

LOVE YOUR GARDEN



David Domoney's Complete Garden Makeover Guide 2015



10 projects to make the most of your garden space

ITV's Love Your Garden is the most watched TV gardening show in Britain. The team head around the country to give surprise garden makeovers to deserving people.



Read presenter **David Domoney's** Complete Garden Makeover Guide, including expert gardening advice no matter what your budget and top plant tips to recreate the styles from the show.





INTRODUCTION



The garden is an incredibly important part of our lives. It gives us space to relax and unwind, and the satisfaction of seeing little plants grow and thrive by our hands.

Countless studies have shown that gardens and outdoor spaces improve our mood and wellbeing. A great garden just makes us feel better.

I love taking part in the show with my friends Alan Titchmarsh, Frances Tophill and Katie Rushworth.

It's a pleasure to work with the whole team behind the show and see how much difference a garden can make to the families we meet.

Get your own dream garden

But I believe that everyone can have the garden of their dreams. The truth is that you don't need large television budgets or a team of people to help you.

Remember, we complete those makeovers from scratch in just a few days. But it is possible to revamp your own garden on a smaller budget.

It might take a bit longer, but you can do it. After all, the inspiring gardens that we feature in every show are designed, built and maintained by people on normal budgets.



What's in this guide?

Here I reveal my top tips and ideas from the show to help you love your garden. Whether you want a total revamp or just to tweak it, there's something here for everyone to do.

I look at each area of the garden individually to help you with your own garden makeover. I also pick my top plants for different styles and schemes to get the look from the show. Plus I reveal my top tips for easier gardening.

Contents

- 1 Planting pots and containers
- 2 Revamping the patio area
- 3 Renovate your fences
- 4 Get a greener lawn
- 5 Go to shed heaven
- 6 Front of house
- 7 Establish evergreen structure
- 8 Growing your own food
- 9 Love Your Wild Garden
- 10 Lighting the way

Fall in love with your garden again



CHAPTER 1

PLANTING POTS AND CONTAINERS



Container gardening is fantastic. It lets you grow plants where there is no soil – on a balcony, in a courtyard, around a patio or even on a windowsill.

Container growing is flexible and helps make the most of your space. You can change the look of your garden by simply shifting the pots around. And with a bit of planning and some clever planting, you can produce a container garden for every season.

Prepare your pots

A little preparation goes a long way. One of the most important things to remember is add crocks.

These are stones or pieces of broken pottery that line the bottom of the pot. They stop soil plugging drainage holes so the pots don't get waterlogged.

Soggy soil will damage roots and eventually kill the plant.

Remember to drill lots drainage holes if you use recycled or repurposed containers.

Plant the pots

You can put almost anything in a container: flowering plants, ornamental shrubs and even fruit and veg.

Fill the pot halfway with general purpose compost. Take the plants out of their plastic pots and tease out the roots so they aren't growing round in a circle.

Make a hole in the compost and plant the roots. Backfill with compost and firm everything down.

Aim to have the soil level a couple of centimetres under the rim of the container when finished. If it's completely full, the soil will overflow when you water it.

Water all the plants in really well.

Tip:
Lift pots up onto pot feet to aid drainage over winter. Old wine corks cut in half will do!





A pot for every season

Change the contents in your pots for year-round colour and interest. Grow bulbs and primulas for spring and classic bedding plants and fuchsias for summer.

Create autumn and winter containers with evergreens like box and ivy, plus heather and winter-flowering pansies.

Create a planting clock

Plant mixed containers in a clock style. Put a larger, taller plant like pelargonium in the middle. Add bedding plants at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock. For very large containers, fill the remaining gaps with leafy and trailing plants.



Top 5 bedding plants

The best plants for pots!

- Petunia
- Pansy
- Geranium
- Pelargonium
- Lobelia



Container garden tips

Keep containers watered. They are often kept under shelter like the eaves of your house and will rely on you for water. They might need it every day in summer.

Create a cohesive container garden by repeating the process with different pots and plants. Aim for a mix of sizes and display them however you like! Rows look neat and formal, or create a cottage-garden jumble.

For a real statment, use one tall pot in the centre of a feature for a striking effect.



