

# BACKYARD BLITZ

## It Could Be You!



Backyard Blitz enjoys a huge following, and the one thing that unites all its fans is the same dream, the thought that one day - *IT COULD BE ME!* Backyard Blitz experienced such a huge response to the last year's campaign that we decided to have another crack at it once again every Australian household is in with an even chance as the team scan the country for that special backyard that will be hit for six by the Blitz team.

This time it was Sydney's turn to be the city that had the chance of a surprise door knock and we didn't disappoint. We stumbled into the home of single mum Sue and her little daughter Sarah. Eight year old Sarah was asleep in mum's bed when we rang the doorbell and she was awoken by Jamie and the team. No it wasn't a dream. This time it was for real!



## Design intent

When designing a garden, Jamie considers what type of garden the owner would like and Sue said she loves exotics, flowers and European style gardens. Then Jamie considers the site and what is growing well in the area, how much sun or shade, soil type, and how flat or sloping it is. As this garden is seriously sloping, Jamie will terrace the garden with a retaining wall.

Jamie also considered functional requirements – Sue needs to dry clothes and would like a covered area to entertain friends and family. So Jamie designed a timber slatted screen in a huge sweeping curve to cover the barbecue area and give them shade. The changes of levels with terracing will give more usable space.

And finally Jamie will add some inspirational ideas to make the garden one that they will love to spend time in.

## Adapting these plans 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 regulations about earthworks and drainage. If you are changing existing levels or installing drainage ensure no water run-off is directed toward neighbouring properties. Any water entering the storm water system must be free from debris and sediment.

**Design:** A large paved area; retaining walls; two frangipanis set in boxes either side; a large retaining wall planted with photinia; stepping stones through the centre; a steel arbour; and a series of stepping stones to the clothesline.

## Getting started

A bobcat and backhoe were brought in to create the new terraced levels.

**Set up:** measure and mark out areas to be constructed and determine levels

**Tools:** auger/posthole digger, spirit level, hand or circular saw, square, drill, concrete, mallet, lumpy hammer, straight edge, pencil, tape measure, string line, marking paint spanners, shovels, rake

## Garden elements

**Retaining walls:** Scott/Jamie built a treated pine sleeper retaining wall. Holes were dug at 1200mm spacings to a depth of 600mm and upright sleepers (treated pine H4, 200 x 75mm) were installed vertically in ground in quick setting concrete to support the treated pine sleepers. A spirit level was used to check that posts were vertical. Sleepers were laid horizontally on edge behind uprights, ensuring first course was level, making the following courses easy to install. Sleeper steps were built to give access between the levels

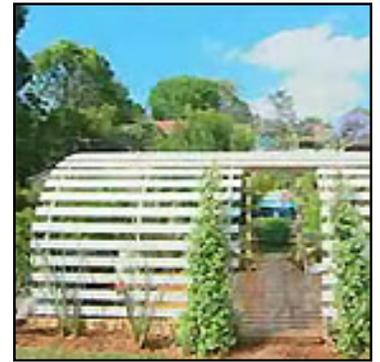
**Blitz Tipz:** Retaining walls over 900mm in height need to be designed by a qualified engineer and may require council approval.

**Arbour :** Scott marked out the distance between post holes and these were then dug to a depth of 800mm. Treated pine posts (H4, 90 x 90mm) were then installed vertically in ground in concrete, using a spirit level to keep them perfectly vertical. Eight specifically manufactured curved posts of 40 x 40mm galvanised pipe, spaced at 600mm centres, were bolted to the retaining wall at one side, then attached with coach screws to the 140 x 45 mm top plate that had been fixed to the timber posts on the opposite side.

**Blitz tipz:** Be sure to supply detailed sketches with measurements for the structure you want manufactured.

Pink primed timber slats (90x19mm) were fixed with tech screws to the metal frame to create an enclosed space and to give some protection from the sun. The timber was then painted with white acrylic paint.

**Blitz tipz:** It is much easier to pre-paint slats before installing.



**Sleeper deck:** Nigel a H4 sleeper pine treated deck. The area was levelled using compacted roadbase. The bearers were set out at 1200m then sleepers laid across, staggering the joints and nailing into place.

**Blitz tipz:** all fixers for treated pine should be galvanised to prevent corrosion



**Planter boxes:** Jamie used sleepers to create planter boxes for the frangipani, making sure of a sound level base to lay sleepers on edge. Our box height was 470mm and this was two sleepers on edge and a capping sleeper laid flat for seating, with the ends cut at 45 degrees to give a mitred finish.

**Blitz tipz:** Raised beds improve drainage and are perfect for herb and vegetable plots

**Stepping stones:** Nigel laid the pavers on a stiff bed of mortar or a screeded bed of paving sand and cement mixed at 4:1 ratio. Nigel used a rubber mallet to tap the pavers into place.

**Blitz tipz:** Use a spirit level and straight edge across the pavers to ensure they are at an even plane.

## Plants

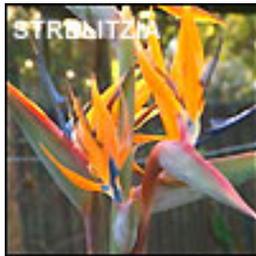


**Trees:** Tahitian lime (*Citrus aurantifolia* 'Tahiti'), Calamondin (*x Citrofortunella microcarpa*), Eureka lemon (*Citrus limon* 'Eureka'), Washington navel orange (*Citrus sinensis* 'Washington Navel'), Heuchera (*Heuchera* 'Amethyst Falls'), weeping lilly pilly (*Waterhousea floribunda*), Frangipani (*Plumeria rubra* var. *acutifolia*)

**Shrubs:** photinia (*Photinia* 'Red Robin'), strelitzia (*Strelitzia juncea*), golden dewdrop (*Duranta* 'Geisha Girl')

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

**Annuals and perennials:** ground morning glory (*Convolvulus* 'Blue Moon'), horsetail plant (*Russelia equisetiformis*), marguerite daisy (*Argyranthemum frutescens*), Indian hawthorn (*Raphiolepis umbellata*), butterfly bush (*Gaura* 'So White')



## Product details

- 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 and the nail gun.
- The metal arches were made by a specialist steel manufacturer.
- White glazed egg pots came from Decorator Terracotta

## Cost

We used mature plants in this makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$19,423. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$11,586.

## Holiday Details

Echoes Boutique Hotel  
3 Lillianfels Rd  
Katoomba  
Phone: (02) 4782 1966  
Web: [www.echoeshotel.com.au](http://www.echoeshotel.com.au)

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## Acknowledgments

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

For more Step by Step Constructions click here

