussie than packing up the caravan and hitting the road for the holidays.

Relegated to the grey nomad for many years, caravanning has seen a return in popularity with young families, as a back-to-basics approach to life and a desire for the simple pleasures have taken hold again.

Australian TV reno stars Michael and Carlene Duffy wanted to enjoy the kinds of holidays they'd loved as kids

with their own family, and hit upon the idea of buying a vintage caravan.

With their combined skills, the couple teamed up with White Knight Paints to take a vintage Viscount van from zero to hero.

Caravans are a great way to explore the beauty of our country and coastline, and can also provide an extra bedroom for in-laws or Airbnb guests when parked in the backyard.

Vintage vans can be picked up quite cheaply, often for less than \$5000, but

are usually in dire need of renovation, refurbishment and modernisation, which is where the White Knight range of specialty paints came in.

'We were really happy to take up the challenge. We wanted to show as well that you don't need to pull everything out and start again,' says Michael.

'A lot of these older-style surfaces are really tough and a good choice for the job they do. So as long as it's all structurally sound, keep everything you can and use paint to refresh.' ►

PICTURES WHITE KNIGHT PAINTS

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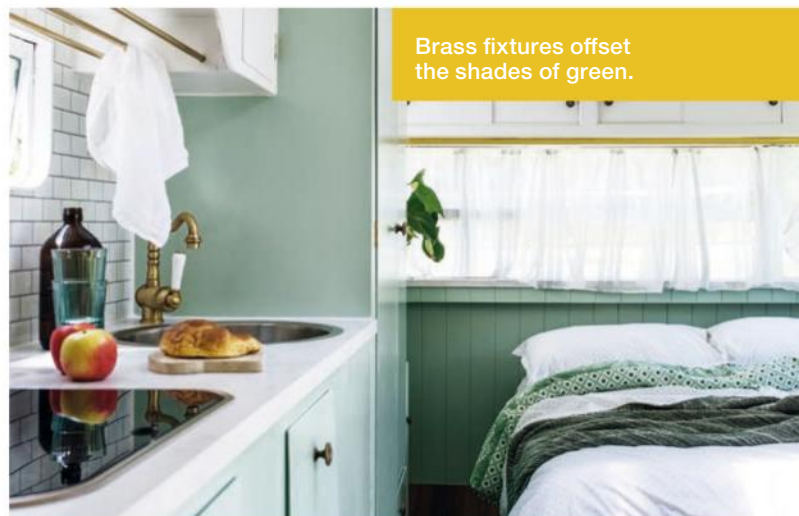
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After

Painting the surfaces in a soft green transforms the interior.



Brass fixtures offset the shades of green.

White Knight Squirts Paint & Prime gives internal fixtures a new look.



Natural vibe

Vonnie the Van had good bones but needed a lot of work to bring it back to its former glory.

The metal exterior was on the verge of rusting, the interior laminate cupboards and kitchen tops were straight out of the '60s, and the van needed some new furniture.

Michael and Carlene rolled up their sleeves and turned the entire renovation around in just a couple of weeks, using their home garage workshop and tools, White Knight Paints and a good measure of elbow grease.

First up, Carlene created a simple mood board, so they had a design and

colour vision to work towards. She took inspiration from the stunning coastal bushland around their family home in Queensland's lush Tallebudgera, creating a palette of varying shades of green, offset by brass and gold fixtures.

As she wanted to create a soft, relaxed, natural vibe, Carlene opted for a muted green and a crisp white as the hero colours.

Next, she sourced an old stool from an op-shop and some timber deckchairs for sitting by the campfire outside the van. White Knight Squirts Paint & Prime was used to give these and some of the internal fixtures a brand-new lease of life.

Before





Kitchen revamp

Meanwhile, Michael was hard at work on the interior, which was a shock of brown and beige laminate. All in structurally good shape, it desperately needed to be brought into this century.

He started by scrubbing down with White Knight Tile & Laminate cleaner, then applied Tile & Laminate Primer. After a quick sand, he added two coats of Laminate Paint.

The kitchen benches were finished with a layer of White Knight Bench Top Protective Coating, a hard-wearing, clear coating that delivers a tough layer over painted laminate benchtops, protecting them from heat, chemical cleaning products and stains.

Finally, after waiting for a tropical storm or two to pass, they sprayed the exterior with Rust Guard, tinted to the lovely green on the bottom half and contrasting crisp white for the top to match the interior.

To start, Michael taped up any areas he didn't want painted, such as window frames. He prepped the surface by removing all rust and flaking paint with a light sand and a good clean.

He then used SLS Etch Primer to seal the surface and Rust Guard Quick Dry for the important top coat. ►

ABOVE Michael and Carlene relax with their kids in the stylish interior. BELOW Protective coating is applied to the laminate tops.



DIY TIP

Choose an old caravan with good bones. Check it for rot, water damage or weaknesses by tapping and pressing into walls, under the beds, inside cupboards and below the sink and shower.

After

Vonnie the Van's simple facelift highlights its cool vintage shape.



Ready to go

Despite the age of the caravan, the chassis was in good condition. Michael gave it a quick once-over with a wire brush to remove any loose materials.

He then primed it with White Knight Rust Guard Metal Primer and finished with Rust Guard Quick Dry.

'Because these vans are so old, renovating them is more rewarding than restoring a newer model. The vintage vans are such a cool shape, which makes the outcome better,' says Carlene.

'It's such a good solution for our endlessly busy lives, to have a caravan packed and ready. You just hook it up and go. It's affordable, convenient and you have comforts and a good-looking space. It's the future!' ♦

Before



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SURF SHACK

The eclectic decor of this charming coastal cottage reflects the laid-back lifestyle of its location

WORDS NINA FREUDENBERGER PICTURES BRITTANY AMBRIDGE

If you surf Avalon beach, you know who Mel Hayhoe is. She's as ingrained in the community's surf culture as *Surfing World*, Australia's longest running surf magazine.

She's also one of the few folks living on Sydney's Northern Beaches who can call herself a local. Her family moved there from England when she was three, and she's been there ever since.

While most days you're more likely to get her chatting about her aversion to the 'kale smoothie-ification' of her town than the almost 30 years she's spent in the surf industry, Mel does head up one of the largest surfboard distribution companies in all of Australia and Asia.

Mel and her partner in life and business, Drew Down, have run Onboard Industries since the '80s, when it was called Insight Surfboards.

They have two shops in Australia, one in Mona Vale, the other in Byron Bay, and an outpost in Bali. But what Mel is proudest of is the work they do with their surf teams, especially at the Super Grom and Pro Junior levels.

'We're sponsoring a lot of girls these days, which is exciting,' says Mel. ►



'There are so many more girls surfing now – and lots are from here, which is fun to watch!'



This is Peanut, who came from New York City for a visit and never went back.



This is an edited extract from *Surf Shack* by Nina Freudenberger published by Hardie Grant Books, about \$A50. It is available online.



The original tiny windows were replaced with bifolds.



Mel wanted a kitchen that was simple and functional.

Meeting point

Mel's house is as much of a rendezvous point – for family and friends, for friends of friends, and for vagabond surfers – as the shop in Mona Vale.

Her tiny beach shack, with its indoor-outdoor flow and low-key vibe, is definitely inviting.

But, frankly, the real draw is the yard itself, which is less lawn and more Pacific Ocean, and happens to be home to one of the best breaks in North Avalon.

‘Even when I’m not there, people stop by and hang out,’ says Mel.

Her niece and nephew pitch tents in the garden and camp out with their friends on a regular basis.

Every Tuesday, kids from the school down the street (the same one Mel attended) take over her yard for gym class, otherwise known as ‘surfing sports’. Mel even has an open board-borrowing policy.



This bench was rescued from a nearby house. ABOVE These shells were an op-shop find.



‘We keep a few under the deck. People come by, take one and bring it back when they’re done,’ she says.

And at low tide, practically everyone living in her little cove is out with a glass of wine or a beer, floating in one of the natural pools that form along the shore.

‘I don’t plan parties. They just seem to happen. One person comes over, someone else stops by, and before I know it, I’m making dinner for 20 people.’



The porch was walled in to create a sunroom.

Beach heritage

Her the-more-the-merrier spirit has been the way things are done at this house since it was built in 1916. Or so says Mavis, Mel's 92-year-old neighbour, whose family built the home and was among the first to settle in Avalon.

Back then, it was one of fewer than a handful of fishing cottages in the area that wealthy families used to trek out to in horse-drawn carriages from Sydney.

Mel and Drew have made changes over the years. An outdoor porch was turned into an indoor sunroom, three bedrooms were added and they blew out a wall and replaced it with bifold doors.

It was all done on an as-wanted basis, which means the house feels slightly puzzle-pieced together in the coolest, quirkiest way. Case in point, a few original outdoor windows now look into the affixed bedrooms.

But whenever the choice comes down to adding a modern convenience or not losing something charmingly original, Mel has always picked charm.

This is why the chipped blue ceiling paint in some rooms has never been touched, and that the wood panelling gets repaired instead of torn out. ►



The original blue porch ceiling was left intact, as Mel loved the colour so much





ABOVE Mel is one of a few folk who can be called local. BELOW Records are propped on the timber panelling.



Quirky collections

The cobbled-together floor plan suits Mel's magpie tendencies just fine.

She is a self-proclaimed collector of anything and waster of nothing, and the things she shares her home with all tell that tale.

