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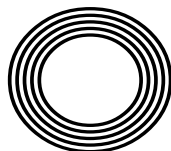
TOP 5
tech-free
holidays

Why we celebrate
ST PATRICK'S DAY

VIVA MAGENTA:
Pantone Colour of the Year

PETER JONES CBE

How this dragon proved he's impossible to slay



FREE

Photo credit: BBC/Graeme Hunter/
Caroline McDonald

As any expecting mother knows, pregnancy can be both a beautiful and challenging experience.

As your body changes and adapts to accommodate your growing baby, it's essential to ensure that you're taking care of yourself in the best way possible. One fantastic option that more and more expecting mothers are turning to is **chiropractic care**.

Chiropractic care is a non-invasive, drug-free approach to healthcare that focuses on the musculoskeletal system, particularly the spine. It can help relieve pain, reduce inflammation, and improve mobility, all of which can be especially beneficial for pregnant women.

Before birth, chiropractic care can help align the pelvis, which can make for a smoother delivery. It can also help alleviate common pregnancy symptoms such as back pain. During pregnancy, chiropractic care can also help regulate hormones and improve overall wellness.

After birth, chiropractic care can help new mothers recover from childbirth faster. It can help reduce inflammation, restore proper alignment, and relieve pain associated with the postpartum period. Chiropractic can also help new mothers with issues such as breastfeeding difficulties, postpartum depression, and fatigue.

Chiropractic care is a safe and effective way to support your body through the unique challenges of pregnancy and childbirth.

By addressing musculoskeletal issues, it can help ensure a healthier and more comfortable pregnancy, a smoother delivery, and a faster recovery. If you're an expecting mother or a new mum, consider adding chiropractic care to your self-care routine. Your body (*and your baby*) will thank you for it.



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Editor's notes...

MARCH 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

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

I recently saw a picture of basketball player LeBron James making a shot that would break the all-time scoring record in the NBA. Although this was an iconic moment, it was the crowd that caught my eye.

Out of around 200 people in the shot behind him, in the crowd you could count on one hand how many of them did not have their smartphones out videoing this moment. In a world where you can see every sporting moment on video nowadays, it made me realise how important it is to remember to live in the moment and enjoy it with our own eyes, rather than through a

camera lens.

I have been more conscious of this now, even when I'm at home, to spend less time on my phone and more time in the moment. Having a daily cut-off point when my phone gets locked away for the evening and also on weekends has helped me spend less time staring at a screen.

So how about setting yourself the challenge of stepping away from your phone this month? You'll be amazed at how your quality time with family and friends improves when you no longer have this distraction to hand.

Nik Allen

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

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Home Office/Studies



The story of ST PATRICK

In the USA, some people celebrate St Patrick's Day not just by wearing green clothes, but also by drinking green beer or milkshakes and eating green bagels and grits. Chicago even dyes its river bright green. If you think all this sounds more American than Irish, you're spot on. People join in the parades and celebrations whatever their heritage, but about one in every 10 citizens in the USA claims to have Irish ancestors. So what's the real story behind St Patrick's Day on March 17?

St Patrick was born in Britain around 386 AD into a well-to-do Roman family. His birth name was Maewyn Succat, and he grew up on the west coast, probably in Wales. At age 16, he was kidnapped by pirates and taken to Ireland, where he was sold as a slave. His job was to look after sheep for his master, a Druid high priest.

During his time as a slave, Maewyn devoted himself to Christianity, his parents' faith, and became determined to convert pagan Ireland.

After six years in captivity, Maewyn persuaded some local sailors to let him board their ship. After landing in France, he made his way back to his family in Britain. And from there, he travelled back to France to train as a priest in Auxerre.

When he was ordained, Maewyn changed his name to Patricius – or Patrick – which comes from the Latin for 'father figure'. Then, Pope St Celestine sent him to Ireland to spread the Christian message.

At first, the Irish people weren't keen. Patrick was threatened, robbed and beaten. But his strategy of persuading the most influential people first, including his former slavemaster, eventually paid off. He also had the good sense to incorporate pagan rituals into church practices to make them more appealing. Over the years, Patrick and his fellow missionaries spread their teachings across the country and set

up churches, monasteries and schools.

It's believed that Patrick died on or around March 17, 461 AD, when he would have been in his mid-70s. He died in Saul in County Down, Northern Ireland, and he's said to be buried in Downpatrick.

The Catholic church never formally declared him a saint, because the system for creating saints didn't start until the 12th century. But the Irish people and their leaders recognised him as one because of the decades he'd spent spreading the gospel.

The Irish have celebrated St Patrick's Day for more than 1,000 years. Traditionally, it involved donning a shamrock, going to church and tucking into a traditional meal of cabbage and bacon. But over the years, some St Patrick's Day fun from the USA has caught on back home. You won't find green beer – and certainly not green rivers. But there are plenty of lively parades, particularly in Dublin, with traditional singing, dancing and colourful floats.

Photo credit: TZIDO SUN/Shutterstock.com

Holi

THE FESTIVAL OF COLOURS

If you're lucky enough to experience the Hindu festival of Holi in India, it's an experience you'll never forget. People put aside their differences and come together to celebrate the end of winter and the beginning of spring, based on the Hindu lunar calendar.

This year's festival takes place on March 7 and 8 in India and among Hindu communities across the world. But what really happens at Holi, and how did it come about?

On Holi day itself, people take to the streets, singing and dancing and throwing powdered dyes and coloured water at each other – so it's no surprise that everyone ends up drenched in a rainbow of colours.

The colours of the dyes are significant. Red is associated with purity, green with vitality, blue with calm, and yellow with piety.

In the evening, when everyone's had a chance to freshen up and put on clean clothes, people visit their friends and exchange sweets.

In some places, people start celebrating the evening before Holi by lighting a bonfire. As a token of gratitude for the harvest, people throw coconuts, wheat sheaves and green chickpeas into the flames.

The bonfire tradition is based on the tale of a witch called Holika. She was burned to death in a fire by the Hindu god Lord Vishnu for trying to kill her devout nephew. To this day, some people burn an effigy of her on their bonfire.

The origin of the coloured dyes may lie with another Hindu deity, Lord Krishna. When he was a boy, he loved practical jokes, including throwing coloured water over his playmates.