Want more tips? Check out [my guide to pots and planters](#) and see [12 quirky container ideas](#).

Top 5 succulents

Low-maintenance pot plants!

- Sedum
- Echeveria
- Sempervivum
- Agave
- Paddle plant



CHAPTER 2

REVAMPING THE PATIO AREA



Much of our time outdoors is spent on the patio. It's where you sit and eat, entertain friends and family and just relax after a long day.

But the patio area is often neglected in favour of the flower beds. And making it look nicer will encourage you to spend more time in the garden.

We always put in a new patio on the show but that can be expensive. And very often you can salvage what you already have. Here's how to revamp your patio area.

Remove weeds

Weeds always pop up in cracks and crevices and look unsightly. The best way to get rid of them is down on your hands and knees!

I use an old butter knife to dig them out from between the slabs. Try and get as much of the roots out as possible.

Clean the paving

The next job is to clean the patio. Paving slabs get covered in dirt, moss and algae, and simply cleaning them makes a tremendous difference to how the patio looks.

Brush the patio clear and apply a patio cleaner according to the packet instructions. Try and give the patio a really good scrub. Use a brush with stiff bristles.

If your patio is really dirty, consider blasting it with the hose.

Or you can hire (or buy) a jet wash – it lifts off all grime and gets the slabs looking new again. It's a bit more expensive but saves a lot of scrubbing!

Fill in the gaps

Finish by brushing kiln-dried sand into the gaps. This makes the patio look brand new.



TIP:
 Spruce up your garden furniture too. Clean it with warm water and washing up liquid to make sure you'll be enticed to sit out as soon as the weather is nice.



How to plant up the patio

Add colour to your patio with beautiful bedding plants in pretty containers. Try cleaning and painting old pots for a splash of colour.

It's a great project to do with the kids – you just need some emulsion paint. Paint faces on the pots and grow plants as 'hair' or create any design you like.

Got decking rather than a patio? [Watch the Love Your Garden video clip on revamping deck.](#)

Top 5 Mediterranean plants

Easy and exotic sun-lovers!

- Rosemary
- Olive
- Cypress
- Sunflower
- Oregano

Create a patio herb garden

Herbs are incredibly easy to grow and great for spicing up your cooking. Keeping them on the patio means you'll always have them to hand when you're entertaining.

Grow thyme, oregano, chives, mint and parsley in little pots or put everything together in one herbal container.

I made a video showing how to create a [patio herb garden - watch it here!](#)



TIP:
 If you have any broken slabs, prise them out to create planting pockets. You can put in low-growing creepers like thyme. These make the hard landscaping look softer and greener, and release a beautiful fragrance when you walk over them.



Top 5 old roses

Old-fashioned fragrant roses

- Peace
- Gertrude Jekyll
- Harlow Carr
- Charlotte
- Princess Anne



CHAPTER 3

RENOVATE YOUR FENCES



Most of us have boundary fences. They provide privacy, security and shade, and mark out the land that we call ours.

But they are more than purely practical. A good fence has the potential to add style and character to your garden, highlighting the plants and making the garden feel 'done'.

You should treat garden timber regularly. Yes, it's time-consuming and can feel like a chore. But rain and frost can easily penetrate the wood and cause rotting and splitting. Treating your fence every couple of years will extend its life, saving you time and money in the long run.

Plus it gives your garden a facelift, even on a budget. Here's how to treat your fence.

Step 1 Choose a treatment

There are two main types of treatment:

- Stains are watery dyes that soak into the wood, changing the colour but leaving the grain visible.
- Paints are richer pigments that sit on the surface and act as a barrier.

Typically stains are lower maintenance because they don't chip, while paints are available in a wider range of colours and can be used to disguise rough wood.

Most modern fence treatments contain a water-repellant to protect wood, but you can also buy a special wood preserver.

This is ideal if you like the faded silver colour of cedar wood and don't want to paint over it.



Top 5 scented climbers

Flowers and fragrance for fences

- Trachelospermum jasminoides
- Honeysuckle (Lonicera serotina/ Belgica)
- Akebia quinata (chocolate vine)
- Clematis montana
- Wisteria



Step 2 Prepare the timber

Choose a dry day with little wind. Clean away any dirt and cobwebs and wipe down with a stiff brush and some warm water. Sand off any splinters and refasten loose boards.

