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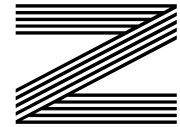
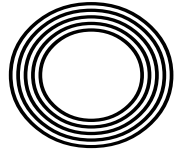
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# Editor's notes...

NOVEMBER 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Halstead Braintree.

I've heard about kids going bonkers over conkers - yet now the schools are getting in on the act too.

I'm not someone who is easily riled up, but even I'm surprised at the dismay caused by an inanimate inch-wide object. The consternation came about when my niece's school banned the seed because one mother claimed her little one had a conker allergy.

Even the NHS states (a) "conkers do not pose any anaphylactic threat" and (b) "there is no prescribed evidence that exists that horse chestnuts cause an allergic reaction".

And if the threat were real, this is not the way society works. Parents and children are very capable of going out there in the world equipped with the knowledge and tools to avoid danger when it arises.

If I were this parent, I would be embarrassed. They are not helping their child adapt to real life.

To cancel the fun of hundreds for the debatable protection of one is bad; to do it without even researching the facts is sadly reflective of where we are today, and people are growing tired of it.

Until next month, take care of yourself, each other, and your conkers!

*Nik Allen*

This is your town's hyperlocal magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

HOME & DIY | GARDENING | PETS | HEALTH & FITNESS | BEAUTY | FASHION | HISTORY | LOCAL NEWS | FOOD & DRINK | TRAVEL | BUSINESS & PROPERTY | SPORT | PUZZLES | MOTORING | KIDS | WHAT'S ON | TECHNOLOGY | THE LISTINGS

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# DOCTOR WHO

## 60 YEARS



### MARKING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF DOCTOR WHO – THE MAN, THE WOMAN, THE SHOW, THE MOVEMENT

Asking celebrities how they remain so youthful has become par for the course, but none has achieved as much ongoing success and vigorous relevance as the great Doctor, who at 60 is looking pretty fresh.

On Christmas Day, the Doctor's latest regeneration will be revealed, but not before some highly anticipated TV specials for the show's anniversary in November.

Making his grand return as the fourteenth Doctor, fan favourite David Tennant is set to wow once more for three anniversary episodes. The Scottish actor originally starred as the tenth Doctor from 2005 until his final episode aired on New Year's Day in 2010. Catherine Tate will also reprise her role as the Doctor's companion Donna Noble, with Neil Patrick Harris also joining the cast.

Though Patrick Harris is a newcomer to the *Doctor Who* fold, his character, The Toymaker, is not. First appearing in a now classic episode titled *The Celestial Toymaker*, from the show's third season in 1966, he was originally portrayed by actor Michael Gough.

The Toymaker is a memorable antagonist owing

to his whimsical yet sinister demeanour and his ability to create intricate and deadly challenges for the Doctor and his companions. The character's distinctive appearance and personality have made him a notable figure in the show's lore, one that aligns perfectly with Patrick Harris' dramatic and theatrical flair.

One of the greatest success stories for the BBC, *Doctor Who* began in 1963 when Sydney Newman OC, the corporation's head of drama, tasked producer Verity Lambert OBE and writer Anthony Coburn with creating a TV science fiction series. Their vision gave birth to *Doctor Who*, a show that would combine history, adventure and futuristic concepts in a unique way.

William Hartnell portrayed the original incarnation of the Doctor, a mysterious Time Lord with the ability to regenerate. The Doctor, along with his granddaughter Susan and two teachers, Ian and Barbara, travelled in the TARDIS, a time machine that looked like a 1960s British police box on the outside.

The series is listed in the Guinness World Records as the longest-running science fiction television series in the world, with Tom Baker holding the title for starring in the highest number of episodes – a whopping 178.

Despite its popularity, *Doctor Who* faced a significant hurdle in 1989 when it went on an extended hiatus. Aside from a TV film in 1996, the Doctor would not be fully regenerated until 2005.

This was the beginning of the show's modern era, helmed by writer and showrunner Russell T. Davies OBE and starring Christopher Eccleston as the ninth Doctor.

The most recent revamp of the series sees Davies return as the showrunner, taking over from Chris Chibnall who

introduced Jodie Whittaker as the 13th Doctor. Hot on the heels of his 2021 success *It's a Sin*, and with *Sex Education* star Ncuti Gatwa playing the 14th Doctor, Davies is in a fine position to return the show to its noughties glory.

# The King's NEW COINS UNVEILED



## SHOWCASING HIS PASSION FOR CONSERVATION AND EQUALITY

When His Majesty King Charles III was crowned, he thanked the public for their kindness and encouragement, and vowed that he and Her Majesty Queen Camilla would rededicate their lives “to serving the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and Commonwealth”.

Putting his money where his mouth is, quite literally, the edge inscription of the new £2 coin reads ‘In servitio omnium’, which means ‘In the service of all’. It was taken from the King’s inaugural speech on September 9, 2022, and chosen by him personally.

The coin is one of eight that have been unveiled by The Royal Mint, ranging from 1p to £2. Determined to distinguish his reign from that of his beloved mother, the King has also embossed them with another of his great passions: nature.

Featuring endangered species from across the British Isles, such as the puffin, the red squirrel and the bee, along with flowers and the oak tree leaf, the coins reflect His Majesty’s devotion to conservation and equality.

