

THE WORLD-
Spectator

*Home &
Garden*

2025





HOME & GARDEN

Get rid of nasty mosquitoes naturally with repellent plants!

Gardening is a fun summer pastime. However, pesky mosquitoes can quickly ruin your pleasant watering and weeding sessions. Instead of relying solely on commercial products to fend them off, consider planting natural repellent species that will encourage these biting insects to move elsewhere. Here's a look at some repellent plants.

Sweet-smelling lavender

Lavender's beautiful purply-blue flowers and fresh scent are often associated with cleanliness. This plant brings an extra touch of elegance to your garden while effectively repelling mosquitoes. It can truly brighten up your flowerbeds!

Lemony plants

Mosquitoes don't like the smell of lemon. Therefore, look for ornamental plants and herbs with a citrus fragrance. Lemongrass, lemon thyme, lemon eucalyptus,



lemon basil and lemon verbena are great choices.

Additionally, fragrant geraniums emit a lovely lemony aroma. Their abundant blooms serve as excellent insect repellents.

Powerful mint

Peppermint works wonders against various insects, including mosquitoes. However, since mint can be invasive, it's best to plant it in pots to prevent it from overtaking your garden.

If you want to benefit fully from the powers of these plants, make sure to plant plenty of them. They also need to be close to where you spend the most time outdoors, as their repelling range isn't infinite.

Visit your local garden centres and nurseries to find the plants you need to make the most of summer.

Beautify your property with fast-growing trees!

Do you want to add new trees to your property, but don't want to wait forever to enjoy their shade? Choose one of these fast-growing species:

- White willow
- Cottonwood
- Silver maple
- Catalpa

- Black birch
- Red oak
- Elm
- Honey locust

How to choose the right tree

You must consider the unique needs of each tree species, including their space and sunlight requirements. Plus, each spe-

cies adapts differently to various soil types and climate conditions. Some thrive in moist, acidic or well-drained soils; others prefer neutral environments.

Select the fast-growing trees that fit your yard's characteristics. Talk to a local horticulturist for expert advice.





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HOME & GARDEN

Privacy screens: what are your options?



Do you want to enjoy the privacy of your yard or deck this summer, away from prying eyes? Plenty of elegant and practical solutions are available to help you maintain your privacy while enhancing your outdoor space. If the thought of installing a massive, opaque fence doesn't appeal to you, why not choose a privacy screen that lets in just the right amount of light? Here are a few options to explore.

Decorative panels

Available in materials like wood, aluminum and polypropylene, decorative panels come in various designs, from classic slats to geometric patterns. To secure these panels, you can choose from a variety of posts and beams. Some are even specifically designed to elevate the look of your structure.

Faux greenery

You can create a natural ambiance with a faux foliage privacy screen. These screens mimic plants like ferns or cedars and are made of UV-resistant materials, such as polyethylene and polyester.

Freestanding screen

Sturdy and elegant, a natural wood screen will elevate the look of your yard. Keep in mind that some screens can be

combined with matching planters, providing a chic and practical two-in-one solution.

You're sure to find a privacy screen that meets your taste and budget. Visit your local home renovation or hardware store to discover a multitude of stylish options.

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HOME & GARDEN

Furnishing a small living room: expert tips



Does your living room feel cramped? Try these expert decorating tips to make your small space both functional and esthetically pleasing:

- **Choose light colours.** Light shades help create a sense of space by reflecting light. Colours like off-white, beige and pearl grey are perfect for creating a light atmosphere.

- **Pick your furniture wisely.** Look for small or multi-functional pieces of furniture, such as nesting tables and storage ottomans. Avoid bulky items that take up too

much space.

- **Decorate sparingly.** Leave as much free space as possible to avoid overcrowding the space. Instead, stick to a few carefully selected pictures or accessories to add character.

- **Provide multiple light sources.** Use subtle, indirect lighting and accent lamps to compensate for a lack of natural light, which can make the living room feel even smaller. Wall-mounted fixtures are particularly effective because they free up floor space for a more streamlined appearance.
- **Play with mirrors.** Mirrors reflect light and create the illusion of depth. Place a mirror opposite a window to maximize natural light and create a feeling of openness.

Visit your local shops to find everything you need to create a living room you love.

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5 tips to light up your yard

Want to enjoy your yard even after sunset? Follow these five expert tips to create a functional and stylishly illuminated backyard.

1. Play with contrast. Instead of flooding your yard with bright light, create areas of both light and shade. This will enhance the beauty of your space

and add depth.

