

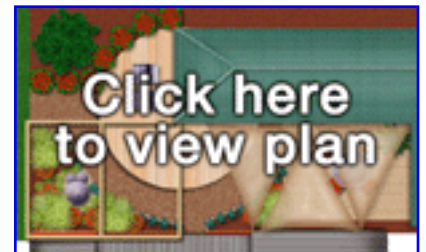
# BACKYARD BLITZ

## Colours and Curves



Karina and Choon Teoh moved their family to Australia from Malaysia 13 years ago because they believed that there were greater educational opportunities for their children in this country. Jacqueline Everett is a great friend of the Teoh family and wrote to Backyard Blitz to nominate Karina and Choon's garden for a makeover in recognition of their efforts on behalf of their children.

Landscape designer Matthew Cantwell from Secret Gardens of Sydney has created a contemporary feel in the backyard of this brick bungalow by using colours and shapes. Random paving shaded by three triangular sails has been used to create an entertaining area that replaces a grassed courtyard. A curved gravel pathway meanders past slatted screens, while a circular deck adjacent to a sculptured water feature encourages rest and relaxation. These simple design elements combine well with a minimalist plant selection to create a low-maintenance garden space.



### 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, new decks may overlook neighbours if not designed properly. Always discuss your plans with your local council and neighbours before commencing building in the backyard.

## Getting started

A bobcat stripped all unwanted vegetation from the site and created sub-base levels for Nigel's paving and Jamie's water feature. An organic soil mix was incorporated into the garden beds and post holes drilled for the circular deck and screens.

## Materials

**Deck:** Scott constructed a stylish circular deck at the rear corner of the house to complement the curves of the garden design. Treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) installed inground in concrete provide a solid foundation for bearers (140x45mm) which were attached with galvanised cup head bolts (10mm). Joists (H3, 90x45mm) skew nailed to the top of bearers support decking (90x22mm) laid with a 3mm gap between boards. Joist ends were cut on a curve and noggins inserted to support the ends of decking boards. **Blitz Tipz:** When ordering and costing timber for your deck, base your costings on actual lengths of timber you will use rather than the total number of metres. You will get a much more accurate estimate using this approach because it accounts for wastage.



**Paving:** Nigel laid pavers of three different sizes (50mm Boulderstone pavers - Oatmeal coloured) to create a random pattern. Grass and soil were removed to a depth of 180mm below existing levels to accommodate a 100mm layer of compacted road base, 30mm paving sand and 50mm pavers. A mortar haunch around the perimeter was used to prevent bedding sand from washing out while a fine-grained grouting sand (Sydney sand) swept through the top of the pavers helped to bond the pavers together. A gravel-filled trench against the house acts as a drain. **Blitz**



**Tipz:** Ensure finished paving laid against the house does not cover the damp-proof course or ventilation gaps.

**Shade sails:** Nigel erected three triangular sails (Desert Sand, 3.66m) between the house and the garage to provide shade and a sense of scale in the courtyard. Corner eyelets pre-sewn into the sail allow connection to any solid structure using steel chain and shackles. **Blitz Tipz:** If you are unsure of connection points for sails against your house or garage, seek the advice of a qualified builder or engineer.

**Slatted screens:** treated pine posts (H4,90x90mm) installed inground in concrete support external ply strips 450mm wide (12mm thick) attached with galvanised screws and painted with Dulux 'Riding Hood'. **Blitz Tipz:** Partial screens create interest and allow light and breeze to flow through the garden.





**Water feature:** a prefabricated circular pond (1200mm diameter) provides a base for a sculptural water feature. Polyurethane boulder shapes manufactured to look like sandstone give the feature an architectural theme. A low-voltage submersible pump connected to a low-voltage transformer provides power for the feature's water circulation. Galvanised steel mesh and bird wire laid across the top of the pond acts as a safety barrier and supports white pebbles.



**Blitz Tipz:** Check with your local council regarding regulations for water features. If your water feature is more than a certain depth, you may be required to erect a pool fence around it. Regulations governing water depths differ between council areas across Australia.

**Garden beds:** Jody used a bobcat to spread an organic garden mix through the garden beds. The new planting was brought up and into the deck area by creating a raised, mounded garden bed. **Blitz Tipz:** When developing a new garden bed ensure that organic garden mixes are fully incorporated into the site soil.

**Gravel pathway:** recycled crushed red brick gravel spread to a depth of 75mm provides a free-draining pathway surface. When compacted in place this gravel provides a cheap and colourful alternative to more decorative gravels. **Blitz Tipz:** Use a plate compactor to compact the sub-base well before spreading the gravel. Water in and compact the gravel as well for a solid pathway.

