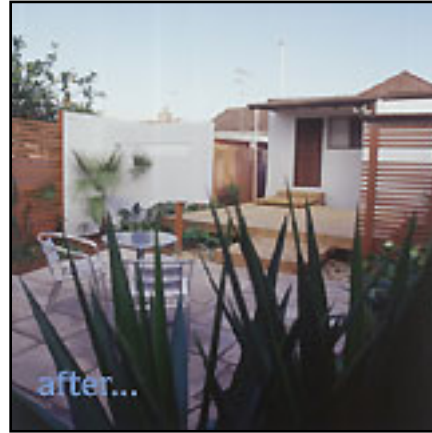


# BACKYARD BLITZ

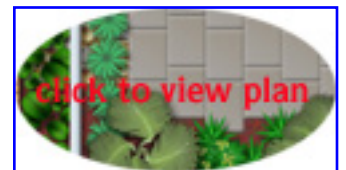
## Funky and Functional



Paul Doherty is a single dad trying hard to help raise his son Jordan. He loves a party and tries to help those around him, particularly his flatmate Angela. Angela has leant on Paul for emotional support over the past 12 months and wanted the Backyard Blitz team to help her thank him.

Landscape designer Peter Bachak from Art in Green has created a contemporary, funky garden in this limited space. A split level deck steps from the rear of the house, leading the eye to a floating feature wall underplanted with lush, large-leaved elephant's ears. The sound of cascading water invites visitors to step beyond the floating wall, over a sleeper boardwalk and toward a cascading glass and steel wall fountain.

Timber batten screens create horizontal lines allowing glimpses through to the garden and create a sense of intimacy to the space. Large rectangular pavers broaden the rear garden and plantings of plants with a strong architectural look, such as yucca, cycad and liriopes, complete the garden. This is a very modern looking garden design but elements can be easily transferred to gardens anywhere.



### Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (eg 1:100) showing the location of the house or main buildings and other major features. Then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your backyard 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: many structures in the backyard require council approval as they can have an impact on your neighbours. For example screens and feature walls above certain heights are often required to be built 900mm away from the boundary line. Always discuss your plans with your local council before commencing building in the backyard.

## Materials

**Decking:** always use appropriate structurally graded and preservative treated timber for external decks. The following timber types and sizes were used in this deck: H4 posts (100x100mm), pink-primed bearers (140x42mm), rough header joists (90x45mm) and decking (90x22mm). **Note:** Kiln dried or seasoned timbers (rougher header or dressed) are best to use when making outdoor structures. They are less likely to shrink or split over time.

Posts were installed 800mm in ground in concrete. Bearers were attached by fitting them into house outs in the posts. They were secured with galvanised cup head bolts, while joists and decking boards were attached with galvanised spiral shanked nails. **Blitz Tipz** Some sites do not allow for regular spacing of posts. Reduce the number of posts needed by using larger bearers to span between posts. Check your design with your architect, builder or local timber yard to ensure it is structurally sound before you order timber.

**Boardwalk:** a simple, chunky boardwalk was built using treated pine sleepers (2400x200x100mm) as decking. Posts (100x100mm, H4 treated pine) installed 800mm in ground in concrete hold bearers and were connected with galvanised cup-head bolts. Boardwalk sleepers are skew nailed to bearers with a nailgun and also nailed into the bearer beneath with deck spikes (150mm galvanised nails).

**Blitz Tipz** Treated pine sleepers are long lasting, simple to work with and come in several sizes. Discuss your project with a supplier of sleepers to get the best size for your project.

**Paving:** large concrete pavers (610x458x40mm) were laid over washed river sand and a sub-layer of compacted roadbase. Fine grouting sand (Sydney sand) was swept through the joints to bond the pavers together. A mortar haunch was laid beneath the edge of the perimeter pavers to hold everything in place. No pavers needed cutting as the ends were left staggered. A fall of 1:100 was used to ensure that water or rain that collected on the pavers would drain away from the house. **Blitz Tipz** Large unit pavers are very heavy. Have the job site prepared to ensure you only move the pavers once, that is, to lay them in place.

