



1st December 2025

British Garden Centres' guide to choosing and caring for your real Christmas tree

Bringing home a real Christmas tree marks the start of the festive season and fills your home with that unmistakable scent of pine. For many families, a real tree takes pride of place at the heart of their celebrations. With so many shapes, sizes, and varieties to choose from, finding the right one can be a tricky decision, but the team at British Garden Centres have put together these tips to make it simple.

Measure up

Before heading to your local store, take a moment to measure the area where your tree will stand. Trees always appear smaller outdoors in the plant area, so knowing your ceiling height and available space will help you find the perfect fit. Remember to factor in the height of the stand and any decorations for the top of your real Christmas tree, as you don't want to trim branches at home and lose that lovely natural shape.

Varieties to consider

During Christmas, the Nordmann Fir is one of the most popular Christmas tree types in our centres. It has a symmetrical shape, well-spaced branches, soft, glossy, dark green foliage and excellent needle retention, making it an ideal choice for families with children and pets. Your local store will also stock the Norway Spruce, a more traditional-looking tree that emits a long-lasting fragrance and has plenty of branches, providing ample space for hanging decorations.

We also have in store the Fraser Fir, popular for its needle retention, dark blue-green colour, and fresh scent; and the Blue Spruce, which is an attractive symmetrical tree with distinctive blue foliage. All of our trees are pot-grown and come with a decorative pot cover, meaning less root disturbance and a healthier tree after Christmas. With a little care, these pot-grown trees can be planted outside to enjoy year after year. Our Nordmann Firs are also available as cut trees, which can be displayed in a festive stand and dressed in a Christmas tree skirt.

Picking your tree and stand

When choosing your tree, give it a light shake. A fresh tree should hold onto most of its needles, which should look shiny and green and not dry or yellowing. A heavier tree generally means it's well hydrated and freshly cut. Consider



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how you'll decorate it, too. If you love hanging lots of ornaments, pick a tree with well-spaced branches, while a fuller tree suits those who prefer a lush look with fewer decorations.

A sturdy, water-holding stand is essential. The taller the tree, the wider the base you'll need. Choose one with a generous water reservoir, as this will help it stay fresh longer and reduce the need for constant refilling during the busy festive season.

Once you're home

Keep your tree outdoors or in a cool garage for as long as possible before bringing it inside. Saw off about 3cm from the trunk to open up the pores, helping the tree absorb water efficiently. Stand it in plain water, not soil or sand, and keep it away from direct heat sources such as radiators or fireplaces, so a cool, well-ventilated corner is ideal.

Real Christmas trees can last up to six weeks with the right care. Water daily, as they can take up to two or three pints in the first few days. Regular topping-up not only keeps it looking its best but also reduces fire risk and keeps your decorations safe throughout the season.

Potted and pot-grown options

If you'd like a tree you can replant, consider a container-grown one. Potted trees are dug up and placed in pots, often with limited root systems. They should be cared for like cut trees and may not always survive planting out.

Pot-grown trees are grown and maintained in their pots from the start, giving them strong, healthy roots. With careful watering and gradual reintroduction to outdoor conditions, these can be replanted after Christmas and enjoyed for years to come.

Planting out

After the celebrations, give your tree time to adjust before moving it outside. Place it in a garage or porch for a few days to acclimatise to cooler air. Once the ground is frost-free, choose a sunny, sheltered position with lots of space to grow. Plant firmly, backfill with compost, and add a few centimetres of mulch to retain moisture. Water well and feed in spring to help it thrive for the seasons ahead.



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Andy Little, Christmas Tree Buyer at British Garden Centres, said: “We are proud to offer this broad range of beautifully maintained, sustainably grown real Christmas trees. Our expert team is always ready to help you find the perfect tree and guide you on its care to keep the festive spirit alive longer. Visit your local branch to discover our festive tree selection, as well as our Fern Christmas decorations and enjoy a Christmas full of natural beauty and lasting memories.”

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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 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 61 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 3000 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres, Woodthorpe Leisure Park, and Woody’s Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

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Website: www.britishgardencentres.com

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