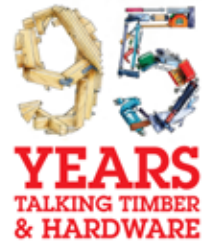




let's talk... outdoor



making a grand entrance: tips to enhance your home's street appeal

No doubt about it, first impressions count. You can maximise the impact your home makes on visitors and neighbours alike, by taking your home's exterior from drab to fab. You'll increase your property's value and make your home a more pleasant place to live. There's lots of projects big and small that you can tackle yourself, which will help your property create a beautiful first impression. Here's a few of our suggestions...

paint magic

Probably the most impactful way to improve your home's first impression is to paint the exterior of the house. Painting the exterior of your home is a big commitment and it's not a job you're going to want to do again in a hurry. So do your research when it comes to colour selection and product choice. There is plenty of DIY information on the web, talk to the Bretts paint experts in store, and ask for a copy of our "Let's talk... paint" advice newsletter. Finally, make sure you invest in a quality exterior paint.

If you're not ready to tackle the whole house, consider the small details which can really make a difference. For example, you can freshen the front door and trims for instant impact.

fabulous fencing

For many practical reasons – including keeping trespassers out and children and pets in – most properties these days include a fence that wraps the property's boundaries. But a fence is such a major structure that – particularly at the front of the home – it's important to get the look right too. There are numerous styles, designs and materials available for fencing. Some of the more popular choices include: timber, brick, wire and steel.

The timber fence still seems to be the most common, and for good reason. Timber as a material choice for fencing is affordable and versatile. And next to privacy hedges, which are undoubtedly the "greenest" choice of all; timber can be the most environmentally friendly fencing. For more information on "green" timber choices, see page 4.



Styles of timber fencing include paling, panel and those designs combined with other materials – think of the modern rendered brick, with stylish timber slats. And timber can be painted, stained or left to age naturally.

If you have an existing timber fence, simply repair and refinish to totally transform it. (Ask for our fact sheets for full step by step instructions on repair, maintenance or building fencing and screening).

dress up your door

The front door is the focal point for most homes, so make it a feature. Consider replacing the door itself – there are many options available including stunning timber designs with multiple glass panels

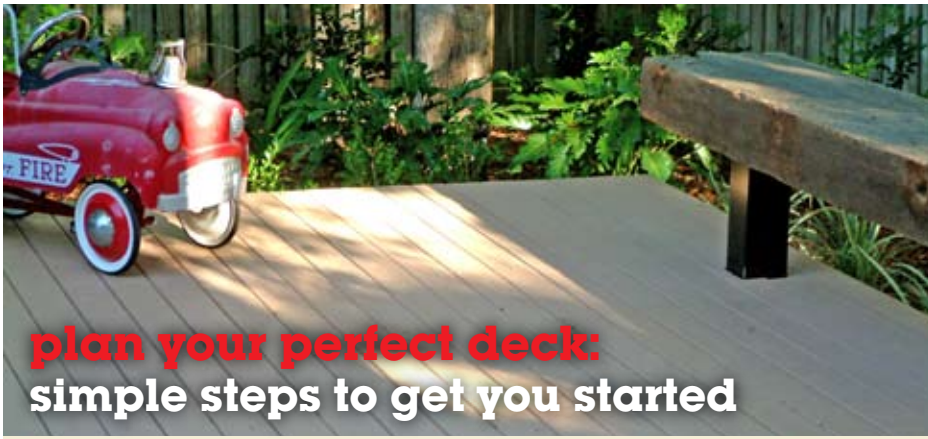
in contemporary or classic styles. Visit the Bretts deck-door-floor showroom to see a huge variety of door options.

Or if your existing door is in good condition, transform it by painting it in a bold but complimentary colour. Think of any striking entrance doors you may have seen in your neighbourhood or check out paint charts for colour inspiration.

Complete the look by installing new door hardware, including a shiny new entrance lock and handle set and door bell.