If your fence has previously been painted, use a wire brush to scrub off any flaking paint and sand down. This is important because it gives the paint a good surface to adhere to.

Wipe with a damp cloth to pick up any dust. The fence must be dry before you apply the treatment.

Step 3 Apply the treatment

You can use a brush, a small roller or a spray system. It's worth investing in a sprayer if you have a lot of fence.

Wedge cardboard under the fence to catch drips and protect plants with sheets. Treat the fence one panel at a time, working methodically from top to bottom. Take extra care to cover the top of posts and panels, as these are most exposed to rainwater.

Leave it to dry according to the pack instructions.

Not sure what style to try? Here's a [Get the Look guide with 10 styles to choose from!](#)



How to grow climbers

A great way to make your fences feel like part of the garden is to use them to grow climbing plants.

Self-clinging varieties like ivy will pull themselves up, but others like roses and honeysuckle will need a wire or trellis support system.

Plant your climber and tie its stems loosely to the supports. Train young stems as they grow and keep checking that ties do not cut into the plant.

Prune in late summer or autumn once flowering has finished. Remove any weak or crossing stems and tidy the plant up to keep it looking symmetrical. Then tie in new growth.

Got a north-facing fence? [Here are my top 6 climbers for shade!](#)



CHAPTER 4

GET A GREENER LAWN



The lawn is a quintessential English garden feature. Many of us, myself included, dream of a smooth, green grassy heaven. But we're often given a rough, weedy, patchy mess instead.

However, you can create a gorgeous lawn. Grass is surprisingly resilient and fast-growing. Did you know lawns are actually made up of thousands of tiny grass plants? And they need care like any other garden plant.

Clear the lawn

Remove dead leaves and debris from the grass throughout the year. These can harbour pests and diseases and smother the grass. Rake well in spring to remove thatch build up.

Lawn mowing tips

Mowing the lawn can feel like a chore, but regular maintenance keeps the grass plants healthy. The most important thing is not to scalp the grass by cutting it too short. Aim for at least 2.5cm high, rising to 4cm in drought or shady spots.

Raise the blades of your lawn mower to 4cm high for the first cut of the year so you don't shock the grass.

Get rid of weeds

It's common to get weeds in the lawn. If it's just a few, spot treat them with general lawn spot weedkiller.

If your lawn is more weeds than grass, try a lawn weedkiller. This is a special mix that kills weeds and moss without harming the grass.

If you have moss in the lawn, you need an appropriate moss killer.

Make sure to get rid of moss before attempting to rake or aerate the lawn or you will simply spread the moss spores around.

TIP:
Mow frequently to chop off a little, rather than occasionally cutting the grass back hard.





Aerate the lawn

We walk all over lawns, compacting the soil and pushing the air out of it. This means oxygen can't get to the roots, resulting in stunted growth. It also causes waterlogging.

Aerate your soil by pushing the prongs of a garden fork deep into the soil at regular intervals. You can brush sand over the top to fill the holes if your soil is waterlogged.

For very compacted soils, invest in a hollow tine machine which removes thin cylinders of soil. Aerate lawns in spring or autumn.

Feed the lawn

Grass plants need added nutrients if you want them to grow fast, strong and green. There are two feeds available: spring and autumn fertiliser.

Spring feeds have lots of nitrogen to encourage green leafy growth. Autumn ones are rich in phosphates to boost root growth for stronger grass plants.

Make sure you use the right one at the correct time of year and choose from liquid or granular feeds. Granular feeds are fine on moist soil, but if you apply the feed and it doesn't rain, water the lawn well so the granules don't burn the foliage.

[Watch the Love Your Garden tutorial on lawn care here!](#)

Top 5 architectural plants

Striking plants for form and character

- Box
- Allium
- Cardoon
- Fatsia japonica
- Aeonium

How to reseed bare patches

Repair the lawn in spring. Fork over the soil surface to loosen it and apply a bit of compost. Sow the seed quite densely and sprinkle compost over the top.

