

WELCOME TO YOUR GARDEN JOURNEY 2024!



#GrowWithUs

Everyday this year, we'll be posting a 5 minute job, a tip or a little inspiration that will help you create a gorgeous garden in 2024!
Grow with Us on Instagram,
Facebook & YouTube

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JANUARY 1

Whether you're a novice gardener or your outside space needs a re-vamp, our daily prompts for 5 minute tasks will help guide you to create a fabulous garden!

January is going to be a gentle start with lots of planning for later in the year.

Take a good look at your space and imagine how you'd love it to look in the Spring, Summer and Autumn.

Now we have the start of your plan!
See you tomorrow for more.

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JANUARY 2: GARDEN JOURNAL KICKOFF

- Begin a garden journal to document your observations, plans, and progress throughout the year.
- A good garden journal is a valuable tool for any gardener, whether you're a novice or an experienced enthusiast. It serves as a personal record of your gardening journey, helping you track progress, learn from experiences, and plan for future seasons.
- There's a guide in our Instagram bio on how to begin a gardening journal, ready for you to download!

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JANUARY 3

ASSESS YOUR SOIL

- Take 5 minutes to check the soil in your garden. Is it sandy, loamy, or clay? It's important to know so you can choose the right plants.
- There's a PDF Guide to assessing your soil in our Instagram bio. Download it for step by step instructions!
- Look out for more tips later in the month to improve your soil type.

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JANUARY 4

PLAN YOUR SPACE

- If it's not too cloudy, take note today of how light travels through your space.
- Sketch a simple layout of your garden space, identifying sunny and shady spots.
- Fill in where you might want a table and chairs, sun beds or lounge sets.
- Think about where you want flowers, vegetables, beds or pots.

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JANUARY 5

SWEEPING SENSATION!

- A quick sweep and tidy up on a regular basis will make a big difference long term!
- Spend 5 minutes sweeping up today, then admire how much difference it makes.

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JANUARY 6

COMPOST JOY

- A compost heap or bin is one of the most important additions to any garden or outdoor space.
- From big heaps in large gardens to neat bins created specially for small spaces, there's lots of choice.
- Think about what compost bin would suit your space.
- There's a link to our blog post on making compost at home in our Instagram bio, or check out the blog section on our website.

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JANUARY 7

SEED FOR SUCCESS!

- Cosy up indoors and browse some online seed catalogues.
- Make a list in your garden journal of the seeds you want to sow this year.
- It can be intimidating to grow from seed so start with some easy ones if you're not sure. **Sweetpeas, nasturtium, Californian poppies** and **Sunflowers** are all good seeds to start with.
- Watch out for Sharon's Potting Bench sowing from seed guides in February.
- And remember, it's half price seeds at Millbrook during January, so once you've chosen, pop in to get them from us!

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JANUARY 8

HOUSEPLANT LOVE

- It's a busy back to school and work for lots of us today so take a break from the garden and focus on your houseplants.
- Check to see if they need watering - many houseplants prefer to be drier than too wet, so don't overwater!
- If you haven't fed them for the last month, give them a good feed.
- If you can't remember what conditions your houseplants like, take a couple of minutes to check online.
- Make a section of your gardening journal just for your houseplants so you can note when you've watered and fed them.

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JANUARY 9

GARDEN TOOL TLC

- Although you don't need a shed full of tools to make a gorgeous garden, there are a few essentials. See our downloadable Tool Starter Set Guide in our Instagram bio.
- Caring for your tools is really important in making sure your gardening journey is fun and easy. Always
 - clean your tools before putting them away.
 - sharpen tools with blades regularly so they're easy to use.
 - keep your metal tools in good shape by oiling them (a thin layer of linseed oil is great) to prevent rust.
 - sand down splits and splinters in wooden handles.
 - invest in good storage so your tools are easy to find and kept dry and clean.

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JANUARY 10

WEDNESDAY

WEEKLY TIDY UP!

