

# OUR PLACE *News*

The monthly magazine dedicated to help everyone over 50 get the best out of life!

MARCH 2026

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## Letter from the Editor

Welcome to Our Place - The monthly magazine dedicated to help everyone over 50 get the best out of life!

Every month, we bring you news and features on; Health & Beauty, Money & Work, Leisure & Travel, Food & Drink, Arts, Crafts & Hobbies, Home & Garden, plus... our Charity of the Month!

Our Place was founded with a mission to connect the mature online community to a world of news, features, offers and life changing products they may have missed out on. Bring them all into one place, Our Place.

What makes us special is that we are a vibrant team of all ages, from 21 to 65 who are all passionate about living life to the fullest irrespective of age. We have built strong relationships with some of the best UK age related businesses with the aim of brokering discounted rates for our Over-50s community.

Become a Friend of Our Place and receive our exclusive newsletters. They are a great way of keeping updated with the latest news and promotions. We aim to bring a smile to your face every time you open your inbox by selecting exclusive vouchers and discounts just for you.

We welcome you and hope you enjoy Our Place.

The Editor - Our Place

*PS. Do you have an interesting story or article? If so, send us an email by visiting: [www.ourplace.co](http://www.ourplace.co)*

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### Data Privacy

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## CRUFTS - The world's largest dog show is back! Thursday 5th - Sunday 8th March 2026 NEC Birmingham

The BIGGEST and BEST dog show in the world is back! Get your tickets now to Crufts 2026 for an unforgettable day out full of furry fun. From 5th-8th March watch over 22,000 dogs compete for the world famous title of Crufts Best in Show Champion, plus enjoy hundreds of trade stands full of wonderful products for both you and your canine pal. You can also watch pawsome pups raise the roof of the NEC with Agility, Flyball, Heelwork to Music and inspiring doggy displays. Thinking of buying a puppy? You can meet 200 different dog breeds at the Discover Dog area, in association with Frontline; say 'hello' to your favourites and get to know the breeds you've never before heard of! It's the perfect family day out AND under 8s go FREE.



- Day 1 - Thursday 5th March - Working and Pastoral breeds**
- Day 2 - Friday 6th March - Terrier and Hound breeds**
- Day 3 - Saturday 7th March - Utility and Toy breeds**
- Day 4 - Sunday 8th March - Gundog breeds**

Each day runs from 8.15am to 6.30pm, though Best In Show is from 4.45pm to 9pm Each day also features an Obedience Ring starting at 8.15am.

**Tickets: [www.crufts.org.uk](http://www.crufts.org.uk)**

You'll need to leave your pooch at home however, as the only dogs allowed in Crufts are those invited by the Kennel Club, or assistance dogs.

**Shopping Heaven** - over 400 stands with special treats and offers for you and your dog.

**Fantastic Family Fun in the Arena** - jam packed with agility, flyball, displays and competitions including the Scruffts final!

**Eukanuba Discover Dogs** - come meet, greet and discover over 200 breeds.

**Best in Show** - over 22,000 dogs striving for the title of Crufts Best in Show 2024.



## WINTER CAT WARNING

**At this time of year please check under your car and wheel arches for cats trying to keep warm, before you set off on your journey!**



**During the cold winter months cats will often seek out any warm space they can find. One particularly irresistible lure seems to be the cosy confines of a warm car engine. Unfortunately, cats that seek shelter under the bonnets of cars can then be injured or killed when that car is started. Help keep your own and your neighbourhood cats safe this winter by tapping the bonnet of your car before you start the engine.**



# Pieceful pastime: 7 health benefits of doing jigsaw puzzles

Jigsaw puzzles come in many shapes and sizes, from just a few pieces to several thousand. The earliest jigsaws appeared in the 1760s when European mapmakers pasted maps onto wood and cut them into small pieces.

There are various reasons why we might choose to complete a jigsaw - for example, to take on a challenge, relax and unwind, or (if completed with others) to socialise.

