

The Home HANDYMAN

March 2014 • Vol 21 No 3
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Beautiful balustrades

- Different materials
- Safety advice
- Installation guidelines



MAKE A DRUM BRAAI



**CHOOSING A
GARAGE DOOR**

+plus

Secure your property
Be security savvy: choose an alarm system and secure your perimeter



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Garden shed: how to fix a leaking roof, treat rust and maintain wooden sheds

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PLUMBING

ELECTRICAL

Wood needs nurturing

The recent rainy season was really good, but if there is one thing that didn't appreciate the water, it was my front door. When I moved into my new home in May last year, the eight panel wooden door already seemed tired. Tired, but not yet ready to die.

We publish many articles on treating wood in the magazine, but that doesn't mean I always follow my own advice. Although the damage was already quite extensive, it was not so bad that the door needed to be replaced immediately. After some deliberation I came to the conclusion that treating the wood would just extend the door's life a little, but would never restore its natural beauty. The door needed to be replaced... but winter came, the daylight hours became shorter and the rain disappeared. I adopted an 'out of sight, out of mind' type of attitude.

Then summer approached, the rain started and soon the weary door showed that it was taking strain again. One night the rain came down and it was beautiful. There is something about rain that makes the world sound, smell and look new again. But the next morning, the door had clearly given up on life. The bottom had swelled until it was stuck to the floor tiles. With a gentle tug on the handle, the door broke in half and was suddenly a stable door.

So, off I went to get a new one. I cut it to size, sealed it with three coats as the instructions kindly request and that night I had a new door in place. I promise to look after this one better and feed it when it asks to be fed.

Autumn is nearly upon us again, but not quite yet. In this issue, we still venture outdoors, bringing lots of maintenance tips and how-to's. We also cover home security in depth. I hope this magazine will bring you hours of happy reading and learning.



Johann Stadler, Editor



*Roelof Strydom,
Assistant Editor*

The Home HANDYMAN

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The Home
HANDYMAN
PUBLISHING

CONTENTS

FEATURES



12

12 Keeping criminals out

Secure your home to keep criminals out and your family and assets safe

18 Guiding lights

Bring your garden alive at night by installing garden lights

22 Beautiful balustrades

Balustrades don't just serve a safety purpose, but add character and value to your home as well

26 Make a drum braai

Piet Steenkamp shows you how to make a handy braai from a metal drum



34



26

28 Access granted

What to consider when choosing garage doors

34 Metalworking

André Gous constructs a handy veggie rack

38 Writing on the wall

When safeguarding your home, the first line of defence is a good perimeter wall

46 Shed some light

A look at some garden shed repairs and maintenance

50 Tool talk

A jigsaw is an indispensable tool to have in your tool cupboard. We showcase six different products

52 A woodworker's diary

Denis Lock explains why end grain does not glue well



52

Competitions & giveaways

WIN a Maktec MT870 Rotary Hammer 7

WIN a Bosch PBD 40 Bench Drill 11

WIN a Triton T12ID Impact Drill 44



REGULARS

4 Off the shelf

All the latest products for the DIY'er

6 Voice your views

Your chance to air an opinion

8 DIY matters

News, views and reviews from around the globe

10 Ask our experts

Your DIY queries answered by our panel of experts

44 Bright ideas

Readers share their DIY ideas and projects

54 Woodworker's corner

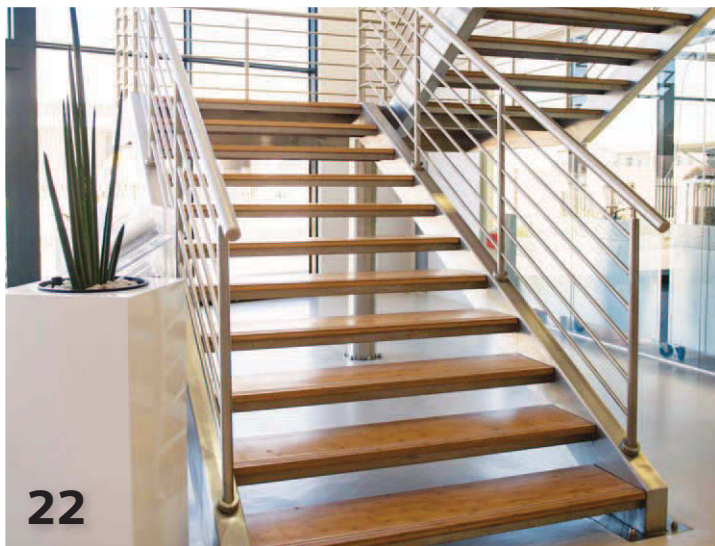
An opportunity for readers to showcase their work

62 Subscriptions

Save by subscribing to *The Home Handyman* and win great prizes

64 Tailpiece

Reuben has an altercation with a BMW salesman about his Mercedes-Benz

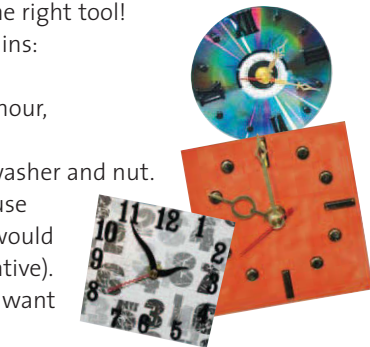


Make your own clock

Cape Watch is a leading supplier of precision tooling in the clock, watchmaking and hobby industries. It stocks an extensive range of tools and materials, which are available on the website. The company has technical hands-on experience and a new website that allows you to order online – it has never been easier to get the right tool!

The clock-making kit contains:

- The movement.
- A set of hands (minute, hour, second hands).
- A rubber spacer, metal washer and nut.
- Dial or face (or you can use almost anything if you would like to be a bit more creative).
- Perspex CD stand, if you want a small clock to stand alone and not hang on a wall.
- Instructions.



i For more information

Visit: www.capewatch.co.za
Tel: 021-424-8261

Drill sergeant

The Skil 2531 Cordless Drill/Driver is a powerful, ergonomic and lightweight drill/driver that is always ready to use, thanks to advanced lithium-ion battery technology. It is a light, 18V two-gear lithium-ion drill/driver weighing in at just 1.3kg.

The motor and gearbox configuration has been upgraded, resulting in a higher torque and a higher maximum drilling diameter. Thanks to its high gear setting, the Skil 2531 drill/driver is able to achieve 1 600rpm, allowing it to drill faster and more conveniently in materials such as wood, steel and plastic.

It has two mechanical settings; a high speed setting for drilling and a high power setting for challenging screwdriving tasks. With a maximum drilling capacity of 35mm in wood and 10mm in steel, it is guaranteed to satisfy a wide range of DIY drilling and screwdriving demands.



i For more information

Visit: www.skil.com
Tel: 011-651-9600



Flex your grinding

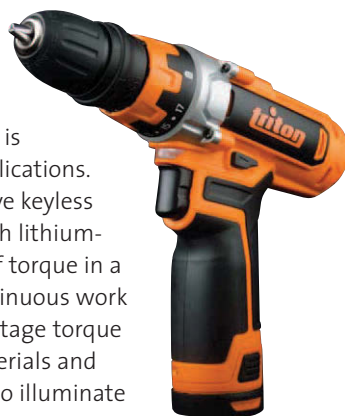
The Flex 750W Angle Grinder from Newco Power Tools has a no-load speed of 10 000rpm. The unit provides extensive protection against dust for motor and gears, thus extending its working life. Its comfortable, ergonomic and lightweight design with a weight of only 1.8kg makes working with it easy. The safety guard can be adjusted without any tools and for improved handling it has a place for the hand grip on both sides.

i For more information

Visit: www.newcopowertools.co.za
Tel: 011-315-1504

Drill and drive it

The Triton T12DD 12V Cordless Drill Driver is ideal for all drilling and screwdriving applications. Featuring a 10mm removable single sleeve keyless chuck for quick bit changes, and two 1.5Ah lithium-ion batteries, the T12DD delivers 20Nm of torque in a compact and lightweight design for continuous work in confined areas. It is equipped with 17-stage torque adjustment for a variety of different materials and screw sizes and a built-in LED worklight to illuminate the work surface. The over-moulded grip improves comfort and reduces fatigue during repetitive work.



i For more information

Visit: www.vermontsales.co.za
Tel: 011-314-7711

Specifications	
Power:	12V
No-load speed:	0-300rpm Low/0-1 050rpm High
Battery type:	2 x 1.5Ah li-ion Samsung cells
Chuck type:	single sleeve removable chuck
Torque settings:	17 + 1
Max torque:	22Nm Hard/15Nm Soft
Speed:	Two-speed with variable and reverse
Motor type:	Mabuchi RS.-550VC
Charger:	30 min fast charge/one hour full charge
Light:	LED worklight
Weight:	1.18kg



Strong bond

A new addition to Pratley's adhesive range is Pratley Powda Bond. This DIY adhesive is an instant repair system that can be used as either a two-component or a single adhesive. It cures very fast and can be used to build up thick sections or fill gaps on repair jobs.

The kit contains a special grade liquid adhesive and specially formulated black and white powder fillers. The bond cures within seconds and its formulation ensures good penetration of the adhesive through the powder filler and onto the substrate. A great way to see the product's good powder penetration is by adhering an item to a transparent substrate like Perspex.

Once cured, Powda Bond can be painted, sanded or filed and can be exposed to water. It also performs well on certain difficult plastics. Some suggested Powda Bond repairs include damaged car bumpers, cracked pipes, damaged television remotes and swimming pool pump valves.



For more information

Visit: www.pratley.com

Tel: 011-955-2190

Keep it together

Pattex 100% Glue and Gel are UV- and shock-resistant, as well as waterproof once cured, making them suitable for a range of applications, including on vehicles and outdoors. The bonding agent is also flexible once cured and can resist temperatures between -50°C and 80°C.

Plus, the final result is fully transparent, so these Pattex products are even ideal for fixing broken glass and crystal. Pattex 100% Glue and Gel are adjustable for up to 30 minutes and are acid-free, which make them perfectly suited to crafting applications, too. In addition, the gel is non-drip and suitable for vertical applications.

With a 100% concentrated formula and no solvents, the Pattex 100% Glue and Gel range is the ideal DIY, home repairs and crafting partner!



For more information

Visit: www.pattex.co.za

Take care

Plascon Woodcare Natural Deck Coating is an advanced water-based formulation designed to penetrate deep into wood for maximum protection. Like the true oils found in wood, it rejuvenates and safeguards wood colour and integrity. Woodcare Natural Deck Coating protects wood from the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation and seals and protects the wood from moisture, minimising cracking and mould build-up.

It is safe to use, has a low odour and is easy to clean up with cold water. It is a natural treatment solution and will breathe life back into your timber and enhance its natural beauty.

- Premium quality penetrating sealer.
- Blocks out harmful UV rays.
- Excellent wear resistance.

Can be used on all types of wood.



For more information

Visit: www.plascon.co.za

Tel: 0860-20-40-60

Rusting away?

Powafix has been producing and supplying products to the retail trade for the last 25 years, including metal treatment products. Two of these products include:

- **Deoxidene:** A ready-to-use phosphoric acid-based de-ruster and metal cleaner that protects and prolongs the life of many types of metal, such as roof sheets and gutters, metal gates, fences, windows and structural profiles and steel. It is an ideal pre-treatment for surface rusted metal that needs to be stabilised before painting.
- **Rust Converter:** An ideal copolymer coating that reacts and converts rust to a stable black protective coating that provides excellent adhesion properties to metal primers. Great to protect and prolong the life of outdoor metal products like garden furniture.



For more information

Visit: www.Powafix.co.za

Tel: 0860-254-620

DIY restoration

**WINNING
LETTER**

My wife and I live on a farm high up in the Drakensberg Mountains. We purchased the farm 10 years ago and since then have been restoring the original old farmhouse. This house has a fair amount of history attached to it. It is well over 135 years old and was originally a post office on the wagon trail. Later on, in addition to being a post office it became a type of weekly boarding school for the local children. After both the post office and the school closed, the farm was then used for general farming purposes. The farm changed hands after many years and it was then that the original old farmhouse was no longer used and therefore stood empty for 35 years. It was at this stage that we purchased the farm. I am sure you can imagine the state of this old sandstone dwelling.

We have been restoring this old house, trying wherever possible to keep it as authentic as possible. I would like to share with you what I have done on some of the old original dung floors. We collected slate from a dry river bed. As you know, slate is a sedimentary stone composed of layers. I cut up the pieces of slate we removed from the dry river bed into various sized rectangles, which I then laid using normal tile adhesive. I then sealed the slate and it looks old, different and fits in so well with the age of the house. I have used this slate on the floor in the bathroom where there is an old bath, and in another bathroom, I used it in the shower and on the bathroom floor. In one of the other bathrooms, I used layers of sandstone in the shower. These floors are all non-slip and very easy to keep clean.

I have done a few different and interesting DIY projects in this old house. With some of the things I have done, I really had to wrack my brain as we do not have electricity on the farm.

Evan Langley

Winning letter

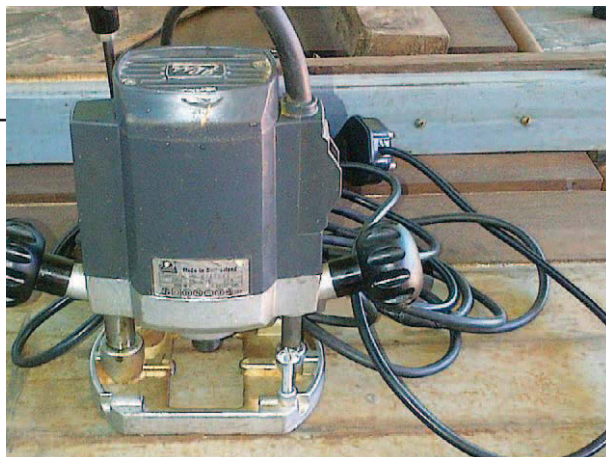
This month's winning letter comes from Evan Langley who wins a Makita JV0600K Jigsaw



Never say die!

In 1984, I purchased this router second hand. A few times it has nearly seized due to bearing failure. I then opened it up and sprayed Q20 into the bearing until it turned freely again. Two weeks ago it eventually seized and after a long battle I eventually managed to get the bearing removed from the armature shaft. A trip to our local bearing dealer and R 18.50 later, I now have a router that will service me for the next 30 years.

Eric Botha, Ermelo



Info on Stayer tools

I work at a steel company in Worcester and sell steel for DIY and other steel projects. Our company received drills, grinders and electric screwdrivers named Stayer. I would like to know more about this product because I have never heard of it before. The rep reckons this product competes with Bosch, Skil and other top products. I would appreciate a reply from your experts or maybe a reader who knows this product.

Henry Pletschke

Ed replies: We haven't seen or tested the product yet, so our opinion would be an uninformed one, but maybe a reader can tell us a bit about the product.

Harvesting lightning strikes

Reading your answer on Christo du Toit's question regarding the harnessing of lightning energy, it once again becomes clear that the Americans don't always have the correct answers on issues.

You state correctly that we have a problem with catching lightning hits as even the areas with the highest hits in South Africa only get around 10 hits per square kilometre per year. However, the problem is not based on the smallness of the current as stated in the answer as lightning protection is based on multiples of 100 000A, which along with the very high voltages would give us vast amounts of energy. One hit could supply a big city with energy for months.

The problem lies in catching and saving/storing this vast amount of energy, then delivering it at the required voltage, which is a standard of 230V AC single phase or 400V three phase in South Africa as per the SABS standards, not 120V as stated in your answer.

In short, to make harnessing lightning energy commercially viable we need to find ways to:

- Catch lightning hits on a regular basis to make any such project financially viable.
- Store this vast amount of energy instantly in a suitable storage container.
- Transform this stored energy into usable electricity (230/400V AC) for the consumer.

Not such an easy act and that is why it has not been done yet.

Harm Boer, Pretoria

WIN!

A Maktec MT870 Rotary Hammer

Share your opinion

Send us your views, ideas and opinions addressed to

The Home Handyman:

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Fax: 011-704-3962

By mail: PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010

Letters may be edited for length and clarity



Please note: Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery once the issue is on the shelf.

Wits Woodworkers Association celebrates 25th anniversary



▲ Shaun Sampson with the Toymaker of the Year floating trophy

The Witwatersrand Woodworkers Association held its 23rd Toys for Charity fundraiser at Greenside High School in November last year.

The event was attended by over 100 members and guests, who thoroughly enjoyed the spit, and was supported by donations from major suppliers to the woodworking industry.

The purpose of the event is to enable association members to bring the toys they have made to one central point for donation to charity. Members were challenged to make 1 000 toys and the final tally was 1 440, over 40% more than the objective.

Daphne van Staden from Westview Clinic attended the function and presented Shaun Sampson with the Toymaker of the Year floating trophy.

The Westview Clinic runs 35 crèches in underprivileged areas on the West Rand and Soweto, and the Witwatersrand Woodworkers Association annual toys donation is always gratefully received.

UP architectural student wins a place at Corobrik awards

The revitalisation of an old textile mill has won Heidi van Eeden, a University of Pretoria architectural student, a place at the 27th Corobrik Architectural Student of the Year Awards.

Today's fine architects are required to combine design talent with engineering ability, social awareness and an aptitude for business. In recent years, this skills set has, of necessity, expanded to include understanding of the impact of different technologies on the environment with a particular focus on biodiversity conservation, wise water consumption and low energy usage. Students of architecture who successfully incorporate technologies able to lower environmental impacts with their artistic and design talents are those set to make a valuable contribution to the built environment of the future.

The top thesis students from eight universities across the country who demonstrate holistic competence will showcase their talents at the 26th Corobrik Architectural Student of the Year National Awards in April 2014.

Allin Dangers, Corobrik director of Sales Inland Region,

Heidi van Eerden is this year's regional winner from the University of Pretoria in the Corobrik Architectural Student of the Year Awards. She is pictured proudly holding up her award for her thesis entitled "Machinarium"



presented prizes to architectural thesis students of the University of Pretoria. The winner of R8 000 was Heidi van Eeden, with Philip Slabbert taking the R6 000 second prize and Marie Cronje taking home the third prize of R4 000. The winner of the R4 000 prize for best use of clay masonry was Stephen Steyn. Heidi van Eeden will go forward to compete for the national award and a cheque for R50 000.

