

BACKYARD BLITZ

Time to Relax



Lyn Beattie has her hands full supporting a large family on one income, paying a mortgage and attending to her special needs child. Lyn is studying part-time to improve her qualifications and employment prospects. Neighbour, Heather Goldsmith, has been a resident in the street for 41 years. Heather has an award-winning garden, and knows how hard the Beattie boys work to try and improve their backyard. However, limited finances mean it will be a long time before the family can afford landscaping. So Heather wrote to Backyard Blitz to ask for some help.



John Happ, a landscape designer from 3rd Dimension Designs, has created a stylish low maintenance garden to complement Lyn's busy lifestyle. Large unit pavers lead from the rear patio to a gazebo with a shingled roof. Perimeter plantings of ornamental shrubs and groundcovers soften the rectangular backyard and will be easy to maintain. A new paling fence screens the unattractive carport and helps to create a sense of privacy to the previously drab backyard.

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 cleared all unwanted vegetation from the site. The backhoe excavated trenches for drainage works associated with the gazebo, and heavy subgrade materials were brought in for paving.

Materials

Gazebo: Scott built a shingle-roofed gazebo to provide a weatherproof entertaining zone in the middle of the backyard. Treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) support pink primed beams (190x45mm), ridge beam (140x45mm), rafters (90x45mm) and battens (50x35mm). Marine ply nailed over the rafters acts as a form of insulation and provides a solid base to work on whilst nailing off the shingles. Hardwood shingles overlapped and nailed in place provide a waterproof roof. **Blitz Tipz** Although it is more expensive, Scott used pink primed timber for the roof frame because of its superior strength and consistency in shape and size.



Paving: Nigel laid large sandstone-coloured pavers from the patio to the new gazebo. The existing steps were reworked to ensure an even riser to tread ratio. The tread length was 400mm to match the chosen paver size. Risers were set at 200mm high to accommodate a paver cut in half and to make the top and bottom steps the same height. **Blitz Tipz** A common fault in this style of step construction is that the pavers crack away from the brickwork beneath. Add a bonding agent like Bondcrete to your mortar mix to improve the bond between the two surfaces.



Drainage: collecting run-off from new structures in the garden is a very important consideration in the design phase. Guttering and downpipes would detract from the appearance of the gazebo, so an attractive form of rubble drain has been used beneath the roof overhang. Agricultural pipe (65mm diameter with sock) buried in a blue metal (10mm) filled trench and topped with decorative Cowra Gold pebbles will catch run-off from the roof. Captured water travels to a 90mm PVC stormwater pipe connected to the existing stormwater system. **Blitz Tipz**

When building new structures in the backyard make sure that any water run-off is retained and collected within your property boundaries.

Fencing: a new timber paling fence installed along the length of the garden hides the carport behind and provides an internal boundary to the garden. Three-hole fence posts, installed at 2400mm centres in quick setting concrete support three rails. 1800mm (6ft) palings nailed vertically against the rails provide a quick and long lasting screen. A prefabricated galvanised steel gate was hung on drop hinges to enable access to the carport. Timber palings screwed in place complete the gate. **Blitz Tipz** Prefabricated, steel gate frames are simple to hang and are less likely to sag over time than a handmade timber gate.

Garden beds: Jody used the excavator attachment on the bobcat to loosen the compacted soil in the proposed garden beds and to add an organic garden mix. A decorative mulch of recycled timber waste called Forest Fines was spread to a depth of 75mm over the newly planted garden beds. Some beautiful flowering climbers were planted into glazed, oxblood-coloured pots to brighten up the rear patio.

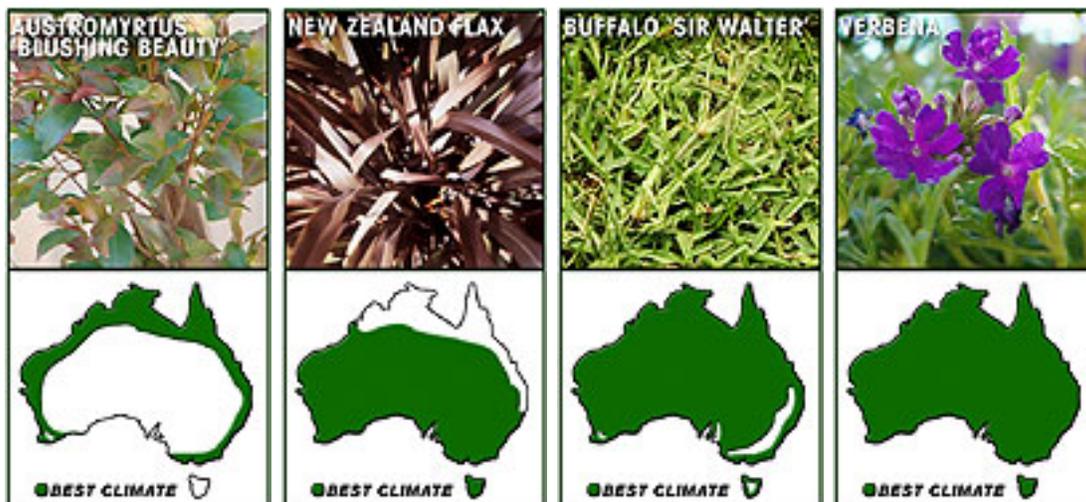


Plants

Trees: austromyrtus (*Austromyrtus 'Aurora'*), austromyrtus (*Austromyrtus inophloia 'Blushing Beauty'*), Bhutan cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*)

Perennials: New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax 'Purpureum'*), verbena (*Verbena 'Purple Passion'*)

Climber: dipladenia (*Mandevilla sanderii 'Red Riding Hood'*)



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 \$14,278. This cost could be reduced to \$11,899 by using smaller plants.

Product details

- Stepstone pavers from C&M Brick cost about \$45m². The colour we used was 'Sunstone' but they are available in five other colours. Phone (02) 9748 1024 or view the website at www.cmbrick.com.au
- Hardwood shingles were supplied by The Shingle Company of Australia. Phone (02) 6677 7420 for more product details and design ideas.
- Large oxblood pots are available at most large nurseries or specialist pot stores. Expect to pay about \$150 per pot.
- Cowra Gold pebbles are not available Australia wide, but there is a great range of decorative pebbles to choose from at good landscape supply yards. They start at about \$80 per tonne or \$10 per 15kg bag.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at nurseries. If not, your nursery can order them for you or give you advice about 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 and landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the bobcat and nail gun.

Getaway details

Rafferty's Resort
1 Wild Duck Drive via Rafferty's Road
Cams Wharf
Lake Macquarie
Phone: (02) 4972 5555
www.raffertysresort.com.au

Milano's on the Lake
Pelican Marina

89 Soldiers Rd
Pelican
Phone: (02) 4972 0550

Acknowledgments

Design by:
John Happ
3rd Dimension Designs
Phone: (02) 9744 2658

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

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For more Step by Step Constructions click here

