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Top frame OF MIND

How snooker's "bad boy" Ronnie O'Sullivan is taking care of his mental health

IDYLIC ESCAPE

Inside £3.95m Little Baddow manor

It's a dog's LIFE

Hundreds of pooches attend paw-ty at Down Hall
PLUS we reveal top doggy places & spaces

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BRILLIANT
DAYS OUT

SUNNY SOUTHEND

Met Office reveals Essex's best summer spots





SMALL GARDEN, BIG DREAMS

Make the most of your outdoor space with a few handy tricks

BY **KATRINA KIEFFER-WELLS OF EARTH DESIGNS**



We know green spaces are good for us, but opportunities to explore them are limited in the modern urban environment.

But just because your outdoor space is small, doesn't mean you have to squash your creativity and imagination. When space is tight, taking advantage of every inch becomes even more important. Dream big for those small spaces, cram in as much life as you can and you will reap the rewards.

The light is where it's at

True with all gardens, but especially if space is limited, because small urban gardens are often overshadowed. This makes it even more important to identify the areas the sun falls on and where the lighter and shady areas are.

Use pale surfaces, such as porcelain paving to reflect light back into the space. Place seating in the sunniest spots and design your planting to incorporate shade tolerant plants. Then use large planters to bring in specimen trees like palms and acers to add height and colour. ➔





If you can't go out, go up!

Restricted by walls and fences? Why not go up? A living wall is a great way to turn dead space into a feature, bringing with it opportunities to plant more flowers and foliage. Stuffing it with pretty, pollinating plants will help support bees and other wildlife. And if you didn't think you had space for a veg patch, a living wall even offers the chance to grow a few strawberries, tomatoes or herbs.

Say goodbye to your lawn

A lawn-free garden is less hassle, better for the environment and perfectly suited to a smaller space. Not only does a lawn take up valuable space, it brings other problems too, like regular watering, mowing and maintenance.

Which means you'll need a mower and watering equipment - and space to store them. It may seem strange to get rid of your lawn, but it will open a world of other possibilities. Like room for more seating, plants and other fun features.

Sneak in some storage

Every garden needs some storage, but in a smaller space you don't want a shed dominating the view. Instead, look at seating or furniture with built-in storage and sneak in cupboards under stairs or decking areas.

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