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Handyman

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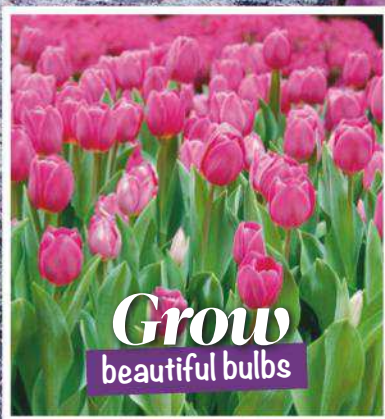
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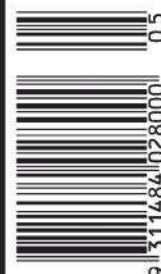


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EDITOR'S LETTER

Having just undergone the arduous task of selecting an exterior paint colour for our house (complete with a patchwork of sample pots on the wall that were all close-but-not-quite-right), I appreciate just how important paint is for setting the tone and mood both indoors and out.

And, once you've managed to find the right hue, it's also one of the cheapest and most effective ways to transform your home.

With our guide to the latest trends in paint (starting on page 26), tips and tricks for achieving a professional finish (from page 36), and reno queen Cherie Barber's impressive paint makeovers (page 42), there's nothing stopping you from rolling up your sleeves, popping open a paint tin and getting stuck in.

Building from the ground up

There are few of us who haven't at some point dreamt of building our dream

house from scratch, but with so many factors to consider, it can seem like a daunting feat. Our feature on page 78 details the key elements to get in place to turn your dream into a reality.

Projects to get stuck into

We have plenty of projects for you this month, from building a concrete vanity (page 61), to creating cool and quirky kitchen gadgets (page 52), installing a built-in wardrobe (page 64) and reusing leftover floorboards to make rustic architraves and skirting. Happy DIYing!



MANAGING EDITOR
ZOË MEUNIER



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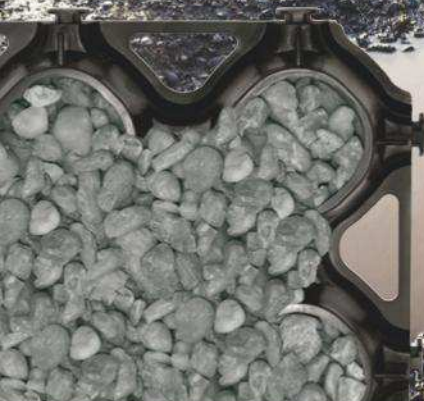
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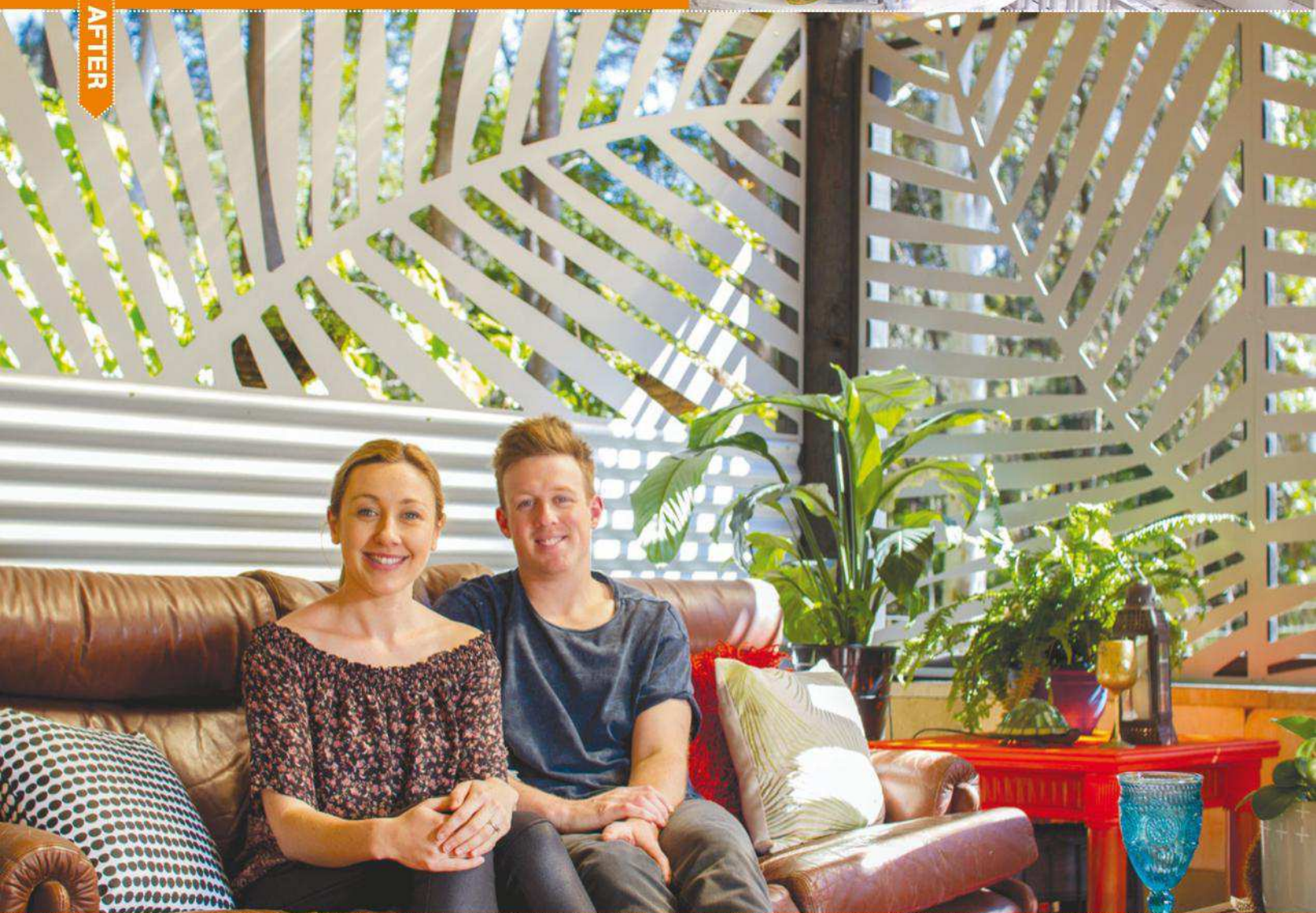
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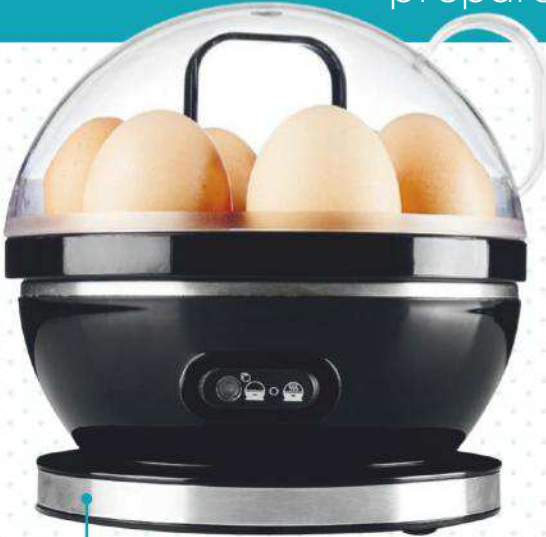
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HANDY STUFF

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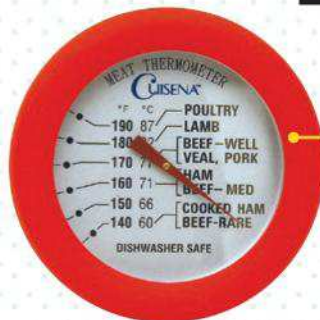
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CHANGE YOUR SMOKE ALARM BATTERY



Smoke alarms provide critical early warning when a house fire starts.

With winter approaching and, with it, the increased use of heating appliances and fires, it's time we all checked and, if necessary, changed our smoke alarm batteries. Smoke alarms save lives, but not if the battery is flat.

For peace of mind, it's best to replace the battery in all the smoke alarms in your home, as well as cleaning them with a cloth or using a vacuum cleaner. After replacing any battery, check your

smoke alarm is operational by holding down the test button until you hear a loud alert tone.

Smoke alarms should also be tested regularly, usually monthly, to ensure they are operating correctly.

All smoke alarms have a red light that flashes momentarily about every 40-60 seconds to show they are operating, while alarms that have a low battery will emit an intermittent beep or chirping sound. ❖

TIME TO CHANGE THE BATTERY?

Smoke alarms powered by a 9V alkaline battery require you to replace the battery every year.

When replacing an existing 9V battery smoke alarm, consider installing a photoelectric smoke alarm with an in-built 10-year lithium battery, which eliminates the need for annual battery replacements.

Alternatively, there are mains-powered or hardwired smoke alarms which are powered by an external power source. These alarms also have a battery back-up for periods of mains power outage.

Many models of alarms have a rechargeable, non-removable battery and do not need replacement. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions to see if you need to change the battery.



Handy Smoke Alarm tips

- Replace your smoke alarm battery once a year when daylight saving begins
- Test your alarm after installing new batteries - simply press the test button
- Clean and vacuum your smoke alarm at least every 6 months - this will help nuisance alarms caused by dust or other contaminants
- Replace your smoke alarm every 10 years



Only working smoke alarms can save lives.

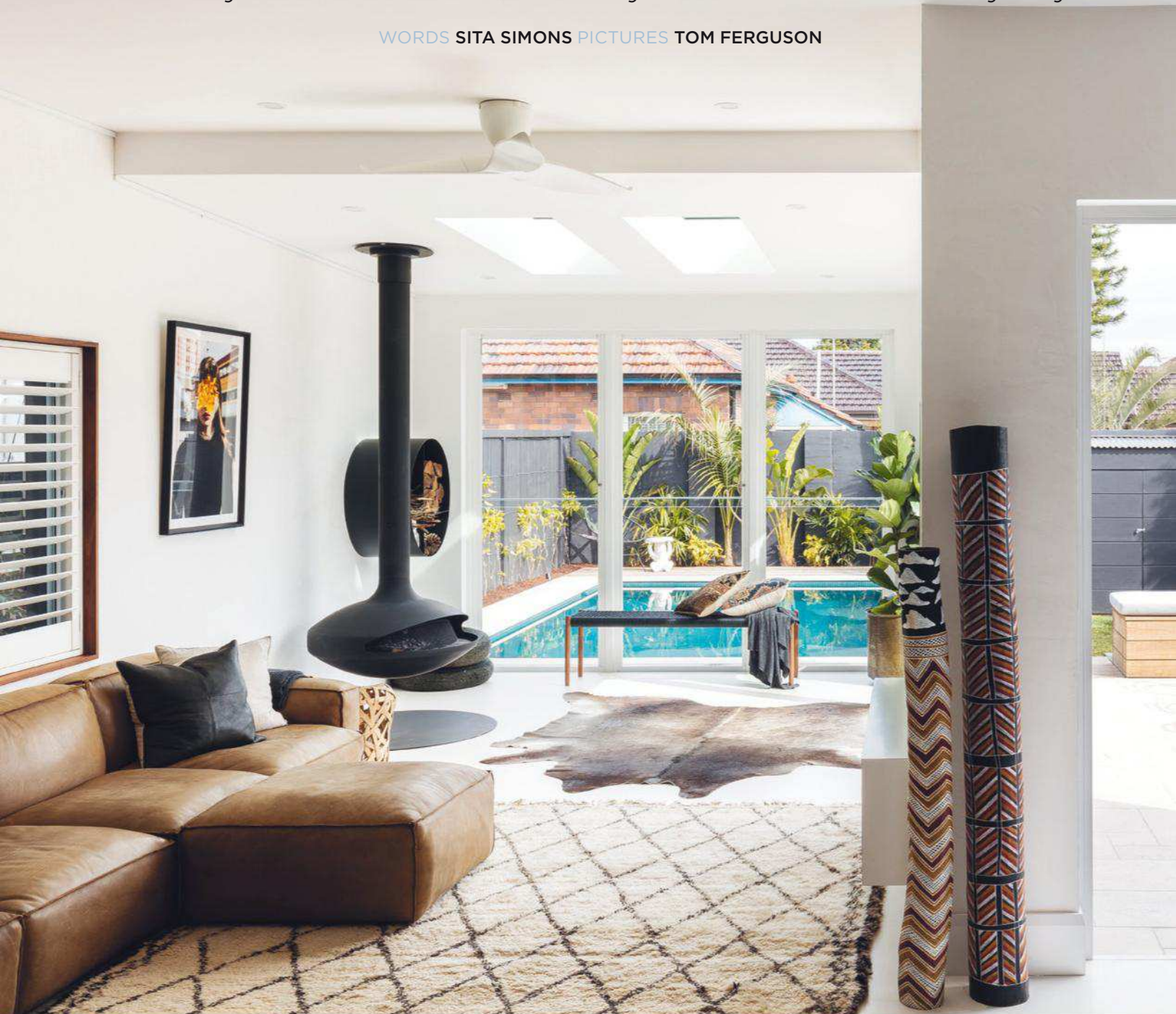
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HOLIDAY AT HOME

A dark, poky dwelling is renovated to create a breezy, beachy house where it feels like you're on vacation every day

WORDS SITA SIMONS PICTURES TOM FERGUSON





The living and outdoor areas have a smooth flow, while the palette of whites is punctuated with Melissa's art collection.



Designed for Melissa Bonney, director of The Designory, this light and bright home was a full renovation from the front door through to the sparkling new pool in the backyard, and everything in between.

With a run-down two-storey house already on the site, the challenge was to turn the building into a high-end home in a beach-side suburb of Sydney.

Led by Melissa, the design team redefined new zones for both downstairs and upstairs. This was done to create a haven with a focus on bespoke joinery and natural materials and finishes.

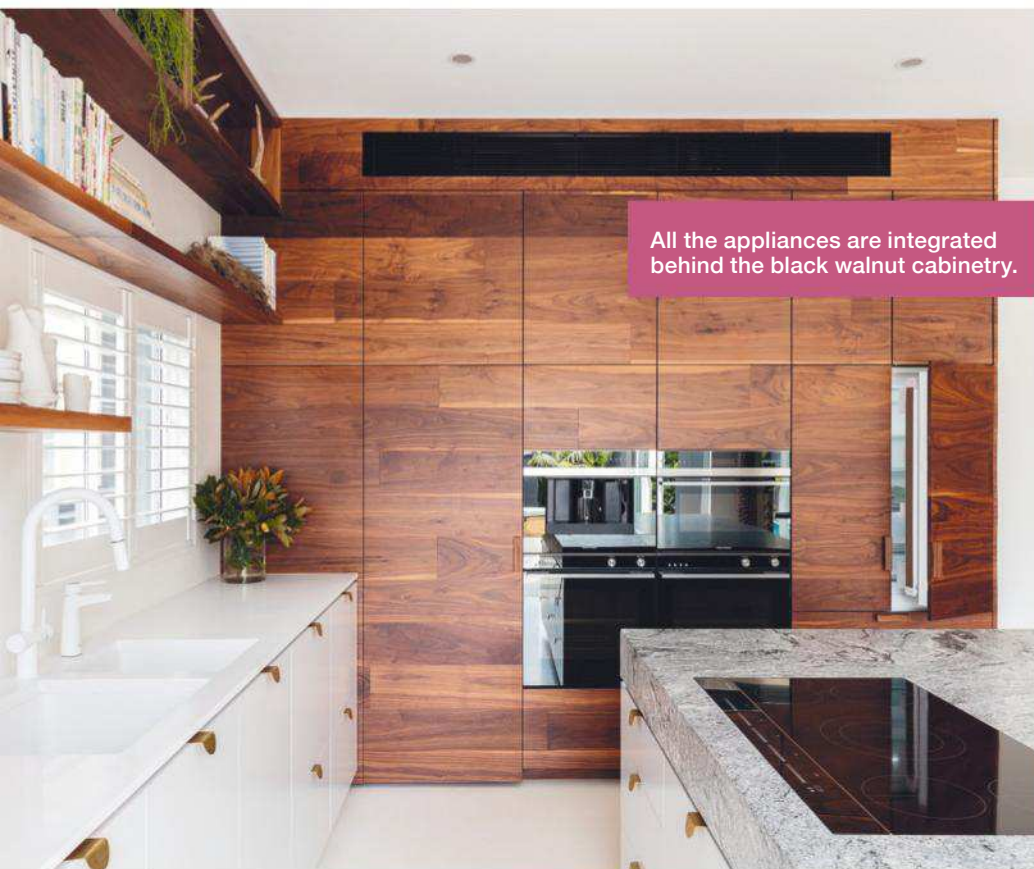
'The property was a rabbit warren of small, dark rooms. The addition of doors, windows and skylights allowed us to gain natural light and connect to the outdoors,' says Melissa.

Upstairs, six small bedrooms would become five well-designed spaces, including the master suite, two bathrooms and an ensuite. ►





A granite island benchtop was custom-built for the home. Darker hues punctuate the light space.



All the appliances are integrated behind the black walnut cabinetry.

Setting the scene

With a view to the pool and outdoor entertaining area, the living room features a striking suspended fireplace, giving the space a focal point.

The walls are finished with a stucco render, creating a textured, icy-smooth and glossy finish. The new windows, skylights and sliding doors now allow plenty of natural light to come in, making the finish really stand out.

As the house was originally designed to feature a palette of fresh whites set against a range of greys, Melissa wanted to bring a fresh element to the kitchen.

‘The kitchen sets a tone for a home, so we brought the warm tones of walnut and brass in there, then throughout the home,’ says Melissa.

‘The wall of American black walnut was created by hand by our joiner, who followed the wood grain against all the cabinet fronts to create a seamless look.’

Here, and in the living and dining areas, the full effect of the white epoxy resin flooring is apparent, adding shine, texture and a feel of easy luxury. ►



A dining table off the kitchen makes for easy family living.



The TV is tucked around a corner in the open-plan space to define the different zones.



A seagrass mat softens the hard edges and materials of the bathroom.

Unified bathrooms

A selection of tumbled brass hardware was installed in the bathrooms, adding some texture. Over time, the brass fittings will change patina, adding a softer touch to the bathroom spaces.

‘The bathroom designs all used the same tiles and fixtures, so they all had symbiosis,’ says Melissa.

‘We chose a tumbled limestone laid in a French pattern on the floor and up the wall, with the surrounding space tiled in a simple white tile to carry light and create contrast.’

The custom-made vanities feature a rich walnut, which include generous storage drawers for bathroom linen and a range of cosmetics.



KEEPING GROUT CLEAN

- Minimising grout lines and keeping them clean over the years should always be taken into consideration in any bathroom.

Good design, and in particular when simplicity is a key component, relies on clean lines, both literally and aesthetically.

- Large-format tiles require fewer grout lines, but there are also new products on the market that are designed to tackle this issue.

- Coloured grouts can be tinted to match the tile and advances in fabrication mean some products are stain-resistant.





The vertical-striped wallpaper defines this cosy boy's room.



Practical and simple design solutions tailored to each child will always work well.