There's a colourful collection of outdoor seating parading as dining chairs. A bunch of rusty old wash bins she found in the house when

she first moved in are now planters in the garden.

A trove of op-shop treasures fills every nook, cranny and shelf. In other words, this fishing cottage-turned-surf shack has always felt like home to Mel.

'I kind of knew the first day I saw this house 10 years ago that I was never going to leave it, and I seriously don't think I ever will.' ♦

What's now the dining room was once the whole home.





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WALL CABINET DRAWER

Declutter your kitchen benchtop by adding this simple but handy storage solution

Knives, utensils, spices and coffee pods – there are so many potential uses for an extra drawer under your kitchen wall cabinet.

This is an easy DIY project, as everything is built around the drawer. You just need enough space under the cabinet to fit your benchtop appliances.

The dimensions of the drawer will depend on the size of your cabinet.

The timber thicknesses required are 7mm plywood for the drawer base,

19 x 64mm timber for the drawer box, and 19 x 89mm for the drawer supports, drawer face and side trims.

You'll need two side trims if the drawer is visible from both sides.

Use dressed pine if the exposed parts are to be painted, and if your existing wall cabinet is made from natural timber, choose a timber and a finish that matches it.

Paint or finish the drawer front and side trims before installing them. ►

WHAT YOU NEED

- Jigsaw or circular saw
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Straightedge
- PVA adhesive
- Bar clamp
- Double-sided tape
- Nail gun and brad nails
- Drill and screws

TOP PICKS



Ryobi One+ 18V Cordless Brad Nail Gun, \$279, skin only. ryobi.co.nz



Lufkin 8m Black Widow Tape Measure, \$32.50, lufkintool.com



Selleys Aquadhere PVA Adhesive, \$12.50 for 250ml. selleys.co.nz



Kaboodle Standard Drawer Runner, \$30 for one pair. bunnings.co.nz

Ensure appliances will fit neatly under the drawer.



MAKE THE DRAWER



1 Build the frame

Measure the cavity under the cabinet. Cut a drawer base from 7mm plywood narrower than these dimensions to allow for the width of the drawer supports and slides. Cut the drawer front, back and sides to match the plywood dimensions, then secure together with adhesive and brad nails.



2 Attach the base

Use adhesive and nails to attach the drawer base to the drawer frame. Cut two side supports the same length as the drawer sides, then attach single-extension drawer slides to the base of the supports with 12mm screws using a self-centring drill bit. Make each slide flush with the support base edge.



3 Secure the slides

Pull out the slide on each drawer support a few centimetres to expose the mounting holes, then use the self-centring bit to pre-drill and screw the slides to the drawer sides so they are flush with the front. Pull the slide out the rest of the way to mount the slide to the back end of the drawer.



4 Centre the assembly

Hold the assembly in place to ensure the drawer clears the cabinet face frame. If not, use 20mm strips of 7mm plywood for spacers and nail them to the drawer support before mounting the assembly. Use double-sided tape to secure the assembly temporarily to the underside of the wall cabinet.



5 Secure the supports

Predrill two pilot holes through the cabinet base into each drawer support. Attach with 40mm screws. Cut the drawer face the same width as the cabinet face frame. Use two coins to space it from the cabinet frame, then attach with double-sided tape. Secure from the inside with 30mm screws.

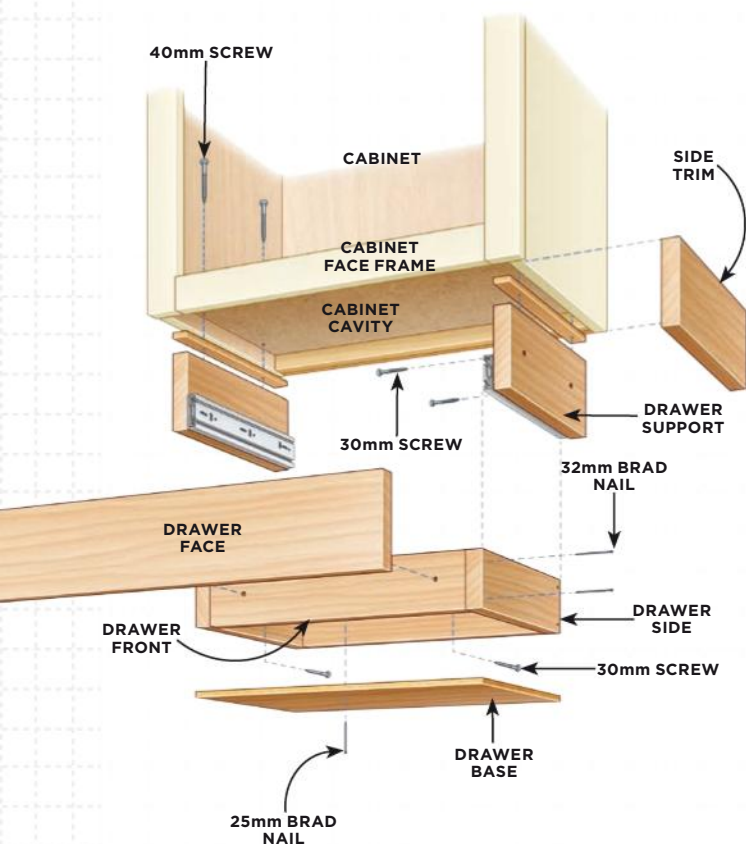


6 Attach the side trims

Cut two side trims the same depth as the cabinet. Remove the drawer and clamp the trims to the drawer supports. Drill pilot holes above the drawer slides and attach the side trims with 30mm screws. Because the drawer supports sit inside the cabinet base cavity, the drawer front underside will act as a finger pull. ♦



CABINET DRAWER



DIY TIP

Matching the finish on your existing cabinet can be tricky. Unscrew the hinges of the cabinet door and take the door to your paint supplier to match the paint colour.

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EASY SHELF DESIGNS

Reduce clutter and store your knick-knacks with these handy but simple shelving solutions

PROJECTS AND PICTURES SUE FERRIS

Finding space for storage is a big problem for anyone moving into a smaller property, as creating storage space can be expensive.

A cheap solution is to make your own shelving. It saves on floor space and helps you organise many items that otherwise may be spread haphazardly around your home.

Timber shelving is durable and sturdy and looks great. It can also be simple and easy to make.

The two projects here show you how to store many of your personal items while utilising valuable space.

The mirror shelves are a great idea for the bedroom, and the key shelf is especially useful for people who want one spot to leave their keys and phone.



EXPERT SECRETS

Apply a polyurethane varnish to plywood if you want to protect it against fingerprint marks and prevent moisture absorption.



MIRROR SHELF

These plywood mirror shelves are an easy way to start achieving the uncluttered Scandi look in your home. Built from a sheet of 25mm plywood, they're also inexpensive to make.

Leaning mirrors are popular and this design features shelving for your favourite bits and pieces, as well as shoes.

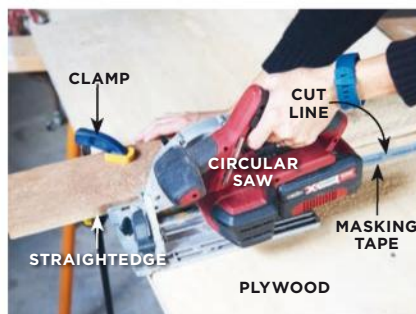
It is especially useful if you don't want a huge mirror on the wall or if you need to move it around the room.

The mirror is attached to the larger plywood piece with nickle-plated mounting corners and 25mm screws.

The shelves and shoe rack are attached with PVA adhesive and 40mm screws through the back of the plywood.

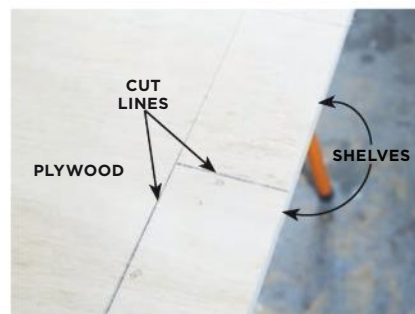
WHAT YOU NEED

- 2000 x 1200 x 25mm plywood sheet
- 6g x 40mm timber screws
- Circular saw
- Drill
- Masking tape
- Straightedge
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- PVA adhesive
- 1200 x 350 x 5mm mirror
- Mirror mounting corners
- 6g x 25mm timber screws



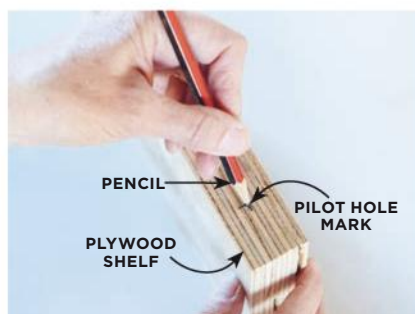
1 Cut the plywood

Using a pencil, measure and mark a 1400 x 600mm piece of plywood for a backing board. To prevent splintering, apply masking tape along the cut lines. Using a straightedge for a guide, cut the plywood piece with a circular saw.



2 Make the shelves

Using the remainder of the plywood, measure and mark three 200 x 100mm pieces of plywood for the small top shelves and one 450 x 100mm piece for the shoe rack shelf at the base. Cut the four shelves with the circular saw.