Do you have any DIY industry news or views to share?

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Different sections of House Bozwana in Pretoria, which was the 2013 overall winner of the Lafarge Artevia Decorative Concrete Awards

Chryso products help showcase creative use of decorative concrete

Chryso South Africa supplied a variety of products for the Lafarge Artevia concrete mix for the construction of House Bozwana, overall winner of the 2013 Lafarge Artevia Decorative Concrete Awards, which showcases the innovative and creative use of decorative concrete finishes.

Sponsored by Lafarge South Africa's Readymix concrete division and Chryso South Africa in collaboration with global pigment producer Lanxess of Germany, the Lafarge Artevia Decorative Concrete Awards were introduced in 2009 to show how decorative concretes can create better, more durable structures and enhance the environment in which they are located.

The installers and polishers of House Bozwana were Johannesburg-based Ocean Side Trading, which won the overall top award of R40 000, while the house's architects, Nico van der Meulen Architects, were also among the professionals honoured at a gala function at the Michelangelo Hotel in Sandton.

Other category winners in the 2013 Lafarge Artevia Decorative Concrete Awards included QS Concrete Grinding and Polishing (Polishing Award), Horticare (Exposed), Melt Wahl (Colour), Boogertman & Partners (Exposed) and Panmixer SA (special award for showcasing Lafarge Artevia decorative concrete in the company's showroom).

Commenting on the merits of decorative concrete in the design field, award-winning House Bozwana architect Nico van der Meulen said the concept has great potential in South Africa, but called for skilled and experienced applicators capable of achieving the desired standard. "The standard of the applicators' workmanship and skills ultimately determines the quality of the finished product."

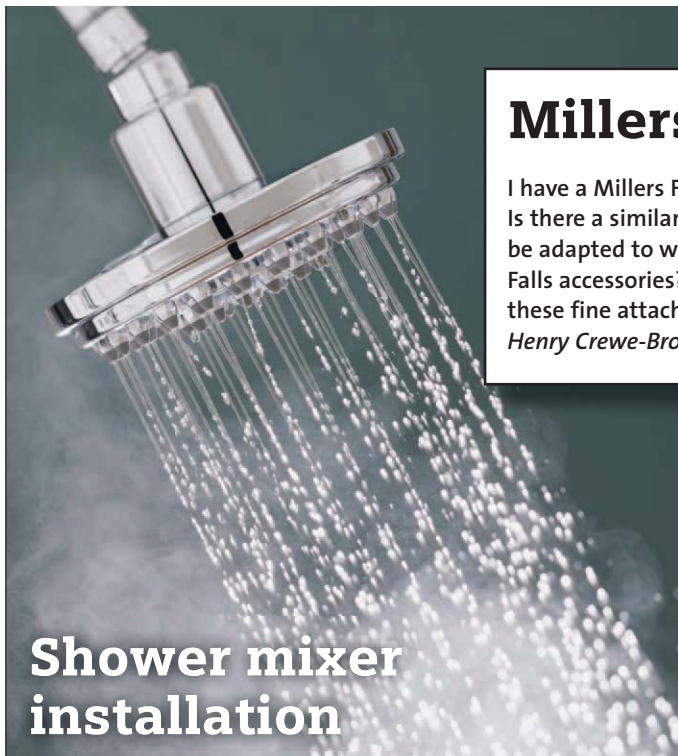
Sika supports Lions charity evening at Builders Express

The Lions Rotary Club held its annual fundraising event on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast on behalf of the many charities it supports in November last year.

The Builders Express South Coast store offered its premises as the venue and helped obtain as many donations as possible. Many suppliers donated fabulous gifts to be drawn in a lucky dip. Sika's Debbie Westwood was there, wearing her Santa hat and proffering her yellow bucket of sweet treats and other giveaways, which were a great joy to all who received them.

Sika sponsored a large hamper filled with all the essential products needed for many DIY jobs around the house. Builders Express also held trolley dashes for two lucky people to fill their trolley within the time period given. A 'one-man band' added Christmas cheer to the evening and fun was had by suppliers, customers and Builders Express staff alike.





Shower mixer installation

I want to install a shower mixer in my existing shower, where all the pipework is behind the tiles. I don't want to remove the existing tiles, so need to find out if there is a method to install the mixer and pipework on the outside of the tiles.

Hendrie Spies, by email

Patrick Gordon, national training manager at Cobra Watertech, replies: I assume that you have two under-tile stopcocks connected to form a mixer as per normal screw-down tap configurations. If you want to install a mixer, I gather that you need a single lever unit to replace the two screw-down taps that you currently have.

Unfortunately there is no off-the-shelf way to do this. If you can get a plumbing specialist like Adap Atap to make up something for you, the whole mixer and riser pipe to the shower rose will have to be surface mounted and that may not be an aesthetic solution to your problem. Adap Atap can be contacted at 011-660-7613, or contact Patrick on 011-951-5000.

Millers Falls drill

I have a Millers Falls drill that is on its last legs. Is there a similar drill on the market that could be adapted to work with the various Millers Falls accessories? It seems a pity to discard these fine attachments.

Henry Crewe-Brown, Kenton-on-Sea

Julian Stern from Hardware Centre replies: These drills have been off the South African market for more years than I can remember... at least 40 years. I can only suggest that you take your old drill or accessory to a hardware store that stocks Black & Decker or Skil power tools and see if he can match fit, however, I do not hold out much hope.

WINNING QUERY



In a knot

I make picnic benches (see photograph) that people use outside and I am experiencing a huge problem with knots in the pine. I have been treating the wood with Woodoc 50. Can the panel of experts please advise me on how to address my problem?

Eric Botha, Ermelo

Frikkie Greeff, managing director at Woodoc, replies: We always recommend that one should make peace with the fact that wood is a natural substance and, as such, is subject to imperfections. If the knots in the wood are sealed with a good knot sealer (Plascon Woodcare Knot Seal comes to mind) before application of Woodoc 50, I can say with reasonable certainty that the resin from the knots will not bleed through and the knots themselves will not work loose and come out of the wood. Then it should not be necessary to use wood filler. Wood fillers are prone to hardening and shrinking faster than wood, hence the tendency to become brittle and 'pop out'. If very soft filler, or at least filler that remains pliable and does not dry out, is used, you may have the problem of compatibility between the soft filler and the sealer/varnish topcoat that will not necessarily adhere to the filler. Hence we do not generally recommend the use of fillers.

Contact Woodoc on 0800-411-200 if you need any further advice. The service is available during office hours, from Monday to Friday.

Winning query

This month's winning query comes from Eric Botha who wins a Bosch PLL 360 Line Laser Level





Tub chair plans

I am a DIY carpenter who has built a few projects and have the idea of constructing my own tub chair. I understand that this is not an amateur project but would greatly appreciate it if you could inform me of where I could get plans for a tub chair.

Louis Kruger, by email

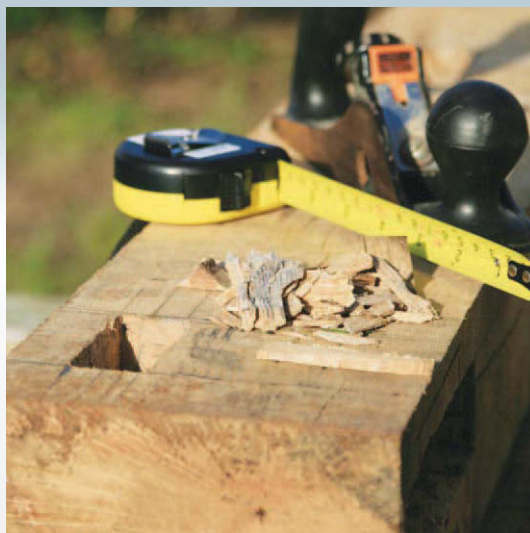
Ed replies: We will ask our readers if they can assist with a plan, however, the best source is Hardware Centre, a specialist woodworking store that offers a wide selection of woodworking power tools and equipment, including a vast range of books that feature projects, plans and technical know-how. Contact Viv Martin on 011-791-0844 or visit www.hardwarecentre.co.za. They deliver countrywide via a courier service.

Where is a Watts drill?

I took woodwork as a subject in school in the 1970s. This comprised theory, drawings and practical. It was a great subject to be recommended to anyone.

I want to rekindle that passion and require some advice. As we did some fancy joints, we used a variety of tools. What I am looking for is a Watts drill. This drill can create square holes. It operates with a square sleeve incorporating an oval drill bit inside the sleeve. The question is, where can I find this drill, or has this been made redundant by routers?

Chris Faurie, Pretoria



Julian Stern from Hardware Centre replies:

I have only seen this item once before and this was many years ago. I do not think these were ever imported into this country. They were made by a firm in the United States – Watts Brother Tool Works – in Pennsylvania in the 1950s.

One of the ways of making square holes today is with a mortise attachment used with a drill press, or by drilling the hole and then using a corner chisel/punch. Perhaps one of the readers can assist?

For more information contact Julian on 011-791-0844

WIN!

A Bosch PBD 40 Bench Drill

Ask our experts

Send us your DIY queries and you could win! Send to:

The Home Handyman DIY Queries,
PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010.

Fax: 011-704-3962.

Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za

Remember to include your physical address and telephone number during office hours.

Please note: Queries will be answered in the magazine. Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery once the issue is on the shelf.



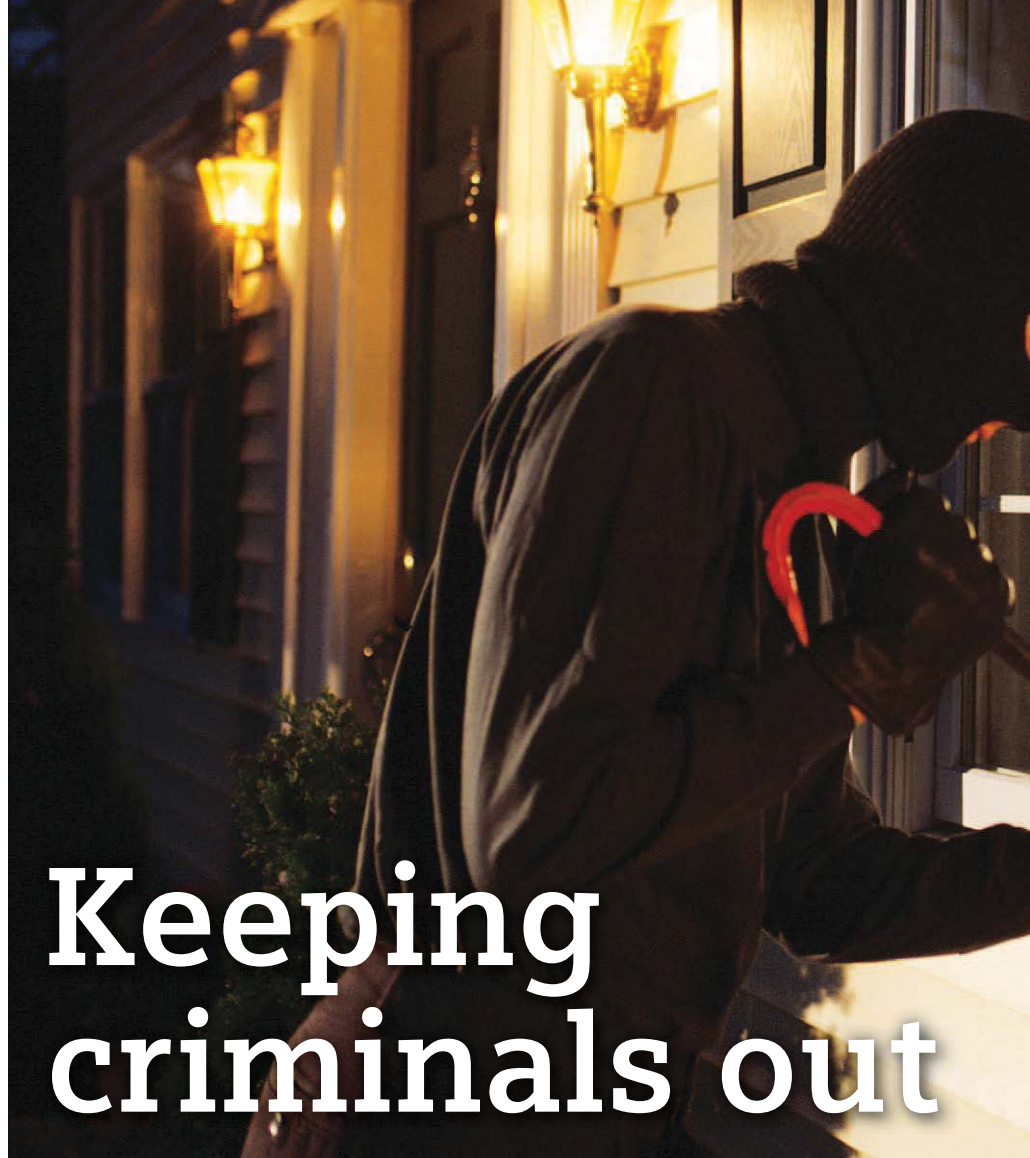
Security is a top priority for South African homeowners. Is your home secure and have you perhaps missed a loophole?

By Gina Hartoog

Just how secure is your home? By understanding more about the technology available, you can make an informed decision as to what your home needs. In the past, home security was required to secure assets, but with the brazen attitude of criminals in society today, it's also about the protection of human life. Before choosing a system, it is important to consider your home and requirements.

Looking at home security

While nobody likes to think about an armed attack at home, when it comes to security, you need to consider that possibility. Today's criminals are often linked with sophisticated syndicates that will rarely take on a target without proper preparation. If your home is targeted, chances are good the criminals have done their homework and have documented your family's schedule so they know what they are 'in for' when they make a hit. If the criminals are thinking about your home, it's time you did too! Also consider how easy it is to obtain information from the Internet. Criminals may well be able to find information that could be used to breach your security system.



Keeping criminals out

Security savvy

Home security is about feeling safe and secure in your space. "Planning the security at your home is not only about installing a security system," says Johan Krogh, executive member of the South African Intruder Detection Services Association (SAIDSA). "It is a mindset, and involves a lot of factors such as the entry points to your property, adequate lighting, physical barriers, early warning systems and other security systems, but more importantly the homeowner's ability to manage his security, to be vigilant and to be observant."

Simple precautions can go a long way to deter opportunistic criminals looking for an easy target. Make sure you have good lighting on your property at night. Have a look at your driveway area and identify any trees or bushes which may provide ideal hiding places for criminals. Remove these or cut them back. Have your security

company's details in your cell phone and utilise 'built-in' services like tuck-ins if you arrive home late at night.

While most companies offer a stand-alone panic button, some allow you to turn your cell phone into a panic system. You preset a speed dial number into your cell phone which connects with your armed response company's control room. Once the speed dial number is pushed, just a few seconds are needed for the call to go through and the company will despatch a vehicle to your home. You also need to consider the people you allow on your property. Use reputable repair and maintenance companies to ensure that proper background checks have been done, especially if the company uses casual employees.

What your home really needs

"Different homes need different security," says Hennie Prinsloo of JSB Security



A barrier around the perimeter of your property is a deterrent. You may choose to include spikes, barbed wire or electric fencing



Alarm Specialists. "Security for flats and townhouses will differ to that of free-standing suburban homes and farms or plots." Even homes in townhouse complexes should be alarmed – even if there is 24-hour monitoring with a security guard at the complex gate.

Outdoor security on farms can be a challenge when livestock and wild game roam free. Hennie says that ideally the farm should be fenced with 22-strand electric fencing. Houses must be alarmed and connected to the nearest armed response company or local police. The system should also make provision for remote panic buttons. Community networking on farms is essential. "Communities may want to look at setting up a radio network where communication is maintained every few hours to ensure safety of residents," he suggests.

Home security

Security can be divided into three areas – the perimeter of your home, adequate security at access points (windows and doors) and intruder detection, with armed response backup. It is pointless having an alarm system that isn't monitored! Your neighbours are unlikely to investigate if your alarm activates in the middle of the night.

Securing your home

While you do have the option of installing your alarm system yourself, it does make sense to call in a security professional to get a good idea of what you require. If you do decide to go the professional route, ask the alarm company if their technicians are registered with the Private Security Industry Regulation Authority (PSIRA). Technicians are required to do a course and write exams

Lock your postbox

Criminals always seem to be one step ahead of their victims. Reports in the media have linked stolen mail with housebreaking. While you may not have control over what happens to your mail at the post office, make sure that your mail is secure once deposited inside your postbox by the postman. Use a lockable postbox or have your mail delivered to a post office box. With today's drive towards a paperless society it also makes sense to have as many accounts emailed to you as possible.



before registering.

They also have background checks and are fingerprinted.

Hennie Prinsloo says that you should always start inside the home and identify

a safe place for the mainframe of the alarm. "If the heart of the system isn't properly protected, you may as well not have security," he says.

"The reason for starting inside also gives a perspective of distances as we go towards the perimeter. This will tell us how far from the panel we need to go and if we can use wireless or wired technology."

Once you have established a place for the control panel, the installer will determine how many bedrooms need to be covered, as well as other sensitive areas in the home, like rooms that contain a safe. The control panel should never be installed inside the roof cavity where it can be tampered with. Inside the home, the panel must be covered with a passive detector.

If you have free-standing outbuildings, you may need to fit a separate alarm to secure these areas.

Newer systems have 'partitioning' capabilities where the alarm zones can be split into sections – either securing your home and garden, or a free-standing garage or cottage on one system. Most new systems also have a built-in GSM module, which allows SMS messages to be sent to the homeowner's cell phone. The message conveys details on which zone was activated. If you have an older system, you may be able to purchase a GSM module

which plugs into the existing system, although it may not work on all systems. The technology also allows you to arm and disarm your alarm from a remote location and will confirm by SMS that this has been done.

