

AUSTRALIAN

\$6.50 INC GST • Dec 2009/Jan 2010
handyman.net.au

We show you how!

WIN!
POWER TOOLS

Handyman



OUTDOOR areas
for entertaining



BUILD a mobile
barbecue bench



CUT posts with
a small saw



HEATPROOF the
summer garden



THE HOW TO
CHANNEL'S
**LUKE
VAN DYCK**

15 DECK SOLUTIONS

**BUILD FROM SCRATCH
REVIVE OLD TIMBER
MAKE EASY REPAIRS**

DIY

- BREW BEER
- ZAP MOSSIES
- RENDER A WALL
- MAKE A SWING

RENO COUPLES

'We tossed in
our day jobs to
make millions'

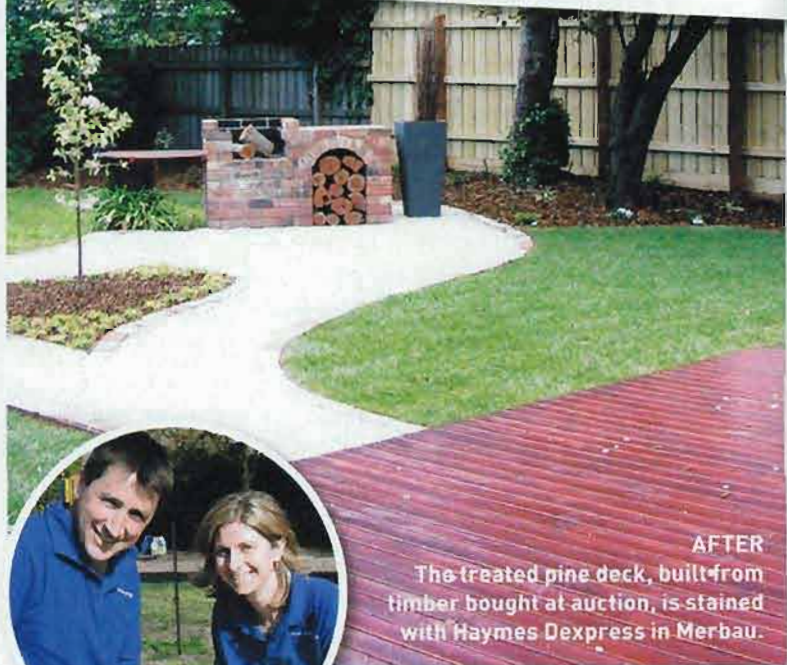
**WHO ARE THE
WINNERS?
2009 DIYer
OF THE YEAR**





BEFORE

This Ballarat home, believed to be about 100 years old, was in dire need of some TLC.



AFTER

The treated pine deck, built from timber bought at auction, is stained with Haymes Dexpress in Merbau.



DEAN AND ELISE

OUR MILLION-DOLLAR LIST

Dean and Elise Parker have made more than 145 property transactions worth in excess of \$30 million in the past five years.

They wanted a change from the demanding work they were doing in IT, which involved commuting long distances. Having bought a partly renovated house, they decided to move in and finish the job themselves.

Learning through trial and error they made a checklist so the process would be easier the next time. This list became the basis for The Complete Renovation System, a costing resource for others who also want to profit from renovating.

Selling the system and holding seminars, the couple also manages property renovations and a website



Dean used to do much of the DIY himself but now has a more managerial role.



Upgrading the tiles, benchtop and flooring made this kitchen look new.

(www.propertyystems.com.au) where they share their expertise. **DEAN SAYS** The first reno we did took 18 months and we made every mistake in the book. It was a big learning process but the checklist now enables us to cost an entire house in less than three hours.

I've seen couples lose hundreds of thousands with massive mistakes and people ask how we manage so many properties at once. It's just down to our checklist system. We do pretty advanced renos in weeks.

A big part is finding the money as you need capital to do more than one project at a time. I guess we did step out of our comfort zone to fast-track success.

My role is to find the renovation projects then source the finance.



AFTER
A \$200 door and polished floorboards give the loungeroom designer style.



BEFORE
Dark carpet and dated paintwork made this old-fashioned room feel tiny.

Elise manages the finance and the administration.

I'm glad we had experience doing hands-on stuff but to take it to the next level you have to step away. We're not working as much as we used to and we're earning a lot more.

ELISE SAYS Not everyone wants to work with their partner but we love it and both enjoy the freedom of being our own bosses.

Initially it was hard, we were asking people for money and dealing with money that's not your own is nerve-racking. But we made it work.

To do this as a business you have to be flexible and open to challenges. We don't mind doing a bit of the renovating but if we spent a week painting we'd be thinking about all the deals we were missing out on. ▶

Reno for profit **ADVICE**

■ **BUDGET RIGHT** 'Renovations are cash intensive,' says Dean. 'You've got to pay reno costs before the payoff so know how much you need to get to the end.'

■ **TRY TO LIVE OFF-SITE** 'If you're living in the house, get as much done as you can before moving in,' says Dean. 'We were forever cleaning during our first reno so we could live in it Monday to Friday only to destroy it on the weekend.'

■ **BE REALISTIC** 'Realise your skills and weaknesses,' says Elise. Dean adds, 'After we'd figured out who was good at what, if neither of us were good at something we outsourced it.'