

# FEBRUARY 1

## IMBOLC

Today is Imbolc, a day when we welcome 'The Return of the Light' after a long winter.

The days are lengthening and we can begin to prepare for spring.

Today let's be thankful for that!

It's traditional to light a candle to mark Imbolc.

This month in the garden we will be focusing on seeds and wildlife. But who knows, there may be a little romance in the soil too...

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# FEBRUARY 2

## SEED INVENTORY

- Growing from seed isn't as scary as it might seem to a beginner!
- Feb is a good time to begin.
- Seeds that are easy to sow include
  - sunflowers
  - lettuce
  - sweet peas
  - basil
  - nasturtiums
  - chives
- Let's start by making a list of the seeds you already have (check their expiration dates) and a shopping list of any you want to grow.

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# FEBRUARY 3

## PLANT A SEED

- Soon we'll start sowing our seeds!
- Gather necessary supplies
  - seed trays
  - compost for seedlings
  - spray bottle
  - plant markers
- Watch Sharon's Potting Bench video on planting seeds (it's in highlights on Instagram).
- Or read the Sowing Seeds PDF that's in the Grow With Us section on our website and our IG Linktree bio.

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# FEBRUARY 4

## SUNDAY

### POTT(ER)ING

Today we sow!

Hopefully you have all your seeds and supplies ready so now is the time to begin growing them. Find our PDF for sowing seeds in the Grow with Us section on our website and in our Instagram bio.

Remember to use plant markers so you don't lose track of which seeds you've shown. Also note this all down in your journal. You'll be glad later in the year that you recorded it all.

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# FEBRUARY 5

## JUST ENJOY

It's Monday morning and you probably have a busy week ahead.

Take a break and spend time simply enjoying your garden. It's an essential part of the gardening process.

If you have time, make a cup of something hot and delicious and take a wander around, then note down any changes in your gardening journal.

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# FEBRUARY 6

## PREPARE FOR PESTS

There's nothing more disheartening than watching your lovingly grown plants eaten or blighted by pests and disease in the garden.

Neither do we want to use lots of unnecessary chemicals on our gardens anymore!

The slugs, snails and mildew will be arriving with warmer weather so take some time now to think about how you want to deal with them.

We have a Pest PDF in the Grow With Us section on our website and on our IG bio.

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# FEBRUARY 7

## WEDNESDAY

### WEEKLY TIDY UP

It's the weekly tidy up!

After the storms of recent weeks, take a few minutes to check on broken branches. Prune any damaged branches from trees and shrubs.

If you have time, tidy up your paths by sweeping up the leaves and weeding any cracks.

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# FEBRUARY 8

## WILD BIRD CAFE

- To set up a 'garden cafe' for wild birds in your garden, begin by selecting a suitable location that is sheltered from strong winds and predators.
- Install bird feeders stocked with a variety of seeds, nuts, and suet cakes to attract a diverse range of bird species.
- Ensure a fresh water source nearby, such as a birdbath or shallow dish, to provide drinking and bathing opportunities for your feathered visitors.

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# FEBRUARY 9

## MAKE YOUR MARK

- To make DIY garden plant markers, gather materials such as wooden popsicle sticks, wine corks, or small wooden stakes.
- Use waterproof paint or markers to write the names of your plants on the markers, ensuring they are legible and durable.
- Alternatively, you can decorate them with colorful designs or patterns to add a personal touch to your garden.
- Once dry, insert the markers into the soil near the corresponding plants to help you identify them easily and add a decorative element to your garden beds.

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# FEBRUARY 10

## CHECK ON YOUR TOOLS

Take time today to check through your gardening tools.

if you haven't already read our PDF on how to create a starter set of tools, it's on our website or in the IG bio.

Spend 5 minutes giving your tools a good clean.

Cleaning both the blades (carefully!) and the handles will prolong their life and give you years of good digging and pruning.

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# FEBRUARY 11

## SUNDAY POTT(ER)ING

it's nearly Valentine's Day so why not show yourself some love by making a romantic pot or two to sit in your garden.

Take a look at our Everlasting Love pot video on Facebook/Instagram or YouTube.

It uses pretty Spring perennials such as Fritilary, snowdrops and ranaunculus to make beautiful long lasting pot.