But others say the custom comes down to Holi falling at a time of year when people are most at risk of catching diseases. Before the tradition of flinging around colourful dyes started, people threw herbs to keep ailments at bay.

Whatever the reason, Holi is definitely a time to celebrate life – and long may it last.

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HOME & DIY

TILE- Tastic!



If you're looking for an affordable and highly effective way to update your kitchen, then installing new kitchen tiles is the way to go.

With so many different styles and designs to choose from, you are guaranteed to find something you love from our list below.

TONAL SHADES: Neutrals, greys and creamy whites remain a safe but sophisticated choice for your kitchen and promise to make this pivotal space look both fresh and clean. However, rather than sticking to just one colour, why not combine several tonal shades? Choose tiles with a naturalistic finish for a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

COLOUR BLOCKING: If you're not a fan of patterned tiles but you still want to make an impact, colour blocking is a great solution. Put a spin on your standard brick tiles by arranging them in horizontal, vertical or even diagonal stripes of colour. Alternatively, play around with different widths of coloured tiles on the floor to see what looks best.

EXPOSED BRICK: Add character to your kitchen with exposed brick-style tiles that are perfect for both feature walls and splashbacks. Much more affordable than using actual bricks, brick slips, which are tiles that are made to look like bricks, allow you to achieve the same look without breaking the bank.

HEXAGON TILES: If bright colours in your kitchen aren't your thing, then why not add an extra dimension by filling the space with different shapes? For example, white hexagon tiles can be used to create a sleek and contemporary look in a modern kitchen.

3D TILES: 3D tiles have seen a surge in popularity in recent years owing to their ability to add the wow factor to any style of kitchen. Choose from sharp geometric shapes, undulating wave patterns or more subtle textured tiles.



Photo credit: fireclaytile.com, Future PLC/Mark Scott via idealhome.co.uk, tiles360.co.uk, loveproperty.com



The Lounge Club

THIS MARCH AT THE LOUNGE CLUB



3rd March

Neon Blue

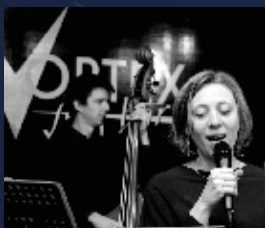
Neon Blue offer an evening of choice Jazz Classics, Rat Pack Hits & Brazilian Bossa Nova lead by critically acclaimed tenor saxophonist John Martin.



10th March

Omar

Omar returns with a brand new album that many say is without doubt the strongest of his entire career.



11th March

The Dave Manington Trio

Having played together for many years the interplay and communication between these musicians is almost telepathic. The melodic nature and great ensemble playing of the group make it highly accessible.



17th March

James Brown is Annie

Regulars on STV and BBC Radio Scotland, JBIA are the only band to have headlined two different stages at the famous Edinburgh Hogmanay Street Party. Purveyors of full-fat, calorie-laden, whipped up funk 'n' soul.



The Lounge Club

THIS MARCH AT THE LOUNGE CLUB



24th March

Rose Windross

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25th March

Kenny Thomas

We have one of the UK's most successful soul singers of his generation Kenny Thomas. His debut album 'Voices' selling 600,000 copies in the UK.



31st March

Jaki Graham

She paved the way for many black British female solo artists with her international success of a string of hits from '85 onwards.

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How to use LEFTOVER paint

Anyone who's decorated their home will know the dilemma of what to do with leftover paint. You'll often find tins left over after painting projects, which normally end up gathering dust (or rust) in your shed or garage.

So what should you do with all that leftover paint? Here are five ideas for some simple projects for your unused paint.

ADD A COLOURFUL ACCENT

While you might not have enough paint left over for a whole wall, you can use it to paint part of a wall. An accent behind some shelving, around a photo frame or simply to break up a block of colour can add a nice contrast to your walls.

UPCYCLE SOME FURNITURE

Leftover paint can be used to upcycle old furniture. From a pop of colour to a more neutral hue, your unused paint can bring a new lease of life to a piece in need of a facelift.

PAINT A PATTERN ON THE WALL

Patterned walls don't just have to come from wallpaper. From polka dots to lines and animal-style splodges, you can use your paint to create a cool contrasting pattern that will add some interest to your space.

GIVE PLANT POTS A MAKEOVER

Want to brighten up your plant pots? Use your leftover paint to give them a new look and instantly brighten up your garden and windowsill.

PAINT PHOTO FRAMES

Adding a little colour to photo frames can make them stand out and is an ideal way to upcycle them, saving you some money and helping the environment too.

Finding ways to use up your leftover paint will help you prevent waste and help you do some interesting and colourful DIY projects around the home.

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HOME & DIY

Viva MAGENTA

Pantone Colour of the Year 2023:

A bold and brave shade, Pantone's Colour of the Year for 2023 is Viva Magenta. Perfect for anyone who wants to start the spring feeling empowered and unstoppable, there are lots of ways that you can incorporate this colour into your home.

What is Viva Magenta?

According to the colour experts at Pantone, Viva Magenta is "a pulsating colour whose exuberance promotes a joyous and optimistic celebration, writing a new narrative". A hybrid shade of red, pink and purple that provides the perfect balance between warm and cool tones, Viva Magenta is an inclusive colour that is easy to add to your home.

What does Viva Magenta represent?

The story behind Viva Magenta is all about the balance between our digital and physical lives. In recent years, people have become drawn to nature in their homes and Viva Magenta has been chosen to reflect our pull towards natural colours. Furthermore, it reflects the movement surrounding climate change, sustainability and land protection.

How can you use Viva Magenta in your home?

Incorporating Viva Magenta is an easy way to add a touch of fun to your home. Some of the best ways to incorporate this shade into your existing interior design include:

- Paint a magenta feature wall in your bedroom or living room
- Invest in an eye-catching magenta sofa
- Add pops of colour through rugs, curtains, pillows and other soft furnishings
- Paint your kitchen cabinets a rich pink or invest in a magenta splashback
- Try magenta dinnerware to create a sense of opulence in your dining room

What colours go well with Viva Magenta?

Viva Magenta pairs well with both yellow and turquoise, as well as being a good match for most dominant colour categories.

Photo credit: zen-living.ca, snugsofa.com





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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Council cancels plans

A Freedom of Information request, submitted by a campaign group Save Mill Hall, revealed that Rochford District Council (RDC) paid £622,000 to the council's development partner GB Partnerships.

