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### Welcome....

Christmas is literally just around the corner and many of us are getting ready to welcome Santa, then pack up the kids and head away for the holidays.

If you are planning a summer garden project, check out our guide to creating that special 'outdoor room' so you can truly enjoy the long summer afternoons.

Doepels have had a busy and exciting year. Through our Sales, Property Management and Owners Corporation divisions we have welcomed new staff, celebrated with some fantastic award recognition and experienced steady growth, along with implementing some exciting new changes to our branding that will continue to be rolled out across 2013. We are all looking forward to another successful year in 2013, and wish you and your family the same.

**We wish you  
a Merry  
Christmas.....**



The Directors and Staff of Doepel Lilley & Taylor would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy and safe summer holiday season.

**Our offices will be closed from  
12noon on Mon 24 December,  
reopening at 9am on  
Wednesday 2 January.**

### AWARD WIN FOR DOPELS LESLEY DUFFELL

Doepel Lilley & Taylor's Owners Corporation Manager Lesley Duffell has won the prestigious REIV Awards for Excellence 2012 – Owners Corporation Manager of the Year Award.



Lesley took out the award ahead of her metropolitan counterparts, announced at a Gala Awards Dinner at Crown Casino in Melbourne on October 18.

Lesley has previously been awarded the SCA Small Owners Corporation Manager of the Year 2010 and 2011, and SCA Rising Star OC Manager of the Year 2010.

Doepel Lilley & Taylor is regarded as offering the best Owners Corporation Management services in the Ballarat region. The portfolio of properties currently under management by Doepels Owners Corporation team is diverse and based as far afield as Maryborough, Avoca and Drysdale, and has grown substantially over the past 2 years.

In accepting this award Lesley paid tribute to her team and said that this recognition on a state level was proof that regional centres are as proficient and professional in managing the complexities of Owners Corporations as their metropolitan counterparts.

"To take out this prestigious award is a great honour, and a testament to the commitment and hard work we put into managing this important aspect of our business," she said.



# Making the Most of Your Garden in Summer

*It's a sign of the times that the outdoor room is now almost mandatory. Types of outdoor rooms range from a humble deck to the full resort-style experience, your budget and the space available will determine what you end up with. Here's some great pointers to get you started creating your own outdoor space.*

## Planning

Approach your outdoor room the same as you would any renovation project, and decide on what its main purpose is, then work out a budget. A space purely for lounging, for example, is going to be a lot more straightforward than one with a state-of-the-art outdoor kitchen or lap pool. You don't have to do all the work in one hit, so consider breaking a more ambitious project into stages.

Think about services (electricals, gas, plumbing, etc) and whether you can work with any existing connections to save money. Think about storage for things like hoses and garden tools in small spaces. Measure up your site, then draw up a plan on paper, mapping out where the key elements will go.



## Theme

To get that seamless indoor-outdoor, your outdoor room needs to be a visual extension of your indoors, so avoid jarring clashes. You don't want a country-style living space flowing onto a courtyard with sleek, modern, metallic finishes. Think about finishes, textures, colours and an overall style that will complement the adjoining living area.

## Orientation

Screening, for both privacy and weather protection, could range from tall plants to timber slats, reed or bamboo screens, or for the more ambitious, a green wall – literally a vertical planting of greenery. Take note of where morning and afternoon shade falls and factor this into where you place key zones, such as for eating or sunbaking, and what to plant where.

## Creating the right look

It's one thing to decide on what you want in your outdoor room, another to pull it altogether in a masterstroke of fabulous design. That's the tricky bit and where you really need to look at how the experts pull it off. Visit landscape design centres and trawl the internet and magazines for ideas.

Consider raised garden beds, constructed from materials like brick, stone or sleepers, as well as built-in seating. Storage can often be cleverly incorporated into bench seating. When you've worked out **what plants are suitable for your site**, choose them for colour, height and texture. Mass plantings work well in a small space and sometimes just one focal point, like a potted maple, has more impact than a dozen different plants.

## Ambience

With the practical cornerstones in place, it's time to tinker with colour, lighting and furnishings. Take your cue from the indoor space, choosing a colour palette that blends rather than clashes. You may decide you don't want the exact colours, but you at least want something sympathetic.



Outdoor furniture comes in so many different styles and materials it's really down to the look you want. Wicker and aluminium are popular alternatives to conventional hardwood outdoor furniture, and many now look like they'd be more at home in the lounge room. Add a splash of colour with bright coloured cushions in a water-resistant fabric.

At night, lighting can turn an outdoor room into a resort setting, even just with a string of fairy lights and strategically placed candles.

Source: [domain.com.au/tips](http://domain.com.au/tips)

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The Sydney Morning Herald | The Age | Domain.com.au