

Gardening club

with DAVID DOMONEY

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SAVE £30
Was £49.99

SCARECROW TWIN PACK

Now £19.99 plus £3.95 p&p

A fun addition to your garden and a great way to keep unwelcome pests from your garden or vegetable plot. These charming scarecrows Florence and Fred will help protect seedlings, plants and flowers without the use of harmful chemicals or ultrasonic devices. Measures an impressive 6ft (183cm). Mounted on a solid bamboo pole, they are traditionally dressed and feature long corn cobs, feet and hair designed to deter even the bravest of birds and pests as they wave in the wind. **D4454 6ft Scarecrow Twin Pack.**



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Was £44.99

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Put an end to damp, sore, grass-stained knees, and take the strain out of gardening with this two-in-one folding garden kneeler and seat, which is great to use while you are tending to your flowerbeds or tidying up lawn edges. It features a handy pouch with three pockets to keep garden tools to hand, and you can simply flip the kneeler over for a comfortable seat on which you can either relax or continue to garden at a comfortable working height. The durable frame is constructed from high-quality steel and the kneeling pad has a deep layer of polypropylene foam for complete comfort. It folds in seconds for easy storage and transportation and weighs only 2.7kg. Use it indoors to assist with DIY jobs, cleaning or as extra foldable seating. Measures H49 x W59 x L27cm when in use, and H12 x W59 x L27cm when folded. **G0999 Garden Kneeler**

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Q&A



Rooting out lions before it's a jungle

▶ I've got dandelions springing up everywhere. How can I get rid of them?
Margery, Kent
DAVID: Dandelions have a tap root, so you need to get it all out so it doesn't regrow. You'll need a corkscrew weeder to core the soil surrounding the root and lift it all out. If you don't remove the root, they spring up again and spread. Now's a great time to get rid of them before they seed.

Whether you prefer your spuds roasted, baked, boiled or mashed, you'll get more satisfaction and a bigger taste by growing your own

Grow tasty potatoes on your plot and this staple crop will make any meal shine. They're great for beginner gardeners and practised vegetable growers alike, so get some in the ground this year to start enjoying your very own homegrown spuds.

WHERE TO GROW
Potatoes are grown from special seed tubers instead of seeds. You can buy some from garden centres now - I strongly recommend getting those, rather than using ordinary supermarket spuds which some people like to do. Seed potatoes have been cleared of disease and bred to produce strong, viable new plants. Rather than just in the ground, small crops of potatoes can be grown in large, deep containers. This is a clever way of getting an early batch of new potatoes. But you can grow them almost anywhere - in the ground, in bags, even in a dustbin as a cheap way of getting started. Spuds love a sunny spot as they are

“**My favourite variety is Kestrel, which makes a marvellous mash**

not frost-hardy, so find a place that is aglow in order to grow tasty potatoes like a pro.

WHAT TO PICK
There are three types of potatoes to know about - earlies, second earlies and maincrops. These names refer to the time they are harvested. Earlies are the easiest to grow and take up the least space. The other two are simple crops and give you loads. Potato crops need different planting times depending on the exact variety. Plant earlies in late March to harvest in June, pop second earlies in before mid-April and harvest in July and get maincrop planted mid-to-late April to harvest by October.

Grow your harvest by choosing varieties for your preferred cooking method. As a general rule, early potatoes are good for boiled potatoes. Look to Swift for an early that's quick to mature and has top-class taste. My personal favourite is Kestrel, which is a second early that makes marvellous mash, or maincrop King Edward if you are looking to steam.

TIP of the week
Ensure you get healthy, strong plants by dividing perennials regularly. It also gives you the chance to multiply your plants without any cost.