*Continued
on page
2/...*

INSIDE
all about
the **FREE**
insulation
offer



plan your perfect deck: simple steps to get you started

1 location, location

Choose the location of your deck carefully. The northern side of the house is the best location for a deck, as it will catch the winter sun. But if this isn't practical for your home layout, consider where the deck will be most useful.

Consider the environmental aspects – sun, shade and wind – privacy, and how you will enter and exit your home. If easy access to the kitchen is at the top of your list, for example, your positioning options are going to be limited, so make sure you consider how you will deal with other factors.

2 purpose built

Think about the primary functions for your deck. Is it simply a place to relax, or will you be cooking for and entertaining your family or an extended group of friends?

Deciding exactly how you will use your deck, and composing a rough layout for furniture and other items, will help determine the practicalities of your deck in the very early planning stages.

3 size does matter

Typically 12 square metres is comfortable for a family of four to six people. This will accommodate a table and chairs for six people, but none of the extras.

If you want to include a barbecue, other furniture or plants, a more realistic estimate would be 2-2.5 square metres per person.

4 access all areas

Consider how people will access the deck from the house and vice versa. If your deck is to be attached to your home, determine how best to ensure a smooth traffic flow. You may need to move your current door or replace a window with a door, for example. Think about enlarging the doorway at this point. French doors, large sliding doors or bi-folds will allow the deck to operate fully as an extension of your home.

If you would also like to access the back garden from your deck, or to allow visitors entry to your home from the deck, think about the best position to locate the stairs.

5 road test your design

Use rope to set out the boundaries for the deck you are planning. Position a table, chairs and a barbeque etc. Use rope or newspaper to layout these items if you don't already have them. Have several people join you, with someone standing at the barbeque while the others walk around the table and in and out the doorways.

Will this deck operate comfortably for you and your family? If not, it is better to reconsider the size and layout now rather than after construction's began.

6 seek approval

Draw a detailed sketch, including dimensions, to use in your discussions with your suppliers, any contractors you may be employing and the local Council regarding approvals. In Brisbane, there are two approval types that apply to decks on residential properties:

1. Building approval (by a building certifier and assessed under the Building Code of Australia).
2. Planning approval (provided by Council and assessed under the Brisbane City Plan 2000).

Building approval ensures that buildings are structurally sound. Planning approval is used to make sure decks complement the locality and do not affect neighbours. According to the Building Regulation 2006, you do not need building approval if your deck is:

- no more than one metre above the natural ground surface
- no more than 10m² in area after building work is completed
- no more than 2.4 metres high (with an 'average mean height' of no more than 2.1 metres)
- no longer than five metres along any side

If your deck does not fulfill these requirements, you must lodge a building application and have it assessed by a building certifier.

7 for more information

Check out www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:
BASE:878737355:pc=PC_5261 and ask for Bretts deck building fact sheets.



making a grand entrance

Continued from page 1/...

illuminating lighting

In addition to improving safety and security for your property, lighting will also make a major impact on your home's external appearance.

Consider having a new light installed outside the front door for a welcoming touch. Add accent lighting to draw attention to your property's features and consider using fairy lights in the trees for a wonderfully Parisian touch. And illuminating the walkways with low voltage and solar landscape lighting is both beautiful and practical.

dressing the driveway

A large expanse of concrete can be visually unappealing. Consider breaking up the ocean of grey with timber, bricks, pavers or one of the many concrete resurfacing options available.

Refinishing your concrete can improve the look of your driveway at a fraction of the cost of replacing it and the decorative options include concrete painting, stamping and stenciling. You can even recreate the look of sandstone, brick and paved finishes.

add a walkway

If you don't already have a clear entry path to your home, consider adding a walkway. A well designed walkway will add an inviting touch to your home.

A treated timber walkway looks super stylish; while bricks, pavers and the many loose stone options available offer an easy DIY alternative. And concrete is extremely versatile and durable.

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If you already have a standard concrete path that you'd like to improve the look off, consider the concrete refinishing option mentioned previously for your walkway as well.

love your letterbox

If your letterbox is rusty, dated or just plain ugly, it's time to replace it. The most common styles are post mounted (a "box installed on post") and wall mounted, which are generally installed in a wall (like the fence) near the front entry to your home.