**Timber screens:** streamlined timber screens have been created by attaching pink-primed battens (42x35mm) to timber posts (100x100mm) installed 600mm in the ground in concrete. Battens are attached horizontally to posts using a nail gun. **Blitz Tipz** Pink-primed timbers are cut to precise dimensions and are usually free of twists, cups and bows. In a defined feature such as this, straight timber is essential.

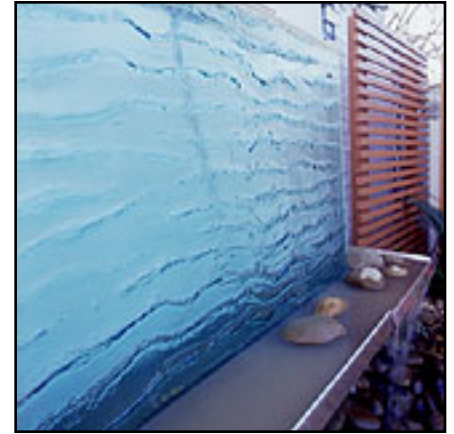


**Feature walls:** feature walls were erected to divide the garden into two rooms and to add interest. Timber posts (100x100mm) installed in the ground in concrete carry a pine frame (70x35mm). Harditex base sheets (2400x1200mm, 2400x900mm, 9mm thickness) were attached with stud adhesive and clouts.

To get a sharp, clean edge line, Scott fitted a plaster reinforcing edge called 'external setting angle'. Made from stainless steel, it costs about \$20 for a 3m length. Exterior setting angles were used to form a base over which to apply cornice cement and topcoat. The sheets were then sanded and painted with 'North Pole' from Bristol. **Blitz Tipz** Harditex sheets are available in several sizes. Design your screens to take advantage of available sheet sizes to reduce wastage and cost.

**Water feature:** specifically manufactured elements have been combined to create this dramatic water feature. A stainless steel trough (2200x500x65mm) with steel posts was installed in the ground in concrete. Steel risers were connected to the rear of the trough to support a distorted glass feature panel (1600x1000x20mm).

A perspex trough (1600x100x100mm) hooked over the feature glass and spills water down the face. The water runs into the stainless steel trough and cascades in a sheet into the gravel and rocks below. Beneath the gravel is a sump, lined with a butyl rubber pond liner (3mm). From the sump the water runs into an Everhard stormwater pit (600x600x600mm) and is recycled.



Housed beneath a sheet of wire (to support the gravel) is a low voltage, submersible pump (Pumpmaster 4200) which recirculates the water via a length of 19mm clear plastic tube to the top perspex trough. A transformer plugged into an existing power point in the nearby garage runs the pump.

**Blitz Tipz** High pressure is required to lift water any height. The higher the lift needed the larger the pump required. This pressure is termed 'head' and is referred to in the specifications of a pump's capacity. Discuss your project with an expert before purchasing a pump.

**Garden beds:** the site soil was a sandy loam. Accordingly, organic matter in the form of a commercial soil mix, was added to improve soil structure. A mulch of Nepean River gravel (40mm) and lucky stones (75-300mm) was spread to a depth of 75mm beneath the water feature. An organic mulch of recycled timber fines (called Forest Fines) was spread to 50-60mm deep to retain soil moisture and warmth and suppress weed growth. **Blitz Tipz** Laying porous weed mat beneath gravel mulches helps control weed growth. Weed mat can also be used under low deck areas to prevent weeds.

