

# Thinking about building a patio?

*RONA tips to get your house ready—inside and out—for the summer season*

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(NC)—In a few weeks' time, it will be time to plan the outdoor projects that you would like to carry out around your house, in order to make the most of the summer season. If building a patio is one of your projects for this coming summer, here are some RONA tips that may prove very handy.

## What is a good time to start the work?

It is advisable to wait until the ground has completely thawed out—around May—in order to make sure that the soil has sufficiently drained, is less muddy and has better load-bearing capacity, which will make it easier to efficiently install the foundation of the structure on stable soil.

## Tips to remember: Installation of foundation

When planning a patio, the first step is to choose the type of structure that you want for your patio: 1) a foundation that is protected from frost with the foundation bed planted 4 feet deep into the soil, or 2) a surface foundation that is not protected from frost. If you opt for a foundation that is protected from frost, there is a new product that makes it easier to put it in place with maximum efficiency and minimum effort, time or risk of damaging the landscaping of the house. It's called a "spud pile". Available on the market for the past few years, it is very simple to install, as it works on the same principle as a screw. In fact, the spud pile is installed very easily as it can be inserted into the soil using just an ordinary 2 x 4. You'll therefore be able to save time and money!

## Building the patio floor

Building the patio floor requires particular attention. In fact, securing the planks must be thought out with efficient draining and aeration in mind

in order to keep the patio in perfect condition. To do so, it is advisable that you allow for space between the planks so as to ensure efficient evacuation of water, good air circulation and expulsion of debris—like suckers and little plant buds—that can become lodged in the floor and promote the emergence of mould over the long term.

Don't forget that wooden planks will shrink slightly during the first year. So you have to count on spacing of approximately 3/16 in. - 1/4 in. between each one.

## Dry framework!

Remember how important it is to keep the structure protected from water seepage at certain critical locations as, for example, at the intersection of the floor planks and the joists of the structure. To prevent such a situation and keep the structure dry, you must apply strips of black tarred paper, 3 inches wide, on the joists of the

framework before securing the floor planks, therefore creating an "umbrella" effect, which will prevent the water from touching the structure and will reinforce the protection of your structure against mould.

## Additional protection for wood

It is desirable for all cuts made on a piece of treated wood to be brushed with a copper-based preservative in order to apply new protection on the freshly cut sides.

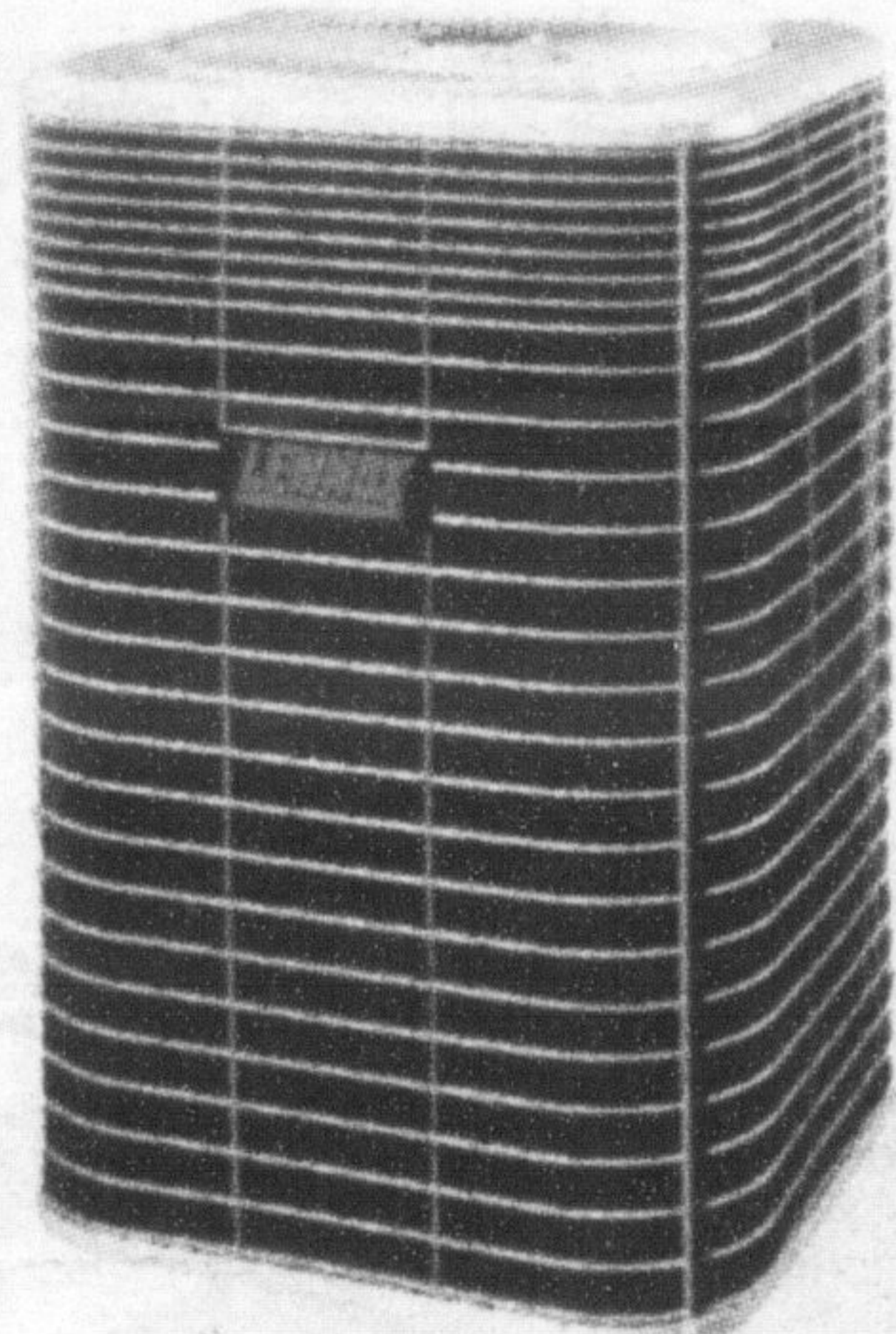
## Tips for a nicer-looking finish

Before securing the planks, it is preferable that you countersink the hole for the screw using an automatic countersink bit, thereby eliminating broken pieces of wood, while reducing water seepage at that location. To do so, take note that there is a swivel adapter with both a drill and a screwdriver bit that makes it possible to countersink and screw using the same drill.

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