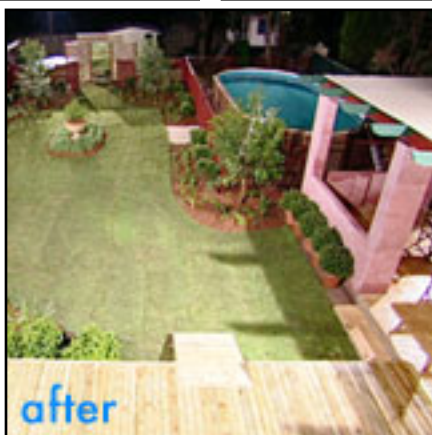


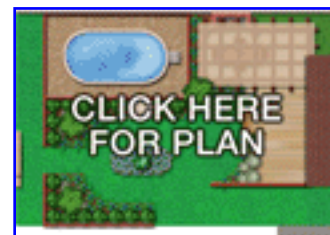
# BACKYARD BLITZ

## Family Paradise



The Deacon family have had their fair share of tough times. Illness has struck their family with breast cancer and they are raising an autistic child, causing a massive strain on their emotional and physical resources. In recognition of their struggle, the Autism Association of New South Wales contacted Backyard Blitz to ask for their help in giving the family a much needed boost.

Matthew Cantwell from Secret Gardens of Sydney created a formal design by dividing the large garden into rooms. A central garden bed features a large urn as a focal point and a picket fence separates the living area from the rear utility space. A new deck, above ground swimming pool and entertaining area have turned this half finished backyard into a self contained family paradise.



## 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: Check with your local council regarding access and delivery and storage of materials during the construction of your garden. All public areas should be kept clean and safe following the delivery and use of landscape materials.

## Getting started

Existing turf was removed and new garden beds ripped out with a bobcat. Organic garden mix was incorporated through the garden beds and post holes were drilled for the new fences and decking.

## Materials

**Decking:** Scott removed an existing rotten deck with the help of the bobcat. New post holes were drilled and treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) were installed in rapid setting concrete. Bearers (140x45mm) connected to posts with stainless steel cup head bolts support the joists (90x45mm) which were skew nailed in place. Decking boards (90x20mm) laid perpendicular to the joists were connected using spiral shanked stainless steel nails from a nail gun. A small ramp leading from the deck to the new lawn was constructed by nailing bearers at an angle to an exposed joist and onto a bottom plate (200x75mm treated pine sleeper) to prevent rotting of the timber ends.



Decking boards were nailed over the angled bearers to complete the ramp. Posts at one end of the deck were continued beyond deck height to support rails (70x35mm). These had pine fence pickets attached to create a decorative screen.

**Blitz Tipz:** Any structural timber that is in contact with the ground should be preservative treated to resist rot and fungal attack.

**Paving:** The existing tiled area was updated. Nigel left the old pavers, laid paving sand on top and spread and levelled it with a screed to provide a firm bed for the new pavers. Fine grained grouting sand was swept through the laid pavers (Stonepave, 450x450mm) to help bind them together, while a mortar haunch around the perimeter holds it all in place. Drainage holes were drilled in the existing brick wall below the pavers with a hammer drill and masonry bit. **Blitz Tipz:** Ensure paved areas slope away from buildings. A minimum recommended fall is 1 to 100. This means that for every 100cm travelled horizontally the pavers fall 1cm vertically.



**Lattice screens:** treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) were installed in ground in concrete to support treated pine lattice (closed diagonal, 1800x1200mm) which was enclosed in pine framework. A central feature panel was created by attaching an acrylic mirror (3mm thick, 1800x1200mm) to compressed fibre cement sheeting using construction adhesive. Screwed to the rear of the central posts the reflection in the mirror gives the illusion of a larger garden. **Blitz Tipz:** Glass mirrors can be used in the garden but safety is an issue as is their limited lifespan. Sealing edges and protection from the elements will extend their life.