Bespoke bedrooms

Upstairs is all about calm, and the bedrooms are beautifully finished with bespoke joinery, luxurious wool carpet and clever design features such as built-in desks and mini walk-in robes.

'Storage is extremely important for any home. Having well-designed built-in wardrobes that have the capacity to store everything allows for the space to feel uncluttered,' says Melissa.

'But kids' rooms need various storage solutions. We used Muuto boxes under the window to create a child-friendly height bookcase. An oversized basket also helps to store toys, allowing for easy play but making cleaning up a breeze.'

For their youngest boy, Melissa chose a Shibori Stripe wallpaper from Milton & King, to help create the illusion of the room having higher ceilings.

'It's a strong backdrop, one that will grow with him,' says Melissa. ►

A much-loved artwork sets the tone for the soft furnishings.



Blush pink complements the various shades of grey.



Tranquil tones

The master suite located upstairs has a stunning curved batted wall.

'We wanted to make curves a feature, to bring a softness to the box-like quality of the existing house,' says Melissa.

'Not only does it add a beautiful design detail, but it also helps to soften some spaces and divide rooms, while not closing them in.'

The generous bedroom also has a full ensuite bathroom and a balcony.

Soft and tranquil colour palettes are an important factor in the success of a bedroom, and Melissa says it can be

a major task. But taking the time to test colours out, even if only with subtle differences, will pay off in the end.

'Needless to say, you need to double-check and, sometimes, triple-check your colours before you decide which is the best choice for you and your space. We spent plenty of time painting patches in different areas and in changing light,' says Melissa.

Final decisions about your interior palette should always be made while considering other aesthetic elements such as the carpets, rugs, joinery and surface materials.



A well-considered master bedroom is a must in a family home, as it's somewhere for the adults to retreat and recharge



Natural light and outdoor palms add contrast and calm.



Design distinctions

The front of the property has been reconfigured to create a distinct entry point. Another element was to design clever joinery hidden behind a curved wall, allowing for a discrete home office to be tucked away behind it.

An expansive rumpus-cum-media room has also been designed to work as an ideal second living area.

'When you have children of different ages and with differing requirements, a second living or casual space to watch TV or play games, or simply hang out, is crucial,' says Melissa.

'It works for everyone and it can also be a great use of an area with less than ideal light, for instance.'

With the creation of a new laundry, linen and storage area, tucked in under the stair cavity, a previously unused space is made the most of. ►

The spacious rumpus room is both comfortable and stylish.



A concealed study is kept clutter free thanks to custom-designed joinery.



A fire pit is a great way to bring everyone together.



Customised elements make each space better suited to meet all the family's needs

Seamless space

The home's outdoor areas are all geared towards providing the best function and appeal, such as an outdoor shower and seating nook at the front.

'We built this as the dream house for our family. We really got it right with this house, for us,' says Melissa.

'It was fully customised at every step so that our time within any space felt calm, organised and relaxed.

'That's what it's all about – creating a seamless space that resonates with all the people living there.' ♦

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thedesigory.com.au





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SHADES OF AUTUMN

Nature-inspired themes remain strong and new darker colours emerge

WORDS SITA SIMONS

Trends come and go, but the process of defining paint palettes for the year ahead may surprise you.

Driven by fashion, architecture, design events such as the Maison et Objet in Paris and the Milan Furniture Fair, The Pantone Colour Institute, and even the political mood, what is on offer in the paint tin is a culmination of all these factors.

Although colour theory has been around for many years, today there are countless research studies that explore the connections between colour and our emotions. And as we spend more and more time at home,

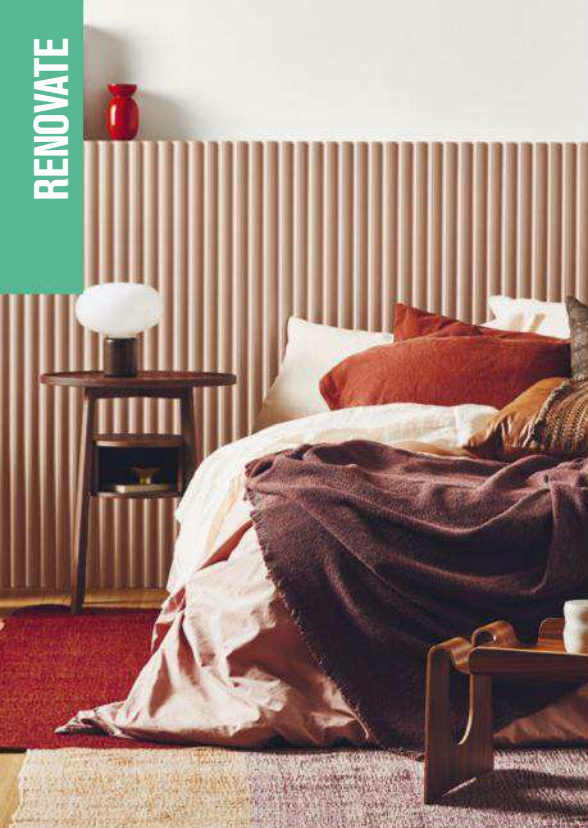
our interiors become entwined with how we think, feel and live.

Taking a cue from the all-important Pantone Colour of the Year, a purple called Ultra-Violet, some big paint companies are making bolder, darker offerings and including deep purples, blues and greens. Dulux is no exception, their 2018 Colour Trends includes a selection of rich, deep shades, such as Dulux Ohaupo and Nugget Point, to create moody schemes.

Keeping to the trends, Dulux's autumn colour palette introduces some dark, earthy shades, encouraging people to try something different as the weather cools down. ►

New season darker tones are a twist on monochromes.





PEACHY PERFECT

The latest colour palette from Dulux is all about increasing the cosiness factor this autumn. Sophisticated earthy shades partnered with light neutrals will star alongside tribal-inspired textured furnishings. It's a layered look, which creates inviting interiors that exude warmth and comfort.

These colours are taking on the softer, nature-loving style, which was exemplified in last year's green trend, and the huge popularity of the 2017 Pantone Colour of the Year, Greenery.

The new Dulux Kinship Palette offers a collection of rich tones, inspired by traditional cultures and folklore. Featuring warm terracotta, russet, soft grey-greens and cosy neutrals with

splashes of red, there's more than a hint of Eastern influence. The palette works beautifully with enduring trends in natural materials, such as timber, stone and raw fabrics.

'This colour palette exudes warmth, but in a sophisticated and contemporary way. It is easy to work with, allowing you to add character with minimal fuss,' says Davina Harper, Dulux colour expert.

'If you're nervous about the idea of introducing deep colours to your space, you needn't be. You'll find that even a small amount of these richer hues against a white or neutral background, in the right spot, can make a big impact,' says Davina. ►

Shades of terracotta make a warm and rich palette.



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Pair your deep colours with a complementary white or neutral that has similar undertones. This will create a sense of balance, allowing the statement colours to enhance rather than overwhelm a space.

'Paint the fireplace surround or create an eye-catching feature wall with one of the bolder colours in the Kinship palette, such as Dulux Motueka or Tikitiki, and keep the other walls soft and neutral,' suggests The Design Chaser's Michelle Halford.

'Or, for a more low-key effect, pair a muted green such as Dulux Ohai with a cool white.'

Bold colours easily and quickly invigorate a space, and you don't need to go full-scale. Consider repainting the front door, the edge of shelving,

a storage nook or around a doorframe.

Create a tonal vignette for very little outlay by painting a medley of op-shop vessels in similar shades of the one colour and displaying them on a hallway table or mantelpiece.

'The one definite with interiors is they're always moving forward. Some trends will remain from one cycle to the next, but closer inspection will reveal that slightly different textures, patterns or undertones are at play every time,' says Davina.

'Paint is such an easy and affordable way to keep your interiors up-to-date, and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone colour-wise can be incredibly fun and rewarding. Best of all, if a colour isn't what you're looking for, you can easily change it.' ►

Layer shades and mix textures for a vibrant living space.



Ground pastels with black accents in accessories.



Bold colours easily and quickly invigorate a space, and you don't need to go full-scale



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SAINT-GOBAIN

NEUTRALISING NEUTRALS

Neutrals are taking a back seat, but will always be a fundamental part of interior design. Coming trends are a combination of colours and neutrals working together in effect as a palette, rather than one singular shade throughout.

'Colour is nothing to be afraid of. Introducing new colours into a neutral or white scheme can be transformative, breathing new life into a room and making you feel more positive. And the great thing about paint is, if you decide on a new colour down the track, you can simply paint over it,' says Dulux's Colour & Design Specialist Davina Harper.

'Homeowners can breathe new life into a neutral scheme with accents of

Dulux Whitianga or Waitiki Landing. These shades go well with many of the Dulux Most Loved Whites, including Okarito and Mt Aspiring, as well as soft timbers,' says Davina.

'If you're hesitant to dip into colour, don't worry: even small doses of colour can make a huge impact on a neutral or white scheme. Create fun, eye-catching accents in unexpected places, such as doors, the inside edge of a wall or door frame, along a staircase or adding an element of surprise in a storage nook.

'For the rest of the walls choose a fresh white – our hugely popular Dulux Okarito is the perfect pairing,' says Davina. ►



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THE PERFECT MATT

The trend for matt surfaces is set to continue this year, as people swap glossy sheen levels with sophisticated matt finishes. Matt finishes now can be seen everywhere from cars to flooring, furniture and tapware.

Dulux Wash&Wear +PLUS Super Hide Matt delivers a smooth paint finish that shows little to no sheen when dry. The sophisticated matt finish helps hide surface imperfections.

With concentrated levels of titanium pigment, this product gives superior hiding power and two coats cover over any colour. This makes a hard-wearing finish with block-out strength for ultimate hiding power. With 101 Barrier

Technology, you can wipe away most common marks with a wet cloth so your walls will stay looking freshly painted for years. ♦



Matt finishes are set to become very popular. Featured here is Dulux Okarito.





Dulux Ceiling White +PLUS
Kitchen&Bathroom



Dulux Wash&Wear +PLUS
Kitchen&Bathroom

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The best part?
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PAINTING 101

Get a professional finish every time with the right tools and techniques

WORDS ZOË MEUNIER



Anyone can pick up a roller or a paintbrush, but achieving a high-quality finish is not quite so easy. Read on to ensure you have the right tools, preparation and application to get the job done right.

PREP WORK

For a professional result, it's essential to prepare correctly. Remove all furniture from the room, or away from the walls, and remove fixtures such as picture hooks and light switch covers. Open windows to improve ventilation and drying time.

Place drop cloths on floors and over any furnishings that remain in the room. Heavy-duty canvas drop sheets are your best bet, as they can absorb any spilt paint and you won't slip on them in the case of a spill. They can even be washed afterwards, preferably at a laundromat that has large washers and dryers.

Wash walls with sugar soap, or use a small amount of detergent in a bucket of water, to remove dust and grime. If the walls are mouldy, use a bleach solution or mould remover.

Dust off window trims, sills and skirting boards with an old paintbrush. Rinse the walls in plain water to remove any traces of soap and allow time to dry.

If your old paint is peeling or flaking, use a paint scraper to remove the loose paint, then gently sand the surface to remove obvious edges.

Dents or nail holes should be filled with an interior filler while acrylic gap sealant should be used for cracks or gaps between doors and windows. Once set, sand down to a smooth finish, along with any rough or shiny areas on the walls.

Finally, apply painter's tape to fittings, trims and any surfaces that will be challenging to paint around, such as skirting boards and fixed shelving. When applying tape to trims, run a putty knife over it to bond the tape to the surface and prevent paint seepage. ►



STEAM IT OFF

To effortlessly remove wallpaper without endless scraping, the Wagner W15 Wallpaper Steamer, \$149 (bunnings.co.nz), is an ideal choice. The three-piece steam plate is wide enough for full width sheets of wallpaper, but can also be shortened for those narrow and hard-to-reach areas.



PICTURE (TOP) ISTOCK

WAGNER

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and paint flow control

Powerful X-Boost™ Turbine
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from wide to narrow

Less parts for
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FLEXiO 590

FLEXiO 570

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TOOLS FOR THE JOB

As with all tools, quality counts. Buy the best painting tools you can afford and remember to take good care of them.

PAINTBRUSHES

Good-quality brushes improve with use, as the tips become rounded and any loose bristles fall out.

Cheap brushes usually contain far fewer bristles per given width and bristles tend to fall out more frequently.

Brushes come in a variety of widths. Standard 12mm, 25mm and 50mm brushes are ideal for painting woodwork, while wide 75mm or 100mm brushes are used for walls and ceilings.

Angled cutting-in brushes are perfect for edges, trims and window frames, as the angled tip helps you get close to the edge without getting paint on it.



Get a perfect paint finish with the right tools for the job.

ROLLERS

Easy to use, rollers spread acrylic paint quickly over large areas. For painting with a roller, a metal or plastic roller tray is also needed. Roller covers come in a variety of fabrics.

- ◆ **FOAM** This applies a seamless finish for cutting close to trim.
- ◆ **MICROFIBRE** With minimal lint shedding, this type suits most surfaces.
- ◆ **LAMBSWOOL** Tough and durable, lambswool has minimal spattering.
- ◆ **SYNTHETIC** This holds a lot of paint on the roller, saving application time.
- ◆ **MOHAIR** Easy to clean, mohair holds paint well thanks to its extra-fine fibre.

A roller's nap refers to its pile length. Use a short 6mm nap for ceilings,

smooth surfaces and high-gloss paints, a medium 12mm nap for walls and flat, low-sheen or semi-gloss paints on uneven surfaces, and a 20mm nap for rough surfaces.

Some new roller covers have a layer of fuzz that can transfer to your walls the first time you load them with paint. To avoid this, wrap masking or painter's tape around the cover, then remove, taking the fuzz with it.

Most rollers have a hollow handle that will screw into a telescopic extension pole so you can reach to the tops of walls or ceilings. Some poles stretch as far as 3.8m, which is very handy when reaching lofty ceilings. ►

HOW MUCH PAINT DO YOU NEED?

Porosity, texture and the base colour of the surface will affect the amount of paint required.

Highly porous and rough surfaces absorb a large amount of paint, especially when priming.

Applying two or three undercoats may be necessary to cover a strong base colour.

Allow for at least two top coats for the best protection against the weather on external surfaces.





SHOULD'VE DONE THE PREP WORK

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PERFECT WALL PAINT

Apply paint to one wall at a time to prevent streaks and get the best result.

- ◆ **USE** a brush to paint cornices, and around the edges and into the corners of the wall. Pour paint into the roller tray, insert the roller, then push it back and forth on the shallow ridged part.
- ◆ **START** painting with your roller near the top of the wall. Roll upwards, drawing a large M about one square metre in area, then randomly roll strips of paint across it evenly, finishing in

one direction. Start the next area a metre down, lapping into the wet edge of the previous one.

- ◆ **ROLL** near the floor without reloading the roller, smoothing the paint across the wall with long, horizontal strokes as close as possible to taped edges.
- ◆ **APPLY** horizontal strokes around skirting, frames and trim, using a brush. Put masking tape on the floor along the trim to cut a line across the base of the skirting.



GET A CLEAN EDGE

It's best to remove tape when the paint is a little wet. But if it has stayed on too long, cut the seal between the wall and the tape with a sharp knife, before pulling away the tape at a 45° angle.



You can cover about two average-sized walls an hour with a paint roller.

Coverage per litre

COATING	COVERAGE
Primer	8-12sqm
Undercoat	10-12sqm
Gloss	14sqm
Acrylic	10-12sqm
Masonry paint	5-10sqm



SPRAY-PAINT FOR SPEED

For a smooth finish that's 10 times faster than using a paintbrush, spray-painting is a highly time-efficient way of painting walls, ceilings, furniture and other projects.

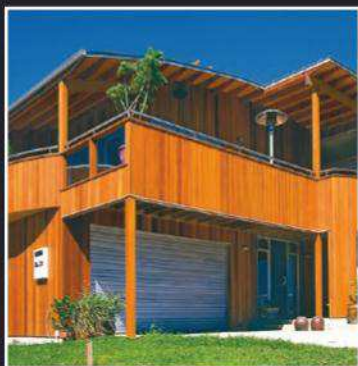
Designed for both indoor and outdoor use, the Wagner Flexio 590 Paint Sprayer, \$296 (bunnings.co.nz), features a powerful turbine spray and newly designed nozzle, which allows for fast application, full coverage and easy cleaning. ♦



PICTURES (TOP RIGHT) ISTOCK (BOTTOM LEFT) ALAMY

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PAINT POWER

Celebrity renovator Cherie Barber shows it's hard to beat plain old paint when it comes to cosmetic transformations

WORDS AND PICTURES **CHERIE BARBER**

It's cheap, you can easily do it DIY and it's undoubtedly one of the most powerful tools in the renovation kit. I'm talking about paint. In my 25+ years of renovating, I've yet to come across a more effective way to achieve utter transformations on minuscule budgets.

Even if you don't have the finances or time for a full renovation, there are many miracle paint products on the market that deliver overnight transformations.

Tile paint, laminate paint, specialty enamel paint for bathtubs, spray paints to turn white appliances into stainless steel gems. Then, of course, there's just plain old paint in all its colourful guises.



Cherie Barber is the reno expert and owner of Renovating For Profit (renovatingforprofit.com.au).



BATHROOM REVAMP

When I'm doing a low-cost cosmetic bathroom renovation, I rely heavily on paint. In fact, there's even a product to paint floor tiles in high-traffic spaces such as bathrooms – Rust-Oleum Tile Transformations.

And if you've got a pink bath, no worries, you can break out the White Knight Tub & Basin Paint and neutralise that golden oldie with pristine white.

But for this bathroom, I wanted to experiment with something a little

different. So instead of painting all the wall tiles in plain white, I tinted some in White Knight Caribbean Green.

It would have been too much on all the walls, but it created a vibrant hit of colour on just the far wall and the bath tiles. That mirrored cabinet helps light bounce around the room.

Then instead of removing the old floor tiles, which is very expensive once you factor in waterproofing, I simply opted for a floating timber floor. ►

After

Combining a splash of colour with white for the tiles works wonders.