2. Include pathway lighting. Place small lanterns or recessed spotlights along high-traffic areas. This warm touch is far more inviting than the light from large lamps.

3. Spotlight your trees. Install neutral or coloured LED lights at the base of your most stunning trees, directing the light upwards. This technique will transform your garden into a magical retreat.

4. Opt for solar-powered or battery-operated lights. If you want to skip the hassle and expense of modifying your electrical system, explore solar-powered options or

battery-operated lights that don't require an outlet.

5. Use soft lighting on your deck. Avoid placing blinding lights around your deck or patio to extend those summer evenings. Instead, choose hanging lights that emit soft, warm tones, and consider adding string lights for an extra festive flair.

Visit your local outdoor lighting retailers to find the perfect lamps and fixtures.





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HOME & GARDEN

Spring cleaning 101: don't forget these 7 tasks

Spring cleaning is a yearly tradition that breathes fresh air into your home, but certain areas are easy to overlook—or ignore. For a thorough spring cleaning, don't neglect these seven essential tasks.

1. Garbage cans. Even if you empty them regularly, garbage cans can quickly accumulate bacteria and unpleasant odours. Be sure to wash them out with vinegar and hot water.

2. Light switches. These high-touch surfaces are breeding grounds for germs. Wiping them down with a clean cloth and all-purpose cleaner can make a big difference.

3. Cushions. Soft, decorative accessories need attention too. If possible, machine wash or vacuum them thoroughly to remove dust and allergens.



4. Coffee maker. This often-used appliance can develop limescale and grime buildup. Use a mixture of vinegar and water to sanitize the inside. Rinse it thoroughly afterward.

5. Fans. The blades and grilles on both ceiling and standing floor fans quickly collect dust. Use a damp cloth to keep them clean.

6. Blinds and curtains. Machine wash your curtains and dust your blinds with a dry cloth to keep them looking fresh.

7. Vents. Although easy to miss, air vents trap dust and allergens. Use a vacuum cleaner or a damp cloth to keep them clean.

Cleaning these often-overlooked areas will help you create a healthier living space. Gather your cleaning supplies and take your spring cleaning to the next level.

How to wash windows without leaving streaks

Spring marks the end of winter—and the start of spring cleaning. Washing your windows is the ultimate way to brighten up your home. However, cleaning glass without leaving streaks can be tricky. Follow these tips to make your windows shine.

Supplies

- White vinegar
- Warm water

- Spray bottle
- Lint-free or microfibre cloths
- Rubber squeegee
- Newspaper

Prepare your windows

Start by dusting the window frames and removing any dirt, such as insect debris and spider webs. To lift off stickers or adhesive residue, wet the area and scrape it off gently

with a plastic scraper.

Wash the glass

Make a homemade cleaning liquid by mixing a three-to-one solution of water and white vinegar in a spray bottle. Generously spray this solution onto the glass. Use a cloth or squeegee to wipe it clean. Then, remove any liquid residue with a dry cloth. If you still notice streaks, dampen a piece of crumpled

newspaper and rub it on the glass to achieve a streak-free finish.

If you don't have the time or prefer not to wash your windows yourself, you can get an impeccable clean by hiring a professional window cleaning company. This will help you quickly check this task off your spring-cleaning to-do list.



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What should you consider when choosing your kitchen

Is your kitchen outdated and in need of a makeover? The right choice of cabinets can take your space from drab to fab. Consider these factors to guide your choice.

BUDGET

What's the most you can spend? If you're on a tight budget, you might want to consider prefabricated cabinets, which are typically the most affordable. Custom-built cabinets can be an excellent choice for a truly individualized look. However, they come at a much higher price point.

MATERIAL

The material you choose for your cabinets will significantly affect your kitchen's finished look and feel. Different materials vary not only in price but also in their unique characteristics:

- Imitation lacquer is relatively new to the market. This material is highly resistant to scratches and water damage.
- Wood is a timeless option that can add that inimitable sense of warmth to your space.

- Melamine is an affordable choice and comes in a wide range of colours.
- Acrylic is a glossy material that can give your kitchen a modern look.

There are many additional materials to consider, so don't hesitate to talk to an expert.

HANDLES

You may think handles are a trivial detail, but they can make a significant difference in the overall appearance of your cabinets. Knobs, which typically require a single screw, are generally the most affordable option.

Two-screw models, although more expensive, offer a broader variety of styles. You can also find handleless cabinet designs that are perfect for creating a minimalist look.

Do you need expert advice? Visit a specialized retailer in your area.



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