

# **KILLHOPE** Green Newsletter



## INTRODUCTION

*It's lovely to finally feel the sun on my skin and see the trees and flowers thriving around me.*

*This summer promises to be a sunny one so make the most of it and get out in the garden and see what you can grow.*

*While you're at it have a read of the composting tips on page 2 and make your own compost. Most of all—just enjoy it!*

*Thanks Helen*

### **What to do in your garden: June—July**

Sprinkle rose fertiliser around roots to encourage strong growth and a good flower display.

Tap the blooms on greenhouse tomatoes to improve pollination.

As the weather warms up, and spring moves into summer, the garden becomes a real battleground, with pests attacking flowers, fruits and vegetables as soon as your back is turned. Be on the lookout for the first signs of attack, picking off any pests found.

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# COMPOSTING

## WHY COMPOST?

The aim of composting is to return to the soil the nutrients and energy locked up in plants. It is a very powerful form of recycling that is often overlooked. Garden waste is a significant portion of the average bin load, removing it from landfill helps reduce the climate change and pollution risk.

Approximately 15% of kitchen waste that's thrown away could be composted.

## SO, HOW DO I COMPOST?

If you don't have a compost bin, then get in touch with your local council as a lot of them offer compost bins for a very reduced price, or even for free if you're lucky.

Then, all you need to do is sort out your waste. Compost bins can take almost everything from egg shells, coffee grounds, contents of the Hoover bag and of course veg peelings. However, don't put cooked food or meat in the compost bin as this can attract rats.

Give your compost bin a stir every now and again and your compost should be ready within a year.

Don't forget to use your green wheelie bin (if your local authority provide one). You can put all of your garden waste in this bin, including branches and grass clippings.

The local authority then chip it all down into very small pieces and compost it down.

This compost is then used in parks and gardens and keeps our environment looking pretty!!

## **Make People Laugh at You**

Learn at least one good joke.

Laughing tones your stomach, lowers your blood pressure, and makes you healthier.

Even the concentration of salivary immunoglobulin A is raised by laughing—and this guards our respiratory tract from infectious organisms.

## **Let's twist again**

Wash glass jars and use them to save small amounts of leftover food in the fridge, or the contents of a tin after it has been opened. A cheap alternative to buying tupperware storage containers.

## **Sprouting Seeds**

For a cheap, healthy addition to salads or stir fries, try sprouting seeds - they're so easy to grow and kids will love them. Simply put them in a jam jar, cover with muslin or a patch of tights material secured with an elastic band. Store in a warm, dark place, and rinse with water twice a day. Try seeds such as alfalfa, mustard cress, aduki and mung beans from your health food shop.

## CRAFT CORNER



### Dried Flower Sachets

#### Materials Needed

- Tulle or any thin material
- Ribbon
- Dried Flowers
- Scissors
- Hole puncher

Pick some nice smelling flowers, such as lavender. Remove unwanted leaves, divide the flowers into small bunches, and tie them together with string. Hang the flowers upside down in a warm, dry, dark place. This will take a couple of weeks, but check on your flowers every few days.

You can store your dried flowers in a dark, sealed container until ready to use.

Cut a circle, about 12-inches across, out of your tulle. Tracing around a dinner works well.

Use a hole puncher or the scissors to make holes around the edge of the fabric. You will want the holes to be about an inch in from the edge. Each hole should be around 1-inch apart.

Thread a piece of ribbon, in-and-out, through the holes. Do not cut the ribbon or cord until you have it threaded into the holes with about 4-6 inches to spare on each end while the fabric is laying flat. Now, simply pull both ends of the cord or ribbon tight to gather the top of the bag together to make a bowl shape.

Fill your tulle 'bowl' with dried flowers. Pull both ends of the cord or ribbon tight to close and tie. Place your sachet in your drawer or wrap and give it as a gift. If the smell of the flowers fade, simple spritz the sachet with perfume!

## 19 Ways to be Beautifully Green, Healthy & Fashionable

1 Simplify your life - how many vitamins and supplements do you really need to take? Stop buying them and eat healthily instead. At the same time, look at how many lipsticks/glosses and creams you own. Does your body really need all this - simplify your life and you'll be amazed at what you save.

2 Less is always more - again don't be fooled by the marketing, you don't need a cleanser and toner to wash off your make-up or even heavily perfumed soaps, creams and deodorants.

3 Look for biodegradable formulas - and while you're at it, look for recyclable packaging or at least recycle your waste properly - plastics, glass and aerosols can all be recycled.

4 Opt for lip-gloss over lipstick - Lip gloss contains less potentially toxic colour and fewer film formers to make it stay on for long periods of time.

5 Buy natural, 100% vegetable or organic soaps - strong soaps are not only harsh on your skin but also have a large environmental impact on rivers and wildlife, thanks to the chemical content.

6 Stop Shopping - The greenest garments are those you already own. No more resources are required to get them to you. No more materials extraction, manufacturing, shipping, retailing etc, plus no cost!