The money was paid to remove The Mill Arts and Events Centre in Rayleigh from the Asset Delivery Programme (ADP). Under the plans, the centre would have been developed into flats and a smaller venue.

A spokesperson for RDC said: "At an extraordinary council meeting on September 8, 2020, it was agreed that the council would enter into a contract with GB Partnerships to deliver the council's ADP."

"The purpose of the ADP is to regenerate the area and provide facilities for residents and businesses as well as new homes and office accommodation. The Mill Hall site was a part of that programme."

"After extensive consultation and listening to the community, the decision was made last year by the executive to reopen The Mill Arts and Events Centre. The centre reopened in September 2022."

"This cost is the result of taking the site out of our contract with GB Partnerships and reopening the centre."

GB Partnerships has been contacted for comment.

Singer announces dates for upcoming tour

American singer-songwriter Dean Friedman (pictured right) will perform at The Mill Arts and Events Centre in Rayleigh on Friday, May 12.

Dean will be performing solo, jumping back and forth between guitar and keyboard. The show will feature songs from his four-decade career, as well as new tracks from his latest album, *American Lullaby*.

He said: "Flying thousands of miles across the pond and various time zones can be a bit daunting, but it's always worth it to be able to jump on stage and share my songs with what's always an appreciative and enthusiastic audience."

"I also enjoy the slightly nervous anticipation of performing in a venue and city I've not played before. Very much looking forward to my first visit to The Mill."

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Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford



LOCAL NEWS RAYLEIGH

At the end of January, the Mid and South Essex ANHS Foundation Trust (which runs Basildon, Broomfield and Southend hospitals), announced that it has received £8million of government money from the Department of Health and Social Care to completely remodel the A&E department at Southend Hospital, which is very welcome news indeed.

I have visited the hospital a number of times down the years and the existing A&E department is not really built to modern standards, has a poor layout and not enough treatment cubicles – a point that has been made to me by both hospital management and staff in the past.

This money is intended to completely revamp the A&E department, not just to increase its capacity, but also to make it a better working environment and one in which there can be a more efficient flow of patients who need help.

The work will be completed in stages, some of which

will begin in the next few months and with the whole project intended to be finished by the spring of 2024.

As well as providing an improved A&E department, this will hopefully reduce the time that ambulances may have to wait in the car park at Southend Hospital (about which, unsurprisingly, I have received a lot of correspondence from constituents in recent months).

This one project will not solve all of the challenges at Southend Hospital, but it is critically important and it is something that I and my fellow south Essex local MPs – Anna Firth MP, Rebecca Harris MP and Sir James Duddridge MP – have been campaigning on for some time, so we are all very pleased to see that the money has finally come through and will be put to good use.

Clothing shop to close down

Clothing retailer M&Co will be closing down all of its stores, including the branch on Rayleigh High Street.

The company went into administration in December and was bought out by AK Retail Holdings last month.

However, the deal did not include the stores, which will be closing down as a result.

M&Co wrote on Facebook: "Unfortunately, we haven't received the news we would have hoped for during our administration period, and would like to share this news with you. As we haven't received any funded, deliverable offers that would result in the transfer of the company's stores or staff to a potential buyer, this means that all of our stores will close.

"The M&Co 'brand' has been purchased, but unfortunately this does not include a future for our stores or staff. The majority of stores are expected to continue trading into April. We will update you closer to the time of our actual closing date.

"We hope you will appreciate this is also a very difficult time for staff working in the stores and we ask for respect and understanding when raising an issue. We thank you all for your continuous support, and we



hope to see you all over the next couple of months."

Shoppers took to Twitter to share their disappointment over the closure.

One user wrote: "Just went to M&Co today and seeing the closing down sale signs makes me sad. It's a real shame."

Another wrote: "See that they have gone into administration – do hope that a buyer can be found – lovely and important store in our town, with great staff."



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: Steve Parker

Volunteers visit Ukraine to provide aid

A group of volunteers from Wickford travelled to Ukraine last month to donate vital supplies to those in need.

The team set off on their journey on February 3. The trip was organised by Steve Parker, owner of Boxers Barbers on Southend Road, and saw six drivers in three large vehicles deliver generators, medical supplies, food, clothing, power banks and batteries.

This isn't the first time Steve and his group of volunteers have provided support to Ukraine following the Russian invasion. The Boxers Barbers 4 Ukraine Appeal has now made a total of 15 trips, delivering humanitarian supplies worth £1.5million.

Steve said: "It was a very successful trip, but a very

hard and arduous journey as there is no electricity in Ukraine. We slept in an old church in minus 10 weather conditions and it was snowing.

"Me and the guys were all ex-soldiers and served in places like Bosnia, which is a similar situation to Ukraine. We decided it was time to take action and help these people.

"All in all, the trip was an absolute success."

The volunteers will return to Ukraine on March 8, marking a year since their first trip.

If you would like to donate, visit www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/boxers-barbers-ukraine-appeal

If you want to donate supplies, you can drop them off at the barber's at 161 Southend Road, Wickford.

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MP shares concerns over delayed station build



Photo credit: Felix Morris

Mark Francois (pictured left), MP for Rayleigh and Wickford, recently met with representatives of Greater Anglia to challenge the company about the delay in the building of the new Wickford Station.

Plans to develop the station were unveiled in May 2020, but the project came to a halt owing to funding issues and it remains half complete.

Mr Francois MP said: "Although Abellio [Greater Anglia's parent company] did succeed in keeping a basic service running throughout the pandemic, for which I must commend them, I have been deeply disappointed by their handling of this project. It is clear that Abellio should have secured full planning permission from Basildon Council before demolition, as well as making sure that they had the funding to fully rebuild the station.

"While I welcome the revised dates for the project given to me during the meeting, it is clear that my constituents deserve far better."

A Greater Anglia spokesperson said: "We are working to replace the station building at Wickford as soon as is practical. A consultation on the new station design is due to start this spring, with the intention of then submitting a planning application over the summer. If all the relevant approvals can be secured, it is hoped that construction of the new design could then begin next year, subject to the necessary funding also being secured. We will keep customers updated.

"In the meantime, work is underway to provide a temporary canopy at the station over the ticket office area and along the platform."

Basildon Council declined to comment.

