



How to choose & care for a **Real Christmas Tree**

Christmas comes but once a year! Here is our guide to choosing and caring for a real Christmas tree this festive season.

Why choose a real Christmas tree?

- There is nothing quite like the aroma of a real Christmas tree.
- They help the environment by storing carbon and producing oxygen as they grow.
- Picking out the perfect tree each year is a family ritual full of fun and excitement, signalling the start of the Christmas period.



How to choose the right tree

Real trees offer variety, both in shape and size, meaning you can get the perfect one to suit your home. Before choosing, measure the space in your home, remembering that the tree stand could add to the height.

When selecting a tree, choose one with very few brown needles. You can check if it is fresh by taking a branch and gently pulling your hand towards you along the branch. Or raise the tree a few inches and drop the trunk to the ground. The needles should stay on the tree.

These are the most common types of tree bought in the UK:

- **Nordmann Fir** - Soft, dark green foliage and excellent needle retention has made this the UK's most popular real Christmas tree. It has a lovely symmetrical shape with strong branches. The needles are shiny, mid green and soft to touch.
- **Fraser Fir** - This tree is often leaner in shape with much denser foliage and pyramid-shaped branches which turn upwards. The needles tend to be long and dark green on top and silvery underneath. They have good needle retention and a nice scent.
- **Norway Spruce** - Often regarded as the traditional tree, it has a pyramid shape and a lovely scent. The tree features pointed mid-green colour needles with long cylindrical brown cones which hang down. It is not forgiving if you forget to water it, as the needles will drop!
- **Blue Spruce** - An elegant tree with natural powdery blue foliage. Stiff needles and strong branches will support heavy decorations and it is the best type of tree for needle retention.



How do I care for my tree?

When you purchase a Christmas tree, ask the seller to cut off the base of the trunk to aid water absorption. When you get home, if you're not putting your tree up right away, place it in a bucket of water and keep it outside in an area that's protected from wind and freezing temperatures. When you're ready to bring it inside, make another fresh one-inch cut off the bottom of the trunk.

Once inside, place your tree away from direct heat, such as radiators or an open fire, and keep the container topped up with water every day. Plenty of plain water is all you need to keep a tree fresh. Just remember to check the water level daily — it should always cover the cut end of the trunk.

How do I dispose of my tree?

You can dispose of your tree in several environmentally friendly ways. Many councils organise special collections or drop off points for used Christmas trees (search online for ones near you) and real trees can be used for chippings.

Remember you can also buy a potted tree with roots. Once the festive season is over, you can plant it outside and care for it through the year to enjoy again next Christmas.

