



23rd February 2026

How to give your houseplants a fresh start this spring

As the growing season gets underway, now is a good time to take a closer look at your houseplants. After a winter spent indoors, many will have quietly outgrown their pots, and a little repotting could be all it takes to get them thriving again. Late February through to early spring is the sweet spot to repot, and the team at British Garden Centres has put together this essential guide for all plant parents.

Five warning signs your houseplant needs repotting

Not sure if yours needs attention? Your plant will usually tell you if you know what to look for.

Growth has ground to a halt: If a plant that was once putting out new leaves regularly seems to have simply stopped, don't assume it's struggling with light or water. A sudden slowdown in growth, especially if nothing else has changed, is often a sign that the roots have run out of room. They've essentially hit a wall, and without space to expand, the plant above the soil stalls too. It's one of the most common signs people miss because it creeps up gradually.

The plant is pushing itself out of the pot: When the roots have filled a container, they start looking for a way out. If you notice your plant sitting higher than it used to, or the root ball visibly bulging above the rim, that's your plant telling you that it's outgrown its home.

Roots are coming out of the drainage holes: Turn the pot over and take a peek at the bottom. If the roots are trying to make their way out through the drainage holes are a classic sign of overcrowding inside. The roots aren't doing anything wrong, they're simply following the path of least resistance in search of more growing space. Once you see this, it's definitely time to act.

The plant has become top-heavy or unstable: A healthy plant should sit comfortably and securely in its pot. If yours has started to lean, tip, or wobble, or looks disproportionately large for its container, then it's time to repot. A bigger pot not only gives the roots more room, but it also provides a more stable base for a plant that's grown significantly since it was first potted up.



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The roots have started coiling around themselves: This is what's known as being rootbound. When roots can't grow outward, they begin spiralling around the inside of the pot, eventually forming a dense, tangled mass. At this point, they're no longer able to absorb water and nutrients effectively. If you ease a plant out of its pot and the roots are tightly wound in the shape of the container, it needs repotting as soon as possible.

When to repot

The end of winter into early spring is ideal. Plants are just waking up from their slower winter period, so potting them on now gives them the chance to settle into fresh compost before the growing season kicks in properly.

What you'll need

All you need is a drainage pot, a new indoor decorative pot, around two inches wider than the current ones, and a bag of good quality potting compost. A watering can, some plant stakes and a tray to work on are handy but not essential.

How to repot your houseplant

Start by tidying the plant up and pinching off any dead leaves or spent flowers. Ease it gently out of its old pot, then put a layer of fresh compost in the base of the new one. Set the plant in place and fill in around the sides, using a stick or finger to work the compost down evenly and close any gaps.

Water it in, and don't be surprised if the compost sinks a little; just top it up and give it another watering. Once it's drained fully, pop it into its decorative pot, and you're done.

Andy Little, Houseplant Buyer at British Garden Centres, said: "We're seeing tremendous enthusiasm for houseplants, and repotting is one of those essential skills that really builds confidence and allows your plants to thrive. When customers understand these simple signs and follow the right steps, they're rewarded with healthier, more vibrant plants that become a beautiful part of their homes for years to come. Spring is the perfect time to give your indoor collection the care and attention it deserves."

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Notes to Editors:



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About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 75 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 1990 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 75 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 3,200 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres, Woodthorpe Leisure Park, and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

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