Woman sentenced for racial and religious harassment

A woman was sentenced last month for harassing a woman in Wickford.

Amy Taylor, 23, of West Street, Blandford Forum, pleaded guilty to the offence, which the court found was racially and religiously aggravated, when she appeared at Poole Magistrates' Court on Monday,

February 20.

Taylor was sentenced to a conditional discharge for 12 months and ordered to pay a surcharge to fund victim services of £22. No order was made for costs and her guilty plea was taken into account when imposing sentence.

Park extension finished after planting of orchard

The 26-acre extension to Wickford Memorial Park, known as Beauchamps Meadow, concluded last month with the planting of a community orchard featuring 200 fruit trees.

The park was previously used by Beauchamps School, but as the school no longer used the site, Basildon Council decided to utilise the biodiversity of the area for the benefit of the local community.

The extension includes a 3,500-tree woodland area, two inline ponds with more than 20 aquatic plants, a 12 feature tree parkland area, and a hectare of wildflower meadow, plus an eco-corridor between the main park and extension site.

The community orchard, which features 61 species of local heritage varieties, was planted last month by the council's Parks Team, alongside the Friends of Wickford Memorial Park and volunteers from the wider community.

Councillor Jeff Henry, cabinet member for health, wellbeing, leisure, arts and culture, said: "This is such a great project and it's great for Wickford and the wider community that the Beauchamps Meadow project is now complete.

"Wickford Memorial Park, with its initial 85 acres, was already a lovely location to walk, relax and play. Now, with its additional 26 acres of diverse grassland, it adds an even more exciting dimension for its visitors.

"Do go and check it out, and take advantage of one of the brilliant open spaces we have locally."



Photo credit: Wickford Town Council via Facebook



LOCAL NEWS WICKFORD



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PETER JONES

AND A HOST OF TALL TALES

At 6ft 6", formidable *Dragons' Den* mainstay Peter Jones CBE has a lofty view over more than just his business landscape.

His is a stature that has evolved over four decades of being at the cut and thrust of business, on the way amassing a personal fortune of more than £1.2billion.

The idea of standing up to one of the formidable commercial minds in *Dragons' Den* is, ultimately, a thing few entrepreneurs relish. The hit BBC reality business show puts pitchers through their paces en route to a prospective investment offer, yet few who duel with telecoms wizard Peter Jones ever emerge victorious.

The 56 year old has been the only Dragon to appear in every season of the hit show, the 20th series of which is currently airing on BBC One.

He has mastered the art of pulling off a devastating look of utter incredulity, although the element of surprise is part of what makes the show so entertaining.

"Over so many years in business, there should

be few things that surprise me," he begins, "and by now I thought I might have exhausted the ability to be surprised or shocked by some of the ideas or investment valuations that come my way.

"In truth, though, people will always surprise you, and that's what makes the show so entertaining. You can expect the unexpected, because it will always arrive."

That line perfectly encapsulates Jones's climb to becoming one of the country's most successful and best recognised entrepreneurs. Growing up in Langley, Berkshire, before moving to Maidenhead at the age of seven, his first business was in the production of personal computers, a venture he began at the age of just 16.

While the business excelled at first, the evolution of home computing in the 90s saw Jones lose ground. A series of bad decisions led to the collapse of his enterprise, and with it went his millionaire status. At 28, he was forced to sell the remnants of the company to IBM and start again.

Subsequently joining Siemens, he was soon branching out again by himself, launching Phones International Group in 1998, a business that garnered more than £14million in sales in its first year alone.

Further personal ventures in TV, retail and lifestyle projects have been supplemented with more than 60 investments via *Dragons' Den* – where Jones is regarded as the most plain-speaking and shrewdest on the panel.

"I think when it comes to business, it's important to be polite and engaging, but ultimately you can't hang about," he says. "If something needs to be said, it needs to be said, and tiptoeing around the issue has been the death of many a good idea."

As well as gaining a CBE in 2009, he runs The Peter Jones Enterprise Academy and The Peter Jones Foundation – both committed to driving and promoting the next generation of business minds, no matter what barriers exist in someone's life.

As for the most salient business lesson of them all – Jones insists there is nothing more defining than starting again from scratch. "Failure is arguably the best route to success," he says. "Most entrepreneurs have been at the point where the hopelessness seems profound. I've been there myself, and to be that low, only to rise back up, is one of the most fulfilling things you can do. Ultimately, never give up."

Photo credit: BBC Studios



PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

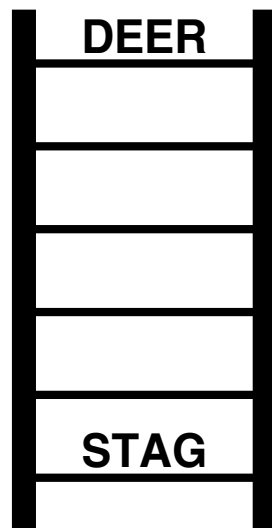
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- ▶ LION
- ▶ LIZARD
- ▶ PANDA
- ▶ REINDEER
- ▶ RHINOCEROS
- ▶ SALAMANDER
- ▶ SNAKE
- ▶ SPRINGBOK
- ▶ TIGER
- ▶ TURTLE
- ▶ WARTHOG
- ▶ WOMBAT



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ There are 63 million pairs of chopsticks manufactured in China every year – that's 126 million single sticks.
- ▶ In Pakistan, a small city called Sialkot is where 40 per cent of the world's footballs are produced.
- ▶ Covering 2,653 miles, Chile is the world's longest country from north to south.
- ▶ There are more than 2,100 castles stand in Germany.
- ▶ Canada has more lakes than every other country in the world put together.
- ▶ Iceland has no army and is recognised as the world's most peaceful country.
- ▶ Disneyland Paris is the most visited place in Europe.

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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Pet DIET



PETS

Are you worried about your pet's weight? Perhaps you've allowed them to over-indulge during the winter months? With as many as half the nation's dogs and cats being overweight, it has never been more important for pet owners to take control of their pet's health and help them to lead a happy and healthy life.



Calculate calories: If you don't know how many calories your pet needs each day, then now is the time to find out. While you may think that you can simply refer to the recommended amount on their preferred pet food, this does not take into account metabolism, age and other factors such as activity levels. Ask your vet for a bespoke calorie allowance.

