



25<sup>th</sup> May 2026

## **Winning the war on weeds: British Garden Centres' simple tips for a blooming garden this summer**

The sun's out, the garden's waking up, and so are the weeds. As part of its Make It Bloom campaign, British Garden Centres is on hand to help gardeners get on top of weeds before they get out of hand. Whether you've just planted your first flower bed or you're a seasoned grower, a bit of effort now will save a lot of hard work later in the summer. Here are our simple tips to keep weeds under control as the weather warms up.

### **How to spot good and bad weeds in your garden**

Not everything that grows uninvited is worth panicking about. A weed is really just a plant in the wrong place, and most of them are pretty easy to spot. Dandelions are the obvious ones, with their cheerful yellow flowers and stubborn deep roots. Nettles, you'll know about the hard way if you're not wearing gloves. Bindweed is the sneaky one that winds itself through your other plants before you've even noticed it's there, until it produces white flowers. Creeping buttercup hugs the ground and spreads sideways, chickweed turns up in beds and borders looking pale and straggly, and hairy bittercress is a small, low-growing plant with tiny white flowers that you'll often find popping up in pots and borders.

Some of these really do need sorting quickly. Bindweed spreads underground and gets harder to deal with the longer you leave it. Hairy bittercress is another one to catch early, as once it's grown and you disturb it, it fires seeds in all directions. But not every weed is bad and deserves to be removed. Dandelions are one of the first things bees go to in early spring, and a small patch of nettles tucked in a corner does wonders for butterflies and caterpillars. It's worth knowing the difference. And if you're ever not sure what you're looking at, take a photo and bring it in; we're always happy to help.

### **Ways to prevent weeds**

**Mulching:** Mulching is one of the best things you can do in spring, and it really is straightforward. Spread a thick layer of about 5 to 7 centimetres of bark chippings, garden compost, or wood chips over your beds and borders. This blocks the light that weed seeds need to grow, and it keeps moisture in the soil too.



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Around vegetables and roses, well-rotted compost or manure works a treat. For flower beds, decorative bark looks tidy and does the same job. Put it down in April or May before weeds get going, and you'll notice a real difference. It's low effort, it works, and your garden will look better for it, too.

**Groundcover plants:** Another great option is to use ground cover plants to fill bare patches of soil. These low-growing plants spread out and crowd out weeds naturally, which means less digging and weeding for you. Some good ones to look at are:

**Vinca minor (Periwinkle):** Great in shady spots, with pretty blue-purple flowers in spring

**Geranium macrorrhizum:** A groundcover geranium that is tough, spreads well, and has a lovely scent

**Ajuga reptans:** stays low to the ground and has striking blue-purple flower spikes

**Pachysandra terminalis:** This is ideal under trees where not much else grows

**Lysimachia nummularia:** Also known as Creeping Jenny, brilliant for damp corners, with bright yellow-green leaves  
Plant them close together, and they'll soon knit into a thick mat that weeds simply can't get through.

**Hoeing and fabric:** For any bare soil that isn't mulched yet, a simple hoe is your friend. Run it lightly across the surface on a dry day, and it cuts off young weed seedlings before they get a chance to root. The trick is to catch weeds when they're small, before they flower and spread their seeds everywhere. One weed left too long can mean thousands more next year.

If you have a patch where weeds keep coming back no matter what, laying a sheet of landscape fabric under your mulch or gravel can make a big difference. Water still reaches your plants, but weeds can't push through it, making it a great option for new beds or problem corners.

### **A few more easy wins**

Not sure where to start? Here are a few easy wins that will make a big difference to your garden. Always try to weed after rain as the soil is soft and the whole root comes out much more easily, which means they're far less likely to grow back. If you can't face a full weeding session, even just snipping off the flower heads stops weeds from spreading their seeds and buys you some time.



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For weeds pushing up through paving cracks or path slabs, try pouring boiling water straight onto them. It kills them off with no chemicals and costs nothing. And wherever possible, try not to dig the soil over more than you need to, as turning it brings up dormant weed seeds that would otherwise stay buried. Little and often is the best approach, focus on small weeds which take seconds to pull out, as leaving them for a few weeks means it becomes a much bigger job.

**Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres**, said: “There's no need to feel overwhelmed by weeds in the garden as they are easily solved. Weeds are one of those things that put people off, but there are some really simple ways to deal with them, and once you know the tricks, it's much less of a battle.”

**ENDS**

**WORD COUNT: 914**

**Notes to Editors:**

About the business

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 80 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 through the acquisition of garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland into the business it is now, with 80 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate and from Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of over 3,500 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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