



16th June 2025

How to maximise a small outdoor space with British Garden Centres

Urban gardens in Britain are often on the smaller side, especially for those aged 25 to 44, with the average space coming in at just 12m². Suburban gardens need to work hard for their owners, so they're usually designed to be practical, stylish, and easy to maintain with clean lines, simple layouts, and unfussy planting that helps make the most of every inch. British Garden Centres has put together some tips to help you transform your small garden or balcony just in time for the summer season.

Create a cosy corner

Think of your garden as another room where even a small space can become a relaxing retreat with the right furniture. Bistro sets or benches make it easy to enjoy your morning coffee or an evening drink outdoors, without crowding the area. The [Fern Living Cherington Bistro \(RRP £449.99\)](#) is perfect for natural and cottage gardens, and brings cosy, boho vibes to even the smallest outdoor spaces. Enjoy relaxed moments with the set's curved-back armchairs and stylish glass-topped table, perfect for morning coffee or afternoon tea.

Perfect for balconies, the [Fern Living Bakewell Bistro Set \(RRP £129.99\)](#) has a folding design with both chairs folding down, allowing for easy, compact storage when not in use. This makes it ideal for areas where space is at a premium and looks at home on petite patios or compact decking. Crafted from rust-resistant steel, the Bakewell Bistro set will look right at home amongst summer flowers and foliage.

The [Dalby 2 Seater Bench \(RRP £229.99\)](#) is a great choice for small patios and gardens because its compact size, measuring just 120cm wide, ensures that it fits neatly into limited spaces. Made from durable, FSC-certified acacia wood, it combines natural beauty with a sleek, sophisticated design, offering a comfortable spot to relax, whilst the [Dalby Companion Bench \(RRP £249.99\)](#) has a compact footprint that combines two comfortable armchairs with a built-in table and shelf, making it a practical and space-saving choice which is perfect for enjoying drinks, snacks, or a relaxing cup of tea, making the most of every inch of your garden or patio.

Make the most of pots

If space is tight, pots and containers are your best friends. They're perfect for patios and decks where digging isn't an option, and if you move house, you can take your plants with you. Play around with different sizes and groupings to add depth and interest by mixing large and small pots to create a layered look. Choose plants that bring colour or texture, and don't be afraid to cluster containers for a full effect.



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With options like the [Varese Medium Planter \(RRP £32.99\)](#), [Cotswold Square Planters \(RRP from £24.99\)](#), and the sleek [Cotswold Trough Planter \(RRP £29.99\)](#), you can easily add greenery to balconies, patios, or compact garden corners. Their portability means you can rearrange your plants to suit the season, sunlight, or your changing style, making them incredibly versatile for any small outdoor setting.

Your local British Garden Centres stores will also have a range of terracotta, glazed and fibreclay planters to make sure your small garden footprint is fully maximised.

Grow upwards

When you can't spread out, go up! Vertical gardening is a clever way to add greenery without taking up precious floor space. Use trellises, arches, or wall-mounted planters to support climbers like jasmine or roses, which add scent and colour. Living walls filled with hardy plants or succulents are a great option for brightening up fences or bare walls.

Why not try the [Forest Garden Classic Dome Top Arch \(RRP £167.49\)](#), which provides an attractive but sturdy frame for climbing plants like clematis or roses, making it perfect for adding vertical interest without taking up much ground space. The [Cadiz Arbour \(RRP £ 449.49\)](#) combines comfortable seating with trellis panels, allowing you to grow flowering vines or fragrant plants up and around the structure, turning a small patio or garden corner into a cosy, leafy retreat.

Play with light and mirrors

If your garden doesn't get a lot of sun and is a little on the compact side, mirrors can help bounce light around and make the space feel larger. Hanging a mirror on a wall or fence reflects greenery and sky, giving the illusion of extra room. Outdoor lights, whether solar lights or strings of fairy lights, can be used to highlight features and create a cosy atmosphere as the sun goes down.

Border and stake lights that can enhance small spaces include the [Smart Garden Martello Stainless Steel Stake Lights \(RRP £18.00\)](#), which provide subtle illumination along pathways or garden beds, creating a gentle ambience without overwhelming the space.

[Fern Lighting's 200 String Lights \(RRP from £14.99\)](#) are excellent for small spaces because their length allows you to easily drape or wind them around balconies, fences, railings, small trees and potted plants. This means you can create a warm, inviting atmosphere without taking up valuable floor or table space, ideal for compact patios, balconies, or dark garden corners.



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Darren Craven, Furniture Lead at British Garden Centres, said: “With a few smart choices and a little creativity, even the smallest garden can become your favourite place to relax and unwind. Whether it’s a compact bistro set, decorative planters, or clever lighting, there are plenty of ways to transform limited outdoor spaces into your dream garden.”

ENDS:

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Notes to Editors:

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK’s largest family-owned garden centre group, with 73 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by the Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1987 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre, funded by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018, it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now, with 73 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 2,700 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, three growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres and Woodthorpe Leisure Park and Woody’s Restaurant & Bar.

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Website: www.britishgardencentres.com

Cassie King

PR Officer

cking@britishgardencentres.com

07875 337290