

take it outside

Try these top tips to make your outdoor space an oasis for entertaining.



top tip

Use Resene testpots to decorate table runners, trays and party favours to match your festive celebrations.

Above: Built-in backyard furniture can be especially helpful for smaller outdoor areas as it's certain to fit your unique dimensions and optimise the available 'floor' space. Not only can a bench double as both a seat and a surface, you can also use it to store small seasonal items by building it as a cubby (with one end open), a chest (with a hinged, removable top) or with sliding doors at the front. Wall in Resene Aspiring with mottled Mediterranean-style effect in Resene FX Paint Effects medium coloured with Resene Moon Mist, bench in Resene Aspiring, left wall and lattice blocks in Resene Moon Mist, deck in Resene Woodsman Uluru, chair in Resene Yuma, table and large plant pot in Resene Teak, smaller plant pot in Resene Siam, tray in Resene Flax and DIY striped painted throw in Resene Yuma and Resene Flax, vases in Resene Thistle and Resene Eagle and tea light holder in Resene Bitter. Rug from Mocka, cushions from Adairs and Allium, carafe and tumbler from Città.

Resene
Flax

Resene
Thistle

Resene
Eagle

Resene Woodsman
Uluru

Whether you prefer to host more populous parties or fancy more intimate affairs, when the mercury is on the rise, so too is the desire for social gatherings to spill out into outdoor areas. It's common to think that a few extra chairs are all you need to make your outdoor space ready for hosting a do, but there's a lot more to outdoor living space design than many realise.

Not only will leveraging a few fundamental design principles help it look good, it'll increase your ease of entertaining and up the comfort of your guests – and, thus, the success of your party. Here are some key considerations for making your outdoor space ready for your upcoming occasions.

Divide and conquer

Similar to an open plan layout indoors, many outdoor spaces don't have fixed structural walls to divvy them up – and nor would you want them to. You will, however, still want to build a sense of intimacy and ambience. Therefore, the best approach is to apply the same strategy to your outdoor entertaining space as you would inside: divide it into zones for different tasks.

While the number and type of zones that you break your space up into will vary depending on the area you have available and how you want to put it to use, some key zones you'll likely want are a zone for preparing food, a zone for consuming food and one or more conversation zones. There are a number of strategies you can employ for cordoning off those areas without closing them off completely, but they all come down to your furnishings and layout. Everything else you choose to do will be the icing on the cake.

Flexible furnishings

It may go without saying that everyone is different, but it can be easy to forget that different people will find different types of seating – and different seating arrangements – more comfortable than others. So not only does having flexible outdoor furniture make it simpler to add or remove seating as your headcount expands or contracts, it also means that guests will have more choice when it comes to where and how they'll be sitting while they socialise.

If you're holding a larger gathering, unless you're putting on a true al fresco dinner party, you likely won't need a seat for every guest. Just like with indoor house parties, many people prefer to stand while they chat and mingle with others. It's also unlikely that everyone will arrive or eat at the same time – your barbeque can only cook so much at once, and when the queue for the food is long, some people will hold out for a shorter wait. That means that several people may end up using the same place at the dining table throughout the course of the meal.

Trying to cram everyone into one big circle (especially when food is involved) seldom works well for big gatherings. Instead of making everyone feel included, this arrangement often does the opposite as guests are too spread out to speak to one another. If the person beside them is already engaged in conversation with someone else, some guests may feel left out and even bored.

Whether you're doing dinner or just drinks, for smaller gatherings, you probably will want to provide a seat for each attendee. Sofas are great for people who like to cosy up, but if your guests aren't family or friends, it can be uncomfortable or intimidating for invitees to have to sidle up to someone they don't know. This is where individual armchairs and the almighty titan of outdoor entertaining – the beanbag chair – come in handy.

Occasional seating shouldn't be without a place for guests to rest their plate or glass so it's a good idea to have some flexible tables – especially at a height that will suit the seating type. Look for items that can be upcycled to be smaller table surfaces like wooden >



Above top: Wall in Resene Triple Merino, deck in Resene Woodsman Tiri, ombre screen in (from top to bottom) Resene Ebb, Resene Soothe, Resene Paper Doll, Resene Coral Tree and Resene Merlot, plant pots in (from largest to smallest) Resene Ebb, Resene Alabaster, Resene Coral Tree, Resene Paper Doll and Resene Merlot and pendant lamp shade in Resene Alabaster. Sofa and coffee table from Outside Space, cushion from Collect Living.