Here is the full list:

- **1p coin:** Hazel dormouse... which has seen its population halve since 2007
- **2p coin:** Red squirrel... expected to blend into the colour of the copper coin
- **5p coin:** Oak tree leaf... a rich habitat for biodiversity in woodland areas with a long monarchical association
- **10p coin:** Capercaillie... found in a small part of Scotland and threatened with extinction
- **20p coin:** Puffin... 10 per cent of the world population is on the UK’s coastline
- **50p coin:** Atlantic salmon... at threat from river pollution and habitat loss
- **£1 coin:** Bees... 250 species found in the UK
- **£2 coin:** National flowers – a rose (England), a daffodil (Wales), a thistle (Scotland), a shamrock (Northern Ireland)

The coins will replace those designed by Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2008 and may be in use by the end of 2023, but The Mint has confirmed that all existing currency remains legal tender.

Photo credit: royalmint.com



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MOTORING

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Podcasts are all the rage nowadays, yet navigating a route through the thousands available to download can be exhausting.

Here are six of the best that will further fuel your love of the fast lane.

**CAR CHAT:** British photographer and fervent car aficionado Sam Moores hosts, with a primary focus on high-performance vehicles and racing.

The podcast features diverse guests, from prominent Instagram personalities to experts from within the automotive industry, and broaches all the trending topics from within the motoring universe.

**FULLY CHARGED:** Robert Llewellyn presents his renowned Fully Charged brand, which comes in the form of a YouTube series, news platform and live event. The podcast also features exclusive conversations with experts deeply knowledgeable about the complex realm of EVs, renewable energy and sustainability.

**GARETH JONES ON SPEED:** Gareth collaborates with Richard Porter (known for Sniff Petrol, BBC *Top Gear* and *The Grand Tour*) and his tech-savvy buddy Zog as they deep-dive everything car-related, from daily commuter routes to high-end supercars, vintage vehicles to motorsport.

**SPIKE'S CAR RADIO:** Spike Feresten, comedy scribe and TV host, unites celebrities, automobiles and comedians in this captivating podcast that's bound to spark car envy.

Engaging with top-tier car enthusiasts, he delves into their most memorable car tales, the prized vehicles in their collections and their all-time favourite rides.

**THE COLLECTING CARS PODCAST:** *Top Gear's* Chris Harris invites guests to discuss all facets of the automotive world. With a special emphasis on racing narratives, this podcast is a perfect fit for F1 enthusiasts, tackling the hot topics with colour and humour.

**THE SMOKING TIRE:** With a sunny Californian edge, car enthusiast and YouTuber Matt Farah treats listeners to interviews spanning the motoring spectrum, showcasing everyone from film stars to industry experts. So plug in and ride the soundwaves!



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HOME & DIY

## How to make a Christmas CUTLERY POUCH

**C**over your cutlery with Christmas cheer with this simple and stylish craft. All you need are a few materials and some basic sewing skills and you are good to go!

**YOU WILL NEED:**  
A sewing machine or needle and thread | A rotary cutter or pair of sharp scissors | A ruler | Cotton fabric fat quarters in your preferred Christmas colours or patterns | 2 x pieces of festive ribbon or trim (optional)

**HOW TO MAKE:**

**Step 1: Cut your fabric**  
To create your pouch, you will need two pieces of fabric in contrasting colours or patterns. These need to be cut to 38cm x 12cm.

**Step 2: Decide on your layout**  
One piece of fabric will be used to make the inside of your pouch and the other will be used as the flap. Your cutlery will lie on the inside fabric and be covered by the outside one.

**Step 3: Place your fabrics face to face**  
Next, place your two fabrics face to face. If the flap fabric has a pattern, this needs to be placed upside down. Using a 10mm seam allowance, stitch around the two pieces of fabric using a sewing machine or by hand. Leave a 4cm gap at the bottom for turning.

**Step 4: Clip the corners**  
Clip the corners of the fabrics, making sure not to cut the stitches, then turn the pouch the right way in. Pop out the corners using a pencil and then iron gently to smooth out the fabrics. Sew up the gap.

**Step 5: Add ribbon or trim**  
If you want to add ribbon or a trim, lay out your pouch and sew the pieces of ribbon or trim to the edge that will turn up to make the flap.

**Step 6: Complete the pouch**  
Fold the flap over with a 13cm measurement and iron it in place. Carefully tuck the ends of the trim inside and pin it in place. Sew all the way around the pouch as close to the edge as you can to create a top stitch.

Photo credit: hobbycraft.co.uk, thesamnamnom.com



# From Banking Hall to Curtain Call

Following the closure of Barclays Bank in Tiptree Curtain Call Interiors have taken over the former bank building and transformed the space into an inspirational home interiors showroom and new workroom. The new space showcases a wide range of designer fabrics, curtain displays as well as home accessories including, a home fragrance range, cushions, lamps, furniture and tableware.

We specialise in making hand finished bespoke curtains, Roman blinds and soft furnishings all made by our experienced team of curtain makers. With the new workroom located adjacent to the Showroom it allows our team of experienced makers and



designers to assist customers in finding the right fabric and style for their decoration projects. Using the vast library of fabric samples and pattern books we



can help you bring your ideas to life and offer you our help and advice in choosing the right fabric and style for your space.

We are open Monday to Friday from 9am until 5pm and 9am until 3pm on Saturdays. We have free parking available for customers at the rear of the building and offer a free estimating and consulting service.



