



AFTER
Treated with a merbau stain for a rich finish, the treated pine wall of three stacked sleepers with capping is about 650mm high.



BEFORE
A mound of sandy dirt in the yard had to go and the new wall installed in just one day.

EDITOR'S NOTE

CLIMBING FIG

The *Handyman* team is always on the lookout for new tools and equipment that make DIY simpler, faster and cheaper.

ULTIMATE BUILDING PROJECT

The easy retaining wall on page 104 was unanimously voted the best building project of the month.

There are no fasteners required, just a clever readymade post system designed for slotting sleepers into.

Deputy editor Frank Gardner did the installation and says, 'It's a fantastic product. All you need is concrete to set the posts plus a mate to help you lift the timber.'

PLANTS FOR OUTDOOR STYLE

Another simple idea with big impact comes from TV landscaper Charlie Albone and a courtyard he designed. Check it out on page 82.

He laid light-coloured pavers in a circle in the tiny space then planted around the

edges and into the corners, leaving an existing bamboo screen in place.

He also used a special technique for growing plants vertically and chose varieties to suit. I was chuffed to discover my climbing fig just needs coaxing to help it grow up the wall and make me look like a green thumb.

COSTING THE BATHROOM RENO

The one thing many reader renos have in common is the cost blowout.

If you're planning a bathroom overhaul the secret to staying on budget is on page 18. It's especially timely if you're refurbishing to sell.

But doing the makeover should be fun too and have you ever seen a sink as colourful as the one on page 36?

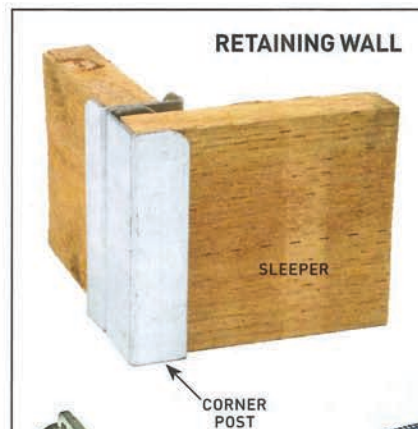
Happy DIYing!



Build a wall in a day?
My kind of project.

Natasha
EDITOR
NATASHA DICKINS

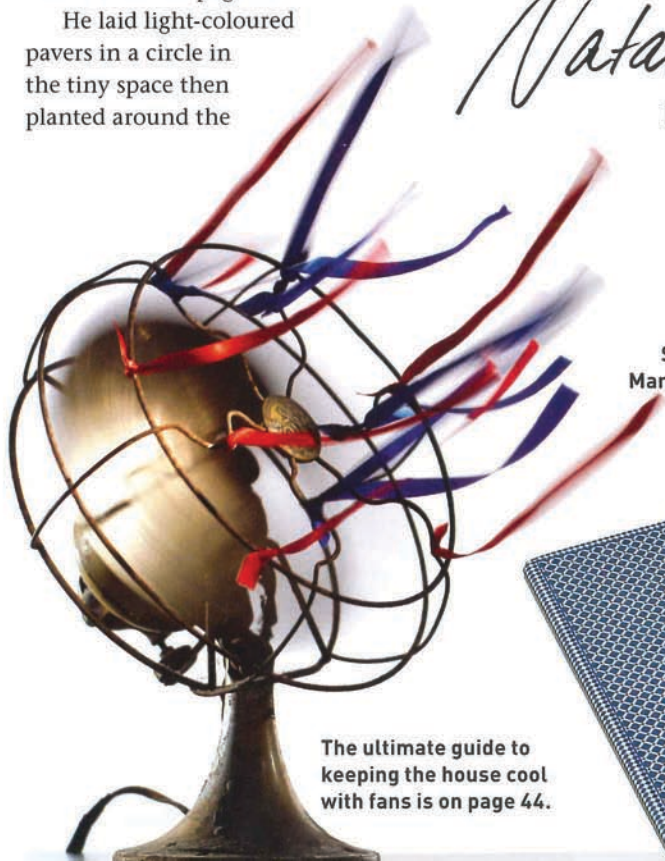
Splash out on the Kohler Marrakesh bathroom basin, \$1999. kohler.com.au



