



**EMMA TOWNSHEND'S JOBS FOR JUNE**

- Water, water, water. It looks like it will be a dry summer so make sure everything is properly watered. Consider buying an automatic watering system to deliver straight to the pot at the optimum time of day (early morning). They start at around £30 and will easily pay for themselves when you come back from holiday and find your window boxes don't need complete restocking.
- Plant out summer bedding like dahlias, gladioli and cannas.
- Thin out the weakest stems of your best delphinium and phlox plants for better flower power on the others.
- Use glyphosate weedkiller on really pernicious weeds like bindweed and brambles - you have to deal with them while they are still in full growth, which slows down after the solstice.

Emma Townshend is the gardening columnist for the Independent on Sunday



# EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN'S LOVELY

**S**ummer is most definitely upon us and if you haven't already done so, it's high time you turned your attention to your outside space. Whether it's a tiny scrap of land or acres of rolling lawns, get the basics right and your garden will shine whatever the weather is.

**Outdoor dining**  
It's always worth keeping one eye on the other side of the Atlantic when it comes to alfresco dining, because they are way ahead of us in terms of barbecuing trends. Americans have had long been obsessed with the type of charcoal or wood they cook with, because different types impart different flavours to the meat. It's an idea that is taking off over here, too. At [www.foodsmoker.co.uk](http://www.foodsmoker.co.uk) you will find every type of fuel imaginable (wood, briquettes, chips, flakes) in different flavours (apple, hickory, oak, maple) from just £3. And it tells you which ones work well for what cuts of meat.

Meanwhile, Devon-based barbecue obsessive David Wright, who turned his hobby into a business, says this summer's big seller is a simple aluminium barbecue by Danish brand Dancook (from £289.99, [www.planetbarbecue.co.uk](http://www.planetbarbecue.co.uk)). Wright also says he's noticed a big increase in the demand for smokers, which are essentially barbecues with lids, ideal for use all year round (from £89.99), as well as rotisseries, which people are buying to stick over their barbecues. "It's the easy option," he says. "It's really hard to burn meat on a rotisserie so you can sit back and have glass of wine while it cooks. "The fat drips onto the charcoal, which smokes, so you get a lovely flavour on the outside and the meat bastes in its own juices so it's really juicy on the inside."

Another big trend this summer is for fire pits (from £22.99 [www.greenfingers.com](http://www.greenfingers.com)) or fire bowls. The Kadal Fire Bowl, which was once used for cooking ceremonies across India, is a particularly good one (from £164, [www.thebestdressedgarden.co.uk](http://www.thebestdressedgarden.co.uk)). And, if you've gone to all that trouble to prepare your meat, you might as well serve it on something nice. Check out Sagaform for a brilliant spring/summer outdoor range ([www.formahouse.co.uk](http://www.formahouse.co.uk)) or [www.nettlegreen.co.uk](http://www.nettlegreen.co.uk) for one of the UK's

**Best in show**  
(clockwise from top left) garden furniture from The Best Dressed Garden; Farrow & Ball masonry paint; a bird feeder from The Best Dressed Garden; wild flowers at Chelsea Flower Show; Nettle Green bowls; the Kadal fire pit; a Nettle Green bow; Hee chair; Vegetal chair  
SUSANNAH IRELAND

outdoors, too. So just as there was a trend a while back for creating feature walls within the home, it's now a big trend for outside. Hence we see a rise in the number of companies selling outdoor tiles. Habibi is good for a range of traditional handcrafted Moroccan ones (from £75 per square metre, [www.habibi-interiors.com](http://www.habibi-interiors.com)). Or you can add a splash of colour to existing walls using Farrow & Ball's fabulous exterior masonry range, which has a palette of over 100 colours (five litres, £45 [www.farrow-ball.com](http://www.farrow-ball.com)). Or you can build your own feature wall - [bau-outdoors.co.uk](http://bau-outdoors.co.uk) do garden screens in either bamboo or teak for £250. Also, we are seeing a rise in super-durable outdoor fabrics - so just as you would in your sitting room, you can customise everything from your deckchair to your cushions. Fabrics & Papers ([www.fabricandpapers.com](http://www.fabricandpapers.com)) have a good range starting from £52 a metre. And as if that's not enough of the inside out, designer-furniture site

Suddenly that little old lawn is beginning to look a little dated.

**Furniture**  
This season's garden furniture is also looking like something we wouldn't be ashamed to have in our kitchens. Out goes the heavyweight teak and rattan products that you can barely drag across the patio and in come light, flexible, low-maintenance furnishings in an array of cheerful hues. Testimony to this trend is *Elle Decoration*, which has devoted pages and pages of its June issue to brightly coloured kit for the garden. "People have been scared of introducing colour to their gardens," says Jane Blakeborough, of [www.thebestdressedgarden.co.uk](http://www.thebestdressedgarden.co.uk). "Many gardening shops just did exterior products in a range of browns and greens but that is changing now and colour is coming in."

Check out the Hee range of lounge and dining chairs, which come in sunny lemon, aqua and green by Hay, or the Vegetal chair by Vitra (from £140, [www.lollipopshoppe.co.uk](http://www.lollipopshoppe.co.uk)). Or there's the ultra-modern fibreglass Supernatural chair in a range of colours, including green, orange and turquoise (£98, [www.thebestdressedgarden.co.uk](http://www.thebestdressedgarden.co.uk)).

**Plants**  
Did you remember to sow that wild-flower meadow back in early spring? Let's hope so, because this summer we're moving away from swathes of solid blocks of colour for a more scattering approach. "At Chelsea they were using plants such as Iris Sibirica, Primula floridosa, Salvia Nemerosa and Knautia Macedonica to create much more naturalistic patchwork planting," Blakeborough says.

Other trends include combining ornamental plants - such as climbing roses - with edible and herbal plants - such as strawberries, rosemary, alums and thymes - for a modern take on the traditional kitchen garden. And another design trend is the rise of the living wall, or vertical garden, which already feels like it's been every where before it's really started. Check out [green-wall.co.uk](http://green-wall.co.uk), which provides stainless-steel growing systems that easily attach to most standard structures (from £10 per square metre). Or [vertigarden.co.uk](http://vertigarden.co.uk), which provides colour-themed packs to give you the right plant mix for £24.99. "It's a big trend because half of the gardens in the UK are less than 2,000 square feet," Blakeborough

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