

# bunny pavers



DOROTHY DU PLESSIS, author of *Making a Mosaic* shares these step-by-step instructions for making your own garden paver.

A simple way of making garden pavers is to use moulds from the kitchen – like a plastic basin, a cake tin or even the plastic drip tray from a pot plant. Look around you; there are so many things that can be used as moulds! You just have to make sure they are deep enough – at least 50mm. Bear in mind that not all pavers have to be round or square (old, rectangular ice cream containers will also work) and a mould – be it wood or plastic – can be used over and over again.

## fun that develops

### you will need:

- \* Mould of your choice
- \* Petroleum jelly
- \* Brown craft paper
- \* Pencil
- \* Permanent marker
- \* Tiles of your choice
- \* Tile nippers
- \* Wallpaper glue
- \* 2 boards slightly bigger than your design
- \* Plastic sheeting
- \* Cement
- \* Building sand
- \* Bucket
- \* Trowel
- \* Chicken mesh
- \* Newspaper
- \* Sponge and cloth
- \* Grout, waterproofing additive and applicator (optional)

**1** Take measurements of your mould or container and transfer these to brown craft paper. Draw your design (mine was a bunny in a garden of flowers). Wrap the brown paper around a board and secure so that your mosaic does not move while you work.

**2** Select the tiles you want to use. I used mosaic rounds for the flower centres.

**3** Cut the tiles and glue them to the brown paper with wallpaper glue – with all the tiles the right way up (facing you) because you are going to use the double reverse method. I used a sheet of shaded tiles for the shading on the bunny. You may want to loosen all the tiles from the sheet, then arrange them in shades from light to dark so that you can choose the shade you need as you work.

**4** Glue another sheet of paper on top using wallpaper glue. Try not to get too much glue on sections of paper without any mosaic pieces on. Place a board over the sandwiched mosaic and carefully flip everything over. Push all the tiles down with your fingers (through the paper) to secure them and leave to dry.

**5** When dry, carefully remove the original piece of paper, leaving you with the wrong side of the tiles facing up – they are now glued to the second piece of paper, which has become the backing paper. Trim the backing paper as close to the edge as possible.

**6** Apply a generous layer of petroleum jelly to your mould. Carefully lift the mosaic up and place it, paper-side down, in the base of the mould. In this case I used a plastic basin.

**7** The paver needs to be approximately 50mm thick, so make a mark with a marker on the wall of the mould indicating how far up you will fill it with the cement mix.

**8** Mix three parts building sand with one part cement. Slowly add water, mixing until the cement is pliable.

**9** Cut chicken mesh smaller than the diameter of the paver. Half-fill the mould, place the chicken mesh in the centre, and continue to fill the mould until you reach the marking you have made. Level the cement mix with your trowel.

**10** Cover the mould with wet newspaper and plastic sheeting and leave to dry for six days. On the seventh day, carefully flip the mould over, dislodging the mosaic paver. Carefully remove the backing paper and clean the mosaic. Grout if you wish; leave until it has dried completely and clean to remove any excess grout before polishing. Display your paver in a prominent place in your garden and don't forget to show your friends and family!

### TIPS

• The bunny is a good example of how one sheet of mosaic can be used to create an image with shading. I bought a sheet of brown opal tiles for this project, which had all the shades and hues I needed to give my bunny life.

• Bear in mind that you need to add the necessary waterproofing additives if you are going to grout, as the pavers will be exposed to the elements.

*Making a Mosaic by Dorothy du Plessis (Metz Press, R200) looks at mosaics as an art form, where line, colour and texture all combine to produce beautiful works of art. The step-by-step projects in the book are lovely and can be followed exactly, but the author urges crafters to make the projects their own and bring their own personality into them by playing around with colours and texture. The projects include big and small items for the home or to give as gifts, with alternative ideas and suggestions if you prefer a different look or feel. ©*