- Lets make a date, for a weekly tidy up every Wednesday!
- Today is the day to check any garden ornaments and bird boxes or baths.
- Make sure they're undamaged and give them a good clean.
- Move anything that may be damaged in stormy weather to a safer spot.
- Have a cup of tea and biscuit to congratulate yourself on your hard work!

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JANUARY 11

GARDENING BOOK CLUB

- One of the joys of gardening is curling up inside on a wet day and reading about it...
- Our favourite books for gardeners are
 - The Complete Gardener by Monty Don.
 - To Stand and Stare: how to garden whilst doing next to nothing by Andrew Timothy O'Brien
 - Why Women Grow by Alice Vincent
 - Step by Step Veg Patch - an RHS Guide.
- Happy Reading!

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JANUARY 12

GARDEN IN A BOTTLE!

- If outside is still too wet and chilly for you, how about making a miniature garden in a jar?
- Terrariums are gorgeous, magical worlds that can be as simple or complicated as you like.
- They're also pretty easy to make!
- We have a downloadable guide in our Instagram bio and reels on Instagram and You Tube showing you how to make a terrarium.
- Or come into our Gravesend store for Elisha to make you a bespoke terrarium.

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JANUARY 13

WINTER FLOWER POWER

- Just because it's January, it doesn't mean your garden has to be bare of blooms.
- If you've planted winter flowering plants previously, take a look around to and note down what's already blooming. You may see signs of early bulbs like snowdrops peeking through.
- You can establish new colonies of snow drops or beautiful hellebores by buying them in bloom now.
- Think about whether you'd like to plant them in the ground (if you have suitable soil and it's not frozen) or in pots.
- We have some gorgeous hellebores in our plant department if that takes your fancy!

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JANUARY 14

SUNDAY POTT(ER)ING

- If you've treated yourself to some winter blooms, like hellebores, snowdrops or pansies, pot up a couple of containers to make a gorgeous display.
- In last week's Potting Bench reel, Sharon showed us how to pot up a beautiful January display.
- There's also our How to Plant a Container guide on the Millbrook website (link in bio).

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JANUARY 15

THE GRAND PLAN!

- Now we've done some tidying up, checked our soil and light conditions and got our tools sorted, it's time to finalise the Grand Plan for your garden this year!
- In your journal make sure you have
 - a simple diagram of your garden showing sunny and shady areas.
 - a note of your soil types.
 - a rough budget
 - your aims for the year (is it a veg garden, for flowers, a relaxation space, family fun area?)

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JANUARY 16

PLANT WISH LIST

- Create a list in your Gardening Journal of 3 plants you'd love to flourish in your garden this year.
- Take a look online to see if they're suitable for your soil and light conditions.
- Note down in your journal when is the best time to buy and sow the seed or plant.
- Put an alert on your phone so you don't forget to buy them!

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JANUARY 17

WEDNESDAY

WEEKLY TIDY UP

- Lets make a date for a weekly tidy up every Wednesday!
- Have a good sweep of your garden.
- Be brave and look into those corners where we put 'useful things' we never actually use!
- Sort items into three piles - rubbish, recycling, useful! Take a strong rubbish sack and throw all the real rubbish away.
- Have a cup of tea and biscuit to congratulate yourself on your hard work!

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JANUARY 18

MAKE YOUR MARK

- It's a beginner's error but planting out seedlings and seeds and then forgetting what they are is something we've all done!
- Use garden markers for your plants and seeds so you always know exactly what is planted where.
- It's especially useful to record which variety you've planted. It's easy to see you planted a rose, but can you remember exactly which variety it was?
- Most centres sell plastic and wooden markers or you can get creative and make your own!

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JANUARY 19

SHOPPING LIST

- There's bound to be a few bits and pieces you need for the garden so draw up a shopping list.
- It's easy to overspend when you're in store (all those beautiful flowers and shiny spades!) so having a list will help you budget.
- Divide your list into the following sections
 - soil (compost/mulch etc)
 - plants (seeds, seedlings and trays)
 - equipment (tools, protection, pots).