Measure meals: Many pet owners simply guess how much they are feeding their pet, or they offer an all-you-can-eat buffet and fill their bowls readily throughout the day. However, it is a much better idea to use a pet measuring cup so that you can make sure you give them the correct amount at each meal.

Tactical treating: If you are guilty of giving your pet a few too many treats, then tactical treating offers the perfect solution. This involves choosing low-calorie, no-sugar treats that are beneficial to their health. Carrots and apple slices are a good choice for dogs, and cats enjoy broccoli florets, green beans and catnip. Don't forget that you need to factor these extra calories into their total daily intake.

Experiment with exercise: When it comes to keeping your pet healthy and at their ideal weight, daily exercise is key. As well as daily walks for dogs and allowing your cat to explore in the garden, there are lots of other fun exercises you can enjoy with your pets, such as playing fetch, interacting with toys, tug of war and obstacle courses.

Signs your pet is overweight: Visual signs such as excess body fat around the stomach, spine and waist | Lack of grooming | Reduced mobility | Difficulty breathing.



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Shoulder pain, injuries or surgery

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Cosmetic surgery

Thursday 9 March 2023 from 18:30pm
with Mr V Ramakrishnan and Miss M Morgan, Consultant Plastic Surgeons

Hip pain, surgery

Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 18:30pm
with Mr A Waheed, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

Varicose veins

Thursday 16 March 2023 from 18:30pm
with Mr S Jacob, Consultant General Surgeon

Back pain, injury or surgery

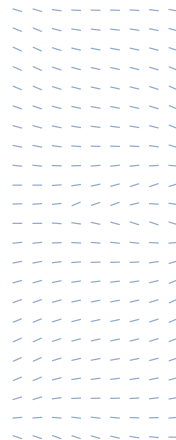
Wednesday 19 April 2023 at 18:30pm
with Mr A Qureshi, Consultant Neurological Surgeon

Knee pain, injury or surgery

Friday 21 April 2023 at 18:30pm
with Mr A Ali, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

Haemorrhoids

Wednesday 26 April 2023 from 18:30pm
with Mr V Shatkar, Consultant General Surgeon



UNUSUAL SPORT...

CHEESE ROLLING
A lump of dairy, a hill, an ambulance on standby – it's the Cooper's Hill Cheese Rolling Championship

We've all heard of cheese rolling. Indeed, many of us have seen the frankly terrifying sight of grown men and women hurtling down Cooper's Hill in Gloucestershire on a balmy spring bank holiday in pursuit not just of a 9lb lump of Double Gloucester cheese, but also of the respect of the local community.

The annual event, which takes place on a slightly terrifying 200-yard slope in the town of Brockworth, has become iconic as the go-to cheese rolling event in the UK, yet it attracts competitors from all corners of the world.

While the perception is that anyone who catches the cheese takes the title, in truth this is a 'race to the bottom', with the first person across the finish line claiming the delightful dairy.

Now classed as an extreme sport, there is a series of individual races for have-a-go heroes to compete and contort in, with local legend Chris Anderson the most successful participant in the event's near 200-year history, having won a record 23 races. Ironically, the ex-1st Battalion light infantryman doesn't even like the cheese on offer, insisting on a passion for cheddar instead.

Injuries are commonplace – not just to participants, either. On many occasions, spectators have been struck by the tumbling cheese, which can reach speeds of up to 70mph as it tumbles downhill.

While COVID-19 halted the 2020 and 2021 events, the festival returned in 2022, complete with all manner of sprains, bashes, aches and breaks. Perennial champ Anderson has since announced his retirement, clearing the decks for a new era of southwestern sadist when the event returns this year on Monday, May 29.

While Brockworth hosts the country's most famous competition, there are other cheese rolling events across the UK with their own take on the concept, albeit none quite as flavoursome.



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CAMERA JARGON

Explained!

Want to improve your photography skills? Then spending time with a camera is a good place to start. While mobile phones are great for point-and-shoot, for the best photos a camera is required. At first glance, a camera can seem confusing with all its buttons and settings. Fortunately, we've got you covered with our simple guide to some basic camera terms.

Exposure: One of the most important terms to learn in photography. Getting the exposure right will help you take great photos with all of the elements in balance. Put simply, exposure is the amount of light that reaches your camera. Too much or too little exposure can affect the quality of your photo. The 'exposure triangle' is the combination of aperture, shutter speed and ISO that will help you capture the perfect photo.

Aperture: The hole that allows light into the lens, represented by the f-number. The lower the f-number, the more light is allowed into the lens. It's the aperture that helps you determine which elements of the shot are in focus, allowing you to play with your depth of field.

Depth of field: The distance between the closest and furthest subjects in a photo. A shallow depth of field will put your main subject in focus, creating a blurred backdrop for your subject to sit against. A deep depth of field helps to put the backdrop or landscape in focus, blurring the nearest object.

Shutter speed: Controls how much light is allowed into the camera from the lens. It signals how long the lens is open to capture the light. A low shutter speed is ideal for most situations, but when you are faced with fast-moving subjects (such as animals or sports) you'll want to use a high shutter speed to prevent blurring.

ISO: The ISO settings determine the light sensitivity. The higher the ISO, the brighter your images. A higher ISO may cause images to feature noise or grain, which can be more difficult to fix during the editing process than an underexposed shot.

Points to consider when purchasing a camera:

- Rent or borrow a camera first to trial the settings.
- Consider the size and weight to discover what's right for you. Mirrorless cameras are more portable with auto-focus features, while a DSLR has more changeable features.
- For high-quality photos, look for cameras with the largest sensor size. Generally, the larger the sensor, the higher quality your photos will be.
- A high number of megapixels (MP) will help to produce images that are highly detailed, but the downside to this is that they don't perform as well in low light. Something around the 20MP mark performs well for most situations.
- Invest in a range of lenses to get the most out of your camera. A macro lens is ideal for detailed close-up shots, while a long lens will help you capture high-quality shots from further afield, such as landscapes or wildlife.

Capturing the perfect shot means finding the balance between the three key settings (aperture, shutter speed and ISO). Don't be afraid to experiment and get creative.



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A GARDEN IN WINTER

If you're visiting Sheffield this year, the multi-award-winning Winter Garden offers the chance to take a step away from the bustle of Britain's fourth-biggest city. It's wheelchair and buggy friendly, open every day except Christmas Day, and entry is free.