The access points in your home are places of entry – doors and windows. These must also be adequately secured in the form of burglar bars and quality security gates.

Perimeter security

A barrier around the perimeter of your property is a deterrent to criminals and will help to prevent them from getting close to your home. You may choose to include spikes, barbed wire or electric fencing on the top of built or precast walling. If you choose electric fencing, consider the new legislation that came into effect in December 2012. If your fence is not compliant and someone gets hurt, you could be held liable. If you sell your property, you'll also need an Electric Fence Certificate (EFC). If you have an existing fence, you need to have it maintained regularly to ensure it is working properly.

Early warning systems for the property perimeter and gardens include point-to-point beams, outdoor passive detectors and CCTV cameras, which can be used to alert residents on what is happening outside

Intercom systems

Most South African homes have good perimeter security – our front doors don't open onto the street and we are able to control who we allow onto our properties. However, if a stranger approaches your gate, you'll need to walk outside to address him. This is a security risk. Thieves have been known to pull a gun on an unsuspecting home owner at the property gate.

An audio intercom system provides the ideal solution for homeowners. You can verify who is at your gate first, before allowing them access to your property. There are various products on the market from wired and wireless systems which allow for easy installation, to systems with video which allow for visual identification of the person. Safety is certainly the foremost reason for installing an intercom, some systems include an unlocking feature where the homeowner can open the gate from inside the safety of his home.

the home. Before you select either of these systems, you must take into account the size and shape of the property as well as driveways, garages and outbuildings.

Outdoor passives (IP65 rating) are reliable and an excellent choice for perimeter security. Pet-friendly products are available, but as with any system, they must be correctly installed to work optimally.

In some cases, point-to-point beams can be breached (we know how it can be done, but we aren't publishing it). If you choose this technology, choose an approved product and have the system fitted by an approved installer. Installation standards are set out by SAIDSA and if these are not adhered to, tampering and overriding by criminals can go undetected by the system.

A word on new technology

"There are always new technologies available, and currently it would seem that the industry is moving towards alarm verification technology," says Johan Krogh. "Due to the very high false alarm rate in South Africa, and the safety of armed response officers to be taken

into consideration, alarm verification plays a vital role in the industry. The new technology allows the control centre to determine and identify the reason for the activation at the time of activation – a false alarm due to a rodent or pet or a possible break-in."

Choosing an alarm system

"SAIDSA does not prescribe to support any specific product, however, the product must be capable of performing the functions as defined in the by-laws of SAIDSA and more importantly the installation must comply with the by-laws of SAIDSA. A homeowner can select the best system available on the market, but if it is not installed correctly and to a certain standard as prescribed by SAIDSA, the system will be worthless to the homeowner. To this extent it is important that a homeowner makes use of a SAIDSA approved installer."

Johan Krogh, executive member of the South African Intruder Detection Services Association



The control panel is able to receive and transmit radio frequency signals from detectors or sensors connected to it

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Fix-o-Chim



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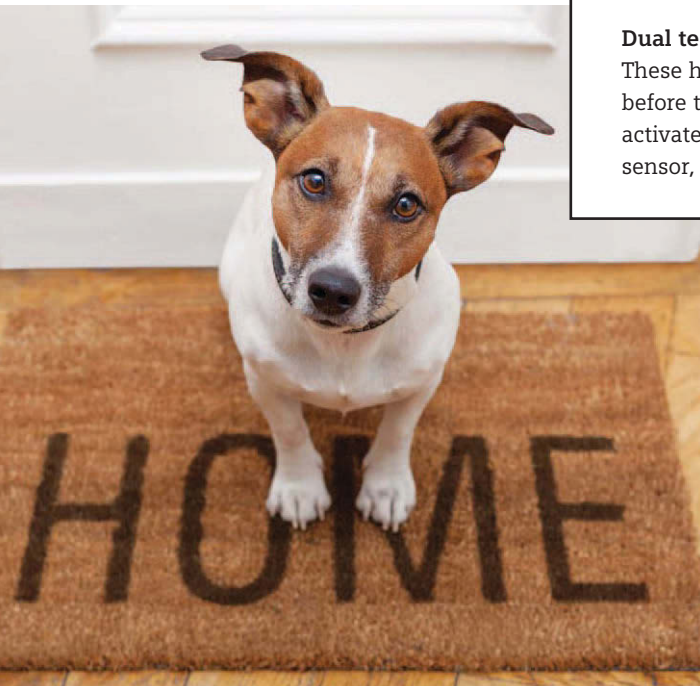
Den Braven

Available from hardware stores nationwide

When installing an alarm you should start inside the home and identify a safe place for the mainframe of the alarm system

Alarm system troubleshooting Pets

Pet-friendly technology has improved over the past few years. "If you have pets in your home and on your property, it is important to tell your alarm installer so he can set up the system accordingly," says Hennie Prinsloo. "If you are putting in a new system now and don't currently have pets, consider the future. Is it possible that you may get a pet? While outdoor passives can be converted to 'pet-friendly' by changing the lens at a minimal cost, indoor passives cannot be changed, so a later change will cost you more money."



Wireless frequency jamming

As technology improves, criminals also improve their knowledge. Those with resources at their fingertips may be able to obtain expensive equipment that is able to jam radio signals going from the control panel to various wireless devices on the property, however, this is unlikely. Newer products on the market have the ability to detect these devices. Alarms that use multiplexer technology, also called



Motion detector

Alarm technology

Alarm or control panel: The electronic mainboard is the heart of the alarm system. The panel is able to receive and transmit radio frequency signals from detectors or sensors connected to it through wireless devices or a wired system. Should there be a breach in security, the panel will send a signal to the monitoring company. Depending on the system, there may be an audible sound or the alarm may be silent.

Passive infrared detectors: PIR detectors are placed in various zones in the home and detect changes in body heat in these zones, usually within a temperature increase of about 5%. Any detection is sent to the control panel, which then reacts accordingly by activating an audible alarm and relaying the information to the security company's control room.

Active infrared detectors: AIRs are point-to-point systems that send out pulsed beams of infrared lights between units. If the beams are broken, the breach is transmitted to the control panel, which alerts the monitoring company.

Dual technology sensors: DTs combine a PIR sensor with a microwave sensor. These help to limit false alarms as both circuits will need to detect movement before the alarm is triggered – the PIR first detects heat and subsequently activates the microwave sensor. If movement is detected by the microwave sensor, a signal is sent to the alarm panel.

code hopping, have helped to make wireless devices more secure. Transmission from the sensors to the panel are sent on different frequencies.

System testing

Alarm systems need to be tested regularly to ensure that they are operating optimally. Your insurance company may decline your

claim should your alarm be found faulty – and you are also putting the lives of your family in danger. Ask your security company about their procedure for testing a system. Most companies will put you on 'testing mode' for a short period of time, during which you will be able to trigger your alarm and panic buttons. Test your system every four to six weeks. ✂

Information supplied by Hennie Prinsloo of JSB Security Alarm Specialists and the South African Intruder Detection Services Association (SAIDSA)

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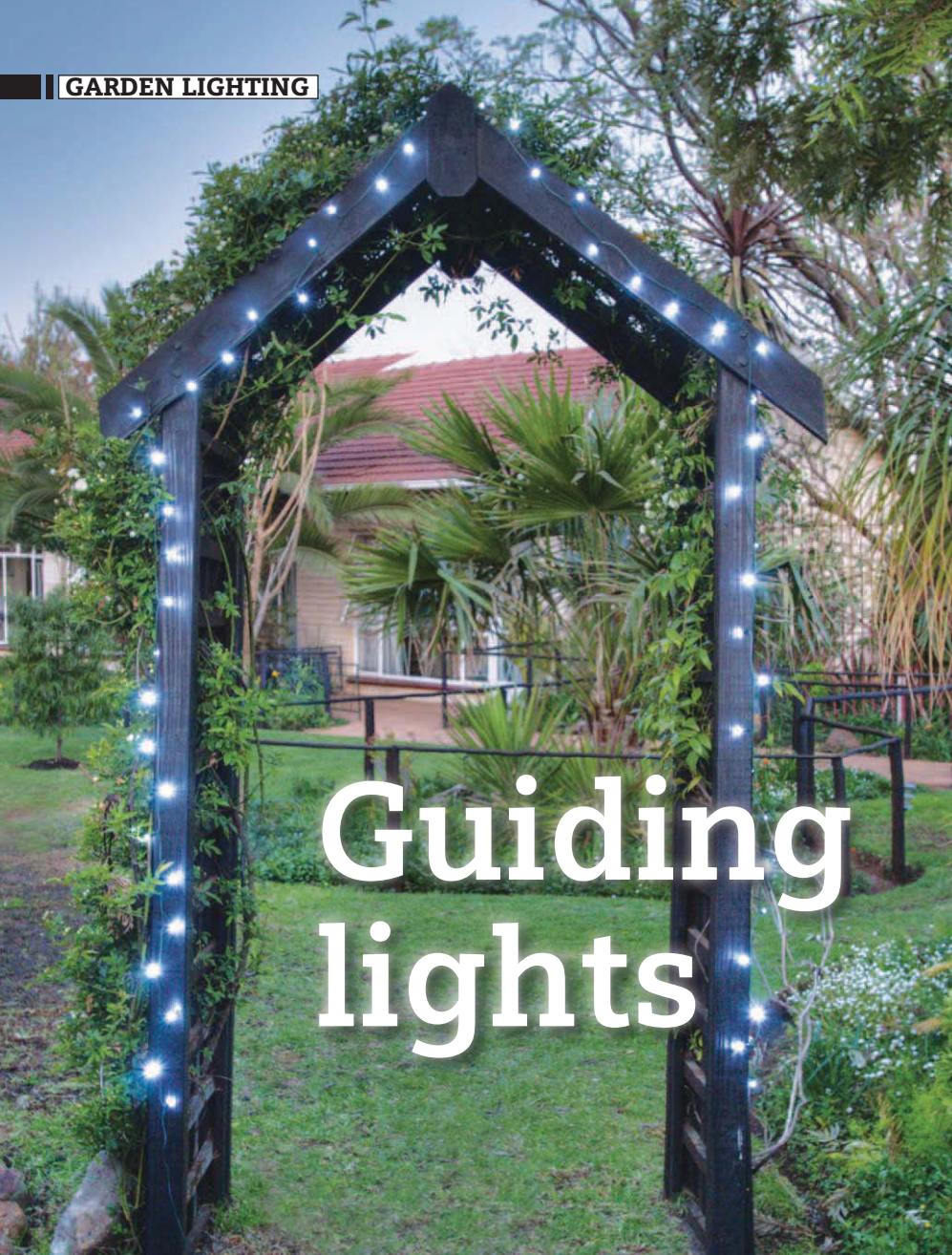


Call 0860 236 887

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www.CentSys.com





Guiding lights

Bring your garden alive at night and at the same time ward off intruders by installing garden lights

Lighting up your outdoors with garden lighting affords you the opportunity to enjoy your garden for more hours of the day. It also lends the garden a magical quality – enhancing the atmosphere of any outdoor gathering – and it highlights chosen features, making them stand out dramatically against the darkness. A well-lit garden is also a safer garden to traverse at

night, especially when pathways and steps are illuminated. With the added benefit of enhancing your home's security, it is no wonder that more people are lighting up their gardens.

If you are put off by the extra electricity garden lighting may draw, or can't face installing lights and wiring them up, think solar. These convert the sun's solar power into electrical current, and the lights come on at night automatically. They are easy to install as there is no wiring – some you can simply push into the ground, and voila! There are also many LED lighting options now available, which are very energy efficient.

Designing with light

According to Melissa Davidson from The Lighting Warehouse, to create an effective outdoor lighting scheme you need to consider your landscape's ambient, accent and task lighting requirements:

- **Ambient or background lighting** – this can give a low-level glow to create a relaxing ambience or give full illumination for practical purposes. Consider recessed ground lights, free-standing posts and poles, floodlights, wall brackets, lanterns, bulkheads, and sphere light fittings for ambient lighting.



Outdoor lighting can give your garden a magical quality

Pic courtesy The Lighting Warehouse



For more traditional looking homes larger, more ornate type fittings are a good option

- **Accent lighting** – this highlights specific features, such as garden statuary, plants, trees, arches, windows, doorways or water features. Install the light fittings a short distance from the chosen feature and angle the beam to shine directly onto it. Consider walkover lights, floodlights used as uplighters, wall-mounted spotlights as downlighters, submersible fittings, garden spike spotlights, surface and recessed light fittings.
- **Task lighting** – this is used to light up specific areas with a clear purpose, such as steps, pathways, driveways or changing levels. Consider surface recessed, walkover, drive-over and post fittings, bollards, outdoor table lamps, spotlights and short post lamps.

Choose your light

Some of the most energy efficient light source choices for outdoor lighting are:

- **Metal halide** – offers great daylight-quality illumination, a long life and it is energy efficient.

- **Energy efficient fluorescent bulbs** – a good choice for outdoor lights that are on all night as they are long lasting and have low running costs.
- **Light emitting diodes or LEDs** – popular for small, more flexible fittings as they are compact, highly efficient and offer a long lifespan.
- **Solar-powered lighting** - the most cost-effective to run and environmentally friendly option of all – they are quick and easy to install as they don't need to be connected to the mains electricity, and they are powered entirely by the renewable light energy from the sun.

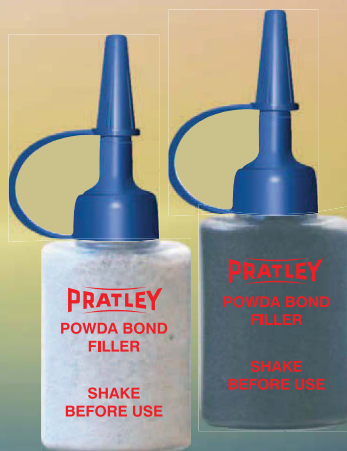
Choose your fittings

It is important to take into account the style of your house before choosing an outdoor lighting scheme. The aim, according to Melissa, is to create a seamless flow between your home's indoor and outdoor spaces. "For example, if you own a contemporary home, then the outdoor lighting you choose should be simple and

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Hint

Melissa Davidson advises that any outdoor lighting should be fully sealed against the elements to protect it from rain, irrigation and any splashes prevalent in outdoor areas. Water and electricity can be a lethal combination.

sleek in its design and choice of materials. For more traditional homes, such as the Provencal-, Tuscan and Georgian- style homes for example, more traditional outdoor lighting would be a better option – these tend to be larger, more ornate type fittings,” explains Melissa.

The many styles and types of outdoor fittings available is vast – they can be made from a wide variety of materials, including plastic, aluminium, stainless steel, brass and copper. For outdoor conditions, however, the fittings you choose need to be able to withstand the elements; anti-corrosive, hardwearing materials such as stainless steel and aluminium are best, or you can opt for robust plastic composites.

String or fairy lights can create a romantic, fairy tale mood in your garden. Coil them around tree trunks, let them hang from tree branches, attach them to arches and arbours, or wind them around garden benches.

Online eco store, Sustainable.co.za, has a wide range of trendy and playful

solar lights for those who want to give their garden a distinctive look, and most of them are very easy to install. From ‘floating’ globes attached to spikes that are simply pushed into the ground, to hanging cone lights that give an enchanted look when hung from trees. According to Steph Breytenbach of Sustainable.co.za, there are outdoor solar lights for every garden situation – along paths, next to a blanket during a night time picnic or pushed into containers; the trick, however, is that all of the lights have panels that need to be exposed to direct sunlight to charge, so even though you may think a light is ideal under a statue, you need to make sure it is in sunlight during the day for it to have light at night.

Spotlight on security

“Exterior lights with a passive infrared sensor can improve the security of any outdoor space. The sensor activates the light when it detects movement within a pre-set range, and as such, deters criminals. The sensor can be attached to one fitting, or a remote sensor can be attached to more than a single fitting and when movement is detected at one point, all the selected lights will automatically come on. The latter is especially good for L-shaped areas,” explains Melissa. She notes that it is important to position the motion sensor correctly – the higher

you place it, the less distance you will cover, while a lower floodlight will offer a broader coverage.

Energy saving floodlights are also a good security solution – these can be left on all night as a deterrent for would-be intruders. Floodlights feature different sized beams for different effects, whether you want a wide but shallow spread of light, or a narrow but penetrating glow. “Daylight globes and fittings with built-in daylight sensors are a great security option for any outdoor space. Globes are switched on automatically by way of a special sensor that detects a loss in light at dusk or early evening. Conversely, in the morning these fittings are switched off, thus saving against leaving outside lights on all day long, or when you go away on holiday,” Melissa explains.