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# CLASH *of the* FABRICS

## TOP TIPS FOR COMBINING CONFLICTING FABRICS TO CREATE HARMONIOUS HOME DÉCOR

We're conditioned to think about our home interiors in ways that mean they match, complement and merge in the most perfect of ways.

Yet true innovation often brings about conflicting elements, so why not try these juicy style juxtapositions en route to awesome in-home ambience?

### LEATHER AND WOOD

Sumptuous soft leather against solid wood is about as luxurious as you can get in a modern home. From leather cushions on a wooden bench or a walnut wood bedframe with leather panelling, the contrast between hard and soft is impossible to resist.

### SUEDE AND COTTON

Both are beautifully soft, and yet the rugged texture of suede almost feuds violently with the plush softness of cotton. Ideal for brightening up bland bedding, suede cushions are the perfect foil to give your bedroom a hotel feel before removing for a restful night of sleep.

### WOOL AND SILK

Wool and silk may be the oddest of bedfellows, but together they conspire to make something rather beautiful. From luxurious rugs to coveted curtains and upholstery for almost anything, the colour, quality and sheer beauty combined make this a dream duo.

### TWEED AND CORD

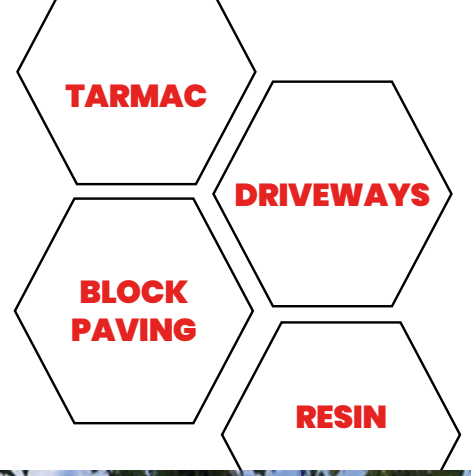
Tweed is a very harsh material that has bundles of presence, which is why you should match it with something softer, like cord. Both have a vintage and almost classic feel, which works perfectly for a formal sitting room.

### CHROME AND GLASS

Creating an almost retro/futuristic feel, the stunning mirror shine with the transparency of glass transforms an ordinary coffee table into a futuristic centrepiece.



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## Butcher prepares for first Christmas following stroke



A local resident, who suffered a stroke five years ago, is gearing up for his first Christmas managing an independent butcher shop in Halstead.

Miles Nicholas (pictured above) was working as a butcher in a farm shop when he suffered a stroke in 2018. He was left unable to speak and with loss of movement and sensation in his hand and arm.

Miles said: "Stupidly, I just thought a stroke was like a cold and I would recover and move on, but a part of your brain dies. I couldn't do my job any more."

As he was unable to work for someone else, Miles went into partnership with his friend Matthew Morgan. Together, they founded Morgan's Butchery at Baythorne Hall, Halstead.

Along with the help of his daughter Amy and a £20,000 grant from the Stelios Philanthropic Foundation, Miles has now taken over from Matthew in running the business.

He said: "If you told me when I was lying in a hospital bed two years that I would be running my own business, I would never have believed you."

Miles says the business is a great success and he is grateful to be able to do what he loves.

BDC refused the application in May 2023. Now, the plans have been resubmitted, with the developers arguing that refusal would be "unreasonable".

Since the resubmission, many residents are again objecting to the proposals over concerns that town services will be unable to cope with an influx of new residents.

Cabotlane Ltd has been contacted for comment.

## Firefighters commended for life-saving actions

Two firefighters from Braintree Fire Station have received commendations.

Paul Brazier (pictured below left) and Claire Speed (pictured below right) have been awarded Chief Fire Officer commendations.

After installing two new smoke alarms for a resident during a home fire safety visit, Claire and Paul were getting ready to leave when they were approached by a distressed member of the public asking for help.

Both firefighters followed the woman to the house across the road, where they found a resident who had collapsed and was visibly in a lot of pain.

When the resident lost consciousness, Paul leapt into action and began administering CPR, while Claire remained on the phone to the paramedics.

Claire said: "We were told that without our quick actions this could have been a very different outcome."

Chief Fire Officer Rick Hylton said: "Their actions saved this lady's life and we are proud of them both."



Photo credit: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

## Concerns over town becoming overdeveloped

Residents have raised concerns that Halstead is at risk of becoming overdeveloped.

Cabotlane Ltd is seeking permission to build 39 new homes on land off Oak Road.

Plans were originally submitted to Braintree District Council (BDC) in 2021 and received many objections.



NEWS FROM HALSTEAD FC...

THE HUMBUGS



LOCAL NEWS



Photo credit: Halstead FC



At the time of writing, the Humbugs find themselves in 10th place in the table, having just won an amazing game away at Barking by a season's best score of 6-0. This shows how far the team have progressed, as less than 15 months ago, Barking were playing at step 4 and the Humbugs at step 6.

There has been some disappointment over the last month, no more so than the 5-4 penalty shootout loss to near neighbours Stanway Pegasus after the game finished all square at 2-2. It is worth noting once again that there was a bumper crowd of 476 in attendance at the Milbank for this very entertaining FA Vase game – a crowd that turned out to be the highest anywhere

in England on the day, for this round of the Vase.

A little earlier in October, there was some redemption for the team and supporters in their desire to have a longer run in a cup competition, when there was another closely fought victory against Southend Manor in the Essex Senior Cup.

