

FROM DUMP TO DIVINE

Beat the budget blues with these three clever, money-saving projects for your vegie garden



Too big for the recycling bin, too inconvenient for the tip and too valuable to toss – such is the lot of leftover renovation materials that get dumped in a hidden corner to be forgotten and ignored. You can salvage and recycle these scraps and turn that lost bit of land into a productive and attractive vegie patch. It's creative, environmentally responsible and thrifty as well. Don't have reno leftovers? Take them off your friends' hands – they'll thank you for it!



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PROJECT 1 MAKE A WICKING BED

If you regularly head off on holidays over summer and abandon your vegie patch to the whims of the weather, putting in a wicking bed will liberate you from your worries and save you valuable time during the rest of the year.

A wicking bed holds a reservoir of water at the bottom of a waterproofed container and the water is drawn up into the soil by capillary action (or wicking) when the plants need it. This self-watering process can last up to three weeks before you need to replenish. There's no need for expensive timer controls and there is no water waste through evaporation.



Gather your supplies

- 200 x 75 x 2400mm Sienna-treated pine sleepers
- Leftover corrugated roof sheeting
- Leftover 90 x 45mm treated pine
- Leftover decking timber
- Brickie's sand
- Non-porous, rigid liner, such as a pond liner or a double layer of thick builder's plastic
 - 65mm PVC pipe
 - 65mm 90° PVC elbow
 - 65mm ag piping
- Leftover irrigation pipe
 - Fine-grade scoria
 - Geotextile fabric
- Soil with high level of organic matter and compost

You'll also need

Circular saw; drill; 150mm bugle head screws; 20mm spade bit; 200mm landscape screws; 50mm roofing screws; angle grinder fitted with metal cutting blade; 65mm galvanised screws; decking screws; straightedge; spirit level; staple gun; handsaw; duct tape; utility knife;



For you to note

- Timber placed in the ground needs to be treated to protect it against fungal decay and termite attack. But most treatments contain arsenic, which leaches into the soil and contaminates your produce. Sienna sleepers have no arsenic.
- These are general instructions only using materials leftover from a renovation. Make the size of the bed to suit your available sunny space and materials.

Here's how

STEP 1 Use circular saw to cut sleepers to a length and width that suits your garden space. Make 2 rectangular frames, screwing together with 150mm bugle head screws. Place 1 frame in its final position.
STEP 2 Cut 10 lengths of sleeper 400mm long to make corners and



STEP 1



STEP 2

central support post. In bottom edge of second sleeper frame at corners and where central post will sit, use 20mm spade bit to drill countersink holes through sleeper 100mm deep. Hold sleeper pieces against top edge of frame then screw through holes into sleeper pieces using 200mm landscape screws.



STEP 3



STEP 6



STEP 12



STEP 4



STEP 7



STEP 13



STEP 5



STEP 8



STEP 14



STEP 11



STEP 15

STEP 3 If building up against a wall or fence, as here, attach a length of roofing to the back of the frame using 50mm roofing screws. Make roofing overhang top of frame by 45mm.

STEP 4 Sit second sleeper frame onto first. Countersink with spade bit then join the 2 frames together.

STEP 5 Cut roofing with tin snips or angle grinder to suit dimensions of bed. Screw to frame with roofing screws. Make roofing sit above uprights of frame by 45mm.

STEP 6 Cut and fit 90 x 45mm pine around top of frame.

STEP 7 Cut and fit decking boards to cover corners. Pre-drill and screw through boards and roofing into frame using 65mm screws. Cut more boards to sit on top of frame. Cut ends at a 45° angle to make mitred joins in the corners. Screw

to frame using decking screws.

STEP 8 Line bottom with 5-10cm of brickie's sand and level.

STEP 9 Lay liner on sand and extend up sides of bed past second rectangular frame of bed. Staple to frame to hold. Don't puncture liner or the water will leak out.

STEP 10 Cut a 500mm length of PVC pipe with an old handsaw and attach 90° elbow to 1 end. Cut length of ag pipe to run full length of bed and insert into elbow. Use duct tape to hold ag pipe in place. Insert into bed with PVC pipe in 1 corner so top of pipe is about 200mm above bed.

STEP 11 At other end of bed to PVC

pipe, use a 20mm spade bit to drill a hole through the roofing at the top of the second rectangular frame. Insert irrigation pipe to act as an overflow.

STEP 12 Fill bed with scoria to level of second frame. Trim off excess liner using a utility knife.

STEP 13 Cover scoria with geotextile fabric and attach it to timber frames with staple gun.

STEP 14 Cover fabric with soil.

STEP 15 Fill scoria reservoir with water via the PVC pipe.

STEP 16 Plant your vegetables.

PROJECT 2 MAKE A POTTING STATION

Find an old metal table with angled braces on its legs, leftover 90 x 45mm treated pine and leftover decking boards. Then create a station that has a flat top for preparing and potting up, shelves above for storing seedling trays, tags, small pots and hand tools, and a shelf underneath for storing large pots and bags of potting mix and mulch.