Online eco store, Sustainable.co.za, provides solar-powered LED security lights with infra-red motion detectors – no wiring required. When activated the light comes on for up to three minutes or for however long motion is detected. The solar panel is weather resistant. The light will activate up to 70 times on a single charge. ✖

The fittings need to be able to withstand the elements; opt for hardwearing materials such as stainless steel, aluminium or robust plastic composites



Contacts

The Lighting Warehouse,
www.lightingwarehouse.co.za
Sustainable Online Eco Store,
www.sustainable.co.za

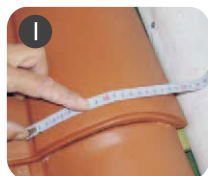
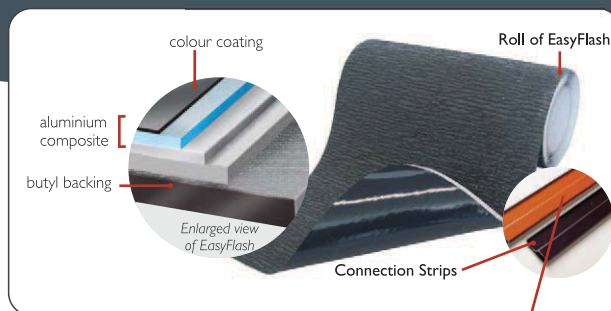
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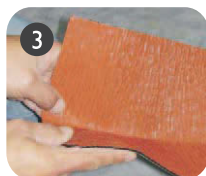
Simple D.I.Y. application



1 Measure width to seal the abutment.



2 Cut EasyFlash and connection strip.



3 Fold EasyFlash along break line.



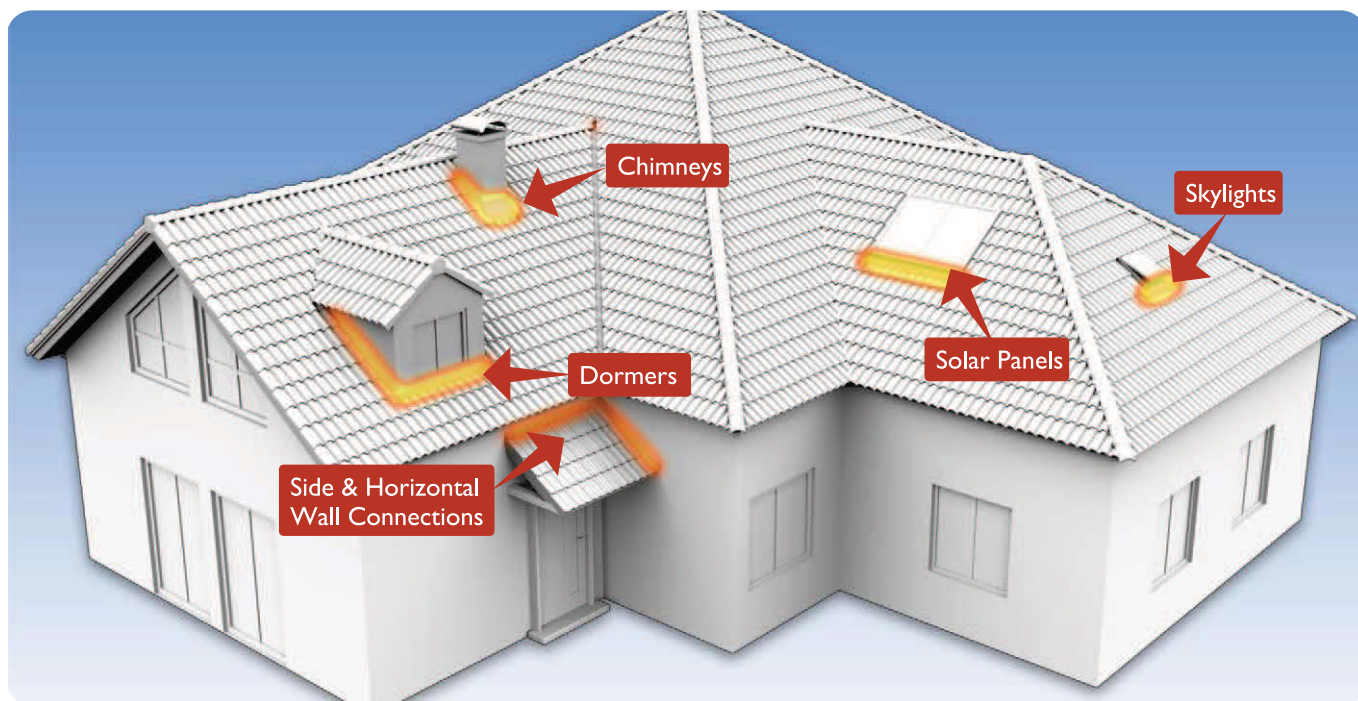
4 Position EasyFlash, then remove release paper to stick butyl backing on the wall.



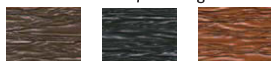
5 Remove the release paper on the tile side and stick onto the clean surface.



6 Secure the Connection Strip to the upper edge of the EasyFlash. Apply weather resistant silicon sealant between wall and strip.



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ROOFS THAT LAST

Beautiful balustrades

As well as serving a practical safety purpose, balustrading adds character and value to a home

When building a new home or refurbishing or adding onto an old one, you will inevitably have a need for balustrading. Mostly made from wood, metal or glass, these railings form an important safety barrier along the edges of stairways, balconies, patios and pools. They are made up of a series of balusters or posts that form the supporting columns for the railings or glass.

Although balustrading serves a practical purpose, it is an integral part of your home's design from an architectural point of view, often forming a focal point from a living space, in the case of a stairway, or from the outdoors, in the case of a pool, patio or balcony, so consider what kind of balustrade will best suit your home and enhance its design.

Types of balustrades

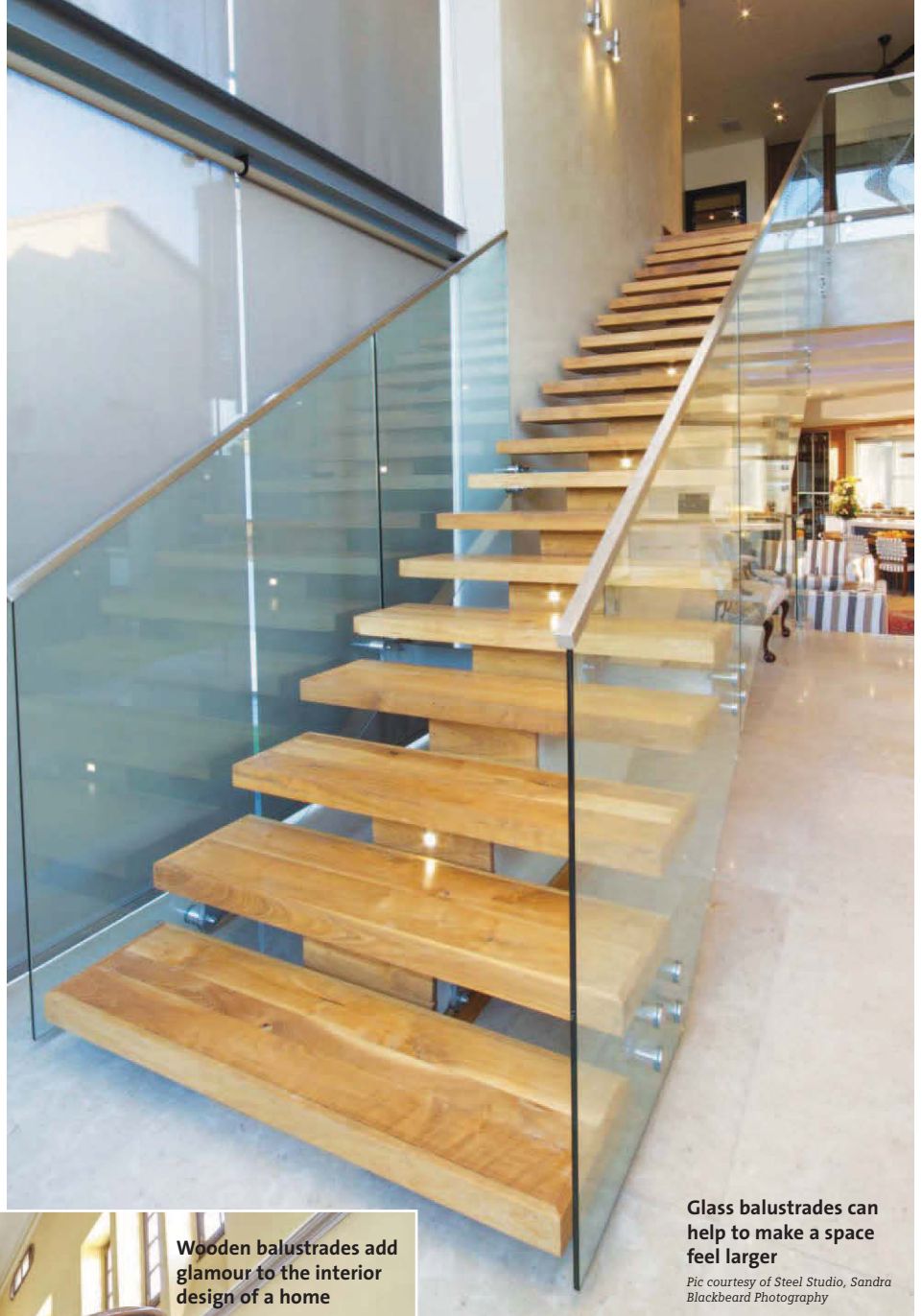
Balustrades can be made from a variety of materials, but the most commonly used nowadays are glass, steel, wrought iron and wood. When choosing balustrades for your home, carefully consider the style of your home and try to choose balustrades that will complement its architecture. For example,

Balustrades can be made from a variety of materials or even a combination of materials

a more traditional home with wooden window frames and floors is suited to wooden balustrades, while glass or steel balustrades would work in both classic and contemporary homes. Balusters, the supporting posts for the railings, are commonly made from wood or metal and come in a variety of shapes and designs, from straight and thin (usually the case with metal) to more rounded and intricate columns.

Glass

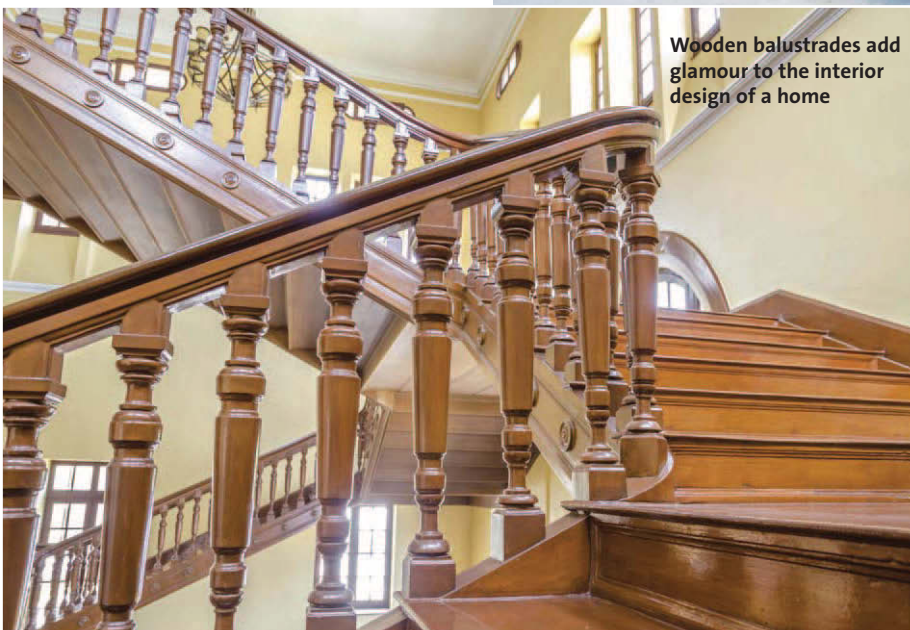
Glass balustrades are great for those who want to enjoy uninterrupted views. They are also very fashionable on current and modern building designs, advises Sandra Blackbeard of Steel Studio. There are even frameless versions available, allowing them to be as unimposing as possible, making a space seem larger. Frameless systems need to be engineered properly and signed off by an engineer to ensure that the glass is the correct thickness and has been installed correctly to take the required load. Remember, though, that the downside of glass balustrades is that they need to be cleaned regularly as dirt shows quickly, especially if used around a pool area, on outside balconies or outside staircases.



Glass balustrades can help to make a space feel larger

Pic courtesy of Steel Studio, Sandra Blackbeard Photography

Wooden balustrades add glamour to the interior design of a home



A balustrade's main function is to provide safety and it must be able to withstand the loads with which it is burdened



Stainless steel balustrades complement minimalist, contemporary architecture

Pic courtesy of Steel Studio, Sandra Blackbeard Photography

Steel

Stainless steel is another modern option, ideal for a minimalist look. "It is an environmentally friendly material and requires little maintenance, simply requiring occasional washing with normal household soap and water. Note that mild steel is not an environmentally friendly option as it rusts and needs to be maintained by sanding and painting every so often," explains Sandra.

Wrought iron

Wrought iron balustrades can be highly decorative and you can have them made to your taste and specification, with endless choices of patterns and scrollwork available. Thanks to their classy and elegant appeal, they are suited to any style of home and can also be combined with wood for a warmer effect. They are strong and durable,

but may be prone to rust, especially outdoors. Remove loose, flaking rust with a wire brush and sandpaper and treat with a suitable rust protection paint like Oxirite Metal Paint.

Wood

"Wooden balustrading adds warmth and a natural feel to a home. It is also warm to the touch and, if treated and maintained correctly, will last a lifetime," says Dirga Lowe of Kaljon, specialists in wooden balustrading and staircases. Wooden balustrades and handrails are suited to all styles of homes both modern and traditional. They can also be combined with wrought iron, glass or steel. "For external applications, the most popular woods are balau and treated H4 CCA pine, while for indoors almost any wood can be used, although meranti and oak are most

popular." Paint and paint techniques on wooden balustrades can also enhance interior design.

Caring for wooden balustrades inside the home is done simply by wiping them with a soft cloth and using a wood oil, such as Woodoc Oil. Painted wooden balustrades should be kept dust free with a dusting cloth especially externally as dust attracts moisture and mould. Treat external wooden balustrades with an exterior UV resistant paint, varnish or wood preservative.

Safety

There are many companies that specialise in balustrade design and installation, but how do you go about choosing the right one? "A balustrade's main function is to provide safety to those using the staircase or balcony and it must be able to withstand the loads with which it is burdened. Many builders and architects see the balustrades as a design element and don't realise the safety regulations that a balustrade must comply with when designing a balustrade on a house or commercial building," warns Sandra Blackbeard of Steel Studio. "As South Africa moves towards a far more regulated building industry, more professionals and homeowners find themselves unaware that they are on the wrong side of these regulations. The SANS building codes are a set of guidelines that ensure your building project is safe and able to deal with the task at hand, so find out whether your balustrade manufacturer and installer complies with these."

These codes are extremely technical and detailed and make reference to different loading (kilonewton metres) for different occupancy classifications, explains Sandra. "In layman's terms, the load a balustrade must be able to withstand in a shopping centre is substantially more than in a residential dwelling. In terms of the new SANS building codes, balustrade installations must be signed off by an engineer. This sign-off is crucial when getting an occupation certificate. The building inspector requires this professional engineer's sign-off before an occupation certificate can be issued. It has therefore become a critical requirement that

manufacturers and installers comply with the SANS building codes.”

Sandra explains that as it currently stands, it is ultimately the client’s responsibility to ensure that their balustrades comply with the SANS regulations. “To avoid liability, ensure that your manufacturer or installer has an engineer sign off on your balustrades. Also make sure that your balustrade company complies with the SANS building codes in terms of their design capabilities, manufacturing processes and installation. Ask your balustrades supplier for a range of balustrades that complies with the SANS codes and ensure they are a member of the following regulatory bodies: Master Builders Association, the Southern Africa Stainless Steel Development Association (SASSDA) in the case of stainless steel balustrades, and the South African Glass and Glazing Association (SAGGA) in the case of glass balustrades. Steel Studio offers a range of balustrades that comply with the SANS codes and will provide an engineer’s sign-off for our SANS compliant range of balustrades,” says Sandra.

Steel Studio offers some guidelines for balustrade installation:

- Ensure that core drilling is to an adequate and suitable depth of 120mm and secured with a non-shrink grout, which is an equivalent or stronger MPa than the concrete, subject to the engineer’s approval.
- Base plate fixings, either top or side fixed, are suitable, provided that adequate chemical anchors are used with the necessary cover depth, and should be designed and approved by a structural engineer.
- A balustrade post should never be installed with a pin fixing at the base of a smaller diameter than the post itself. This will create a weak pivot point at the base of the balustrade and lead to structural failure.
- Stainless steel balustrade systems should ideally always be welded together or where the design calls for it, mechanically bolted together. Filler wire and fasteners of the same or superior material should

Product showcase

Pattex Chemical Anchor CF850 from Henkel has been developed to provide strong, structural anchoring, such as when installing balustrades, banister rails and fences. It is styrene-free, making it ideal for applications involving stone, bricks (solid or hollow) and concrete.

This tough and easy-to-use adhesive works through a chemical reaction that is created when you combine the two components in the cartridge using the static mixers supplied. It can be used with a standard caulking gun and cures in three minutes. In addition, the cartridge can be stored and reused by sealing it with the seal cap.



Tips when using Pattex Chemical Anchor CF850:

- When drilling a concrete or solid stone surface, use the drill’s hammer action. This setting should not be used for hollow brick.
- After drilling, always clean the drill hole properly with a circular brush and compressed air. If you’re working in hollow brick, insert a sleeve collar after cleaning.
- Screw the Pattex Chemical Anchor CF850 mixer to the cartridge and squeeze out about 10cm of the compound before using to allow it to mix properly.
- Use the Pattex Chemical Anchor CF850 immediately to avoid hardening in the static mixer.
- In concrete or solid stone, fill the drill hole from the bottom upward (about two-thirds), screw in the reinforcement bar or threaded rod and check that the hole is filled. In hollow brick, fill the sleeve fully from the bottom up; any composite will distribute into the brick when the anchor is inserted. Push in the bar or rod, turning slightly as far as the base of the collar.
- Allow 45 minutes to harden fully and then install the component with torque.

Visit www.pattex.co.za for more information

always be used. Systems that are glued or pressed together may not meet the SANS building code requirements and may also rattle continuously.

- All welds should be cleaned and ground either with a suitable pickling acid or mechanically ground or sanded with suitable dedicated abrasives. If pickling acid is used, care should be taken to ensure that the acid is thoroughly rinsed off with fresh water and the effluent is safely discarded. Care should be taken to avoid contact with finishes such as flooring or carpets etc. ✖

Kaljon, 031-700-3910, email: sales@kaljon.co.za, www.kaljon.co.za

Steel Studio, Johannesburg: 011-608-1963,

Cape Town: 021-551-3510, nationwide:

0861-724-5464, email: Sales@steelstudio.co.za, www.steelstudio.co.za



This intricate wrought iron balustrade forms the focal point of the living space

Make a drum braai

I rescued a drum that a builder was going to discard and realised that it would make a handy braai

By Piet Steenkamp

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: Using an angle grinder, cut the drum just above the lower ring.