Water in well and cover with netting to protect it from birds if they are a problem. Use sticks or coffee stirrers to prop the netting up. Keep watered as it grows.





CHAPTER 5

GO TO SHED HEAVEN



Sheds are ideal for outdoor shelter and storing tools and equipment. But they are often neglected and used as a dumping ground.

Make a real difference to your garden by tackling the shed. After all, such a large structure can detract from a great garden if it looks dilapidated.

And overhauling your shed doesn't have to be expensive. A few tweaks and a lick of paint can totally transform it.

1 Clear it out

I know we all hate clearouts, but this will be so cathartic. Get every last thing out of the shed. Throw away anything that is broken or that you never use.

Now sort what is left into three piles, depending on how often you use it:

- 1 Hardly used (Christmas decorations)
- 2 Occasionally used (chainsaw, hedge trimmers)
- 3 Often used (spade, fork, hose)

When you repack the shed, put the least-used things at the back. Simple.

2 Organise it

Before you repack the shed, consider putting in some storage. Simple shelves made from planks of wood can hold small tools, fertilisers and pots.

Install hooks to hang tools like spades and forks. This gets them off the ground and stops them falling over. Tie up bamboo canes too.

If you have space, put in an old chest of drawers. This is great storage to keep mess out of sight and doubles up as a potting bench. You can pick up cheap second-hand ones from auction.

Make your garden tools more efficient by sharpening the blades. [Here's how to do it!](#)





3 Paint the shed



Now you have the insides sorted, give the outside a facelift. Treating the timber regularly will protect it from water damage that causes rotting and warping.

Make sure your paint or stain contains a wood preservative or apply a separate pre-treatment.

See Chapter 3 on fences for advice on choosing and applying paints and stains.

Don't forget the prep! Ensure the wood is dry and use a fungicidal wash to remove algae. If wood has previously been painted, sand it down to create a good surface for paint to adhere to.

Add interest by painting the eaves and door and window frames in different colours. Or choose two colours and paint alternate slats for a beach hut effect.

4 Decorate it



Make your shed into a stylish garden feature with decorations. Hang wooden hearts and signs on the walls and put up pretty insect hotels. Get a [guide to making your own insect hotels here!](#)

You can decorate around windows by buying false shutters and attaching them to the sides of the pane.

And make it more like a summerhouse with soft furnishings. Curtains and vases of dried flowers look stunning in windows, or add bunting and outdoor fairy lights to adorn the building.

And don't scrimp on the lock. Keep your garden shed and all your tools and equipment secure with a sturdy padlock.



Top 5 prairie plants

Relaxed grassy plants for meadow gardens

- Cornflower
- Poppy
- Cosmos
- Miscanthus
- Calamagrostis



CHAPTER 6 FRONT OF HOUSE



So many of our front gardens are being paved and concreted over to make car parks. But you can't overestimate the effect of being greeted by a beautiful front garden when you get home.

Gardens lift our mood and make us feel happier. Front gardens also give us a sense of pride in our homes and communities. And there are some really simple ways to make your front garden prettier and more functional.

Cover eyesores

Many of us keep wheelie bins in the front garden but they are hardly attractive features. Create a shelter from fence panels or trellis entwined with climbers. Or cover the bins with self-adhesive vinyl panels to make them look nicer.

You can also decorate fixed features. Paint your front door a bright colour and spruce up the garden gate.

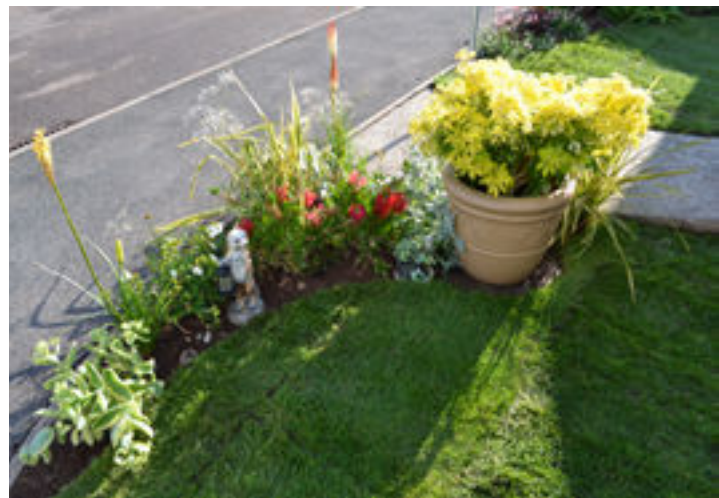
Create privacy

Privacy is really important in front gardens as streets are filled with passers-by. Put up fencing or add a hedge along the boundary.

