Build a garden setting

- An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a perfect result.
- Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.
- Includes a materials checklist.

PLEASE NOTE:
Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is worth your time to read all steps thoroughly first to be sure you understand what is required.

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MIGHTY HELPFUL MITRE 10

MITREPLAN PROJECT PLANNER

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Make an outdoor setting – with a little help from Mitre 10.

So there you are in the great outdoors. The smell of sizzling steaks and sausages, fresh air and enjoyable company. It’s the classic Aussie barbie. And here’s a MitrePlan project that’ll have you dining out in style in next to no time – a sturdy, functional timber table with two bench seats that will become the centre of much outdoor entertaining and relaxing for the whole family.

The design we’ve chosen for you is attractive yet simple to build. It has been planned so that no joints are required. The whole assembly is held together by non-corroding bolts and coach screws. All you need to make it yourself are average do-it-yourself skills, the right tools and materials – and this easy step-by-step MitrePlan from Mitre 10.

Step 1: Prepare materials
Making your garden table and seats will be easier if you cut and prepare all pieces first. Then it’s just a simple matter of assembling the pieces and tightly fixing them together with bolts and screws. Be sure your bolts and screws are galvanised as ordinary hardware will rust and stain the timber.

If you are using a non-treated timber, it is also a good idea to weather protect all pieces with a water repellent primer, stain or outdoor furniture finish before fixing together. This is especially important where timber butts up together to prevent rotting underneath the joins. And you will find it next to impossible to coat between the narrow gaps in the table and seat tops once assembled.

Step 2: The table top
Take the eight 1.5m lengths that you have already cut to size and lay them with the outside face down on a hard, flat surface. Evenly space them 4mm apart (Fig. 1) to allow rain to run through and form a top 750mm wide. After checking all is square, measure 270mm from each end and rule a line across the boards with your pencil. Place two 750mm top rails with their flat faces down and their edges flush with the inside of the lines drawn (Fig. 2). Drill holes through the rails into each of the eight boards, carefully avoiding drilling all the way through, and fix together with the galvanised coach screws and washers.

Step 3: The table legs
These are formed by cutting angles at both ends of four 945mm boards to allow the table top to fit level and for the table to sit level on the ground.

To do this, measure down from the square end 45mm (half the board width) along one edge. Rule a line from your mark to the corner on the other side (Fig. 3). Do the same at the other end of the board, but measure and cut 45mm down along the opposite edges as shown.

Place the legs in pairs. The outer toe of each leg should extend 90mm beyond the edge of the table for stability. You can make this process easier by marking a 750mm square on a flat surface and measuring using this square (Fig. 4). The legs will need to be braced to keep them rigid. So fit two 690mm leg braces 396mm down from the table top (Fig. 4). Drill two holes through each leg and through the leg brace, and fix together with the 90 x 8mm galvanised bolts, nuts and washers to finger tightness.

Make sure the angle of each pair of legs is identical to the leg brace, and fix together with the 90 x 8mm galvanised bolts, nuts and washers. By doing this the table and seats remain rigid.

Or paint them before fixing the timber. Ordinary hardware will rust and stain the pieces together. Ordinary washers and screws in fixing out, the pieces will be easier if you prepare them together and measuring accurate results by clamping pieces of timber to the same markings before you cut any out.

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Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.
Step 4: Assemble the table

You can now bolt the lengths to the top rails already in position on the underside of the table top (Fig. 5). Centre the legs to the top, ensuring the outer toe extends 90mm on each side. Then drill two holes through each leg and through the top rail. Use your spanner to securely fix the pieces together with 140 x 8mm galvanised bolts, nuts and washers. Also tighten the leg braces now with your spanner.

A top brace support 780mm long is now added to the underside of the table top between the two top rails (Fig. 6) and fixed directly under one of the table top pieces to one side of the centre with four galvanised coach screws.

Finally, from two 700mm long boards, mark and cut two braces to fit under the centre of the table and at the legs for extra strength (Fig. 7).

Step 5: Now the seats

The seats are really just a smaller version of the table and formed and assembled in much the same way.

Start with the seat top by laying out three pieces 1500mm long, remembering to leave a 4mm gap between each board for drainage. The 280mm long top rails are fixed 150mm in from each end with 60mm coach screws.

Legs are made from 480mm lengths with top and bottom angles cut similar to the table legs (Fig. 8). The outer toes should also extend 90mm beyond the seat top for stability (Fig. 10).

Add a 400mm leg brace to each pair for rigidity. You are now ready to fix them to the top rails with 140 x 8mm galvanised bolts, nuts and washers.

Finish by centrally fixing a 1020mm long top brace between the two top rails with coach screws, and two 448mm bracing pieces (Fig. 11) with galvanised bolts, nuts and washers. Be sure all braces are fitted tightly.

Step 6: Sanding and Finishing

Finally, sand to a fine finish, making sure all splinters and chips are removed, and apply a protective finish according to the instructions on the can.

For natural timber consider one of the specialised garden furniture finishes now available in either solid or see-through cover. They are quick and easy to apply and provide excellent protection while highlighting the timber’s grain and colour. Be sure to remove all traces of dust before applying, and follow the manufacturer’s instructions. A coat every few years or so will keep it looking fresh and new.

If you have used treated pine, a finish is optional. It already comes in a natural green colour and doesn’t require any added protection. However, remember that it will eventually turn to a silver grey colour if left to age naturally.

Now all that’s left is to light the BBQ, throw on a few snags and enjoy dining out in style.
MIGHTY HELPFUL HINTS TO MAKE THE JOB EASIER

- Choose durable hardwoods or treated pine – they last longer.
- Making your garden setting will be easier if you prepare and cut all pieces first.
- Measuring is easy, materials expensive. Double check all measurements and markings before you cut any piece of timber.
- When cutting several pieces of timber to the same length, you will get more accurate results by clamping them together and measuring and cutting them as one. That way, even if you’re a fraction out, the pieces will still be identical lengths.
- Use non-corroding galvanised bolts, nuts, washers and screws in fixing pieces together. Ordinary hardware will rust and stain the timber.
- To weather-protect any timber that joins up against other sections of timber, stain or paint them before fixing them together.
- Occasionally tighten bolts and screws to ensure your table and seats remain rigid.
- Eyes should always be protected by suitable goggles when using any power tools. And never use power tools on a wet or damp floor.

IMPORTANT: This project planner has been produced to provide basic information and our experienced staff are available to answer any questions you may have. However, this information is provided for use on the understanding that Mitre 10 is not liable for any loss or damage which is suffered or incurred (including but not limited to indirect or consequential loss), for any personal injury or damage to property suffered or sustained as a result of using the information contained in this MitrePlan Project Planner. Mitre 10 advises you to call in a qualified tradesperson, such as an electrician or plumber, where expert services are required, and to independently assess any safety precautions that will need to be followed prior to using the information in this MitrePlan Project Planner.

WARNING: There may be by laws or regulations of councils or other statutory bodies that you must comply with when following this MitrePlan Project Planner.

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