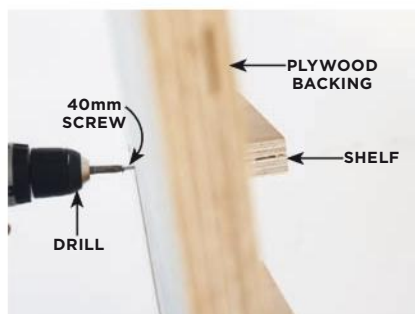
3 Position the shelves

On the three top shelves, using a pencil, mark 30mm in from each side on the back of the shelf and centred top and bottom. For the shoe rack shelf, measure 40mm in from each side and mark. Predrill pilot holes at these marks.



4 Secure the top shelf

For the top shelf, lay the plywood backing face down and mark 220mm down from the top and 50mm and 190mm in from the left side. Attach the shelf at the front with PVA adhesive and secure from behind with 40mm screws.



5 Attach remaining shelves

For the second and third shelves, repeat the same steps as for the first shelf, marking from the left side at 50mm and 190mm. Leave 200mm between each shelf. Predrill pilot holes and countersink at all six marks.



6 Add the shoe rack

For the shoe rack, drill pilot holes at the marks. On the backing, drill pilot holes 70mm from the base and 120mm in from the left and right sides. Line up the holes and attach shelves with adhesive and screws. Secure the mirror to backing. ►

KEY SHELF



There are always times when you can't find your keys, phone or wallet. This handy key shelf gives you a place to keep everything together within reach and easy to find.

The shelf is simple to make and takes up little wall space, so it's great for tight spots, the hallway or the kitchen.

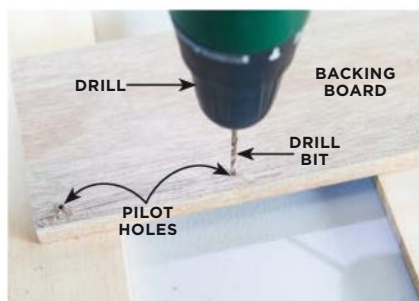
The timber can be either stained or left raw, and the shelf's backing board attaches to a wall with screws that are hidden behind decorative timber buttons.

The magnets attached underneath the shelf sit flush against the timber. They hold metal key rings, so you can easily find the key you need. ►

WHAT YOU NEED

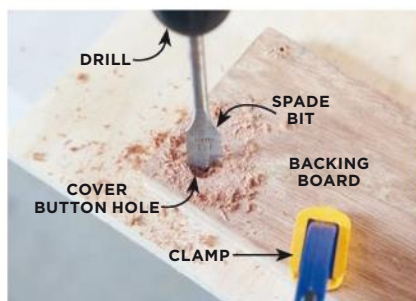
- 1800 x 115 x 18mm dressed timber
- Tape measure and pencil
- Circular saw
- 6g x 30mm timber screws
- Two 19mm timber cover buttons
- Four 22 x 4mm craft magnets
- PVA adhesive
- Epoxy adhesive
- Drill and wall anchors

1 2 3



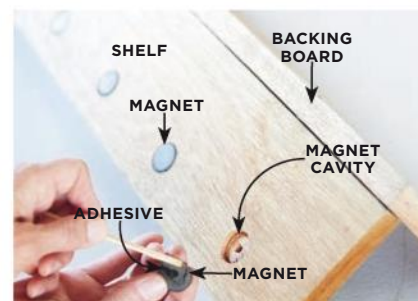
1 Prepare the timber

Measure and mark two 300mm timber pieces for the shelf and the backing board. Cut to size using a circular saw. Measure and predrill five pilot holes for screws 9mm from the edge and 100mm apart along the backing board.



2 Make mounting holes

Mark pilot holes for two wall anchors for the screws and cover buttons on the backing board 25mm in from each side. Drill the cover button holes with a 19mm spade bit. Join the shelf and board with PVA adhesive and screws.



3 Assemble the shelf

Measure the magnet positions 100mm apart on the shelf underside. Drill the magnet cavities with a 22mm spade bit. Secure magnets in the cavities with epoxy adhesive. Screw shelf to the wall. Attach cover buttons with PVA adhesive.

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Here are just some of the handy online videos available at [bunnings.co.nz](https://www.bunnings.co.nz)

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We can show you some great ways to get the kids outside to enjoy the garden.

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Learn how to replace broken pickets and screw them into place with step-by-step instructions.

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Bring the outdoors in with easy to make indoor garden shelves. It's the perfect way to show off your favourite plants.

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ONLINE INSPIRATION

Looking for more easy shelving solutions? These three projects featured on our website show that, with a little imagination and basic DIY skills, you can put together a range of shelving options to save space and organise personal items, books and even the kids' toys. To find out how to make them, visit handymanmagazine.co.nz. ♦

Turn two timber boards into a pair of hanging shelves joined by rope.



Give kids a reason to put away their toys with this rocket storage cabinet that you can easily make from timber and Corflute.



Use steel pipe with metal flanges that have been painted black to create industrial-style brackets for these solid timber shelves.

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- Edge Filler
- Grain Filler

Water based interior filler with no latex, acrylic or solvent added.

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USE FOR: Timber flooring and all interior woodwork repairs.



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USE FOR: Repairing wood, concrete, weather boards & patching render.



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- Will not shrink, sink or fall out.
- Sands easily, will not clog sandpaper.
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- Australian made.

USE FOR: Repairing decking, fascia boards and plaster boards.



Earl's Wood Hardener

- Water-based
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USE FOR: Repairing wood rot effected exterior fences, decks, furniture, door frames, windows and so much more.



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- No shrinking.
- Won't crack and fills to any depth.
- Australian made.

USE FOR: Repairing wood, concrete, masonry, steel, plasterboard and cement sheets.

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A kitchen tile is loose. Your shoe needs a new sole. The plaster cornice has come unstuck. These common household problems can be resolved with fillers or adhesives. But where to start?

Choosing the right adhesive or filler for your home projects can be daunting, as there are many types.

Before buying, the first things to consider are the type of surface that needs bonding or repairing, the strength of the bond or repair required, and whether it is indoors or outdoors.

BUILDING BONDS

Repair cracks, gaps and holes by choosing the right adhesive or filler

WORDS MARC MCEVOY

ADHESIVES

Adhesives are synthetic products used for most bonding tasks. Glues are made from natural ingredients and are used only for making musical instruments, books and furniture.

The main adhesives include epoxies, superglues, contact adhesives, polyvinyl acetates (PVA), polyurethanes and construction adhesives.

Good contact between surfaces is essential for an adhesive to work and, until it cures, it's a good idea to clamp joints or surfaces or secure them with fasteners.

Contact adhesive

Contact adhesive, or contact cement, forms a strong bond between two flat surfaces. It comes pre-mixed as solvent-based or water-based.

The solvent-based type dries quickly, but the water-based product can be cleaned up with water.

Contact adhesives are especially useful for non-porous materials that other adhesives can't bond, such as countertops in kitchens and bathrooms.

USE on timber, laminate, metal, leather, plastic, vinyl, rubber, fibre cement and MDF. ►



Selleys Kwik Grip Contact Adhesive, \$32.70 for 1L. selleys.co.nz

Construction adhesive



This versatile heavy-duty adhesive is sold in cartridges and applied with a caulking gun.

It has gap-filling qualities, has a permanent bond and takes about 20 minutes to set, giving you time to position pieces.

Exterior construction adhesives are weather resistant or can include a waterproof sealant.

USE on timber, concrete, brick, metal, plasterboard, aluminium, rubber, glass, tiles, particleboard and MDF.

Selleys Liquid Nails High Strength Construction Adhesive, \$5 for 320g. selleys.co.nz

Superglue

This is a cyanoacrylate adhesive that hardens in about 10 seconds. It cures fully within two hours. It also has a short shelf life – about one year from manufacture and about one month after being opened.

It can provide a strong waterproof bond between different non-porous surfaces such as metal to plastic. The strongest bond comes from applying the thinnest layer between two firmly pressed surfaces.

USE on metal, glass, ceramics, leather, paper, cardboard, fabric and some plastics.



Parfix Super Glue Adhesive 2-pack, \$2 for 3ml. bunnings.co.nz



Parfix PVA Adhesive, \$18.70 for 1L. bunnings.co.nz

Polyvinyl acetate (PVA)

PVA is a type of aliphatic resin that is also water-based. It is available for interior or exterior use and is non-toxic.

Interior water-based PVA adhesive bonds porous materials such as timber and is used for woodworking and craft. Exterior PVA adhesive is water-resistant and good for laminating.

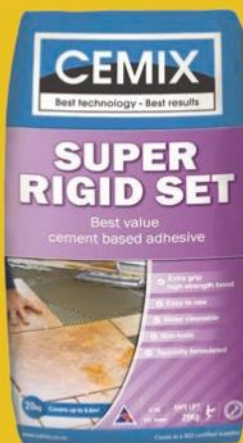
USE on timber, woodwork, craft and furniture.

Tile adhesive

Designed for wet areas, tile adhesive is available in powder and pre-mixed forms and used in kitchens, bathrooms and outdoors.

It is applied to the wall with a notched trowel and the tiles are positioned on top.

USE on ceramic and stone tiles, timber, plasterboard and concrete.



Cemix Super Rigid Set Adhesive, \$27 for 20kg. cemix.co.nz

Stud adhesive

Some construction adhesives contain over 50% solvent! Sika Nailbond Fast contains no solvent yet delivers the same results without the eye watering, unhealthy VOC smell.