One of my favourite front garden ideas is to plant a small tree. It makes a great focal point and adds privacy without casting too much shade. Try acer, willow or amelanchier.

Grow gorgeous plants

Most front gardens are small, so use containers to get more flowers in! Pots, window boxes and hanging baskets will cover the whole house in colour.



Top 5 New England Plants

Pastel blooms for an American style

- Hydrangea
- Delphinium
- Osteospermum
- Viburnum opulus
- Rhododendron



How to plant incredible hanging baskets

People always ask me for hanging basket tips. So here is how to get blooming baskets to make all your neighbours jealous.

Line wire baskets with moss and a little newspaper. Add hanging basket compost – it's more expensive but will save you money because your plants will last longer.

Or use general-purpose compost and add a water retainer. Water slices and hydration crystals store moisture in the soil and release it on dry days, keeping your plants going.

Plant up your hanging basket, including trailing plants like ivy, petunia and lobelia so they hang down the outsides. You're aiming for them to grow and cover the basket.

[Not sure what to plant? Here's my top picks for bedding plants.](#)

You can speed this up with wire baskets by planting through the sides. Once it is lined with moss, make a few holes around the basket and push plants through the gaps.

Then fill the basket with soil and place more plants on top. They will soon grow together to cover the basket.

Water the basket well and keep it watered – once a day in warm weather.

After a few weeks, start adding plant fertiliser to the water. Plants have very limited soil in hanging baskets and they soon use up all the nutrients. Add more and they will keep going for months on end.

Make sure to fix hanging baskets well so they don't get blown about and place them somewhere shady on hot, dry days to protect plants from drying out.

Want more tips? [Get my complete guide to hanging baskets here.](#)



Top 5 cottage garden plants

Informal classic cottage blooms

- Climbing rose
- Hollyhock
- Penstemon
- Sweet pea
- Peony



CHAPTER 7

ESTABLISH EVERGREEN STRUCTURE



As the garden dies back in winter, it can start to look a bit bare. This is where you need evergreen structure. It will anchor your flowering plants during summer and keep the garden looking strong through the winter months.



Permanent backdrop

Evergreens are great as a year-round framework of greenery for the garden. Use them to fill gaps in borders and cover boundary walls and fences to keep the garden bountiful over the winter.

Plant evergreen shrubs at different points throughout the garden to create anchors. Grow climbers up walls and put in evergreen hedges and trees.

What plants to try

Conifers are great for rich foliage and you can even buy dwarf varieties for containers.

For a less formal feel, try bamboo or a tall grass like *Stipa gigantea*. Play around with height for the best effect.

Rhythm and repetition are important too. Repeat colours and shapes throughout the garden and along pathways to make the planting look cohesive. You can add an element of movement with swishy evergreen grasses, and don't be afraid to grow evergreens in containers.



Top 5 evergreen plants for winter

- Box
- Winter heather
- Conifer
- *Viburnum tinus*
- *Sarcococca*





Topiary focal points

Topiary is a great style for structure because it can be made into any shape you like! Good plants for topiary include box, yew, bay and ilex. Plant topiary balls, cones, spirals or lollipops for striking evergreen focal points.

Or if you're feeling brave, you can create your own shapes. You can cut freeform, but I recommend using a topiary frame, which is a wire mesh shape that you place over the plant as a 3D template. You can even buy animal shapes like chickens!

Grow topiary in flower beds as an anchor, or use two plants as markers by a gate or along a path. Topiary of different shapes and sizes also has a great effect when planted together.



Top 5 trees for small gardens

- Magnolia grandiflora
- Betula utilis (Himalayan birch)
- Amelanchir lamarckii
- Acer palmatum
- Sorbus

Flowers and colour

Evergreens don't have to be green! There are also varieties that will add rich colour to your garden right through winter.