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# FEBRUARY 12

## HALF-TERM HELPERS

Here are three short tasks children can help with in the garden during February half term

They can assist in filling bird feeders with seeds, nuts, and then make a record of which birds visit the garden!

Mulching! Children can help spread a layer of mulch around garden beds to protect plants from frost and retain moisture in the soil. This task not only keeps the garden tidy but also teaches kids about the benefits of mulching for plant health.

Let them get creative by making and hanging homemade decorations in the garden, such as birdhouses, colourful wind chimes, or rocks.

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# FEBRUARY 13

## HEARTY HERBS

In time to Valentine's Day tomorrow, make a heart shaped garland from herbs. Not only will it look pretty but it will smell wonderful and you can leave it to dry!

To make a heart-shaped herb garland, you'll need fresh herbs such as rosemary, thyme, sage, or lavender, floral wire, and scissors. Start by cutting several sprigs of herbs to a uniform length. Next, shape the floral wire into a heart outline, leaving extra wire at the top for hanging. Arrange the herb sprigs along the wire, overlapping them slightly and securing them in place by twisting the wire around each stem. Continue until the entire heart shape is filled with herbs. Hang the garland in a well-ventilated area to dry, or use it fresh as a fragrant and decorative addition to your home or garden.

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# FEBRUARY 14

## WEDNESDAY WEEKLY TIDY UP

Time to get that broom out and give your garden a good old sweep.

If there are children around during half-term, even better as they can help you!

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# FEBRUARY 15

## ROSE CARE

Because of Valentine's Day, everyone is thinking of roses this week.

Rather than spend a fortune on roses grown artificially in hot houses then flown across the world, let's put our energy in growing gorgeous rose bushes that will bloom all summer long.

It's coming up to a good time of year to plant roses, so for the next few days, we're going to have a Rose Special!

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# FEBRUARY 16

## ROSE BASICS

Choosing the best roses for your means first you have to know your light and soil.

- Roses like well drained but nutrient rich soil. If you have either very sandy or heavy clay soil you will need to help the roses out a bit more!
- Do you want flowers that climb, ramble or are bushy or in tubs?
- Do you want flowers to cut?
- Do you want roses that provide one spectacular display in the summer or repeat flower throughout the season?

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# FEBRUARY 17

## CHOOSE YOUR ROSE PART 1

Different types of roses includes;

- Hybrid Tea Roses

Robust and ideal for cut flowers, these are repeat flowering and have fragrance.

- Polyanthus

Small, shrub roses that repeat flower. Some have fragrance.

- Floribunda

These are bushy and have lots of flowers. They are pretty hardy but have no fragrance.

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# FEBRUARY 18

## SUNDAY POTT(ER)ING

Plant up a beautiful Rose Pot today!

It's important to choose the right plant for the size of pot and space you have.

Patio and Miniature roses are good for small containers (minimum of 30cm x 30cm)

Ground Cover and Small climbing. Roses are good for Mid size pots (45x45)

Bush, Shrub and Climbing roses are vigorous growers so need a large pot of at least 60x60cm.

Multi-purpose compost will do but ideally choose a loam based compost to keep roses at their best!

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# FEBRUARY 19

## CHOOSE YOUR ROSE PART 2

### Patio Roses

ideal for growing in containers.

Clusters of small flowers, fragranced and repeat blooming through the season.

### Ground Cover

The rose bushes spread out and most of them repeat flowers. They are small but hardy plants.

### Climbers and Ramblers

As the name suggests these climb or spread over walls and fences.

Ramblers are more vigorous growers.

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# FEBRUARY 20

## PREPARE THE SOIL FOR ROSES

- **Remove Weeds and Debris:** Clear the planting area of weeds, rocks, and debris to create a clean planting bed for the roses.
- **Amend the Soil:** Incorporate organic matter such as compost, well-rotted manure, or peat moss into the soil to improve drainage, fertility, and soil structure.
- **Break Up Compacted Soil:** Break up compacted soil using a fork or tiller to ensure proper root penetration and water drainage.

By improving the soil with organic matter, breaking up compacted soil, and removing weeds and debris, you'll create an optimal growing environment for your roses. This preparation promotes healthy root development, improves soil structure, and enhances water drainage, setting the stage for successful growth and blooming.