Step 2: Cut three lengths of 25mm flat bar, each 800mm, and bend and hammer them into the shape of legs. Drill holes in the legs and the bottom and side of the drum to bolt the legs in place.

Step 3: Use the lid or bottom of the drum as a template and cut enough flat bar to form a round fire grate, spaced about 5mm apart. Cut two more lengths and weld them across the grate to keep the bars in place. This grate will lie at the bottom of your drum to protect it and create enough ventilation for the fire.

Step 4: Bend two rings of about 450mm and 300mm in diameter using 9mm round bar. You can use any drum or round object as a template to start the bend, and again hand bend and hammer it into shape. Then cut three 'spokes' of about 200mm, bend the tips over and weld them onto the underside of the rings to resemble a steering wheel. Put the 'wheel' on top of the drum to support your braai grid.

Step 5: You can make a grid yourself using round bar and expanded metal or use any grid that can lie on top of your wheel. I was fortunate as a friend of mine put his old Weber on pension and I inherited the grid, which is exactly the right diameter of 540mm for the braai.



1 Cut the drum to size



4 Weld the grate for the bottom of the braai



2 Cut the legs and bend them accordingly



5 The modified grid I made



3 Make sure they are the same size

My no. 4 potjie fits snugly into the inner ring and depending on the size of your potjie, you can make the ring bigger or smaller.

If you find that the fire is too far down, you can lift the grate by putting three bricks underneath it, or cut the drum lower (next time before you make the fire, that is). ✂

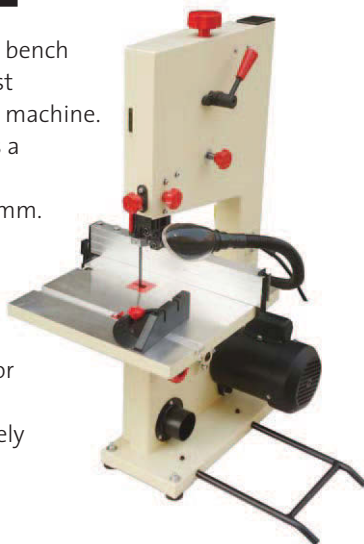
Jet introduces new woodworking machines

Jet is proud to announce three new woodworking models that will appeal to a wide range of woodworkers everywhere

New Jet Bandsaw

The Jet WBS-9X Bandsaw is a handy bench top bandsaw perfect for the hobbyist requiring a convenient space-saving machine. It runs quietly, cuts accurately and is a pleasure to use.

- Cutting width: 230mm, depth: 80mm.
- Blade width: 6-10mm, length: 1 575mm thin gauge.
- Table size: 300mm x 300mm, tilts to 45°.
- With rip fence and mitre square for accurate rip and cross cuts.
- Machine lamp so you can accurately follow the cutting line.
- 350W motor.
- Dust port: 57mm.



New Jet Lathe

The Jet 1221VS Lathe is different from anything the company has made before. In truth, it is different from anything that anybody has ever made before. The design is better. The features are better. The entire turning experience is better. And it all focuses on one concept: Control. The useful features include:

- Cast iron 170mm-wide bed for extra rigidity. No other lathe in this size range has a bed as wide and strong.
- Wide speed range of 60-3 600rpm. This is made possible by electronic control, which maintains torque even at low speeds.
- Lots of power from a 745W motor. Large bowls are no problem.
- Electronic speed control is a great convenience
- Ratchet-style belt tensioning for convenient speed range change. This arrangement is patented and is exclusive to Jet.
- Indexing head with 24 marked positions. No need to mark the head with coloured markers as each indexing hole has a number.
- Forward/reverse switch with soft start. You can change the direction without switching the machine off.
- 520mm between centres, 318mm swing. Optional bed extension allows maximum distance between centre of 1.09m.
- Two Morse tapers on head and tail stock.
- M33 thread on head stock. Optional 1" thread adapter.



Jet Planer Thicknesser

Jet introduces a light-duty combination planer thicknesser, model JPT-10B. Ideal for the home hobbyist. The surfacing function enables the wood to be trued up with the edges straight and 90° to the surface. The thicknessing function makes all your wood the desired thickness so that all the joints fit.

- Maximum width: 254mm, thickness: 120mm.
- Surface table length: 945mm.
- Thickness table length: 305mm.
- Feed speed: 6m/minute.
- Cutter block with two blades.
- Motor: 1.5kW.
- Dust port: 57mm and 100mm.
- Stand included.



For more information on these products contact Brian Jolly at Strand Hardware – national distributors for Jet in southern Africa. Tel: 041-585-6996, email: brianjolly@strandhardware.co.za or visit www.strandhardware.co.za. In addition there are Jet dealers in all the main centres in South Africa.

JET

NATIONAL AGENT:
Strand Hardware



Access granted

There is a huge range of garage doors available on the market today; choose one that offers good quality, security and is attractive to boot

Durability, safety and convenience are what most people look for when selecting garage doors for their home. Proud homeowners, however, seek something that offers all they are looking for in terms of quality and reassurance, but that also makes a sleek statement in itself.

Garage doors are one of the first things people see when they approach your home and because of their size, they can create a significant negative or positive impact. While this is true, there is something else to consider: The security of your belongings that are kept behind the garage doors.

The main garage door choices are steel, wood, aluminium, fibreglass and Chromadek (galvanised and painted metal), available in sectional, overhead, roll-up or tip-up.

Standard sized doors

A standard sized single door is 2 440mm in width by 2 135mm in height, and a double door is 4 880mm in width by 2 135mm in height. This is important as it will affect your budget considerably if your doors have to be purpose-made. Standard sizes are available everywhere, from local hardware stores to specialised garage door installers.

Headroom and side space on the inside of your opening is very important as this will determine your options regarding the type of garage door you can install. Standard headroom is 450mm and side space is 150mm. Although it is obviously easier to purchase a standard sized door, if your garage opening is not standard size, you will need to have your door custom made.



Garage doors are one of the first things people see when they approach your home and because of their size, they can create a significant impact

Choosing a garage door

There are three main aspects to consider when choosing a garage door:

The door

This may consist of a number of panels joined together. Enquire about the thickness of the panels as this is important for the structural strength of your door. Try to find out whether the door was manufactured according to the right procedures to avoid inferior workmanship.

Hardware

The hardware of your door consists of springs, pulleys, hinges, etc. The quality of the hardware is important to ensure hassle-free use of your door over an extended period. Poor quality hardware may cause

failure in operation and even death if a door dislodges and falls on someone.

Automation unit

Make sure the automation unit is manufactured by a local company to ensure a continuous supply of spares and backup service for years to come. Ask for specifications to ensure that you are getting what you paid for.

Materials and systems

When considering the type of door you require, bear in mind that, in general, wood adds more value in terms of warmth and an appearance of quality, whereas steel and Chromadek doors are more convenient in terms of maintenance.

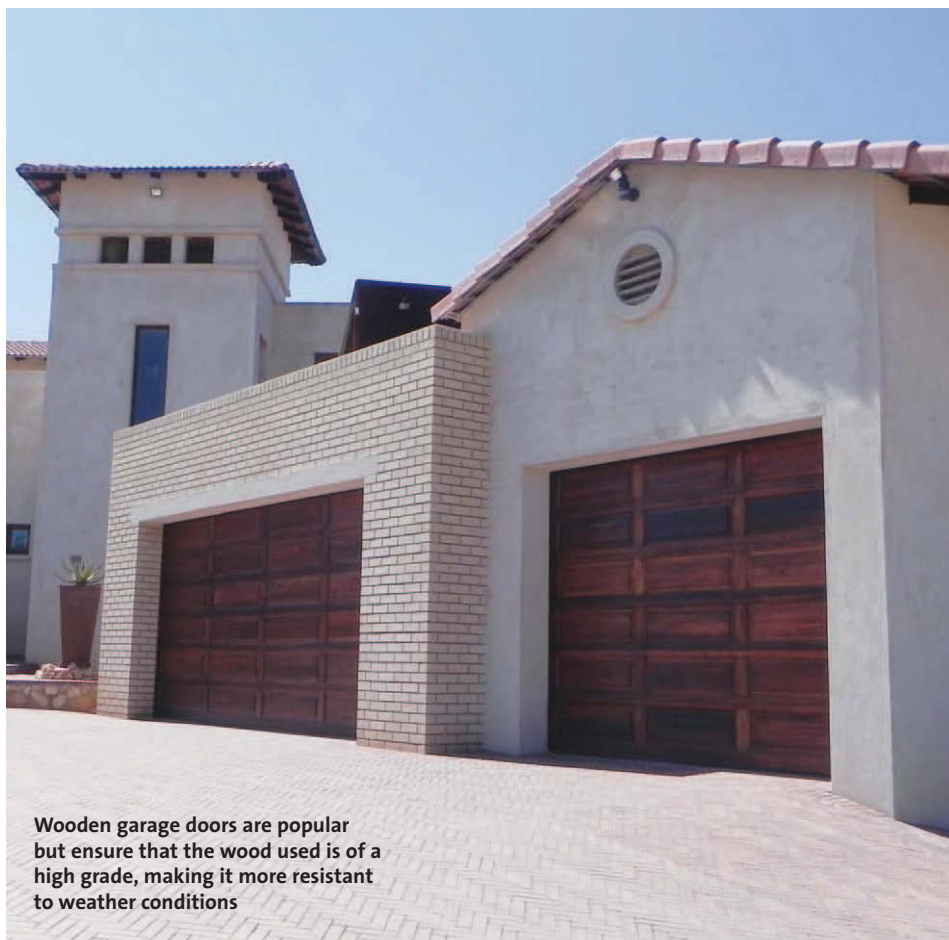
The type of mechanism or system is often related to the type of material from

which the door is made. Overhead sectional systems are the most popular because they allow for greater drive through space and parking space in front of the door. These systems also allow less wear and tear as the weight of the door is distributed evenly. Tip-up mechanisms are generally used in situations with limited headroom.

Wood

Wooden garage doors are most appropriate for tip-up and sectional overhead systems. They are available in various designs and types of wood. Usually meranti is used for wooden doors. Ensure that the wood used is of a high grade, which means that it will be denser than the cheaper options, making it more resistant to weather conditions.

Wooden doors should be treated regularly to ensure longevity. Wood has to



Wooden garage doors are popular but ensure that the wood used is of a high grade, making it more resistant to weather conditions



When choosing a colour for your garage door it is best to choose a one that matches your window frames

be sealed or varnished at least once a year, so there is some maintenance involved, but aesthetically there is no comparison between wood and other materials.

Steel

Affordable and requiring little maintenance, steel doors are available as sectional, overhead, tip-up or roll-up systems (double roll-up doors are generally not recommended as they are too heavy). They can also be automated on tracks.

Chromadek

Chromadek doors are made from galvanised, pre-painted steel. They are available as roll-up systems and come in a variety of colours, are durable and require little maintenance.

Aluminium

Aluminium garage doors are expensive, but require little maintenance and are suitable for coastal areas. Usually available as sectional overhead doors, they give a contemporary look and suit a modern or minimalist style home.

Fibreglass

Maintenance free and ideal for coastal regions, fibreglass doors are available in a range of colours and wood grain finishes. They usually come as sectional overhead doors.

Colour and texture

Because your garage doors play such an important role in the look of your home's exterior, give a lot of thought to the colour you choose. Allow your home's architecture and style to influence your choice. It is best to choose a colour that matches your window frames, so go for wood if your frames are wooden, or white if you have white painted window frames and burglar bars, or one that will match the colour of your home's walls or roof. Neutral colours, such as black, brown, charcoal, white or dark green, will blend with most colours. Brightly coloured garage doors will become a focal point, so only go for bright colours if your doors have a lot of character.



Overhead sectional mechanisms are the most popular because they allow for greater drive through space and parking space in front of the door

Automation

Convenience and safety are the primary reasons for automating your garage doors. Here's what to look for when choosing an automation system:

- **Compatibility.** Ensure that whichever operator you choose, it is suitable for your door. Centurion's XTrac has variable speed, which makes it suitable for both tip-up or sectional doors. Centurion's RDO operator is suitable for roll-up doors.
- **Quiet operation.** Newer technologies provide for a much quieter operation than traditional operators. Older technologies included the old bicycle chain style, which pulled the towing arm of the door, driven by a static motor or a worm-screw drive – both of which become very noisy with use. Centurion's XTrac operator has a revolutionary design where the motor silently crawls along a static chain. This provides for excellent longevity of the operator with minimal maintenance.
- **Speed of operation.** Greater speed equals more convenience and better security.
- **Reliability of operation.** Choose a system with battery backup – this will ensure your system continues to run in the event of a power failure.
- **Adaptive anti-crushing control.** This ensures that in the event of the door closing on someone or something, it can immediately react (stop and reverse).
- **Safety beams.** Ensure that the operator can have safety beams connected to it, which will prevent it from closing in the event that someone/something is in its path. Installing these beams is highly recommended, and if they are installed you can also activate another function called Autoclose. The Autoclose function allows you to open your garage door and simply drive off without having to worry about remembering to close the door. With the safety beams fitted, the operator can be set to close automatically after a predefined period.

Remote controls

Garage door remote controls are available in one to four button versions, with some manufacturers providing up to six button transmitters. They can be paired with other devices, such as gate motors and alarms. Rolling code technology is the best option for your remote control as this technology is less likely to be compromised by would-be criminals.

Maintenance

Obviously your choice of material will determine the type of maintenance required for your garage doors. Wooden doors require regular maintenance and a protective coating should be applied at approximately three-month to a year intervals, depending on weather conditions.

Steel, aluminium, glass and Chromadek doors are maintenance free in terms of exterior treatment, but all garage doors should be serviced mechanically at least once a year. ✕

Remote controls can be paired with other devices such as gate motors and alarms



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or fax them to 011 704 3962.

The competition is open to all South African citizens except employees of home Handyman Publishing, Centurion Systems and its associated brands and their immediate families. Closing date for entries: 15 April 2014. Prizes cannot be extended, transferred, or exchanged for cash or any other product. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. All entries must be emailed to sarah@homehandyman.co.za or faxed for attention: Sarah Moodley on 011 704 3962, including your full physical address and contact numbers. Winners will be contacted by either email or telephone within 14 days of the competition closing date.



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WORKSHOP VENUES 2014

Mpumalanga	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Mica Bronkhorstspuit	17 February 2014	18:00-19:30	013-932 3129	pieter@kungwinimica.co.za
Gauteng	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Silverton Bolt and Nut	18 February 2014	18:00-19:30	012-804 1974	johan@silvertonboltandnut.co.za
Hi Lite Hardware	20 February 2014	16:30-19:00	012-362 6089	manager@hilite.co.za
Eastern Cape	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Mesco	24 February 2014	18:00-19:30	044-695 0431	michael@mesco.co.za
Builders Warehouse George	25 February 2014	18:00-19:30	044-050 0283	mario.barnard@builders.co.za
Builders Warehouse PE	26 February 2014	18:00-19:30	0860-008 900	rob.vanrooyen@bwhouse.co.za
Vincent	27 February 2014	18:00-19:30	043-726 6779	admin@vincenthardware.co.za
Gauteng	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Mercury Build It	01 March 2014	10:00-11:30	087-807 9233	elma@mercury1.co.za
Chamberlain Centurion	04 March 2014	18:00-19:30	012-653 9600	johanz@fhchamberlain.co.za
Makro Centurion	31 March 2014	16:30-18:00	0860-305 999	anthony.smith@makro.co.za
DIY Depot PTA North	01 April 2014	18:00-19:30	012-542 4481	northdale@diydepot.co.za
Myzone	22 April 2014	18:00-19:30	012-549 2582	myzone@telkomsa.net
Lenasia Mica	24 April 2014	18:00-19:30	011-852 0797	anoopm@micaretail.co.za
Cape	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Build it Vredendal	24 March 2014	18:00-19:30	027-213 2260	janbuildit@yahoo.com
Honolulu Mica Springbok	25 March 2014	18:00-19:30	027-718 1878	admin@honolulumica.co.za
Merweda Paint & Hardware	26 March 2014	18:00-19:30	022-713 1875	merweda.luzanne@telkomsa.net
Brights Montague Gardens	27 March 2014	18:00-19:30	021-551 4080	luiz@chainhw.co.za
KZN	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Builders Newcastle	07 April 2014	18:00-19:30	034-940 0113	Jemaine.Devarsan@builders.co.za
Ladysmith Mica	08 April 2014	18:00-19:30	036-631 4612	sales@ladymica.co.za
Bolt centre	10 April 2014	18:00-19:30	035-789 3866	roytravis@boltcentre.co.za
The Craft Shop	02 June 2014	18:00-19:30	039-312 1995	crafthardware@telkomsa.net
BEX Hilcrest	03 June 2014	18:00-19:30	031-765 7711	Bryce.Esbend@builders.co.za
North West	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Builders Warehouse Rustenburg	15 April 2014	18:00-19:30	0860-008 916	peter.koitsioe@builders.co.za
Freestate	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
SG Tappin Welkom	17 March 2014	18:00-19:30	057-355 1431	deon@tappin.co.za
Kloppers	29 April 2014	18:00-19:30	051-400 5500	antonh@kloppers.co.za
Pietria Hardware	30 April 2014	18:00-19:30	016-362 0038	Pieter@pietria.co.za
Limpopo	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Giyani Build It	05 May 2014	18:00-19:30	015-812 3545	giyanibuilditsales@telkomsa.net
Easy Build Louis Trichardt	06 May 2014	15:00-17:30	015-516 2470	easybld@mweb.co.za
Ismails Mokopane	07 May 2014	18:00-19:30	015-491 3177	markethwh@gmail.com
Hassims Supply Store	08 May 2014	18:00-19:30	014-736 2157	ismail@hassims.co.za
Cape	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
BEX Worcester	19 May 2014	18:00-19:30	023-100 0270	pierre.krause@builders.co.za
BEX Stellenbosch	20 May 2014	18:00-19:30	021-883 2988	repl.stellenbosch@bexpress.co.za
BEX Hermanus	21 May 2014	18:00-19:30	028-313 0044	her.purchase@builders.co.za
Powertool Repairs	22 May 2014	18:00-19:30	021-448 2620	kai@ptrct.co.za
Botswana	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Haskins Gabrone	09 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00267-395 1001	dsautereau@haskins.co.bw
Builders Gaborone	10 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00267-393 0533	zakiah.motsewabeng@builders.co.bw
Haskins Francistown	11 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00267-241 2301/4270	cmooketsi@haskins.co.bw
Builders Francistown	12 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00267-2410276	Simon.Tebogo@builders.co.bw
Namibia	Date Of Workshop	Time	Contact Number	RSVP Email
Erongo Electrical	23 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00264-64 200566	michael@eae.com.na
WB Hardware	24 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00264-64 415500	djansen@wbswakop.com
E Hardbuild Centre	25 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00264 -64 416880	info@hardbuild.com
Pupekewitz Windhoek	26 June 2014	18:00-19:30	00264-61 2916717	whkret@mps-pupkewitz.com

**The great strength of TRITON is its ability to change functions quickly and easily.
To convert from a table saw to a crosscut saw takes about a minute...**

In need of some storage space for your vegetables? This month we show you how to construct a simple veggie rack

By André Gous

Fresh storage

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: First, you need to determine the size of the baskets. Measure the height, width and depth. The baskets I used measured 180mm (h) x 370mm (w) x 370mm (d). Therefore, the height of the basket x 3 = 540mm. You need to add a bit extra for the veggie rack's clearance off the ground as well as for spacing between each basket. You can adjust this extra spacing to your liking. I also added 20mm to the width and depth, which left me with a measurement of 390mm.

