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PRIVACY SCREEN PLANTER

Jacob Leaf builds a living wall that doubles as a privacy screen.

1 To make the planter box, form a rectangular frame out of two of the 1800mm sleepers and both of the 600mm sleepers, and screw them together. (Drill pilot holes before adding the screws to prevent the wood from splitting.)

2 Trim and fit the offcuts to make the base. Attach these with screws.

3 Stack the remaining 1800mm sleepers on top of the first two to complete the shape. Drill pilot holes, screw them in place.

4 Make the legs using the remaining offcuts. Screw to the base of the box. While the planter box is upside down, drill drainage holes through the base.

5 To make the frame, take the larger piece of steel mesh and make a mark 200mm from each of the shortest sides. Using the marks as your guide, use an angle grinder to grind about one-third of the way into the mesh (you can also use a file). These will become fold lines for bending the mesh. Use a hammer to bend the folds down at a right angle to form a rectangular C-shape in the steel. Use a cut-off disc or a hacksaw to trim 10 of the protruding horizontal bars off both sides, leaving 4 untrimmed on each side – they will hold the mesh securely inside the planter.

6 With the smaller piece of steel mesh, mark and fold a line (as described in the previous step) along one of the longer ends. The fold should be the same size as on the trimmed mesh (approximately 145mm).

7 To attach the two pieces of mesh, hinge them together at the top using zip ties. Once you've filled the box with soil and planted it with a suitable climbing plant, secure the mesh together down both sides with more zip ties. Then stain or paint. I used Resene Pickled Bluewood Waterborne Woodsman stain because it contrasted well with the red macrocarpa. ❧

To watch our video on how to make this, search for "privacy screen planter" on play.stuff.co.nz.