The reward for victory was a very attractive home tie against Chelmsford City from the National League South – a game which will be the Humbugs' biggest for several seasons and which, rightly, is already attracting a lot of local interest.

For up-to-date information regarding news at the club, please visit [www.halsteadtownfc.com](http://www.halsteadtownfc.com)

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# Exploring the expansive corners of Hatfield Forest

In west Essex on the border of Hertfordshire lies a treasure trove of natural beauty: Hatfield Forest. This enchanting forest, once a royal hunting ground, is a special place where age-old landscapes have been preserved and history echoes through every leaf and branch.

landscape designer Capability Brown was invited to modify elements in the 18th century.

In later times, the Victorians explored agricultural use, and during the Second World War, some parts of the forest even came under military occupation.

These days, the expansive setting is carefully protected by the National Trust, offering accessibility for locals and visitors alike, who are invited to have a picnic in the open grasslands, enjoy the tranquillity of the lake, or take a leisurely walk through the ancient woods. With the latter in mind, there are a number of designated routes that can be traversed through the forest, although some of the trails can become quite muddy during the winter months.

Regardless, Hatfield Forest, which is also marked as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, provides a beautiful escape from the modern world.

To find out more about Hatfield Forest and for visitor information, including opening times, head to [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/essex-bedfordshire-hertfordshire/hatfield-forest](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/essex-bedfordshire-hertfordshire/hatfield-forest)

The forest, which spans more than 1,000 acres, features coppiced trees, ancient wood pasture and shimmering lake, making it a paradise for nature lovers, walkers and picnickers alike.

Hatfield Forest isn't just about natural beauty, though. It was preserved as a hunting ground by William the Conqueror and is steeped in centuries of history. It's a living, breathing relic of medieval England, and stories of past royalty and deer hunts are woven into the very fabric of the woodland.

Boundary disputes have dominated much of Hatfield Forest's past, and these dividing lines remain intact to this day, despite the fact that renowned



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# YOUR LOCAL EVENTS



WHAT'S ON

### CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

St Andrew's Church, Parsonage Street,  
Halstead, CO9 2LD  
Friday, November 24, to Sunday, November 26,  
various times

Warner & Sons and palace refurbishments.  
Tours last approximately two and a half  
hours.  
Tickets cost £20 from [www.bitly.ws/Zgzq](http://www.bitly.ws/Zgzq)



Photo credit: St Andrew's Church

The League of Friends of St Andrew's Church is once again hosting Halstead's annual Christmas tree festival. Vote for your favourite tree, eat mince pies, drink mulled wine or try your hand at the lucky dip. Entry is free and open to all.

Find out more at [www.halsteadtowncouncil.org.uk/christmas-tree-festival-2](http://www.halsteadtowncouncil.org.uk/christmas-tree-festival-2)

### HALSTEAD'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE 2023

High Street, Halstead, CO9 2JB  
Saturday, November 25, 10am – 4pm

Join in with the biggest street event of the year! An opportunity to shop local at a variety of stalls before Christmas. There will also be Santa's Grotto at The Bull Inn. There's no need to book; just turn up and join the queue.

This is a free event, and all are welcome.

To find out more, please visit [www.facebook.com/halsteadchristmasfayre](http://www.facebook.com/halsteadchristmasfayre)

### BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS: THE PALACES OF KING CHARLES III

Braintree District Museum, Manor Street,  
Braintree, CM7 3HW

Tuesday, November 28, 10.30am – 1pm

The Warner Textile Archive offers its fifth and final behind-the-scenes tour this year, starting at Braintree Museum. After an introductory talk and refreshments, guests will see the historic textiles once supplied to the royal household and now stored at the Warner Textile Archive, and learn about the long association between

### CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA

Braintree Town Hall, 2 Manor Street,  
Braintree, CM7 3YG

Friday, December 8, 12pm – 4pm

Eat, drink and be merry at this Christmas Afternoon Tea event at Braintree Town Hall.

Festive afternoon tea tickets are priced at £28, including unlimited tea and coffee and a welcome cocktail upon arrival. Book by calling 01376 557776 or emailing [thc@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:thc@braintree.gov.uk)

### THAT EIGHTIES BAND

Empire Theatre, Butler Road, Halstead, CO9 1LL  
Saturday, December 16, doors open at 7pm

Join That Eighties Band for a time-turning rendition of classics like *Rio*, *Call Me*, *Love Shack* and *Thriller*.

Doors open at 7pm for an 8pm start, with tickets on sale for £15 from [www.empire-theatre.co.uk/that-80s-band](http://www.empire-theatre.co.uk/that-80s-band)

### SANTA FUN RUN

Great Notley Country Park, Great Notley,  
Braintree, CM77 7FS

Sunday, December 17, 1pm

Tickets are available for this year's Santa Fun Run, with all proceeds going towards Hope House Essex. Santa suits will be provided on the day.

Free entry for those who raise £25, otherwise tickets cost £16 from [www.bitly.ws/ZgAa](http://www.bitly.ws/ZgAa)



Photo credit: Hope House Essex



# Kylie

MINOGUE

After a huge year, Kylie Minogue AO OBE is revving up for the grand finale with an ITV extravaganza, *An Audience with Kylie*.

Few of us can boast of a career of more than three decades; even fewer can achieve such a feat in the cut-throat music industry, and one in a billion can do it with the grace, style and panache of Kylie.