7 - Wash only when you have to - think full loads in the washing machine and then air-dry your clothes

8 - Choose greener sanitary products - 75% of all tampons are flushed down the toilet, so try using non-chlorine bleached sanitary protection.

9 - Go for green toothpaste - In some brands of toothpaste you'll find oestrogen linked parabens.

10 Buy a reusable toothbrush - millions of toothbrushes are thrown away each year, with most people going through an average of four toothbrushes a year.

11 Use half measures. Less is more. You don't need handfuls of shampoo and conditioner to do the job. Try to cut down by half the amount you use.

12 Don't be a brand junkie - In other words, shop around. Whereas it's nice to think of yourself as a label beauty queen, experiment with more eco-friendly brands, from cheap to expensive and see if you can notice the difference.

13 - Ditch the all-in-ones. It may seem like an ideal way to waste less, but ready made facial wipes that do everything take hundreds of years to biodegrade, instead invest in a face cloth.

14 Have a clothes/accessories/bag swap party. De-clutter your wardrobe by getting rid of anything you haven't worn for six months or more and swap items with friends who are doing the same. It's reusing, recycling and it will save you bundles of cash.

15 Go natural with your medicine cupboard - Try aloe vera for sunburns and burns, tea tree oil as an antiseptic, lavender to aid sleep, peppermint tea for indigestion and arnica cream for bruises and aches.

16 Be suspicious of hypoallergenic labels - hypoallergenic is basically meaningless because even though the main known irritants have been taken out of the product, it will still have other chemicals in the mix that could irritate your skin.

17 Buy an eco friendly cloth - eco-cloths stop you using tissues and cotton wool to take off your make-up. It's simply a reusable and washable soft cloth that fits over your hand like a mitten and takes off your make up when you add water.

18 - Think about trainers - they may not be leather but most trainers are not eco-friendly thanks to where they are made, how they are made and the labour used to make them.

19 - Look in your kitchen cupboards for beauty products - use oat as a face scrub, olive oil to moisturise your skin and cucumber slices to soothe your eyes. They're cheap, fresh and chemical free if you use organic.

## **Learn Basic First Aid**

It only takes two hours to learn how to save a life. What else are you going to do in that time that is going to make such a difference?

Let's face it, saving someone's life is cool, about as cool as you can get.

And, if you learn this skill, you might like to know that the person you help is statistically unlikely to be a stranger, they're more likely to be a friend or relative.

Imagine saving your best friend's life.

## **Brushing Your Teeth**

You can waste up to 4.5 litres of water if you leave the tap running while brushing your teeth - instead, use a glass of water for rinsing, or short bursts from the tap, and you'll only need a fraction of this amount.

## **Uses for old carpet**

Carpets have a huge environmental impact so make yours last as long as possible. Even when they are no longer suitable for the floor, there are a number of ways to re-use small pieces. Line bottoms of cupboards, boot of the car, pet's baskets, or use as doormats or for lagging pipes. Small pieces are also great to put underneath plant pots on windowsills or shelves, so they don't damage the surface.

## **Grass cuttings**

Use grass cuttings as a mulch around shrubs and trees in the garden to help them conserve water - and to stop weeds growing.

## Seasonal Recipe

### Nettle and wild garlic soup



Don't forget to take rubber gloves on your nettle hunt. Serves six.

1 carrier bag full of nettles (ideally young leaves)  
55g butter  
1 large or 2 medium onions, finely sliced  
2 celery sticks, chopped  
1 small leek, chopped  
1 small celeriac (about 350g peeled weight), cut into cubes  
1 large garlic clove, crushed (optional)  
1 litre good-quality chicken (or vegetable) stock  
Salt and ground black pepper  
1 pinch freshly grated nutmeg (optional)  
3 tbsp cooked rice (or 3 rice cakes)  
2 tbsp wild garlic leaves, chopped

To garnish

A little cream or some crème fraîche  
2-3 tbsp wild garlic leaves, finely chopped

#### Method

Pick over the nettles and wash them well. Discard only the tougher stalks, because the soup will be liquidised. Melt the butter in a large pan and sweat the onion, celery, leek, celeriac and garlic, if using, until soft but not brown - about 10 to 15 minutes.

Now add the stock and pile in the nettles, pushing them down to submerge. Bring to the boil and simmer, partially covered, for five to 10 minutes until the nettles are tender. Season with salt and pepper, and with nutmeg, if you wish.

Purée the soup in a liquidiser along with the cooked rice (or rice cakes) - the quantity is such that you will probably have to do this in two batches. Return the puréed soup to a clean pan, stir in the wild garlic leaves and reheat, but do not let it boil. Check the seasoning, then serve, garnishing each bowl with a swirl of cream and a generous sprinkle of chopped wild garlic leaves.

Recipe taken from the River Cottage website—[www.RiverCottage.net](http://www.RiverCottage.net)