



2nd March 2026

Spring into action with British Garden Centres' pruning and maintenance tasks you should be doing right now

With spring on our doorstep, now is the time to get out into the garden and take on the pruning and maintenance jobs that will define the season ahead. The narrow window between late February and early April is the most important period of the entire gardening year, with buds swelling and plants waking up from winter dormancy. British Garden Centres has all the advice you need on the spring gardening tasks you should be doing right now.

Why prune in spring?

As plants break from dormancy, they push energy upward into new growth, and where that energy goes depends on what's been cut and what hasn't. Old, dead, or weakened stems act as a drain, pulling effort away from the new shoots that will produce this year's flowers, fruit, and foliage. Pruning before growth really takes hold removes that competition and gives plants a fresh start, with the whole growing season ahead to recover. Many fungal diseases and pest problems establish themselves in dense, congested growth, so thinning a shrub now does far more to prevent problems than any treatment applied after the fact in June.

How to prune your plants in spring

One of the most common pruning mistakes is applying the same approach to all the plants in your garden. Each plant will require a different refresh in spring to thrive in the summer weeks ahead.

For roses, pruning in late February or March is ideal. Cut back to an outward facing bud, remove crossing stems, and take out any dead or spindly wood on your plant. The aim is to have an open, goblet-shaped plant with good airflow, which alone dramatically reduces blackspot.

Hydrangeas need a lighter touch, so prune your mophead and lacecap varieties so that they only lose their old flowerheads and any dead wood. Make sure you leave last year's stems, as that is where this year's blooms come from. If you cut too hard, you cut away the flowering potential entirely.



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Fruit trees benefit from pruning now, so you need to remove branches that cross or grow back toward the centre, which opens the plant to light and air, improving both the size and quality of the harvest later in the year.

Clematis can be cut hard to around 30cm now to produce excellent results when it flowers. Earlier flowering types need only weak or dead growth removed. For lavender and sage, trim back into leafy growth but never into old wood to keep your plants compact and productive for years longer than they'd otherwise last.

Spring maintenance jobs

Pruning is only part of the spring picture, and there is much simpler maintenance you can do now to enjoy your garden for the rest of the year. Lawns should get their first cut once grass is actively growing, which is typically when daytime temperatures consistently hold above 7°C. Keep the blade on your lawnmower high for that first mow and then apply a spring feed in March or April, and overseed any bare patches before weeds take hold.

Borders will benefit now from a top dressing of well-rotted compost before new planting begins. This feeds the soil rather than just the plant, improving moisture retention, especially if we have a dry early summer. If mulching is on the list, do it while the soil still holds winter moisture, as mulching dry ground simply locks the problem in.

Slugs and snails are at their most damaging in spring, targeting new growth and seedlings when they are at their most vulnerable. Getting controls in place early, whether that be organic pellets, copper barriers, or encouraging natural predators into your garden, is far more effective than reacting once damage has already been done.

And weeds pulled out now will take minutes and leave you with a satisfying lawn or border. If left until May, the same plants have seeded and created a problem that can last all season.

Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: "Spring is about resetting the whole garden. A few focused hours now and over the next few weeks can be the difference between a garden that looks after itself through summer and one that feels like it's constantly catching up. Take the time to prune, feed, and prepare, and that early effort pays you back with less maintenance and a garden that thrives right through to autumn."

British Garden Centres has a wide selection of spring plants and blooms available at all garden centre locations and online at www.britishgardencentres.com



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ENDS

WORD COUNT: 750

Notes to Editors:

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.

Social Media

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