An undisputed queen of reinvention, the 55-year-old Aussie delighted her fans earlier this year with the sizzling floor-filler *Padam Padam*. It was a track that not only launched her back into the charts (the song peaked at number eight, becoming her 52nd Top 40 single in the UK), but also flaunted her spectacular and seemingly ageless appearance in the accompanying music video.

For Kylie – who returned to where it all started this year in the well-received *Neighbours* finale – such moments have become second nature. Bursting onto the music scene in the late 1980s with her debut single, *I Should Be So Lucky*, her angelic voice, combined with a girl-next-door charm, made her an instant sensation.

Kylie continued to release chart-topping hits that solidified her status as a pop sensation. Songs like *Got to Be Certain*, *Je Ne Sais Pas Pourquoi* and *Especially for You*, a duet with

Jason Donovan, became anthems of the era. Her catchy tunes and memorable music videos created a pop culture phenomenon.

By the time the 90s rolled around, however, saccharine pop was on the wane. Rather than fade away,

Kylie retreated into her cocoon and reappeared as an indie princess, even collaborating with the master of melancholy, Nick Cave, on *Where the Wild Roses Grow*.

Another defining moment of Kylie's career came in the early 2000s with the release of *Fever*. The album's lead single, *Can't Get You Out of My Head*, became a global phenomenon. Its hypnotic beat and unforgettable hook catapulted Kylie back to the top of the charts worldwide and solidified her status as an international pop icon.

Though she is adored across the globe, her status here in the UK is one of particular reverence. So much so that Kylie, who was awarded an OBE in 2007, has spent much of the last few decades living in London and now owns an apartment in the highly coveted Hyde Park One building, alongside a house in her home town of Melbourne.

Fortuitously, her abode in Britain's capital is a short walk from the location of her ITV special, the iconic Royal Albert Hall. *An Audience with Kylie* promises to dazzle with an array of floor fillers from both her recent album, *Tension*, and her award-winning back catalogue. She will also field a bevy of questions from the floor posed by specially invited VIP guests, including celebrity Kylie superfans.

Kylie said of the event on December 1: "I'm so excited to announce that I am teaming up with ITV for *An Audience with...* at London's iconic Royal Albert Hall. I'll be performing some of my favourite tracks from throughout my career and no doubt answering some surprising questions from the audience."

The one query she's sure to bat away is talk of retirement. An icon of modern music, the industry – in all its inconsistency and fragility – is indebted to this marvellous mainstay, and her star will surely never be allowed to wane.



# AUTUMN arrivals

While many might scoff at the idea of the UK being a warm winter getaway with gourmet food, it's a top holiday spot in the bird world! That's right – as temperatures drop elsewhere, large numbers of our feathery friends flock to Britain.

### MAJESTIC GESE AND SWANS

Leading the parade of bird visitors is the fabulous pink-footed goose. When the temperatures dip in Iceland, and food gets scarce, the geese fly to the Faroe Islands, rest a bit, and then head to the UK. Similarly, Bewick swans head over from Siberia, while whooper swans make their way from Iceland.

### VIBRANT COASTAL LIFE

Every autumn, the UK's beaches and wetlands burst into life with a big mix of wading birds from northern Europe, the Arctic, Russia and northern Canada. These include lapwings, dunlin, oystercatchers, bar-tailed godwits, redshanks, and grey plovers from the Arctic.

### INLAND VISITORS

Moving inland, colourful Bohemian waxwings, with their distinctive crests, black eyeliner, and peach-tinged plumage, fly in from Scandinavia. You can sometimes spot them in large flocks in berry-laden bushes in towns, car parks and gardens. And it's not uncommon to see large numbers of dainty goldcrests with a radiant yellow stripe along the top of their heads. Despite weighing no more than a ten-pence piece, this remarkable bird journeys across the North Sea to spend its colder months with us.

Other northern European visitors you might spot in your garden include redwing and fieldfare – both types of thrush.

When spring comes, the birds fly back to their homelands to breed. Given the warming world and milder climates in their nesting territories, these winter visitors might one day no longer grace our shores. So let's all appreciate them a bit more – while we still have the opportunity.




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# ROCK ON

*How to create a rock garden*

In recent years there has been something of a rock revival going in Britain's gardens, front and back.

A trend that came to the fore in the nineties has seen something of a revival, with an increase in sales of rocks and alpine plants. Add in pebble mulches and gravel, and it's clear we are refreshing our garden spaces to add height, texture and, dare we say it, perhaps the odd splash of cascading water.

As for how to style your perfect rock garden, a slope obviously helps. If you don't have one, fear not – you can create a display by banking rocks closely together, filling in gaps with brick, stone or rubble to create a defined ridge.

It's a good idea to look for local stone – this will add character and provenance to the garden; and while many varieties may be expensive to buy, searching locally online may well bring about cheap or even free sources of stone.

Let rocks develop a patina of age – don't clean them or they won't look authentic – and bury them about a third of the way into the ground, tilting backwards, allowing space for grass and plants to flourish around them.

Now all you need to do is pattern surroundings with what you choose – an evergreen, such as miniature conifers will create vertical interest, while smaller shrubs will keep layers of interest even through the cold winter months.

Drought-tolerant plants such as sedums and sempervivums are also a good idea, while trailers, such as creeping rosemary, creeping thyme or aubretia, will guide the eye across the structure.

Finally, for texture, add some contrasting shapes – spikes, slants, velvety leaves – plus smaller bulbs, such as wild tulips, daffodils, snowdrops and crocus.