WHAT EXACTLY IS IT?

It's an exotic landscaped garden housed in a vast greenhouse with soaring arches and a glass roof. It houses around 2,500 plants, all originating from temperate climates in the Southern Hemisphere. There are also bedding plants, which are changed five times a year – so there's always something new to admire.

The Winter Garden is 75m long, 23m wide and 21m high – that's big enough to house 5,000 average domestic greenhouses.

And it's not just about plants – there's also an art gallery, a café and shops at the garden. So allow plenty of time for your visit.

The greenhouse was opened in May 2003 by the late Queen Elizabeth II, and was designed by London

architects Pringle Richards Sharratt and Bath-based construction consultants Buro Happold.

WHAT TYPES OF EXOTIC PLANTS ARE THERE?

As well as a stunning bamboo curtain, lush tree ferns and elegant grasses, you can also feast your eyes on some of these:

- > Thorny acacia trees, which in their native habitat are an important food source for animals, including giraffes and elephants
- > Pines from the araucaria family, including monkey puzzle trees
- > Palm-like cordylines, often grown as houseplants in the UK
- > Desert plants like cacti, agave and aloe vera
- > Eucalyptus trees, mostly found in Australia and prized for their timber, the oil in their leaves and providing food for koalas
- > Low-growing phormiums, which are native to New Zealand and have elegant, sword-like leaves
- > Trachycarpus palm trees, known for their chunky trunks.

Photo credit: travellight/Shutterstock.com



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Our gardens start to bloom in earnest this month – but March can be a surprisingly tricky time for wildlife. That includes humble but helpful insects and worms, as well as bees, birds, amphibians and hedgehogs. So what can you do to help?

LEAVE FOOD FOR HEDGEHOGS

Leave out water and meat-based cat or dog food – ideally chicken in jelly. Do this when it's getting dark, and remember to throw away any uneaten food the next morning. If you have hedgehogs in your garden, you could also buy a hedgehog house or even build one.

FEED THE BIRDS

Birds need calorie-rich food at this time of year to get ready for breeding. Choose sunflower hearts (seeds without the husk), fat balls or suet pellets. Steer clear of peanuts just in case adult birds feed them to their young and cause them to choke.

BEE KIND

If you're adding new garden plants, choose ones with open flowers that are rich in pollen and nectar. Good choices include aconites, evergreen clematis, primroses, and winter-flowering heather and honeysuckle.

BUG LOVE

Helpful insects and even earthworms find it hard to flourish in March as food sources can be scarce. To help them, create a log pile in a shady spot. You might also want to start a compost heap. And, while you don't have to turn your garden into a jungle, insects will love it if you let a corner of your garden grow wild.

POND LIFE

March is the main breeding month for frogs, toads and newts. To make your pond amphibian-friendly, select the plants they like to breed around, such as marsh marigold, water forget-me-knot and brooklime. You could add plants such as hornwort and curled pondweed to keep the water oxygenated and help shelter tadpoles from predators.



TECH-free TRIPS



Do you and your family need a break from technology? Are screens taking over your lives? Then these phone-free holiday destinations are just the antidote you need.

QUIRPON ISLAND, NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA

If you can think of nothing better than spending your next getaway marvelling at the wonders of Arctic life such as polar bears, puffins and icebergs, then this is the holiday destination for you. Located in the far reaches of the North Atlantic, there is virtually no phone service and definitely no wi-fi.

PARRANO, ITALY

If you're looking for a remote destination in Europe, then the Eremito retreat in Parrano, Italy, is just what the doctor ordered. Boasting 21 rooms and only a 90-minute drive from Rome, there is no internet, wi-fi or television, so you're guaranteed a tranquil and restorative stay.

DENALI NATIONAL PARK & PRESERVE, ALASKA

Denali National Park is home to the Sheldon Chalet, a luxury five-bedroom lodge that is only accessible by plane or helicopter. Perfect for those who want to experience nature in the extreme, the panoramic views of snow stretch for miles. Plus, with no mobile phone coverage or internet, you can enjoy the peaceful silence with zero distractions.

BADEN-BADEN, GERMANY

If you love a spa break, the Villa Stéphanie mansion and spa is just the digital detox destination for you. Located in the famous spa town of Baden-Baden, this decadent five-star hotel boasts a sauna, plunge pool, thermal suite and private gym. And, of course, no technology in sight.

TOP END, NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA

As you would expect, there is no wi-fi deep in bush country, so you can kick back and relax or enjoy the local wildlife, including blue-winged kookaburras, magpie geese, wallabies and crocodiles. Book into the Bamurru Plains safari lodge for a restful night's sleep and five-star dining.



Photo credit: webtravelians.com, theluxuryarchitecturalcompany.com, theluxuryspedic.com, kuoni.co.uk

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13th May Film Music Gala, Royal Albert Hall: **£52.00**
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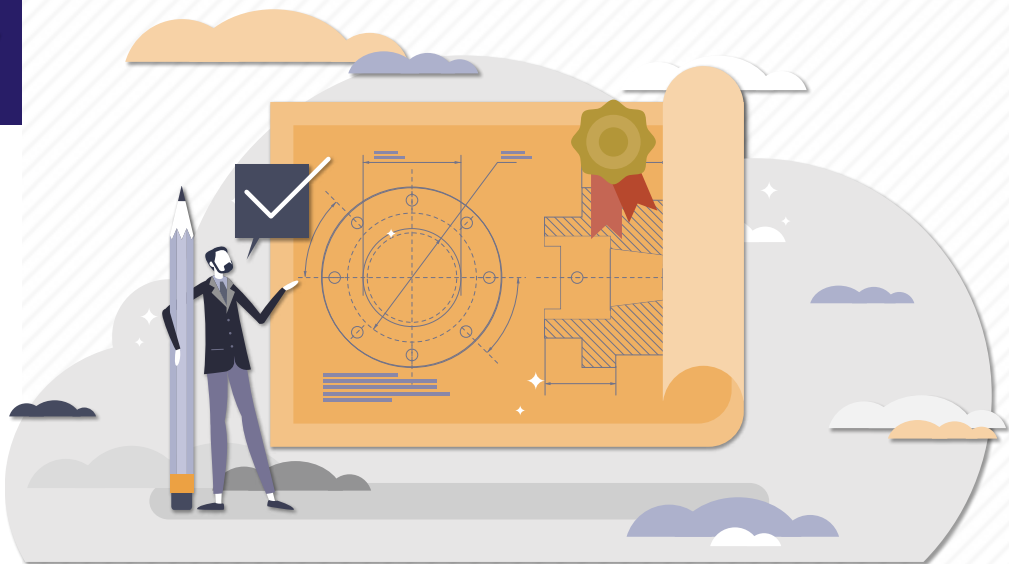
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How to get A PATENT

Thinking about applying for a patent to stop others from copying or selling your invention without your permission? Find out everything you need to know about how to get a patent in the UK below.

