



5<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## **Give your plants an MOT for National Houseplant Week**

**As the January chill sets in and days feel shorter, British Garden Centres urges houseplant owners across the UK to give their indoor green companions a check-up at home during National Houseplant Week (13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026). Rather than reaching for the bin at the first sign of trouble, follow our simple MOT routine to keep your houseplants, because a little TLC now means healthier homes and less waste come spring.**

### **Low maintenance houseplants**

If you're new to houseplants, pick easy ones that don't need much care. Snake plants, ZZ plants and pothos are great for beginners. They grow in low light and handle missed watering fine. Spider plants make baby plants you can grow for free, whilst peace lilies droop when they need water, so easy to spot and care for. Cast iron plants survive in dark spots. Chinese evergreens do well in offices or bathrooms with little help. Parlour palms tolerate shade and dry air, whilst rubber plants add big leaves with basic care. Philodendrons trail nicely and forgive mistakes, making them a great low maintenance option.

### **Water right**

Forget the calendar when it comes to houseplant watering. All you need to do is put your finger into the soil up to the second knuckle; if it's dry, give a gentle soak with room temperature water until it runs out the bottom, then tip away any excess. Too much water rots roots, too little crisps leaves, so it's a good idea to check pot weight and soil moisture weekly during your home MOT to get the feel.

### **Boost humidity**

Our homes get dry from heating in winter, which hurts tropical plants like calatheas and ferns that prefer 80% humidity or more. Mist leaves daily to keep them happy or set your pots on pebble trays filled with water, place near a humidifier, or group plants together so they create their own moist air. You'll see healthier, less droopy leaves in just a few days. Avoid tap water; if possible, it can leave white spots on leaves from minerals. Place your houseplants in your bathrooms or kitchens with natural steam; this is where they often do best without extra help.



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### **Find the right light**

Houseplants need 12-16 hours of indirect light each day, so placing them in your east or west-facing windows works best. Not enough light will make stems leggy and weak, and too much direct sun scorches leaves, so make sure you turn pots weekly for even growth all around and pick shade-lovers like philodendrons or snake plants for dim corners. Use a phone app to map your home's light levels over a day, then tweak spots carefully to avoid shocking the plant with big moves.

### **Drainage**

Pots must have holes at the bottom to let extra water drain out. Line them with crocks, broken pot pieces or mesh for good airflow and to stop soil washing away. Terracotta pots suit succulents and cacti because they let moisture evaporate fast. Glazed or plastic pots work better for leafier houseplants that like things a bit damper.

### **Repot**

If roots poke out the bottom holes or soil dries out too fast, it's time to repot into a slightly bigger pot. Use peat-free compost mixed with perlite for good drainage and air around the roots. Go just one size up to avoid holding too much water, which causes rot. British Garden Centres has all the pots, compost and perlite you need in stock for your pot MOT.

### **Pruning**

Settle plants in 18-24°C spots with steady light and leave them be, as moving them may cause leaf drop. Snip off dead leaves and stems at the base with clean scissors to focus energy on new growth. Feed lightly in winter and use balanced fertiliser every six weeks for leaf plants, and one with a potassium boost for flowering houseplants.

### **Pests and diseases**

Check weekly for spider mites (fine webs on leaves), mealybugs (white fluffy spots) or scale (small brown lumps on stems). Look for yellowing leaves, curling edges or brown spots too and isolate any sick plants right away. Wipe leaves with neem oil solution and improve air flow around them. Use a magnifying glass or phone camera zoom at home to spot tiny pests, and use natural treatments, mix garlic spray (crushed garlic in water) or soapy water to wipe bugs off safely.



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**Andy Little, Houseplant Buyer at British Garden Centres**, said: “These simple MOT checks at home can transform struggling houseplants into thriving ones, even in the depths of January. Give it a go this National Houseplant Week and your plants will thank you, creating greener homes that boost wellbeing all year round.”

**ENDS**

**WORD COUNT: 776**

**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**

Facebook: British Garden Centres

Twitter: @BGCentres

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Website: [www.britishgardencentres.com](http://www.britishgardencentres.com)

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