With your work done, sit back and admire!

Photo credit: Zia Allaway via gardeningetc.com





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# Tackle that TARNISH



FASHION

If your bling is looking more dull than dazzling, then these tried and tested DIY cleaning techniques are just what you need.

## HOW TO CLEAN STERLING SILVER

### 1. Try baking soda

For severe tarnish, mix three parts baking soda with one part water. Wet the silver and then apply the paste with a soft, lint-free cloth. Work into the crevices, rinse well and buff.

### 2. Apply toothpaste

Toothpaste is a mild abrasive and therefore ideal for cleaning silver. Simply apply a dab to your silver jewellery and rub gently with your finger or a soft cloth. Rinse and buff.

## HOW TO CLEAN GOLD (WHITE, YELLOW AND ROSE)

### 1. Use ammonia

Ammonia is a powerful cleaner so is best used for occasional deep cleaning rather than frequent use. Add one part ammonia to six parts water, soak your gold jewellery for one minute, rinse and gently pat dry with a polishing cloth.

## 2. Soak in warm, soapy water

Fill a bowl with warm water, add a few drops of washing-up liquid and leave to soak for 10-15 minutes. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush to dislodge dirt, rinse and dry.

## JEWELLERY TO BE CLEANED PROFESSIONALLY

Gold and sterling silver can be safely cleaned at home. However, more delicate metals, such as platinum, should be cleaned by a professional. If your jewellery contains precious stones such as diamonds, sapphires or rubies, you should stick to mild soap and water.

## HOW TO KEEP SILVER AND GOLD JEWELLERY LOOKING ITS BEST FOR LONGER

- > Store your jewellery in an acid-free, closed container.
- > Do not leave your jewellery in direct heat or sunlight.
- > Avoid your jewellery coming into contact with chemicals.
- > Remove your jewellery before bathing, swimming and exercising.





# The perfect ROAST CHICKEN

From how to create a classic roast dinner to carving it up to get the most meat out of it, the below will guide you through each step.

## TO ROAST THE CHICKEN

### You will need:

1 whole chicken | Half a lemon | Butter | Salt and pepper

### Method:

- > Pre-heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas mark 6.
- > Take the chicken and remove any giblets that may be in the cavity. You can, of course, buy whole chickens with the giblets already removed.
- > Put the half lemon into the chicken cavity and smear butter over the whole bird.
- > Season with salt and pepper.
- > Cook the chicken uncovered for 20 minutes per half a kilo, with an extra 30 minutes for good measure.
- > To make sure the chicken is thoroughly cooked, give the legs a prod to see if the juices run clear,

or cut into the breast to see if the meat is white.

## TO CARVE THE CHICKEN

### You will need:

A very sharp carving knife | Carving fork | Chopping board (preferably with a well to catch any juices)

### Method:

- > **Remove the legs:** Use the carving fork to hold the chicken in place and cut across the skin between the breast and the leg. Pull the leg away from the breast and use your knife to cut through the joint. Repeat on the other side.
- > **Remove the wings:** Repeat the process above – pull the wing away from the breast and cut through the joint. Repeat on the other side.
- > **Remove the breast meat:** Carefully run the knife down the centre of the breastbone to cut through the skin. Run the knife down the breastbone, cutting the meat from the bone.
- > **The rest:** Pick off any remaining meat to use in a pie or soup or freeze in a container for another day.



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FOOD & DRINK

What's the difference between...

## Whisky & bourbon

**D**o you like whisky but say you can't stand bourbon? If yes, you may be surprised to hear that bourbon is actually a type of whisky.

Discover the main differences between bourbon and other whiskies below. Plus, some delicious whisky and bourbon cocktails.

**WHAT IS WHISKY?**

Whisky is a family of distilled liquor that is made by fermenting wheat, rye, barley or corn. It is then aged in wooden barrels that are typically made of oak. This is what gives whisky its distinct brown colour and taste.

There are many different types of whisky, including Scotch (Scottish whisky), Irish Whisky, Rye whisky and Japanese whisky.

**WHAT IS BOURBON?**

Bourbon is a specific type of American whisky that is made from at least 51 per cent corn and aged in new charred oak barrels rather than reused ones. The name bourbon comes from Bourbon County in Kentucky, which is where this popular spirit originates from. Straight bourbon whisky has to have been aged for at least two years.

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE IN FLAVOUR?**

Bourbon has a sweeter flavour than other types of whisky, boasting notes of vanilla, oak, and caramel. This is owing to the high concentration of corn. Rye whisky tastes grassy and peppery with a spicy finish, Scottish whisky is malty and buttery, Irish whisky is known for being light and fruity and Japanese whisky has floral notes with hints of oak.

**POPULAR WHISKY COCKTAILS:**

- > *Whisky Sour* – 50ml whisky, 35ml lemon juice and 12ml simple syrup
- > *Old Fashioned* – 50ml rye whisky, 1 sugar cube, a few dashes of water and angostura bitters
- > *Whisky Highball* – 50ml whisky and 100ml soda water or ginger ale
- > *Whisky Smash* – 50ml whisky, 25ml simple syrup, ¼ lemon wedge and 1 sprig mint

**POPULAR BOURBON COCKTAILS:**

- > *Bourbon Sour* – 50ml bourbon, 35ml lemon juice and 12ml simple syrup
- > *Kentucky Mule* – 50ml bourbon, 15ml lime juice and ginger beer to top
- > *Bourbon Manhattan* – 50ml bourbon, 25ml sweet red vermouth and 2-3 dashes angostura bitters.