**Bagging:** Jamie added some style to the existing brick entertaining area with red coloured bagging and a new shade cloth cover. All brickwork was bagged with a 4:1 mortar mix (4 parts yellow brickie's sand to 1 part off-white cement) and a cup of red oxide for colour. A wheat coloured shade cloth stretched tight over the existing pergola was connected to the tops of rafters with mini-gangnails. **Blitz Tipz:** Adding builder's lime or renderer's clay to your mix will make application smoother and will promote adhesion when it is on the wall. Both materials are readily available at hardware stores.



**Garden beds:** Jody utilised the power of the bobcat to assist her with the garden bed preparation. Each bed was ripped with the backhoe and an organic soil mix incorporated to a depth of 200mm. A large diameter auger (250mm) attached to the bobcat was used to create planting holes for larger specimens. Hardwood fines (also sold as eucalyptus mulch) were spread to a depth of 75mm to insulate the soil against temperature changes and excessive evaporation whilst reducing weed regrowth. **Blitz Tipz:** Contact your local tree surgeon as an alternative for cheap mulch. They often have leaf litter mulch for sale from \$15 per cubic metre.

**Pool and fencing:** a family friend had recently donated an aboveground swimming pool to assist with Alex's therapy. As it had not been installed, family and friends worked with the team to erect the pool and install a new pool fence. A licenced water carrier utilised a nearby water hydrant to fill the pool quickly. Nepean river gravel (20mm) was spread as a low maintenance mulch around the pool to keep weeds down and to absorb oversplash by excited children. **Blitz Tipz:** Pool fences must comply with rigid safety criteria. Speak to your local council or the Swimming Pool and Spa Association on 1800 802 482 (Toll Free) for further information.



**Picket fence:** treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) support rails (70x35mm) and pre-cut pine fence pickets to create a romantic picket fence as a backdrop to the formal plantings. A sheet of clear perspex screwed to the rear of the picket fence where it meets the pool fence ensures children cannot climb into the pool area.

**Turf:** a new lawn provides a soft recreational area for the children to enjoy. A layer of turf underlay (80% sand/20% topsoil) was spread to a depth of 50mm. This removed unevenness from the site and will allow the kikuyu lawn to quickly establish a vigorous root system. **Blitz Tipz:** Consider the frequency of maintenance you will need to carry out and the type of wear and tear to which your lawn will be exposed. Discuss your plans with a turf supplier to ensure you get the best turf for your needs.



## Plants

Massed flowering favourites provide the framework to this simple garden scheme making it enjoyable to use and easy to care for.

**Trees:** flowering ash (*Fraxinus griffithii*)

**Shrubs:** lavender 'Sidonie' (*Lavandula* 'Sidonie'), gardenia (*Gardenia augusta* 'Florida'), metrosideros 'Dalese' (*Metrosideros* 'Dalese'), hebe 'Inspiration' (*Hebe* 'Inspiration'), long-leaved coast rosemary (*Westringia longifolia*)

**Perennials:** agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox*)

**Turf:** Kikuyu





## 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 \$9922. This cost could be reduced to \$7053 by using smaller plants.

## Product details

- An acrylic mirror and perspex sheeting was supplied by Allplastics in Sydney. The mirror cost about \$180. Phone (02) 9417 6111 for more details.
- Stone Masonry provided Stonepave pavers for \$48 per square metre. Available from Amber and the Paving People or by calling (02) 4353 0036.
- Large Sandstone Urn No.28 is available from El Rancho Garden Products in Sydney. Phone (02) 9809 2265 for details on their range of pots.
- Flat topped pool fence was sourced from Dunn and Farrugia Fencing in western Sydney. Phone (02) 4731 6974 for prices and range of styles.
- Pool filling was carried out by L.K Gault Pty Ltd, licenced water suppliers. Phone: 0416 267 071.
- 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 bobcat and the nail gun.

## Getaway details

### Accommodation:

The Outrigger Resort  
88 Marine Pde  
Coolangatta, QLD  
Phone: (07) 5506 8787  
[www.outrigger.com](http://www.outrigger.com)

### Tours:

Tweed Endeavour Cruises  
Phone: (07) 5536 8800  
www.goldcoastcruising.com

Tweed Coast Limousines  
Freecall: 1800 442 199  
- Weddings - Airport Transfers - Special Occasions -

## 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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