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THE
PERFECT
PICNIC**

Celebrating

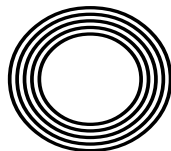
150 years of The FA Cup

ANNIE MAC

Radio DJ steps down after 17 years

Laura
WHITMORE

Presenter back in the limelight with new series of Love Island



FREE

Photo credit: ITV Pic



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Editor's notes...

JULY 2021



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

I hope everyone has been out and about, enjoying some of the freedoms that we sorely missed for so long. I for one have been, and it's been a pleasure. Not just in terms of being able to have a pint down the pub, or to see clients in the flesh, but to be casually interacting with strangers.

I can't tell if it's because we've been deprived of it for so long or if I had simply forgotten what it was like to have a polite chat with someone while out and about, but people are just so engaged and welcoming at the moment when it comes to conversation.

I think the 2020 Euros are playing a big part in morale and engagement. Of course, I'm writing this well before the conclusion of the tournament, so from an England perspective... please take everything I say with a pinch of salt! But the tournament is certainly having a positive impact - it's great to see everyone enjoying the games down at their locals and to hear real fans roaring at the stadiums.

My dog has also been enjoying his freedoms - perhaps a little too much. He recently ran out of the house and went exploring. We found him playing with other dogs down the road. If he keeps this up, we may have to impose Tier 1 doggy restrictions!

Brett Shohet

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CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Holly Bullen

At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines

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BRIDGE

TOO FAR?

IT HAS BEEN JUST 50 YEARS SINCE LONDON BRIDGE WAS SOLD AND MOVED TO LAKE HAVASU CITY, ARIZONA. BUT HOW AND WHY DID THIS COME ABOUT?

As far as the architecture of London goes, 50 years seems like only a very short period of time. For context, other recognisable landmarks in the capital built at the start of the same decade, the 1970s, include Euston Tower and the Barbican Estate, with the likes of the Lloyds Building and NatWest Tower built only a few years later.

So it's astounding to consider that the London Bridge that we know, love and recognise – the elegant five-line concrete box girder bridge that connects Monument on the north bank to London Bridge station on the south – has only been in place for five decades. It's even more astonishing that its forerunner now spans a small conurbation in the desert of western Arizona.

That a London landmark which had been in place since its construction 130 years previously ended up being dismantled, one brick at a time, shipped 4,000 miles around the world and reassembled, is one of those eccentric curiosities we would most likely expect of the Victorians. But this happened just eight years before Margaret Thatcher came into power. London would never look the same again.

In fairness, the old London Bridge had seen better days. Although it had survived the Luftwaffe's rain of bombs during Second World War, structural issues caused by ageing, combined with the increased weight and frequency of traffic, meant the bridge was sinking into the Thames at a rate of one inch every eight years. Surveyors were left querying the affordability of renovations.

At first, it seemed the bridge might have to be broken up and scrapped. But a city councillor by the name of Ivan Luckin decided he would capitalise on London's historical reputation by heading abroad to market the 1,000ft construction.

While the peculiar proposal largely fell on deaf ears, it did pique the interest of eccentric American businessman, Robert McCulloch. An industrialist who had made millions through oil and motorisation,

he was keen to market Lake Havasu City, which sits equidistant between Phoenix and Las Vegas, as a global tourist destination. In need of a talking point and a centrepiece that would define both his and the city's ambition, he agreed to purchase London Bridge for the not inconsiderable sum of \$2.4million.

The bridge was subsequently dismantled, with workers numbering each individual granite brick and carefully marking its position on the huge structure. It travelled to North America via the Panama Canal, before landing in Long Beach, California. It was then transported in trucks to its final destination.

The bridge, which originally spanned a section of desert before the growth of the city, was reinforced with a steel shell in order to circumnavigate the same issues over weight of traffic that had brought about its demise in the first place. On October 10, 1971, it was finally opened to a flurry of fanfare. London's Lord Mayor attended and a banquet comprising the meal that had been served when the bridge was first constructed back in 1831 was prepared.

While McCulloch died in 1977, his bridge over the desert lives on, with the attraction bringing an estimated two million visitors to Lake Havasu City each year.



THE LEGENDARY RADIO 1 DJ ANNIE MAC MOVES ON TO PASTURES NEW AFTER 17 YEARS

There can be little disputing the impact Annie Mac has had on our understanding and appreciation of dance music over the past two decades.

Having joined Radio 1 as a producer back in the early Noughties, the Irish DJ breathed fresh energy into an ailing electronic music scene, overseeing a number of breakthrough genres, including dubstep, trap and drill, while continuing to celebrate the house and techno sounds that have defined a generation.

Yet now, at 42, the pioneer has announced she is leaving behind two decades of influence in order to focus on more private ventures, including writing a book and spending time with her family.

There is also the small matter of her podcast work, and of course the return of live gigs – both of which go to show that a DJ cannot spend too long out of the spotlight. That said, we might assume a

musical legacy that has educated, informed and inspired is now coming to an end – for now, at least. Annie wrote on her Instagram page that she would be coming back to radio broadcasting when the time was right.

The Dubliner first got her foot in the door at the BBC working as a broadcast assistant on the Steve Lamacq show. By 2004, she had her own slot, *Annie Mac's Mashup*, and for the past six years has presided over the weeknight *Future Sounds* show.

Always one to push boundaries and extol the virtues of music across genres well beyond the norm, the famously curly-haired Annie has, among other things, hosted *The Culture Show* and *Top of the Pops*. She is also the curator of AMP Lost & Found Festival.

Now, a new set of sounds awaits this airwaves innovator, and no doubt we'll be tuning in.

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BEAUTY

We all know the importance of using sunscreen, not just when the sun is shining, but all year round. However, do you know what sun protection factor (SPF) you should be using for your skin type? And whether your make-up contains SPF?

Why is SPF so important?

A good sunscreen will block the harmful effects of the sun's UVA and UVB rays, which can wreak havoc on the health of your skin, causing not only premature fine lines and wrinkles but also an increased risk of skin cancer. When buying sunscreen for the body or face, look for two things: the SPF, which protects your skin from UVB rays, and the UVA rating, which ideally should be five stars. In the UK between March and October you should wear at least SPF30 with a four-star UVA rating. However, for maximum protection, wear SPF50 with a five-star UVA rating.

SPF by skin type

OILY SKIN: Many sunscreens that offer a high SPF tend to be thick on the skin, causing already oily skin further issues such as blocked pores and blackheads. Prevent this by opting for an oil-free sunscreen or using a lightweight moisturiser with SPF included.

SENSITIVE/ACNE-PRONE SKIN: Avoid sunscreens that have too many chemicals or unnecessary ingredients, such as fragrances and preservatives. Instead, choose a non-comedogenic sunscreen or a mineral powder sunscreen that feels weightless on the skin.

DRY SKIN: Dry skin sufferers can benefit from an SPF serum which simultaneously protects and hydrates the skin. Alternatively, try a dry oil spray with SPF, although this will need to be applied several times a day for maximum protection.

Does make-up with SPF work?

Skin experts state that you need 1–1.5tsp of sunscreen to adequately protect your face from the sun, so it is highly unlikely you are applying sufficient foundation to use this as your sole form of protection. Plus, most SPF make-up only protects against UVB rays, not against harmful UVA ones, which can cause skin cancer.

BEST SPF MAKE-UP: Charlotte Tilbury Magic Foundation | bareMinerals Original Foundation Broad Spectrum SPF 15 | L'Oréal Paris True Match Super-Blendable Compact Make-up | Neutrogena Healthy Skin Compact Make-up.

Remember, make-up should be worn as a second line of defence against the sun, after your chosen UV protection product.