# NUISANCE NITS



Nits are the bane of every parent's life and can be a nightmare to get rid of. While over-the-counter treatments are effective, they can also dry out your child's scalp and hair. Discover four natural alternatives below.

### ESSENTIAL OILS

With the ability to eliminate nits and nourish the hair, there are several essential oils that you can try, including tea tree oil, lavender oil, neem oil, clove oil and eucalyptus oil. For best results, mix 15-20 drops of your chosen oil with 60ml of olive oil, apply to the scalp and comb through with a nit comb.

### RAW GARLIC

Raw garlic has antibacterial properties and can be used to suffocate nits. To use garlic on nits, crush a peeled bulb of garlic into a paste and then mix with either olive oil or lime juice. Apply to the head, leave for 30 minutes and then wash the hair as normal. No combing needed.

### CONDITIONER

If you are worried about drying out your child's hair, then you may want to try applying a thick conditioner to suffocate the nits before using a fine nit comb to remove them. This also helps to make the combing process less painful for your child.

### VINEGAR

Both normal vinegar and apple cider vinegar can be used to effectively kill and get rid of nits. All you need to do is mix one cup of vinegar with one cup of warm water. Distribute the mixture evenly onto the scalp and cover with a hair cap. Leave for 30 minutes and then wash with their usual shampoo. No combing needed.

### MORE TOP TIPS FOR NIT REMOVAL:

- ✦ Wash all bedding and any recently worn clothing in hot water.
- ✦ Vacuum upholstered furniture, rugs, soft toys and car seats.
- ✦ Recheck the scalp every day for two weeks.



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# SEAL PUP SAFARI



TRAVEL

Have you ever yearned to see fluffy white seal pups in their natural habitat? If so, a trip to Blakeney Point in north Norfolk could be up your street.

Blakeney Point is home to England's largest grey seal colony – and winter's a great time to visit. From the end of October to mid-January, around 4,000 pups are born – and you can't fail to spot some.

### What is Blakeney Point?

Blakeney Point is a four-mile stretch of pebbly beach with a backdrop of dunes, salt marshes and mudflats. It's one of England's 220 National Nature Reserves and is looked after by the National Trust.

### Can I walk there?

You can walk to the point from the car park at Clew beach. But it's not for the fainthearted. It's a four-mile walk, mostly on shingle. But if you're fit and love nature, you're in for a treat!

### What's the best way to get there?

The most exciting way to get a closer view of the

seals is by boat. Several companies offer seal-watching trips from nearby Morston Quay. You can travel there by car or on the Norfolk CoastHopper bus service from places like Sheringham and Cromer.

The boat trip will take around about an hour. Just remember the boat trip is for viewing only; you can't land there.

### Planning ahead

Remember to book your seal trip in advance and get there early. Places on the boats fill up quickly, and the car park can be a challenge. Even on a warm day, the sea can be chilly and might splash you. So pack some warm clothes and some rain gear. And remember your camera and binoculars!

### Let's talk seals

- > Grey seals are marine mammals
- > Adult seals can weigh up to a whopping 300kg
- > Grey seals can live for 30-40 years
- > Britain has more than 120,000 grey seals – 40 per cent of the world's total.



Photo credit: Ruseana Krasteva/Shutterstock.com



BEAUTY

# Crystal Craze

According to Pinterest, there has been a 110 per cent increase in searches for crystal eye make-up over the last year, with this beauty trend showing no sign of slowing down.

Versatile, flattering, and oh-so-pretty, find out how to rock this statement look below.

### What tools do you need to do crystal eye make-up?

To master this trend, you will need a pair of tweezers, lash adhesive, and your chosen crystals. For complete beginners, you can also buy jewels that already have adhesive on them. It is worth noting that the smaller the crystals, the harder they will be to apply.

### Where to place your crystals

There is no hard and fast rule when it comes to where to apply crystals around your eyes; you can basically be as creative as you want. However, it can be a good idea to place your crystals in places that you want to draw people's attention to. For example, the inner corner of the eyes, the upper lash line and the lower lash line. Be careful when using adhesive near your eyes.

### Crystal eye make-up looks to try

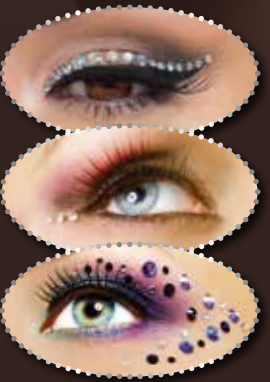
**Crystal cat eyes:** Create your usual cat eyes using black liquid eyeliner, and then apply gems to the upper lash line along the eyeliner for a mega-bling finish.

**Silver gem-encrusted wing liner:** Instead of the basic black winged liner, apply five or six tiny silver crystals from the outer corners of your eyes, extending upwards towards your temples.

**Colour combinations:** Crystals and eyeliner come in a wide variety of colours so don't be afraid to mix it up a bit. We love combining blue and silver, gold and metallic shades, and a full rainbow of crystals with any liner of your choosing.

### How to remove crystal eye make-up:

Not a beauty trend for the office, you can easily remove any crystals using a cream or oil-based make-up remover. This will lift the jewels off the face without causing any irritation to the skin.



