

# Handy Gardening Tips...



## May

One of the busiest months in the gardening calendar, with plants catching up from their cold, slow start and thriving under milder conditions. Everything is growing at a great pace, and the dark, cold winter seems like a distant memory.

### Vegetable Plants

We have a great range of vegetable plants. Regularly harvest rhubarb and remove any flower spikes. Take care to cover up potatoes from late frosts. Beans hate cold and cold winds so protect them with fleece on cold nights, pot a few up and keep them indoors as an insurance in case the weather turns cold. Now that the soil is warmer and drier, continue to sow crops, taking care to sprinkle the seeds relatively thinly.

**What To Do:**  
Pot your vegetable plants using John Innes No.2 potting compost.

### Flowers

Weeds will be appearing thick and fast, so stay on top of them by weeding thoroughly, before they have a chance to seed and spread.

**Handy Tip:**  
Mulching borders will prevent weeds from taking over and conserve moisture.

### Bedding Plants

Ideally, bedding plants should be planted in May. But be aware that cold nights and east winds can damage them, so you may need to fleece them in severe weather.

**Handy Tip:**  
Use Gro Sure easy container compost and Stay Wet+ slow release fertiliser with water absorbing granules.

### Lawns

After two or more mowings at a high setting, the mower height can be moved to the normal setting. To keep the lawn in tip top condition, aim to cut it once a week. If you have unsightly bare patches, over seeding or turfing is the solution.

**We Recommend:** Miracle Gro soluble lawn food, and use Patch Magic to fill bare spots.

### Fruit

Ensure that the soil around new fruit trees is not allowed to dry out while they become established, and keep grass away from trees for at least three years.

**Handy Tip:** Push straw under ripening strawberries.

### Trees and Shrubs

Hedges are beginning to sprout, so keep well trimmed to prevent them from becoming too unruly. Most hedge varieties can be left alone until early summer, but some faster growing types need around three trims each year.

**We Recommend:**  
Feed with Liquid Seaweed fertiliser to give it a boost.

### Herbs

May is the month to plant herbs. Plant out the hardy ones: thyme, mint etc first and leave the more tender herbs such as basil till early June. Plant a selection in Elho Grow Your Own Raised Containers. Use John Innes to help keep in moisture to prevent salad leaves from bolting.

### Ponds

This is the best month for making a new garden pond. If your pond has turned green with algae, add more oxygenating plants. Plant new water lilies, and divide and replant existing ones. A new filter system will ensure the water is clear and healthy and add to your enjoyment of your pond. Replace old filter matting and UV bulbs. Add filter start and use Aqua Safe after water changes.



We stock HTA vouchers, which are a great gift idea. We are members of the Horticultural Trade Association (HTA) which promotes high standards in the gardening industry.



## June

Much of the heavier work, maintenance jobs and planting should be completed in the garden by now, leaving you more time to enjoy the fruits of your labour. There's still plenty to be getting on with now. Here are some tips...

### Fruit

Protect ripening fruit from birds with nets, harvest raspberries, blackcurrants, strawberries and rhubarb. Plum trees should be pruned to avoid overcrowding & any diseased branches removed. Small fruits will start naturally dropping in June but to get the best-size fruits it's worth thinning them out.

**Handy Tip:** keep well-watered, use Vitax Vitafeed Flower & Fruit. Feed Tomatoes, peppers & chillies with Tomorite.

### Roses

June is a great month for choosing roses as the buds are forming and you can see the first flowers.

**Handy Tip:** tie in some stems of climbing and rambling roses as near to horizontal as possible. This will encourage lots of dense flowering shoots to come from them.



### Flowers

Tall growing perennials such as delphiniums and lupins should be staked otherwise they will flop and be weighed down by wind and rain.

**Handy Tip:** support using Gardman hoops.

### Vegetables

Now is the time to sow vegetables such as leeks. Brussels sprouts and winter cabbages. Nearer the end of June, lift a few potatoes to check if they are ready, and pick out some of the larger ones for immediate use.

**Handy Tip:** keep well watered to stop plants like lettuce from bolting & feed with Vitax Vitafeed Vegetable & Leafy Plants.

### Lawns

Avoid wasting water on lawns. Instead raise the height of the cut in dry spells to make the grass more drought resistant. Continue to edge regularly, and feed with a general fertiliser.

**Handy Tip:** Feed with Miracle Grow Soluble Lawn Feed.

### Pruning

Prune flowering shrubs as soon as they finish flowering so they can regrow and flower well next year. Prune rampant Clematis as soon as it has finished flowering. You can really cut it down at this time of year.

See our range of pruning shears.

### Pests & Weeds

Sadly this is the time of year pests & weeds are about, there are various things you can do to deal with thistles, nettles, aphids, slugs and other problems.

**We Recommend:** SBK Tough Weedkill & Bug Clear Ultra for flowers, fruit & Veg

### Trees and Shrubs

Autumn and spring planted trees and shrubs should be kept well watered during dry spells. If you want a few large rose blooms rather than a few smaller ones, take out the smaller buds on each stem, leaving the largest one to grow on.







## July

July can be a busy gardening season, a busy gardener is a productive gardener who will have a healthier, bigger, more diverse harvest to enjoy. After the work is done long enjoy balmy evenings with one of our rattan table & chair sets to extend your evenings in the garden.