Conifers come in a range of colours, from yellow to blue. Golden yew has stunning foliage and bright red berries, and looks elegant grown as a column. Variegated ivies are attractive climbers and will brighten up dark corners and shady walls with their mottled leaves.

There are also evergreens that bear colourful flowers. Skimmia is a great winter plant, and has delicate white flowers and rich red berries. Bear in mind that you need a male and female plant to produce berries.

Viburnum tinus is a stunning shrub with shiny green foliage and delicate white flowers from December onwards. Or try winter jasmine for its delicate yellow flowers through winter and into early spring.

And don't forget winter heather, which comes in white, pink and red. It brightens up borders and containers with its striking flowers.

Want more leafy inspiration? [Here are my top 10 plants for foliage.](#)





CHAPTER 8

GROWING YOUR OWN FOOD



Growing your own fruit and veg is much easier than you think. And once you start, it's totally addictive! It begins with herbs on the kitchen windowsill and then you sow salad leaves in pots. Pretty soon you have strawberries and a few crops in the garden and then it's a full-blown veg patch!

Growing veg is healthy, good for the environment and great fun – and it can save you money on your shopping. Most importantly, there are few greater rewards than enjoying homegrown potatoes with your Sunday roast, or tasting peas sweet and fresh from a hand-picked pod.

My top growing tips

Most fruit and veg crops grow happily in containers, so pots are a great place to start. Salad, beetroot and soft fruit bushes are perfect for pots.

Take out the stress of germinating plants from seed by starting with young plants. Most garden centres sell plug plants ready to go.

Always follow the sowing, planting and spacing advice on the packet. And make sure you pick the right spot – a crop that loves full sun will not thrive in even partial shade.

Only grow crops you like. This sounds obvious, but many people get caught up in growing a 'proper' veg plot with broccoli and cabbage that they don't even like to eat. Growing and eating your own food shouldn't be a chore.

And have a go at something unusual! You're not trying to become self-sufficient. Have fun growing things you love, whether that's kale, blueberries or chocolate mint!



Top 5 veg for beginners

Easy-to-grow and super tasty!

- Peas
- Runner beans
- Strawberries
- Apples
- Salad leaves



Top 5 herbs

Tasty leaves to flavour cooking

- Mint
- Basil
- Chives
- Coriander
- Thyme



How to build raised beds

Many people prefer to grow edible crops in raised beds and they have lots of benefits. They allow you to garden on less-than-perfect soil because you can fill them with good compost. It also saves you digging over your garden and stops other plants and weeds taking over the bare soil.

Wooden raised beds are also cheap and easy to build.

Clear and level the site. Mark out the bed with stakes and string. Insert retaining stakes into the ground to support the walls. These should be made from strong timber at least 2x2 inches. Push one in each corner, going at least 30cm into the soil. Add another every 1.5m around the bed.

Nail your planks of wood to these stakes to build the bed. Fill with soil in layers and compact it as you go.



More grow your own resources

[Vegetable planting and harvesting calendar](#)

[Step-by-step growing guides](#)

[How to plant a strawberry pot](#)

[Winter herb garden harvesting and storage](#)

[How to plant a fruit orchard](#)



CHAPTER 9

LOVE YOUR WILD GARDEN



Imagine being outside in a thriving wildlife garden. The sound of birds chirping and bees buzzing from one flower to another. Butterflies flutter around before your eyes. The garden hums with activity.

You don't need acres of land or a countryside garden to watch nature thrive – you can turn even the smallest garden in a nature haven. Here are some easy ways to create a wildlife garden.