Letterboxes are available in a range of materials including molded plastic, extruded aluminium, stainless steel and timber; and in a wide variety of designs, from the standard "box on post" to the architectural. A letterbox should compliment the design of your home, not be installed as an afterthought. Make sure you choose a model that is large enough for your needs and is rust proof and weather resistant.

the final details

Clean up the garden – pull all the weeds, prune your trees and shrubs and plant new flowers. Add new mulch and fertilize, as required.

Add an instant colour – with pots and planters filled with bright flowers or more architectural and drought resistant succulents.

Create symmetry for visual appeal – two planters flanking the door, for example.

Add a striking feature – consider oversized, stainless steel numbers on your fence or near the front door. Or a sculpture, water feature or even a decorative wind chime.

shielding your indoors, from the great aussie outdoors:

and how to take advantage of the government's "free insulation" offer

what is insulation?

House insulation means installing materials which are utilized for their thermal resistance. Insulation comes in a variety of forms including: batts or blankets; loose fill or soft foam, which is typically pumped, poured or sprayed; and reflective products. Insulation is installed in ceilings, floors and walls of a home to provide a buffer against heat transfer from the roof and walls into the home in summer, and against heat loss during winter.

Batts, blankets, loose fill and foams limit air movement – the still air works as an insulator because it eliminates convection and has low conduction. Reflective insulation works by reducing the amount of energy, or heat, that travels in the form of emissions. Some reflective insulation also breaks the area up into smaller spaces to reduce air movement.

why insulate your home?

Insulating your home will help curb green house gas emissions by reducing the use of non-renewable resources.

You will save money on energy costs as heating and cooling systems in the home will operate more efficiently.

Your home will be more comfortable. That is, warmer in winter and cooler in summer.

Insulating your home can also increase its market value, help insulate against external noise and improve fire safety by eliminating air leakage in the roofing.

what is "free" insulation?

One of the Australian Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package objectives is to insulate 2.7 Million homes with ceiling insulation by the year 2012. The package offers free insulation to the value of \$1,600 to homeowners and later free insulation to the value of \$1000 for landlords. The labour and insulation is initially paid for by the buildings owner and later reimbursed by the federal government by way of a rebate.

Note that to qualify, the insulation must be installed by: an installer who owns or is employed by a registered business operating in the installation of thermal insulation.

who is eligible?

The criteria for free insulation for ceilings are defined as follows:

- You are a home owner-occupier - that is, you live in your own home
- You don't already have ceiling insulation
- You are installing insulation in an existing home on or after 3 February 2009 (excludes new homes or extensions to existing homes)
- You are an Australian citizen or permanent resident aged 18 years or over.

for more information

Check out www.yourhome.gov.au/technical/fs47.html and www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency/. And talk to the Bretts experts to find out more about the right insulation products for your home.

EXPERTS
IN STORE

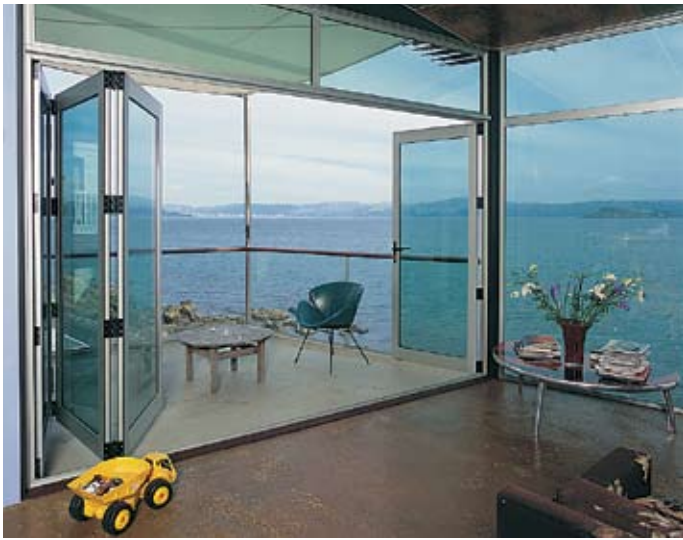
this month is
makeover
march!

bretts is going batty

talk to our insulation experts:

- for the insulation pros and cons
- to get more information on the government rebate
- to get a price for supply and install of insulation for your home.





inside out: the outdoor room

An increasingly popular trend for the home this year has been the creation of an 'outdoor room'.