Step 2: Now that everything is measured, you can start by cutting the metal for the feet. In this case, four 1 150mm lengths of 8mm round bar were required.

Step 3: To bend the scrolls for the feet, measure 450mm from one end of the four 1 150mm round bar lengths. After bending



Project guide

-  Difficulty: Easy
-  Estimated cost: R200
-  Estimated time: 2-3 hours

the scrolls, the straight parts of the four legs were 700mm long.

Step 4: Cut 20 lengths of 8mm round bar measuring 390mm each.

Step 5: Place the four legs on top of each other. From the top, measure 233mm down until you reach the 700mm mark just above the scrolls. Make sure these markings are transferred to all four legs.

Step 6: Take two of the legs and lay them on your work surface. The two scrolls should face outward. Next, place four of the 390mm pieces between the two legs and line them up with the markings on the legs you made earlier. One of them goes right at the top. You now need to weld these four pieces onto the legs, but make sure they are square before doing so. Do the same with the other two legs and four more 390mm lengths. This is the back and front of the veggie rack.

Step 7: On each of the 390mm lengths that connect the two legs measure 50mm inwards. On each of these marks you need to weld a 390mm length of round bar perpendicular to the lengths that connect the legs. Again, make sure everything is square before you weld. A 90° clamp, like this one from Magswitch, makes things a lot easier.

Step 8: Now you can join the front and back parts of the veggie rack. Do this by placing the remaining leg on top of the six lengths you welded in place in Step 7. Make sure the



1 Measure the baskets for the veggie rack



2 Bend one end of each of the four 1 150mm lengths into a scroll



3 Measure 700mm from the top



4 From the top, measure 233mm downwards to get the positions of the lengths connecting the legs



Tools

- Angle grinder
- Tape measure
- Welding machine
- Welding electrodes
- Bending machine or jigs



Cutting list

- Four 1 150mm lengths of 8mm round bar
- Twenty 390mm lengths of 8mm round bar



Materials

- 12.4m of 8mm thick round bar
- Paint
- Three baskets of your choice



Note

You can place a large tile on top of the veggie rack to serve as a cutting surface.

six lengths that connect the front and back are welded 50mm inwards as well.

Step 9: Place the veggie rack on its feet. Measure 50mm upwards on the four legs from where the three baskets will sit. Weld six 390mm lengths of round bar between the front and back of the veggie rack on the marks you made. These will be the guides that make sure the baskets stay in position.

Step 10: Finally sand the veggie rack and give it a coat of paint. ✂



11 Measure 50mm upwards on the four legs to get the position of the guides



5 Line up the four lengths



8 From the left and right, measure 50mm inwards



12 With the guides in place



6 Weld them in place



9 Weld 390mm lengths perpendicular onto the lengths connecting the legs



13 All it needs now is a lick of paint



7 Construct another section. This will be the front and back of the rack



10 Weld all six of them in place



Contacts

For more information on this or other metalworking projects, contact André Gous on 082-303-4830, 011-824-4995, email: metalandhome@telkomsa.net or visit www.metalandhome.co.za



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There are many ways to safeguard your home, but the first line of defence is good a perimeter wall



Tools

- Bricks (calculate how many you will need)
- Cement (ready-mix cement is available from certain suppliers)
- Water
- Spade
- Bucket
- Board on which to mix cement
- Trowel
- Builder's line
- Spirit level

Writing on the wall

The most modern way to enclose your garden and home is with a face brick or plastered wall. So whether you are erecting your own wall or want to keep an informed eye on your employed contractor, here's what you will need to get the job done.

The foundation

Whatever structure you build, if you want it to last and be safe, you need to build it on a proper mortar foundation. Mortar strength is achieved by using the correct admixtures and following the correct curing process.

The width and depth of the foundation trenches are dependent on whether the foundations are designed for a typical double brick wall or a single brick wall.

Single brick walls are usually for lower walls and no load bearing walls. Double walls are more expensive but will last longer and are stronger.

Usually the foundation is approximately 760mm wide to support a double brick wall, and approximately 400mm wide for a single brick wall. Continuous strip foundations should be at least 200 mm thick.

If a strip foundation is laid at more than one level, it is important for the higher portion of the foundation to extend over the lower portion for a distance that is equal at least to the thickness of the foundation. If there is a void between the top section and lower section, you will need to fill the void with concrete that is the same strength as the concrete used for the foundations.

Mixing concrete

Mixing concrete differs in certain areas and also according to the bricks you use. This should be explained and indicated on the cement packaging. For smaller batches, it is best to buy ready mix.

Foundations should be constructed with concrete that has a compressive strength of at least 10 MPa at 28 days, or concrete that is mixed proportionately by volume in the ratio 1:4:5 cement: sand: stone. Mixing by volume involves carefully measuring out the materials in a same sized container. A wheelbarrow may be used, but it is not a suitable method for large building projects. The amount of water added to a mix must be enough to make the mix workable and plastic.



Brickwork

Brickwork should always be done methodically; straight and level. Also invest in the right tools for the job. Few things are as frustrating as trying to get something done with the wrong tools.

Use a builder's line and pegs to mark where you will start and to make sure you build in a straight line. Use your trowel to scoop up mortar and lay it evenly on the foundation along your builder's line. Put enough mortar down for about three bricks to go in line. Make a few indents with the trowel's sharp edge. This helps the mortar to bed nicely on the foundation. Then push the first brick into the mortar. Level it with the trowel's handle.



Butter the next brick with mortar on the short side before bedding it next to the last brick in the mortar and push it closer so the mortar squishes out and stop when you are about 10mm from the last brick. Then level and square the bricks with a level and the

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Never build more than 1m in height per day. This will give the mortar time to cure properly before being put under too much stress

trowel handle. Excess mortar can be scooped up and used again, as long as you use it immediately.

Place each brick level by using the already bedded bricks as a reference. If you are building a double wall, instead of placing one brick at a time place two parallel with each other and butter the inside of the bricks too. When you reach the end of your wall, move the builder's line up by one brick's height.

Place the next brick half a brick's length from the end on a mortar bed. This will mean your top and bottom bricks will cross over so the joints won't line up. This staggered building method makes for a stronger wall. If you are building a double wall, you could place the first brick diagonally, which will run across the double wall. This will also create a staggered effect. Again, follow the line, carefully checking the level and squareness of each brick. Never



Remember!

- The National Building Regulations state that walls and fences to a maximum height of 1.8m are regarded as "minor building work" and do not require building plans.
- Solid boundary walls may not be any higher than 1.8m on street boundaries, and no higher than 2.1m on lateral boundaries.

build more than 1m in height per day. This will give the mortar time to cure properly before being put under too much stress.

Building corners

If your construction includes corners, it is best to start building on a corner. Lay the first brick and then the next one perpendicularly to form the corner. Use a steel builder's square to make sure your corner is exactly square.

When you lay the second course, place the next brick overlapping the bottom brick, once again this will automatically create the stagger effect in each direction.

The corners should always be built first. This forms an accurate lead for the rest of the bricks.

Drainage

Keep drainage in mind when you build. If water is unable to get through the wall, pressure will build up, leading to cracking and even collapsing of the wall. Water can also wash out the foundation of the wall. A well-built wall will make provision for water to drain out via built-in drainage holes.

An alternative is to slope your garden so water naturally flows away from your wall

Moisture protection

Moisture can penetrate into a structure through bricks and it is therefore advisable to use damp proofing. This will minimise rising damp through the walls. The plastic is black in colour and 375 micron and available in thicknesses of 110mm, 225mm and 300mm. The best way to lay it is about three courses above ground level. Excess plastic can be cut when the construction is complete. ✂



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How to install a ceiling

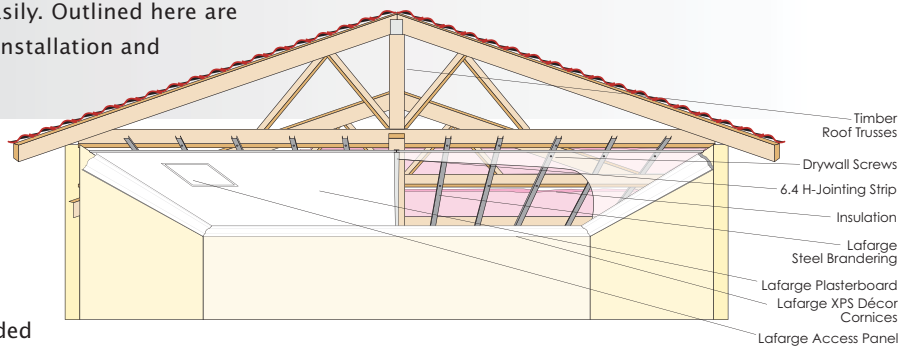
How to plan a Ceiling

Careful planning is essential for a successful ceiling installation. Plan well, and the rest of the job will go easily. Outlined here are the important issues in planning a ceiling installation and calculating the materials you will need.

Components of a Ceiling System

Steps to planning a Ceiling:

1. Determine the area of the room
2. Determine the amount of brandering needed
 - Starting from the wall, plan the placement of brandering 400mm apart to ensure adequate support for Lafarge Plasterboard
 - National Building Regulations stipulate a minimum ceiling height of 2.4 metres
3. Calculate the number of Ceiling Boards required. Lafarge Plasterboards come in various sizes (2.4/2.7/3.0/3.3/3.6m)
4. Planning the run direction of Lafarge Ceiling Boards makes calculating the required quantities easier
5. Calculate the amount of H-Strip you will need. Jointing Strips can be ordered in various lengths (3.0/3.6m) to suit the size of plasterboards ordered
6. Determine the amount of Lafarge XPS Décor Cornices
7. Determine the quantity of insulation required
8. Determine how many trap doors you will be needing
9. Order the correct type and number of fasteners
 - You will need 25mm Drywall Screws. The spacing of Lafarge Drywall Screws is 150mm apart along the perimeter and along all of the Lafarge Steel Brandering



1. Area

Length x Width =

2. Brandering

Length x 2.5 =

3. Lafarge Plasterboard

Area/Area of Plasterboard =
E.g. 14.4 / 3.6 = 4

5. H-Strip

Plasterboard Perimeter / 2 =

6. Lafarge XPS Décor Cornices

(2 x Length + 2 x Width) / 2 =

7. Insulation

Area / 12 =

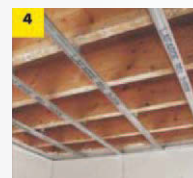
How to put up a Ceiling Grid

Now that all materials are on-site, we can begin with the Ceiling Grid Installation:

1. Taking the thickness of the Lafarge Ceiling Boards into account, mark the room's ceiling levels. Fix the perimeter support along this line using Lafarge Galvanized Angles. Maintain the level using a water pipe or laser level. Screws or fluted nails can be used, depending on the type of wall (pic1)

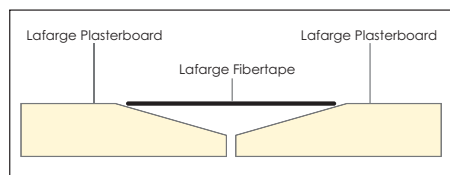
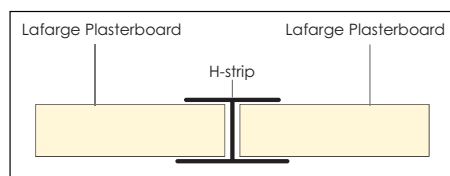


2. Maintain a flat level ceiling using fish line or laser level (pic 2)
3. Install Lafarge Steel Brandering at right angles to the roof trusses. Start 400mm from the perimeter trim. Secure Lafarge Steel Brandering using either:
 - a. Lafarge Direct Fix Brackets. The hole and slot help you adjust the level of the steel brandering (pic 2);
 - Or**
 - b. Lafarge 35mm Jack Point Self-Drilling Screws to fix the steel brandering directly to the wooden trusses. Minor adjustments can be made ensuring levelness (pics 3 and 4). Space the steel brandering 450mm apart
4. Cut steel brandering approximately 5mm shorter than the room perimeter to allow for expansion
5. Join steel brandering using Lafarge Joiners, if required
6. Insulation can now be installed where planned. Cut insulation to fit between the roof trusses, then roll-out on top of the steel brandering. Ensure insulation overlaps to avoid any gaps



How to join Plasterboards in a Ceiling

During the installation of a Lafarge Plasterboard Ceiling, the joining of Plasterboards will require attention. Two methods are used, A) by means of an H-strip, or B) with a combination of Lafarge Fibertape and Lafarge Jointing Plaster (9mm Plasterboard for joint process only)



A. The first method: The H-strip is a simple jointing method that involves friction fitting an H-strip over the length of the edges between the Lafarge Plasterboard

B. The second method: Also simple, involves the application of a combination of Lafarge Fibertape and Lafarge Jointing Compound. The Fibertape reinforces the joint to help prevent cracking and Lafarge Jointing Plaster smooths over the joint, making it invisible

1. Ensure that the joint area is free of dust and dirt. Centre Lafarge Fibertape along the joint. Lafarge Fibertape is self-adhering and is easy to apply. Simply stick it onto the Lafarge Plasterboard along the joint
2. Mix the Lafarge Jointing Plaster as per the instructions on the bag. Remember to mix a small amount at a time as the plaster must be used in 60 minutes or less. Always mix the plaster with clear water
3. Apply the Plaster over the Lafarge Fibertape using a 300mm trowel. Spread Lafarge Plaster along the length of the joint, carefully smoothing to ensure a flat finished surface. We call this process feathering. The better the feathering, the less sandpapering will be required. This is important as it will save you time and money
4. Check all plastered joints for smoothness and lightly even-out any high points with 80mm sandpaper
5. Allow the joints to set and dry (Leave overnight to be sure)
6. Inspect the joints again, scraping any protruding points. A light sanding in places may also be necessary to finalise the ceiling. The painting process can then begin. Always ask your paint supplier to provide the correct type of paint for Plasterboard Ceilings
7. All Plasterboard joints to be supported

For more information about Lafarge Ceiling and Partition Systems, contact Lafarge Industries SA (Pty) Ltd, Gypsum Division on 0861 Gypsum, 011 389 4500 or www.lafarge.co.za

For courses offered, contact the Lafarge Gypsum Training Centre on 011 866 2233, Fax: 011 866 4180 www.lafargegypsum.co.za or training@gypsum-za.lafarge.com



BRIGHT IDEAS

Readers share their time saving, space saving or innovative ideas

Handy home ideas



Rubbish catcher

A plastic receptacle, which attaches to the top of a drawer or cupboard door so that you can wipe veggie peels and other rubbish directly from the worktop into the receptacle, is available on the market at a not so cheap price. I simply cut two strips from an offcut gutter and bent them into U-clips to hold a rectangular plastic container, which I found in the Tupperware cupboard, in place. Flat sheeting or hoop iron will also do the job. This only cost 10 minutes of my time.



Lock screw

Cupboard locks are supposed to be held in place and prevented from being force-turned by a washer with two spikes that bite into the chipboard or wood of the door in which the lock is installed. Some locks even have a flat washer without spikes. I have seen so many of these

that have indeed been forced open by inserting a flat bit screwdriver into the lock and turning the entire lock.

A simple solution is to make a small cut into the washer with an angle grinder, install the lock and position it correctly. Then insert a small screw into the wood just where you made the cut into the washer so that it will prevent the washer from turning.

Piet Steenkamp, via email

Congratulations to Eddie Rothman who wins a Tork Craft BJ02 900W Biscuit Joiner from Vermont



WINNING LETTER



Clamp made from plumbing pipes

After reading the September 2013 issue, I wanted to share an idea with the readers. I could not find a clamp to assist me to hold on top of poles while I was constructing a garden house. I used a few 15mm water pipe t-pieces, bends, bolts and nuts and I then constructed the clamp as in the photograph.

Eddie Rothman, Riebeeckstad

Share your ideas!

WIN!

A Triton T12ID Impact Driver

Send your bright ideas to *The Home Handyman* 'Bright Ideas', PO Box 650484, Benmore 2010 or email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za. Please include your phone number and physical address during office hours.



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These beautiful windows were crafted by Warren Rothenbry: 072 342 4613

Shed some light

Keeping your garden shed in good condition is, like everything else, key to its long life

By Roelof Strydom

Garden sheds can be built from a variety of materials such as wood, metal and plastic. The latter does not really require any maintenance, except maybe the locks and hinges, due to the construction material being fade resistant, waterproof and free from rotting. Those who own a wooden or metal garden shed are not so lucky, however, as the shed's lifespan depends on regular maintenance to protect it against the elements.