GET IN TOUCH
For loads more hints and tips on gardening visit **daviddomoney.com** or follow me on Facebook at **@DavidDomoneyTV** or on Twitter **@daviddomoney**



SHOVEL YOUR FOOD Chitted spuds in a trench



CHIP IN Covering potatoes

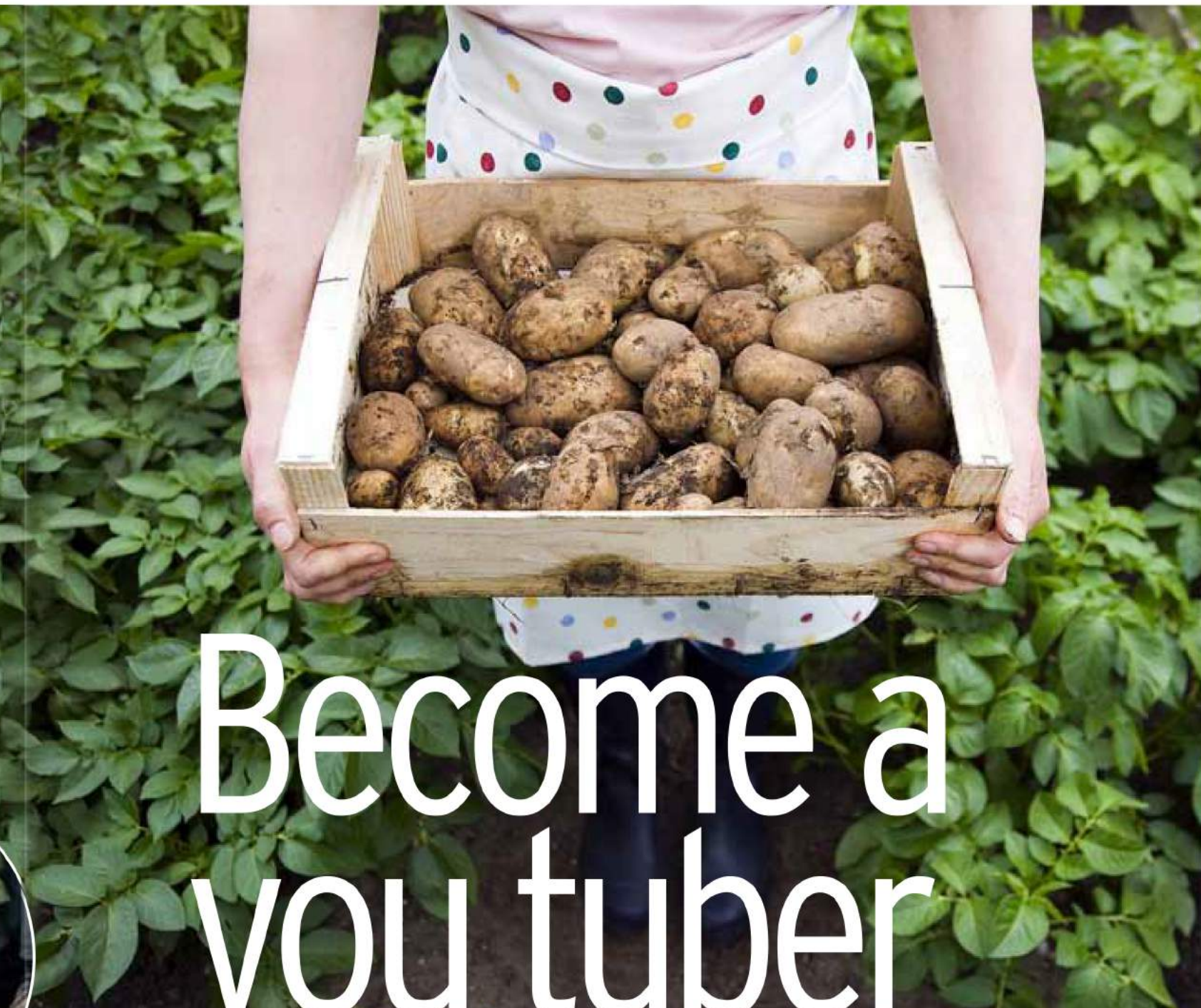


HARVEST Pulling out your dinner

Stand them rose end up - this is the one with small dents, or eyes, in



GROWING WISE Goldthorpe Primary



Become a you tuber

SMASHERS Make space for growing spuds

the skin - and place inside an unused egg box. They are the perfect size to keep them upright. Potatoes are ready to plant when shoots are 3cm long. Once all risk of frost has passed, compost, position and cover them in the ground. Start by digging a narrow trench and line it with compost. Space