Above bottom: Wall in Resene Triple Merino, deck in Resene Woodsman Tiri, screen in Resene Bounty (frame) and Resene Big Stone, large ombre plant pot in Resene Gull Grey and Resene Balderdash, medium plant pot and pendant lamp shade in Resene Alabaster, small plant pot in Resene Bounty. Sofa and coffee table from Outside Space, cushion and throw from Collect Living.



Outdoor furniture in good condition can be easily refreshed using Resene Lustacryl semi-gloss waterborne enamel or Resene Enamacryl gloss waterborne enamel to recoat it in a new colour. If your new colour is on the dark side, choose a Resene CoolColour version of your paint to keep the surface cooler.



Resene Ebb



Resene Bitter



Resene Siam



Resene Aspiring



Resene Teak



Resene Yuma



Resene Woodsman Tiri

Resene Alabaster

Resene Triple Merino

Resene Soothe

Resene Paper Doll

Resene Coral Tree

Resene Merlot

Resene Bounty

Resene Gull Grey

Resene Balderdash

Resene Big Stone

Resene Moon Mist

-  Resene Smokescreen
-  Resene Kashmir Blue
-  Resene Indian Ink
-  Resene Settlement
-  Resene Alabaster
-  Resene Woodsman Tiri

crates, old fashioned suitcases or even a section of tree trunk. And, there isn't much furniture out there that you can't add castors to, which can be especially helpful for manoeuvring in and around informal seating arrangements. Just make sure the ones you choose are up to the task of rolling over your deck or patio surface, holding the weight of whatever they are carrying and have optional brakes so that they're stable when you need them to stay put.

Screen time

If you don't already have a lattice or two in your backyard, then it's high time to purchase some. An open framework made from wood or metal that

features a crisscross, diamond-shaped pattern, lattice is one of the most useful materials that can be leveraged to carve out distinct zones and create visual interest within a greater outdoor area. Plus, it's affordable and lightweight so it's great both for more permanent and temporary uses. You can buy it in framed or unframed sheets and turn it into a whole range of fun and practical DIY projects.

Attach two or more framed lattices together using hinges and paint in coordinating Resene paint colours to create a folding screen divider that can separate spaces within a larger outdoor space. It'll add to the sense of intimacy for your guests, create privacy and you'll be certain that its colour will complement your home, deck and the rest of your home's colour scheme. A few strands of sparkling string lights go a long way in dressing up an outdoor dining area, especially when they're strewn from your new lattice divider. If you're clever, you can also use framed lattice to create an affordable pergola – and what better ambience than enjoying company and conversation under a canopy of greenery and twinkling lights?

Aesthetic agility

Once you've nailed the all-important aspects of zoning and layout, it's time to dig into the details. Design principles that are often used to make your interior look great should be put to work outside, too. Think of ways to create repetition through colours or textures.

The types of gatherings that you will be hosting should definitely affect the type of décor you invest in. After all, a birthday party for kids and a cocktail party for grown-ups demand quite different décor. While some of that might be more ephemeral decorations, it's worth thinking higher ticket décor items, too. A particularly pricey throw cushion might be safe around adults but you may need different options to put out for situations that are more prone to spills or sticky hands.

If your furniture features an element of soft furnishing – definitely recommended if you're looking to amp up the comfort factor outdoors – you may not realise how much of an impact that the colour of your sofa and armchair cushions can make on how inviting your outdoor living space looks. Make your sofa the focal point by playing up the colour of your squabs through décor and accessories painted to match and coordinate. If you've got storage space to spare, there's probably nothing stopping you from having two sets of décor for different occasions or weather.

While we're on the topic of weather, be sure that your outdoor décor also takes the elements into account. Protection from the sun or rain in the form of umbrellas, pergolas or marquees are a must, as are heaters, fireplaces and throws for cooler weather and evening entertaining. Pick options that coordinate with the rest of your décor choices.