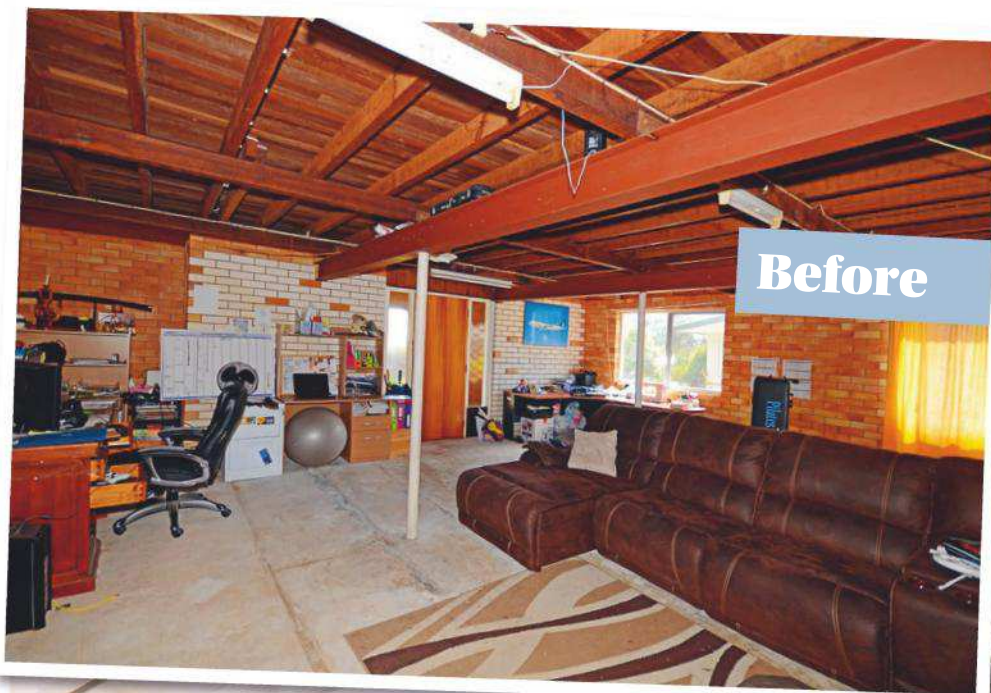
RUMPUS ROOM RENO

This was part of a very ambitious renovation of a house, inside and out, that was done on a total budget of just under A\$20,000. This had to allow for asbestos removal and a new bathroom, which didn't leave much in the kitty for an extravagant reno. So my magic weapon was paint.

The owners had originally planned to convert this basement area into two additional bedrooms, but were thwarted in their master plan when it turned out the subfloor area was below the legal height requirements.

So it had been relegated to a pretty uninviting junk area. By clearing out the clutter and spray-painting the ugly brick walls and ceiling rafters white, and giving the bare concrete floor a coat of charcoal-grey paving paint, it suddenly became an oasis of calm, with direct access to the outdoors.

What kid, big or small, wouldn't love hanging out in this den?



Before



After

With white walls and ceiling, this basement is instantly brightened.

COASTAL COTTAGE CHARM

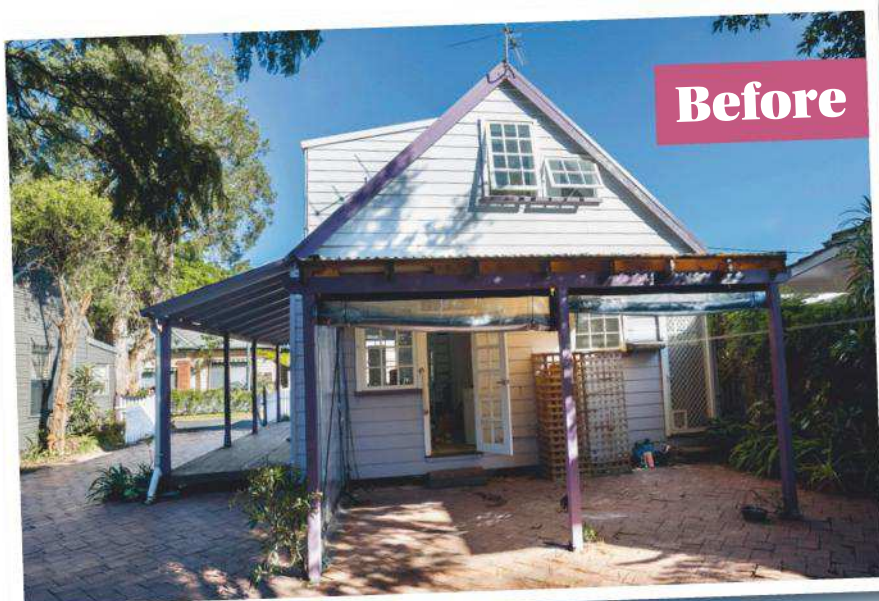
This gorgeous Cape Cod-style home had all the elements in place, let down by a purple and lilac colour scheme.

Using contrasting hues of deep grey on the exterior and white on the trims to highlight the cottage's decorative elements, a striking look was created.

With the addition of simple timber fretwork under the balcony, landscaping and some planter boxes with colourful plants under the windows, I was able to restore the original character of this charming home, typical of the coastal suburb in which it is located. ►



After



Before



After

Classic coastal charm is created with the contrast of deep grey and bright white.

After

Painting the facade of this house boosts street appeal.



FACADE FACELIFT

We all know the importance of first impressions. Just think of the last date you went on, any job interview you've sat through, or even just the person checking you in for a flight or at the hotel reception desk.

Your gut probably instantly told you whether you liked or disliked that person – or maybe it was just completely neutral. Not surprisingly, the same goes for the facade of your property. We're talking about street appeal here, and you've either got it or you haven't.

This was one of those forgettable exteriors that wasn't bad enough to repel, it was just plain boring.

The warmth of natural timber for a new entry and garden beds certainly smartened things up, but the rest was pure paint – the roof, gutters, trims and fences in charcoal grey, the exterior in a lighter grey, and brilliant white to highlight the windows and entry door. ♦

Before



Before





Nick the Naturist pruning his Roses..
sausage anyone!



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That's the Sticky Beak at No.10

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A touch of Scandinavian whimsy creates depth and playfulness in a child's space.

WOW FOR WALLS

Elevate any space with the bold designs and clever advances of modern wallpaper

WORDS SITA SIMONS

SET THE SCENE

For a room with wow factor, wallpaper could be the very thing you need.

With ever more New Zealand and Australian suppliers stocking a wide range of European and American designs, and a growing collection of local makers, the market is wide open for anyone who wants to add texture, colour and style with wallpaper.

And, they have never been so easy to apply. With most new papers, you apply paste to the wall and not to the paper. And removal is also much easier, with a simple catch of a corner and peel-away function, meaning you can change it to a new design when the mood strikes.

Averaging about \$120 per 10m roll, wallpaper can be cost-effective, too, particularly if your choice is a statement wall or small space.



Graphic prints work especially well when kept within a colour theme for the room. BELOW Simple black polka dots are a good, versatile choice for any age or gender.

SLEEPING BEAUTIES

A child's room can be the ideal space for wallpaper. Set the tone by going with whimsical prints to spark imagination, graphic prints to make a statement or classic polka dots for a characterful teen bedroom.

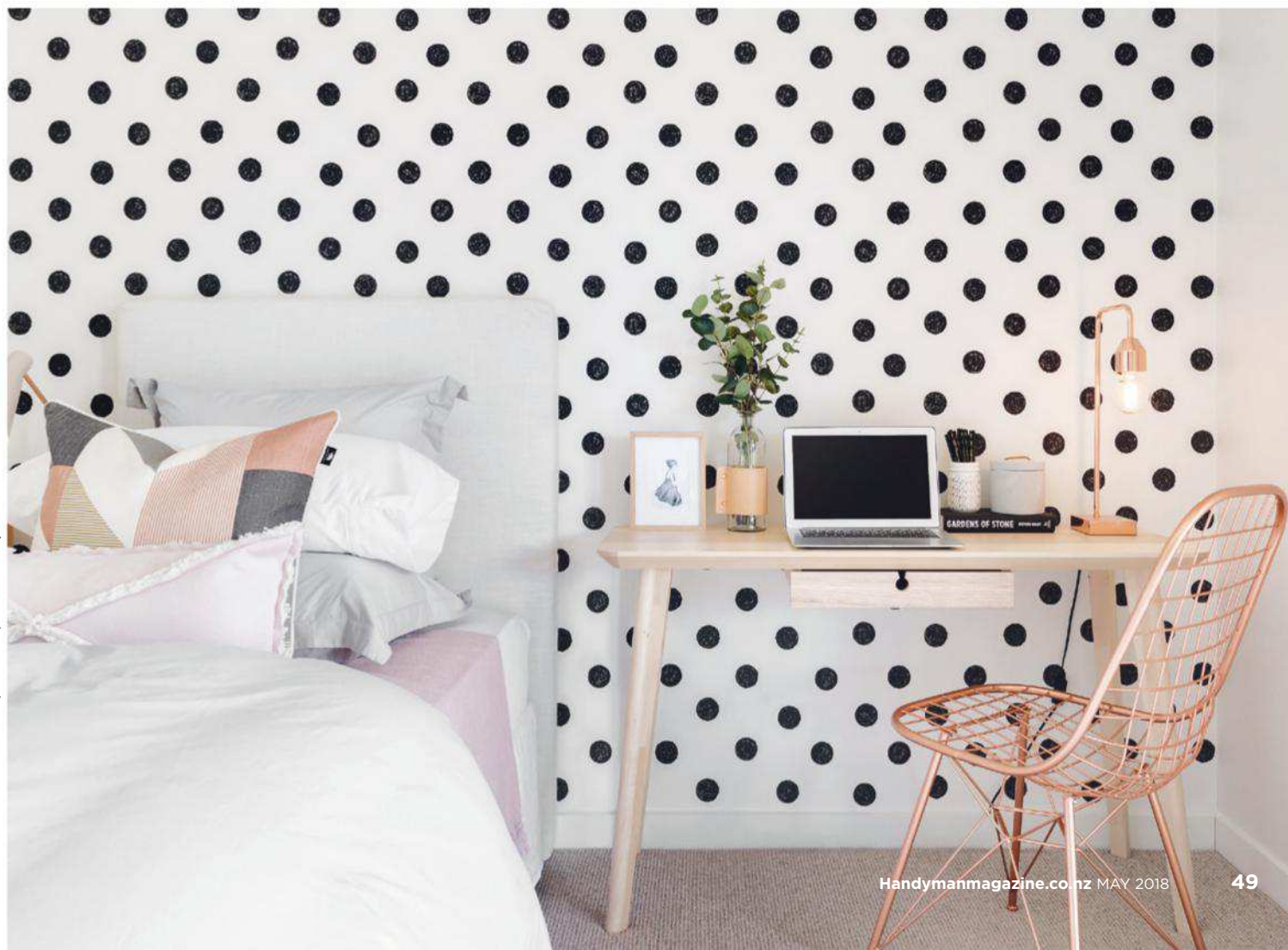
'The bedroom is often the first room people experiment with, because they understand that a successful bedroom is one that feels good and a place in which you want to spend time,' says Sherryl Douglas, director at Gaudion Furniture (gaudions.com.au).

'Wallpaper is an expression of personal taste, and colours, prints and textures on the wall can elevate a neutral space into a private haven that is uniquely yours.

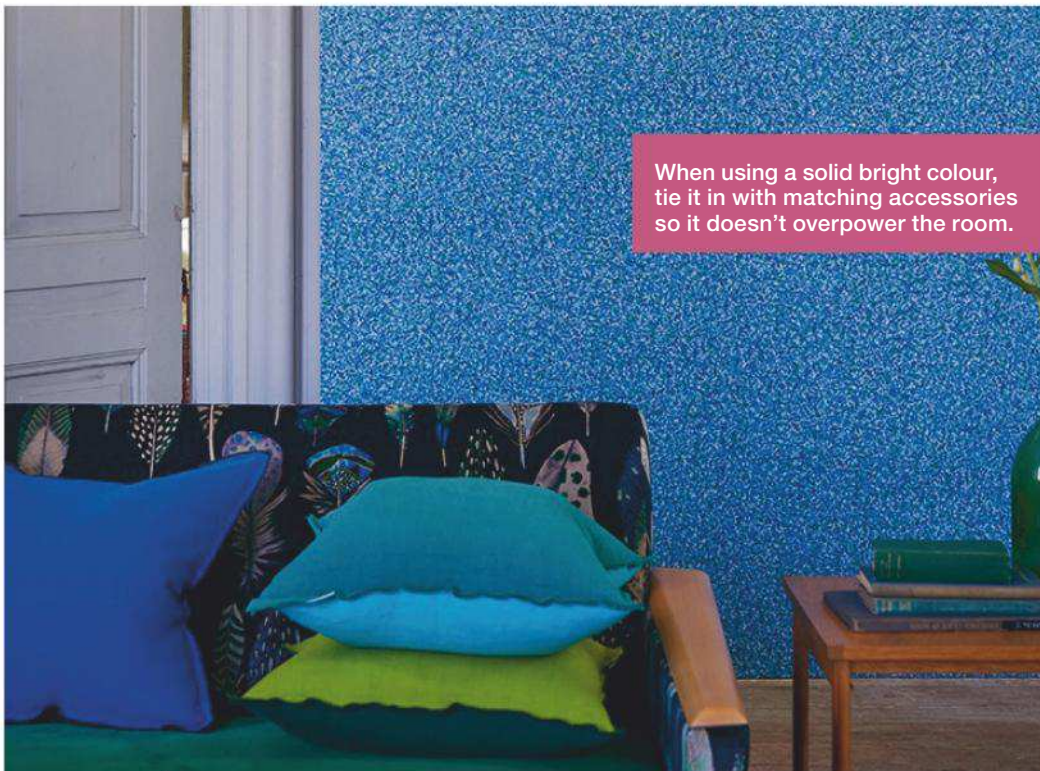
'Even papering just one wall behind a bed can anchor the room and make the rest of the decorating and furniture choices easy,' she says. ►



A bright and colourful repeated print makes a standout feature in a stimulating child's room.



PICTURE (BOTTOM) DYLAN LARK, ASPECT 11 PICTURE (TOP LEFT) DEREK SWALWELL DESIGNER CAMILLA MOLDERS DESIGN PICTURE (TOP RIGHT) HELEN WARD/INWARD OUTWARD PHOTOGRAPHY DESIGNER ALIX HELPS INTERIORS



When using a solid bright colour, tie it in with matching accessories so it doesn't overpower the room.

LIVE IN COLOUR

While many people may be regarded as neutral lovers, some of us are moving beyond beiges and embracing colour to a greater extent.

In part due to the popularity of renovating television shows, magazines and social media, the willingness to experiment is being recognised by paint and wallpaper distributors alike.

'Trends from Paris and the USA are moving in the direction of vibrant colour for all rooms, with dramatic jewel tones and even rainbow brights,' says Sherryl.

'It's true to say that there's a wallpaper for everyone, no matter what your taste, but embracing colour is definitely one track to go down with wallpaper.'

'And, if you don't want to go full-on colour, you can introduce texture to the walls in more subdued palettes.'

'Seagrasses have been very popular, as have fabric-feel papers that have light-changing tones, or are shot through with metallic threads. It's a subtle approach that makes the walls of the room play a greater role in the overall decorating theme.'



A bold and busy wallpaper can be used like art and framed in a large section.



Pick a colour theme and then work it back with purposeful declarations and subtle nods, such as this pink stripe and the pink of the flamingoes.



PRODUCT AND IMAGE COURTESY OF GAUDIONS.COM.AU



PICTURE (TOP RIGHT) CLAIRE GRADWELL DESIGNER CLAIRE GRADWELL DESIGN
PRODUCT IMAGE (BOTTOM RIGHT) COURTESY OF GAUDIONS.COM.AU

TO BOLDLY GO

Stripes, prints and patterns will be very popular over the next few years, says Sherryl. Developments in printing technologies mean that wallpaper is more varied and detailed, as well as more photo-realistic than ever.

Modern wallpapers can look so much like stone, tiles or timber that they have to be touched to find out if they're real.

'My advice would always be to go for it. If you see a colour or print you

love, don't be scared to try using it somewhere in your home.

'Powder rooms can be great for bold choices and add a charming element of surprise and style to what can otherwise be a purely functional space,' she says.

To make the right choices for your home, speak to a specialist who will help match elements of your personality, personal tastes and even hobbies and interests to select the right wallpaper. ♦



ABOVE In a small space, go for broke with colour and pattern.
BELOW Link accessories with the wallpaper for aesthetic harmony.



GET CRAFTY IN THE KITCHEN

Whip up these three fun but functional household items over a weekend

PROJECTS AND PICTURES SUE FERRIS

Whether Scandi chic, industrial style or a touch of vintage glamour is your go-to look, these quirky items will be a cool and practical addition to your kitchen in next to no time.

There's a novel cheese and snack tray that will impress guests and make a great talking point, and a tablet holder made out of a chopping board for when you're rustling up a batch of cupcakes.



EXPERT SECRETS

Save money and avoid wasting paint by buying sample pots of paint at your local hardware store.



CHEESE TRAY

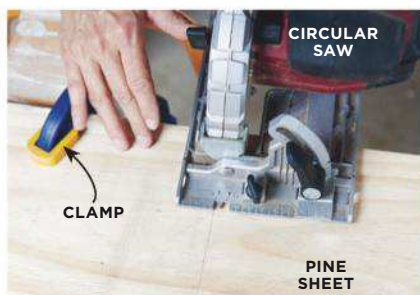
There's something decadent about a cheese board and this easy-to-make server is the perfect way to indulge.

It was stained in a charcoal grey colour and painted in black chalkboard paint so you can add labels, then set with classic black handles.

Add cheese and snacks in serving bowls, as not all chalkboard paint is safe to eat off. Invite friends over and enjoy!

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1200 x 285 x 19mm pine sheet
- Circular saw
- 2 100mm matt-black handles
- Chalkboard paint
- Timber stain
- Clamps
- Paintbrush
- Small paint roller
- Painter's tape
- Rag and gloves



1 Cut the timber

Lay the pine sheet on a work surface and secure using clamps. Measure and mark a 600mm long piece, then cut using a circular saw.

TIP For this project, premium grade dressed pine was used.



2 Stain the timber

Apply one coat of the stain to the timber with a paintbrush, then using a rag and wearing gloves, wipe off the excess. For a darker finish, you can leave the stain on for longer or apply another coat, or coats.



3 Apply the paint

Mask off the edges of the board with painter's tape and lightly sand the timber. Apply black chalkboard paint using a small paint roller. Allow to dry. Centre the two handles at either end of the board and screw into place. ►

TABLET RECIPE HOLDER

Repurposing and recycling everyday household items is fun and great for the environment, too. Here, an old chopping board was painted white and combined with a modern techno gadget to give the best of both worlds.

Getting your tablet off the work bench is a major bonus, and this holder makes it easier to read your recipe.

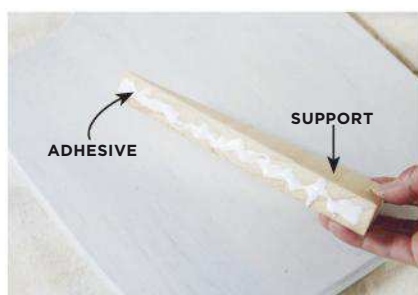
WHAT YOU NEED

- Chopping board, larger than your tablet
- Wooden Scrabble tile holder or picture frame moulding
- Jigsaw
- Clamp
- Timber offcut
- PVA adhesive
- Fine sandpaper, steel wool
- White paint, paintbrush
- Nails



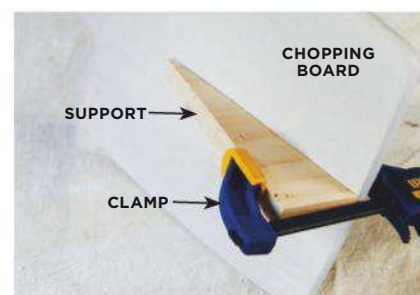
1 Prepare the board

Paint the chopping board on each side in white. Lay on a flat work surface, then lightly sand the edges of the board using fine sandpaper to give an aged look. Then, using steel wool, rub both sides of the board to distress the surface.



