



12th January 2026

British Garden Centres' guide to beat the January blues with the power of gardening

The third Monday in January (January 19th), dubbed Blue Monday as the year's most depressing day, brings dark skies, post-Christmas slumps, and endless cold temperatures. But the team at British Garden Centres has a greener antidote to beat the blues: immerse yourself in gardening. From tending houseplants by a cosy windowsill to braving the garden for a quick tidy-up, plants offer immediate relief for mind and body. Science backs it up, and we have some great ideas to help your health and wellbeing.

Recent findings from the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) Value of Gardens Report (2025) paint a compelling picture, with 85% of UK adults who garden reporting significant mental health improvements, while 80% see gains in physical wellbeing. For those over 60, daily gardening slashes dementia risk by 36%, thanks to the blend of light exercise, fresh air, and mindful focus. Add in stress-busting hormone regulation and calorie burn from digging or pruning, and it's clear why gardens are more than pretty spaces, and gardening is called the Natural Health Service. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) has also revealed that just 30 minutes of gardening elevates mood and self-esteem. Regular green time delivers even bigger wins with wellbeing scores 6.6% higher and stress levels 4.2% lower than non-gardeners, with notable drops in depression and fatigue.

Why gardening is like medicine

The HTA's report highlights how UK gardens pump £38 billion into the economy and support 722,000 jobs, but their true value shines in personal health. Physical tasks build strength and vitamin D exposure, even on the darker days. Creatively arranging pots or sowing seeds sparks joy akin to art therapy. And that mindful immersion, like weeding without distraction, mirrors meditation, dialling down cortisol and easing anxiety.

Gardens also strengthen social ties and a sense of belonging, whether it is chatting over the fence to your neighbour or a passer by, swapping seeds on an allotment or joining a local gardening club. These shared moments help tackle loneliness and give people a reason to step outside, even when the weather is gloomy. In winter, noticing the first bulbs pushing through or buds beginning to show on trees and bushes offers a powerful reminder that change is coming, bringing comfort and hope at a time of year many find challenging.



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Create cosy indoor escapes

Bring the garden indoors to escape the January chill and beat the blues. Start small to build momentum and cluster houseplants like peace lilies, snake plants or ferns into a sunny corner to craft a lush green oasis. Their presence alone slashes stress and purifies the air, and sharpens focus and sleep.

Or why not sow fragrant herbs such as basil, parsley or chives straight into pots on your kitchen windowsill. Snip them fresh for meals while inhaling those uplifting aromas. You could also revive your houseplant collection by repotting leggy specimens with nutrient-rich compost and trimming dead leaves; this simple refresh ritual echoes personal renewal. For a dose of propagation magic, snip stems from ivy or pothos and root them in water. Watching new tendrils emerge is a perfect antidote to winter blues. Indoor gardening fits any lifestyle, needing just a saucer and sunlight for low-effort therapy that turns drab spaces into vibrant sanctuaries to make you smile.

Outdoor gardening to chase the shadows away

When a burst of energy strikes, head outside for gardening rewards amplified by crisp air. Gentle winter maintenance in your garden, like sweeping leaves, lightly pruning roses, or organising tools, delivers just enough motion to trigger endorphins to beat the blues.

Nurture wildlife by scattering seeds or hanging feeders; these bonds with birds fight isolation and bring daily delight to our outdoor space. Splash instant colour in your borders or containers with hellebores, cyclamen or winter pansies to brighten your mood. Or why not dream big for spring by sketching borders, visiting your local garden centre? This forward-planning shifts January from drudgery to eager anticipation, fuelling optimism one idea at a time on how you can transform your garden into an oasis come the summer.

Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: “This January, don’t let the winter blues win. From a quiet moment repotting a houseplant to planning your spring borders, gardening proves that hope and happiness are always just a seed away. Pop into your local store today, pick up some greenery, and start beating the blues with the Natural Health Service.”

Start your 2026 gardening journey today by visiting your nearest British Garden Centres location or exploring inspiration online at www.britishgardencentres.com



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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 73 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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