



Get Gardening Without a Garden

Here we explore the ways you can experience the joys and wellbeing benefits of gardening, without having your own garden.



Welcome!

About Thrive

Thrive is the gardening for health charity. We help to improve people's physical and mental health through gardening and time in nature.

About this activity pack

We believe in connecting everyone to the wellbeing benefits of gardening. In this pack you'll see just how many fun and meaningful ways there are to get into gardening without a garden.

Our aim in this pack is to get you started on your journey. We briefly explain various types of gardening and share ways that you can get involved. Then it's over to you to give it a go!

Get Gardening website

The Get Gardening section of our website is full of information to help you enjoy gardening for health. This includes beginner gardening guides, information on the wellbeing benefits of gardening, and advice on adapting gardening for a wide range of disabilities and health conditions. Visit www.thrive.org.uk/getgardening to discover more.

Tag us on social media

If you're getting involved with our activities, we'd love to see! You can post photos and tag us with **@thrivecharity** on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok.

You can also add hashtag **#nogardennoproblem** to posts so everyone participating can see what others have been up to.

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Container gardening

What is container gardening?

Container gardening is simply growing plants in containers such as pots, balcony boxes and long planters rather than directly into the ground.



Benefits of container gardening

- You can grow plants in containers indoors or outdoors
- You can elevate containers so that they are convenient to reach
- Great for developing fine and gross motor skills

Top tip!

Always check your container has drainage holes at the bottom. Otherwise your plant might absorb too much water.

Getting started

- Choose a container and make sure there's enough space for your plant to grow
- Put a layer of stones in your container and then fill with compost.
- Position your plants, fill around them with compost and then water well

Plant ideas

- Succulents and alpine plants
- Herbs (thyme, sage, rosemary)
- Annuals (pansies, zinnias, marigolds)

'I like gardening – it's a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself.' – Alice Sebold

Balcony gardening

What is balcony gardening?

Balconies can be a lovely spot to have your own little garden. It's amazing how much you can grow in a small space.



Benefits of balcony gardening

- Plants will give you a dose of nature in your very own home
- A great excuse to get some regular fresh air
- Regular watering and care provides a sense of routine

Top tip!

Depending how high up you are, balcony weather conditions can be unpredictable, so ensure you regularly check on your plants.

Getting started

- Find out the weight limit of your balcony (check with building management)
- Get to know your balcony. Is it sunny, shady, windy?
- Sketch a plan of what you'd like to grow
- Get your preferred plants and get started!

Plant ideas

- Edibles (herbs, chillies, beans)
- Plants for pollinators (lavender, chives)
- A very small tree

'Watering my plants gave me a reason to get out of bed.'

- Jason the Cloud Gardener

Window boxes

What is a window box?

Window boxes are planting containers you place on the outside of your window. They are a great place to grow and create a beautiful display outside of your home.



Benefits of window boxes

- Enjoy the wellbeing benefits of fresh air and nature without needing a traditional garden space
- Can give a sense of pride to grow your own display

Top tip!

You may need to fix your window box to the wall with brackets. If you're not confident doing this, ask someone for help.

Getting started

- Choose a window to grow outside of, bearing in mind access to sunlight
- Choose a window box planter that suits the space
- Fill with a layer of stones, add compost and then add your plants.

Plant ideas

- Petunias
- Marigolds
- Geraniums

'The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature.' - Alfred Austin

Houseplants

What are houseplants?

A houseplant can be any potted plant that is grown indoors. Popular places to put them include on windowsills, shelves, desks and in the corners of rooms.



Benefits of houseplants

- Having houseplants can boost your mood, reduce stress and improve concentration
- Houseplants can help to cleanse the air in your home

Top tip!

Houseplants can gather dust. It's worth gently dusting them to enable them to get as much air and sunlight as they need.

Getting started

- Choose your houseplants and decorative pots if preferred
- Find a position that has the right amount of light for that plant
- Water if the soil feels dry

Plant ideas

- Peace lily
- String of hearts
- Spider plant

'Sometimes the satisfaction of keeping a houseplant alive is enough to give us a sense of purpose.' - David Domoney

Tabletop gardening

What is tabletop gardening?

Tabletop gardening refers to gardening activities that you can do at a table, usually whilst seated.



Benefits of tabletop gardening

- As these activities can be done whilst seated, they are good if you have limited mobility or low energy
- You could do these as group activities to connect with others

Top tip!

If you'd like to avoid pressure on your tendons and joints, have your elbows and shoulders at right angles during your activity.

Getting started

- Choose which activity you would like to take part in. Visit our website if you'd like some inspiration
- Gather the necessary equipment
- Find a comfortable seated position
- Enjoy the activity!

Activity ideas

- Sowing seeds in trays
- Flower pressing
- Growing broad beans

'I was planting bulbs and sowing seeds and it was absolutely astonishing. It just felt like I'd escaped in some way.' - Mark Lane

Vertical gardening

What is vertical gardening?

Vertical gardening refers to growing upwards on a wall, fence or other vertical space. Trellises (pictured right) are an example of a common way that people grow upwards.



Benefits of vertical gardening

- The chance to get creative and maximise how much you can grow in a small space
- The satisfaction of transforming a bare wall into a growing space

Top tip!

Some plants will need support or tying in as they grow upwards. Others such as hydrangeas can naturally cling on.

Getting started

- Find a suitable space to grow upwards
- Choose your plants and decide whether you will need a trellis or other frame to grow on
- Position plants, water well and enjoy watching them grow!

Plant ideas

- Climbing rose by your front door
- Hanging baskets filled with flowers
- Vegetables in pots (peas, beans)

'The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies.'

Gertrude Jekyll

Community & allotment gardening

What is community gardening?

Community gardening refers to local projects you can get involved with where you get the opportunity to garden with others.



What are allotments?

Allotments are spaces dedicated to gardening where people are allocated plots to grow what they like. It's like having your own garden but not attached to your living space!

Benefits of community & allotment gardening

Gardening has a way of bringing out the best in people, and is therefore an ideal time to make friends and offer each other advice.

Find a community garden

Search for the following in your browser:

- RHS community garden groups
- Incredible Edible

Find a community garden

Search for the following in your browser:

- The National Allotment Society
- www.gov.uk/apply-allotment
- Allot Me

'I'm so calm when I step into my garden. I don't feel anxious anymore, I feel the weight fall off my shoulders.' - Abi (pictured above)

Time in nature

What is time in nature?

Time in nature refers to spending time outdoors in spaces such as parks, public gardens, forests and more. Engaging with and appreciating nature is just as important as physically being there!



Benefits of time in nature

- Reduces your stress and anxiety
- Increases your mood and energy
- Improves your immune system



Top tip!

Research shows that spending 2 hours a week in nature will show health benefits, but of course the more the better!

Getting started

- Set time aside to spend in nature, even if it's just 10 minutes
- Enjoy a technology break, avoiding distractions such as your phone
- Try to focus on each of your senses. What can you smell, see and hear?



'If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere.'

- Van Gogh

Get involved

Share this resource with a friend

If you know someone who you think would like to get gardening without a garden, share this resource with them.

Join our Gardening Club community

In Gardening Club we share seasonal gardening activities throughout the year, fun quizzes, have photo competitions, seed giveaways and more. Join by visiting www.thrive.org.uk/gardeningclub.

Visit our website

Check out our beginner gardening guides, information on the wellbeing benefits of gardening, and adapting tasks for different disabilities. Visit www.thrive.org.uk/getgardening to discover more.

Donate

If you feel these activities have been of use to you, you can make a donation to Thrive by visiting www.thrive.org.uk/donate.

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