

BACKYARD BLITZ

Contemporary Chic



For as long as 18 year old Mia Airth can remember her Dad, Brian, has been sick. Today with his family's support Brian is a lot better and after the gift of a kidney from brother Wayne, is finally freed from a dialysis machine. With his health improved, he has renovated the family home and is looking forward to a better life ahead. Mia wanted to show how proud they all are of his achievements and asked the Backyard Blitz team to work their magic in time for Brian's birthday. Mia and the team gave him a surprise he will never forget.

The result is a stylish external room designed by landscape designer Jamie Durie. Jamie has designed a contemporary Australian garden in an intimate space between the living room and the garage. A large paved area surrounded by broken slate borders leads the eye to a long formal water feature. Large timber pontoons at different levels surrounded by slate mulch step up to a rear deck.



Here moveable modular bench seating invites visitors to relax and enjoy the sounds of water and the fragrances of nearby herbs. In later winter and early spring a large magnolia will be a stunning centrepiece for the garden.

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: council permission is required to remove some trees, and may be required for some structural work. Check with your local council regarding regulations about water features. If

your water feature is deeper than a certain depth, you may be required to erect a pool fence around it. The depths vary between council areas across Australia.

Materials

Paving: large concrete pavers (610x610x40mm) were used. The pavers were laid over sand and compacted road base. A decorative strip of slate mulch was laid around the edges and through a centre line of the paved area. Grouting sand was swept between the pavers and a concrete haunch was installed to retain the sand beneath the pavers.



Decking: structural grade treated pine and galvanised post supports, nails and cup head bolts and washers were used to construct the deck. Rapid set concrete was used to hold post supports. The following timber sizes were used: posts (90x90x2400mm), bearers (140x45x5400mm), joists (90x45x3000mm), decking boards (90x22mm). We nailed them in position using a nail gun and spiral nails which stay in the wood.



Blitz tipz: decking boards are laid smooth side up, grooved side down. The grooves are for drainage from under the deck.

Pontoons: treated pine sleepers (200x75x2400mm), decking (90x22mm), 25mm wide perforated hoop iron, galvanised decking spikes (150mm).

Moveable bench seats: structural grade pine (70x45mm), decking boards (90x22mm), 50mm galvanised nails.

Water feature: a prefabricated, waterproof marine grade aluminium trough (4500x600x300mm) was used. This was painted with a black bituminous paint. A length of 19mm polypipe and flow controlled irrigation risers were used to trickle water into the trough. This system was fed by a Hozelock low voltage submersible pump. Two submersible low voltage Hanza lights were installed in the base of the trough. These were connected to a transformer located nearby in the garage.



Garden beds: treated pine sleepers (200x75x2400mm) were connected with 150mm galvanised nails and backfilled with a mix of good quality garden mix and mushroom compost. Broken pieces of slate were used for a dramatic, long-lasting mulch.

Paint: Porter's Boncote cement-based paint is a textured exterior paint that can be coloured using oxide. 1kg of the paint covers about 6m² and can be purchased in tins of 3.5kg, 10kg or 20kg.

Steel planter box: 1200x600mm sheets of G4 steel were used for the magnolia planter box. These sheets were welded together on site. This is a job for professionals only. Contact the Association of Sheet Metal Workers under 'Sheet Metal' in the Yellow Pages for individual contractors details.

Plants

We used a range of herbs, a large magnolia, bay trees, dietes and water plants for a contemporary, individual design.

Herb garden: bay tree (*Laurus nobilis*) and assorted herbs including lemon grass, comfrey, garlic.

Water feature and around pontoons: dietes (*Dietes grandiflora*), Japanese bloodgrass (*Imperata cylindrica 'Rubra'*), papyrus (*Cyperus papyrus*), sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*), tall bearded iris (*Iris 'New Tune'*)

Feature tree: magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangiana* 'Alexandrina')

Other plants: New Zealand cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*), false acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia'), bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), soft tree fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*)



bay tree



papyrus



magnolia



lemon grass



New Zealand cabbage tree



Japanese bloodgrass

Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. Our total cost of plants and materials was \$9420. This cost could be reduced to \$8137 by using smaller plants.

- Concrete slab pavers (610x610x40mm) from AA West Precast Concrete Products are distributed through Hardware House and cost about \$30m2 (or \$11.11 a tile). Contact your nearest Hardware House store.
- Broken slate was used as a mulch and as an insert in the paving. Contact your local tile retailer for sources of broken slate.
- Rusted steel planter was purchased as sheets and cost \$280.
- Our water feature used a prefabricated marine grade aluminium trough manufactured by Versatile Metals in Sydney, phone: (02) 9476 4298. It cost \$595. Similar products are readily available by contacting a sheet metal manufacturer.
- Porters Boncote cement paint - 10kg cost \$108. Call Porters head office in Sydney, phone: (02) 9698 5322 for local distributors or check your phone book. The dark green we used was mixed to our specifications.

- Most of the selected plants are readily available at nurseries or ask your nursery to order them for you.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores, building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used such as the nail gun are commonly available for hire.

Getaway details:

Accommodation: Lilianfels Blue Mountains, Echo Point, Katoomba, NSW, phone: (02) 4780 1200.

Acknowledgements: Garden design by Jamie Durie of Patio Garden Design and Collectibles, www.patiodesign.com.au Construction by the Blitz team. Garden lighting by Ross Crawford of Lights For You, phone: (02) 9956 8988, Sydney.

For more **Step by Step Constructions** [click here](#)



© Burke's Backyard 2003

Burke's Backyard and Backyard Blitz do not accept payment to promote products. All recommendations are genuine.

Details on the fact sheets are accurate at the time of publishing, however prices and contact information are not updated and may change.