2 Make the support

Measure and mark a timber offcut at a 20° angle to create a wedge for a back support, then cut using a jigsaw. Apply adhesive to the cut side of the support, position it on the back of the board flush with the base, then press down.



3 Secure the support

Clamp the support to hold it in position, then allow the adhesive to dry. Attach the tile holder to the front of the board at the base using adhesive and two nails through the back of the board. Paint the support and holder to match the board. ♦

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BEDSIDE CHARM

Add a touch of comfort and elegance with these bespoke bedroom beauties

PROJECTS AND PICTURES MELISSA DARR

The bedroom is the space where we open and close the day. So, whatever lies ahead, it's a great idea to begin the day in a beautiful way surrounded by your favourite pieces.

Crafty blogger Melissa Darr decided to turn her attention to achieving bedroom style with a bespoke hanging light and an upcycled bedside cabinet for a retro-made-modern look.

'A modern and tasteful light fixture will certainly add charm and character

to any room. I searched high and low for a special light fixture without any luck so I decided to design and create my own,' she says.

Melissa took a simple angle bracket and attached saddle clips to thread through the light cord. She chose a decorative vintage globe and copper shade to add warmth.

These simple projects will transform any space into an inviting, chic nook on a cost-friendly budget.



Melissa

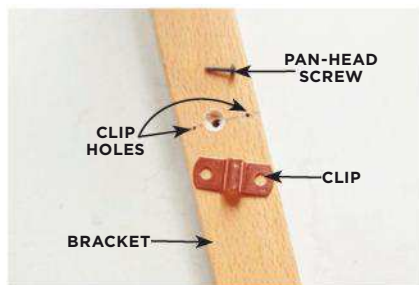
EXPERT SECRETS

Always remember to measure twice to decrease the chance of errors and to get a precise fit.

WHAT YOU NEED

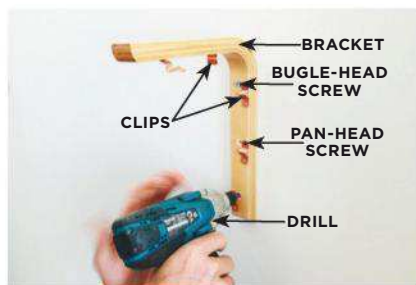
- 175 x 200 x 19 x 15mm varnished plywood angle bracket
- Plug-in pendant light
- Vintage filament bulb
- 6mm copper saddle pipe clips
- 4g x 9mm pan-head screws
- 14g x 75mm bugle-head screws
- Drill and drill bits
- Pencil

Hang light features on either side of the bed for symmetrical elegance



1 Drill pilot holes

In the long section of the bracket, drill three centred, evenly spaced pilot holes for the bugle-head screws to attach to the wall. Mark two holes each side of these holes, and along the top of the bracket, for the clips, then drill pilot holes. Secure clips on one side with pan-head screws.



2 Mount the bracket

Locate the wall studs. Mark the position of the bracket and pilot holes on the wall, then predrill holes. If securing the bracket into plasterboard, not a wall stud, plasterboard anchors are needed to hold the weight. Line up holes and secure with bugle-head screws.



3 Attach the light fitting

Thread the electrical cord through the top clip and finish securing with a second pan-head screw. Repeat the process down the entire length of the bracket, making sure the cord is taut as you go. Insert the light bulb and plug into the socket to test. ►

HANGING LIGHT FEATURE



Get more DIY from Melissa
Follow her blog thewhimsicalwife.com

CABINET REFRESH

After

Cladding, hairpin legs and brass knobs give this cabinet a much-needed facelift.





Melissa wanted to restore style and sophistication to this dated cabinet. The plan was to give it new cladding and metal feet for a contemporary look.

She used Cabot's Interior Stain for the drawer fronts, which contrasted well with the cladding in Dulux Vivid White, adding metallic accents with the hairpin legs in gold spray paint.

For the cladding, Melissa used 6mm MDF board cut to a size to suit her cabinet, but this can easily be adapted to suit your own project.

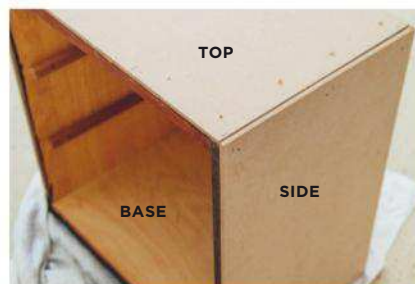
WHAT YOU NEED

- 6mm MDF board
- PVA adhesive
- Circular saw, drill, clamps
- Orbital sander and 120 grit sanding discs
- 120 and 240 grit sandpaper
- Hairpin legs, brass knobs
- Paint scraper
- Timber putty
- White acrylic paint
- Timber stain
- Foam roller
- Clear acrylic spray paint
- Gold spray paint
- 25 x 1.25mm bullet-head nails
- 10g x 35mm galvanised wafer-head screws



1 Prepare the timber pieces

Lay the MDF board on a flat work surface and secure with clamps. Measure and mark the top and the base (for this cabinet, 470 x 295mm), and for each side (460 x 295mm). Use a circular saw to cut the pieces. Cut the base off the cabinet using a circular saw.



2 Attach the cladding

Drill pilot holes in the MDF pieces to prevent them splitting. Apply adhesive to one MDF side piece and to one cabinet side. Press the side piece into position, then secure with nails. Repeat the process for the other MDF side, and the top and base pieces.



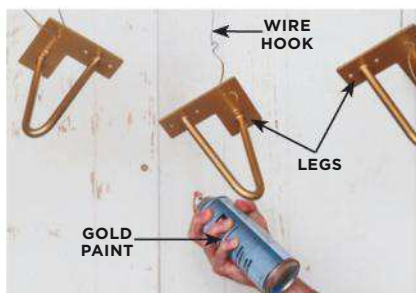
3 Prepare for painting

Apply timber putty over the nail heads using a paint scraper. Allow to dry, then sand with an orbital sander. Apply three coats of white paint to the cladding and top and base of the cabinet frame. Let dry between each coat. Apply two coats of the clear spray to protect it.



4 Re-stain the drawer fronts

Sand the drawer fronts to bare wood with an orbital sander. Sand the handle recesses with 120 grit sandpaper. Apply stain, let dry for 10 minutes, then remove the excess with a damp cloth. Let dry. Sand with 240 grit sandpaper. Apply a second coat if needed. Apply clear spray.



5 Spray the legs

To make sure you get good all-over coverage, hang the legs from wire hooks. Apply a coat of gold spray paint to the hairpin legs, then let dry. Apply a second coat for an even finish. Once dry, turn the cabinet upside down and secure legs in position with screws.



6 Add the knobs

Measure and mark the position of the knobs. Drill a pilot hole in each drawer front and secure the knobs using the supplied screws. Rub an old candle on the side edges of the drawers and the runners to help the drawers open and close more easily. Insert the drawers. ❖

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BUILD A CONCRETE VANITY

Recycle simple farm materials to create a rustic washstand

PROJECT AND PICTURES **STUART SCOTT**

In a previous issue of *Handyman*, contributor Stuart Scott showed how he breathed new life into a 1920s dairy with the aim of preserving the rustic quality of the building while creating a modern functional space.

Part of those renovations involved installing a new bathroom that included a washstand made from recycled farm materials.

An exposed aggregate counter was built to go on top and support an old copper wash basin. Here, we show you how he made it. ►



EXPERT SECRETS

When buying aggregate, wash a handful in water to get an idea of how it will look when polished.

This unique washstand adds character to the historic property.



Recycled materials combine with an easy DIY job to create this vanity.



When polished, the off-white quartz reveals a variety of colours

To make the 750 x 450 x 50mm countertop, a mould was built using a melamine sheet and the junctions were sealed with silicone to prevent leakage and create a pencil-round profile to the edges of the finished top.

Stuart then made a concrete mixture comprising 3 parts 10mm off-white quartz aggregate, 1.5 parts white brickie's sand and 1 part off-white cement. After setting the mixture in the mould, it was cut and polished to create the rustic-looking surface.

Once polished, the off-white quartz reveals a variety of colours from blues and pinks to clears, whites and some earthy tones.

You'll need an orbital sander and a range of specialised polishing pads of varying coarseness to suit.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 2 10kg bags 10mm off-white quartz aggregate
- 20kg bag white brickie's sand
- 20kg bag off-white cement
- 1L concrete and paving sealer
- Reinforcing mesh
- 1800 x 595 x 16mm melamine sheet
- 300g grey silicone sealer
- 10g x 50mm stainless steel decking screws
- Orbital sander
- Polishing pads of various coarseness from 50-3000 grit
- Saw
- Masking tape
- Metal scraper
- Rubber mallet
- Paintbrush

POLISHING PADS

The pads used are available from South Pacific Diamond Tools (diamond-tools.co.nz) in Velcro-backed discs with grits from 50 through to 3000.

Get a few extra of the coarse-grit discs to get through the initial cutting before you

start working up through the finer grits, until your desired level of polish is achieved. The cutting can be done wet or dry, but to cut wet, an air-powered sander is needed.

Or you could consider buying a dedicated wet/dry polisher.

DIY TIP

When fitting the edges, drill a 3mm pilot hole, then a 10mm recess hole to 10mm deep. Tape recessed holes so they don't fill up with concrete.

MAKE THE COUNTERTOP



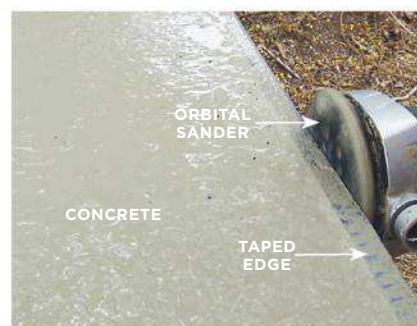
1 Make the mould

Cut the melamine to the size of your top, plus 32mm. Cut 50mm-wide strips of melamine for the sides. Assemble the mould with recessed 50mm decking screws. Tape the edges to protect them. Mark the drain position and secure a 75mm baffle for this with a screw. Seal junctions with silicone, then smooth.



2 Pour the concrete

Mix enough concrete to pour the top in one batch using a ratio of 3 parts aggregate, 1.5 parts sand, and 1 part cement. Fill the mould about halfway. Cut the mesh to fit, leaving a 50mm gap around the drain. Position the mesh in the mould and level using a trowel. Finish pouring the concrete.



3 Work the mixture

Be careful not to make the concrete mix too wet or too dry. You should be able to work the mix into the mould without difficulty. Work the mix in well with a trowel, then vibrate the entire mould with an orbital sander to release any air bubbles. Allow the concrete mix to cure for 48 hours.



4 Release the mould

Remove the tape and screws. Gently release the edges of the mould, using a metal scraper and rubber mallet if needed. With help, carefully turn the mould over and remove the melamine base. Allow to dry for a further 24 hours before removing the baffle for the drain.



5 Polish the surface

Begin polishing with an orbital sander or polisher. Start working with the coarser grits to expose the desired amount of aggregate. Continue with the finer grits until the desired level of gloss has been achieved. Take care along the edges and corners.



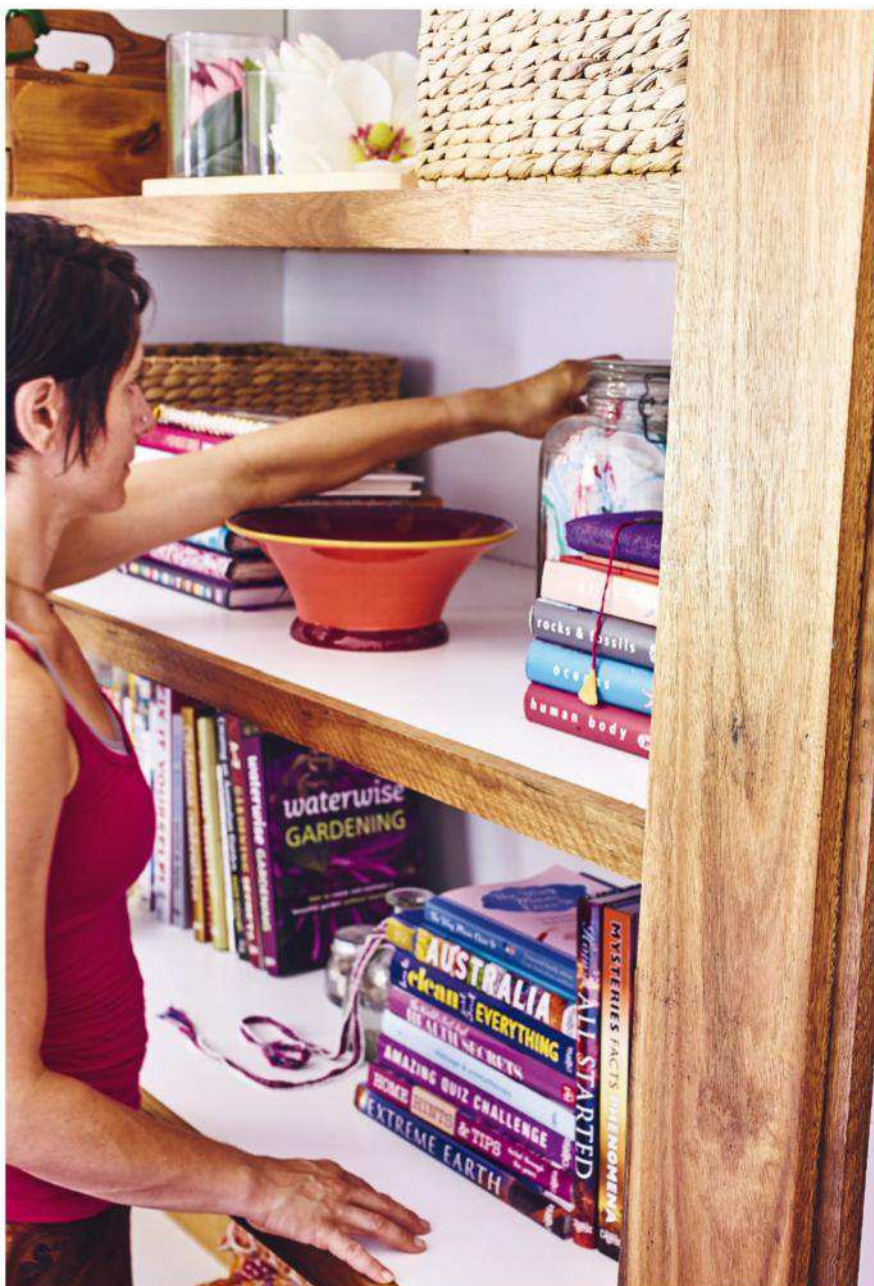
6 Apply the sealer

If any air bubbles are still present, fill them with a grout mixture before or during polishing. Once you're satisfied with the surface, rinse it well with clean water, allow it to dry thoroughly, then apply two coats of sealer to the front, back and sides. ♦

BUILT TO ORDER

Free up floor space and create a seamless modern look with an open-plan built-in wardrobe

PROJECT JESS COX PICTURES STUART SCOTT



The guest bedroom of this house had become a repository for stray odds and ends that didn't have anywhere else to go. While there was space in the room dedicated for a built-in wardrobe, it was missing flooring and had some exposed studwork.

The solution was to create a large, open-plan wardrobe and shelving unit extending the width of the wall. Two rows of racks provide ample hanging space for clothes while upcycled drawers house fabrics and craft essentials.

The shelving uses concealed battens, which makes it strong enough to hold books, along with baskets for folded clothes or other knick-knacks.

The entire unit is trimmed with hardwood, rip-cut to fit from decking boards. The project took about four days, from studwork and framing to lining the unit and fitting the shelves and trim. The trim was sealed with two coats of hemp oil. ►

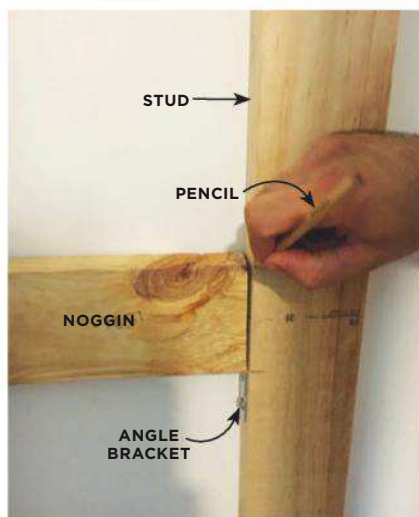
WHAT YOU NEED

- Circular saw
- Drill and bits
- Cordless screwdriver
- Tape measure
- Pencil
- Builder's square
- Spirit level
- Hammer
- Ratcheting spanner
- Sash clamps
- PVA adhesive



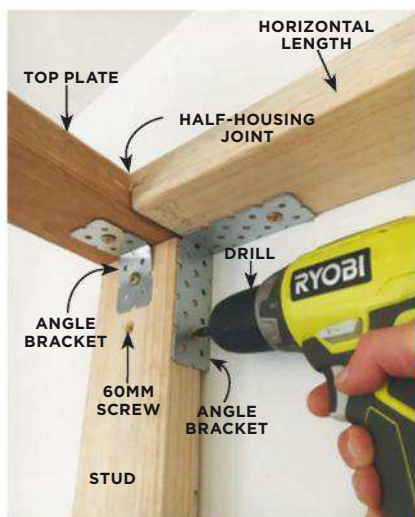
Before work began on the wardrobe unit, the subfloor space was packed with flooring.

BUILD THE WARDROBE



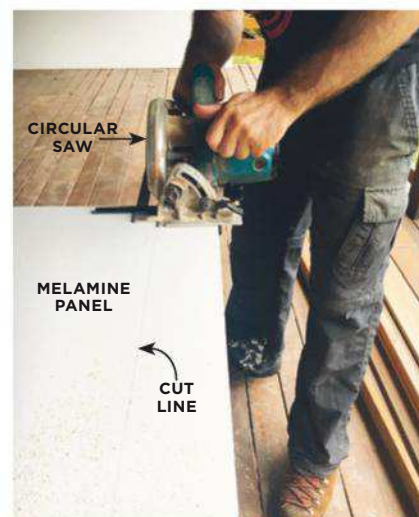
1 Assemble the framing

Locate the studs on the back and side walls. Using 90 x 45mm pine, cut the unit studwork to length with a circular saw. Secure with 60mm screws. Mark position of shelves, then attach noggins between the studs for the shelves, using angle brackets and 25mm screws.



2 Make the partition

Make a central partition by securing four horizontal lengths to the vertical studs at front and back of the unit. Use half-housing joints where these meet the top plate of the partition. Make the joints by making parallel cuts with the saw and chiselling out the waste.