If you're familiar with jigsaws, you'll probably know that they can be both frustrating and satisfying - depending on how easy or difficult it is to fit the pieces together.

Not only are jigsaws an entertaining way to pass a few hours, but they offer some surprising health benefits, too. Below, we'll look at some fun facts about puzzles, as well as seven ways they can boost your health.

## Fun facts about jigsaw puzzles...

**English cartographer John Spilsbury created the first jigsaw puzzle in the 1760s:** He attached a map of the world to a piece of wood, cut out each country, and dared people to put it back together. Spilsbury then marketed these puzzles to wealthy and influential people as a way to teach their children geography.

**The first cardboard jigsaw puzzle appeared in the late 1800s:** These didn't initially replace wooden jigsaws because manufacturers believed cardboard puzzles would be seen as low-quality. The profit margins on the wooden puzzles were also larger.

**The name jigsaw comes from the tool: the jigsaw:** The original name for the jigsaw puzzle was 'dissected puzzle'. But after the jigsaw-cutting tool was invented in the 1800s, puzzle makers began using this to cut puzzle pieces and make more intricate shapes - so dissected puzzles were renamed 'jigsaw puzzles'.

Puzzles made using a jigsaw were quicker to produce, which meant they could be manufactured at a lower price, and more were sold.

**Puzzles became more widespread in the early 20th century:** Companies like Parker Brothers (an American toy and game manufacturer) started making jigsaw puzzles in a wide range of designs. Over the years, the popularity of jigsaw puzzles has fluctuated. The Great Depression was an era when puzzles were particularly popular. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic saw a rise in jigsaw puzzle popularity, with puzzle sales increasing by 38% in 2020 compared to 2019.

**It wasn't until the 1950s that techniques for making cardboard puzzles improved:** Once this happened, jigsaws could be considered 'good-quality'. Since then, the technique for producing cardboard puzzles hasn't changed much.

**Jigsaw puzzles come in a huge range of sizes and designs:** Some puzzles are small enough to be fridge magnets, while others are larger: 300\*, 500\*, 1,000\*, 2,000\*, 3,000\*...all the way up to 40,000\* pieces. They also come in all different shapes, including round\*, 3D\* and even 4D\*. There are also countless jigsaw designs, including animals, cartoons, flowers, movies, scenery, and vehicles. You can even turn your own photographs into jigsaw puzzles on sites such as puzzleYOU.

**Experts say it takes four times as long to do a 1,000-piece puzzle as it does to do a 500-piece one:** The reason for this is that each time you double the number of pieces, the difficulty quadruples. So, it'll take you around 64 times longer to complete a 4,000-piece puzzle than a 500-piece one.

## Here are a few jigsaw puzzle world records...

- The world record for completing the jigsaw with the most pieces is 551,232.
- The world record for the largest jigsaw by size is 6,122.68 m<sup>2</sup> (65,905.17 ft<sup>2</sup>) – it had 12,320 pieces.
- The largest collection of jigsaw puzzles contains 4,060 puzzles.
- The largest number of people to solve a jigsaw puzzle is 9,569.
- The largest online jigsaw puzzle had 1,200,000 pieces.
- The most expensive jigsaw puzzle was sold for \$27,000.

## 7 health benefits of doing jigsaw puzzles

**Doing jigsaws can be good for physical health:** Jigsaw puzzles can help you relax and may reduce heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing rate. They can also be excellent for improving and maintaining fine motor skills (making the manipulation of small objects easier).

**Puzzling can help keep your mind sharp:** Completing a puzzle requires problem-solving, memory, and visual perception skills. As a result, studies suggest that jigsaw puzzles may be an effective way to exercise your mind and combat cognitive decline.

**Jigsaw puzzles can make you feel good:** When you correctly fit a puzzle piece, there's evidence that your brain produces higher levels of the 'feel-good' hormone dopamine, which can lead to feelings of accomplishment and fulfilment. Some people also compare completing a jigsaw puzzle to meditation, because it provides a sense of peace and calm. As a result, studies suggest that spending time concentrating on a jigsaw puzzle can ease stress and anxiety.