Make a haven for birds

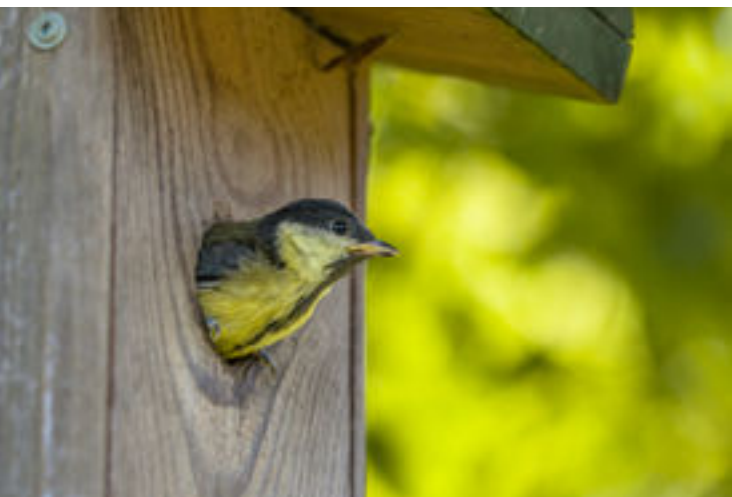
Feeding the birds makes a real difference. Put up bird feeders and hang fat balls. Don't forget to put out some fresh water too, especially in winter. Birds will congregate around a bird table, making it an ideal central feature for a small garden.

And install bird boxes too. They come in a huge range but the main difference between them is the entrance hole. A small 25mm or 28mm hole is best for small species like blue tits.

32mm is ideal for great tits, flycatchers and house sparrows. And an open front is best for robins and wrens.

Bird boxes should be hung off the ground in a sheltered spot. Make sure the front isn't exposed to wind and driving rain. Open-fronted bird boxes should be lower and nestled in amongst vegetation for cover.

Put nest boxes up in autumn or spring, and be patient – it may take a while before you get residents.



Top 5 plants for birds

Tasty berries and seedheads

- Rowan
- Cotoneaster
- Twisted hazel
- Pyracantha
- Crabapple



Top 5 woodland plants

Shade-lovers for a wild style

- Birch
- Bluebells
- Anemone
- Digitalis
- Primrose



Create insect habitats

Garden insects pollinate your plants to produce fruit and seed. But insect numbers are in decline, partly due to a loss of habitat. Make your garden a safe haven for essential bees, flies, beetles, lacewings, ladybirds and other bugs.

Put in plants rich in nectar and pollen, grow wildflowers and leave a 'wild corner' in the garden filled with leaves, plant stems and overgrown vegetation.

You can also build insect hotels. These are man-made structures that mimic insects' natural habitats, giving them a place to hibernate and lay eggs.

Create sheltered areas filled with leaves, straw and hollow bamboo tubes. Drill holes of varying sizes in wood to mimic habitats in trees for solitary bees.

For something more decorative, [try these insect hotels made from recycled materials](#).



Top 5 plants for pollinators

- Lavender
- Foxglove
- Saccious
- Marjoram
- Buddleja

TIP: Don't be afraid of insects! They are essential for the garden and keep pest numbers down.



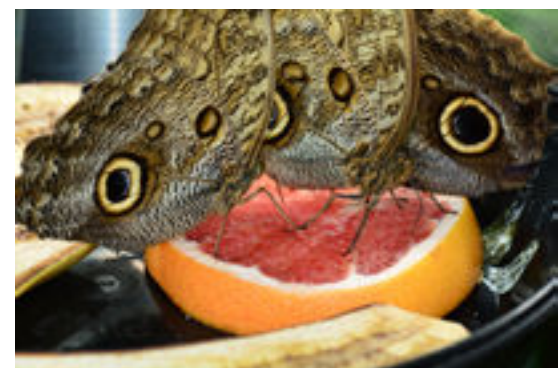
How to make a butterfly feeder

Butterflies are a common sight in the garden and love nectar-rich plants. But if you don't have much space in your small garden, you can create a butterfly feeder instead.

They flock to things rich in sugar like slices of over-ripe orange or soft fruits. Place them on a dish near some colourful flowers.

Or make a sugar syrup by heating equal parts sugar and water together in a pan. Allow to cool and pour into a shallow Tupperware box.

Pop in a couple of brightly coloured scouring pads to attract the butterflies and give them somewhere dry to land. Put the feeder out in the garden on a high, stable surface.



P.S. Feeling inspired? Get ideas for [attracting hedgehogs](#) and [pondlife here!](#)



CHAPTER 10

LIGHTING THE WAY



Outdoor lighting illuminates your garden when night falls. It encourages you to spend time outside in an evening and can be used to highlight features and plants. It also helps create a real atmosphere for entertaining.