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HOW TO SAFEGUARD YOUR sunglasses

Protecting your eyes from the sun's powerful rays is a must, but don't forget that you also need to safeguard your sunglasses from both accidental damage and general wear and tear.

refrain from breathing on them and wiping, as this can cause deterioration.

Protect from scratches

Whether you have plastic or glass lenses, you should always store your sunglasses in a hard case to protect them from scratches. If you do not have a hard case, a microfibre pouch is your next best option.

Do not leave in the car

Leaving your sunglasses in your car on a hot day can cause the lenses to delaminate, making them less effective in protecting your vision from the sun. Particularly avoid placing them on the dashboard, where heat is more intense.

Don't place on top of your head

Although you may like how this looks, placing your sunglasses on your head can cause the screws to loosen and fall out. Plus, it can damage the nose-pads.

Remove smudges

Sunglasses are prone to smudges from sun cream, make-up and your skin's natural oils. To smooth away smudges, rinse your glasses under warm water and, using your fingers, apply a few drops of mild washing-up liquid. Rub gently, rinse and dry with a microfibre cloth.

Don't take designer sunnies to the beach

If you have spent a lot of money on designer glasses, you may want to wear them all the time. However, the combination of sand granules and seawater is a major hazard. Sand can scour away at the lenses and delicate hinges, while the salt in seawater can cause lasting damage to metal components and lens coatings.

Avoid harmful cleaners

Never use rubbing alcohol, vinegar or any other standard household cleaners on your sunglasses, as these can potentially damage the lenses. Also





Natural IMMUNITY

THE FOODS YOU SHOULD EAT TO BOOST YOUR NATURAL IMMUNITY

Having a good immune system helps fight off infections and maintain your health, yet it can sometimes be confusing knowing which foods we should be consuming to take our body's natural protection to the next level.

take supplements. Vitamin C is an antioxidant that helps the body grow, develop and repair, maintaining your body's natural defenses.

STEAMED BROCCOLI: Some of us don't like our greens, but a bit of broccoli or spinach as part of a healthy meal or drink (spinach is especially good in smoothies) can really boost immunity. Steaming broccoli (not boiling) is also thought to be the best way of keep the nutrients in. Both of these green options are loaded with vitamins, minerals and nutrients.

YOGHURT: Another good option is yoghurt, which can be added to cereal, shakes or eaten by itself. Look for Greek yoghurts with live and active cultures, and choose natural rather than flavoured. You can also add fruit and a little honey to make it taste even better.

These options might not stop you getting ill, per say, but they will boost general immunity and give you the best chance of warding off seasonal nasties. Start today!

Here are four consumables that will have a positive effect on your immune system as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

GARLIC: Highly nutritious, low in calories, full of vitamins, laced with nutrients and perfect for combatting sickness and the common cold, garlic also lowers blood pressure and reduces cholesterol. There's even evidence to suggest the antioxidants it contains can prevent long-term diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia.

VITAMIN C: Most of us know vitamin C is number one when it comes to fighting off infections, yet we still don't regularly



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Sound baths

Over the past few years, researchers have confirmed that meditation can have several benefits on the mind and body, from stress reduction to reducing chronic pain symptoms. If you've enjoyed the benefits of regular meditation practice, you will love sound baths – an alternative to mindfulness meditation.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM SOUND BATHS
Sound baths are a meditative experience that involves 'bathing' your mind and body in sound waves. These sound waves are produced by instruments such as singing bowls or gongs, but they can also come from percussion or chimes.

Similar to mindfulness meditation, sound baths have powerful relaxing effects. The sound waves affect the brain, causing it to enter the alpha state – a state of heightened consciousness but deep relaxation. This state of mind is the same one that occurs during meditation and relates to reduced stress, peace of mind, focus and calm.

HOW TO CREATE A SOUND BATH AT HOME
Creating a sound bath at home is easy. Start by creating a relaxing, peaceful nook in your home. Ideally, you should be warm, comfortable and away from distracting noises. You can also improve the atmosphere by lighting a candle, using natural scents and lying on pillows and blankets.

Singing bowls are the most common healing instruments used for sound baths. To create a vibrating, relaxing sound, press a mallet on the outer surface of the bowl's rim and move in a slow, circular motion. To control the sound, create the motion using your entire arm rather than just the wrist. If you have never tried a sound bath before, asking someone else to play the singing bowl for you can help.

Alternatively, if you are alone, you can try a virtual sound bath. To do so, head to your favourite online yoga platform or YouTube, select an expert practitioner and pick your preferred meditation length. Make sure you are comfortable and using high-quality headphones to get the greatest benefits from your meditation practice.



Time to PLANK

The pursuit of perfect abs can feel like a distant dream - but not anymore. Love it or hate it, planking provides a fast and effective way to strengthen your core, shape your waist and create amazing abs. Check out these four plank variations that guarantee to deliver.

1. THE REACHER PLANK

Ideal for building control and strengthening your core muscles, take this move slowly for maximum results.

- > Start in the plank position with your palms touching the ground and your arms straight
- > Reach one arm forward until your elbow is straight
- > Bring your arm back down to the ground
- > Repeat with your other arm.

2. THE HIP DROP SIDE PLANK

Work your side muscles, also known as your obliques, as well as your abs with this plank variation.

- > Lie on your side with your elbow directly under your shoulder and your forearm on the ground in front
- > Stack your legs on top of each other and lift your body off the ground
- > Slowly drop your hips towards the ground, as low as you can, and then raise them.

3. THE WALKDOWN PLANK

Great for building up strength to do push-ups, the walkdown plank is like a moving plank.

- > Begin in the plank position with your forearms touching the ground
- > Slide one hand back and place it under your shoulder
- > Push up with that arm and repeat with the other arm
- > Now you are in the push-up position, reverse the steps to lower yourself back into the plank pose.

4. THE REVERSE PLANK

Providing a full body workout, this final plank is a tough one.

- > Sit tall on the floor with your legs extended in front of you
- > Place your hands behind you, either on the floor or on a foam roller
- > Lift your hips, forming a straight line from heels to shoulders
- > Add an optional tricep dip or leg raise if you want more of a challenging move.



1



2



3



4



Photo credit: gethealthyu.com



LONDON'S Top 10 attractions

What better way to celebrate our return to some normality than by ticking off London's best tourist attractions? A lack of overseas travel means that, in 2021, these iconic hotspots will be less busy and more accessible than ever.

TEN: Borough Market

Based in Southwark, this iconic centre for high quality food and sustainable production has been pulling in admirers for almost as long as London has existed and dates back to the 12th century.

NINE: Natural History Museum

Showcasing modern science interspersed with taxonomy and biodiversity, the Natural History Museum, based in South Kensington, is a maze of walkways and corridors that continues to enchant adults and children alike.

EIGHT: St Paul's Cathedral

Sir Christopher Wren's London masterpiece, St Paul's, is an example of architectural and ecclesiastical excellence dating back well over a thousand years.

SEVEN: Victoria and Albert Museum

Design, art and style come to the fore at the V&A in a celebration of culture and craft from the UK and beyond.

SIX: Westminster Abbey

The setting for every royal coronation since 1066, Westminster Abbey is one of the most important Gothic buildings in England.

FIVE: The British Museum

A celebration of more than two million years of human history and culture, and it's free to enter.

FOUR: National Gallery

Towering over Trafalgar Square, the National Gallery is also free to visit, showcasing some of the finest artists from the UK and overseas.