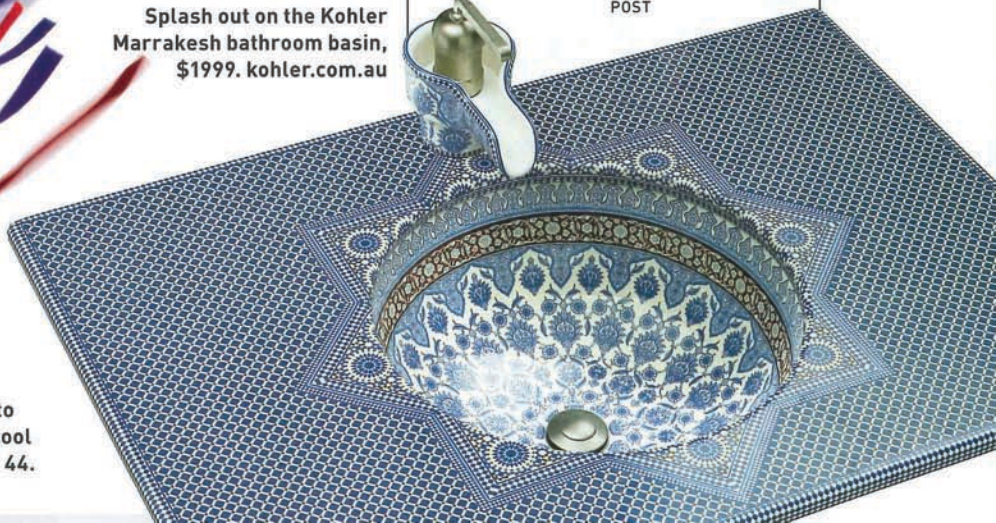
RETAINING WALL

SLEEPER

CORNER POST



The ultimate guide to keeping the house cool with fans is on page 44.



PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Easy install retaining wall

Build a boundary without using fasteners, spending just \$400 on a DIY galvanised post system for pine sleepers

PROJECT FRANK GARDNER MAIN PICTURE STUART SCOTT

Handyman deputy editor Frank Gardner needed to find a simple system for installing a retaining wall in a just a day.

'The wall had to go up before the house extensions blocked access to the yard so I had to move fast,' says Frank.

'I found the Retain-iT system at the hardware store and liked how the galvanised posts would look with pine sleepers. I added pine capping and a set of wide steps.'

To start, establish the line of the wall, excavating 200mm behind it, then use a laser level or dumpy to set the finished height of the wall either end, setting out a stringline as a guide.

'Be sure to install drainage behind the wall using geotech filter cloth, agflo pipe and gravel,' says Frank.

TIP Check local council regulations as many allow a wall up to 1000mm high to be built without approval.

CALCULATING THE MATERIALS

'I went three sleepers high and opted for a sleeper thickness of 75mm for strength and less timber flexibility.'

'The posts were concreted into the ground at a maximum of 2400mm apart on the sandy site,' says Frank.

Measure the length of the wall, setting the posts to match the sleeper sizes. Multiply the spacings between

posts by the number of vertical sleepers to find how many you need.

'I worked out I need 15 sleepers 2400mm long plus six each of 1200 and 1800mm for about 16 metres of wall with steps set in one panel.' >

Simple post system

Made from high tensile galvanised steel the Retain-iT posts are a simple solution for building treated pine walls.

After the posts are concreted into position the treated pine sleepers are dropped into

the 40mm deep recesses with no fasteners required.

The posts come in three heights for walls 200, 400 and 600 high, to fit 50 and 75mm thick sleepers, from the Whites Group. whitesgroup.com.au



END POST



JOINER POST



CORNER POST



FRANK