Quick and simple fixes

The area around the garden shed

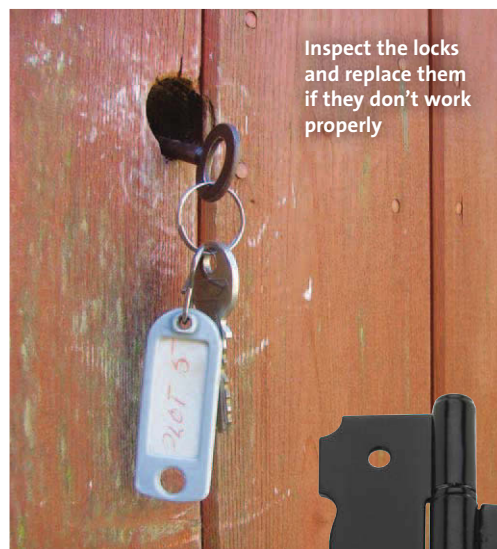
The area surrounding the garden shed should always be maintained. Overhanging trees and hedges can cause damage to the shed, which might cost a lot of money to repair. Tree branches can break off and land on the shed's roof or even pierce it, encouraging water ingress. It is also a good idea to remove any creepers that might grow against the garden shed. You might think these plants are ideal for disguising the garden shed, but, in fact, the plants create a damp environment, especially in wet

weather. Sunlight and ventilation help to keep the wood or metal in good condition and the creepers prevent sunlight and air from reaching the wood or metal.

Garden sheds are built on a wooden framework. The purpose of this framework, apart from providing a level surface for the shed to stand on, is to elevate the shed, preventing damage from ground moisture and insects. It also allows air to circulate underneath the shed, which keeps the underside of the shed dry. So, avoid closing off the framework as this will prevent air from circulating underneath the garden shed.



Garden sheds are used to store a variety of household items



Inspect the locks and replace them if they don't work properly

Locks and hinges

Garden sheds are used to store a variety of household and garden tools and appliances. You might use it as a workshop where you store all your expensive tools and machinery, or you might use it to store all your gardening equipment, like the lawnmower and edge trimmer. Whatever you store in your garden shed, chances are you want it to be safe and secure. Therefore regularly inspect the locks and hinges to see whether they are still working properly. If the lock is giving you hassles, it might be a simple fix and only require you to spray some WD40 into the lock mechanism to



▲ Tee hinges are often used for sheds. If broken, they should be replaced

lubricate it. If that doesn't work, it is best to replace the lock entirely.

Tee hinges are mostly used to attach the doors to the shed. These hinges offer little security to start off with because the fixing screws are exposed. So, if the hinges are compromised in any way, rather

replace them completely. Something else to look for on the hinges is rust. If rust presents itself on the hinges, sand them down to get rid of loose material. Next, prime the hinges with a metal primer, and then apply a topcoat. You can also paint the hinges with direct-to-rust metal paint, which only requires you to remove any loose and flaking rust before applying the paint. If there is nothing wrong with the hinge except some squeaky noises and difficulty opening and closing, all it needs is some lubricant. Lubricant loosens

the moving parts of the hinges and displaces moisture.

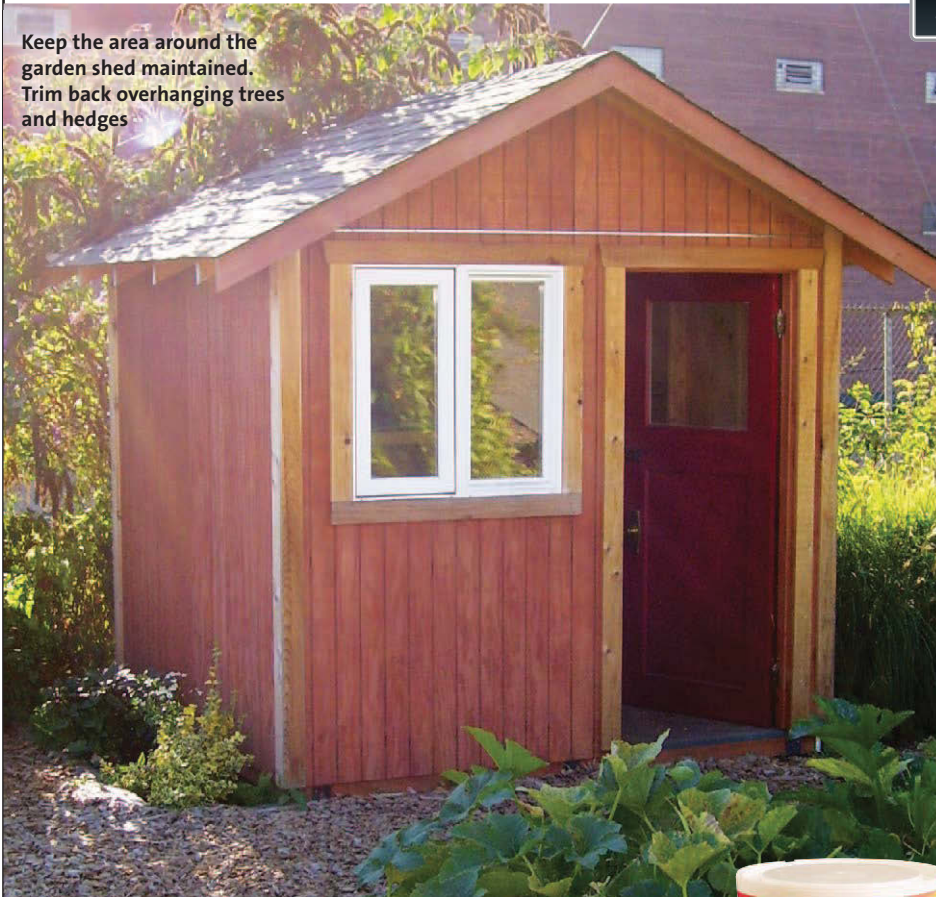
Roof

Inspect the garden shed's roof at least twice a year, especially before the rainy season, in order to identify any problems at an early stage. Use a garden hose and rinse off the roof area, making sure you get rid of any leaves and stubborn dirt. Use a ladder so that you can climb up and give the roof a close inspection. Check all the seams and look for penetrations of any kind.

Also look for screws that need to be replaced, tightened or sealed. If you find any screws that are loose, enabling water to pass through, ScrewGoo from A.Shak is the perfect product to waterproof and seal roof screws. Firstly, look for surface rust in the vicinity of the roof screw. If there is any, sand it off and wash away the loose particles. Then apply the ScrewGoo. All you need to do is unscrew the cap and position the nozzle over the head of the screw. Gently squeeze the bottle so that the head of the screw is covered in ScrewGoo. A skin will form after two hours and will be fully cured after 24 hours.

Resealing a wooden garden shed

Keep the area around the garden shed maintained. Trim back overhanging trees and hedges



Tools & materials

- Paint stripper (if the wood was previously painted or varnished)
- Sandpaper (40-grit, 60-grit and 80-grit)
- Woodoc Wood Reviver
- Woodoc Deck Dressing in the colour of your choice
- Good quality paintbrushes
- Mineral turpentine
- Paint scraper

tin. The way in which the first coat is applied is very important. The first coat penetrates the wood, therefore apply a liberal amount of the sealer with a paintbrush until no further penetration takes place. The wood should be glossily wet all over with no dull patches. The first coat should be left to dry thoroughly, after which a second and third coat should be applied in the same manner as the first. Pay special attention to sharp edges as the sealer tends to run, resulting in some surface build-up.

Before embarking on a resealing job, get the right products for the job. It is also essential that the wooden surface is properly prepared and the Woodoc products are applied properly. Failure to do so may result in reduced longevity of the products.

Prepare the wood

First, the old paint or varnish needs to be removed. This can be done by applying paint stripper to the wood. Always remember to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Use a paint scraper to scrape off the old paint or varnish and neutralise it according to the manufacturer's instructions. If water was used as neutralising agent, allow sufficient time for the wood to dry before proceeding. Any blackening of the wood can be removed with Woodoc Wood Reviver, after

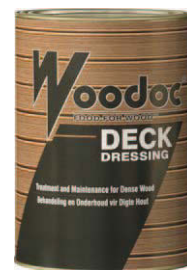
which it should be left to dry again. Next, use 40 grit sandpaper and give the entire surface a proper sanding, which will remove any raised grain. Follow the 40-grit sandpaper with 60-grit and 80-grit sandpaper to achieve a smooth finish. Once sanding is done, wipe down the surface with mineral turpentine to remove any dust, oil and wax. The wood should then be allowed to dry again before the Woodoc Deck Dressing is applied.

Apply the sealer

When applying Woodoc Deck Dressing, pay attention to the instructions on the



▲ Remove blackening of the wood with Woodoc Wood Reviver



▲ Apply three coats of Woodoc Deck Dressing

Maintenance of the structure

Woodoc outdoor products are formulated to biodegrade and disappear from the wood towards the end of its lifecycle. It is recommended that you inspect the wood at least twice a year to see if any wood appears dull, which is an indication that biodegradation has started. To rectify this, clean the affected area with steel wool and mineral turpentine and reapply Woodoc Deck Dressing. You don't have to deeply sand the wood again and it is only necessary to do maintenance in the areas where biodegradation is observed. It is imperative that you catch the signs of weathering early and do the necessary maintenance before damage occurs.

Repainting a metal garden shed

Repainting a metal garden shed usually involves sanding the entire shed to remove all the rust and old paint, and then priming it. Only once the primer is dry can the undercoat and topcoat be applied. There is, however, an easier way to take care of this task and it involves a product called Oxirite Metal Paint. This is a four-in-one metal paint that with one application includes the primer, rust treatment, undercoat and topcoat.

Application

Step 1: Remove the loose, flaking rust with a wire brush. You don't have to sand all the way back to the bare metal. If you require a very glossy or smooth surface, sand the entire surface of the shed lightly to create a slightly rough surface for better adherence. Also ensure that the surface is clean and dry.

Step 2: Stir the product well to ensure that all the solids are mixed into the solution. The 65% solid base gives the product its immense long-term durability.

Step 3: Apply one coat of Oxirite with a brush, roller or spray gun. If required, the paint can be diluted by up to 10% for spraying purposes with Oxirite solvent. On application you will notice the paint's thixotropic properties, which causes the paint to self-level.

Step 4: The first coat is touch dry within one hour and re-coating can take place after two hours. The second coat should be applied in the same way as the first coat. The second coat should not be applied after an eight-hour period has lapsed as the paint begins to cure after eight hours. If eight hours has gone past without applying the second coat, you will have to wait two weeks for the paint to fully cure. Apply two generous coats of the paint to ensure it performs to its full potential. The quick

drying and re-coating time allows you to complete this task in one day, which saves on time and labour costs.

Maintenance of the structure

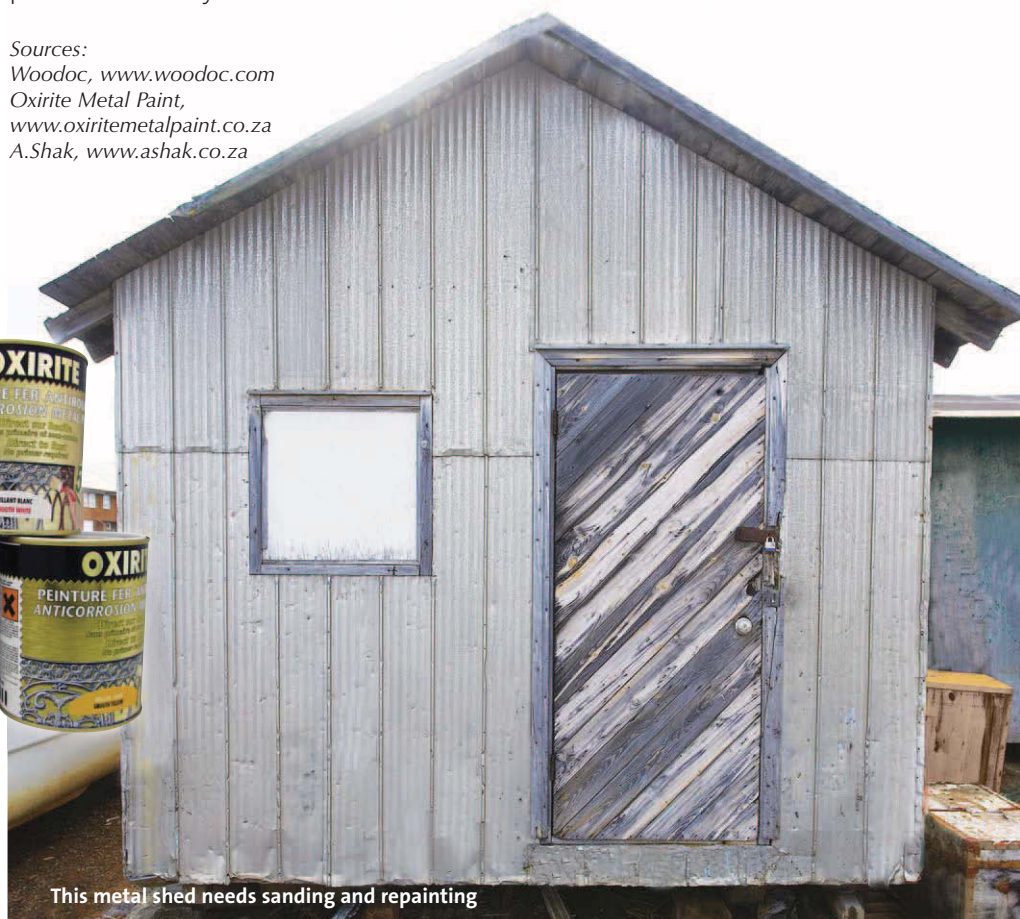
If applied correctly, the paint will provide up to five years of corrosion and abrasion protection. It has good UV, weather and salt protection properties, providing colour stability, keeping your shed looking newly painted for longer. Depending on the harshness of the weather conditions, the shed will require repainting every three to five years.

Regular maintenance means you will catch small problems before they escalate into bigger ones. If you take care of your garden shed, you won't need to spend large amounts of money to fix big problems once they occur. ✂

Sources:
Woodoc, www.woodoc.com
Oxirite Metal Paint,
www.oxiritemetalpaint.co.za
A.Shak, www.ashak.co.za



▲ Oxirite is a direct-to-rust metal paint



This metal shed needs sanding and repainting

The lifespan of a wooden or metal shed depends on regular maintenance to protect it from the elements

Make the cut

A jigsaw is an indispensable part of any DIY'er's arsenal. Although cutting with circular saws or angle grinders may be quicker, jigsaws come in handy when making cuts in confined spaces. Here are some jigsaws from various manufacturers

By Roelof Strydom

What to look for

- Buy a jigsaw that has a quick blade release system. This allows you to quickly and easily change blades, which is useful when you're working with a variety of materials.
- A jigsaw with an adjustable base plate will allow you to tilt the jigsaw left or right to make bevel cuts of up to 45°.
- A variable speed dial will give you greater control over the jigsaw. When doing straight cuts, you'll put the jigsaw on high speed, but when you need to do curved cuts, you can dial the speed down.
- Look for a jigsaw with a pendulum action as it allows the blade to not only move up and down, but forwards and backwards as well. This allows you to cut into thicker and harder material and equates to less work time.

DeWalt DW341 Jigsaw

This DeWalt model features keyless blades changes with its patented anti-deflection clamp as well as a variable speed dial to allow better cutting control in all materials. It also has a pendulum action for increased cutting performance and extended blade life. It has a no-load stroke rate of 3 100spm and a maximum stroke length of 20mm. Maximum cutting capacity in wood, metal and non-ferrous metals is 85mm, 10mm and 20mm respectively. Its bevel capacity is 45° left and right.



Available from:	www.dewaltpowertools.co.za
Weight:	2kg
Power output:	550W
Recommended retail price:	R1 650

Woodster JS0580 Jigsaw

This Woodster jigsaw with stroke length of 24mm has a no-load stroke rate of 500-3 000spm. It can cut wood up to 80mm thick and metal up to 10mm thick. This model sports four pendulum settings and has a bevel capacity of 45° in both directions.



Available from:	www.newcopowertools.co.za
Weight:	1.78kg
Power output:	710W
Recommended retail price:	R760

Maktec MT430 Jigsaw

The Maktec MT430 Jigsaw has a maximum cutting capacity of 55mm in wood and 6mm in metal. It has a stroke length of 26mm and its no-load stroke rate is 0-3 100spm. It also features a variable speed dial and a bevel capacity of 45° left and right.



Available from:	www.maktec.co.za
Weight:	2.5kg
Power output:	450W
Recommended retail price:	R1 229

Technique:

Simple cuts made easy

- Cutting material with a veneer using a jigsaw tends to chip the veneer. You can prevent this from happening by cutting with a fine-toothed blade or you can simply stick some masking tape along both sides of the cutting line.
- Set up a long square against which to run the jigsaw when making long straight cuts. This will ensure you make perfectly straight cuts every time.
- When you need to make a cut-out in wood, such as for a kitchen sink, first drill holes in each of the four corners. This will enable you to place the jigsaw blade into the hole and make the cut-out.

Makita 4350FCT Jigsaw

This Makita model has an electronic speed control that maintains consistent speed set for the material as well as a variable speed dial. It also features tool-less blade changes and has a built-in LED job light so that the cutting line is always visible. The maximum cutting capacity is 135mm in wood and 10mm in metal. It has a no-load stroke rate of 800-2 800spm, a stroke length of 26mm and three pendulum settings.



Available from:	www.makita.co.za
Weight:	2.6kg
Power output:	720W
Recommended retail price:	R2 799

Festool Pendulum Jigsaw

PSB 300 EQ-Plus

This jigsaw from Festool can cut wood up to 120mm thick, metal 10mm thick and non-ferrous metals 20mm thick. It has a no-load stroke rate of 1 000-2 900spm and a maximum bevel capacity of 45°. It also features the FastFix rapid-change system for easy blade changes.