THREE: Churchill War Rooms

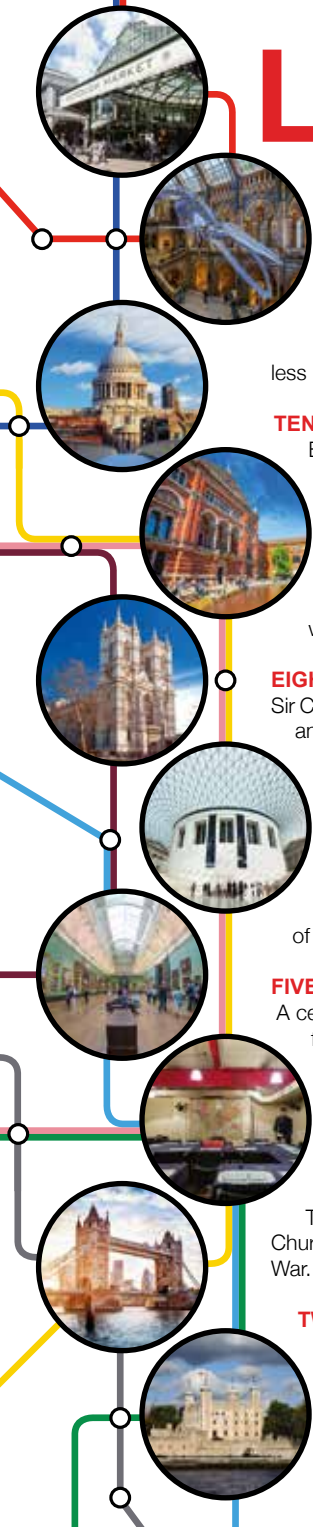
This popular attraction allows visitors to explore the offices where Winston Churchill and his team plotted Britain's fight against the Nazis during Second World War.

TWO: Tower Bridge

Take in stunning panoramic views over the Thames from Tower Bridge's walkway and explore the atmospheric Victorian engine rooms.

ONE: Tower of London

And finally, a fortress, a palace and a prison all in one – learn how royalty reigned in London over the course of a thousand years.



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HOW TO PACK THE

PERFECT PICNIC

Whether you rely too heavily on your local deli or you tend to throw in whatever you can find in the fridge, to help you celebrate National Picnic Month, we are going to show you how to plan the perfect picnic.

PREP YOUR PICNIC

The simplest way to make picnic prep more manageable is by preparing your main dish ahead of the day. Then you can simply divide the dish into portions once seated and ready to eat. Great options for picnic mains include quiches, tarts, tortillas, pies and picnic loaves.

PROVIDE PORTABLE SNACKS

No picnic would be complete without an array of easy-to-carry and fuss-free snacks. As well as all the usual suspects, such as sausage rolls, sandwiches and chicken drumsticks, why not be a bit more adventurous and try empanadas, falafel or smoked salmon scotch eggs?

RUSTLE UP SALADS AND SIDES

When it comes to picnic salads, it is best to focus on more robust dishes, such as potato salad and pasta salad, which will not wilt or become damaged in transit. Dips such as hummus, and even a mackerel pâté, are all great options and can be enjoyed with crudité's or sliced pitta breads. Other delicious sides include boiled eggs sprinkled with chilli powder and garlic salt, or orzo and mozzarella salad.

PICK PICNIC-FRIENDLY PUDDINGS

Puddings for picnics are notoriously tricky, although there are a few tried and tested desserts that will save the day, such as traybakes, loaf cakes, brownies and cookies.

DON'T FORGET DRINKS

Whether you want boozy beverages or virgin varieties, you need to pack something to sip on in the sun. Choose from family-friendly options such as mint iced tea or fruit-infused lemonade. Alternatively, for a tippie that packs a punch, you can't go wrong with a classic Pimm's, a wine-based spritzer or a convenient cocktail in a can.



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MONDAY TO SUNDAY 12PM TO 12AM

Unusual veg of the month: Cardoon



Considered a delicacy in Mediterranean countries, the cardoon is a large, stalky vegetable that is closely related to the artichoke. Although it takes some time to prepare, its tender texture and distinctive flavour make it well worth the wait.

WHAT DOES IT TASTE LIKE?

With a similar, yet slightly more bitter taste to an artichoke, the exact flavour of a cardoon will be dependent on its growing conditions and maturity. For a sweeter cardoon, opt for the lightest in colour.

IS IT GOOD FOR YOU?

The cardoon is a nutrient-rich vegetable that contains protein, fibre, carbohydrates, calcium, potassium, iron and a whole host of important vitamins. It is also low in calories and boasts high levels of folic acid.

HOW TO PREPARE

> Peel off the spines and thorns on each side of the cardoon using a peeler

- > Gently remove the outer portion of the stalk as you would with celery
- > Cut into ½-inch pieces and soak in water and lemon juice to avoid browning.

HOW TO COOK

Cardoons are typically used in a similar way to artichoke hearts and can be steamed, braised, sautéed, blended into a soup, added to a stew and even eaten raw. Many recipes call for cardoons to be pre-cooked for 15 minutes in boiling water to remove bitterness.

WHERE TO BUY

Cardoons can be found in farmers' markets from midwinter to early spring. Alternatively, choose to grow your own. Cardoons can be planted outside from late April until August/September.

HOW TO STORE

Store whole unwashed cardoons in the vegetable drawer of your fridge for up to one week. Cooked cardoons will last up to three days in an airtight container in the fridge. Brined and canned cardoons can last up to one year.



FOOD & DRINK

Doughnut Week

JULY 10 – 18

Need an excuse to eat more “hole foods”? Whether you favour classic jam, love some sprinkles or can’t get enough of comforting custard, once you learn to make your own doughnuts, there’ll be no going back.

Basic Doughnut Dough – YOU WILL NEED:

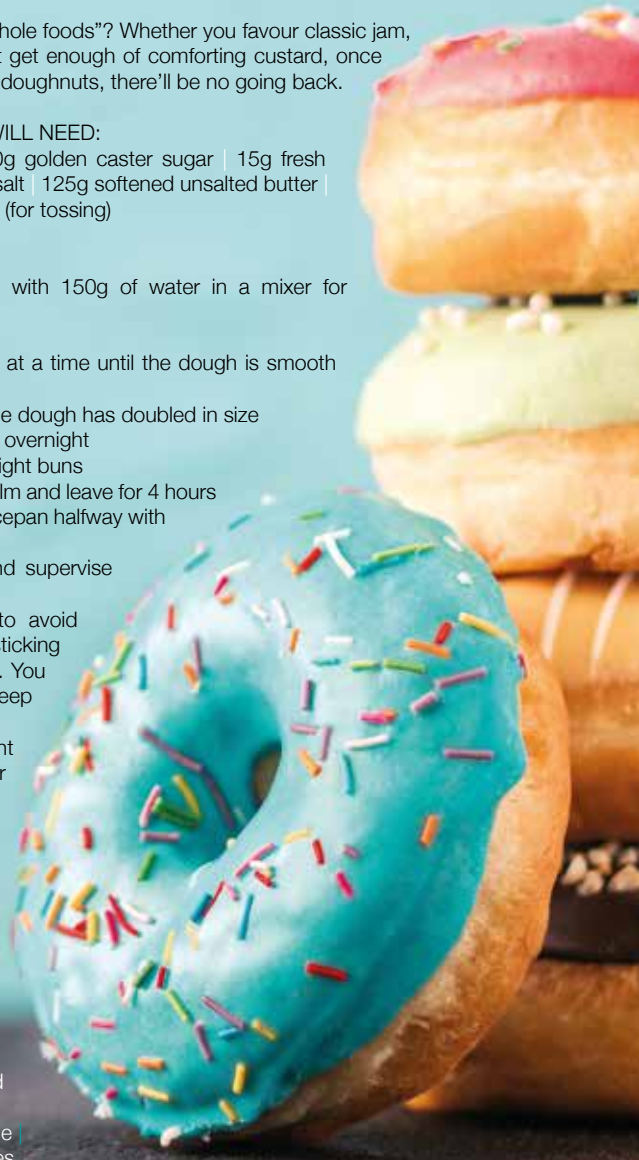
500g strong white bread flour | 60g golden caster sugar | 15g fresh yeast | 4 eggs | Zest ½ lemon | 2 tsp fine sea salt | 125g softened unsalted butter | 2l sunflower oil (for deep-frying) | Caster sugar (for tossing)