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JANUARY 20

EXPERT ADVICE

- At Millbrook our plant team can help with most of your gardening questions.
- Take a quick trip to your local garden centre (us, if you live nearby!) and ask for advice on what plants will best suit your soil and light conditions.
- Then treat yourself to a couple of trays of violas and a pretty pot, ready for tomorrow's Sunday Pottering!

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JANUARY 21

SUNDAY POTT(ER)ING

- if you're thinking of planting any pots here's a list of flowers that bloom in the winter.
- **Winter Jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*)**
- **Hellebore (*Helleborus*):**
- **Snowdrops (*Galanthus*):**
- **Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis*):**
- **Pansies (*Viola tricolor* var. *hortensis*):**
- **Cyclamen (*Cyclamen persicum*):**
- **Winter Aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*):**
- **Camellia (*Camellia japonica*):**
- **Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*):**
- **Crocus (*Crocus* spp.):**

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JANUARY 22

TAKE A BREATH

- It's the start of a new week! Let's embrace a bit of garden wellbeing this week.
- Today, if it's dry, wrap up in big coat and stand outside for a few minutes. Take a few deep breaths to ready yourself for the week ahead.
- If it's raining, it's fine to stay inside and look through the window! But take a couple of minutes to enjoy your outside space before the week begins.

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JANUARY 23

COSY INSPIRATION

- Snuggle up inside - if you can see your garden through the window, that's all the better - and find yourself some garden inspiration.
- For the 15 minutes you can scroll on your phone as much as you like. As long as you're looking at gardens!
- Search on Google or Instagram for the kind of garden you love (cottage/modern/flower patch) and see what comes up.
- Screenshot ideas that you love and keep them on your phone!

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JANUARY 24

WEDNESDAY WEEKLY TIDY UP

- Lets make a date, for a weekly tidy up every Wednesday!
- Either clear an area in a bed or take some pots and planters and get them ready for planting.
- Remove any weeds (if it's a smallish area, hand weeding is best).
- Add some compost to the soil to make it more nutritious for the plants.
- Have a cup of tea and biscuit to congratulate yourself on your hard work!

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JANUARY 25

BLOOM WATCH

- If you have any bulbs or flowers already planted, some of them may already be peeking above the ground.
- Take a good look at your garden see if there are any sign of blooming flowers.
- Note down your findings in your garden journal.

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JANUARY 26

HERB HEAVEN

- Create a mini herb garden on your kitchen window sill.
- Supermarket herbs in pots can be divided and grow well on a window sill.
- But it's more fun to grow from seed! See our downloadable guide on growing herbs from seed in our IG bio.

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JANUARY 27

PHOTO MAGIC

- Spend some time in your garden today taking photographs.
- If you're using your phone, set up an album to keep them in as a record of how it developed over the year.
- If you're feeling creative use an app to make some arty magic - close ups of snowdrops can be edited into your own gorgeous art prints!

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JANUARY 28

SUNDAY POTT(ER)ING

- If you have a green house or a bright windowsill, it's not too early to sow some seeds.
- Use specialist seed compost and a plastic (recycled if possible) propagater. They're not too expensive and some come with self watering systems.
- Sow your seeds according to the instructions on the packet.
- Make sure you mist them with water regularly.
- In a few weeks you will have some seedlings you can plant into bigger pots/trays.

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JANUARY 29

WEATHER WATCH

- English weather is never reliable.
- If you don't already have a weather section in your journal, make one today.
- Note down the January weather conditions you've experienced. This will be useful information for next year, so you can compare!

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JANUARY 30

CONGRATULATIONS!

- It's nearly the end of January and you've made it through the longest, darkest month of the year!
- Even if all you've done is a bit of sweeping and thinking about your garden, you're still on the way to a beautiful Summer space.
- If you haven't already begun your garden journal, today is the day.

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JANUARY 31

WEDNESDAY WEEKLY TIDY-UP

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