## Plants

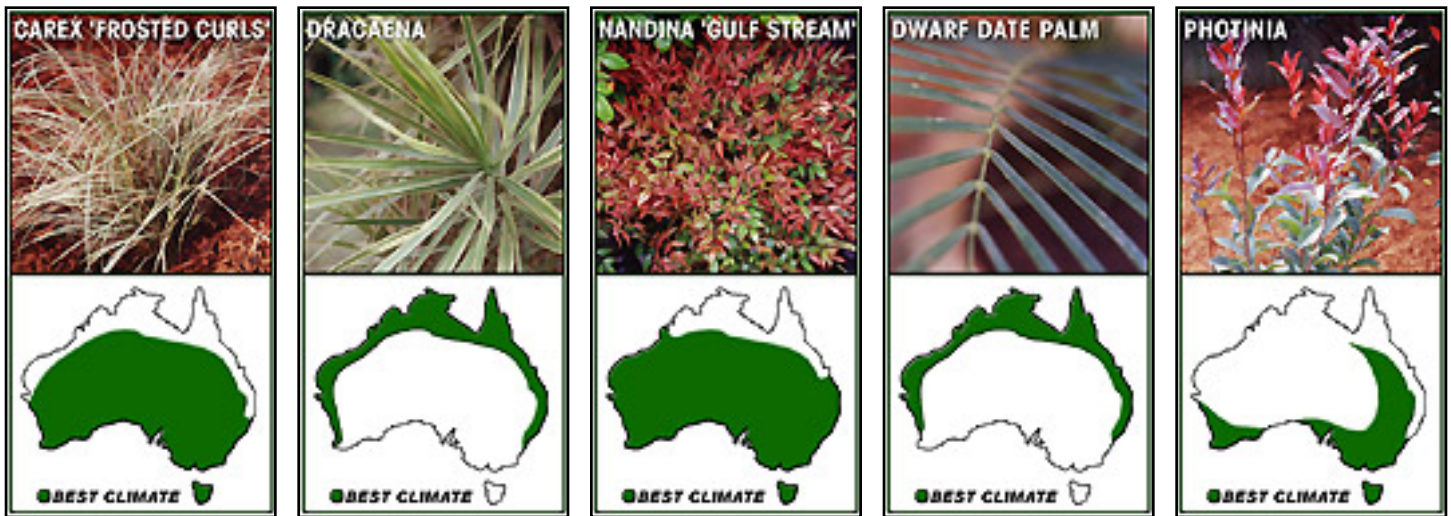
Bold foliage and contrasting colours dominate the planting in this modern garden.

**Shrubs:** dracaena (*Dracaena marginata* 'Tricolor'), photinia 'Red Robin' (*Photinia x fraseri* 'Red Robin'), nandina 'Gulf Stream' (*Nandina domestica* 'Gulf Stream'), dwarf date palm (*Phoenix roebelinii*)

**Groundcovers:** blue fescue (*Festuca glauca*), carex 'Frosted Curls' (*Carex* 'Frosted Curls')







## Cost and availability

We used some mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$13,472. This cost could be reduced to \$10,857 by using smaller plants.

## Product details

- Random 'Boulderstone' pavers are manufactured by C&M Brick and cost about \$41 per square metre. Phone (02) 9748 1024 in Sydney for details or view the website at [www.cmbrick.com.au](http://www.cmbrick.com.au)

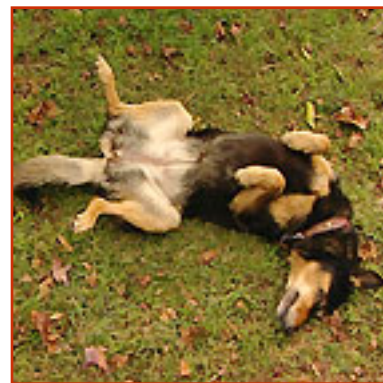
C&M Bricks also distribute through Amber, The Paving People and Paving Plus outlets.

- Desert Sand coloured triangular shade sails were supplied by Coolaroo and are available at large hardware outlets. These sails cost about \$130 and come in four colours. View the website at [www.coolaroo.com](http://www.coolaroo.com) or phone Toll Free: 1800 331 521 for more details.
- Red crushed brick gravel costs around \$20 per tonne and is available from Dial-a-Dump in Sydney. Phone (02) 9519 9999 for details and other product information.
- All components for the water feature are available from Contour Ponds in Sydney. Phone: (02) 9690 2600 for prices and details of their other products.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at nurseries. If unavailable, ask your nursery to order them for you or advise on similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide you with contacts.
- Most other materials such as mulch and pebbles are available from large hardware stores and building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the airless spray gun and the bobcat.

## Accommodation

Crowne Plaza Terrigal  
Pine Tree Road  
Terrigal, NSW  
Phone: (02) 4384 9111  
www.crowneplaza.com

Swells Restaurant  
100 Terrigal Road  
Terrigal, NSW  
Phone: (02) 4384 6466



**Lizzie - Site Manager**

## **Acknowledgments**

Design by Matthew Cantwell from Secret Gardens of Sydney; phone: (02) 9365 6533.

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

For more Step by Step Constructions click here



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Details on the fact sheets are accurate at the time of publishing, however prices and contact information are not updated and may change.