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Mix all the ingredients, minus the butter, with 150g of water in a mixer for 8 minutes
- > Leave the dough to rest for 1 minute
- > Start the mixer again, adding 25g of butter at a time until the dough is smooth and glossy
- > Cover the bowl in cling film and leave until the dough has doubled in size
- > Knock back the dough and chill in the fridge overnight
- > Cut the dough into 50g pieces and roll into tight buns
- > Place on a floured baking tray, cover in clingfilm and leave for 4 hours
- > Fill your deep fat fryer or a heavy-based saucepan halfway with oil and heat to 180 degrees
- > Keep young children away from hot oil and supervise older ones as oil splashes can burn the skin
- > Gently slide the doughnuts into the oil to avoid splatters. Only fry 2–3 at one time to avoid sticking
- > Fry for 2 minutes on each side until golden. You may need to push them down if they keep popping up
- > Make sure the oil remains at the right temperature for each batch to avoid burnt or raw doughnuts
- > Remove from the fryer and place on kitchen paper
- > Toss in sugar while still warm
- > If filling, allow to cool to room temperature, make a hole using a chopstick and gently rotate to create space. Then generously fill using a piping bag.

Filling and Topping ideas:

Cardamon and vanilla custard | Cinnamon and chocolate cream | Raspberry and ginger jam | Salted caramel, toasted coconut and hot fudge | Crème fraiche whipped cream and strawberries



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CREATING THE
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GREEN KITCHEN



Using the colour green is one of the biggest kitchen trends at the moment, and here is how you can get it right.

DARK GREEN

If you want to use dark green in your kitchen, it needs to be done carefully. Because it is such a deep colour, it will look dramatic, but it will also not reflect light to make it seem warm and welcoming. Make sure that the room has a lot of light so you can achieve this.

Keep windows plain and undressed to let in as much natural light as possible. You should also use a pale colour for backsplashes as a contrast. Warmer accents like brass, gold and copper for details will help to bring some warmth into the room.



GREY-GREEN

If dark green seems like too much for you, then you might want to go for a lighter grey-green option. This is warmer than some options when it comes to grey and can bring a sense of peace to the space.

Adding wood tones for extra warmth is a good idea. You might also want to pair it with white fittings like cabinets and sinks to bring in even more warmth. For a little bit of contrast, add in black accents to bring it all together.



GREEN ACCENTS

To incorporate green into your kitchen without making it the main aspect, there are many avenues you can take. You can do this by adding green accents or pieces to the decor, such as lampshades, artwork or tableware. If you have a kitchen island, you may want to paint the island green instead of the walls or cabinets.

Photo credit: Wickes via IdealHome.co.uk, Matt Artobius via IdealHome.co.uk, plainenglishdesign.co.uk



STEP UP *in style*

Make the most of your staircase with our top design ideas for summer 2021. From the simple to the elaborate, there is something to suit all spaces, budgets and tastes.

GO DARK AND DRAMATIC

Although you may think that staircases need to be light and airy, if you want to create an imposing and sophisticated area that demands to be seen, then painting your woodwork either black or dark charcoal grey is the way to go. Contrast with white walls for a chic and contemporary look.



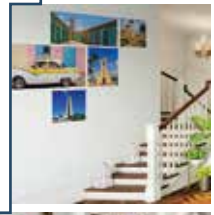
CREATE A GALLERY WALL

A gallery wall is a highly popular option when it comes to decorating a staircase. For the best results, choose matching frames and pictures with a clear theme, such as your pampered pooch, your child's artwork, black and white family photos, or art deco pictures.



MAKE A STATEMENT WITH SPINDLES

Often overlooked, your staircase's spindles provide the perfect opportunity to update your staircase. Whether you opt for a bold colour matched with a natural wood handrail, or you go wild and paint each spindle in a different shade, make sure you keep the rest of the staircase white for maximum effect.



WALLPAPER YOUR TREADS

If you don't fancy carpet or it's a bit out of your price range, why not brighten up your staircase treads with some boldly patterned wallpaper? Choose eye-catching graphics and add further pops of colour in the hallway or on the wall, focusing on primary colours for best results.



LAY AN OMBRÉ STAIR RUNNER

Stair runners are a great way to add warmth and colour to your wooden stairs without covering them completely with carpet. If you are not a fan of patterned stair runners, an ombré version is the ideal choice for you, offering a fun and fresh look without being too overpowering.



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DIY PVC SHOE STORE

Keep your shoes organised with this simple and unique DIY shoe storage – made out of PVC tubes



Keeping the whole household's shoes organised might seem impossible. With your family and friends going in and out of the house multiple times a day, the mudroom or entrance of your home can quickly end up accumulating a messy pile of shoes, flip-flops, trainers, football boots, dancing shoes and so on.

If you have not yet found a solution that suits the needs of your family and your home's design, but you have DIY skills to spare, why not trying creating your own shoe storage out of PVC pipes?

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- PVC tubes – at least 6 inches (15cm) in diameter
- 220 grit sandpaper
- Handsaw or hacksaw to cut the tubes
- Soap, hot water and a sponge
- Adhesion primer
- Paint
- Wallpaper strips (optional)
- PVC glue

HOW TO CREATE YOUR SHOE STORE

1. Cut the PVC tubes into 10–12 lengths of 10–12

inches (25–30cm) each.

2. Smooth the tube sections' edges by using 220 grit sandpaper.
3. Wash the tube sections with hot water and soap to eliminate any dust or debris.
4. Apply a layer of adhesion primer to ensure your painted shoe storage will withstand daily wear and tear.
5. Once the adhesion primer is dry, paint the tubes and apply wallpaper strips (if desired) – depending on the kind of style you are looking to achieve.
6. Leave small horizontal sections unpainted and without wallpaper on each tube so that you can glue together the different sections.
7. Once both the paint and wallpaper glue are dry, apply a line of PVC glue on the section of the tubes left unpainted.
8. Glue the sections together to create your desired design.
9. Keep the glued sections in place with clamps until the glue is dry.

Now you can start enjoying your DIY shoe storage creation.



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YOU'RE oil I need

Olive oil is a storecupboard staple for most households, being used to roast veggies, drizzle over salads, rustle up home-made hummus and so much more. However, you may not know that its uses extend beyond cooking...

To shine stainless steel

If your stainless steel items are looking lacklustre, all you need to do is put a dab of olive oil onto a soft cloth and rub to help prevent streaks, water spots, tarnish and corrosion. Finish by buffing with a dry cloth. A dab of olive oil can also be used to slow down the tarnish of silver items.

To remove sticky labels

Getting sticky labels off glass, plastic and wood can be a nightmare. Fortunately, by saturating the paper labels in a few drops of olive oil and leaving for 15 minutes, you should be able to peel them off with ease.

To protect wood

Any wooden items that you have in your home can be nourished and protected with a light coating of olive oil. Simply let the oil sit for five minutes and buff with a soft cloth to prevent cracking and discolouration.

To silence squeaky hinges

Whether you have a squeaky door, window, cabinet or appliance, a few drops of olive oil on the hinges is all that is needed to silence the squeak in a matter of seconds.

To remove water rings

Water rings don't have to spell disaster for real wood and can easily be removed with just a little bit of warm olive oil. Apply gently to the affected area with a soft cloth and then buff with a dry one. Ideal for also repairing small scratches.