## Plants

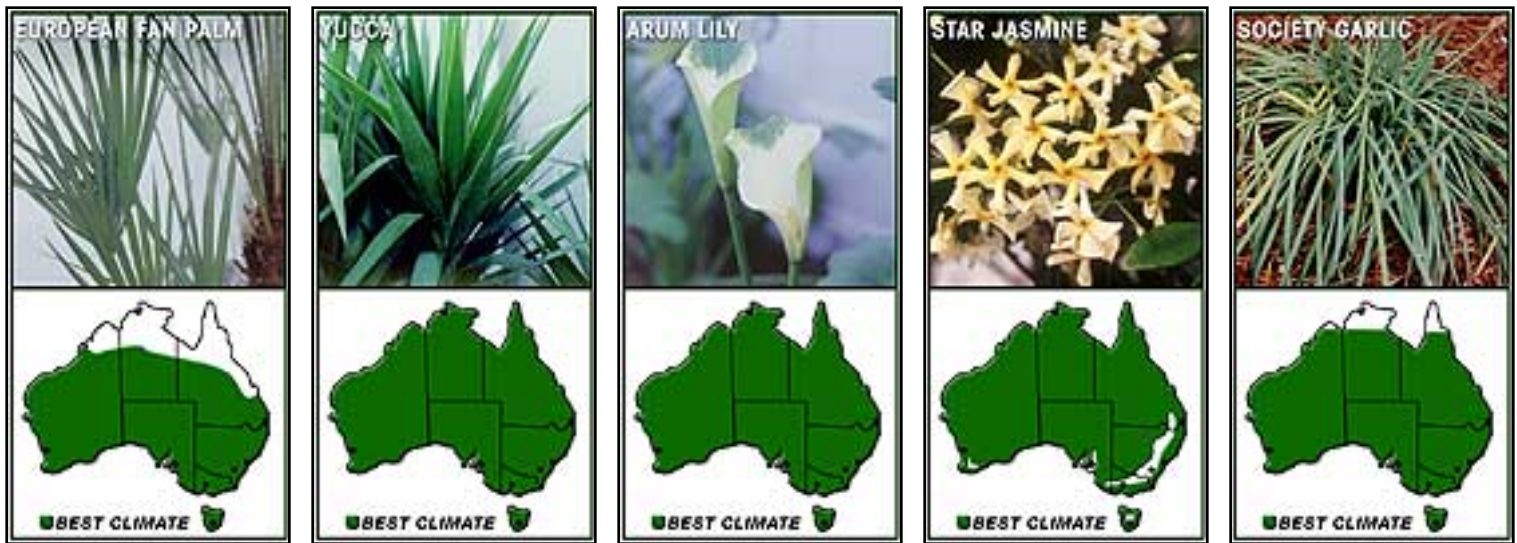
A combination of architectural feature plants and massed groupings of the same species provides interest and drama to this garden.

**Feature plants:** yucca (*Yucca elephantipes*), sago palm (*Cycas revoluta*)

**Palms:** lady palm (*Rhapis excelsa*), European fan palm (*Chamaerops humilis*)

**Massed garden beds:** elephant's ear (*Alocasia macrorrhiza*), arum lily (*Zantedeschia aethiopica* 'Green Goddess'), variegated liriopie (*Liriopie muscari* 'Monroe White'), society garlic (*Tulbaghia violacea*)

**Climber:** star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*)



## 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 \$11,903. This cost could be reduced to \$10,461 by using smaller plants.

## Product details

- The glass panel for the water feature was made to measure using 10mm green, toughened, kiln formed glass with a Dunezone pattern. It cost \$950 from Ozone Glass Design Pty Ltd in Sydney; phone: (02) 9938 5088.
- A stainless steel trough was manufactured by Marcus Engineering Pty Ltd, Sydney; phone: (02) 9905 0672. The trough measured 2200x500x65mm and housed a variable length of steel to control the water cascade. It cost \$1700.
- A low voltage, submersible pump (Pumpmaster 4200) cost \$450. A low voltage transformer to run this pump cost \$120. Check under 'Pond and pump supplies' in your local *Yellow Pages* for suppliers.
- Large concrete pavers cost \$9.50 each and are available from most landscape suppliers and nurseries.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at nurseries or ask your nursery to order them for you or advise similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. 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 including the Kanga mini-excavator. No specific licence is required for this machine.

## Getaway details

Accommodation: Golden Sands Apartments, 3575 Main Beach Parade, Main Beach, QLD 4217; phone: (07) 5532 4811; fax: (07) 5532 4256; website: [www.GoldenSands.com.au](http://www.GoldenSands.com.au) email [gsands@onthenet.com.au](mailto:gsands@onthenet.com.au)

Dreamworld, Dreamworld Parkway, Coomera, QLD 4209; phone: (07) 5588 1111; website: [www.dreamworld.com.au](http://www.dreamworld.com.au)

## Acknowledgments

Design by Peter Bachak from Art in Green; phone: (02) 9453 3341  
Email: [artingreen@bigpond.com](mailto:artingreen@bigpond.com)

Construction by the Backyard Blitz team (all gardens are a gift from Backyard Blitz).

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