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# Gardening club

with DAVID DOMONEY

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## Q&A



### I want to know my onions, seriously...

How do I know when my onions are ready?  
**Jamie Lyons, Stroud DAVID:** Onions will be ready to harvest when foliage starts to yellow and die down. To harvest, gently lift the bulbs using a fork and place in a well-ventilated rack in full sun for two weeks to ripen. They can then be stored in a cool, dry place until you're ready to use them.



### Will plain tap water harm raspberries?

Is tap water OK for watering raspberries?  
**Peter, via email DAVID:** Raspberries grow best in slightly acidic soils. Tap water is often alkaline, so it's better to use rain water collected in a butt. However, if this is not an option, buy sequestered iron from the garden centre and mix it with tap water in your watering can before use.

## TIP of the week

Pinch out the growing tips on Fuchsia plants to encourage bushiness and more flowers.

## GET IN TOUCH

For loads more hints and tips on gardening visit [daviddomoney.com](http://daviddomoney.com) or follow me on Facebook at [DavidDomoneyTV](https://www.facebook.com/DavidDomoneyTV) or on Twitter [@daviddomoney](https://twitter.com/daviddomoney)

Invest in a fountain and weatherproof light fittings - as well as a statement plant or two - and perfect that outdoor room you always wanted

Your garden may be full of seasonal colour but, if you really want the wow factor, adding glorious garden features is a great way to draw the eye and entice people to journey down the garden, creating a truly special space.

### WATER FEATURES

Trickling water in a garden can transform any area into a tranquil haven. Water features come in a wide range of designs and materials.

For a rustic look in a cottage garden, a drilled mill stone amid coloured rocks could add the babble to your brook. Contemporary style outside a minimalist city flat can simply mean a sheet of water cascading over shining stainless steel.

If you've been turned off in the past by tricky installation, there are now solar powered water features that can be installed in an instant. Just be sure to place the solar panel in a sunny spot.

### LIVING WALLS

Brighten bare walls and boost your vitamin uptake in one fell swoop by creating an edible living wall. Grow

Different colours can be arranged in spirals and concentric circles

lettuce, rocket and spinach in vertical planting arrangements to cut down on the use of floor space. They're fast growing and low maintenance.

Some fancy modular walling systems are equipped with their own irrigation pipes, or recycle lengths of guttering fastened to garden walls.

Alternatively, choose ornamental plants like Heuchera, Sedum spectabile (ice plant) or Carex (sedge) to create artistic arrangements and break up bare sections with foliage.

Different colours can be arranged in spirals, concentric circles or stripes to create a true canvas of colour that is unique to your garden.

Not only do they look fantastic, living walls also provide insulation to keep houses cooler in summer and warmer in winter, as well as offering protection from noise and pollution.

### FIREPITS AND FITTINGS

Get the most out of summer evenings by installing an on-trend fire pit on your patio. Available in a range of shapes, sizes and price points, the cheapest fire pits start at around £30 and you can get foldable ones to stow in the shed between uses. There are decorative globes that



OUTDOOR HOME Think about a summer house and, top, a spectacular fire pit



# Features of nature

ACERS HIGH Statement plants create a wow factor

give off dancing shadows or bowl-shaped ones equipped with cooking grates for rustling up flame grilled steaks while you listen to the flames crackle. It's atmospheric and a great way to get warmth and light into your garden at the same time. Lighting up new or existing features

can really set them off and will keep your garden giving well beyond sunset.

Lighting from below with professionally-installed spotlights offers a focal point while casting solar-powered string lights around ornaments creates interesting patterns. Before committing to outdoor

lighting, consider your local wildlife. If you know which nocturnal wildlife visits your patch, you can adapt your light to minimise disrupting them.

Bats and birds' feeding and sleeping patterns can be affected by security lights and some wild birds can begin singing before dawn due to the

confusion. Opt for lighting in a warmer hue or position them lower to the ground to minimise lighting's effect.

### GARDEN ROOMS

All the rage at the moment, free-standing garden rooms are a fantastic way to create an immersive space for

entertaining friends, working from home or relaxing with a book while the kids potter around the garden.

Around £500 will buy you a seven-foot-square wooden summer house, with double doors and large windows to let in the sunlight. Some come with double glazing, integrated terraces and bi-fold doors, or can be plumbed in.

### STATEMENT PLANTS

Another fine idea for sprucing up your garden is to add one or two statement plants in choice places.

The delicate lacy leaves of Acer palmatum (Japanese maple) or vibrant fruits of a dwarf apple tree centre stage in a large pot on the patio will create visual impact. Alternatively, consider evergreens like Taxus baccata (yew).

You can easily give your garden a more intimate, homely feel and make it a great space to unwind by adding features with sentimental value to you. Pick a stone animal, decorative mirror, or etch into a stone tablet to personalise the space to your taste. Invest in a few of these charming garden features and make your garden a truly inspiring place to be.

## TOP BUY



### How to hang out with your favourite plants

These reusable Angus hanging planter bags are ideal if you're short of space - but can also make an excellent garden feature.

They're made of thick waterproof felt and won't leak, so they're suitable for indoors or outdoors, especially on a balcony or patio.

Simply attach to the wall, fill with soil (not included) and away you go. I found them for £7.99 each via [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk).

## Get dug in for a share of £20,000



WINNERS Tay View Community Garden

The growing season is well under way - and so is the 2019 Cultivation Street competition, sponsored by Calliope®.

With entries pouring in from a network of school and community gardens and UK garden centres, let's look at what's up for grabs this year.

In its seventh year, the Cultivation Street campaign is bigger and better than ever, with 300 or so ambassadors in garden centres across the UK who have the know-how to help community gardens better their green spaces.

Entries are now open and the Cultivation Street campaign is thrilled to be receiving inspiring new entries every day. By August the judges will be



eyeing up the huge variety of community gardens in the campaign's network - whether a garden packed with vegetable crops or intricately designed with ornamental flowers.

The competition is open to community gardens of all shapes and sizes, including schools, as long as they're based in the UK.

Once entered, any one of them could be in the chance of winning a share of the £20,000 prize pot. Last year's

overall winner, Tay View Community Garden in Dundee, cleaned up.

Once you have registered online you can enter more than one category to increase your chances of winning.

The deadline is July 24 for schools and August 5 for all other categories.

The 2019 categories are: School Gardens, Community Gardens, Calliope My Life, and the new Gardens for Better Health, to reward gardens that have a positive effect on people's mental and physical health and wellbeing.

To register your garden, or for more information about entering the competition, simply take a look at [cultivationstreet.com](http://cultivationstreet.com).