To condition leather

Buff any leather items in your home with a few drops of olive oil and a cloth and enjoy softer, more supple leather furniture, gloves and shoes.



HOME & DIY



We're loving LAURA

WHO CELEBRATES A DECADE ON TERRESTRIAL TV

Laura Whitmore is the perfect example of someone who knows when to split. The Irish presenter has worked across multiple TV projects over the past decade or so, preferring to stand up and embrace new challenges rather than playing it safe.

As fresh-faced and dynamic as any of the new wave of TV presenters on the circuit, despite having spent more than 10 years in the spotlight, Whitmore has returned with the new series of *Love Island*, which began on June 28.

Set in Mallorca, the six-week bounty of dating, dirty dealing and dodgy dalliances has become an institution on British TV. The last series, in 2019, pulled in an audience of more than four million – with viewers keen to take a somewhat voyeuristic glance at the love lives of others.

“It’s escapism, isn’t it?” Laura says. “I think some viewers are living out holiday fantasies; others are just interested in the ins and outs of romance, of flirting and, dare I say it, sex.”

“You certainly have to be a special type of person to be on the show, though it’s been proved time and time again that the rewards are all there for anyone brave enough to take the plunge.”

Having an ability to step into the unknown and risk disappointment is certainly true to who Laura is, so in that sense she is the perfect presenter for the show. The 36-year-old struck gold when she applied for an MTV Pick Me campaign in 2008, with victory securing her a role on *MTV News*.

“WE ALL NEED TO BE PUSHED AND TESTED FROM TIME TO TIME. YOU GET NOTHING FROM SITTING BACK AND RESTING ON YOUR LAURELS.”

Landing the *I’m A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here! NOW!* role in 2011 was Laura’s first introduction to reality TV, one that she held onto through stints on *The Hit* (on RTÉ Two) and the *Eurovision Song Contest Semi-Finals*, right through to appearing in the 14th series of *Strictly Come Dancing*.

“*Strictly* was a really interesting shift because it was good to put myself back in the firing line,” she says. “I think that’s a good lesson – we all need to be pushed and tested from time to time. You get nothing from sitting back and resting on your laurels.”

Away from the camera, Laura wrote Sunday Times Bestseller *No One Can Change Your Life Except For You*, a book about fear, hope and inspiration. She also recently had her first child with husband, Iain Stirling, who narrates *Love Island*.

“What’s a priority right now is ensuring work doesn’t interrupt the time we want to spend with our baby,” Laura commented recently.

First spotted out and about with her new daughter, Stevie Ré, in March, Laura is clearly the proudest of mums: “It is a wonderful next step for us and while we are very public people – it’s the nature of what we do – we do want to be able to grow our family with a sense of privacy.”

That’s certainly more privacy than will be afforded to those *Love Island* contestants this year.





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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS



Community garden debuts new accessible features

A community garden in Loughton has celebrated the official opening of its new accessibility features.

On Saturday, June 12, the deputy mayor of Loughton, councillor Barbara Cohen, opened GROW Community Garden's new accessible entrance, mobility path and disabled toilet.

The community garden regularly hosts sessions to bring people together to grow food, gain new skills and build connections.

These developments, which have been a work in progress for the past few months, will improve accessibility and provide convenient facilities for all visitors and volunteers.

Heidi Chow, GROW Community Garden co-ordinator, said the new features will help the team achieve their goal of removing barriers to participation.

She said: "The mobility path is suitable for wheelchairs and buggies and connects our new entrance with

the new toilet, seating area and polytunnel. It helps us to achieve our dream of removing barriers to participation and inclusion so that more people can enjoy the benefits of community food growing.

"We are extremely grateful to a range of funders for our new developments, including Loughton Town Council, Epping Forest District Council, Essex Community Foundation and Essex County Council. Without their financial support, these accessibility improvements would not be possible and we hugely appreciate their ongoing support."

During the official opening, Heidi and cllr Cohen gave speeches, followed by children's activities, growing workshops, strawberry picking, site tours and homemade cakes and refreshments.

Visit www.facebook.com/GROWCommunityGarden for more information on the GROW Community Garden.



Former teacher awarded in Queen's Birthday Honours

A former teacher from Loughton has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her work ensuring families and elderly people had enough food to eat during lockdown.

Joyce Obaseki BEM set up Grant A Smile, a non-profit intervention support service, six years ago, to support families with physical and mental health issues.

Joyce has previously won numerous other awards, including the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services back in 2019 (pictured).

She told the BBC that she was delighted to be awarded the BEM.

She said: "It's absolutely blown my mind. I wasn't expecting it at all. When the pandemic hit, a lot more people needed our help."

With funding tight during the first lockdown, Joyce went around houses asking for food donations to get together everything she possibly could.

She added: "We have a criteria, but we scrapped that during lockdown and helped anyone who was in need. We helped people with chronic health conditions who couldn't leave the house at all and the elderly who didn't have anybody to pick up their shopping or prescriptions."

To find out more, visit www.grantasmile.org.uk

Pedestrian dies in hospital after collision

A man who was seriously injured in a collision in Loughton has died in hospital.

Essex Police were called to the incident in Rangers Road in Loughton shortly after 11.05am on Sunday, May 16, to reports of a collision involving a pedestrian and a silver BMW.

The pedestrian, a man in his 20s, was flown to hospital with life-threatening injuries. He died three days later.

Essex Police wanted to thank the members of the public who helped with first aid at the scene of the collision.

No one has been arrested in connection with the collision, but police are continuing to carry out enquiries.

They are also appealing for anyone who saw what happened or has CCTV or dashcam footage of the incident or the moments before it to contact them.

If you have any information, you can submit a report online at www.essex.police.uk or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am and 11pm, quoting incident 405 of 16 May.

You can also call the police on 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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Tributes paid after death of goalkeeper

LOCAL NEWS



Photo credit: ArsenalFC.com

A former student at Epping Forest High School in Loughton, who went on to be a goalkeeper for football clubs including Arsenal and West Bromwich Albion, died on June 3 at the age of 51.

Alan Miller, who was born in Epping, started his professional career at the Gunners and was the first Arsenal goalkeeper to come on as a substitute in November 1992. He was part of the squad that won the FA Cup and League Cup double in 1993, and went on to make more than 100 appearances for West Brom.

He was forced to retire from the game in 2003 due to a back injury.

Former England and Arsenal goalkeeper, David Seaman, posted a tribute to Alan on Twitter upon hearing the news.

He said: "I'm so saddened by the death of my great friend and teammate, Alan Miller. He was such a larger-than-life character and always great fun to be around. I'll really miss you, mate."

Ian Wright, another ex-Arsenal teammate, said: "Going to miss you, Maxi. A great man, and such an important part of a special time at the club. Never once turned down any of the strikers for extra shooting practice, no matter how hard you had been training in any kind of weather."

"You always put the team first. Rest in peace, my friend."

Police issue appeal after man arrested for GBH

A man has been arrested on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm (GBH) after an assault in Loughton.

Police are appealing for witnesses following the incident in which a man and a woman, both known to each other, are believed to have had a verbal altercation between Marlescroft Way and South View Road on Saturday, May 8.

The man is described as being black with a short afro hairstyle, in his late teens, and wearing a navy tracksuit.

The victim, a woman in her early 20s, was wearing pink pyjamas at the time of the incident.

An 18-year-old man arrested in connection with the incident will face no further action at this time.

A spokesperson for Essex Police said: "Anyone who was in the area at the time and has not yet spoken to our officers, or has access to CCTV or dashcam footage that may be relevant, is asked to call 101 and quote the crime reference number 42/85579/21."

MP cuts ribbon at official showroom opening

The local MP for Epping Forest officially opened a new showroom in Loughton recently.

Dame Eleanor Laing, MP for Epping Forest, was invited to open the Chigwell Window Centre on High Road in Loughton on May 29.