Fast grab and fast drying.

USE on timber, plasterboard, concrete, tiles, ceramics and metal.



Sika Nailbond Fast, \$6.25 for 420g. sika.co.nz

Epoxy

This is one of the strongest adhesives available and comes in a two-part system of resin and hardener.

Sold in tubes, the two parts are mixed and harden within minutes and bond permanently within an hour.

Most epoxies are weatherproof, waterproof and heat-resistant.

USE on metal, glass, jewellery, timber, rubber, concrete and plastic. ►



Selleys Araldite 90 Seconds Epoxy Adhesive, \$16 for 24ml. selleys.co.nz

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*If using water based flat or ceiling paint, allow product to cure for at least 2 hours before painting. Not for use with oil based or solvent based paints.



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FILLERS

Fillers will hide holes, dents and scratches in timber and plaster. They can also be used to repair cavities in walls or seal cracks and gaps in wet areas.

To choose a filler, you must consider the surface that is being repaired and whether it will be indoors or outdoors.

For example, a filler used as the grout for bathroom tiles or around a swimming pool should be water resistant and flexible, but a filler to repair a crack in plasterboard should be easily sanded.



Two-part filler

It can be expensive, but a two-part filler hardens without shrinkage, yet can be shaped when dry.

The two-part fillers are epoxy resin, used mainly in wet areas for large holes, and polyester resin, which is good for filling cracks and gaps. Both resins need to be mixed with a hardener before use. They cure quickly and can hold nails and screws in place.

USE on timber, ceramic, fibreglass, fibre cement, plasterboard, particleboard, masonry, steel, MDF and concrete.



Turbo Builder's Bog Filler, \$26.80 for 1L. bunnings.co.nz

Plasterboard repair compound

Ideal for repairing scratches, dents, nail heads and cracks. This is a ready-mixed compound that can be applied straight from the pail. It is easy to apply and once dry, it can be sanded smooth ready for painting/decorating.

USE on plasterboard.



GIB RediFilla Plasterboard Repair Compound, \$24 for a 2L pail. gib.co.nz



Timbermate Wood Filler White, \$17.80 for 250ml. jacjay.co.nz

Timber filler

This is a water-based timber putty used to fill knots, scratches, holes, dents and other imperfections in timber surfaces.

It's available in a range of colours to match the surface colour, which helps blend in nail and screw holes if you apply a clear finish.

Timber filler dries within an hour and can be sanded, sawn, drilled, painted and lacquered.

USE on timber surfaces.

Water-based acrylic filler

Pre-mixed and quick setting, this filler is used to fill holes and cracks in walls, ceilings, doors and windows, indoors and outdoors.

It is a versatile water-based all-rounder that is easy to clean up and sand, and can be blended with stains to match timber repairs.

USE on timber, ceramic, brick, concrete, fibre cement and aluminium.

Polyfilla Exterior Timber,
\$21.45 for 450g.
poly.com.au



Earl's Powder Putty Multi Purpose Filler, \$12.20 for 500g. jacjay.co.nz



Earl's Wood Hardener, \$104 for 1L. jacjay.co.nz



Timber hardener

A water-based chemical cure for rotten timber, this revitalises timber by penetrating weak fibres to restore structure and original strength.

It is ideal for sealing and restoring rotted timber fibres found in window sills, sashes, frames, trim, beams, columns, decks, fences, panelling, flooring and decking.

USE on timber. ►

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BUILDING TRUST



Cement-based filler

This comes as a powder, which you mix with water, or as caulk. It is good for repairing exterior cracks and holes in render and other masonry.

Highly durable and waterproof, it can be nailed, screwed or sanded. It can also be used for interior wet areas or as a floor tile cement.

USE on stone, concrete, brick, masonry and stucco.



Polyfilla Exterior Powder Filler, \$36.30 for 2kg. poly.com.au



Selleys All Clear Multipurpose Sealant, \$16.30 for 260g. selleys.co.nz

Silicone

Silicone is used to create watertight flexible seals, especially around baths, wall tiles and kitchen splashbacks.

It generally comes in clear or white for indoor use, but is available in a range of colours for outdoor use, such as in roofing and guttering. Clean up using turpentine.

USE on masonry, lead, fibreglass, glass, steel, ceramic tiles, aluminium, baked enamel, galvanised iron and plastics.

Expanding foam

Used to fill gaps and cavities around pipes and windows, this polyurethane product expands into a solid foam.

It can be used to block out dust, noise and draughts by filling irregular-shaped holes, and can be trimmed, sanded and painted.

USE on plywood, plasterboard, fibre cement, fibreglass, galvanised iron, timber, brick, aluminium, particleboard, steel and concrete. ❖



Polyfilla Expanding Foam, \$17 for 390g. poly.com.au





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BASIC DIY TOOLKIT

Follow these tips for compiling a basic set of tools for all your home projects

WORDS MARC MCEVOY

Every DIY enthusiast should have a well-equipped toolkit, as home projects can't be done properly without the right tools.

That doesn't mean you need the most up-to-date equipment or that you must have all the specialty tools to suit specific needs.

But if you want to build a timber chair or just repair a broken picture hanger, you'll need good basic tools to do the job well.

Here we provide a list of essentials for every dedicated DIYer.

HAND TOOLS

Basic hand tools receive the most wear, so it is always cost-effective to buy quality equipment.

As cheap tools will break eventually, consider investing in good, durable tools that will last a lifetime. You'll also need a strong toolbox to store and transport your hand tools.

There are useful tools not mentioned here, such as a chisel, file, scraper, float and hand plane, but start out with these must-haves, then build your toolkit.



1. Hammer

The standard claw hammer will suit most DIY jobs around the home. There are many types, but a 16oz hammer with a cushioned grip that balances well in your hand is a good start.

The claw hammer can both drive nails and lever them out of timber.



ESTWING

Estwing Curved Claw
Solid Steel Hammer 20oz,
\$74.50. estwing.com

2. Handsaw

A handsaw is a great tool for cutting small amounts of timber quickly. It's also useful for trimming tree branches.

Choose a saw with medium-pitch teeth. About 8tpi (teeth per inch) is best.

For cutting metal or plastic, use a hacksaw.

3. Pliers

A pair of pliers is an important tool for bending and stripping wire, pulling out nails and gripping nuts and bolts.

Combination pliers are great for general purpose use, but long-nose pliers will get you into a tight cavity to retrieve a tap valve.



4. Screwdriver

Although you'll most likely use a cordless drill for driving a lot of screws, manual screwdrivers are necessary tools for precision work or screws made from soft metals such as brass.

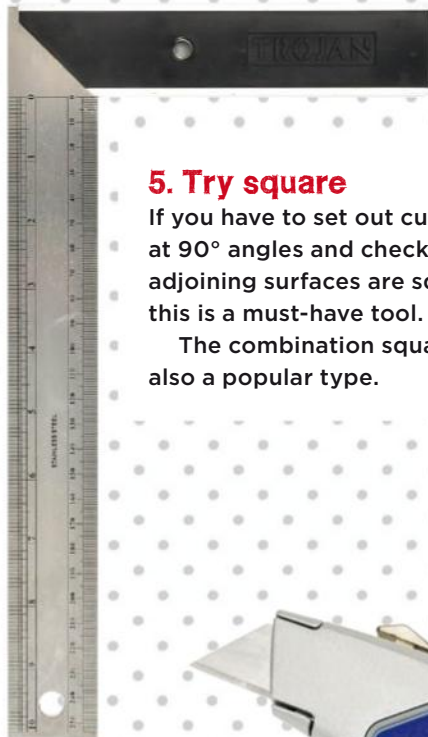
Get a selection of different sizes in flathead and Phillips head screwdrivers.



5. Try square

If you have to set out cut lines at 90° angles and check that adjoining surfaces are square, this is a must-have tool.

The combination square is also a popular type.



6. Shifting spanner

Also known as a shifter or an adjustable wrench, a shifting spanner will see lots of action.

The sliding jaw, which changes the width of the spanner, allows you to work on nuts and bolts of different sizes.



7. Utility knife

The utility knife cuts most things, including carpet, vinyl, electrical wire, rope or string. It also scrapes off dried paint.

Choose one that has a retractable blade, so you don't lose any fingers, and keep a supply of spare blades.



8. Spirit level

To make sure that a project is horizontally level and vertically plumb, you need to use a spirit level.

It also ensures your kitchen appliances are level. A spirit level with measurements can also be a straightedge ruler.



9. Putty knife

A 50mm putty knife or scraper is used to remove excess loose paint or apply a wall-patching compound.

It can be used to scrape off just about anything, including wallpaper, flaky surfaces or baby food stuck on a ceiling. ►



POWER TOOLS

If hand tools are your foot soldiers in DIY, power tools are your artillery.

The three essential power tools are the cordless drill, the circular saw and the sander. Each will make your projects faster and easier.

The choice is whether to go cordless (battery operated) or electric (mains powered with a cord).

For convenience and ease of use, cordless is a better option, but electric handles heavy-duty use.



3. Sander

To achieve a smooth and uniform surface on timber with a superior finish, you'll need a sander.

There are many types, including heavy-duty belt sanders, orbital sanders and smaller detail sanders for getting into tight corners.

A good all-rounder is a random orbital sander using sanding pads from 80 grit for removing paint to 220 grit for fine woodwork.



