

David Domoney's Gardening Tips

1. No shed? Keep your tools tidy by hanging them on a panel of trellis screwed onto a sheltered outside wall.

2. When growing heat-loving plants like tomatoes outdoors, place a rock next to each plant so that the sun will warm the rock and draw heat to the plants at night.



3. Use empty baby wipe containers to keep garden twine clean and dry. Thread it through the flap in the lid and pull out as much as you want before cutting it off.

4. Use a black bin liner twisted into a rope as a tree tie. It's long-lasting, doesn't rub and is cheap! You can also use old socks and tights.



5. Keep container plants happy in warm weather by topdressing moist soil with ice cubes in the morning, which will slowly melt to top up moisture levels.

6. Research has shown that aluminium foil on the soil around the base of plants may prevent viruses transmitted by aphids.

7. Position pots of basil or tansy near the kitchen door to deter ants from entering.



8. To deter birds from robbing freshly sown seeds from the vegetable plot, dust them with talcum powder before sowing.

9. Pop a Brillo pad in water and leave for a few days. Then use the rusty water to feed rhododendrons and camellias with iron to prevent their leaves from turning yellow.



10. Tie the stems of climbing roses horizontally onto their support to reduce the sap flow and encourage the plants to put more energy into making flowers



11. Wait until peas and beans have started flowering before feeding them or they will grow lanky and produce a poor crop.



12. To remove salt deposits on clay pots, combine equal parts white vinegar, rubbing alcohol and water and apply the mixture to the pot and scrub with a plastic brush. Let the pot dry before you plant anything in it.



13. Prevent squirrels stealing food from feeders by greasing the poles and putting plastic bottles over the feeders.

14. Snip a hole in the pocket of an old gardening coat, thread a ball of string through ready for use when tidying and tying up plants in the garden.

15. Fuchsia cuttings will root easily in a block of wet oasis – simply pot them up when the white roots poke through.



16. Get rid of pore-blocking bacteria on the leaves on houseplants by wiping them clean with beer-soaked cotton wool balls.



17. To offer your tomatoes and potatoes some long term protection from nematodes, turn in the roots of your marigolds (not the leaves), they produce a compound that kills nematodes as they enter the soil in the area.



18. Pop used teabags into a jug of water for a great plant supplement. Use the rich liquid to feed lime-hating rhododendrons and camellias.

19. If you're going away for a fortnight or more, remove all the blooms from your plants, to prevent them running to seed in your absence.

20. To retain moisture at the roots, mix little pieces of flower arranging foam with potting compost when planting up patio containers.