The event marked the inauguration of the company's fourth showroom, with the first having opened in Collier Row in March 2016.

Dame Eleanor MP said that it was great to see a local company booming after a difficult year for businesses across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic.

She said: "I was delighted to be invited to officially open Chigwell Window Centre's new showroom in Loughton High Road."

"The past year has been extremely difficult for businesses and our local economy and so it is extremely heartening to see a local company able to expand during these difficult and uncertain times."

The Loughton showroom will join showrooms in Billericay and Manchester. With a manufacturing capacity of 200 products a week, Chigwell Window Centre has its own state-of-the-art factories in Essex, where it can custom design high-performance double glazing products according to each individual project.

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LOCAL NEWS

We are so fortunate to have Teresa Watts, the Pearly Queen of Clapton, as one of our ambassadors. She fully embraces and epitomises our ethos and vision of treating and supporting people humanely, with dignity and respect.

The Pearly Queen recently visited all our hubs to get to know our clients and volunteers. She then presented us with a huge cheque from The National Lottery Community Fund for £10,000. This grant will ensure our immediate future and will mean we can support more families in need with our growing service.

Teresa said: "It's amazing to hear so many stories about the impact 3food4U has had on so many lives. The relief of no longer having to live on £1 per day for food or having only a loaf of bread to last the week; support networks built from queuing outside together; the lady who couldn't speak after being overwhelmed by kindness because she had been feeding her children pasta and tomato sauce every day; the gentleman who said he attends Christmas Day just to see a smiling face because he lives alone. The stories



were endless.

"I also drove away with a car full of products for my 0-4 years baby bank.

"I will be supporting you all the way. Well done. You are all very special people."

We are offering free groceries, clothes and essentials without assessment or referral to anyone who needs them.

For more information, visit www.give.net/3food4u

Centre completes 15,000 jobs

Volunteers at a COVID-19 vaccination centre in Loughton have been praised as they pass the milestone of 15,000 jobs.

Dame Eleanor Laing, MP for Epping Forest, praised the Murray Hall vaccination centre after receiving both her vaccinations there.

Dame Eleanor MP said the centre has proved a success with local residents.

She said: "The success of the centre is the result of a real community effort where everyone - from NHS bosses to the army and local volunteer organisations - have come together."

"I have heard so many comments from people who have really appreciated being able to have their vaccinations close to home, without having to travel out of the local area."

Dame Eleanor MP also said that she has been impressed with how professionally the centre has been run.

She said: "I visited the centre shortly after it first opened and was there to receive my first vaccination. I continue to be really impressed by the efficient way that everything is running and the high number of people who have been vaccinated."

Loughton Town Council has given its approval for the Murray Hall to continue to be used as an NHS COVID-19 vaccination centre until next February.





Find your perfect GARDEN ROOM



If you are considering building a garden room, it is important to understand the different types and the benefits of each.

POTTING SHED OR GREENHOUSE

If you are into gardening or want to learn more about it, then having a designated potting shed or greenhouse can be helpful. A room like this can help you break into the world of gardening or expand your interest in growing different kinds of plants. If you have a small garden with minimal planting space, this is a good option for you, as you can grow a lot in one area.

PURPOSE-BUILT GARDEN ROOM

A purpose-built garden room is a more expensive option for those looking for some more living space. This style can work with any type of house. It is the most versatile option as it can be used for different purposes, such as a home office, a place to entertain friends, a playroom for children, a home gym, a garden kitchen, a lounge bar area or even a guest room. Also for this option, you may want to consider adding a water and electricity supply, which will allow you to add components such as a sink, fridge/freezer, TV, computer, lighting, electronic gym equipment and so on, depending on your needs. With a purpose-built room, you will have to ensure that you have a strong foundation for more stability; if not, this will need to be created.

POP-UP TENT

A pop-up tent is a great, affordable option for those looking for something quick to assemble that is also easy to remove. They come in many different sizes to suit different gardens. It can be a playroom for children, a place to entertain friends, a place to keep plants safe from the elements, or even for camping. This option is mostly suitable for the summer months.

SHEPHERD'S HUT

A shepherd's hut can be used as a place to entertain guests when you grill or cook outdoors. This type of garden room works best with country-style homes. You could use the hut to create a guest house, a chill-out zone, hobby room or home office. This option also requires a foundation to be added underneath.

Photo credit: Harrison James Contemporary Garden Rooms via housebeautiful.com, ratentclub.com, cottagescottages.co.uk



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DIY TOOLBOX BBQ

HOW TO TURN AN OLD TOOLBOX INTO A BBQ



Photo credit: Max McMurdo/Brent Darby via iDealHome.co.uk

BBQ season is fast approaching, but if the thought of forking out hundreds for a BBQ that's likely to get about two weekends of use before the great British summer is over is not appealing, we've got the solution.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

An old metal toolbox with drawers | Barbecue grills | Metal rivets | Handles to connect to the side of the box | A leather belt | A drill | An angle grinder or hacksaw

1: PREPARE THE TOOLBOX

The first step is to remove any tools, give the toolbox a thorough clean, and mark the bottoms of the drawers for where you wish to make the cuts needed to create the gaps for resting the barbecue grills.

TOP TIP: Drilling holes in each corner will make it easier to create clean cuts.

2: CUT THE DRAWER BASES OUT

Use your angle grinder or hacksaw to cut out the bottom of the drawers. Then sand the edges of the remaining material, using a sanding disc on your grinder.

TOP TIP: Wear the appropriate safety gloves and goggles, and take your time to make accurate cuts.

3: CUT THE BARBECUE GRILLS

Next, you'll want to take your barbecue grills, determine where they will be placed on your toolbox BBQ and then cut them. The angle grinder or hacksaw is your friend once more.

TOP TIP: Sanding the grills after they've been cut will remove any sharp edges.

4: ASSEMBLE THE UNIT

With each drawer of the toolbox now fitted with a barbecue grill, it's time to put them back. Small drawers at the top can store accessories while the bottom drawer will be where the coals are placed. The drawer above will be where cooking occurs.

TOP TIP: You can fit a temperature gauge by drilling a hole and bolting it in place.

5: MAKE THE FINISHING TOUCHES

If you're only planning to use the BBQ at home, you're done. However, if you drill and bolt some handles to the side and then attach the belt, you'll have the perfect portable BBQ.

TOP TIP: Remember that cooking should occur on paving slabs or other materials that do not conduct heat or pose safety risks. Avoid wood and grass at all costs.



Forest Feast

A basic guide to foraging



Not only is foraging a brilliant way to explore and learn about the great outdoors, but the food you pick is also healthy and organic. Plus, chances are you'll be cutting down on your weekly food bill. Here are five tips for food foraging:

ONE: Be brave. From garlic to mushrooms, berries to nettles, dandelion to seaweed, one of the attractions of foraging is appreciating the variety that exists on our doorsteps, so be brave and bold in what you choose.

TWO: Be certain. Everything you pick, however small and seemingly insignificant, is taking away from the flora and fauna, so be absolutely certain that what you're choosing is edible before you take it.

THREE: Be careful. Some parts of nature's rich bounty just won't agree with the human constitution. Mushrooms generally get referenced as the items we should be most careful about foraging, but hemlock, foxgloves and the ominous fool's parsley are all to be swerved.

FOUR: Be sparing. While it's tempting to bask in a spread of tastes, flavours and textures by picking

enough to see out the winter, true foraging – as outlined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 – is about taking small amounts to satisfy our immediate appetite, always ensuring there is something left for someone else.

FIVE: Be respectful. While it's a day out for us, remember we're actually encroaching on plant and animal habitats. Try to stick to designated routes, abiding by farmland, private property and nature reserve guidelines and designated boundaries to prevent disruption to animals and other people.

