

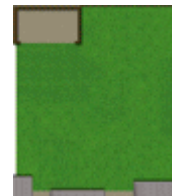
BACKYARD BLITZ

Welcome home



Becoming the adoptive parents of Ethiopian youngsters Melkitu and Yibitel has been a dream come true for Scott and Debbie Campbell. But the battle to establish this new family has taken its toll both financially and emotionally. Having leased their home to tenants while travelling overseas to meet the children for the first time, the Campbells returned to find the house severely vandalised. Family friend Robyn Polson and her nine year-old daughter Danielle contacted the Backyard Blitz team seeking help for the new family at this difficult time.

Landscape designer Matthew Cantwell from Secret Gardens of Sydney has developed a safe family environment for the Campbells by utilising the existing structure of the garden and enhancing its best features. The living room now flows out onto a new deck that has steps leading to an informal paved path. Bamboo clad fences create privacy and screen the utility area from the new entertaining area. Perimeter plantings of olive and bird of paradise will provide shade, fruit and colour and have been designed to combine well with a dynamic range of groundcovers and clumping perennials.



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 required amounts of materials.

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: Check with your local council regarding regulations about fencing and building structures in the backyard. A deck constructed without council approval may have to be removed if it does not comply with specific regulations.

Materials

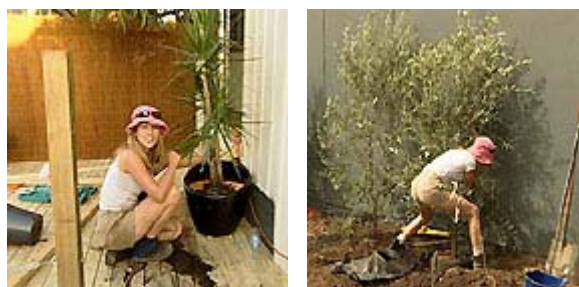
Decking: timber decks should always be constructed with appropriate structurally graded timber that has been treated with preservatives. This deck was built using posts (H4, 90x90mm), bearers (H3,140x45mm), joists (H3, 90x45mm) and decking boards (H3, 90x19mm). The in-ground posts were installed using rapidset concrete and extended beyond the deck level to accommodate a 3mm stainless steel wire rope balustrade and bamboo fencing. Wire balustrading was connected with stainless steel eyelets, shackles, thimbles and swages. All timbers were connected with galvanised bolts and decking boards were nailed down using spiral shanked nails and a nail gun.



Blitz Tipz: The Building Code of Australia requires any deck that is more than 1 metre above the surface beneath to have an appropriate balustrade. Contact your local council for specific details.

point for a large plinth by building a raised base with concrete blocks (200x200x200mm). She used compacted roadbase to create a solid foundation for the blocks which were laid into a 3:1 mortar bed (3 parts brickie's sand to 1 part cement). Blocks were then bagged with the mortar mix using a sponge. A large black urn filled with potting mix and planted with mother-in-law's tongue was placed on top.

Blitz Tipz: Large urns can fall and injure small children. Stabilise them by filling them with soil or by bolting them to the plinth.



Garden beds: inappropriate small trees and stumps were removed and an organic garden mix incorporated into the impoverished soil. Pine mulch was spread to a depth of 75mm over all garden beds.

Blitz Tipz: Most urban councils have Tree Preservation Orders that necessitate council permission for the removal of trees that exceed certain specific dimensions.

Turf: concrete and pavers were removed with a bobcat and a 25mm layer of turf underlay (80% coarse sand/ 20% black soil) was spread evenly to help establish the new Buffalo 'Palmetto' lawn.

Blitz Tipz: Reduce the cost of laying a new lawn by leaving a gap between each roll and allowing the runners to knit together. You may need to carry out occasional hand weeding in the bare soil areas while the lawn becomes established.

Plants

A small range of foliage and fruiting plants provide interest and contrast in this small space. These plants were all chosen for their hardiness, attractiveness and minimal maintenance requirements.

Trees: olive (*Olea europaea* var. *europaea*)

Shrub: dracaena (*Dracaena marginata*)

Perennials: coral plant (*Russelia equisetiformis*), dianella (*Dianella 'Silver Border'*), mother-in-law's tongue (*Sansevieria trifasciata*), lomandra (*Lomandra longifolia*), bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), variegated liriopoe (*Liriopoe muscari 'Variegata'*)



Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$11,200. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$7863.

Product details

- Natureed fencing is available at House of Bamboo in Sydney from about \$130 per roll. View other products at www.houseofbamboo.com.au or phone (02) 9666 5703 for further details.
- Large 'Stepstone' pavers cost \$45m2 and are manufactured by C & M Bricks, phone (02) 9748 1024. These pavers are also available at Amber outlets.
- The large black urn cost \$199. The contour egg pot set cost \$149 for 3 pots. All pots are sold by Northcote Pottery in Sydney. Phone (02) 4577 7740 for details on these and other pots.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available or can be ordered from nurseries. Nurseries can also 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 are available from large hardware stores or building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the bobcat and the nail gun.

Getaway details

Accommodation:

Palais Royale
 230 Katoomba St
 Katoomba
 Phone: (02) 4784 6300
 Web: www.palaisroyale.com.au

Tours:

Scenic World
 1 Violet St
 Katoomba
 Phone: (02) 4782 2699
 Web: www.scenicworld.com.au

Acknowledgments

Design by Matthew Cantwell from Secret Gardens of Sydney; phone (02) 9365 6533.
 Construction by the Backyard Blitz team (all gardens are gifts 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.