

BACKYARD BLITZ

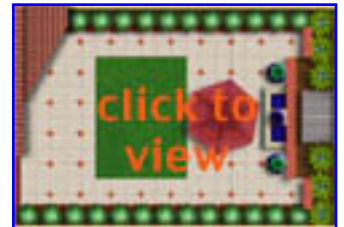
Final Frontier



When Hillary Deegan contacted the Backyard Blitz team to ask for their help in making over the run down rear garden of her daughter's renovated home, they were only too happy to help. Things have been tough for Helen and Adam Booth, since their daughter Madison was born with on going health problems.

Adam, Helen and Madison escaped on a Hunter Valley getaway where they took in the sights from a horse drawn carriage, visited the local wineries and forgot their cares and concerns for the weekend. Back at home, the Blitz team set to work.

Landscape designer John Happ's plan creates a contemporary, colourful outdoor room to suit the Booth's busy lifestyle and the needs of a small child. It does away with a clutter of sheds and replaces it with a paved area that extends from the living room. A central portion of lawn softens the paving and provides a much-needed play area for baby Madison. Colourful tile inserts add fun and boldness to the paving. A focus of the new garden is a tiled wall, which is a backdrop for a formal water feature and screens the new tool shed. Simple repetitive plantings of giant strelitzia, lilly pilly and alternanthera provide a formal framework for the garden and create privacy with a living screen along the boundaries. It's now a great place to relax and there's room to move.



Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (eg 1:100) showing the location of the house and major features then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your garden will be a different size, you will need to estimate the amounts of materials you will require.

Note: on your plan show the locations of any services (water pipes, sewerage, power, phone, etc) so you can avoid damaging them during the makeover.

Permits and approval: some garden or home makeovers require the removal of dangerous materials.

Asbestos

When the Blitz team began to demolish two existing sheds in the Booth's backyard they discovered the old buildings had been clad with asbestos. As asbestos becomes dangerous when it is broken up and can cause lung diseases (asbestosis) and cancers, they called in the services of a licenced asbestos removalist. Only appropriately licenced contractors can undertake or supervise the removal of friable asbestos. Contact the Housing Institute of Australia or the Master Builders Association in your state for details of members of the Asbestos Removal Contractors Association.

Note: asbestos was used for insulation, roofing, walls and fences - an estimated 1 in every 3 houses in Australia built before 1982 could contain asbestos.

Materials



Paving: large reconstituted sandstone Classicstone pavers (500x500x40mm) were laid over compacted roadbase and paving sand. A fine grouting sand (Sydney sand) was swept through the gaps to bond the pavers together. Many of the pavers were cut using a bricksaw to house a tile (100x100mm) laid on mortar. The garden shed was placed on an area paved with concrete Besser block capping pieces (390x190x40mm). The paving was held in place with a mortar haunch around its edge.



Blitz Tipz Lay out any low-voltage cabling or irrigation pipes beneath your roadbase and sand before you start laying any pavers.

Decorative screens: a combination of treated pine posts, framing pine and compressed fibre cement sheeting created functional screening panels. Posts (F7, 90x90mm) were set vertically in the ground using rapid set concrete. Treated pine rails (F7, 90x35mm and 290x45mm) were housed into the posts and connected using galvanised nails.

Compressed fibre cement sheeting (4.5mm thick, 1200x3000mm) was attached to the timber frames using galvanised clouts. Handpainted Turkish tiles (100x100mm, 200x100mm and 200x200mm) were attached to the central fibre cement sheet using tile adhesive. The tiles were butt jointed so no grout was required. A colourful, textured paint finish to the remaining sheets

was achieved using Tuscan Effects from Dulux. **Blitz Tipz** Design your screens to fully utilise the width or length of compressed fibre cement sheeting thus reducing cost and waste.



housing out

Water feature: a pre-fabricated fibreglass pond (1620x700x400mm) was installed into a Hebel block (200x200x600mm) surround. Washed river sand supported the base of the pond and the lip of the fibreglass pond sat over the top course of Hebel blocks. A row of Classicstone bullnose pavers (500x250x40mm) was laid on a bed of mortar along the top course of Hebel as a capping and to hold the pond in place. A glazed urn was transformed into a fountain. To do this a hole was drilled in the bottom and a hose inserted to carry the water from a pump. We used a low-voltage



fountain pump to supply water to the urn. The water spilled over the rim of the urn to be recycled from the pond below. The pump was connected to a transformer that was plugged into an existing power point.

Water feature

Nepean River gravel (30-40mm) was laid in the bottom of the pond to hide the pump and to reduce the water depth and hazard to children. Jade Green Deco pebbles were placed between the pavers and the Hebel block sat the base of the pond as a decorative feature. Two matching urns were planted with agaves and positioned on either side of the water feature (see details below). **Blitz Tipz** A fibreglass pond is less likely to leak or be punctured than a pond liner or concrete pond, and can be ordered in a variety of colours and made to fit specific dimensions.

Garden beds and urns: because the existing site soil was sandy, a composted humus mix was incorporated with the site soil and backfilled around each plant. This will improve the structure and nutrient levels of the soil. Horticultural grade pine bark was spread as mulch to about 75mm thick. A combination of potting mix and coarse sand was used to plant the agaves into the glazed pots.