Available from:	www.festool.co.za
Weight:	2.4kg
Power output:	720W
Recommended retail price:	R4 446



Blade tips

- Wider blades are best for making long, straight cuts while narrow blades are better suited for cutting curves.
- Blades with larger, fewer teeth cut faster, but produce a rough edge. Blades with smaller and more teeth cut slower, but leave behind a smoother edge.

Bosch PST900 PEL Jigsaw

This jigsaw features Bosch one-handed SDS (Special Direct System) ensuring effortless and safe blade changes without the need for additional tools. It also has a switchable air blast function to ensure you have a clear view of the cutting area at all times. It has a stroke length of 23mm and can cut wood 90mm thick and metal 8mm thick. The adjustable sole plate allows for mitre cuts up to 45° and the four stage pendulum action allows for faster cutting and increased lifespan of the blade.



Available from:	www.bosch-do-it.co.za
Weight:	2.2kg
Power output:	620W
Recommended retail price:	R1 199

Upgrade those blades

- When buying jigsaw blades, take note of the type of blade you need to buy for your jigsaw. The two most common types are T-shank (bayonet style) and U-shank (universal style) blades. Manufacturers like Bosch, Makita, DeWalt and Festool use T-shank blades while Black & Decker and Skil use U-shank blades. Some jigsaws have a universal blade clamp to allow both T- and U-shank blades.
- The MPS Alum/Plas.blade is a 100mm 8tpi blade that will easily cut through aluminium and plastic.



- The Ruwag metal, wood and plastic blade will make short work of cutting into wood that has nails in it, as well as metal and aluminium and backwards as well. This allows you to cut into thicker and harder material and equates to less work time.



Woodworker's diary

End grain does not glue well!

My niece, Shirley, recently asked me to fix her wardrobe door that had fallen apart. Every joint had failed and she delivered a pile of wood

By Denis Lock

The wardrobe pieces were shown to me as in photo 1. Sixty pieces in total: Two stiles, three rails and 55 slats! Fortunately none of the pieces were damaged and all I had to do was reassemble it. Before telling you how I did that, let's examine why the joints failed.

One of the joints (the other five are identical) is shown in photo 2. This joint is known as a rail-and-stile joint or cope-and-stick joint. It is cut with a pair of matched cutters on a machine known as a spindle. The joint aligns very accurately. Unlike the finger joint covered in my January



1

Sixty pieces!

2014 article, there is very little mechanical interlock and reinforcement is needed. In the case of my niece's door, only glue was used. No mechanical reinforcement such as nails, screws, dowels, biscuits or tenons were present. Gluing theory is very complex. Woodworkers, however, must always consider the following two facts. Face grain glues very well and the joint is generally stronger than the wood being glued. End grain, because of its porous nature, does not glue well.

The parts of the joint marked in green in photo 3 are face grain and glue well.

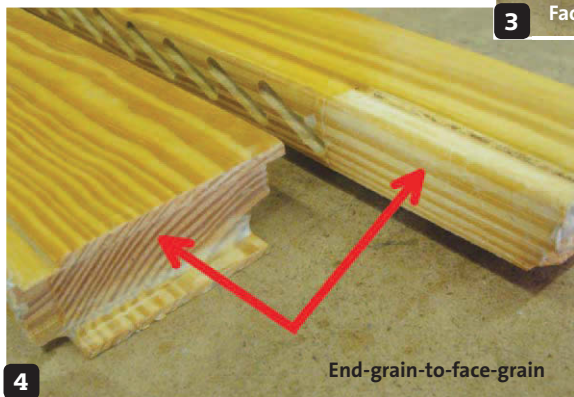
Photo 4 shows that the remainder of the joint has one large end-grain face and this part of the joint is weak. The theory is borne out by the fact that all six joints on this door failed. I had to decide on a method of mechanical reinforcement. Nails and screws were ruled out. A dowel joint, although simple in theory, is difficult to execute accurately. This is particularly true when using SA pine where there are alternate rings of soft early wood and hard late wood. The drill bit invariably wanders. Dowel joints also do not have significant face-grain-to-face-grain area. Biscuits are



One of the failed joints



Face-grain-to-face-grain



End-grain-to-face-grain

ruled out because of the cope cut on the end of the rails. The biscuit blade won't reach deep enough. The rails had already been cut to length so a traditional mortice and tenon joint was not possible.

I settled for slip tenons (also known as loose tenons). A slip tenon joint consists of a pair of identical mortices: One cut on the edge of the stile and one on the end of the rail. They are joined together by a simple slip tenon. When glued, a slip tenon joint is every bit as strong as a traditional mortice and tenon joint. One of the new slip tenon joints is shown in photo 5. The joint for the centre rail needed a little extra treatment. The mortices for the louvre slats had been cut continuously along the inside edge of the rails. The three slat mortices, already cut where I wanted to cut a new mortice, were filled (with pieces of some old kiaat louvre slats I had), cut flush and sanded before cutting the new mortice. This can be seen in photos 6 and 7.

In total, I had to cut 12 mortices (two per joint) and fit six slip tenons. I cut mortices with a handheld router and two shop-made jigs. The first of these – I call it an auxiliary



Slip tenon joint

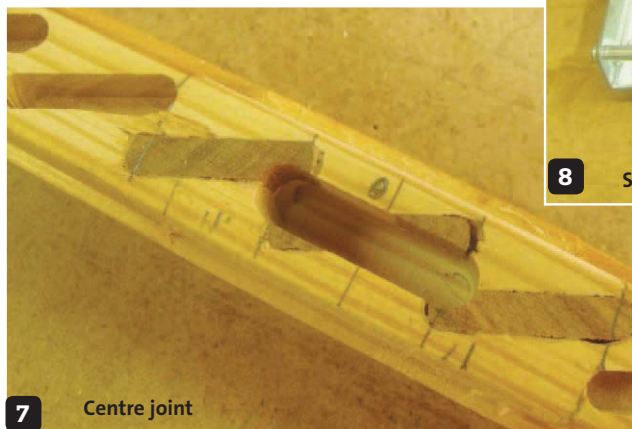


Unnecessary mortices filled

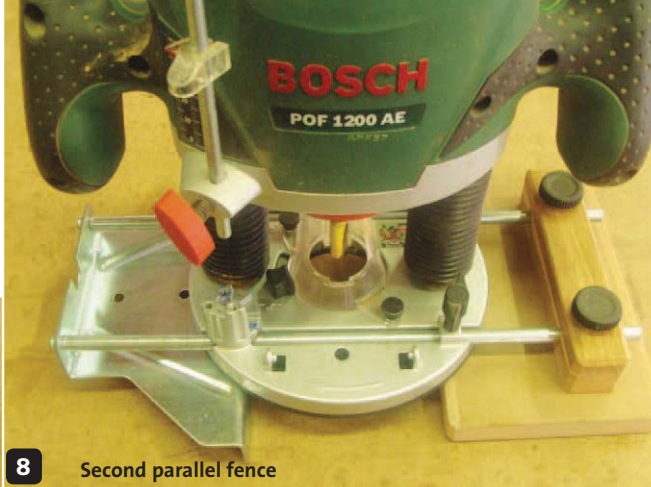
parallel fence – is used in addition to the standard parallel fence (see photo 8). The second is my double-L mortice jig. This jig is seen in in photo 9 and you can see where it got its name. Photo 10 shows the jig and one of the stiles with a mortice marked out clamped in a woodworker's vice. The stile is set to cut the mortice in the correct place (reference mark R1). The distance

between reference mark R2 and the 6mm MDF stop determines the length of the mortice. Photo 11 shows the mortice being cut. The two parallel fences straddle the jig and the router moves in a dead straight line. I will present this jig in full detail in a future article. How tight should a tenon (or slip tenon) be? Not so tight that you have to use a mallet to knock it into the mortice, but tight enough that it doesn't fall apart under its own weight (gravity) as shown in photo 12.

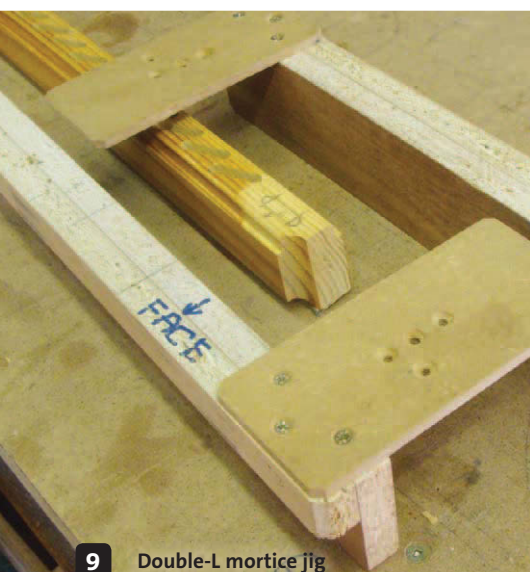
Everything fits and it is time to glue up (photo 13). Glue up is the most stressful part of any project. I adhere strictly to three rules. The first is to do a rehearsal (a dry run with no glue). This ensures that all the joints pull up square and tight, that you have sufficient clamps and that they are correctly set, it determines the clamping sequence and most importantly confirms that you can complete the process within the open working time of the glue. The PVA glue I use has an open time of approximately 10 minutes. The second rule is don't try to do the entire glue up at one go. Break it up into logical steps. We did this job in two steps. The first, a simple one,



7 Centre joint



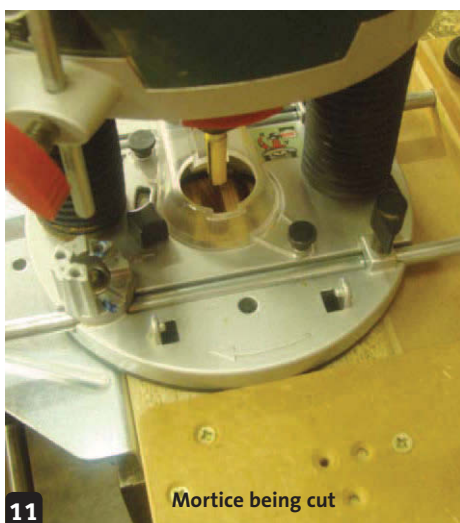
8 Second parallel fence



9 Double-L mortice jig



10 Ready to mortice



11 Mortice being cut



12 How tight?

was to glue the three joints on one stile. The second stile is in place, but has no glue on its joints. Make sure that the frame is square at this stage by comparing the two diagonals (photo 14).

I had nightmares about the second stage. We had to glue a second set of three slip tenon joints and we had to get 55 louvre slats correctly positioned at the same time. After two rehearsals we could do it comfortably in less than 10 minutes. This second step was definitely a two-man job. This is my third rule: Make sure enough hands are available. The outcome was successful as can be seen in photo 15.

Thank you Shirley for bringing this job to me. It gave me material for this article and photographic evidence to back up my frequent statement: "End grain does not glue well." ✖



13 Ready for glue up



14 Is it square?



15 Finished job

My three rules of gluing

1. Do a rehearsal (a dry run with no glue).
2. Don't try to do the entire glue up in one go.
3. Make sure enough hands are available.



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The Woodworker's Corner has been turned into a bragging space

Lights up

I was strolling along, very much enjoying the shopping centre in Woodlands, where I ended up paging through the magazines at CNA. In the October 2013 issue of *The Home Handyman*, there was another amazing article on woodworking; this time about how to make a tea light candle holder. I started working on the idea for use in our science club that we run at different schools in Pretoria and Centurion, and the photos show the end result. The kiddies thoroughly enjoy woodworking. Three schools made the tea light candle holders; an all-boys school, an all-girls school and a co-ed school. The ladies don't hold back and operate drills, orbital sanders, soldering irons, etc.

At the all-boys school, one kiddy remarked, "Ah, something my mom won't throw out!" Another boy said, "My dad is using the tea light candle holder!"

The wood that we use is avocado pear and white stinkwood. A more natural process of aging was selected for some of the white stinkwood. The wood is mainly cut with a table saw or bandsaw and sanded down with a belt sander. Finishing touches are carried out with an orbital sander. The holes are then marked and drilled with a 40mm spade bit. We usually add feet to the tea light candle holder by drilling a hole in the body of the holder and a hole in the foot, which we attach with a pressed in dowel stick with a little bit of glue. We use finer grade sandpaper, 220-grit, to give a smoother surface and then brush linseed oil on the wood, briskly rubbing it down with a cotton cloth.

Anton Du Toit, Pretori

▲ A candle holder made from a cross-sectional cut of the more naturally aged white stinkwood



▲ This is made from avocado pear wood

▼ A selection of tea light candle holders made from white stinkwood



Please send us pictures of your projects. Write a caption with your name, inspiration, type of wood, etc. and send it to editorial@homehandyman.co.za



▲ A thicker piece of white stinkwood



Woodworking associations

Woodworking associations' details are available on our website at www.homehandyman.co.za

BOOK SHELF

Viv Martin from Hardware Centre reviews the latest in woodworking literature

Small Woodturning Projects with Bonnie Klein

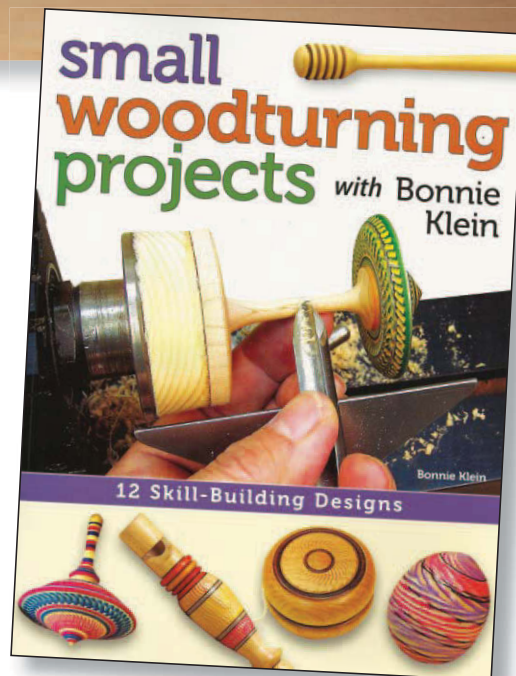
Author: Bonnie Klein
Publisher: Fox Chapel Publishing

Some of you may recall the symposium in Johannesburg some years back when the invited guest was Bonnie Klein. At the time, she was turning boxes out of marrow bones. The adept skill that she showed in all of her demonstrations and teaching will be well remembered.

A new book by Bonnie Klein has just arrived, and whether you are an enthusiastic beginner or an experienced turner, these practical and fun-to-make small projects are Bonnie Klein classics that will ultimately improve your woodturning expertise on any size lathe.

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For more information, contact Hardware Centre on 011-791-0844 (Randburg) or 021-421-7358 (Cape Town)



▲ This white stinkwood went through a more natural process of aging, resulting in a rich and luscious deeper brown colour



► Another candle holder made from a cross-sectional cut of naturally aged white stinkwood

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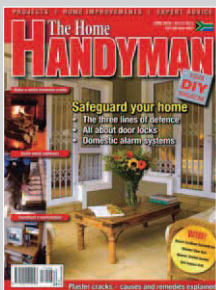
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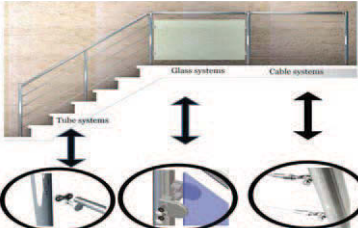


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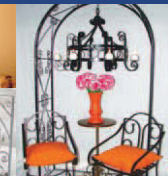
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Some time ago, Reuben the Screwman experienced a problem with his car, so he quickly ventured under the hood to fix it... without much success. Here's his story

Car problems!

There was a rather loud 'click, click, click' sound coming from under the hood of my Mercedes Benz. Knowing full well that I was utterly useless as far as motor cars go, I still ventured under the hood, with a degree of optimism that by some stroke of luck I would be able to fix this in no time.

After an hour of burnt fingers and smelling like an oil foundry, I decided that it would have been easier to locate the spot where all the single socks go than to locate the problem under the hood. As the vehicle was fairly new, I was not exactly a happy camper and insisted that the dealer fix it while I wait.

The safety valve that controls my emotions, rationale and vocabulary had just blown

It was then that I realised just how independent dealers can be. They were just as unhappy to deal with the problem without a booking as I was with the situation. Be that as it may, the vehicle was taken to the workshop and I was escorted to the waiting lounge to enjoy a lovely cup of 'battery acid'.

After an hour of paging through a copy of a year-old edition of *Car*, Mr Happiness came and broke the news: "It was just a 'sprigged' that rubbed against a 'sprong' under the cam over the top." He might as well have told me that the Russians had invaded Britain; it would have made more sense.

The car was fixed and off I went. Halfway home, lo and behold, the irritating rubbing of the 'sprigged' was back, louder than ever. The safety valve that controls my emotions, rationale and vocabulary had just blown and I was now in free fall. To say I was upset is to describe Ted Bundy as vegetarian.

As it was 4.40pm and peak hour traffic, going back was not an option. I decided to drive to a dealer en route. I pulled in as they were locking up. I explained the situation to the salesman, but he was having none of it. "I am sorry but the workshop staff have all left," I was told. My inner voice was telling me to pack it in, but my alter ego was not going to let this one slide. I insisted that he call the manager. Once again I was told that it would be futile as he was not a technician.

I pushed past the stunned salesman and walked to what seemed to be the manager's office. I was greeted by a very courteous gentleman who seemed to understand my frustration. "I am not a technician, but let's have a look if I can help you." For the first time that day, I had found someone who was really willing to help. As we approached my vehicle the gentleman said, "I am sorry but we do not service Mercedes Benz." This was the last straw. "What exactly do you mean, 'we do not service Mercedes Benz'?" "We are a BMW dealer; Mercedes Benz is on the next corner." I looked up and to my horror, there it was in neon... BMW. In my outraged state I had not noticed the signage. Mr Nice Guy just laughed and said, "These things happen." But all he saw leaving was a pair of shoes and some pants dragging behind.

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