

# BACKYARD BLITZ

## It Could Be You

The success and popularity of this style of Blitz program has the team out on the streets again, searching for that very special backyard on which to unleash the full "Blitz treatment". This time the fab four find themselves in Canberra, scanning the suburbs that were most severely affected by the 2003 bushfires. We meet a family two years on, who are still dealing with the emotional and financial aftermath of the disaster, and who are still trying to re-build their family home.



## Design

Jamie looked at the backyard and discussed with the owners, what they would like in their garden. He then designed the garden to reflect the individual needs of the family, including an outdoor dining area, an outdoor lounge room, a soccer court, children's play area with cubby house, new raised vegie and herb garden, a timber boardwalk and seating area.



## 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.

**Blitz tip:** use graph paper (already scaled) and pencil

**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.

## Getting started

Clear out the yard of all unwanted material to get the full picture. Mark out your finished design with aerosol survey paint.

**Note:** In ground posts must be H4 treated pine – if not they must be set in galvanised stirrups set in concrete.

Perimeter fence was painted with 'Plum Purple'.

## Garden elements

We built the dining room deck using the typical post, double bearer and oversized joist (150x50mm) construction to allow for extra weight. We then fixed 15mm compressed cement sheeting as a substrate to lay the ceramic tiles.

**Blitz tipz:** Sheeting is best laid with staggered joints.

The tiles were then laid on a quality flexible adhesive bed. Be sure that the laying surface is dry and dust free.

**Blitz tipz:** When laying tiles endeavour to have any cuts against the walls or where they will be less noticeable.

For shade to the outdoor entertaining areas we supplied a Shelta Penumbra adjustable umbrella.



The cantilevered boardwalk was constructed from 90x90mm treated pine posts, 140x140mm treated pine bearers and 90x45 joists. Merbau hardwood decking was laid.

Screens were created using 38x19mm batu hardwood slats fixed to painted 90x90mm treated pine posts.

**Blitz tipz:** When fixing hardwoods, pre-drill holes to prevent splitting of timber.



Stepper pavers were laid on a mortar bed to give access through the garden areas.

For turf we laid a tall fescue/rye grass blend in rolls over underlay. It is a green all year round blend and withstands heavy traffic.

10mm 'Peach Pebble' was laid as a surface for the outdoor lounge area with intermittent plantings to break up the space



The cubby house was bought as a D.I.Y pre-fab flat pack kit and comes with construction instructions.

**Blitz tipz:** Get a friend to help

**Garden:** To improve the dry and compacted soil, we dug it over to a depth of 400mm and incorporated a good organic garden mix.

**Blitz Tipz:** If you find that your soil has become hydrophobic or repels water (water beads on the surface), apply a wetting agent like SaturAid.

Raised herb and vegetable garden beds were constructed from treated pine sleepers nailed together using galvanised spikes. A raised bed provides good drainage.

In this garden we were able to combine utility areas, entertainment and a place for the children without jeopardising plant selection and were still able to achieve masses of flowering and interesting fruit trees and plants.



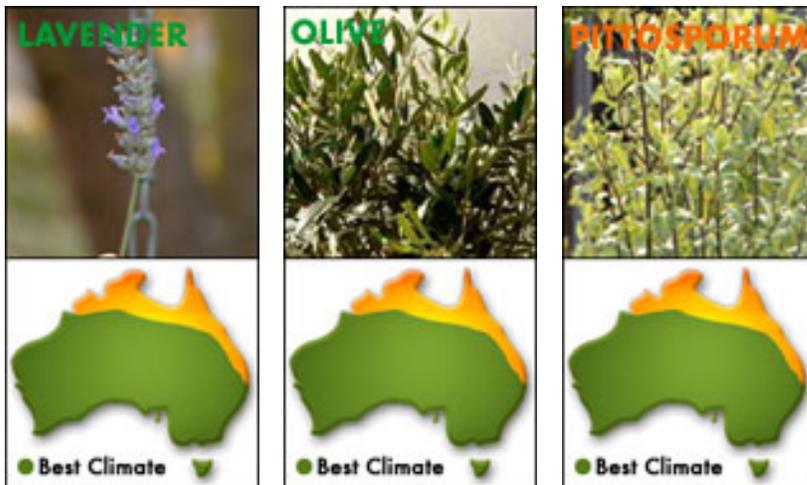
## Plants

**Trees:** Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Seiryu'), Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Sangokaku'), Illawarra flame tree (*Brachychiton acerifolius*), Chanticleer pear (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Glen's Form' Chanticleer®), Irish strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*).

**Shrubs:** coast rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*), bush germander (*Teucrium fruticans*), correa (*Correa decumbens*), camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*), pineapple guava (*Feijoa sellowiana*), English lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), silver bush (*Convolvulus cneorum*), pittosporum (*Pittosporum* 'Silver Sheen') and (*Pittosporum* 'Sunburst'), grevillea (*Grevillea x gaudichaudii*), (*Grevillea* 'Mt Tamboritha'), photinia (*Photinia* 'Red Robin'), sweet pea shrub (*Polygala x dalmatisiana*).

**Perennials:** lomandra (*Lomandra* 'Little Pal'), flax lily (*Dianella revolute*).

**Grass:** blue fescue (*Festuca glauca*).



## Cost and availability

We used mature plants to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$22,251. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$18,513.

## 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.
- All timber supplies and technical information supplied by Midcoast Timber Centres. Check the website for the closest outlet. Web: [www.midcoasttimber.com.au](http://www.midcoasttimber.com.au)
- Tiles were supplied by Rivoland tiles. Phone: (02) 6297 7028 Web: [www.rivoland.com.au](http://www.rivoland.com.au)
- Shelta Penumbra umbrella supplied by Burning Log Megastore. Phone: (02) 6280 6021 or contact Shelta for nearest stockist. Retail cost is approx. \$1200 or \$1500 including the stand.
- Goal posts from any specialist sports equipment retailer.

## Holiday details

Mercure Grand  
50 Murray Street  
Darling Harbour NSW  
Phone: (02) 9563 6666  
Web: [www.accorhotels.com.au](http://www.accorhotels.com.au)

Sydney Aquarium  
Aquarium Pier  
Darling Harbour NSW  
Phone: (02) 8251 7800  
Web: [www.sydneyaquarium.com.au](http://www.sydneyaquarium.com.au)

Power House Museum  
500 Harris St  
Ultimo NSW  
Phone: (02) 9217 0111  
Web: [www.powerhousemuseum.com](http://www.powerhousemuseum.com)

Lion King  
Sydney Capitol Theatre  
13 Campbell St  
Haymarket  
Phone: 1300 855 445  
Sydney season sold out.  
Tickets now available for the new season starting on July 28 at Melbourne's Regent Theatre.

CafÉ Sydney  
Level 5  
Customs House  
31 Alfred St  
Circular Quay NSW  
Phone: (02) 9251 8683  
Web: [www.cafesydney.com.au](http://www.cafesydney.com.au)

## Acknowledgements

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

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