

BACKYARD BLITZ

Sibling Support



The children of the Ralston family have been living in their family home for about 18 years. Christian, Kate and Rosanna have been living on their own since May 2002, when their mother tragically passed away.

Christian has taken on the role of head of the house and accepted the responsibilities that entails. So Christian's best mate Kevin thought Backyard Blitz could help by giving the backyard a much needed once over and helping him have a few days away with a mate!



Design Intent

Landscape designer, Matthew Cantwell from Secret Gardens of Sydney has designed a contemporary inner city garden design. A hardwood board walk leads from the rear of the house down to the newly paved entertaining area. The boardwalk is complimented by beautiful kentia palms, giant bird of paradise and stylish arbours at either end.

Design ideas

The narrow width and length of the yard has been enhanced with the

installation a boardwalk. Decking boards running the length of the garden make it appear longer when viewed along the deck and wider when viewed from the side. Consider the direction of patterns and materials when constructing structural elements in the garden.

Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (e.g. 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 approvals: Check with your local council regarding regulations about structures in the backyard. Always talk to your neighbours and the council before commencing your project as it could save you thousands of dollars and will help to make the project run smoothly.

Getting started

A bobcat and mini-excavator removed all the existing plant material and cleared the site ready to begin construction.

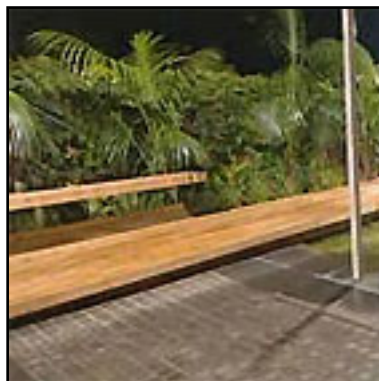
Garden elements

Boardwalk: Scott built a treated pine feature boardwalk down the centre of the backyard. Treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) were used as supports in quick setting concrete. Scott then attached bearers (140x45mm) with nails and galvanized cup-head bolts. Joists (90x45) were laid perpendicular to the bearers and skew nailed on top to support the treated pine decking boards (90x19mm). Scotty nailed off the decking boards with a compressor driven nail gun.

Blitz Tipz: A ramp was created in the top section of the boardwalk by bolting the bearers to the posts on a downward angle.

Boardwalk seat: Scotty built an unusual but very effective seat attached to the boardwalk. A pre-fabricated metal frame forms the basis of the curved seat. The framework was bolted to the underlying joists with cup head bolts and treated pine decking boards were attached by using self-drilling metal screws.

Blitz tipz: Metal manufacturers can bend and twist most metals to pre-formed shapes.



Arbours: Jamie and Nigel built arbours at either end of the boardwalk to direct the eye along the length of the boardwalk. Four treated pine posts (90x90mm), placed vertically in quick setting concrete support one cross member (90x90mm) screwed horizontally on the top.

Paving: Nigel laid Unicube cobblestone as a feature in the middle of the entertaining area and surrounded it with large Riverstone pavers. The pavers had to be laid on a 'wet bed' as there was an existing concrete slab. A wet bed comprises of 4 parts sand to 1 part cement. Once laid, Nigel grouted the pavers using a 3:1 sand and cement slurry.

Blitz tip: A slurry mix is a very wet mortar mix that flows into the gaps between pavers or tiles.



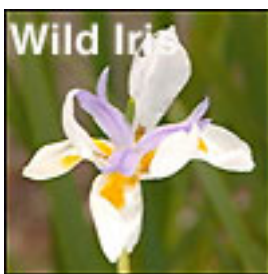
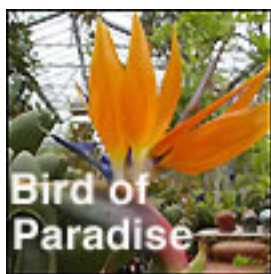
Plants

A limited number of plants was chosen to enhance the formality of the garden, but also to display its modern style.

Trees: kentia palm (*Howea forsteriana*)

Shrub: viburnum (*Viburnum* 'Emerald Lustre')

Perennials: variegated shell ginger (*Alpinia zerumbet* 'Variegata'), giant bird of paradise (*Strelitzia nicholai*), dietes (*Dietes grandiflora*), mondo grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus*)



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 \$12,650. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$9,367.

Product Details

- Uni cube cobblestone was the center feature in Nigel's paving and is available from Daisho in Sydney. Phone (02) 9264 1465 for prices.
- Large bluestone pavers are available from Riverstone. Phone Riverstone in Melbourne on (03) 9587 4446 for local distributors.
- The tumbled sandstone pebbles used to surround pot plants are available from RV Stonemasons on the Central Coast (02) 4382 6101.
- The giant bird of paradise and viburnum were potted in to charcoal planters, while the Mondo grass was planted in to Hibachi pots. This range of planters are obtainable from Terracotta trading (02) 9427 9007.
- The metal seating frame was shaped by Rollco (02) 9772 4188, although most local engineers should be able to help you.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at, 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 mini loader , airless spray gun, concrete saw and the compression nail gun.



Getaway details

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Acknowledgements

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



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