FORAGING CALENDAR

- > **JANUARY:** Winter fruits (blackberries, crab apples), pine nuts and chestnuts
- > **FEBRUARY – MARCH:** Mushrooms, nettles and edible plants such as dandelion, mint, watercress and wild onion
- > **APRIL – JULY:** Plants, herbs and edible flowers such as bellflower, elderflower, garlic mustard, chives, fennel and garlic
- > **AUGUST – OCTOBER:** Wild plants, nuts and berries such as hawthorn berries, strawberries, raspberries, bilberries and rosehips
- > **NOVEMBER – DECEMBER:** Edible winter plants such as bittercress, bullace, pine and hops.



Adopt me!

Whether you are looking to get your first pet or you want to add another furry friend to your household, there are many reasons why you should choose to adopt a pet from a rescue centre or animal shelter.

The chance to save a life

Sadly, even with the best will in the world, some shelters are forced to euthanise animals owing to a lack of space and resources. By adopting a pet from one of these over-stretched facilities, you could be literally saving an animal's life.

To fight against puppy mills

When you buy a puppy from an online seller, or even from a pet store, it is highly likely that this animal came from a puppy mill. In factory-style breeding facilities that always put profit above welfare, puppies from puppy mills are often kept in shockingly bad conditions and tend to have behavioural problems as a result.

You will save money

If you are thinking about approaching a breeder, you should know that this can be a very expensive route to go down. However, when adopting from a shelter, animals are often microchipped, spayed or neutered, and vaccinated already, saving you a pretty penny.

You will get a great animal

Contrary to popular belief, most animals from rescue centres are not damaged or dangerous; they are happy and healthy pets that, through no fault of their own, have been made homeless.

Where can you adopt a pet?

Pet Adoption UK is a great online service that allows you to find a pet by relevant search criteria, such as age, type and location. With thousands of pets looking for homes each day, you can also search for local charities that have specific pets looking to be rehomed, such as Cats Protection and Dogs Trust.

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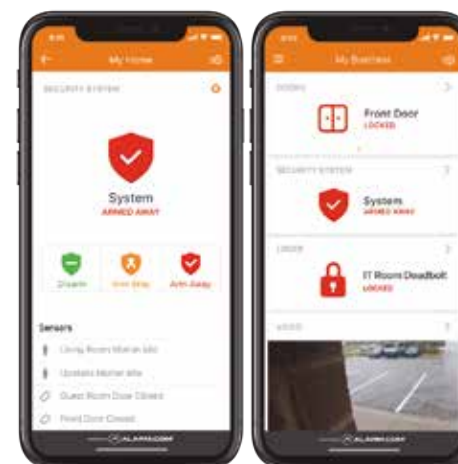
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Plastic fuelling

DISCOVER THE NEW TECHNOLOGY THAT IS ABOUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD BY CONVERTING PLASTIC WASTE INTO JET FUEL

More than 10 million tonnes of plastic enter our oceans every year. The aviation industry and air travel account for more than 2.5 per cent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. Combined, these industries are among the largest polluters in the world. Researchers at Washington State University have been able to develop a new, innovative way to prevent plastic from going to waste – and jet fuel from using up so many precious resources.

Today, the environmental crisis is more imminent and severe than ever, and while scientists are aware of the damage of plastic pollution on the environment, recycling plastic is still challenging.

Most recycling methods today leverage a process that melts and remoulds the discarded plastics or uses extremely high reaction temperatures to create new plastic products. Both methods use up great quantities of energy, time, resources and money. These obstacles make it impossible for these methods to be adopted at a commercial level, which causes more than 90 per cent of plastic to end up in landfill.

Chuhua Jia and Hongfei Lin, researchers at the Gene and Linda Voiland School of Chemical Engineering and Bioengineering, have addressed the costs and extended time frames involved with recycling plastic.

First, a mix of waste plastic products was ground and turned into fragments. The granules were then placed in a tube reactor on top of activated carbon. In the process, the activated carbon acts as a catalyst, which is a substance that facilitates a specific chemical reaction while being immune to the reaction itself. In this case, the carbon breaks down the chemical bonds in the plastic, releasing hydrogen – an essential component of jet fuel.

Thanks to their innovative catalytic process, the researchers were able to convert up to 90 per cent of plastic waste to jet fuel. All this while also shortening reaction times to under one hour and reducing temperatures to 220°C.

This technology is still in development and far from entering the market commercially. However, it does already represent a beacon of hope in the fight to reduce plastic waste, minimise pollution and protect the environment.





KIDS

PAINT YOUR OWN WATER BOTTLE



Keeping your kids hydrated can be a challenge – at least, it was before you helped them create their very own, personalised water bottle. Cheap and easy to do (depending on the design you choose), this craft requires minimal supervision.

YOU WILL NEED:

1 white stainless steel water bottle | A paint brush | Acrylic paint in their chosen colours | Gloss sealant or varnish

HOW TO MAKE:

1. CHOOSE YOUR DESIGN

Depending on the age of your child and their personal preferences, there is a wide range of different designs you can choose from, some of which are super simple and others that are a bit more complex.

Design ideas for younger kids: Hand prints, flowers, fruits, footballs, princesses, animals, robots or vehicles such as cars, trains or aeroplanes.

Ideas for older kids: Just their name (à la Love Island), their favourite sports team, floral or geometric patterns, or their favourite artist.

2. PENCIL ON YOUR DESIGN

If you have younger children, you may want to do this step for them, although if they want to have a go themselves, why not let them? Lightly draw their chosen design directly onto the water bottle. Don't worry about pencil marks, as the paint will cover them up.

3. PAINT YOUR DESIGN

Starting with the outline of your words or images, carefully start painting. Once you have finished the outline, fill in the rest of the shape. If you are worried about smudging, leave each part to dry before moving on to the next.

4. APPLY GLOSS SEALANT OR VARNISH

Once you have finished painting your entire design, leave your water bottle to dry completely. Then all you need to do is apply a coat of gloss sealant or varnish as per the manufacturer's instructions.



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WHAT CAN £250,000

buy you in each region in England?

Have you ever wondered where you can get more bang for your buck when it comes to property investment? With the extension of the stamp duty holiday until September on home purchases below £250,000, let's see what you can buy on or under budget in each region.

NORTH EAST: Asking prices in the North East have increased by 5.4 per cent in the last year, seeing one of the biggest changes across the country. However, you can still purchase a 3-bedroom property for a little more than £150,000.

NORTH WEST: Boasting the biggest price increase, up 7.3 per cent in the last 12 months, the average asking price for a 3-bedroom property in this region is £193,357. Expect to be able to find a 4-bedroom detached new build under the £250,000 threshold.

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER: With prices up a modest 2.8 per cent, the average price of a 3-bedroom property is £188,538. Head to Bradford or Kingston upon Hull for the cheapest homes in the region.

MIDLANDS: The East Midlands is another fast-selling region and you can find some beautiful 3-bedroom detached homes in sought-after, semi-rural areas such as Sutton-on-Sea for around £245,000.

The West Midlands is one of the regions that takes the least amount of time to find a buyer (on average 65 days). You can purchase a 3-bedroom semi-detached house in the popular area of Maypole for £250,000.

EAST OF ENGLAND: The third most expensive region in the UK, you can still find some areas where your budget will stretch that little bit further, such as in Norwich where you can get a 3-bedroom detached home for £250,000.

SOUTH EAST: After London, this is the most expensive region in the UK, with the average asking price of 3-bedroom properties being £372,655. However, we did find a 3-bedroom end-of-terrace house for sale in Deal, Kent, with an asking price of £250,000.