1. Drill

The drill is the most important device in your power arsenal. It drills holes in timber and metal, drives screws and can double as a sander.

If you plan to drill a lot of holes or drive fasteners, choose at least a 12-volt model with a lithium-ion battery and varying speeds.

If you plan to use a drill infrequently, it's probably best to get a corded drill.

2. Circular saw

For repetitive cutting of timber, you'll need a circular saw, which uses disc-shaped blades that can also cut metal and plastic.

Cordless models are more expensive, but they are portable, whereas mains-powered devices have better repetitive performance.

For the DIYer, a 185mm model is a good choice.



SAFETY GEAR

Wearing protective gear while working on home projects is essential, especially when using power tools such as a sander or circular saw.

Flying debris, dust, and fast-moving sharp edges can endanger your safety and

health. Safety glasses or goggles are vital for eye protection, work gloves protect your hands.

A dust mask or respirator stops you inhaling harmful substances, and ear muffs prevent hearing loss. ►

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ACCESSORIES

Your toolkit would be incomplete without support from various essential accessories.

While these items are not your frontline equipment, you will need them for most home projects.



2. Torch

This is a vital tool for working in dark places without power, such as a roof space.

Any sturdy torch will do the job, but hands-free models with a headband or ones that can be tilted are useful.



4. Extension cord

You'll need a long extension cord for taking the power supply to where you're working around your home.

There are many varieties, but for safety reasons get a heavy-duty cable that can withstand falling objects.



1. Tape measure

Chief among the accessories is that old workhorse, the retractable tape measure.

You need it to cut timber accurately or fit a bedroom wardrobe. Get an 8m model with 25mm-wide blade. It extends 3m before collapsing.



3. Tape

Electrical tape provides insulation in electrical tasks, such as wrapping a wire join.

Masking tape, or painter's tape, is a must for paint jobs, helping to mask off areas that are not to be painted.



5. Clamps

Having a good set of clamps is like having a second pair of hands to hold things in place.

Small spring clamps are quick and easy to use, while larger F-clamps and sash clamps will stabilise a big woodworking project.



6. Bucket

You can't carry water or mix materials without a bucket. Buy several, as plastic ones are as cheap as chips. ♦

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HOW TO MAKE A TRESTLE DESK

Create this stylish trestle desk and add a bespoke touch to your home or office space

Don't have a lot of space at home? This stylish trestle desk could be the ideal solution. It looks great in any compact workspace such as a study nook, a hallway, child's bedroom or corner of the room.

Just follow the steps below for this great DIY project. The tabletop can be cut out of a wooden panel. If the

timber is to be a feature, it can be enhanced with a wax coating.

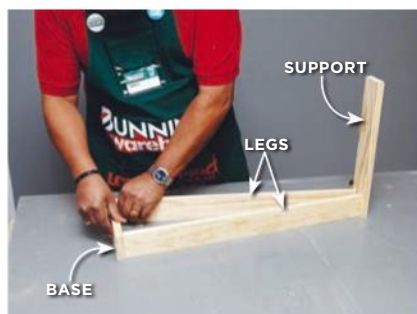
And to make this project easier, have your timber pre-cut to size at your local Bunnings store (see cutting list).

The ends of the legs should be cut using a compound mitresaw set to 5°, so that the legs join the supports and leg bases at an angle.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Tape measure and pencil
- Drill and Phillips head bit
- 3mm and 6.5mm drill bits
- Orbital sander
- 240 grit sanding pads
- PVA timber adhesive
- 8g x 40mm timber screws
- Two 1200 x 6mm galvanised threaded rods, two 6mm nuts
- Bolt cutters or hacksaw
- Wax and spray paint
- Safety gear

Waxing the tabletop will protect the surface and bring out the natural timber grain



1 Prepare the legs

Lay out two leg pieces, a leg base and a support to create a triangle on your workbench. Predrill pilot holes with a 3mm bit for the 40mm screws that will secure the legs to the base and the support. Apply adhesive and join the pieces. Repeat for the other legs.



2 Attach the supports

Using the drill, attach the bases to the legs with 40mm screws. Then assemble one trestle by attaching a support to the four legs. Predrill four pilot holes in the ends of each support, then secure to the legs with adhesive and 40mm screws. Repeat for other trestle.



3 Paint the legs

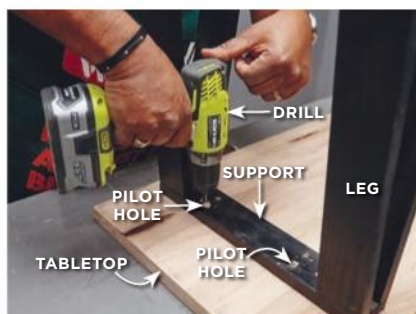
Paint or spray the trestles in the colour of your choice. Apply several coats, allowing each to dry. Lightly sand the painted surfaces with 240 grit sandpaper between coats. Sand the tabletop using an orbital sander with 240 grit sandpaper for a smooth finish.



CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE	NO
Dressed pine		
Legs	670 x 65 x 18mm	8
Leg bases	205 x 65 x 18mm	4
Supports	390 x 65 x 18mm	2
Timber panel (thickness might vary)		
Tabletop	1200 x 450 x 25mm	1

Watch the video 'D.I.Y. trestle desk' at bunnings.co.nz/diy-advice



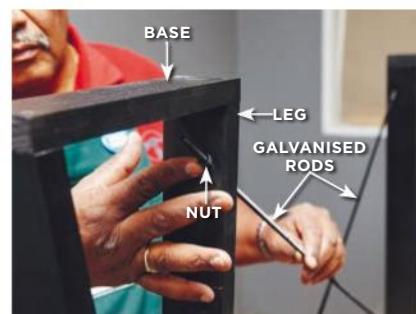
4 Attach the trestles

Position the trestles under the tabletop by marking the side of each support 110mm from the end of the tabletop, with a 30mm overhang at each end of the supports. Predrill 3mm pilot holes through each support. Attach the trestles to the top with 30-40mm screws.



5 Cut the rods

Use two galvanized rods to brace the table. Position the rods diagonally between the inside back legs on both sides 80mm from the base of the legs and 50mm from the top of the legs. Cut the rods to length with bolt cutters or a hacksaw.



6 Secure the rods

Paint the rods to match the trestles. When the paint is dry, predrill pilot holes for the rods on an angle using a 6.5mm drill bit. Thread each rod through the holes and secure with 6mm nuts. Apply several coats of wax to the tabletop for a final finish.

Find it at Bunnings

What's new

Check out our latest gear to help make a huge difference to your home this autumn.



Featuring a eucalyptus hardwood table and stools with a natural oil finish, this 5 Piece Corsica Bar Setting is perfect for outdoor entertaining. \$799

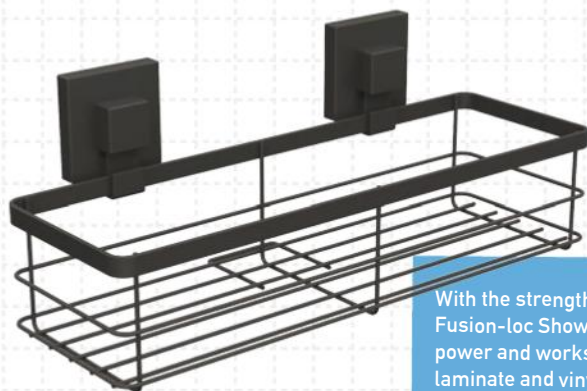


Protect your home with this starter pack, complete with 2 photoelectric smoke alarms and 1 thermal heat alarm for your kitchen or laundry. \$115

With a durable powder-coated and resin wicker seat, you can relax outdoors in this Mimosa Wicker Standing Egg Chair. \$599



Take the effort out of garage doors with this wireless sensor. The Garage Door Wireless Sensor is perfect for roller, sectional or tilted doors. Plus, it's easy to install. \$55



With the strength to hold 26kg, this large Fusion-loc Shower Caddy has incredible suction power and works on glass, non-porous tiles, laminate and vinyl. \$48.94

Secure your home with the Yale Assure Keyless Lock with Bluetooth. Open or lock your door with your smart phone or simply enter a unique code into the keypad. \$331.54





With its powder-coated steel frame, the Coolaroo Butterfly Gazebo is strong and durable in all weather conditions. \$699



With water repelling technology, cement sealer SurfaPore C protects cement surfaces, mortar, grout, stucco and natural or artificial stones. \$39.99

Improve the quality of your soil this autumn with Osmocote Professional 40L Compost & Soil Improver. \$9.98



With its self-levelling operation this Lasertec CL3 Hybrid Multi-Line Laser features ultra-bright red and green laser beams for precise indoor levelling tasks. \$289

This Gorilla Silverback Platform Ladder is perfect for the serious handyman or tradies. It's large platform area, heavy duty aluminium construction and 150kg load rating makes it suitable for all kinds of jobs. \$190



This 20kg bag of Cemix Fastcrete Super Strong is so easy to use. Just pour it in the hole, add water and let it set in just 15 minutes. \$10.98



With faster setting times and a rainproof bag, the Cemix Maxcrete is perfect to tackle those big projects. \$10.98

STOP THE ROT

Keep your deck in good shape with regular maintenance and repairs

WORDS MARC MCEVOY

A timber deck is often the connection between your home and the outdoors. It can also be the platform for your barbecue entertainment area, which means it endures a lot of foot traffic.

