



The perfect place to find everthing you need and a few things you didn't know you needed, for your garden.

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Feel Good Gardening



The benefits of being outdoors and 'green therapy' are well known and if you've been craving the feel-good factor of being outside, we have a new column by Peterborough gardener Andrea Connor to help you.

Ditch the idea of stuffy cardigan wearing rose pruners and embrace the modern gardening vibe! Whether it's planting some bulbs in pots, creating a window box or a small border – you'll not only get fresh air and vitamin D you'll get a kick out of seeing something you planted start to grow.

You don't need to be Alan Titchmarsh and you don't need a big garden – the satisfaction you can get from the simplest of planting can have a huge impact on your wellbeing.

Andrea Connor has a successful hairdressing business, but over the last few years she has been switching the scissors for secateurs in her spare time after she embraced her love for gardening in a life changing moment.

Struggling with mental health issues and during low points in life, Andrea has found it to be a life saver and says – “I wouldn't be here now if it wasn't for my love of gardening.

“Being out in the garden I didn't feel alone. You turn off from the world, notice more around you and get lost in what you're doing. It's the healthiest thing and such a boost for your mental wellbeing.

“Now as soon as I start to see a shoot coming through I feel hope for the year ahead. I

want to encourage other people to learn about and love nature more – in return nature will love you back!”

Being dyslexic Andrea has needed to learn visually and through volunteering at Baytree Garden Centre she gained a wealth of knowledge and experience working alongside their staff.

Having achieved her horticulture qualifications and working on wellbeing gardens in Dogsthorpe and Stamford and being part of the Castor and Ailsworth Gardening Society – Andrea's ambition is now to further her garden design portfolio.

Even the smallest urban space can become something magical. Andrea transformed her garden with pots, planting and hundreds of lights as 'the night garden'. This was selected by the National Gardens Scheme and was enjoyed by hundreds of visitors. Now she's working with Peterborough Positive to bring colourful flowers to the planters in the city centre.

So if you want to boost your mood maybe it's time to get growing. In each issue Andrea will have tips to help you make a start.

“Let go of the fear of not knowing what you're doing and just have a go – it's liberating.”

Andrea's easy tips for getting started...

My advice would be to start with a simple hanging basket or window tub which is a fantastic way to add colour to your home. Here is a simple guide to help you.

Size of your pot – make sure the basket or tub is large enough, small tubs can get crowded quickly, while large ones may be too heavy for some hooks or rails.

Material – there are a few such as wire, plastic, or woven. Wire baskets are great for drainage, you will need to use a liner in the bottom. If you forget to buy one, just use a plastic bag and cut holes in it for drainage.

Full sun plants – go for plants such as petunias, geraniums, or marigolds.

Shade-loving plants – if your space gets less direct sunlight, choose plants like begonias, impatiens, or ferns.

Preparing the basket or tub – use good-quality potting mix from a garden centre; avoid using garden soil, as it can become too compacted.

Planting – using your fingers gently loosen their roots, place the plant into a container at the correct depth. Fill in around the roots with more potting soil, pressing gently to secure them.

Caring for your hanging basket or window tub – containers dry out faster than ground-planted gardens; check daily, water when it feels dry about an inch deep. Use a water-soluble fertilizer every 2-3 weeks.

Dead heading – regularly remove dead flowers to encourage new blooms and keep your plant looking tidy.

For more in-depth details please visit:
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