the seed tubers, with shoots facing towards the surface, 30cm apart for earlies - allow a bit more space for second earlies and maincrop varieties such as Picasso AGM or hardy Desiree. Handle the delicate tubers carefully, pressing over the soil to let nature do her work. Keep the foliage away from

the actual potatoes underground. Mounding is where you repeatedly bank up the earth over the emerging shoots, forcing them to grow up towards the light. Repeat until shoots and leaves are well away from tubers. Once they have begun to grow, they need lots of water. If summer is wet

and warm, be careful of overwatering, which can cause fungal diseases like potato blight, where leaves and stems go brown. Try blight-hardy Sarpo Mira or stick to earlies, which are usually harvested before blight strikes.

Mucking in with magic muddy lessons

Entries have opened for our Cultivation Street competition, sponsored by Calliope, and we have already been hearing from incredible schools and communities across the country. We love learning how teachers get kids to grow and eat their own veg - they really get creative. Goldthorpe Primary School in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, was runner-up last year, impressing judges after transforming its grounds. The whole school - 239 kids - has access to its garden over a two-week

cycle. They get lots of exposure to the school allotment to find out how to grow their own veg, and the food they produce is used in school dinners. Outdoor education teacher Christopher Wharton-Lovett said: "It's a group effort. We think this is a fantastic way for children to try new foods. "We plant more than we need as this allows us to sell vegetable plants to our

families really cheaply on our market stall, which gets families involved growing at home. It's a wonderful way to generate funds for the garden." He added: "Children get the chance to be children - exploring, getting muddy hands and being outside in all weathers. Learning is fun and engaging and, because it's something they enjoy doing, they don't realise how many skills they are developing at any one time." To register your school or community garden or for more details, visit **cultivationstreet.com**

TUCKING IN
Now you know how to grow, it's time to make the most of your bounty. With earlies, simply dig them up and eat. With second earlies and maincrop, they will stay in the ground a bit longer and two weeks before you want to lift them, cut off growth at ground level. It gives skins more time to toughen up. The trick is to use a garden fork for easy harvesting by just teasing them out, or use your hands. My favourite way to use spuds is to take a peeling glove, with its rough surface for grating, and lightly rub off the skin. Don't peel them, just rough them up and dislodge the thicker parts of the skin for that rustic taste. Then boil, add a knob of butter, pinch of rock salt and parsley to serve.

OFFER of the week

Our superb collection of three AOA Lilies is impossible to ignore. These stunning Asiatic hybrids make wonderful cut flowers and also look amazing planted in the summer border. Reaching heights of 80-100cm, they are real head turners. Supplied as top-quality 16-18cm bulbs. You can order our collection of 15 for only **£17.98** and receive five each of Viva la Vida (yellow/orange), Sunset Boulevard (orange) and Child in Play (Pink). Or you can buy five of one variety for **£8.99**. To order by debit/credit card call **0843 922 5000** quoting **SMTG012** or send a cheque made payable to 'Mirror Garden' to AOA Lilies Offer (**SMTG012**), PO Box 64, South West District Office, Manchester, M16 9HY or visit **mirrorgardenoffers.co.uk**



GADGET



Point hungry beaks in the right direction
I love this signpost-style bird feeding station from the RSPB. Made in the UK from certified sustainable timber, it is robust and designed to look like an old-fashioned signpost. It comes with four hooks to hang feeders from and is easy to put together. It's free standing so ideal for lawns or any other flat surface. You can buy one for £54.99 via **shopping.rspb.org.uk**