3 Cut the melamine

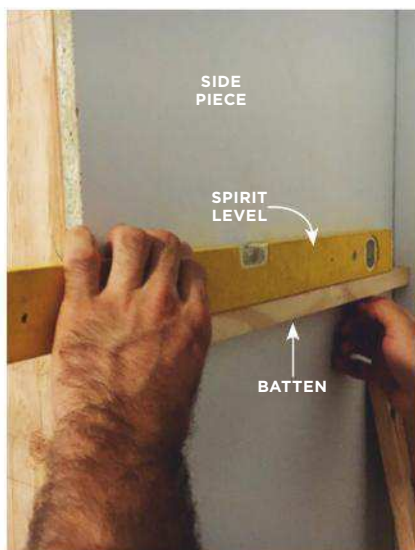
Measure the internal dimensions of the unit. Mark measurements for the backs on 2400 x 1200 x 16mm melamine, and the tops, bases and sides on 2400 x 600 x 16mm melamine. Cut with the saw. Build the lining as a box inside the space, starting with the base piece.



4 Attach the lining

Fit the back pieces to the studwork with 60mm screws, shimming if necessary to keep plumb. Attach the sides, checking they're square. Fit the top piece and secure with 60mm screws.

TIP As noggins will be hidden, mark their position on the front studs.



5 Secure the shelves

For the battens, rip-cut 45 x 20mm pine in half, then cut to length. Attach battens to sides and back with 60mm screws. Check level. A shelf on the right divides the wardrobe and five shelves on the left are 400mm apart. Attach shelves to battens with 30mm screws.



6 Attach the trim

Use saw to rip-cut 90 x 19mm hardwood decking to make 40mm-wide trim. Attach with nails to the front shelf edges and internal sides to disguise battens. For the top, external sides and central partition, cut 140 x 19mm hardwood to fit. Secure with nails on small trim. ►

CUTTING LIST

PART	SIZE (mm)	No
Structural pine framing timbers		
Studs	2400 x 90 x 45	8
Noggins	2400 x 90 x 45	6
Top framing	2400 x 90 x 45	4
White melamine panels		
Backs of unit	2400 x 1200 x 16	3
Sides and top of unit	2400 x 600 x 16	5
LHS shelves, top and bottom	1800 x 600 x 16	7
RHS shelf, top and bottom	1200 x 600 x 16	3
DAR pine		
Battens	1200 x 45 x 20	8
Hardwood decking		
At least 2400mm long, 90 x 19mm to trim shelves		7
At least 2400mm long, 140 x 19mm to trim framing		5

FASTENERS

TYPE	USE
8g x 25mm button-head screws	Framing
Angle brackets 50 x 50 x 40mm 50 x 50 x 20mm	Framing
10g x 60mm timber screws	Studwork, lining to framing, battens to framing
10g x 30mm timber screws	Shelves to battens
30 x 1.6mm bullet-head nails	Trim, drawer runners



Hardwood timber is valued for density, sustainability and character



Open-plan shelving allows easy access to stored items.

MAKE THE BUILT-IN SHELVES

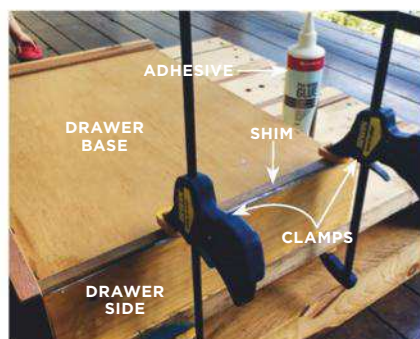
Built-in shelves were created to house drawers recycled from an old chest.

This was an easy DIY job, but some of the drawer fronts sat at different heights.

On two of the drawers, the runners on either side needed shimming to make all the drawers appear level.

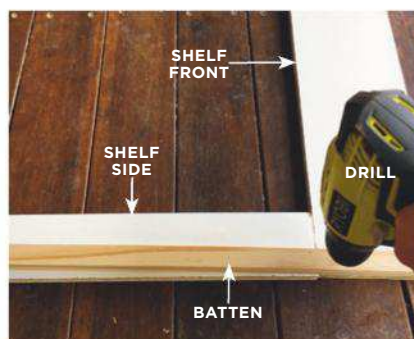


These recycled chest drawers glide on runners instead of slides.



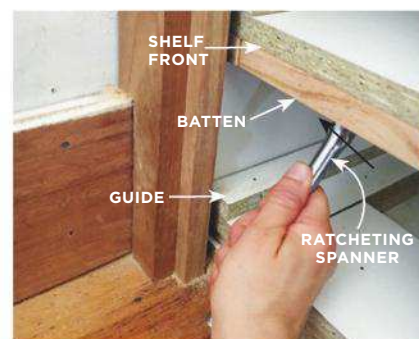
1 Mark drawer positions

Measure and mark the position of the drawers in the unit. Fit a central divider in the bottom shelf with 30mm nails. To level drawer fronts where needed, apply adhesive to attach shims to the runners on either side. Clamp shims to the runners and allow to dry.



2 Build shelf supports

As these drawers are too narrow to attach slides, make shelves for drawers to glide on, comprising a front and two sides, from leftover melamine and pine battens. Attach with 30mm timber screws. Attach guides on top of each side of the shelves with 30mm screws.



3 Secure the shelves

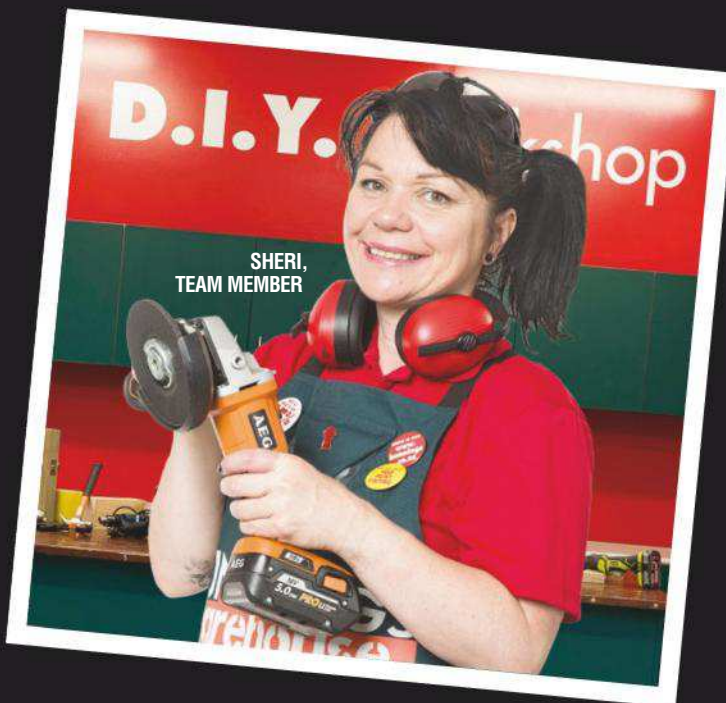
Attach shelves to the internal sides and central divider of the built-in unit using 60mm screws and a ratcheting spanner. Check level. Trim the shelf fronts and the central divider with hardwood rip-cut to width to hide the shelves and battens. Attach with nails. ♦

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RECYCLED RUSTIC TRIM

Use your excess tongue-and-groove flooring to make precision skirting boards and architraves

PROJECTS JESS COX PICTURES STUART SCOTT

You know the problem – you ordered more mixed floorboards than you needed and now you have to deal with the leftovers.

For this project, a quick rip-cut of the boards to remove the tongues and grooves provided enough high skirting boards and trim for the windows. This avoided having to pay full market price.

The owners of this house chose mixed red and blond hardwood boards in two sizes, 80 x 19mm and 130 x 19mm, for the new floors in two rooms.

The leftover wider 130 x 19mm boards became the skirting and the narrower 80 x 19mm boards were used on the window and door architraves.

All you need for this job are enough boards of the same width. It's a good idea to keep this in mind when ordering your flooring initially to save extra delivery costs. ►



Before

The rooms had custom-built timber sliding doors and windows. New floors were laid, using feature-grade timbers in reds and yellows.

Fit around frames

Before installing skirting boards, fit the architraves around the doorframes, as your skirting will finish at the edge of a door's architrave, not the doorframe.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Circular saw
- Drill and 1.5mm bit
- Hammer
- Sliding bevel
- Measuring tape
- Mitresaw
- Timber filler
- Tung or hemp oil
- 30 x 1.6mm bright steel bullet-head nails
- Pencil

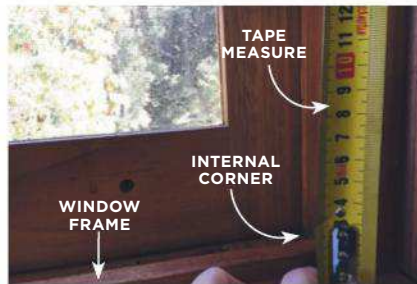
After

The trim on the windows, doors and skirting sets off the striking colours of the flooring.



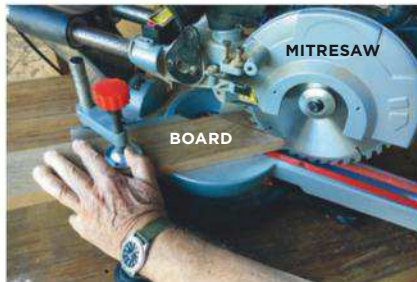
MAKE THE ARCHITRAVES

It's a good idea to measure all your flooring offcuts before measuring the dimensions of the windows and doors. You can then determine which board can be used in each position.



1 Determine the dimensions

Measure the dimensions of all frames. Use a sliding bevel to mark a diagonal line across each corner. If the doors and windows were installed flush with internal walls, add a setback line 20mm from the internal corner. The position of the internal corner of the architrave is where the diagonal and setback cross.

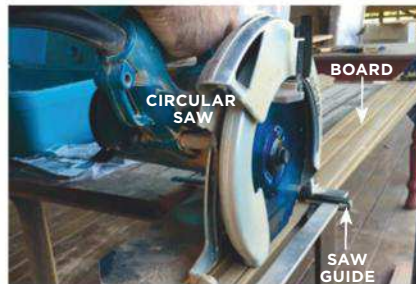


4 Cut the mitre

Cut a 45° angle on one board end using a mitresaw. With the board overlapping the edge of the frame, hold the mitred end against the diagonal line, either using the setback line or the half-groove as a guide. Make a mark at the other end where the timber crosses the diagonal line.

Hardwood decking is also a great choice for making architraves.

There are several varieties of recycled and imported flooring timbers to choose from, not all hardwoods.



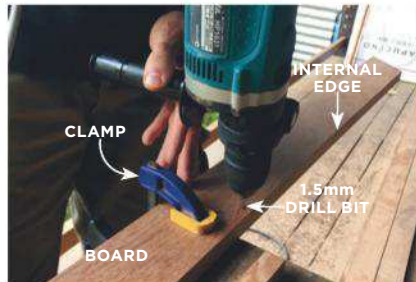
2 Rip-cut the boards

For windows and doors set flush with walls, invert a board between two sawhorses. Measure the tongue's width and set the circular saw guide to this width. Rip-cut the board to remove the tongue. On the other side, measure the distance to the groove, reset guide and cut the board. Repeat for other boards.



3 Remove the grooves

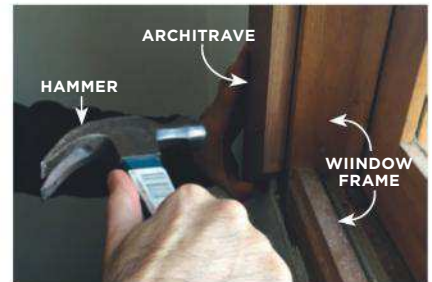
If the frames sit proud of the wall, remove just the underside groove. Part of the board will then overlap the frame while still sitting flush to the wall. To do this, set the circular saw cutting depth to 10mm (enough to cut off the underside of the groove), and set the guide to 5mm to cut flush with inner edge of the groove.



5 Secure the architrave

Clamp the board, then use the mark to cut the second mitre. Drill pilot holes along the internal edge of the architrave using a 1.5mm drill bit. Reposition each piece on the same side of the frame and secure with bullet-head nails.

TIP If using hardwood, have spare drill bits handy, as they can break easily.



6 Repair the gaps

Repeat the process for the remaining pieces of architrave. After securing the architrave with 30mm nails, fill any gaps at the corners with timber filler of a matching colour, then finish the surface with tung or hemp oil.

TIP If you need more than one piece for a side, use board end laps for a neat fit.

MAKE THE SKIRTING

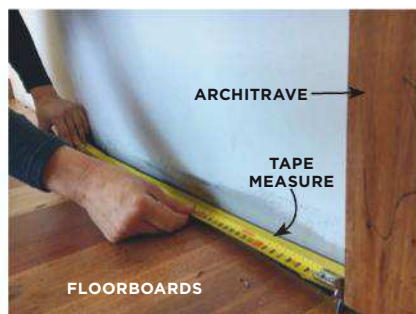


Now that the architraves for the door and window frames are in place, it's time to fit the skirting boards.

If square, modern edges aren't your style, you could consider using a router to profile the top edge.

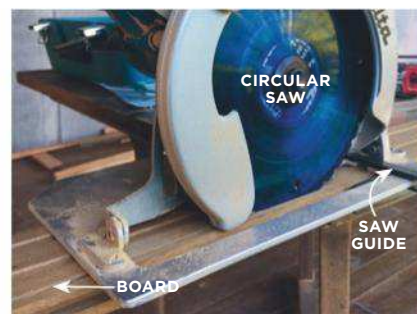


ABOVE Make use of the existing end lap for straight joins.
BELOW Mitre the edges of the boards at the internal corners.



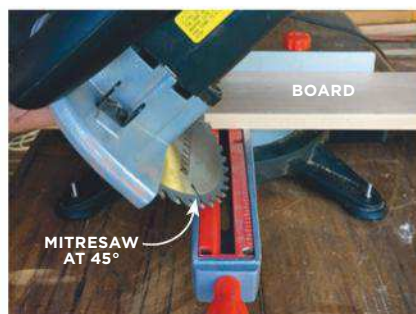
1 Measure the room

Measure up the room dimensions for the trim, with an allowance of 100mm at either end for cuts, and then set aside the boards for each wall. To minimise the number of joins, try to use the whole length of boards, where possible.



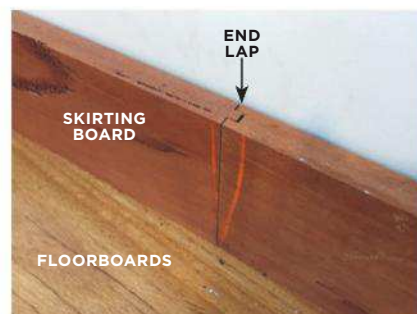
2 Rip the boards

For the skirting, repeat the rip-cutting of boards to remove the tongues and grooves, setting the circular saw guide to about 8mm. Keep the end lap in position until you work out which pieces of flooring will sit against each wall.



3 Cut the corners

Using a mitresaw angled to 45°, cut an internal corner at the end of a board. Position in the corner of the room and mark the cut on the other end. Where the skirting will butt against architraves, make straight cuts, not mitres.



4 Secure the skirting

Where the wall is longer than a single board, use the end lap to make a neat join. When skirting is in place, mark the position of wall studs on skirting, drill pilot holes and secure with bullet-head nails. Finish with tung or hemp oil. ❖

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CHALKBOARD CABINET

Turn an old cabinet into a useful storage unit and message board

A chalkboard cabinet gives you somewhere to store your tools and a spot to write up lists or plans for your next project.

Instead of making one from scratch, you can save time and money by using an old cabinet in need of reinvention.

Here, we show you in simple steps how to restore a cabinet that can be used as a great message board as well as a place to keep your tools.

A chalkboard cabinet can be a useful item in the garage, shed, home or office, depending on your needs.

Watch the video 'DIY upcycled chalkboard cabinet' at bunnings.co.nz/diy-advice

WHAT YOU NEED

- Bucket and cloth
- Sugar soap and sponge
- Random orbital sander
- Chalkboard paint
- Paintbrush and stirrer
- Putty knife
- Timber putty
- Cordless drill and bit
- Cabinet handle
- Screwdriver
- Timber screws
- Wall anchors
- Spirit level and pencil
- Dust mask and earmuffs
- Safety glasses



1 2 3



1 Clean the cabinet

Ensure the cabinet surface is clean before painting. To do this, place the cabinet on a workbench, mix sugar soap in a bucket of water and scrub the cabinet with a sponge, removing all the grease and grime. Wipe the cabinet with a clean cloth and allow it to dry.



2 Remove the hardware

Use a screwdriver to remove any handles or hardware from the exterior of the cabinet. This can include the hinges if you want to restore them to their original state. This will involve sanding them. If not, keep them attached and just paint over them.



3 Fill holes and cracks

Use a putty knife to fill holes or cracks in the cabinet surface with timber putty. Overfill the holes and allow the putty to dry. Wearing safety glasses, earmuffs and a dust mask, sand the putty and surfaces with a random orbital sander until they're smooth and level.



DIY TIP

All chalkboards need priming. After the paint is dry, lay chalk flat and rub it evenly over the surface, twice. Then erase with a dry cloth.

4 5 6



4 Drill handle holes

Use a pencil to mark the position for a new handle. Here it is attached near the base of the door, as the cabinet will be wall-mounted at eye level. Use the cordless drill to make two pilot holes for the handle screws. Use a cloth to wipe away any dust left from sanding.



5 Paint the surface

Mix the chalkboard paint thoroughly with a paint stirrer, then paint the entire cabinet exterior with a paintbrush. Allow to dry, then apply a second coat and a third, if needed. For quick results, chalkboard paint can also be applied with an aerosol can. Allow to dry.



6 Secure the cabinet

Use a screwdriver and timber screws to attach the handle to the cabinet. Mark the the position of the cabinet on the wall, ensuring it is level. Drill pilot holes through the back, and secure the cabinet to the wall with wall anchors and timber screws. ♦

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What's new

Whether you're sprucing up the indoors or doing up the backyard, check out the latest gear to help you get it done.



Get your home ready for winter with the 3M Window Insulator Kit. It reduces condensation and prevents frost build-up. \$34.87

With 1080p full motion streaming & recording, this Samsung SmartCam is a perfect way to keep an eye on tools and property from anywhere in the world on all kinds of devices. \$258.80



Be accurate with this new Digital Level from Empire with auto-calibration, dual screen, and a protective case included. It also has an IP65 dust and water protection rating. \$179



With its aluminium construction, this Rhino Work Platform is durable and handy to have around the worksite. Perfect as a work bench or a platform ladder. \$75



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FROM THE GROUND UP

Use these five simple steps to ensure you lay the foundation for success when building your own home from scratch

WORDS DONYALE HARRISON



For many of us it's a big life goal, but building your own home can be slower, more stressful and more costly than expected. These steps will help you maximise the fun of the experience and minimise the stress.

Think about all the following points as interacting. Knowing what sort of house you want will help you choose your site. Knowing regulations will guide you in whether you need a specific design, and so on.

ABOVE A difficult site can be more economical due to less buyer demand. BELOW Lifestyle and budget play a role in what and where to build.

1. CHOOSE YOUR SITE

Factors such as slope, exposure, soil stability, and earthquake, fire and flood risk, will determine many aspects of your build, including cost, materials, footings and height.

Start with an onsite analysis. You can often get a free consultation from a builder or designer, but for detailed advice on everything from overshadowing to breezeways, it's worth paying for a full report.

They can advise you on site costs (preparing the land for building), from basic clearing to cranes, retaining walls and other large expenses.