WHAT CAN YOU PATENT IN THE UK?

To patent an invention in the UK, it must be:

- ✓ New – it must not have been made publicly available anywhere in the world
- ✓ Inventive – it cannot be an obvious change to something that already exists
- ✓ Something that can be made and used, a technical process or a method of doing something

WHAT CAN YOU NOT PATENT?

There are some things that you are not allowed to patent, including:

- ✗ Literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works
- ✗ A way of doing business, playing a game or thinking
- ✗ A method of medical treatment or diagnosis
- ✗ A discovery, scientific theory or mathematical method
- ✗ The way information is presented

- ✗ Essentially biological processes such as crossbreeding animals or plants
- ✗ Software that has a non-technical purpose

HOW MUCH DOES A PATENT COST?

When you apply for a patent, you must pay fees to the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) when you file your application and also for processing your application after you file. This costs at least £310 if you complete the process. You may also want to hire a patent attorney for help and advice.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A PATENT IN THE UK

Getting a patent in the UK is a fairly complicated process and it can take several years, even with professional help. Therefore, you should only start the application process if you are confident that your invention is new and that a patent meets your needs. If you decide to go ahead, then you need to:

- Prepare detailed documents that describe your invention
 - File these documents with the IPO
- Typically, around 18 months after you apply, the IPO will publish your application in full. You may then have to amend your application based on its recommendations.

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A WILL WRITER'S WORDS OF WISDOM

WORRYING PROBLEMS

If a married couple dies together, and where there is no Will, the eldest is deemed to have died first, so only the family members of the surviving spouse will inherit

A beneficiary or their spouse should not be a witness to a Will, or they will disinherit themselves

Unless it has a Contemplation of Marriage clause, marriage or re-marriage invalidates a Will, requiring a new arrangement

Without a Will, spouses and civil partners are NOT automatically entitled to all of the estate assets on death, and the Government could inherit your estate if you die with no surviving traceable relatives

If a couple dies simultaneously, the elder is deemed to have died first - s184 Law of Property Act 1925, leaving only the

younger spouse's family to inherit

Without a Will, even grandparents have NO automatic Legal Guardianship of their orphaned grandchildren

Without a Will, the Rules of Intestacy, ie 'The Government Will', could land the children with an IHT liability

A beneficiary or their spouse should not be a witness to a Will, or they will disinherit themselves

Although divorce does not invalidate a Will, marriage will indeed invalidate a Will, unless a marriage clause has been embedded

If you have no surviving parents, siblings, grandparents, uncles or aunts, then under the Intestacy Rules, the whole estate goes to the Crown or the Duchy of Lancaster or the Duke of Cornwall

PEACE OF MIND SOLUTIONS

Always appoint charities as your final beneficiaries, to avoid your estate being claimed by the Government

By the use of a Property Protection Trust, you can ensure that if you pre-decease and your spouse re-marries and has more children, your own children benefit from your share of your home, and not the new spouse. BUT if Probate is not completed, the Trust Deed will not be set up and notified at the Land Registry

If children have special care needs, an appropriate Discretionary Trust could avoid loss of State benefits on them inheriting your estate

A Grant of Probate confirms to Executors that they have the authority to act and carry out the wishes of the deceased

Provide in your Will for continuity of your business on your death

If you own property abroad, you should arrange a Will for your assets in that country, to avoid costly fees and much Probate delay

If a Named Beneficiary, Executor, Trustee or Legal Guardian changes their name, e.g., on marriage or by Deed Poll, it is not necessary to amend the Will: documentary evidence, eg Decree Absolute, is sufficient

The estates of current or retired members of the Armed Forces, fire police and ambulance services, and most rescue organisations are entitled to exemption from Inheritance Tax if they die on active service, or if their later death was caused by an injury or disease that was received or aggravated while they were on active service

A properly worded Will could ensure that half the value of your home is potentially protected against Local Authority care home fees

There is no Inheritance Tax liability if the deceased spouse has left their entire estate to their surviving spouse or civil marriage partner

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR WILL?

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HISTORY

MEET THE MAN BEHIND THE INVENTION FOR HOT (AND COLD) DRINK LOVERS EVERYWHERE

The next time you unscrew your flask to pour a coffee, spare a thought for Scottish scientist Sir James Dewar. He was the man who made it happen – even though keeping your drinks hot wasn't what he had in mind.

Dewar, who died 100 years ago this month, was best known for his work on the liquefaction of gases. It's not the right place for a chemistry lesson, but when gases are in liquid form, they're much easier to store, so it was important work.

The problem was that Dewar couldn't keep the liquid gases cold enough for long enough to study them. And when they got too hot, they turned into gas again.

To solve the problem, he put his glass flask of liquid gas into a bigger flask. Then he created a vacuum between them and mirrored their outside walls. So the inside flask was almost perfectly insulated, and heat couldn't reach the liquid inside.

Dewar exhibited his creation at London's Royal Institution on Christmas Day 1892. The principle behind his flask is the same one behind the vacuum flasks manufactured today.

Dewar's invention could have made him a wealthy man. The problem was he didn't take out a patent. But the German glassblower who made Dewar's flask had an idea: he realised that the flask could keep liquids warm as well as cold and spotted a gap in the market. He created a flask in a protective metal casing and set up a company called Thermos – Greek for 'hot'. He successfully applied for a patent in 1904 – and the Thermos flask was born.

Dewar sued Thermos for using his invention. Sadly for Dewar, he lost the case. But, refusing to retire, he carried on working as a professor at the Royal Institution until his death at the age of 80 in 1923.

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LET THERE BE LIGHT!

Do you want younger-looking skin? Then you need to know about LED light therapy. Originally used to treat wounds, LED – which stands for light-emitting diode – is now used by aestheticians to help regenerate ageing skin and treat other skin problems.