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HEALTH & FITNESS

**FUNCTIONAL FITNESS 101**



**WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL FITNESS?**

As the name suggests, functional fitness is a type of physical training that is designed to make your body function better in everyday life. More specifically, functional fitness exercises help to make daily motions such as picking up your children, carrying your shopping and walking around easier and safer.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FUNCTIONAL FITNESS?**

There are many benefits to practising functional fitness, including: Enhanced strength | More flexibility | Better balance and agility | Better range of motion

**THE BEST FUNCTIONAL FITNESS EXERCISES**

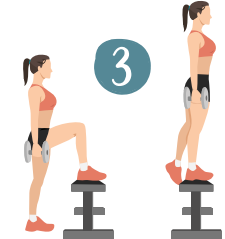
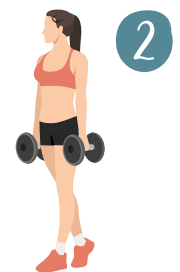
Functional fitness exercises prioritise natural movements over exercises that are carried out on a machine. For example, squats and pull-ups over leg presses and lateral pull-downs or going for a hike rather than using an elliptical trainer. Some of the most effective functional fitness exercises are:

**1 BEAR CRAWL:** Begin in the tabletop position on the floor | Bring up your knees so they hover above the ground | Using opposing arms and legs, take a small step forward with each limb | Return to the starting position, then repeat on each side for one minute, rest and repeat three times

**2 FARMER'S WALK:** Pick up a couple of weights (kgs that you feel comfortable walking with) | Keep a tight posture with your shoulders back | Take small, manageable steps back and forth across the room | Rest and repeat for two minutes

**3 STEP-UPS:** Step up and down from a bench | Continue for one minute, rest and repeat three times | Add weights if you want to challenge yourself | Upgrade to a box jump where you jump up and down with two feet rather than alternate feet

**4 PLANK:** Adopt the push-up position | Push through your hands and squeeze your body, engaging your abs | Hold for one minute, rest and repeat three times.





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BAD SPORTSMANSHIP:

# BUTT & WARNE *on the spot*

Cricket undoubtedly has universal popularity. Combine this with its intricacies, its longevity as a game, the ease of online betting and the variety of bookmaker markets, and you have the potential for foul play, on an international scale.

Take Pakistan's 2010 tour of England, for example; a series that became the centre of a sting by the *News of the World (NoTW)* where its reporters secretly filmed Mazhar Majeed, a British bookmaker and agent, giving bribes to visiting players ahead of the Lord's Test.

Money was offered on the proviso that two Pakistan fast-bowlers, Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Amir, would deliberately send no-balls at agreed times – known as spot-fixing. Even the team's captain, Salman Butt, was in on the scam.

The *NoTW* exposé ended with jail sentences meted out to all four, with the three players also receiving lengthy bans.

While the idea was brazen and reflective of the global gambling market, it was not the first time it had happened. Between 1994 and 1995, an Indian man referred to as 'John the Bookmaker' handed over cash to Australian stars Mark Waugh and Shane Warne in exchange for pre-match weather and pitch information.

'John' soon upped the ante, requesting team selections and tactics, but the duo refused. The Australian Cricket Board became aware of the allegations and the action taken was to fine each player privately.

In the aftermath, the Aussies claimed that Pakistan captain Salim Malik had approached them with bribes in exchange for losing matches. While their own credibility as witnesses had evaporated, the story was pursued, and former captain Malik received a life ban in 2000.

In 2023, cricket's abundant riches implies spot-fixing should be less appealing to players, yet the lure of a payday is always there.



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

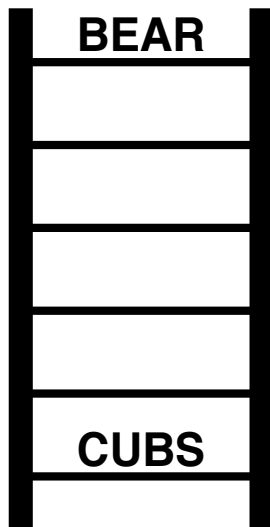
- ▶ ACTING
- ▶ ASTRONOMY
- ▶ BLOGGING
- ▶ BRIDGE
- ▶ CALLIGRAPHY
- ▶ CHESS
- ▶ COOKING
- ▶ DANCING
- ▶ GAMING
- ▶ JUGGLING
- ▶ KARAOKE
- ▶ KNITTING
- ▶ PAINTING
- ▶ PHILATELY
- ▶ PHOTOGRAPHY
- ▶ POETRY
- ▶ POTTERY
- ▶ READING
- ▶ SEWING
- ▶ WRITING



## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ The earliest version of Monopoly was invented by Elizabeth Magie in 1903 and was originally called the Landlord's Game.
- ▶ The longest game of Monopoly lasted for 70 days.
- ▶ There are more than 300 varieties of Monopoly, including *Pokémon*, *Game of Thrones* and *Harry Potter* versions.
- ▶ The Monopoly Man's real name is Rich Uncle Pennybags, and he is said to be based on American investment banker J P Morgan.
- ▶ Monopoly is available in 47 languages and sold in 114 countries.
- ▶ American jeweller Sidney Mobell created a Monopoly set made of 23 carat gold, rubies and sapphires, worth £1.4million.

## WORD LADDER



THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

HOW TO: Change one letter on each step to make a new word. By the time you reach the end, you should have created the new word.

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

TIP: There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.

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