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# FEBRUARY 21

## WEDNESDAY

### WEEKLY TIDY UP

It's that time of the week again!  
Useful garden equipment for tidying up at this time of year includes:

- Broom and garden sized dustpan and brush.
- Heavy duty garden sacks.
- Collapsible bin.
- Small wheelbarrow.
- Compact incinerator for burning garden waste (only burn natural, dry waste to avoid polluting yours and your neighbours air!)

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# FEBRUARY 22

## HOW TO PLANT A ROSE

- Choose a sunny location with well-drained soil for planting roses in spring, ensuring they receive at least six hours of sunlight daily.
- Dig a hole twice as wide as the rose's root system and deep enough to accommodate its roots without crowding, typically around 18 inches deep.
- Gently spread the roots in the planting hole, ensuring they are positioned evenly and not curled or bent.
- Backfill the hole with soil, firming it gently around the roots to eliminate air pockets, and water thoroughly to settle the soil.
- Apply a layer of mulch around the base of the rose plant to retain moisture, suppress weeds, and insulate roots, maintaining a consistent watering schedule to support healthy growth throughout the spring season.

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# FEBRUARY 23

## SUPER SOIL

Soil is one of key components (along with light and water) to growing healthy plants.

This is a perfect time of year to work on the soil in your outdoor space.

The next few days we'll be looking at ways to improve your soil and prepare it for growing all your summer flowers and vegetables.

We'll be exploring

- soil structure
- compost
- ph levels
- digging and weeding

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# FEBRUARY 24

## FIRST STEPS TO SUPER SOIL

In January we posted about how to do a quick and easy check of whether your soil is sandy, loamy or clay.

You can find a PDF in the Grow With Us section on our website or watch our January You Tube video to find out how to do this.

Once you know which type of soil you have (and you may need to check in different areas of your garden depending on it's size) you can plan for how to improve your soil.

If you're keeping a gardening journal, make sure to note down which types of soil you have.

Sharon explains how to improve your soil in our YouTube video and we'll be posting more about this next week.

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# FEBRUARY 25

## SUNDAY POTT(ER)ING

If your outside space is filled with pots rather than flower/veg beds, take the opportunity today to check how healthy the plants are and which you're going to re-pot for Spring and Summer.

Old soil from pots you want to change or are too old can be re-used but you need to check a few things first.

- did the plants suffer from any pests or disease? If so, it's probably best to discard the soil. It can be sterilised but if you're new to gardening probably best to treat yourself to fresh soil.
- the nutrients in the soil will probably be depleted so you'll need to improve it. Tomorrow we'll talk about how to revitalise your pot soil!

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# FEBRUARY 26

## FEED THE SOIL

If you have old soil from pots you're re-planting and you know it's not from a diseased or pest ridden plant then you can re-use it with a few simple steps.

We need to enrich it with nutrients so either

- add a handful of slow release fertiliser like well rotted farmyard manure.
- mix in one part multi purpose compost to every three parts old soil.
- apply a liquid fertiliser every 2 to three weeks.

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# FEBRUARY 27

## COMPOST!

Have you started a compost bin yet? If so, top marks!

If not, here are a few easy steps to starting one of the most important parts of your garden.

Choose your compost bin to suit the space you have. If you're new to gardening, a small plastic bin is a good start. Larger wooden compost bays are good if you have larger garden.

Place in a sheltered spot so it doesn't get too hot or cold. And not too far from the house so it's easy to get to with those kitchen peelings!

Either stand it on earth or, if you're placing it on hard standing, put a an inch or soil of soil down firstly. This helps to get the soil organism started.

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# FEBRUARY 28

## WEDNESDAY

### WEEKLY TIDY UP

It's been wet and windy lately so use today to take a quick five minutes in the garden with the broom. Give all your paths and corners a good sweep.

If you've set up your compost bin you can put any leaves or small broken branches in there to compost down!

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# FEBRUARY 29 AND RELAX...

Well done on making it to the end of another month of gardening!

January and February can be the hardest months to garden as it feels as though you're braving terrible weather for very little reward.

But from March onwards, you'll begin to see all the benefits of your hard work.

Take a few photos in the garden today, to keep a record of its progress throughout the year.

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