Other issues will also be pointed out, including council restrictions, higher building costs for slopes (more for side to side than back to front), or the need for an engineer to advise on earthquake safety. A difficult site can still be more

economical overall, as there will be less competition from other buyers.

Building on the site of a previous house can save on works. Knocking down an old house is usually cheaper than a renovation and these sites are often in superior locations with desirable amenities.

Take into account the local council's rates, services and facilities, plus lifestyle factors including transport and proximity to places you regularly visit.

A smaller house on a more expensive site near shopping and good public transport can give you a better quality of life for the same cost as a bigger build further from your work and friends.

Local councils are also a great source of information about soil types and previous land usage and council by-laws, which can help guide your selection. ►

2. DON'T FEAR REGULATIONS

Although the levels of building regulations can be intimidating, they just require patience to navigate. Spending time and effort here can save you a lot of frustration and money later.

Start with the steps listed on the building.govt.nz website. It lists your rights and obligations, then leads you through the steps of the building process. Although most regulations are covered in the Building Act, there are other legal obligations to meet.

It's your responsibility to apply for building consent and to show that your plans meet or exceed the Building Code. Your builder or designer can help you with this, or even take on the service for you, but it is an area where you can save money and gain a detailed understanding of your project. Your council is a key part of approvals and will help guide you through any questions.

Works will need to hit multiple consent targets throughout the build. Keep in close contact with your local council so you can organise inspections as they're required, and make sure you have all your boxes ticked for your Code Compliance Certification (CCC) at the end of your build.

While building works are covered under warranties, these rely on the building company still being in business for them to be enforced. Hold onto all your paperwork in case it is needed, but it is also worth considering additional security.

Builders Guarantees are offered by building industry bodies and are activated if your builder becomes insolvent. Make sure you receive a copy of the paperwork if your builder takes out a guarantee on your behalf and check that it provides sufficient cover and is backed by a third party that will be able to fulfil the warranty.

If this is your first home, you may be eligible for KiwiSaver grant and savings withdrawal assistance. Check out ways in which Housing New Zealand may be able to help at hnzc.co.nz.



3. CONTROL YOUR BUDGET

Building is filled with hidden costs. Your site will need a basic inspection, which includes zoning, site levels and contours before you start. Engineering works and soil tests where required will cost more, then site costs can add tens of thousands.

You may also need to pay additional council and legal fees, plus extra for warranties and insurance. Talk with your council and builder or designer about the cost of extras before you finalise your design.

Many contracts omit things such as driveways, landscaping and floor treatments. Make sure you either include these items specifically or have a separate budget available.

Most people are excellent at setting an initial budget, but make poor decisions on where to cut back if there is an overspend.

The most expensive thing to fix later is improving the performance of a house. A big new bath is easy to install a few years down the track, but better insulation isn't. Spending more on sustainable features initially can save you enough money to pay for the update later.

Similarly, you're usually better off building to fit your current lifestyle rather than borrowing more upfront for where you think your family will be in a decade. Talk with your designer about planning ways to add extra space if your family's needs grow.



Spending time and effort understanding levels of building regulations now can save you frustration and money later



PICTURES ISTOCK

4. PICK YOUR PLAN

Most homes begin with an architect, a building designer, or as a project or kit home. Each has distinct advantages.

If you have specific needs, a registered architect can deliver a result that best manages either a difficult site or special requests, including carbon-positive buildings or mobility issues.

While architect-designed buildings are often the most expensive, a small budget can get its best results with careful architecture using clever materials. Check the New Zealand Institute of Architects Incorporated website (nzia.co.nz) to find an architect who can meet your needs, plus general tips and inspirations.

A recognised architectural designer (adnz.org.nz) can

create a site-specific building. They often have more hands-on experience and are particularly good at engineering solutions and tricky sites.

Architectural designers often have more practical designs, with more of a focus on meeting local regulations, though building designers can also be innovative and architects can be practical. Check that any architect or designer you choose carries professional indemnity insurance.

Project and kit homes offer the greatest cost security. These standard designs allow for volume purchasing, so represent excellent, low-risk value.

Project homes are sold as a package including building, while kit homes allow you to project-manage the build

or be an owner-builder. They come flat packed or as partly assembled modules.

While your ability to customise is more limited, most companies have a wide range of options and you can physically walk through model homes on hot and cold days to see what works for you.

Be realistic about your building involvement. The most economical option may be earning a salary while employing builders who work more efficiently than you.

But any jobs you can do effectively will save funds and keep you in touch with progress. Even tidying up after builders knock off is valuable: it makes your site safer and helps protect the fabric of your building. ►

Despite customisation limitations, project homes are a good option.





Installing solar panels makes great energy- and cost-saving sense. BELOW A carbon-neutral home design benefits the environment.

5. MAKE IT SUSTAINABLE

While a sustainable home can cost a little more to build, the money is quickly returned in lower running costs and a higher value on sale, so it's a worthwhile investment financially as well as environmentally.

More than just cutting energy bills with extras like photovoltaic systems, sustainable homes are pleasant to live in with passive heating and cooling and ready access to natural light. In the

same way, designing to retain water onsite creates a landscape that attracts wildlife and supports your garden.

Homestar (nzgbc.org.nz/homestar) can help you find building professionals who focus on sustainability and assess your current design for its efficiency rating. A fee calculator helps you estimate the cost of the assessment before you begin so that you can budget appropriately.

COMPILE A BRIEF

Start planning long before you build. Compile a brief with all the things you need, want or love, plus those that you don't.

Bundle whatever inspires you into an album you can share with designers and builders - magazine articles, photos from open houses, videos, material samples, sketches.

If you admire a designer's work, visit as many of their homes as possible and talk to

the owners. You'll come away with ideas, recommendations, and sometimes warnings.

Take note of what does and doesn't work in your current house. Love your sunroom? Give the new house one, too.

Always tracking dirt in from the garden? A mudroom or a sheltered patio where you can change boots will solve that.

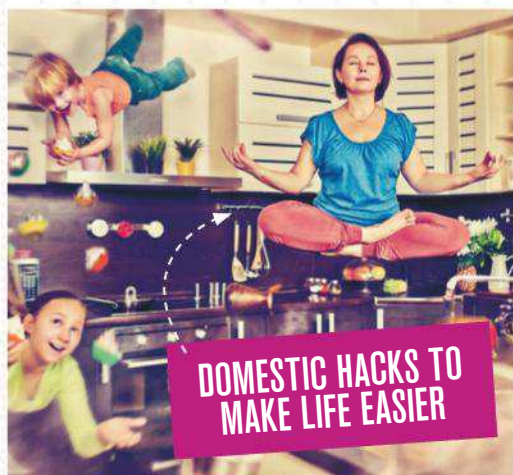
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GRIME BUSTERS

Remove dirt and stains from your outdoor areas to create fresh-looking spaces this autumn

WORDS MARC MCEVOY



Nature shows little mercy on outdoor surfaces such as patios, paths and decks. The cumulative effects of rain, sun and wind can be very damaging.

And then there is the added grime we leave from entertaining and general foot traffic. Throw in mould, mildew, moss, algae and lichen and you can end up with unsightly and slippery surfaces, none of which are particularly easy or quick to clean.

The pressure washer is a valuable tool for getting rid of these substances and the stains they create. But, some surfaces, such as pavers, concrete, tiles and timber boards, do require extra cleaning agents.

PAVERS

Pressure cleaning is the most efficient way to clean hard surfaces such as paving. Begin by rinsing the area

with a garden hose to remove rocks, leaves and dirt, and other debris.

Start the pressure cleaner on a low setting so it doesn't damage the pavers and disturb the sand between them. If using the nozzle, hold it 30cm from the surface. Otherwise, use the patio surface cleaner attachment, which reduces splashing.

If stains remain after pressure cleaning, pour a mixture of water and dishwashing liquid over the surface.

TOUGHER CLEANERS

◆ HOUSEHOLD BLEACH

Cheap but strong smelling, this requires protective clothing and lots of water to rinse. Take note that bleach can damage plants. Dilute one part bleach to two parts water (1:2). Apply, leave on for 30 minutes, then scrub with a stiff broom.

◆ POOL CHLORINE

This is effective with little scrubbing needed but is toxic smelling. Wear protective gear. It can damage plants. Dilute with water 1:4, pour over pavers, leave for 30 minutes, then scrub with a stiff broom.

◆ HYDROCHLORIC ACID

Efficient and requiring little scrubbing, this is a strong chemical, so use lots of water to rinse. It can damage plants. Dilute with water 1:20 and scrub with a stiff brush or broom.

◆ SUGAR SOAP

This is alkaline, so not as smelly or as harsh on plants as acid or chlorine. It requires a lot of scrubbing. Dilute with water 1:1 and scrub with a stiff brush. Rinse. Repeat if needed.

SAFETY TIP

Wear safety glasses or goggles and ear protection together with full-cover footwear when you are using a pressure washer.

Brush the pavers with a stiff broom or brush. Rinse it away with a hose or use a pressure washer.

Follow this process for cleaning concrete or brick paths and driveways.

If any sand in the gaps between the pavers is dislodged while you are cleaning, pour fresh sand over the pavers and use a broom to sweep it into the spaces. To finish off, if the surface of your pavers needs protection, apply a sealant. ►



Hold the nozzle of your pressure washer about 30cm from pavers.

OUTDOOR TILES

To clean outdoor tiles, follow the same process as used on pavers, but take extra care with sandstone, slate, travertine and limestone. Set the pressure washer on a low pressure to avoid damaging the surface.

Begin by saturating the grout joints with water. You can use any of the tougher cleaning solutions on tiles as you would on pavers, but it's a good idea to start with detergent or sugar soap mixed with water, since they are less harsh on the environment and don't expose you to strong chemicals.

The water-detergent mixture must remain on the surface for 5-15 minutes to penetrate and emulsify the dirt. Remove the waste and detergent by rinsing with water.

TIMBER DECKS AND WALLS

To clean timber decking and fences or walls, use a pressure washer on a low setting. Jets of water can damage soft timber and masonry walls when held too close. You can treat timber decks and walls with specially formulated timber-cleaning products, too.

Make sure you remove any build-up of material between decking boards, as this can stay damp and start rot. Pressure washers and garden hoses can also force water to penetrate around door and window frames and into some weatherboard structures.

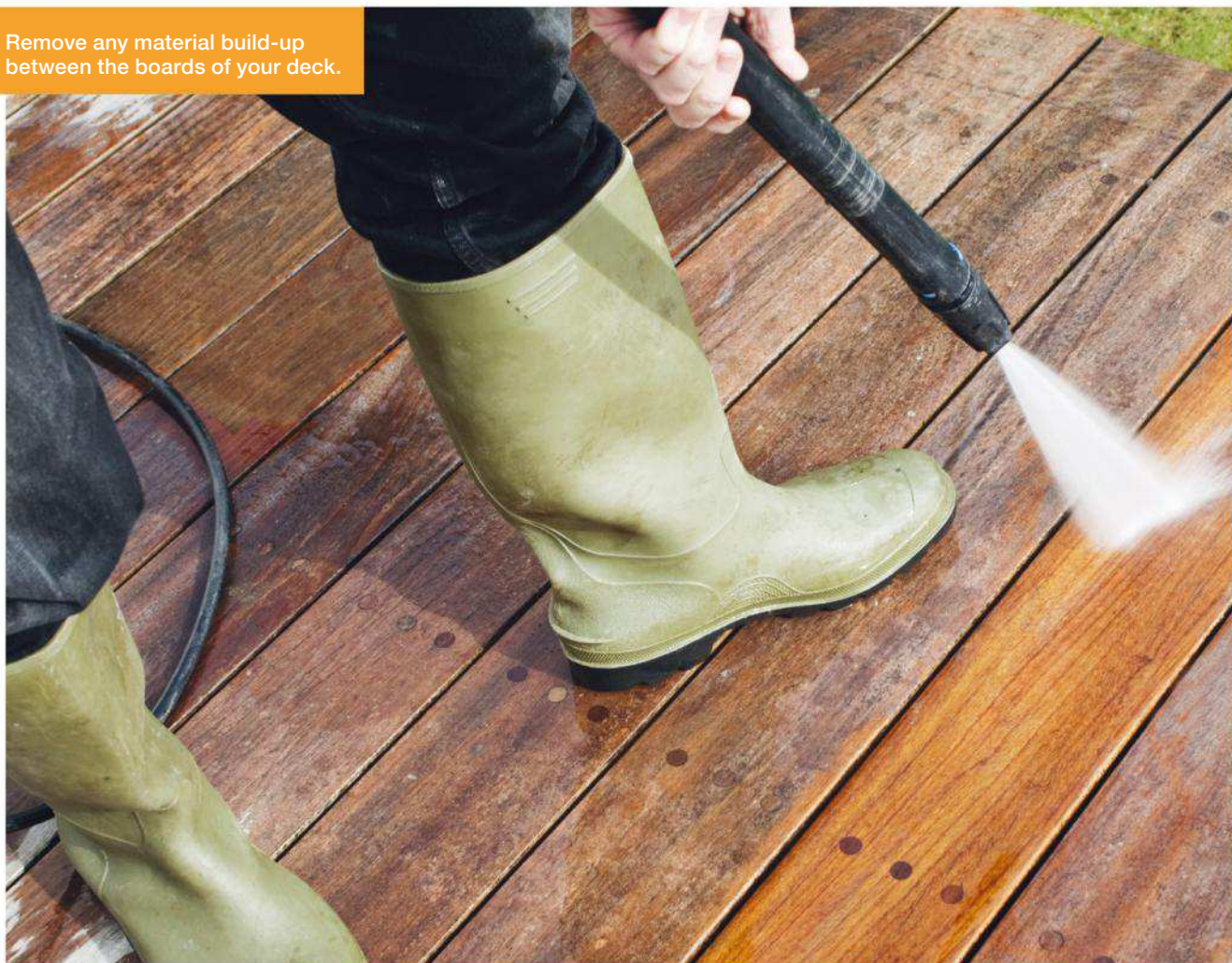
You can avoid this by fitting a rotary brush to the pressure washer instead of increasing the pressure to get rid of stubborn dirt, or clean by hand using an outdoor detergent-based cleaner.

For a deck, once it's dry, the surface will most likely need to be re-oiled or sealed, and you may have to replace any popped nails or screws. ►



**Regular cleaning
of your deck
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as even heavy
rain won't clear
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and debris**

Remove any material build-up
between the boards of your deck.



PICTURE iSTOCK



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ROOF TILES

Most roof tiles are made from either terracotta or cement, and need to be cleaned when you can see a build up of moss, algae or lichen. To start, wash the tiles with water using a hose, then apply an anti-fungal solution with a hand sprayer.

Some solutions do the job over time with the help of wind and rain. For others, wait a few days for the moss, algae or lichen to die, then clean the tiles with a high-pressure washer set at 3000psi (pounds per square inch).

Hold the nozzle about 30cm from the tiles. Start from the top and avoid walking on wet areas, so you don't slip.

If you have a water storage tank, disconnect it first so that the chemicals from the roof don't end up causing damage to your garden.

GUTTERS

Keep your gutters free of leaf litter and other debris to ensure they function

Keep roof tiles in good condition by cleaning them as needed.



SAFETY TIP

Take safety precautions when working on a roof. Wear non-slip boots and use a safety harness, or install safety rails to prevent falls.

and don't overflow when it is raining. Cleaning open gutters is an easy job using a brush or leaf blower.

Debris can still build up, even if your gutters are fitted with gutter guards. Remove the guards before cleaning. They are usually secured with brackets and screws. ❖

Glitz Glass Multi-purpose Cleaner, \$5 for 400g. pascoes.com.au



Selleys Professional Sugar Soap, \$5 for 1L. selleys.co.nz



3M Folding Earmuff, \$17.90. 3mnz.co.nz



Cabot's Deck Clean, \$29.90 for 4L. cabots.co.nz



Karcher K4 Premium Full Control Water Blaster, \$584. karcher.co.nz



30 Seconds Roof Treatment Concentrate, \$48 for 5L. 30seconds.co.nz



Raven Platform Broom 610mm Java, \$30. raven.co.nz





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SPRUCE UP THE GARDEN

Spend time tidying up outdoors now to reap the rewards in winter and spring

WORDS ADAM WOODHAMS

The days are becoming shorter, the mornings nipper and there's a hint of colour in the deciduous trees. Autumn has arrived!

There's no doubt that your garden will have taken a pounding over summer. The combination of weather and wear and tear can leave everything looking tired. The natural temptation may be to leave little jobs until later, but the task that takes 10 minutes now can become a major chore in spring.

So enjoy the awesome autumn weather and get cracking on a tidy-up.



Care for your lawn by quickly raking up any fallen leaves.



PICTURES ISTOCK

REPLENISH NUTRIENTS

Plants and soil chew through a lot of nutrients over the warmer months, which your plants use for growth, flowering and damage repair, so these reserves need replenishing.

Your soil also needs care, as many soil microorganisms use nutrients, consuming a lot of the fertilising material you add to the soil and converting it into elements your plants can consume, and so providing a balanced feed for plants.

Here are a few ways that you can give your garden a boost now.

♦ **APPLY** a premium controlled-release fertiliser. This is the most efficient way to feed, as the right balance of nutrients will be released as plants need them.

♦ **GIVE** your plants a fast boost with a quick and easy liquid feeding, but remember that most liquid fertilisers need to be reapplied regularly while plants are actively growing.

♦ **ADD** a soil and plant tonic. Products made with seaweed have a long history of improving plant health and building overall strength. Perfect for recovery from a long hot summer, they also provide a boost for soil microorganisms.

♦ **SPREAD** compost or composted manures. This is the ideal way to give your plants a light feed and really enrich your soil quality. Use a landscape rake to fluff up the soil surface, spread manure or compost around generously, then rake again before watering well. ►



As the weather cools, it's time to replenish your soil and give plants some TLC

As leaves fall, they can be a key ingredient in creating compost.

ADAM'S PICKS



Saxon 25 Tine Square Head Leaf Rake, \$19.
bunnings.co.nz



Ryobi Lithium+ 36V Cordless Blower Vac, skin only, \$269. ryobi.co.nz



Scotts Lawn Builder Grub & Insect Control, \$35.70 for 2.5kg. scottsaustralia.com.au



Scotts Lawn Builder Extreme Green Slow Release Fertiliser, \$21.70 for 1L. scottsaustralia.com.au



Seasol 2L Ready To Use Lawn Fertiliser, \$20 for a twin pack. seasol.com.au

PRUNE AND TRIM

After a spring and summer of growth, many plants are in need of a haircut. Anything that's looking shaggy should get a light trim, but if it's very overgrown, it's still okay to prune hard.

But be aware of what you are pruning. Winter- and spring-flowering plants shouldn't be pruned, as you'll likely cut off next season's dormant and developing flower buds. Avoid pruning any of the camellias and spring blossom trees such as flowering and fruiting cherries, apples and peaches.

It's important to take your climate zone into account, too. If you're in an area prone to early frosts, hold off or new growth may be damaged.

The rough rule of thumb? If it's not deciduous and it's looking tired or untidy, then give it a haircut.