But timber decks are also exposed to the weather and require regular maintenance if you want the timber to look its best and to last a long time.

Most decks are made from durable timbers such as pine or hardwoods such as kwila. Pine, a softwood, lasts about 15-20 years. Hardwoods cost more, but last more than 25 years.

This means the effects of sun, rain, wind and ice can be reduced by protecting your deck and dealing quickly with damage or decay. ►

Timber decks are exposed to the effects of the weather.

PICTURE ALAMY

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New Cabot's Aquadeck has a 1 hour re-coat time, so you can finish the deck in a day.

PERFECT FINISH

It pays to keep your deck clean throughout the year. Prevent stains by cleaning up dirt, mildew, food spills, bird droppings, leaf litter and tree sap.

More importantly, ensure your deck is well protected by giving it a coat of decking oil once or twice a year. It will enhance the look of the timber boards, repel water and minimise UV damage.

Check if your deck needs refinishing by splashing water on it. If the water soaks in instead of beading, the timber needs resealing.

Apply two coats of oil with a wool applicator, allowing it to dry between coats. Stained decks need to be lightly sanded and restained every two years.



A replacement section should span at least three joists.

DAMAGED BOARDS

Rotten or damaged decking boards need to be replaced, but it is an easy DIY job. If the damage affects only a few boards, replace with the same timber thickness and species so they match.

You don't need to replace an entire board either. Just remove a damaged section by cutting it out with a jigsaw, then replace it with a board that spans at least three joists.

Secure the new section with construction adhesive and 10g x 65mm decking screws or galvanised nails.

Pre-drill pilot holes for screws to avoid splitting the timber, or use a tool which pre-drills to a consistent depth and helps prevent splitting. Finally, stain or oil the timber to match the other deck boards.

LOOSE FASTENERS

Not all damage to your deck will be obvious. At least once a year you should inspect below the boards to check bearers, joists, posts and the ledger for movement or decay, especially where timber is in contact with the ground.

If your deck sways, bounces or creaks, the fasteners may be loose. Nails can work loose, so the deck should be renailed. If the fasteners are screws, they may have corroded or the timber around them may have decayed.

If a deck wobbles, it may be because the ledger board needs to be refastened to the house. Secure the board with 90 x 10mm coach screws every 450mm.

Attach a 90 x 45mm timber cross brace to the joists under the deck from corner to corner to stop lateral deck movement, which stresses fasteners. ►

Creaking boards may mean the fasteners are loose or corroded.



PICTURE ALAMY

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HOLES IN CONCRETE PATHS



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ROTTEN TIMBER

Water will find its way into timber if it can. This rots the timber, which makes it structurally unsound and unsafe.

If a post is in contact with the ground, it can absorb water, which accelerates rot. The same goes for handrails. Exposed ends will rot if they aren't sealed against water penetration.

You can repair water-damaged joists, rails and posts by applying timber hardener and filler. Just sand the filler when it has dried and apply two coats of decking oil to prevent further rot.

If posts and rails have been painted, apply primer and two coats of exterior paint. If the damage to a joist is not severe, reinforce it by installing a new joist next to it. Otherwise, replace it.



PICTURE ALAMY



Rail damage can be repaired using timber hardener and filler. BELOW Water can rot timber and make it structurally unsound.



WOBBLY POSTS

If your deck has a loose or wobbly railing post, make it safe and secure again by inserting a couple of support bolts.

First check the post is plumb with a spirit level, then secure it using two 10mm-diameter galvanised cuphead bolts that are at least 25mm longer than the thickness of the post and the surrounding outer joists.

Drill 10mm holes through the outer joist and post, diagonally spacing the holes to give the post extra support strength. Then tap in the bolts, attaching a washer and nut on the other side. ♦



Timber decks in entertainment areas can endure a lot of foot traffic if they are cleaned and oiled regularly



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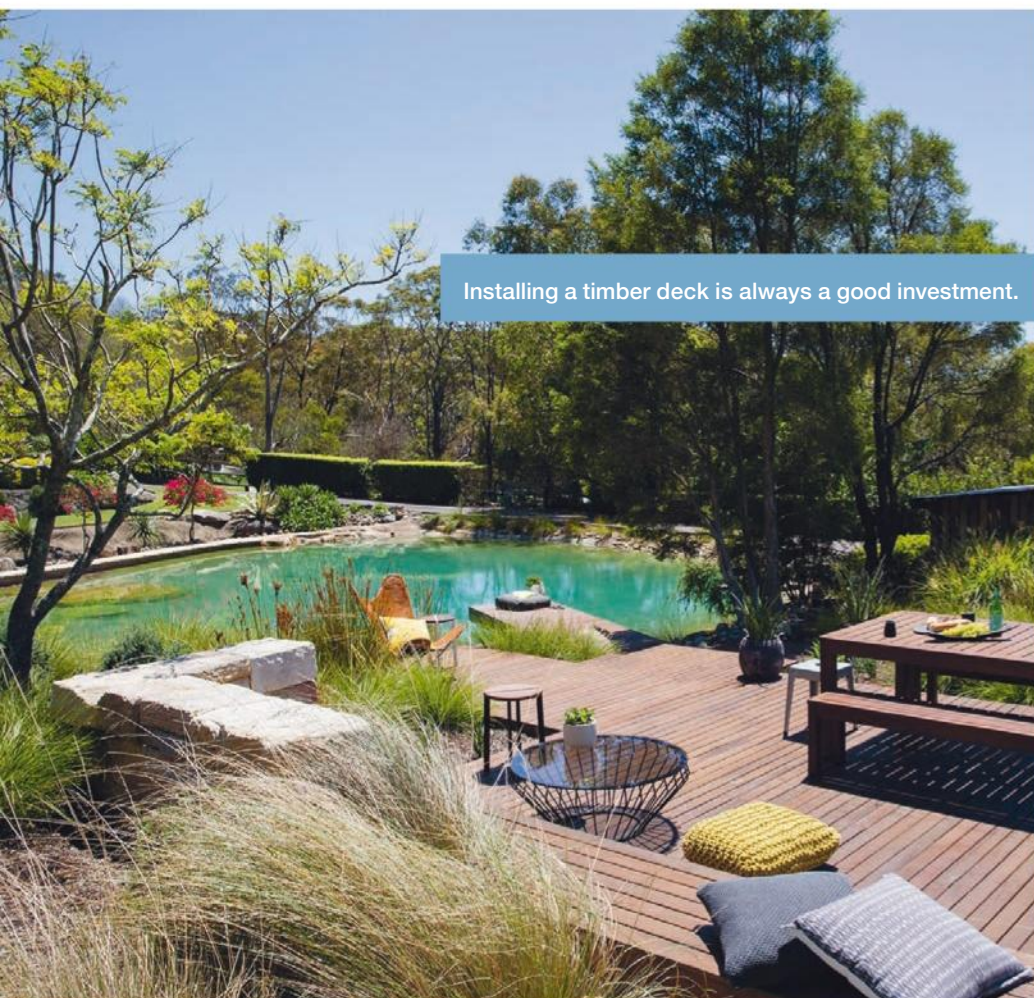
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SMALL CHANGES, BIG IMPACT

Give your alfresco areas a new look with little effort and minimal cost

WORDS MATT LEACY PICTURES JASON BUSCH



Installing a timber deck is always a good investment.



You don't need to spend big to get your outdoor spaces primed and ready heading into summer. Even making small changes can add significant aesthetic and financial value to an outdoor area.

Structural landscaper and designer Matt Leacy is the founder and creative director of Sydney-based Landart Landscapes (landart.com.au).

Matt has more than 20 years' experience in design, construction and maintenance services across landscaping and pool installation.

Here, he shares some small and easy outdoor changes that can make a substantial difference to your home and turn it into a more inviting retreat for your family and friends.

Add a practical design feature using tiles.



Use tiles

An outdoor space can be completely transformed with the proper use of patterned tiles, which can inject openness and light into an area.

Tiles can be added to garden beds, staircases, paving, flooring, fireplace designs and outdoor kitchens to create a beautiful and practical design feature.

‘These decorative tiles are best used in areas where the indoors meets the outdoors, especially in a dining area, bringing with them a seamless transition from the interior to the backyard,’ says Matt.

‘Whether Mediterranean, Moroccan or Californian, patterned tiles featuring simple designs are a great go-to for providing a statement look.

‘Try picking out a pattern that incorporates white so it will match patio furniture while still bringing a unique aesthetic to the outdoors.’ ►

Tiles create a seamless transition from the indoors to the outdoors.