SOUTH WEST: With prices rising by 3.4 per cent in the last year and the average asking price of a 3-bedroom property at £291,861, head to the county of Somerset to find 3-bedroom terraced properties within budget.

LONDON: Surprisingly, London is the only region to experience a drop in prices in the last 12 months. However, the average price of a home is still twice the national average. Barking and Dagenham and Bexley are the cheapest boroughs in London, where you should be able to find a 2-bedroom flat within budget.



BUSINESS & PROPERTY



The Surge of CONNECTED FITNESS

The pandemic caused gym closures – but it hasn't stopped people from looking after their health and fitness... the home gym market just thrived

Over the past few years, the home fitness equipment market has been expanding steadily, with an annual growth rate of 2.75 per cent. But the pandemic – and related gym and sports centre closures – has been the game changer no one could have foreseen.

Today, the market for fitness apps – which was valued at a little more than \$3.3million at the beginning of 2019 – is predicted to grow by 25.6 per cent annually up to 2025, reaching an impressive valuation of more than \$13million.

So, apps and home gym equipment – such as Sweat, the Echelon Fit Bike, Runkeeper, MapMyRun and Strava – have been gaining a larger percentage of the market. But it is the Peloton phenomenon that investors are still marvelling at. As home-bound, health-conscious consumers started to invest in the firm's treadmills and stationary bikes, Peloton reported a 172 per cent surge in sales, translating into Peloton shares (NASDAQ: PTON) being up by 220 per cent.

The firm reports that the number of subscribers skyrocketed by 113 per cent by the end of June 2020, hitting the 1.09 million mark – and it is expected to reach a whopping

two million by September 2021. Peloton apps and virtual classes, which currently have more than 1.6 million subscribers, are not the only 'connected fitness' tools to look out for. The sector, which provides a safer, more accessible way for consumers to reach their fitness goals, is expected to report a compound annual growth rate of 31.2 per cent and reach a staggering \$5.96billion by 2025. Combining a consumer's digital life and fitness goals, home gym equipment, online workouts and fitness apps are taking over the market and reshaping the health and fitness industry.



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State of INDEPENDENCE

CELEBRATING JULY 4 – AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY – AND ITS HISTORY

Independence is a real buzzword at the moment – from Brexit to the failed European Super League to our friends north of the border, everyone appears to want to be free.

Of course, the most famous example of this was undertaken by the Americans on July 4, 1776, when the Yanks broke away from us Brits, who had been resident in North America for more than 200 years.

Back then, people living in the 13 colonies – New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina – had to pay taxes to Britain, even though they had no representatives in Parliament.

Tired of being ruled by a superpower some 4,000 miles away, the rather wordy Colonies' Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia came together to put forward a document – the Declaration of Independence – which was sent to

the UK on July 4, 1776.

The British did not want to give up the United States without a fight, and battles ensued.

The war ended on September 3, 1783, with the British Parliament finally granting America's wish to go it alone.

By 1880, Independence Day was recognised as an official holiday, and 60 years later it became a paid holiday, ensuring people could come together to recognise what is effectively regarded as the birth date of the United States of America as we know it today.

In 2021, the day is marked with parades, barbecues, fireworks, concerts, political speeches, and parties. It reinforces the fierce patriotism Americans have, and in troubling times seeks to bind together everyone who lives and works under the stars and stripes in the world's most powerful country.



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150 years of the
HIGHWAY CODE



The Highway Code is something everyone is familiar with – but only a few know where it comes from and what it first looked like.

Every driver in the UK has looked through the strict set of rules that make up the Highway Code at least once. However, only a few know its history and how it has changed over time. First introduced in April 1931, the original Highway Code looked a lot different from the one we know today.

The one-penny, 24-page-long booklet was the first attempt to reduce the whopping 7,000 fatalities occurring every year on the road – at a time when there were only 2.3 million motor vehicles circulating in Great Britain.

The first edition of the Highway Code contained some advice modern drivers will be familiar with – such as being mindful of others and always putting safety first. However, the original Highway Code did not mention mirrors (as they weren't a requirement for motor vehicles at the time) and recommended drivers sound their horn while overtaking.

Most of the pages of the original booklet were dedicated to describing hand signals to be used by drivers, pedestrians and police officers – recommendations that are today collected on a single page of the 189-page modern Highway Code.

The changes in motor technologies and road design led to the introduction of new colour illustrations, a dedicated section to motorway driving, and road sign diagrams – even if there were

only 10 described in the second edition.

Although these facts might sound curious to today's drivers, the modern Highway Code still contains some unusual rules. For example, under the Road Traffic Act 1998, it is illegal for drivers to splash pedestrians with puddles, sleep in their car if drunk, and pay at a drive-through using their phone.

Undoubtedly, the Highway Code will continue to adapt to any future changes in technology and the road environment, but so far, the results of its introduction have been impressive. Today, while the number of cars in the UK has skyrocketed to 33 million, fewer than 1,700 people are killed on the road annually.



Photo credit: www.gov.uk, www.driving.org



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That cup that FLOWETH OVER

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE FINEST DOMESTIC KNOCKOUT COMPETITION OF THEM ALL

Living in the UK, we can end up taking for granted many things that, to us, seem relatively customary, and the FA Cup arguably falls into that category.

Yet when you hear of overseas players having spent a childhood enthralled by the trials and triumphs of our most famous domestic knockout competition, the true status of the cup comes to the fore. We may have grown more complacent about a tournament that welcomes in almost 900 club sides every season, yet the FA Cup is truly a competition we should feel proud to marvel over.

July 20 marks the 150th anniversary of the FA Cup being formed. The competition began in 1871, with 15 teams allowed to enter. The final, which attracted a modest crowd of 2,000 people, saw Wanderers triumph over Royal Engineers.

In the modern game, COVID-19 notwithstanding, the semi-finals and final at Wembley are watched by crowds in excess of 85,000, and while other competitions – notably the Champions League –

have wrestled some of the attention away, the competition retains huge importance for clubs of all sizes.

Over the years, it has given us tremendous, defining memories. The famous White Horse (Billie) Final of 1923 was notable for its crowd of an estimated 300,000 people inside Wembley; while the Stanley Matthews showpiece in 1953 saw the legendary footballer lead Blackpool to a 4–3 cup success against Bolton Wanderers.

The 1981 final saw Ricky Villa score a memorable Wembley goal to see off Manchester City, and seven years later the crazy gang defeated the culture club as Wimbledon stunned Liverpool 1–0. Of course, giant-killings on the road to Wembley (think Sutton United, Hereford United, Colchester United, Wrexham and more) are part of the fabric of this great competition.

The FA Cup may have had to evolve over recent years, but its value remains.



FA Cup White Horse Final 1923

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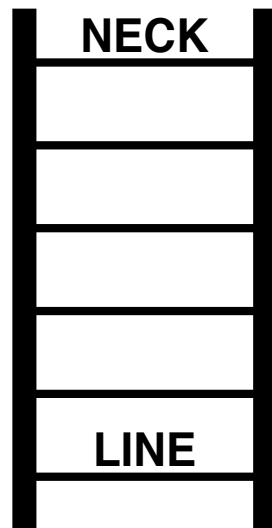
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- ▶ You can tell the outside temperature by counting the chirps of a cricket. Count the number of chirps in 14 seconds and add 40 to get a rough temperature in Fahrenheit
- ▶ The coldest temperature recorded on Earth was -89.2°C in Antarctica in 1983
- ▶ During a heatwave, the temperature can make train tracks bend, often causing delays
- ▶ The rainfall in Kerala, India, was red in July 2001
- ▶ Damage caused by Hurricane Andrew in Florida caused captive pythons to escape
- ▶ Some frogs are noisier before rain arrives as their croaks are reflected and magnified by the low clouds
- ▶ Earthworms come up closer to the surface when it rains

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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