- ♦ **DEADHEAD** shrubs and plants such as agapanthus.
- ♦ **REMOVE** sun-damaged foliage.
- ♦ **TIDY UP** climbers that have spread.
- ♦ **RESHAPE** hedges and topiary.
- ♦ **TRIM** out any dead wood, diseased or damaged branches. Look at plants that are congested with internal and crossing branches, then thin them out.



PUT LEAVES TO WORK

Don't look on the autumn carpet of leaves as a nuisance, as it's nature's own recycling process and gives you a load of very useful material.

Add leaves to your compost or set up a temporary compost cage. Just make sure you balance dead leaves – brown material – with equal amounts of green material – lawn clippings, kitchen veggie scraps and plant prunings.

Also, switch your blower to vacuum mode and you'll find the collected shredded material makes a great mulch.



REVIVE THE LAWN

Autumn is a critical time for grass care, as lawns are often very worn and weary after summer. If not given attention now, they can be seriously damaged by a harsh winter, leaving you with dead patches and thinning areas when spring arrives.

- ♦ **FEED** the lawn with a premium controlled-release fertiliser, using either a specific autumn-winter blend or a normal variety at half rates.
- ♦ **APPLY** a hose-on seaweed tonic.

- ♦ **AERATE** any dead patches or compacted areas with a garden fork. Drive the fork into the soil 50mm deep at 50mm intervals, gently rocking back and forth over the area.
- ♦ **RAKE** leaves as they fall to maximise sunlight falling on the grass.
- ♦ **APPLY** a soil wetter suitable for lawns if the soil seems dry or is repelling water.
- ♦ **OVER-SOW** in warmer regions using a suitable lawn seed to fix bare patches if needed. ♦





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FALLING FOR AUTUMN TREES

Transform your garden into a blaze of fiery scarlets and rich russets, bright crimsons and vivid purples

WORDS CHERYL MADDOCKS

As the light softens and the days grow shorter, autumn is one of the most beautiful and sensational times of the year. In cool and temperate climates, gardens start to glow with deep and vibrant tones.

Deciduous autumn trees are a good investment year-round. They provide shade in summer, fabulous colour in autumn, then allow the winter sun to shine through as they gradually lose their leaves. Plus, some have the bonus of flowers or fruit in spring.

And they're not just for big backyards, as there are lots of wonderful small- to medium-sized trees with colourful autumn foliage that are suited to the modern small garden.

Autumn is a great time to plant a shrub or tree, as it will have a chance to send out and establish its roots, rest over winter, then power away in spring. ►

Plant with autumn in mind and reap a colourful reward.

PICTURE CHERYL MADDOCKS

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CHOOSE A TREE

Most trees that are grown for their autumn foliage like cool and temperate climates. Make sure the tree you have chosen will grow well in your climate.

If it is out of its climate range, it may not be able to cope with extremes of moisture or temperature. A tree that doesn't belong in your soil or climate will never be healthy.

It's also best not to overplant trees. In small gardens, only one tree may be all that is needed. Keep in mind the mature height and width of the tree you are planting.

PLANT YOUR TREE

1 SOAK the tree well in its pot prior to planting. Dig a planting hole that is 2-4 times wider than the root ball and the same depth as the pot.

2 PLACE one hand on top of the potting mix and invert the pot to remove the plant. Check the root ball and gently tease out any matted roots.

3 POSITION the plant in the hole so the top of the root ball is at the same level as the surrounding soil. Backfill the hole, gently tamping down. Form a depression around the trunk to direct water down to the roots.

4 WATER in thoroughly, adding more soil if needed. Wait 30 minutes, then water thoroughly again.

TIP Use a liquid seaweed treatment such as Seasol to promote root growth and help the tree recover from planting.

BARE-ROOTED TREES

If you buy a bare-rooted tree during winter, keep its roots covered and moist, out of sunlight and drying wind.

When planting, trim off any damaged roots and place the tree on a mound of soil in the planting hole. Finish off as for a potted tree.



Evergreen shrubs contrast well with autumn colours.

Did you know?

Trees are good for your mind and body and even the environment because they are intrinsically tranquil. They absorb noise, reduce glare and purify the air. They also help to filter water, store carbon dioxide, prevent erosion, combat salinity and provide shelter and shade.

Autumn's rainbow ranges from pale yellow to deepest red.

GO FOR GROWTH

♦ **FOOD FOR THOUGHT** Mark in your calendar to fertilise trees in spring and again in summer with a complete plant food. Apply the fertiliser at the drip line, which is the outer extent of the tree's leaf canopy, as this defines the tree's feeding roots.

♦ **WATER WORKS** How you water your tree determines the depth at which the roots grow. Water thoroughly and

deeply, as this encourages the roots to travel deeper into the soil so that the tree can survive dry periods.

Once your tree is established, a long, deep watering once or twice a week is much better than a daily sprinkle.

♦ **MULCH MATTERS** It's best to mulch around your tree while keeping the area around the trunk free from mulch. This helps retain moisture in the soil.

The vibrant autumn leaves can rival the colours of the lovely spring flowers.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

The natural bending and swaying of young trees in the wind actually promotes more root growth and helps develop a more resilient trunk.

The only reason to stake may be if a tree is top heavy, such as a weeping tree.

In this case, add temporary support by placing several stakes around the outskirts of the root ball and securing loosely with figure eight ties made of flexible material, such as budding tape or hessian. ►

TEN OF THE BEST



Japanese maple

Hundreds of cultivars of *Acer palmatum* are available and most boast leaves in vivid autumn colours. There are a multitude of leaf shapes, colours and varying growth forms to choose from.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH Depends on the cultivar



Persimmon

Diospyros kaki is a small tree with glossy leaves, edible fruit and striking autumn foliage. There are astringent varieties such as 'Dai Dai Maru', which remain bitter until they soften, or non-astringent varieties such as 'Fuyu'.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH 5-8m

Flowering cherry

Prunus serrulata cultivars are most-often chosen for their breathtaking spring-blossom displays, but in cool to cold climates, the foliage creates a spectacular vision of yellow, orange and scarlet in autumn.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH Depends on the cultivar



Crabapple

Malus ioensis 'Plena' is one of the most beautiful crabapples, featuring masses of fragrant, double soft-pink and white flowers. Its leaves turn orange and dark-red in autumn. It likes a sunny spot in slightly acidic, well-drained soil.

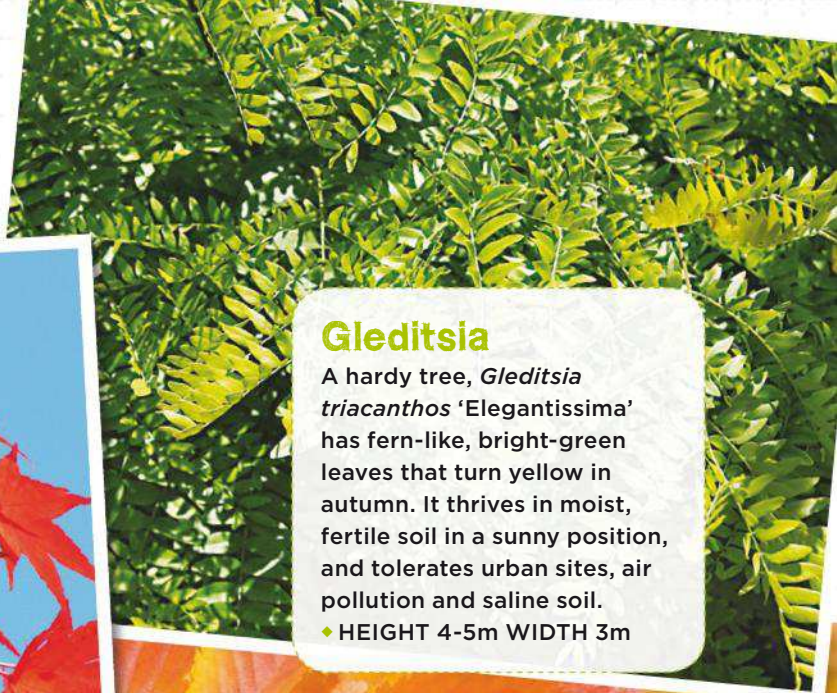
♦ HEIGHT 6m WIDTH 4.5m



Gleditsia

A hardy tree, *Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Elegantissima' has fern-like, bright-green leaves that turn yellow in autumn. It thrives in moist, fertile soil in a sunny position, and tolerates urban sites, air pollution and saline soil.

♦ HEIGHT 4-5m WIDTH 3m



Chinese pistachio

Pistacia chinensis features dark-green foliage that turns yellow, orange and scarlet in autumn. It likes a moist, fertile soil but will tolerate sandy, dry conditions, and is a good medium-sized tree for all climates, except the tropics.

♦ HEIGHT 6-8m WIDTH 6m

Crepe myrtle

Lagerstroemia cultivars have beautiful late-summer flowers in a variety of colours, from white through to red, plus attractive bark that looks good during winter after its yellow autumn leaves fall.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH Depends on the cultivar

Redbud

Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy' has a low-branching habit and pink spring flowers. The heart-shaped leaves turn a brilliant yellow and orange in autumn. It likes a sunny to part-shaded position and acid or alkaline soil.

♦ HEIGHT 6-7m WIDTH 5m

Parrotia

A beautiful tree, *Parrotia persica* boasts rich autumn colour and unusual flowers, consisting of red stamens during late winter. Suited to medium-sized gardens, it has an attractive branching habit and ornamental bark.

♦ HEIGHT 5-7m WIDTH 5m

Taiwan cherry

A graceful tree, *Prunus campanulata* features red late-winter to spring flowers and bronzy-red autumn foliage. It flowers best in full sun but tolerates a little shade, as well as warm climates and coastal conditions.

♦ HEIGHT AND WIDTH 6-8m ♦

BRIGHT BULBS

Switch on the colour next spring with these unfailing favourites

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERYL MADDOCKS

One of the greatest things about gardening is the sense of ritual it brings. Everything is cyclical, so there's always something to look forward to and celebrate. Right now, it's bulb planting time again.

These fascinating, inexpensive and dependable plants are almost foolproof. All the work has been done for you – the bulb itself is a food storage organ and already contains the flower embryo before it's even planted so flowering is practically guaranteed.

And, with good care and attention, many will settle in, multiply and flower in your garden, giving you pleasure for several springs to come.



EXPERT SECRETS

Mark the position of bulbs in beds to avoid disturbing them when they're not in bloom.

Plant in beds

Bulbs are hardy and, once planted, need minimal care to keep them blooming every year.

- ◆ **ADD** cow manure or compost to the soil before planting.
- ◆ **PLANT** in free-draining soil in the right position. Most bulbs require some sun to enable them to store food for the following year's flower display.
- ◆ **DIG** a hole to the required planting depth, as indicated on the packet.

The rule of thumb is to plant a bulb twice as deep as it is high.

- ◆ **PLACE** the bulb in the hole so the pointy side faces up and the flat base, where the roots will form, faces down. The exception to this is ranunculus, which is planted with its claws pointing down. Fill the hole with soil.
- ◆ **MULCH** with lucerne hay or sugar cane to help retain moisture in the soil and suppress weeds.

- ◆ **FEED** in early spring with a fertiliser formulated for flowers and fruit and again after flowering. Avoid fertilisers high in nitrogen.
- ◆ **WATER** regularly during the flowering season and while the leaves are green.
- ◆ **LET** the foliage die down naturally so food can be stored in the bulb. Remove the flowers when finished
- ◆ **DIVIDE** the clumps every 3-4 years to avoid overcrowding.

Grow in pots

A pot full of miniature daffodils, elegant tulips, Dutch iris or fragrant hyacinths will brighten up gardens or courtyards.

♦ **PLANT** in a container that has good drainage. Select deep pots if you intend to plant large bulbs, such as daffodils or tulips.

Shallow pots suit small bulbs, such as grape hyacinths or hoop petticoat daffodils.

♦ **FILL** the container with a premium bulb potting mix to the planting depth of the bulb.

♦ **PUSH** the bulbs gently into the potting mix, positioning them about 30mm from the side of the pot to prevent them getting too hot. Bulbs in pots can be planted close together.



♦ **COVER** the bulbs with potting mix to about 25mm from the top of the pot.

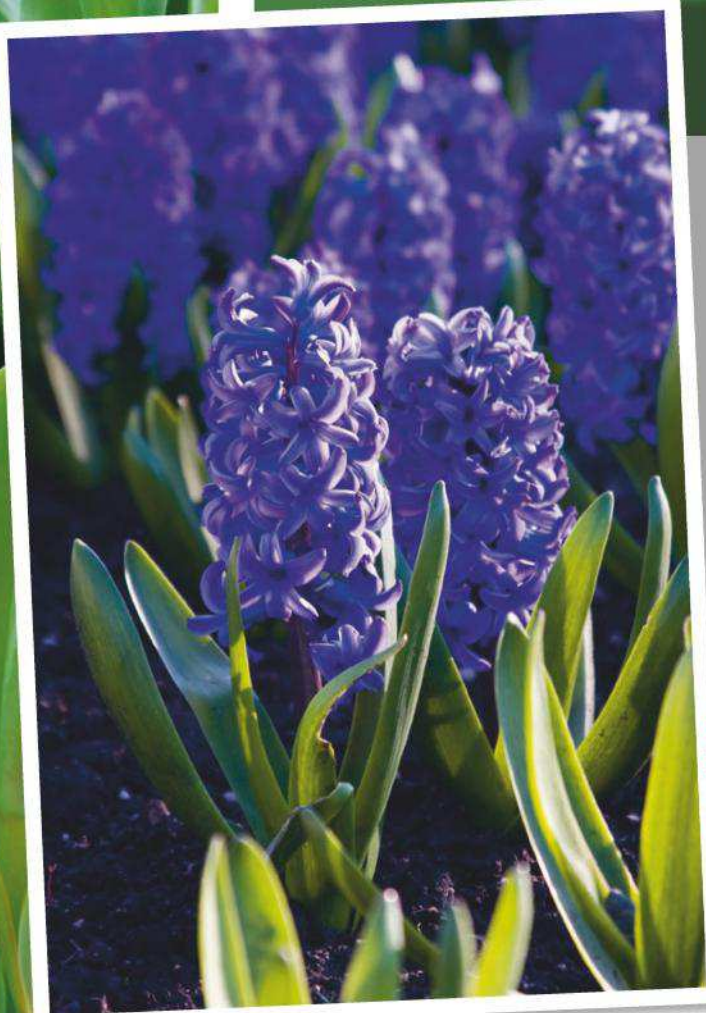
♦ **PLACE** the pot out of direct sun. The roots will develop in the cool potting mix and, when shoots emerge, put in a sunny position.

♦ **MULCH** with lucerne hay or sugar cane to the top of the pot.

♦ **FEED** when growth starts with a fertiliser for flowers and fruit and again when in flower.

♦ **WATER** regularly until the leaves die down, keeping the mix moist but not wet.

♦ **ALLOW** the foliage to die down naturally, then remove bulbs from the container. Store them in a dry position for replanting next year. ►



Hyacinth

Fragrant hyacinths are available in shades of blue, white, lemon and purple. Plant in pots and take them indoors when the plants are in flower.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool and temperate climates.

STORAGE TIP

Keep bulbs that need a cold winter to flower, such as hyacinths and tulips, in a cool place for 6-8 weeks before planting.



Ixia

These starry flowers are borne on tall 30-40cm stems, above grass-like leaves. Colours include pale green, bright pink, orange, cream and lilac. They are great for naturalising.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in cool to subtropical climates.



DIY TIP

Plant annual seedlings, such as pansies, on top of your bulbs in containers to maintain interest before the bulbs flower.

Anemone

Available in shades of blue, white and red, anemones make great cut flowers and will last over a week in a vase. As the stems develop, they need regular watering and feeding.

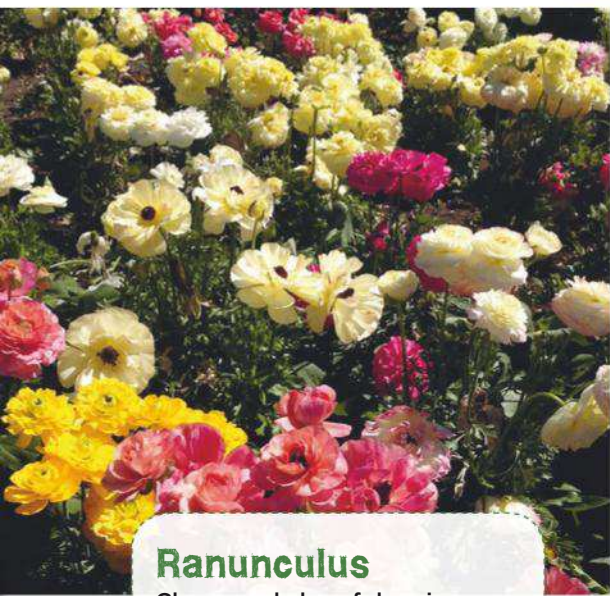
♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in all climates. Treat as annuals.

Dutch iris

The blue, purple, yellow, white and bicoloured flowers of Dutch irises are excellent for picking. Grow them in clumps in garden beds or large pots.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool to subtropical climates.





Ranunculus

Cheap and cheerful spring bulbs with red, yellow, orange, pink or white flowers, these are great to use as cut flowers and can be grown in pots. They need protection from wind.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in all climates. Treat as annuals.



Tulip

Ideal for garden beds and pots, tulips come in a wide range of colours, including deep purple and almost black. Bicolours are also available and there are cultivars with frilled petals.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in cool climates.

Warm-climate tips

If you want to grow tulips and daffodils in temperate climates or in regions with wet or humid summers that will rot the bulbs, they need to be lifted and stored.

After the foliage has died back, lift the bulbs from the ground, shake off the soil and

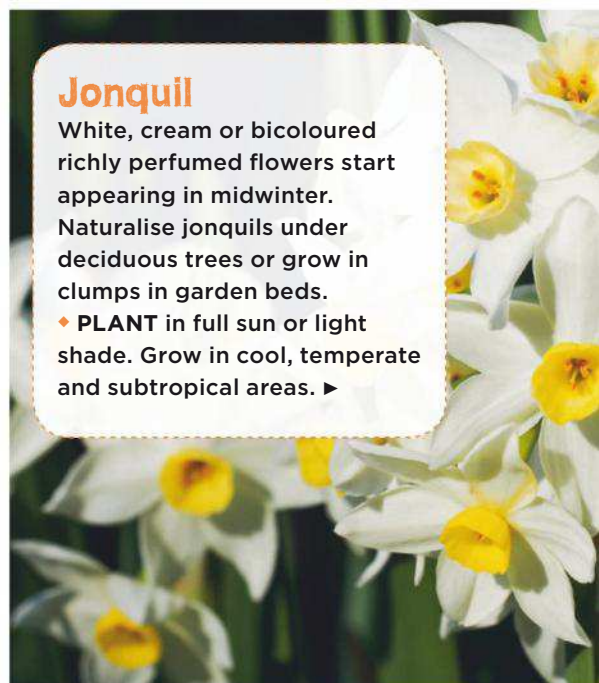
store them over summer in a cool, dry and airy spot.

