

YOUR GARDEN IN FEBRUARY

Garden seating

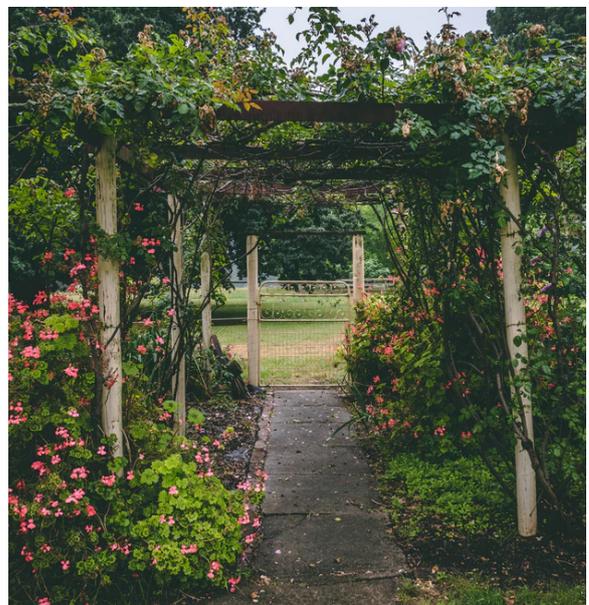
February is a great month for getting started with a whole range of gardening projects. So why not begin with an improvement of your garden seating? There are some lovely garden chairs, seats, and benches available and by shopping now you can get maximum usage from them this year (and for years to come!)

Any seating will be much more appealing if you position it somewhere with a view, be that of the surrounding landscape, a pretty part of your garden...or the kid's play area.



But wherever you decide to put your seating, make sure you plant around the area too – adding herbaceous plants, seasonal bedding or maybe even a small shrub or two will make those seating spots even more irresistible.

It might be that you want to consider putting up an arch or a pergola or a secluded arbour (and of course clothing it with a selection of gorgeous climbing plants!). Whether it is smooth-planed timber, rustic timber, or a metal structure you're after, there are superb home assembly kits in garden centres now but don't forget it is the planting that will really bring any garden structure to life. You can choose flower colours to show off the existing garden features or even the house itself, to best effect, you can select perfumed plants for added charm.





As it will take a good while for the climbers you choose to cover the arch or arbour, I would always advise popping in some annual climbers for the first year or two – sweet peas, morning glory or whatever else tickles your fancy- they will all help to bring colour and interest (and maybe scent too) whilst the longer-term plants get established and put on some growth.



Veg plot

Oh, and don't forget the veg plot. Even if you've not grown (any or many) vegetables before, it really is worth having a go. This is a great month to start off seed potatoes by 'chitting' them. All this means is putting the individual tubers in empty seed trays or similar, with their plumpest end uppermost, then standing the tray in a cool but frost-free spot with plenty of natural light, they'll form short, sturdy sprouts in preparation for planting in Spring.



You can buy seed potatoes either loose by weight, or in net bags now...and why not do what I do and plant up some potato planters too – all you need is good quality compost, some potato-planter-bags and a few tubers. If you follow the instructions and can grow them in a greenhouse, porch or other protected but well-lit spot, you will be able to enjoy an extra-early harvest of unbelievably delicious new potatoes long before those in the garden are ready!



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