Colour wise, there aren't many outdoor items that can't be made to coordinate with a fresh coat of paint. Most Resene testpots are made with Resene Lumbersider, which is designed to be durable for outdoor use without the need for a clear coat. Use Resene Colour



Resene Green Meets Blue 

Three ways with breeze blocks

Strong and flexible, these landscaping staples can be used for much more than garden beds. Try one of these projects with blocks painted in a couple of coats of Resene Lumbersider to complement your colour scheme and protect them from the weather:

- **Use them as a barrier:** have a builder or stone mason stack and grout breeze blocks vertically to create a barrier or divider for added privacy around an outdoor social space.
- **Use them to build a bench:** line up a series of breeze blocks horizontally to form a decorative front base of a bench and cut structural plywood to size to create the rest of the bench.
- **Use them to build a raised planter box:** stack and grout breeze blocks both vertically and horizontally to form a four-sided planter box lined with plywood cut to size.

Unless you are using them purely decoratively, be sure to choose breeze blocks that are structurally sound enough – and properly anchored and secured – for the project you're making.

Right: Have a beach or lake nearby that you and your guests like to frequent? Building an outdoor shower is a great idea for keeping sand outside when guests need to rinse off. Wall in Resene Green Meets Blue, deck in Resene Woodsman Uluru, striped shower back in Resene Nepal and Resene Sea Fog, timber shower platform and shelf stained in Resene Woodsman Pitch Black, breeze block planter in Resene Sea Fog and Resene Green Meets Blue, hook rack and soap dispenser in Resene Nepal and mirror in Resene Breeze. Showerhead from Plumblinc, chair from Cintesi.

Opposite: Whether inside or out, having the right lighting is essential for setting the mood. Try hanging a pendant lamp if you have a covered space, adding sconces to walls or strings of LED lanterns to trees or bushes. Items with wheels or castors, such as carts or movable tables, will make it easy to adjust your layout to better suit your gathering. Wall in Resene Triple Merino, deck in Resene Woodsman Tiri, screen in Resene Kashmir Blue, trolley and tray in Resene Indian Ink, planter boxes in Resene Smokescreen with hand-painted patterns in Resene Indian Ink, breeze block bench seat in Resene Triple Merino, ottoman in Resene Settlement, large plant pot in Resene Alabaster and small plant pot (on trolley) in Resene Kashmir Blue.

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|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|  | Resene Breeze |  | Resene Nepal |
|  | Resene Woodsman Uluru |  | Resene Woodsman Pitch Black |

Match online (www.resene.com/colourmatchonline) or visit your local Resene ColorShop to find the closest colour or an ideal accent hue to go with your cushions, then paint up some plant pots and other small decorative accents for a cohesive colour palette that'll be sure to win compliments from your guests.

Squeaky clean

Hitting the beach or having a pool party? Building an outdoor shower will allow you and your guests to rinse off without having to set foot inside – which will help keep sand outside where it belongs. When you're not entertaining, you'll likely find an outdoor shower equally useful for rinsing muddy dogs and grubby gardening equipment.

But remember, placement is important. The closer your shower is to where you can tie it into existing water lines, the easier and more cost-effective it will be to install. If you don't want your outdoor shower to be directly beside your house, solar showers are another warm water option without the hassle of connecting it up to your pipes. Instead, they can be attached to a garden hose.


You'll also need to consider where the water will drain. Be sure to seek advice from a professional plumber to sort out where your runoff will go as you need to mitigate the potential water damage to nearby structures and the impact on ground surfaces to meet building codes and your local council's regulations.



Design wise, there are plenty of creative ideas out there to dress up your outdoor shower. You could paint or stain it in your favourite Resene colours, either in a solid colour or an attractive pattern. Or, go for a rustic look with Resene FX Faux Rust Effect; it's a waterborne coating used to create a rust style effect on both exterior and interior surfaces. Once applied, it looks like rust – a look that will continue to develop as the coating ages. **H**

For more outdoor decorating and DIY ideas, visit www.habitatbyresene.com.

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 *If your timber deck, patio or furniture needs a refresh before you even dream of inviting over visitors, clean it with Resene Timber and Deck Wash then finish with Resene Woodsman, Resene Kwila Timber Stain or Resene Timber and Furniture Gel.*

Resene Triple Merino 