Hebel block

Tiling: tiles (100x100mm) were inlaid amongst the large pavers. They were laid on a base of 3:1 mortar with additional cement sprinkled over the mortar to ensure they stayed in place in a heavy traffic area. **Blitz Tipz** To make the task of cutting many pavers easier and more accurate, prepare a template to use to mark out the cut on each paver.

Paint: the perimeter fences were painted with Dulux 'Mango' using a spray-gun. The screen surrounding the water feature was decorated with two colours, both from Dulux Tuscan Effects range, 'Tuscan Gold' and 'Da Vinci Red'. These were applied using a crosshatching method of painting. **Blitz Tipz** A variety of effects can be achieved using textured paints, sponges and brushes. Speak to paint professionals for choices beyond the standard flat and gloss finishes.

Plants

A simple palette of plants has been chosen to create a formal effect in the limited space available.

Screening plants: giant strelitzia (*Strelitzia nicolai*), lilly pilly (*Syzygium australe* 'Hunchy')

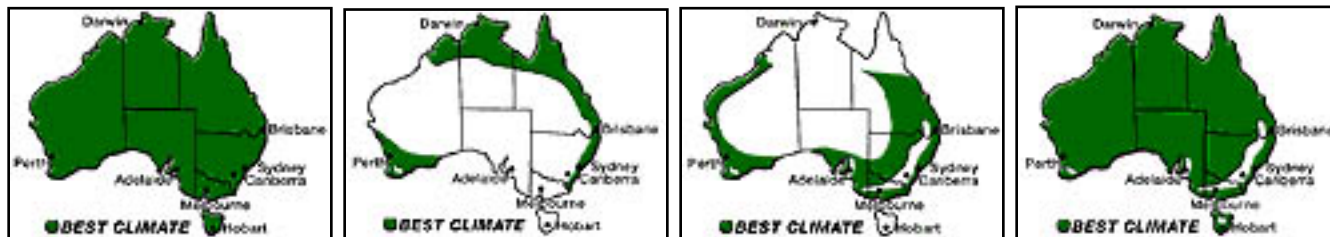
Borders: alternanthera (*Alternanthera dentata*)

Urns: agave (*Agave attenuata*)

Lawn: Durban grass turf (*Dactyloctenium australe*)



Giant strelitzia



Cost and availability

We used some mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost of plants and materials was \$13,262 however this cost could be reduced to \$10,882 by using smaller plants.

- Disposable overalls suitable for working around small volumes of asbestos are available at all good safety equipment shops for about \$20.
P2 type cartridges for masks that filter dust are about \$15 each from hardware stores. Ensure these items are placed in a sealed plastic bag and disposed of appropriately following each use.
- Classicstone pavers (500x500x40mm) from Sydney Stone Company cost about \$16 each or \$64.50/m² and can be ordered by phoning (02) 9979 9458 (or for details of suppliers in other states).
- Decomposed granite (Deco Gold) costs \$65 per tonne and is available from Australian Native Landscapes in Sydney; phone (02) 9450 1444. In other areas phone your landscape supplier.
- Ceramic tiles were supplied by Art of Tiles in Sydney; phone (02) 9565 1066. We used a selection of handpainted Turkish Tiles which cost \$10 and \$12 each. The colourful inserts in the paving were small glazed tiles, colour 'Volcano' and cost \$50/m² (100 tiles).
- The large glazed urns and table and chairs were from Decorator Terracotta, Sydney; phone (02) 9450 1944. The urns cost \$159 for the small and \$199 for the larger size. The wrought iron Harbour table cost \$169 while Cafe chairs cost \$109 each. They were spray painted with Plasticote Brilliant Gold spray; cost \$12.50 per can.
- Paints used were from the Tuscan Effects range from Dulux; cost \$63 for 4 litres. The boundary fences were painted with 'Mango' from Dulux which cost \$68 for 4 litres.
- The compact garden shed (1.83x1.23x1.98m) was bought as a flat pack and is available from large hardware stores such as HardwareHouse and Brunnings. This model called Eucalyptus costs about \$300 and is put together on site.
- The fibreglass pond was made to measure by Fibreglass Manufacturing Pty Ltd in Sydney. This pond cost \$660 with a Royal Blue gelcoat finish. Phone (02) 9958 5238 for more details.
- A Shelta market umbrella completed the garden setting. This model cost \$215 including a metal base.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at nurseries or ask your nursery to order them for you. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants in advanced sizes. Your local nursery should be able to provide contacts to you.

- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores, building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire.

Getaway details

Accommodation: Peppers Guest House Hunter Valley, Ekerts Road, Pokolbin, NSW; phone (02) 4998 7596; website: www.peppers.com.au

Tours: Paxton-Brown Carriages; phone (02) 4998 7362

Acknowledgments:

Design by John Happ, 3rd Dimension Designs; phone (02) 9744 2658.

Construction by the Backyard Blitz team. All gardens are a gift from Backyard Blitz.

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