Inject colour

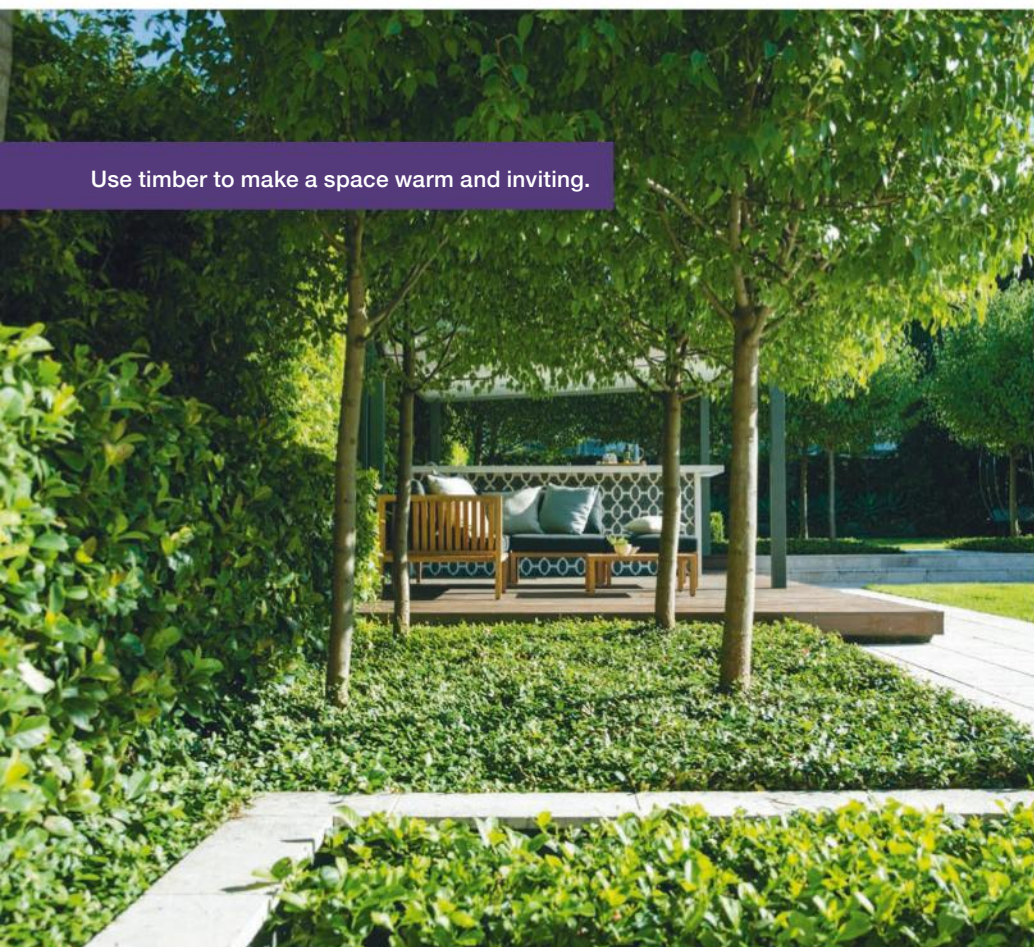
Adding colour to the garden doesn't have to come in the way of annuals or flowers. Matt says there are other ways to achieve this that require minimal garden knowledge and less maintenance.

'One area that's commonly forgotten but frequented many times a day is the front door. By adding a pot with hardy, planted colour at your front door, you can make an amazing transformation with little effort,' he says.

Matt suggests using a lightweight imitation concrete pot or low bowl, as this juxtaposes with most home styles.

There is an array of hardy, coloured foliage plants on the market, so the selection process can be tricky.

'Choose two plants that contrast in colour and texture or just one plant and cover the pot with it. Keeping it simple will mean there's less likelihood of clashing colours.'



Use timber to make a space warm and inviting.



Help define different areas in your backyard with a timber deck that can be enjoyed by the whole family



Enjoy more privacy with a sunken lounge.

Create zones

Matt says his first step when designing a backyard is to imagine the family doing their favourite things outdoors.

'I then design specific zones for each activity to add purpose to the space. Whether it's an outdoor kitchen, a dining setting, a fresh garden or a small nook on the porch, these spaces combine to create a place where the family will prefer to spend their time,' he says.

A timber deck is a good investment if you don't already have one, as it makes the yard a fantastic place to hang out with family and friends, plus naturally adds a homey feel.

Creating different levels as well as zones in a yard will bring out those great spaces for everyone to relax. You could also put in square stepping stones, which are easy and instantly decorative.

'A sunken lounge is a clever way to make your garden space appear larger than it actually is,' says Matt.

'It is the perfect place for catching up with friends and family while you sip away at your favourite beverage.

'At the same time, a sunken lounge also adds privacy and intimacy, as it allows you to drop below the eye line or fence line of neighbours.' ►



Add character and charm with a copper pot.

Add detail

Outdoor lighting is another important element. Task lighting around a kitchen and a dimmer can provide relaxed lighting for conversation areas.

‘Candlelight or fairy lights can add that little magic to make the backyard a truly inviting place. You can also create shady spots for daytime relaxation with mature trees, umbrellas or pergolas,’ says Matt.

Placing a statement copper piece in your outdoor area adds character, charm and an interesting focal point.

Copper works really well for light fittings, outdoor showers, fireplaces, water features and bespoke pots.

‘One of my favourite things about using copper outdoors is that it acquires a beautiful patina over time.

‘This look works especially well for light fittings and showerheads, as the patinas allow them to subtly settle into the garden,’ says Matt.

Keeping copper pots and fittings under shelter so they weather more gradually is recommended.

Most plants look good with copper, and tall, leafy plants such as a kentia palm or fiddle leaf fig are ideal. Silver foliage plants also contrast beautifully. The texture and shape of *Kalanchoe* ‘Silver Spoons’ offsets copper perfectly. ❖



Copper showerheads develop a nice patina. LEFT Set the right mood with lighting.



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VIBRANT BOUGAINVILLEAS

Add brilliant colour to your summer garden with these shimmering beauties

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Our summers would not be nearly as colourful today if French navigator Louis Antoine de Bougainville hadn't sailed to South America in the 1760s with botanist Philibert Commerson, who discovered a new genus, which he named Bougainvillea after his commander.

Bougainvilleas are now among the most popular plants grown in tropical, subtropical and temperate climates.

There are around 14 species in the genus, and they're ideal for growing over pergolas and fences.

They can also be trained as standards in pots or garden beds. On the ground, they look good scrambling over banks.

If you don't have a lot of space, try a dwarf bougainvillea from the Bambino series. These are ideal for pots.

While usually grown as climbers, bougainvilleas make great groundcovers if left unsupported.



PICTURES ISTOCK



The foliage of bougainvilleas can be either evergreen or deciduous, depending on the species and climate.



Help them thrive

Bougainvilleas are very hardy plants and will survive without much water or fertiliser and still put on a fabulous flower show, just as long as they receive plenty of sunshine and are grown in a warm climate.

♦ **POSITION** in a sunny, frost-free spot in light, free-draining soil. The plant will tolerate some shade, but the flowers won't be as prolific.

♦ **FEED** bougainvilleas in the ground in spring with a controlled-release

fertiliser high in potash. Don't use a fertiliser high in nitrogen as this will produce lots of growth but few flowers.

Bambino bougainvilleas in garden beds will need to be fed with a controlled-release fertiliser high in potash in spring, summer and autumn.

♦ **WATER** lightly during summer and you will be rewarded with more flowers. During winter, bougainvilleas will virtually survive on rainwater. Mulch in spring with lucerne hay or sugar cane. ►



Plant in pots

Bougainvilleas, especially those in the Bambino series, make excellent low-maintenance pot plants.

If you want to curtail their growth, planting climbing varieties in pots is an effective way to achieve this.

- ♦ **PLANT** climbing and Bambino varieties in a large container using a premium potting mix.
- ♦ **FEED** in spring, summer and autumn with a three-month controlled-release fertiliser for flowers and fruit.
- ♦ **MULCH** pots with lucerne hay to keep the soil cool and help retain moisture.
- ♦ **WATER** when the potting mix starts to dry out, but take care not to overwater.



A variety of bougainvilleas lining a pathway provide a dazzling display of long-lasting colour.



GROWING DWARF VARIETIES

Dwarf bougainvilleas from the Bambino series can be grown as groundcovers, as trimmed shrubs or individually in pots.

They can be espaliered, look wonderful in large hanging baskets and make colourful informal hedges.

Plants in the Bambino series are available in different heights from 500mm to about 2m, and feature exceptional colours,

including oranges, pale and bright yellows, pinks, various shades of lavender, purple, white and some bi-colours.

The thorns on these plants aren't as big or sharp as those of the larger varieties.

Once planted and established in beds, they require little extra water, as with all bougainvilleas. Dry conditions encourage them to produce more flowers.

How to prune

Hard pruning is generally not recommended for bougainvilleas, as it can cause them to go into a strong, vegetative growth phase and produce long, curved thorns in the leaf axils instead of flowers.

These thorns enable the plants to get a firm grip on tree branches and scramble up towards the light.

But if your bougainvillea is already thorny and far too big, you may have no option but to prune heavily.

After pruning, fertilise with a product that is high in potash to encourage flowers to grow.

Always remove the watershoots when they appear and trim off finished flowers to encourage more blooms.

For Bambino bougainvilleas, prune lightly throughout the year to remove finished flower heads. This also shapes the plant and encourages another flush of flowers. Remove summer watershoots at the base of the plant. ♦

Climbing bougainvilleas
liven up a plain fence and
make a striking border
hedge on a large property.

Did you know?

All bougainvillea flowers are tiny and white. The beautiful, vibrant summer colour we associate with bougainvilleas is provided by the bracts that surround these small flowers, not by the flowers themselves. A bract is a modified leaf found at the base of the flower.

BACK TO YOUR ROOTS

Plant a few root vegetables in your backyard now to add to casseroles and soups when the weather cools down

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

Certain vegetables are sown now and harvested during autumn and winter, providing healthy, nutritious produce to use as a base for warming and filling meals, such as soups and stews, on cold days.