In warm areas, plant bulbs three times as deep as the bulb is high, with the pointy end facing up. Deeper planting will protect them from heat as well as provide strength for the stem.

Freesia

Many freesias have perfumed flowers. They are hardy and easy to grow. Colours include blue, white, red, purple, yellow and bicolours.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun to light shade and grow in cool to subtropical areas.



Jonquil

White, cream or bicoloured richly perfumed flowers start appearing in midwinter. Naturalise jonquils under deciduous trees or grow in clumps in garden beds.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or light shade. Grow in cool, temperate and subtropical areas. ►



Daffodil

These popular, hardy bulbs are available in yellow, white and bicolours. They look stunning naturalised under deciduous trees, planted in clumps or grown in pots.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun and grow in cool and temperate areas.

How to display

♦ **GROW** daffodils, jonquils, freesias and ixias in your lawn but wait until the leaves die back before mowing.
♦ **POSITION** bulbs beneath deciduous trees where they will receive winter sun.
♦ **PROLONG** the flower show by planting drifts of bulbs with different flowering periods. Start the display with winter-flowering

jonquils, followed by bluebells, which look great mixed with white or yellow daffodils.

♦ **CHOOSE** hardy bulbs such as ixias and freesias for those plant-and-forget, dry situations.
♦ **PLANT** perfumed hyacinths in terracotta pots and bring indoors while in bloom.
♦ **ARRANGE** miniature daffodils in shallow pots for an elegant look.



Bluebell

Drought-tolerant and easy to cultivate, bluebells are ideal for naturalising in woodland areas. They come in shades of pink or white as well as blue.

♦ **PLANT** in semi-shade or shade and grow in cool or temperate climates.



Grape hyacinth

Great for planting en masse under deciduous trees, lots of tiny blue flowers appear on dainty stems. They are ideal for pots and drought-tolerant.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool and temperate climates.



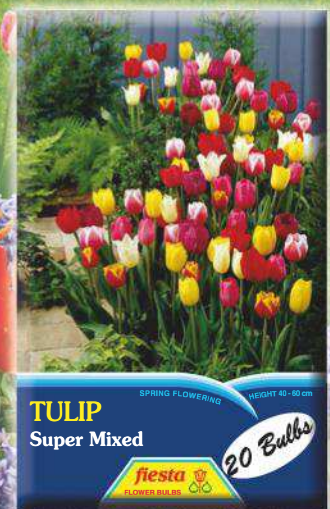
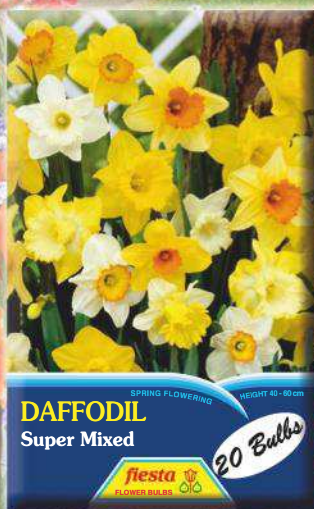
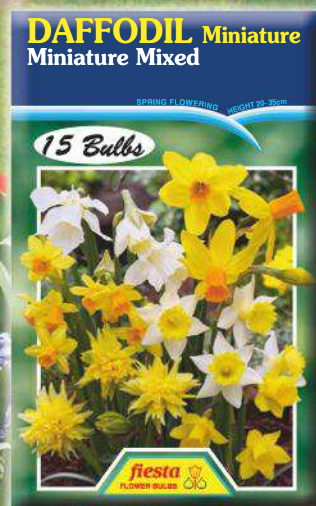
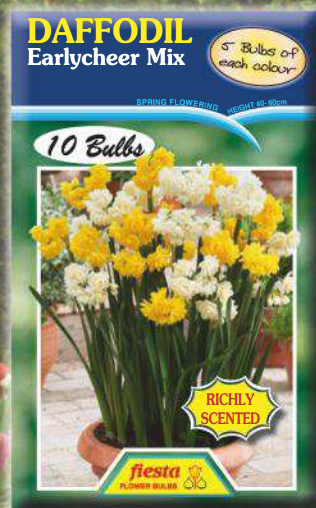
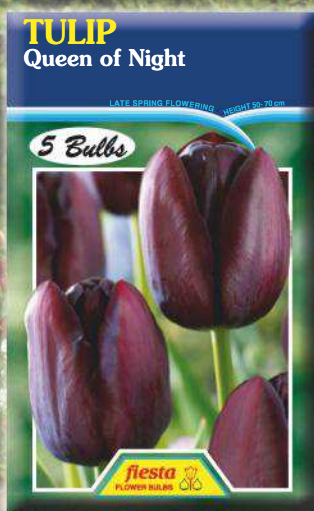
Starflower

Often called the poor man's bluebell, *Ipheion uniflorum* will grow in much warmer areas than bluebells. Plant in pots or en masse in clumps.

♦ **PLANT** in full sun or semi-shade and grow in cool to subtropical areas. ♦

Plant Now

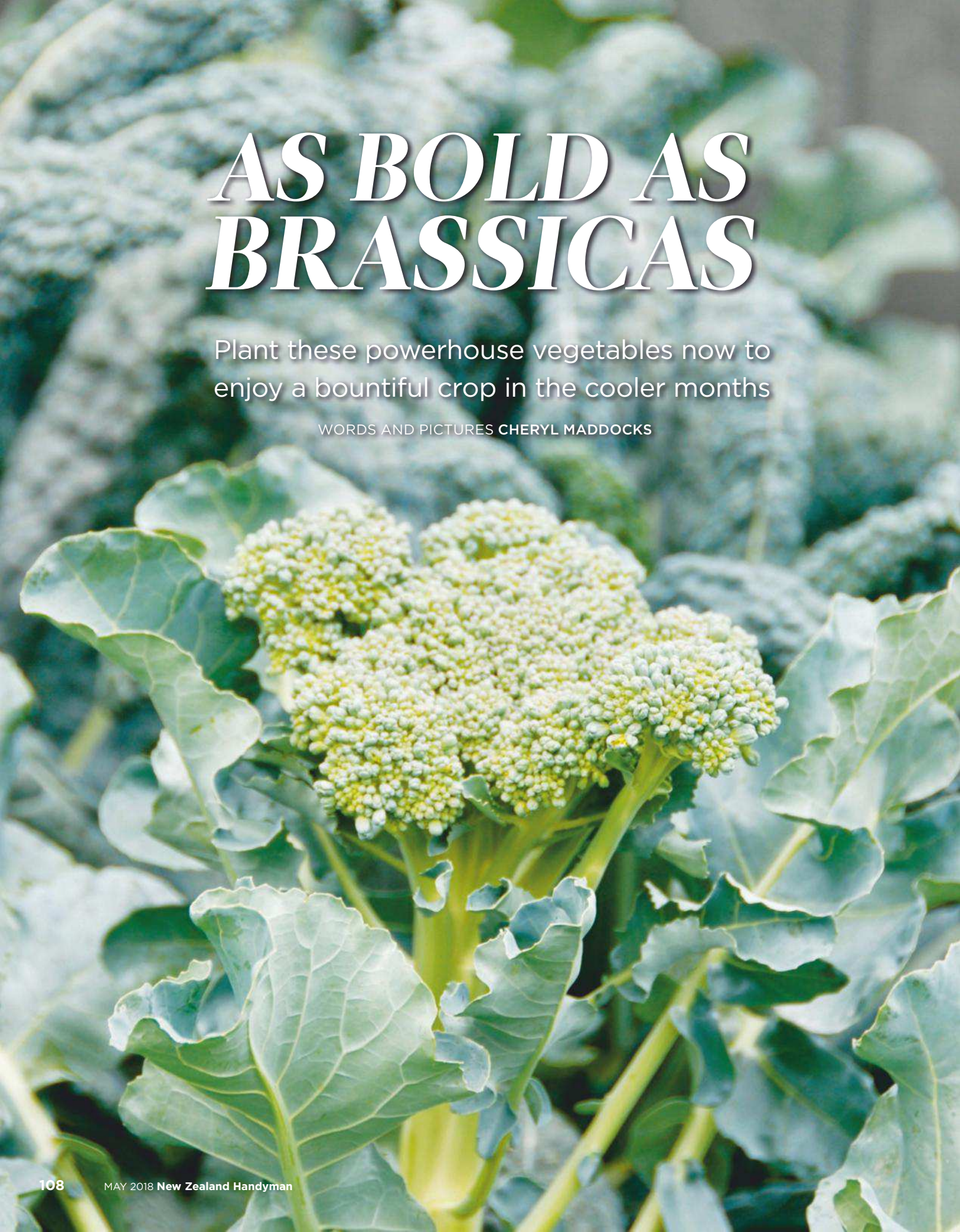
for a beautiful Spring



You can find
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Available at
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AS BOLD AS BRASSICAS

Plant these powerhouse vegetables now to enjoy a bountiful crop in the cooler months

WORDS AND PICTURES CHERYL MADDOCKS

Autumn is the time to start planting your winter vegetable patch.



Nutritional powerhouses of the cool-season vegetable patch, the Brassicaceae family, commonly known as brassicas, comprises many familiar crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, kale and brussels sprouts.

Brassicas are said to contain anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-cancer and detox-support nutrients. Research also suggests that the star component in this family is the phytochemical sulforaphane, which plays a major role in helping to prevent cancer.

They are ready to be planted now and will grow throughout the cooler months. You can grow your own from seeds or buy seedlings from your local nursery. Here, we show you how.

Prepare healthy soil

Healthy soil is full of essential worms and microscopic organisms that provide an excellent start for your brassicas.

Before planting, remove finished autumn crops and get rid of weeds, along with their roots. Dig over the patch with a fork or spade, incorporating any remaining mulch into the soil. Break up clods until the soil is crumbly.

Next, dig in lots of organic matter such as compost, poultry manure, Yates Dynamic Lifter or cow manure. Do this on a seasonal basis before planting any new crops. Organic matter adds structure to the soil, helps retain water and slowly releases nutrients.

Test your pH

It is a good idea to test the pH of your soil every couple of years. Most vegetables like a soil with a pH of about 6.5. Soil can slowly become acidic through continual fertilising and you can rectify this with dolomite, garden lime or a liquid lime. ►



Cook with kale or use it raw in green smoothies.



Good preparation is the key to a healthy crop, so remember to check the soil's pH and adjust if needed



Help them thrive

Give brassicas the right care and attention for a bountiful supply.

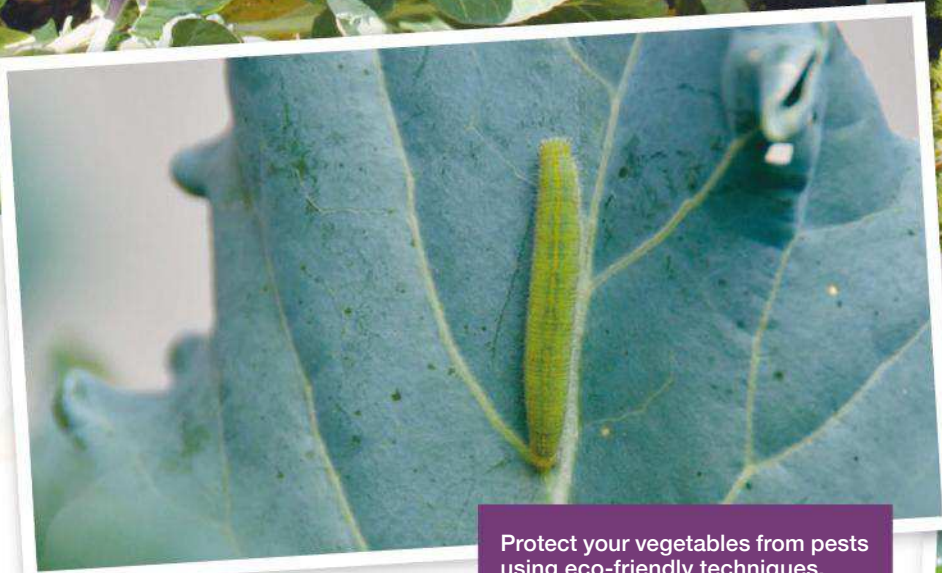
♦ **POSITION** in full sun and provide protection from the wind.

Sheltered vegetable gardens yield up to 50% more crops compared to those in windy conditions. If you have to plant in a windy spot, make a windbreak with shade cloth fastened to posts.

♦ **FEED** at least monthly with a complete soluble plant food. Be sure to always water the soil before and after adding fertiliser.

♦ **MULCH** with lucerne hay, straw or pea straw. Mulch lightly during winter to allow the soil to be warmed.

♦ **WATER** regularly in the morning at ground level to keep brassicas succulent and tasty, and prevent fungal diseases. Don't let the soil dry out.



Protect your vegetables from pests using eco-friendly techniques.

Pest solutions

Caterpillars

These plant devourers will chew through brassica leaves on young and old growth. Small seedlings may be eaten entirely.

♦ **FIX IT** You can control most varieties with Yates Nature's Way Caterpillar Killer, which contains natural bacteria that kill the larvae once ingested.

Snails and slugs

These pests will munch on most vegetables. Look for holes in leaves, as well as shiny streaks on foliage and slime trails.

♦ **FIX IT** Add beer to a small container to make a beer trap, then sink it into the ground. Or use environmentally friendly snail and slug pellets.

Good soil is essential for the best results and a high yield.

HOW TO TRANSPLANT SEEDLINGS

Give your brassicas a good start by correctly transplanting the seedlings from the punnets. They are ready to be moved to a garden bed when they reach 75mm high.



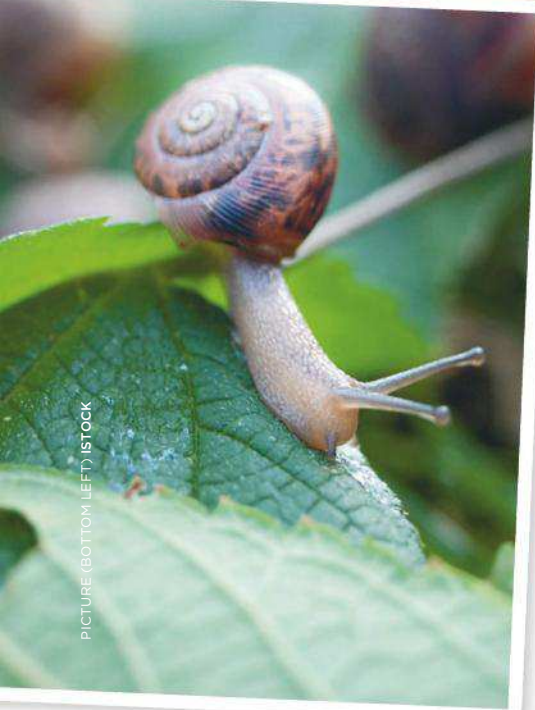
1 Dig planting holes

Water the punnet and squeeze the sides to loosen the seedlings. Remove from the punnet, taking care not to damage the roots. Dampen the soil, then dig a hole 70-100mm deep, checking it is wide enough to fit a seedling.

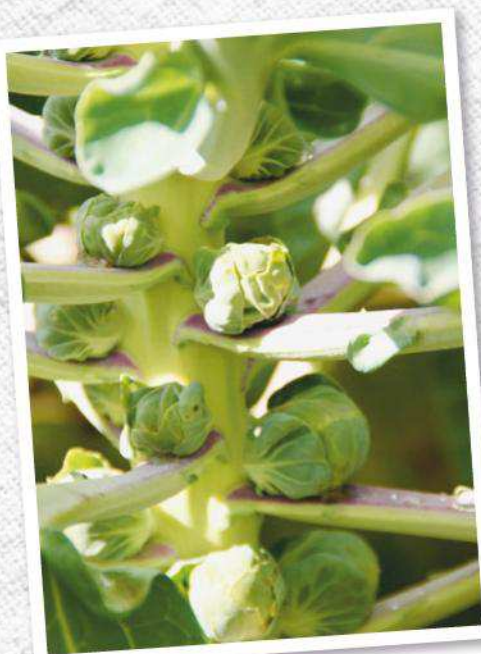


2 Establishing the bed

Position a seedling in the hole, pressing down the soil around it. Repeat making the holes, spacing them at the required distance apart. Plant the remaining seedlings. Water with a seaweed concentrate to help avoid transplant shock. ►



PICTURE (BOTTOM LEFT) ISTOCK



Brussels sprouts

These cabbage-shaped sprouts form in the leaf axils of the main stem and love cool weather. They don't form heads in hot climates.

Plant seedlings 600-750mm apart, as they need room to grow.

Harvest progressively from the base to the top, picking with a downward and sideways action. Sprouts are ready to harvest 4-5 months after planting.

- ♦ **SLICE** thinly and stir-fry with garlic and soy sauce.
- ♦ **COAT** in olive oil and roast for 30-40 minutes, shaking regularly, and top with pecorino cheese.
- ♦ **SUBSTITUTE** for cabbage to make coleslaw with a twist.
- ♦ **BLANCH** and place in a baking dish, cover with bechamel sauce and bake in a moderate oven until golden and bubbling.



Cabbage

Delicious raw, pickled, steamed, boiled or stir-fried, you can grow cabbages with globe-shaped or conical heads, crispy Chinese cabbage or red cabbage.

Sow the seeds successively in punnets to extend the harvest.

Harvest small heads when firm, leaving the rest of the crop in the ground until needed.



Broccoli

Choose from large-headed or sprouting varieties like broccolini.



- ♦ **SHRED** to make sauerkraut, which is healthy for your gut.
- ♦ **WRAP** your favourite filling in blanched cabbage leaves, and serve with hoisin sauce.
- ♦ **STIR-FRY** mushroom, beef strips, chilli and sliced cabbage in soy sauce. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Seeds can be sown in punnets until the end of autumn.

Harvest large-headed broccoli when tightly packed and before flower buds open. Cut on a slant 10cm down the main stem. New shoots will grow in the leaf axils. Harvest sprouting varieties with a long stem, which can be eaten.

- ♦ **MAKE** a soup with broccoli.
- ♦ **STIR-FRY** broccolini with beef and ginger. Season with soy sauce.

Kale

This vegie is high in fibre, vitamins A, C and K, folic acid, calcium, potassium and iron, making it one of nature's superfoods. It also contains omega-3 fatty acids.

Kale likes the cold, and cool weather actually sweetens the leaves. Harvest just before use for more flavour. Young leaves are best for salads.



- ♦ **BOIL** or steam, then squeeze lemon juice over the top.
- ♦ **USE** kale to make a risotto with cheese and pine nuts.

Cauliflower

This vegetable is high in vitamin C and also contains potassium, folic acid and fibre.

Cool weather is required for the edible white flower head to form. Harvest when the head is tight and solid. You can start harvesting while young to extend the harvest.

Protect the heads from sunlight and discolouration by breaking the outside leaves to cover them.

- ♦ **COMBINE** cauliflower with fresh ginger to make a soup.
- ♦ **COAT** in oil, then bake in the oven. Top with parmesan.
- ♦ **ADD** to macaroni cheese.
- ♦ **DIP** pieces in egg and flour, deep-fry, then serve with aioli. ♦