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GARDEN GROW-HOW

Leigh-on-Sea's **Katrina Kieffer-Wells, MSGD** on how to keep your garden blooming this summer – and next!

After a cold start to the year, the sunshine finally arrived and nature is in full bloom. Summer is when gardens come alive. They should be bursting with colour and greenery. But if yours is looking a little tired and dull, here's how to bring Summer sunshine to your outdoor space.

Bloomin' marvelous

June to September is prime flowering time, so your garden should be blooming. But if your beds and borders are bare, you need a few Summer prizewinners to breathe some life back in. Peonies and poppies make big, bold displays and return year after year.

While lavender, olive trees, roses and tropical palms bring a touch of the Mediterranean and look stunning in pots. All are high impact and low-maintenance. Grow them in vibrant planters for extra colour. Clematis, roses and honeysuckle also give a lot of bloom for their buck and climb walls, pergolas and fences to add colour or shade cover.

Outdoor decoration

Bring summer vibes to your outdoor space by dressing your walls or hanging decorations. Colourful outdoor canvases or wall planters with trailing plants can bring texture to small spaces. Pretty bunting adds a party feel to any space. While tropical fabrics for outdoor rugs and cushions bring that holiday feeling home.



'Clematis, roses and honeysuckle also give a lot of bloom for their buck and climb walls'

Summer fruits

If you love summer salads of the fruit and veg variety you don't need lots of space to grow your own. Strawberries and blueberries grow well in pots or raised beds. You could even put strawbs in hanging baskets if you like the country cottage look.

Herbs and salad leaves are easy wins too. Grow them in window boxes to keep the slugs away and enjoy herby aromas through the kitchen window.

Water, water, water

One of the most important elements of keeping a garden looking lively in summer is water. Plants in pots will need watering daily in the hottest months and the rest of the garden may need regular doses too.

A water butt is a great way to collect water during winter months and handy for the summer.

Get an automated watering system if you don't have time to keep on top of it.

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