



Colourful wall cubes provide safe storage for special toys and treasures



# Stripe me pastel

IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
Resene KidzColour

A rainbow of fresh pastel stripes has turned this little girl's bedroom into a sunny place to play and rest

By **Vanessa Johnson** Photography **Angela Keoghan**

First home buyers Melina and Michael Langley knew when they bought their Hamilton property three years ago it could do with a few improvements.

But once they became parents to baby Emma and adjusted to life on one income, they soon realised that doing up their home would be an expensive and gradual process.

So when Melina came across the entry information for the Resene Dream Room competition in *Little Treasures* magazine, the chance of winning the budget to renovate a room in their new home got her thinking.

Married to a boat builder who's at home with power tools, Melina knew she could rely on Michael to turn her room design into a reality so she went for broke and included a paint treatment in baby Emma's bedroom that many people - including Michael as it turned out - might find a tad intimidating.

"I wanted two striped walls and at first when I was putting together my entry, Michael looked over my shoulder a couple of times but let me go with it because he never really thought we had a chance of winning." A month later when

Melina found out she'd won, Michael was suddenly under pressure to deliver on her design.

The problem he faced was how to make sure the painted stripes were perfectly straight. A centimetre out at the top or bottom may not seem like much, but he knew that once painted a wonky stripe could spoil the whole effect. There was no room for error.

"He lay awake for a few nights wondering how he was going to do it," Melina says. There were quite a few huddles where he pondered the question with his dad Doug, his DIY supporter and mentor. "I'd walk into the room and say 'I want it this way' and then I'd walk out again and they would talk a bit more about how to do it." At first Melina says she wanted stripes of different widths but compromised at Michael and Doug's request, agreeing to them being a uniform width.

The room had to be insulated, soundproofed and re-gibbed before any painting could start. Finally, one night in bed Michael had a eureka moment. His work had just bought a laser level and he knew it would help him to keep his lines straight. Luckily he was able to

borrow the machine and pretty soon he was striping up a storm.

First Michael measured the walls and marked the stripes using pencil dashes at the top of the wall. The laser level was then used to project a narrow line of light which was followed in pencil.

Melina then painted the two paler colours: Resene Buzz (yellow) and Resene Lucky Dip (green), using Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen waterborne paint, deliberately painting over the pencil line but leaving it visible through the paint. The laser level was used to redefine the lines, this time using low tack masking tape, before painting another set of stripes in Resene Princess (pink) and Resene Dancing Girl (mauve). The tape was carefully peeled away leaving the crisp pastel stripes Melina wanted.

"By doing it this way, when they removed the tape there were no white gaps underneath because the stripes actually overlapped," says Melina. (For more tips about how you can paint stripes, see the tips and tricks panel on page 74.)

Clever wall-mounted storage cubes were painted in the same pastel shades as well as Resene Ballerina (a deeper shade of pink). To make the cubes, Michael cut five squares of MDF the same size and then screwed them together. Once the cubes were assembled and painted, he screwed them into place over wall studs to



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## Handy tips and tricks

There's no need to feel spooked at the prospect of painting a wall with stripes. It's not as difficult as you might think. Here's how to make start:

- Measure the wall and divide it into the number of stripes you want to paint. Mark the top of each stripe at the ceiling line in pencil. Then, hang a plumb bob from the mark with a drawing pin and string. It will hang straight, giving you a line to follow so you can rule the stripe onto the wall.
- Next, follow the line with low tack masking tape to mask off the stripes beside the one you're painting.
- Don't overload your roller or brush and make sure to remove the tape before the paint is dry.



anchor them strongly in place.

The cubes create an impressive visual effect that visitors always comment on and give Emma's room an extra level of toddler-proof storage.

For now Melina uses them to store the collection of teacups and saucers she inherited from her grandmother, special toys she wants to save until Emma is older and some cute framed photos.

Michael used more MDF to build a desk and above that a magnetic board for Emma's pictures. He painted the board with Resene Magnetic Magic and "the magnets work brilliantly," says Melina.

Michael's mum Catherine helped Melina to make the pretty pink curtains from a fabric called Lollipop Spots, that they found at Spotlight for \$16.95 a metre.

Looking at the finished room Melina says: "I have to admit that Michael did an incredible job.

Although I painted and helped wherever I could, he and Doug did 98 percent of the hard work and I'm really thrilled with the result."

Emma is too and seems to be drawn towards her stripey bedroom whenever she wants somewhere quiet to play – or when her bestie and cousin Caitlin comes over to visit.

### Paint for effect

Resene Magnetic Magic paint turned a piece of MDF into a magnetic board so that Emma's artwork can be proudly displayed. The bright magnets will help her learn to count.

Melina found the cute collection of pastel owls at The Warehouse



A plain chest of drawers from Target got the stripe treatment

