

# A SECRET GARDEN

Create a magical place where children can discover that nature, nurture and a bit of contrivance can give so much joy

**A** hobbit door, nooks, crannies, giant sculptured flowers, weaving frames, a jumping stump pathway, ornate bird cages and masses of tiny, dainty blooms. This secret corner of a community garden in Sydney's Lalor Park has been transformed from a barren patch into an enchanted area for children to explore.

It's carefully laid out so kids can turn a corner, look down or up and come across a surprise. It's a place of discovery and delight. You can create your own secret garden in your backyard for your kids and friends. They'll never leave!



## SHARE THE LOVE

Show off your finished *Better Homes and Gardens* projects! Upload photos to Instagram (tag #bhgaus and the handle @bhgaus) or Facebook via [bhg-showusyours.com.au](https://www.facebook.com/bhg-showusyours.com.au)



## EASY STEPS TO AN ENTRANCE WALL

Every secret garden needs an entrance! It's made using a simple timber frame clad with recycled timber, so it looks ancient as soon as it's finished. This simple wall is the perfect way to move through to another world.

### Gather your supplies

- Wall frame 90 x 35mm H3 treated pine
- Posts 90 x 90mm H4 treated pine
- Recycled fence palings
- Recycled weatherboards
- Recycled window sash (no glass)

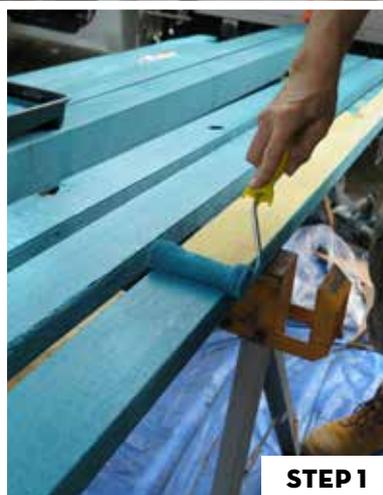
### You'll also need

Exterior paint in Dulux Plunge; painting equipment; circular saw; drill; 100mm galvanised batten screws; post-hole digger; rapid set concrete; finishing nail gun and nails; jigsaw; black tee hinges

### Here's how

**STEP 1** Paint the timber for the wall frame and the posts in a bright colour suitable for a secret garden, here Dulux Plunge.

**STEP 2** Cut timber and construct a simple stud wall, screwing the parts together using 100mm batten screws. When calculating the openings for the door and window, don't forget to allow for the recycled fence paling reveal



STEP 1



STEP 2

that will go around the inside of the opening.

**STEP 3** Use a post-hole digger to dig 600mm-deep holes for posts that will sit at either end of your wall frame. Insert posts into holes.

**STEP 4** Place wall frame between posts and make top of frame flush with top of posts. Screw together. Make frame plumb and level, propping under as required. Concrete posts in position using rapid set concrete.

**STEP 5** Cut recycled fence palings to size for the reveals around openings for the windows and doors. Make the reveals proud of the front of the frame by the thickness of the recycled weatherboards. Hold in position and nail in place. Use a short length of the weatherboard to act as a spacing block on the front of the frame.

**STEP 6** Cut weatherboards to length and, starting at the bottom of the wall, nail in place.

**STEP 7** Use circular saw and jigsaw to cut the boards as



**▲ STEP THROUGH THE GARDEN**

Invite your children to hop, step and jump over the flower bed on raised tree-stump steps, saving the pansies to bring bold colours all winter long.



**STEP 3**



**STEP 4**



**STEP 5**



**STEP 6**



**STEP 7**



**STEP 8**



**STEP 9**

required so they will go around the top and bottom of the windows and the top of the door.

**STEP 8** Cut recycled fence palings to length to suit the height of your door opening. Join them with screws, using cross pieces at top, middle and bottom.

**STEP 9** Make sure door is square, then mark and cut diagonal braces to go between the cross rails. The bottom of each brace should be on the hinge side of the door. Screw braces in place.

**STEP 10** Attach hinges to the front of door so they coincide with the cross rails on the back. Attach door to side of reveal. Also insert window into opening and nail in place.

“  
 Make playing  
 outside a treat  
 for your kids  
 ”



**STEP 2**



**STEP 3**



**STEP 4**



## EASY STEPS TO A BIRDCAGE PLANTER

A colourful cage isn't just for the birds. It's easy to turn a basic birdcage into a plant display that's a little different.

### Gather your supplies

- Coloured birdcage
- Sphagnum moss
- Potting mix
- Selection of colourful plants

### Here's how

**STEP 1** Make sure your birdcage has some drainage by drilling holes through the bottom.

**STEP 2** Soak some sphagnum moss in a bucket of water, then put it around the bottom of the cage, running it up the sides by around 10cm.

**STEP 3** Fill the bottom of the cage with premium-quality potting mix halfway up the moss at the sides.

**STEP 4** Arrange your plants in their pots inside the cage to create your display. When happy with the arrangement, remove pots and position on mix. Thread plants with long foliage through cage bars.

**STEP 5** Fill around the plants with more potting mix, then firm down and water the plants in.



**STEP 1**



**STEP 2**



**STEP 3**



## EASY STEPS TO SPIKY GARDEN ART

There are no rules when it comes to garden art, just put together anything that looks good and you're onto a winner. Add a coat of metallic spray paint for a bit of sparkle.

### Gather your supplies

- Old cricket ball
- 150mm bullet head nails
- 100mm flat head nails
- 12mm diameter reinforcing rod
- Red Copper spray paint

### You'll also need

- Drill; 5, 6 and 12mm drill bits; construction adhesive

### Here's how

**STEP 1** Drill a large hole in a scrap of timber to help hold your cricket ball steady. Mark random points all over the ball and drill holes halfway in, switching between the 5 and 6mm drill bits to suit the diameters of the nails. At the top of the ball on one side, drill a 12mm-diameter hole to suit the reinforcing rod.

**STEP 2** Insert the nails into the holes on both sides of the ball, then squirt construction adhesive into the 12mm-diameter hole and insert reinforcing rod. Leave to dry.

**STEP 3** Stick the rod into the ground, then spray paint the art. It's best to do a number of light coats, than to do it all in one go. ■

### Stockists

**Bunnings, [bunnings.com.au](http://bunnings.com.au)**

90 x 35mm H3 treated pine, \$4.71/m. 90 x 90mm treated pine post, \$50/2.4m. Dulux Weathershield paint, \$51.40/1L. 100mm galvanised batten screws, \$21.50/pk100. Rapid set concrete, \$8.90/20kg. 200mm black tee hinge, \$19.50/pk2. 150mm bullet head nails, \$5.60/pk16. 100mm flat head nails, \$6.50/pk35. 12mm reinforcing bar, \$13/2m. Rust-Oleum metallic spray paint, \$13.60/340g.