



TAKING SHELTER

Enhance your outdoor living experience with a shade structure and enjoy the outdoors year-round

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- 1.** A freestanding timber pergola provides a shady place to sit and entertain among this lush subtropical garden.
- 2.** A well-positioned shade sail, such as this one from Sunshade (www.sunshade.co.nz), will ensure alfresco dining is enjoyed in the heat of summer.
- 3.** With limited space, this side post umbrella provides much-needed shade for this contemporary courtyard.

One of life's pleasures is being outside in the garden enjoying the sunshine. However, protection from the sun's harsh rays is required as the weather warms up and as the cooler months hit you need shelter from the rain. Whatever style or theme of garden you want to create, there are a number of stylish shade solutions available that will allow you to entertain and relax in comfort outdoors — rain or shine.

Pergolas

Pergolas are permanent architectural features that create an extension of the indoor living areas outside. They can be freestanding, attached to the house, covered with a roofing material or left open to the sky. The great thing about pergolas is that there's a wide array of styles that can add that functional, special touch to your home.

You may, however, be a bit confused about which style would work best. First, decide where you want to locate the pergola. Do you want to

attach it to the house to create another room outdoors or perhaps have it freestanding, sitting within the garden or pool area a short distance from the house? Look at the architecture and era of the house — the design needs to work harmoniously with the home.

Choose materials and finishes that blend into the environment. If you have a coastal property, an aluminium or steel structure that does not rust or warp will last a lot longer than timber to withstand harsh coastal conditions.

Also consider how much shade you want to create. Timber battens placed close together on top of the rafters may do the trick. Or perhaps you want shade and shelter from the weather. New-generation opening roof systems allow you to enjoy the summer sun or sit snug and protected from the rain during the winter months. There is also less costly, lightweight sheet roofing material that will provide protection from the rays. Pergolas will definitely improve your lifestyle and add value to your home. →



“There are a number of stylish shade solutions”

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4. An earthy-toned canvas umbrella and timber outdoor furniture set works harmoniously within this resort-style garden.

5. This pergola allows you to control the sun, wind or rain with its new-generation opening roof system.

Shade sails

Shade sails are a great solution if you want some shade over a small courtyard, patio space, barbecue or kids' play area. Some are waterproof to provide that extra protection. They can be easily fixed to existing features such as the house or carport. They are available in many different sizes, colours and shapes to suit your individual outdoor environment. Shade sails can be easily removed for winter storage and effortlessly cleaned. They cannot be enclosed and will withstand high winds up to 50km/h with specific engineering. You won't need a permit if it is no larger than 30m² in area and less than 2m in height. Take into account the movement of the sun — make sure the location of your shade sail will provide maximum protection during summer as well as winter.

Awnings

These are usually fixed to the house over windows and openings to outdoor areas. They provide good sun protection, privacy and weather protection. The great thing about using

an awning is that they can be retracted in the winter months or when shade is not required. They are superb for a number of outdoor places no matter how big or small the space.

Umbrellas

Umbrellas are the most common and least expensive option for protection from the sun. They provide instant shade when you need it. There are some new innovative umbrellas on the market that are both functional and very stylish. An umbrella with a fixed central or side post gives you more room and allows you to move the direction of the umbrella as the sun moves around. If your space is really limited, an umbrella that is wall-mounted and that can be tilted and rotated is perfect for balconies and apartments.

There is a wide range of fabrics, colours and finishes to co-ordinate with your outdoor furniture. There are also a number of styles to choose from. If you have a formal, classic-style courtyard space, an umbrella in a neutral colour in natural materials, with a timber pole, will create an elegant, timeless look. ■