Gather your supplies

- Leftover 70 x 45mm treated pine
- Heavy-duty angle brackets
- Leftover 135mm decking boards

You'll also need

Circular saw; tape measure; pencil; plane; drill with various drill bits; 100 and 50mm galvanised bugle head screws; 50mm screws; 50mm decking screws; 20mm button head screws

Here's how

STEP 1 Use circular saw to cut pine for frame to suit table width and at a height to suit a full number of decking boards, plus a 5mm gap between them. Make side of frames extend down legs of table. Prior to assembly, plane a rebate in sides of frame to suit the width and depth of the angled brackets. Assemble frame using 100mm bugle head screws.

STEP 2 Drill 7mm holes through back legs of table then attach frame to table using 50mm bugle head screws.

STEP 3 Attach brackets inside rebate on sides of frame using 50mm screws. Make sure they are at a height so 3 full decking boards, plus gap between them, will fit between them and the table top. Repeat to attach another pair of brackets towards the top of frame.



STEP 2



STEP 3



STEP 4



STEP 6



STEP 7

“ Be creative by recycling and reusing your leftover materials ”

STEP 4 Cut decking boards to suit the frame width. Attach using 50mm decking screws.

STEP 5 Attach decking boards to brackets using 20mm button head screws. If required, drill extra holes through the brackets to adequately fix boards.

STEP 6 Cut 4 decking boards to height of frame from table. Hold against end of shelves then predrill and screw into shelves using 50mm decking screws.

STEP 7 Make pine frame to sit on the angle of the table legs' braces. Cut decking to suit frame and screw them on. Sit frame on braces' angles.

STEP 8 Fill shelves with garden supplies and materials.



STEP 5



STEP 8

PROJECT 3 SCREEN THE WATER TANK

A water tank isn't the most attractive garden feature. But if you screen it off it can act as a green wall and storage centre for your tools.

Gather your supplies

- Leftover 90 x 90mm treated pine posts
- Leftover 90 x 45mm H3 treated pine
- Leftover reinforcing mesh
- Leftover 135mm decking boards

You'll also need

Post-hole digger; tape measure; pencil; circular saw; drill; various drill bits; 100mm galvanised bugle head screws; quick-set concrete; spirit level; angle grinder fitted with metal cutting blade; mesh clips; 50mm decking screws; steel hanging baskets and tool hooks;



Here's how

STEP 1 Use post-hole digger to dig 700mm deep holes where corners of screen will be.

STEP 2 Use circular saw to cut treated pine posts and timber to length to make frame, extending posts below frame to go into holes. Predrill and screw frame together using 100mm bugle head screws. Lift frame and place into holes.

STEP 3 Use quick-set concrete in holes to secure frame in position.

STEP 4 Check the frame is level and plumb as you go.



STEP 1



STEP 3



STEP 2



STEP 4

“
Hide your water tank behind a screen and build one for the wheelie bins, too!
”



STEP 5



STEP 8



STEP 10



STEP 7



STEP 9



STEP 11

STEP 5 Trim leftover reinforcing mesh using an angle grinder then fix to frame with mesh clips.

STEP 6 Make 2 more pine frames to fit between posts and the wall behind the tank.

STEP 7 Use leftover decking boards to cover 1 side of the frame, fixing them with decking screws.

STEP 8 Position, then screw into posts of main frame and into wall.

STEP 9 Cut and screw more decking boards to the corners to cover posts.

STEP 10 Use decking boards to cover framing timber of main frame behind mesh.

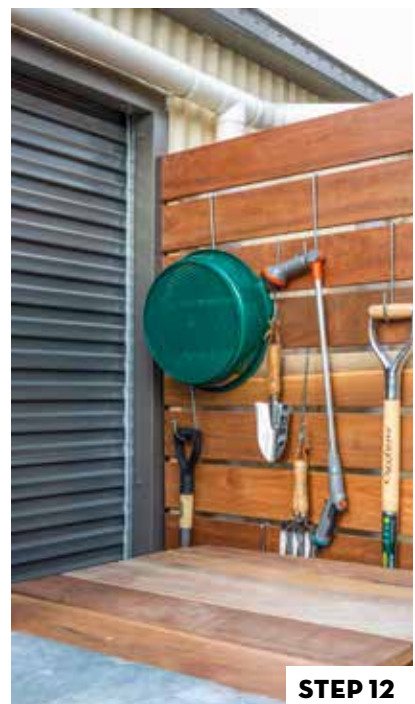
STEP 11 Hang potted flowers and herbs from mesh.

STEP 12 Hang your garden tools from the side of the screen. ■

Stockists
Bunnings bunnings.com.au

Wicking bed: Brickie's sand, \$7 for 20kg bag. Pond liner, \$37.90/m. 65mm PVC pipe, \$10.98/m. 65mm ag piping, \$26.90 for 7m. 65mm 90° PVC elbow, \$3.34. Fine-grade scoria, \$10 for 15kg. Geotextile membrane, \$36 for 10m. Soil, \$3.95 for 25L.

Potting station: Heavy-duty angle brackets, \$11 each.



STEP 12