It's a design feature that is ideal for the warm Brisbane climate where the deck or patio has long been one of the most used parts of the house.

Outdoor living rooms, kitchens and even bathrooms are being incorporated into external spaces and while some may be elaborate, there are easy ways to transform your deck or makeover your patio this spring/summer. But if you're not sure where to start, Bretts Timber & Hardware can help.

"Bi-fold doors can make a big difference by creating a seamless flow between indoor and outdoor living areas," says Bretts General Manager – Timber & Hardware, Andrew Feez.

"Alone, they can deliver an immediate makeover and instantly update your home. Our aluminium windows and doors are ideal as they are extremely low maintenance – there's no need to ever paint or stain and the product will never warp or shrink. Also, the joinery offers the security of superb strength which is less prone to forced entry or damage. They are a great look and a terrific investment for your home."

Another option for moving 'inside out' is with bi-fold windows. "These are a popular and versatile look," says Andrew. "They maximize views and airflow and deliver an expansive feeling to your home. Like bi-fold doors, Bretts can make these for you to suit any design."

For some, transforming your deck or patio into an outdoor room can be as easy as adding a new outdoor lounge or sofa, incorporating a built-in fridge, enclosing the area with timber screening, or building some box seats. Enclosing your deck or patio with timber screening will also add both privacy and shade.

With the right advice, it's a simple project that can be completed in one weekend. The first step is to measure the area and then head to Bretts. "We can help you select the right species of timber and have it delivered to your home for you," advises Andrew. Attach the timber with decking screws – and the help of a good mate! Make sure to use a piece of wood as a spacer to ensure the gaps are even.

"You'll need to protect the screening with a product like deck oil or a good-quality synthetic deck finish," recommends Andrew. "This is a cheap and simple way to expand your living space and add value to your home."

But the best part of an outdoor room is taking the time to enjoy it either alone with a good book or with great company and good food.

Article courtesy of Homezone Windsor's "Zone" Spring/Summer 2008 magazine.

why wood is good: from framing to finishes, timber is the construction material of choice

Whether the need be structural or decorative, timber has long been a construction material of choice. Timber is known for its strength and durability, but did you know that timber is also one of the "greenest" building choices you can make? Here's why...

Put simply, the more timber you use building your new home, extension, additions, and in your finishes, the more eco-friendly your home will be.

It might be difficult to believe at first, but it's true! That's because the production of timber products used to build a house results in far fewer greenhouse gas emissions than the manufacture of comparable concrete, steel, bricks, tiles or aluminium components.

And trees store carbon. By building as much timber into a home as possible, you are actually sequestering carbon and preventing it from escaping as harmful CO2.

This makes plantation grown, kilndried, machine-straightened timber by far the greenest material you can choose.

Still, not all timbers are equal so make sure you ask about the source of your timber of choice, and find out how the timber's been treated.

At Bretts we are proud to offer one of the greenest timber alternatives available in our Golden Heart Cypress range. Golden Heart is made from durability class 1 Cypress, renowned for its resistance to termite attack – so our flooring, decking and fencing products are free from any chemicals, whilst remaining durable and termite resistant.

Bretts have also received Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) chain of custody (CoC) approval for product from the Bretts Inglewood Cypress Sawmill. The AFS ensures that only trees that have been selected under very strict guidelines and removed from the bush in a manner that is least impactful on the remaining flora and fauna. Bretts is now only the second Cypress mill in the world to achieve this certification!

Talk to one of our timber experts for more information, or ask for a copy of our Golden Heart Cypress brochure if you're interested in Cypress.

And when you start planning your next home improvement project – be it an extension, deck, flooring or fencing – think "wood is good".

