



# MAKE IT AT HOME

Make the most of your small garden

*Inspired by the Backyard Oasis Mega Craft from Making It Australia*

In the show's first Mega Craft, the Makers created their very own Backyard Oasis. We cover off the best ways to make a small outdoor space feel big – without building it from scratch!

## BIG UP YOUR BALCONY

Lack of space, privacy issues, exposure to wind and harsh sunlight, as well as weight and access limitations, demand savvy design solutions for the balcony gardener. First check where the sun tracks to determine if your balcony is suited to shade loving plants or sunseekers.

A south-facing balcony can be very hot in summer and cold in winter, so choose plants that can cope with these conditions and consider lightweight pots you can easily move around.

## USE THE HEIGHT

"Choose baskets that don't block your view and create a beautiful hanging garden with trailing plants such as ivy leaf geranium, or shade-loving scindapsus and fuchsia," says Bunnings Greenlife buyer Katy Schreuder.

Try cultivating herbs or vegetables in an upright system like Holman's GreenWall mobile vertical garden.

*Make It With:*



Holman GreenWall  
Mobile Vertical Garden



Assorted plants  
& herbs

## CARE FOR SMALL POTS

Give your plants extra attention so they don't dry out or become root bound.

Succulents are a great hardy, slow-growing, low-maintenance option and come in a variety of interesting forms. If it's vibrant colour you're after, consider petunia, calibrachoa and geranium, which will thrive in a protected, sunny balcony spot.

When choosing plants for your balcony, take into account the weight and positioning of pots, and also any strata-by-law restrictions.

*Make It With:*



Northcote  
Terracotta Pots



Northcote  
Planters



Scotts  
Potting Mix



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## SCREEN YOUR SPACE

A decorative screen can help provide shade and protection from wind, while potted climbers like clematis or climbing fig soften boundaries and add a sense of seclusion.

*Make It With:*



Matrix Ferns  
Screen Panel

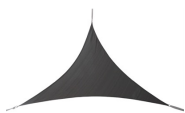


Lattice Makers  
Hardwood Slat Screen

## SHADE AWAY

Retractable folding-arm shade awnings are ideal for smaller spaces as they roll away when not needed. Alternatively, an arbour teamed with climbing varieties like wisteria, jasmine and dwarf bougainvillea can provide dappled coverage with the bonus of seasonal flowers.

*Make It With:*



Marquee Triangle  
Shade Sail



Mimosa Cantilever  
Umbrella

## BALANCE HARD WITH SOFT

A hard-floored courtyard can be softened with planter boxes, slim garden beds and pots. Consider evergreen climbers like creeping fig to envelop walls with natural texture.

Rather than lots of small pots, choose one or two statement pots to display feature trees like a magnolia 'Teddy Bear', or dwarf citrus, which can be underplanted with cascading varieties like dichondra. Consider plants with benefits, such as kangaroo paw, which attracts birds.

## CREATE THE PERFECT COURTYARD

Using colour can create a relaxing backdrop and give the illusion of a larger courtyard.

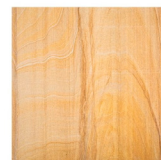
"Keeping the colour palette light will ensure a fresh, bright space when working with limited sun," suggests landscape designer Grant Boyle.

With pavers, pick a colour in harmony with adjacent indoor areas so the spaces flow.

*Make It With:*



Tuscan Path  
Bluestone Paver



Tuscan Path  
Sandstone Paver



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## FURNISH WITH CARE

Built-in seating is a great way to accommodate a crowd without clutter. If the area can't comfortably fit both an outdoor table setting and a lounge, opt for the one you're likely to use most and choose pieces proportional to the space.

Make It With:



Marquee Black  
Verna Chair



Marquee Black  
Acapulco Coffee Table

## CREATE A COHESIVE PLANTING SCHEME

"A cottage garden is great for a relaxed, colourful look; or for a holiday vibe, try tropical varieties like palms and lush philodendrons – just make sure the varieties suit your conditions," suggests Katy.

## GO FOR CONSISTENCY

Similar screening elements, whether plants or structural panels, can visually elongate perimeters.

For fencing, opt for a deep colour so boundaries 'disappear' and green foliage pops.

Another tip to make entertaining areas feel wider is to run decking boards across the site rather than along the length. Imitate your indoor style to blur the distinction between inside and out; think complementary finishes, and coordinated pots and accessories like accent cushions.

## TIPS FOR THE TINY BACKYARD

In a tiny backyard, with too many elements, you can cramp the space and make it seem smaller than it actually is. Instead, keep it simple and promote sight lines which draw your eye to a few key areas of interest, like a feature tree or focal pot.



### LET YOUR IMAGINATION WANDER

There are so many ways to re-do your space, you're only limited by your imagination, so visit your local Bunnings or [www.bunnings.com.au/makingit](http://www.bunnings.com.au/makingit) to get started!

## PLANT FOR PRIVACY

Consider tall, narrow evergreen plants and trees to help create a natural screen. Depending on the look you're after, great options include: gracilis bamboo, coast banksia and pencil pine.

Deciduous trees allow for summer shade and better natural light during winter when the branches are bare.

Trees need to be size and species-appropriate for the site, so check the mature height of plants and look for varieties that have beautiful structural form when not in leaf.

Ask our garden experts in-store for recommendations for your area.