WHAT IS LED LIGHT THERAPY?

LED light therapy is a skincare technique that uses varying LED wavelengths to help treat a whole host of different skin complaints, including acne, inflammation and ageing skin. Unlike other types of light therapy, LEDs do not contain ultraviolet rays, which means they are safe for regular use.

HOW DOES LED LIGHT THERAPY WORK?

You can choose to have LED light therapy carried out by a trained professional or you can buy LED devices that you can use at home. There are two main types of light frequencies: red and blue. The former is used primarily for ageing and the latter to treat acne. Typically, each LED light therapy session lasts around 20 minutes, and, for best results, you need up to 10 treatments.

ARE THERE ANY DRAWBACKS TO LED LIGHT THERAPY?

Some of the potential downsides to LED light therapy include:

- > It can be expensive
- > The results are not guaranteed
- > It is not safe if you have an active skin disorder or take certain medications
- > Side effects are rare but may include redness, rashes and inflammation of the skin

BEST LED FACE MASKS

If you want to try LED light therapy at home, check out the below top-rated LED face masks:

- > CurrentBody Skin LED Light Therapy Mask – Best for all skin types
- > No7 Laboratories Age-Defying LED Mask – Best for budget buy
- > Project E Beauty Skin Rejuvenation Photon Mask – Best for acne-prone skin
- > Dr Dennis Gross Skincare DRX Spectralite Faceware Pro – Best for ageing skin.



PACK IT IN

IN HONOUR OF NATIONAL NO SMOKING DAY ON MARCH 8, HERE ARE SEVEN TIPS ON HOW TO QUIT SMOKING FOR GOOD

BE PREPARED

It's unlikely you'll simply wake up one morning and decide to never smoke again.

Smoking is an addiction, so take time to come up with a plan that gives you the best chance of quitting for good.

SEEK ALTERNATIVES

Though they may be tempting, e-cigarettes are not the ideal way to quit, as they still contain nicotine. However, they are less harmful than tobacco cigarettes.

Nicotine replacement therapy, on the other hand – in the form of gum, lozenges and patches – can help with withdrawal side effects.

BE TRIGGER AWARE

If you crave a cigarette every time you have a few drinks at the pub, it may be best to stay home or, even better, hit the gym. Knowing what makes you want to smoke and then doing the opposite is a useful technique to help you avoid temptation.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS

Not only is it reassuring to have some enthusiastic cheerleaders on your side, but your buddies can also help you on your way.

KNOW YOUR REASONS

Whether you want to run a marathon or are motivated to quit for the sake of your young children, having a clear purpose – from

health to finance to the feeling of having achieved something important – will help you stop smoking.

DON'T GIVE UP

Quitting is hard. Know that and give yourself a break should you fail. Each day is a new day, and it is never too late to stop.

REWARD YOURSELF

Put away those pounds you would have spent on cigarettes and you'll soon see the benefits. Treating yourself to something special is the least you deserve for persevering with such a difficult task.



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DIY Mother's Day BEAUTY GIFTS

Do you want to help your child make a handmade gift for their mum, grandmother or mother figure this Mother's Day? Beauty gifts are always welcomed and provide the perfect opportunity for mums to enjoy a little me-time.

a whipped cream-like consistency | Add 8 drops of rose absolute and whip for a further 1-2 minutes | Spoon into a mason jar and add a pretty bow

Microdermabrasion scrub

Combat the signs of ageing with this super simple microdermabrasion scrub.

How to make:

Mix 6 tbsp of sugar with 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil | Add 3-5 drops of lemon juice | Add ½ tbsp baking soda and 3 drops of lavender oil | Mix thoroughly | Spoon into a small pot and add a handwritten label

Lemon peppermint bath salts

Add an element of fizz to bath time with this aromatic bath salt.

How to make:

Mix ½ cup of fine sea salt and 1 cup of Epsom salt in a medium-sized bowl | Stir in 15 drops of lemon essential oil and 5 drops of peppermint oil | Scoop the bath salts into a mason jar and tie on a small measuring spoon with some ribbon

Rose whipped body butter

Give the gift of super-soft skin with this luxurious body butter.

How to make:

Melt 1 cup of coconut oil and 1 cup of shea butter in a small bowl | Leave the oils to cool slightly | Mix the oils using a whisk or standing mixer until you have

Honey facial mask

Soothe sensitive skin with this natural facial mask.

How to make:

Mix together 1 cup of honey, 1 tbsp of cinnamon and ½ tbsp nutmeg | Stir until the spices are fully incorporated with the honey | Pour into a bottle that has been sterilised with boiling water | Cover the bottle with some pretty parchment paper or fabric.



PAVEMENT

DOUBLES, SINGLES AND MORE... ROAD MARKINGS AND HOW TO WORK THEM IN YOUR FAVOUR

We're all familiar with the sight of single and double yellow lines – yet where many of us have fallen foul of road markings, it's because we may not understand what they mean.

This guide to road markings may not make it any easier to find a parking space in your local area, but at least you'll know the risk you're taking when you apply the handbrake.

SINGLE LINES

Single yellow lines are an indication that waiting restrictions are in place, albeit only at certain times of the day. The intention is to eliminate congestion at busy times.

Always look for the accompanying signs, which will state the times when parking is prohibited. However, you may stop there.

If you see a single red line, stopping is also prohibited at certain times.

DOUBLE LINES

Parking on double yellow lines is prohibited at all times, unless there is accompanying signage which may indicate an ability to park there on rare or seasonal occasions.

With both single and double yellows, the good news is you get five minutes' grace, and a traffic warden must observe your car for the full duration of those five minutes before writing out a ticket.

If you see a double red line, the message is simple – no stopping (or parking) at any time.

ZIGZAG LINES

White or yellow zigzag lines offer the same instruction as double red lines, except they are placed near places of high public footfall, such as on level crossings or outside schools and places where emergency services may operate, such as hospitals.

LOADING OR UNLOADING

To confuse matters, loading and unloading is permitted on double and single yellow lines, but only if it's continuous. You'll get between 20 and 40 minutes, depending on your vehicle.

However, if two yellow stripes are seen emerging from the road and up the curb, even loading and unloading is prohibited. For one yellow stripe, stopping is permitted based on the times shown.



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