While you may be sweltering in the hot summer sun and winter is a distant thought, now is the time to plant those fabulous root vegetables such as parsnips, turnips, swedes, kohlrabies, radishes and carrots.

Grow root vegetables in time for winter with little effort.





Plant your root vegetables in free-draining soil. RIGHT Swedes are a good source of potassium.



Rustle up a plate of French fries with the humble swede.

Swede

The swede, or rutabaga as it is also known, arrived in England from Sweden in the 1770s and it is very closely related to the turnip.

Swedes are a good source of potassium and magnesium, which help maintain healthy blood pressure levels.

Sow the seeds directly where the swedes are to grow in late summer and autumn. In cold climates, swedes can also be sown in late winter and early spring.

How to grow

The main requirement for successfully growing root vegetables is a deeply dug, free-draining soil with well-rotted manure or compost added.

Organic matter must be mixed evenly throughout the soil or the roots could be forked or misshapen.

Scatter a pre-planting fertiliser in the bed before sowing the seeds.

If you have rich, healthy soil, the pre-planting fertiliser should be enough to produce a good crop of root vegetables.

Applying a liquid fertiliser, but not one that is high in nitrogen, will promote faster growth.

Water regularly throughout the growing season.

The roots are swollen stems that sit on the soil surface, so don't mound up the soil around the plants as this can cause rot to occur.

Thin seedlings to 70-100mm apart when 75mm high. Harvest swedes about 3-4 months after sowing.

♦ **MAKE** a root gratin with swede, parsnip and potato. Bake with cream, garlic and parmesan.

♦ **MASH** with potatoes for extra flavour and texture.

♦ **ADD** to soups and stews. ►



Carrots can be eaten when young or left until mature.

Carrot

A native of Afghanistan, the carrot was originally a purple colour. The orange variety we eat now arose from a yellow mutation in the Netherlands in the 1600s. They are a rich source of betacarotene, which can help protect your heart, and antioxidants.

Carrots are biennial, producing their taproot in the first year and flowering in their second year if not pulled.

They can be grown in containers if space is limited and make pretty border plants in ornamental gardens with their bright-green, feathery tops.

Sow the seeds directly where the plants are to grow from February to

November in hot climates, from July to March in temperate zones, and from August to February in cold climates.

The seeds are very fine, so make sure they are evenly distributed by mixing the seed with a little dry river sand.

Thin seedlings to 50mm apart when about 75mm high. Harvest 12-16 weeks after sowing.

You can also buy seed tape, which holds a row of evenly spaced seeds so you don't have to thin them.

- ♦ **USE** carrots to make muffins.
- ♦ **COMBINE** grated carrot with thinly sliced fennel bulb, and add dressing for a crunchy salad.



Turnip

When the turnip arrived in England during the 15th century from the Netherlands, the roots were baked or roasted and the leafy tops were eaten young in salads or cooked like silverbeet.

Turnips are loaded with vitamins, especially C and B, and are full of fibre and low in kilojoules.

They are sometimes grown just for their young green leaves, which are loaded with phytonutrients.

Sow turnip seeds directly where the plants are to grow from late summer through autumn. In cold climates, turnips can also be sown in late winter and early spring. Thin seedlings to 70-100mm apart when about 75mm high.

Harvest small turnips when sweet or in 10-12 weeks at maturity.

- ♦ **MASH** cooked turnips with chopped chives and parmesan.
- ♦ **USE** to make leek and turnip soup.
- ♦ **ADD** to soups, casseroles and stews.

Add a slice of fresh ginger when juicing carrots.





Parsnip

Sweet, nutty parsnips contain fibre and potassium, vitamin C and folate. They are also reputed to contain anti-inflammatory properties.

Parsnips are ideal for winter stews, soups, gratins, purees and soufflés.

Sow parsnip seeds directly where the plants are to grow from February to September in hot areas and from July to March in temperate climates. Sow from August to February in cold zones.

The seeds can take 3-4 weeks to germinate, so keep the bed damp. Thin seedlings to 50-70mm apart when about 75mm high.

Harvest after about 18-20 weeks, but they keep well in the soil, especially during winter.

♦ **ADD** chopped rosemary to baked parsnips and freshly chopped coriander or parsley leaves to mashed parsnips.

♦ **USE** parsnips as an alternative to potatoes to make chips. ►



Parsnips are rich in vital nutrients and vitamins, which help rid the body of free radicals.

PICTURES ISTOCK



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Kohlrabi is related to the cabbage and can be either green or purple.

Kohlrabi

The origin of the kohlrabi is one of the mysteries of horticulture. It doesn't resemble anything that grows in the wild and has been called the mongrel of the vegetable kingdom, as it looks like a turnip grown on a cabbage root.

Its close relationship to the cabbage has led to one belief that it may have developed as an accidental mutation from cultivated cabbage varieties.

It tastes like a cross between a turnip and a swede and the leafy green tops are also edible. The swollen stem grows above ground, so don't mound up the soil around it, as this will cause rot.

Sow the seeds directly where the plants are to grow in late summer and autumn. In temperate and cold climates, kohlrabi can also be sown in early spring. Thin seedlings to 100-150mm apart when about 75mm high.

Harvest 8-10 weeks after sowing. Start pulling the roots while young to extend the harvest. Don't let the bulbs exceed 50-70mm in diameter or they will become tough and stringy.

- ♦ **SERVE** kohlrabi with a cheese sauce.
- ♦ **BOIL** or steam and serve with butter and black pepper.
- ♦ **USE** to make a soup.

Storing the crop

♦ **CARROTS** will keep well in the refrigerator crisper for at least a month.

Cut off the leaves, as they draw moisture from the root, and remove any dirt, then put in a resealable plastic bag.

They can also be peeled, blanched and placed in freezer bags for about three months.

♦ **PARSNIPS** can be harvested during winter when you need them, as they store well in the ground. They can also be peeled, blanched and stored in the freezer for up to six months.

♦ **SWEDES AND TURNIPS** will remain crisp for about two weeks in the vegetable crisper in the fridge. It's best to remove the leaves before storing.

♦ **KOHLRABI** is best eaten fresh, but it can be stored in the refrigerator crisper for about two weeks.

Young bulbs can be peeled, sliced and blanched and stored in the freezer for up to two months.

♦ **RADISHES** can be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for a week. It's best to leave the leafy tops attached.



PICTURES ISTOCK



Pick radish roots while young, as old roots can be tough and stringy.

Radish

The natural zing and crunch of radishes is pleasing on our palates throughout the year.

And radishes are good for you. As do broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage, they belong to the Brassicaceae family and contain cancer-protecting phytonutrients, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

You don't even need green fingers to grow radishes, as they are obligingly easy to cultivate.

Sow the seeds until the end of autumn directly where the plants are to grow.

The seeds germinate in about 5-8 days. So the radishes don't all mature simultaneously, sow

the seeds successively, sowing two lots – one for the roots and one for the young leaves, which make a delicious addition to salads. Radishes can also be pickled.

Depending on the cultivar, the roots will be ready for harvesting in 4-8 weeks.

Allow a couple of plants to go to seed, as the flowers are very attractive to beneficial insects.

♦ **DIP** radishes in ricotta cheese for a tasty snack.

♦ **ADD** them to green salads.

♦ **COMBINE** radishes with fennel, cucumber, tomato, feta cheese and salad leaves and toss with a mustard dressing. ♦



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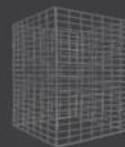
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DRIFTWOOD PLANTER

Transform a beachside find into an eye-catching display for succulents

WORDS AND PICTURES DANIEL BUTKOVICH

Succulents are easy to grow from cuttings, and can be impressive when displayed as a large group in a unique planter.

This piece of driftwood featured a natural channel running along its centre with a soft spongy surface, which provided the ideal substrate for displaying these plants.

Succulents of different varieties and colours were collected from friends' gardens for the planter, then arranged and trimmed to fit.

Holes were drilled along the length of the channel, and the cuttings were inserted snugly. Sphagnum moss was packed around the succulents to encourage rooting and retain moisture.

The result is a portable botanical display that can be brought inside and used as a centrepiece.

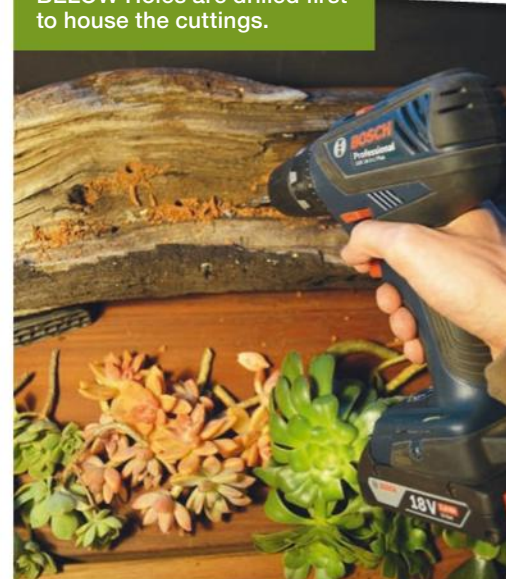
TIP Water the planter regularly to keep the succulents hydrated.



The planter makes a fabulous feature indoors or outdoors.



ABOVE Plan the arrangement before you start planting.
BELOW Holes are drilled first to house the cuttings.



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