### Watering

Spring rains have ended & summer heat is picking up in July, stressing plants & making adequate watering a priority. Gardens should be watered either early or late in the day when less water will be lost to evaporation, and drip systems are the best options to minimize water loss.

Use: Hozelock Super Hose, no more hose kinking!

### Planting

While most planting is complete by July, planting late autumn vegetables & blooms can extend the growing season and provide a more bountiful harvest. Lettuce, cabbage, beets, broccoli, radishes, turnips, and pansies can all be planted in July.

Handy Tip: Top dress with farmyard manure and 6X chicken pellets for continues feed.

### Pots

Feed your tubs and containers at this time of year to keep them going all summer long. You might need: slow release, liquid and granular fertiliser. Liquids are best for containers, and granular feeds for the garden: lawn, fruit and vegetables.

Use: Miracle Grow's range of soluble or slow release granular feeds.

### Vegetables

Plant kale and sprouting broccoli, and sow parsley, turnips, lettuces, salad onions and radishes. Pick courgettes when they are relatively young to encourage more fruit to form. Keep plants in frames well watered to avoid drying out.

Handy Tip: Feed weekly with Tomorite or every 2 weeks with Growmore.

### Tall Plants

As different flowers, vines and plants grow taller in July, it is important to stake and support them appropriately so they do not fall or break. When staking plants, however, keep ties loose so the plants are not choked as they continue to grow.

Use: Obelisks for very tall plants or grow hoops to keep them together.

### Trees and Shrubs

Take softwood cuttings of your favourite shrubs by cutting a piece of new stem about 15cm in length, and removing all buds and leaves except for a few at the end. Space these out in a pot of sandy compost, leave in a shady corner and water well. In a few weeks, the cuttings will have formed roots, and you will be able to pot them individually.

Handy Tip: It's important to keep watering even mature shrubs that have been planted a while.

### Propagate Plants

July is the perfect time to propagate shrubs, herbs and spring perennials to spread plants to other parts of the garden. Choose only the healthiest plants for propagation, however, and care for them well to encourage luxurious growth.

Use: Growmore Granular or Blood Fish and Bone round the roots when propagating.

### Keep Weeding

Weeding is a never-ending garden task, and even during hot July days it is essential to remove unwanted plants that compete for water and soil nutrients. Weeds will be easier to pull when the soil is damp, so it can be better to weed immediately after watering the garden.

Handy Tip: To make weeding easier use a good quality hoe to dig up those weeds.

### Flowers

This is a good time to sow seeds of winter flowering pansies and smaller, but resilient, violas. By sowing them now, they should be established by autumn, and ready to flower throughout the winter period.

Use: Grow It range of seed trays, & John Innes No1 Potting Compost.



## August

Garden activity should now be slowing down after the previous months of accelerated growth. Fruit, Vegetables, herbs, perennials, roses, bedding plants should all be in full flower. Watering will be necessary, but give yourself time to relax too!

### Vegetables

You should now be able to reap the rewards of all your hard work. Harvest onions, garlic, shallots and runner beans and gather herbs. Dig up early potatoes and dry in the sun. Keep broccoli well watered as the heads form. Tidy your vegetable patch, placing the remains of crops that have been harvested on the compost heap. Make sure the runner beans and peas do not go short of water. Use: Tomorite.

### Pots

Hanging baskets and pots should be watered daily and fed weekly. Be sure to remove the dead leaves and stalks, monitor pests. House plants will appreciate a spell in the open air; place them where light is dappled, but not scorching. Use: Miracle Grow Multi purpose Water Crystals.

### Planting

Plant autumn crocus corms now, at three or four times their own depth in drifts at the front of the border, between small perennials, or in rock gardens, troughs or pots. You can also start planting crocus, snowdrops & bluebells from mid August. Use: Bulb planting compost

### Trees & Shrubs

Give hedging a last clipping of the season, and remove all dead flowers and stalks from summer flowering shrubs, unless they produce berries.

Use: Hedge shears/Telescopic shears.

### Flowers

Remove all dead head flowers, leaves and stalks, and continue with weeding and watering. Train wisteria, honeysuckle and clematis before the shoots grow out of control, and disbud dahlias. This is a good time to take cuttings of many plants, rooting them in pots of sandy compost.

Use: Obelisks and plant ties.

### Seeds To Sow

A good gardener always plans ahead and there are a variety of flowers & vegetables that you can sow in August such as Forget-Me-Not, Pansies, Violas & Antirrhinum. You can also sow cabbage, turnip, pak choi.

We stock: MrFothergills seeds.

### Lawns

If there has been a spell of hot dry weather, set the mower on a slightly higher setting, and trim less frequently. Use: Lawn edgers and grass shears.

### Essential Tools

Soil can become hard and compacted over time so to make planting easier and to provide better growing conditions the tilth of the soil should be quite fine.

A good quality garden rake should be strong enough to break up clumps of soil and pull out stones. Garden rakes can also be used to mix fertilizer and compost, or spread mulch over soil to retain moisture and improve its quality. We also have many garden tools from spades to shears. A brand we stock: Moulton Mill.

### Weeds & Aphids

Most perennial weeds are best dealt with when they are actively growing because the weed killer relies on the liquid being taken into the plant (the weed thinking it is being given a drink). This will ensure that the roots are killed along with the leaves. Aphids & greenfly can also be a problem in dry weather they are usually found on the underside of leaves.

Use: Bug Clear Ultra for flowers, fruit & veg.

**We Hope You've Found Some Of These Handy Tips Useful**