There are loads of ways to light your garden, depending on your budget.

Electric

Electric lights are strong and powerful. Think spotlights in borders to illuminate feature plants and lanterns on the wall. Place lights on the ground under trees to light up the canopy, put a line of lanterns on a wall or fence and install step lights on stairs. You can also put strip lights along the edges of paths.

Mains-powered lighting needs careful installation. A special outdoor socket must be installed by a qualified electrician. The cable must be laid deep underground so you can't cut through it with a spade.

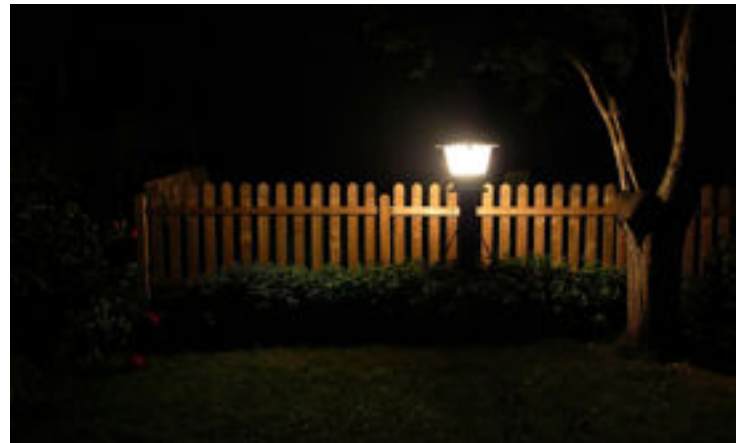
Alternatively, you can use low-voltage lights that plug directly into an outdoor socket. They use a transformer to reduce the voltage, making them safer. You also won't need a professional to install them, which makes them much more affordable.

Solar

Solar-powered lights are cheaper than electric ones and do not need wiring in. They come with a small solar panel which charges during the daylight hours and powers the light at night.

However, they are less powerful than electric lights and need placing somewhere in full sun so they will charge. Small stick lanterns are common – they are lights on a stem which you push into the soil. Use them in pots by the back door and line paths with them.

You can also buy solar-powered lanterns and even fairy lights! I love string lights draped around trees and pergolas and along fences to create a magical glow. Or try winding them around the parasol for a fairy-lit seating area.





Fire pit

These have become extremely popular and it's easy to see the appeal. A fire pit gives you a contained open fire that doesn't leave an ugly charcoal spot on the lawn like a bonfire.

They can be expensive to buy, but you can make your own with raised brick sides. Clear and level the site and build your outer wall.

You will need to line it with an inner wall made of special fire bricks that can take the heat. Spray these with a black high-heat stove paint and add gravel at the bottom.

Another less permanent idea is a 'log candle', which is a large log that has been cut to provide an opening at the top. You stand it on end and light it, and it burns slowly throughout the evening.



Candles

For very low-budget lighting, use candles! There are loads of styles to try. Decorate a seating area with tea light holders for a magical atmosphere.

You can even use recycled tin cans. Peel off the paper label and drill holes in the sides. They create a glowing pattern when lit.

Or line your garden path with hanging candle holders. Push wooden sticks into the ground and use ribbon or wire to hang glass jar candle holders. Recycled jam jars will do the trick. They can also be hung from parasols, tree branches and pergolas.

Create stunning features with floating candles. Use flat, wide candles and float them gently on the surface of the water before lighting. Fill bowls, buckets and zinc tubs with water and float candles and cut flowers on the surface.



Top 5 shrubs for colour

Bright, colourful statment plants

- Ceonanthus
- Rhododendron
- Hydrangea
- Lilac
- Oleander



LOVE YOUR GARDEN

David Domoney's Complete Garden Makeover Guide



10 projects to make the most of your garden space

Thank you for reading this guide. I hope you have enjoyed it and found it useful!

Be the first to get more gardening advice and guides by signing up to my monthly newsletter!

And check out my website for even more gardening tips, ideas and advice.

www.daviddomoney.com