**Jigsaws can help you connect with family and friends:** Jigsaw puzzles can be just as fun to solve with others as they are by yourself. Why not start a jigsaw puzzle on a table in your house where other people can easily access it? This might encourage family or friends to connect a few pieces of the puzzle whenever they have a moment to sit down and focus on it - or give you the opportunity to complete it together. Doing a jigsaw puzzle can also be an effective way to spend time with children.

**Jigsaw puzzles can benefit children:** We all know that children's minds can dart from one thing to the next. But jigsaw puzzles can provide a good source of focus. Plus, there are plenty of learning benefits to solving jigsaw puzzles. For example, themed puzzles can be a good way to help children learn everything from colours and letters to numbers and shapes.

**Puzzling can give you time to yourself:** Jigsaws are great if you need some 'me time'. They allow you to take a break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life - and from the unrelenting stimulus of today's digital world.

## Can jigsaw puzzles reduce the risk of dementia?

There's some debate as to whether jigsaw puzzles can help reduce the risk of dementia, with many online articles claiming they do. However, research in this area remains fairly limited. You can find out more about the link between jigsaw puzzles and dementia on the Alzheimer's Society website.

## Jigsaw puzzles to try if you need some inspiration

When choosing a puzzle, it can be useful to consider where you're going to do it, because this will help determine the size. Will it be a small 500-piece one? Or a larger one, like a 3,000-piece puzzle? It's also worth considering how many people will complete the puzzle. If it's a solo activity, you might like to put it in a spot that's quiet and out of the way. However, if all the family works on it, it's probably best placed somewhere that's accessible to everyone.

## Final thoughts...

Jigsaw puzzles are not only a fun way to spend your time, but they offer several health benefits, too. Also, people of all ages can enjoy them. So whether you complete one by yourself or as a family, everyone can benefit from jigsaw puzzles. From the first wooden puzzle to modern-day digital ones, jigsaw puzzles have become a fixture in our lives; one that's here to stay!

(Article source: Rest Less)

## Exercise can be ‘frontline treatment’ for mild depression, researchers say

**Biggest improvements seen in young adults and new mothers, with group activities of most benefit.**



*The Guardian* reports that aerobic exercise such as running, swimming or dancing can be considered a frontline treatment for mild depression and anxiety, according to research that suggests working out with others brings the most benefits.

Scientists analysed published reviews on exercise and mental health and found that some of the greatest improvements were observed in young adults and new mothers - groups that are considered particularly vulnerable to mental health problems.

While aerobic group exercise emerged as the most effective physical activity for reducing depression and anxiety, low-intensity programmes that lasted only a couple of months may be best for anxiety, the researchers said.

“Exercise can have a similar effect, and sometimes a stronger impact, than traditional treatments,” said Neil Munro, a psychologist at James Cook University in Queensland, Australia. “Getting moving, in whatever shape or form works best for each person, can help mitigate depression and anxiety symptoms.”

The researchers analysed data from 63 published reviews that looked at the impact of exercise on depression or anxiety in nearly 80,000 volunteers. The study aimed to identify the effect of exercise across all ages, and in pregnant women and new mothers. The exercises ranged from resistance training and aerobic workouts to mind-body activities such as yoga and tai chi.

Forms of aerobic exercise that boosted the heart rate had the biggest impact on depression, with resistance training and yoga having a lesser effect. A similar trend was seen for anxiety but the impact was smaller, the study found.

Further benefits were seen in people who took part in group exercise or supervised activities, the researchers write in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. This suggests socialising plays “a crucial role in the antidepressant effects of exercise”, Munro said.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 280 million people worldwide have depression and 301 million have anxiety disorders. In the UK and elsewhere, cases have risen sharply among 16- to 24-year-olds in the past decade. About 15 to 20% of new mothers experience depression and anxiety in the first year after giving birth.

Dr Brendon Stubbs, who studies exercise and mental health at King’s College London, urged caution over the findings because they relied heavily on mild cases.

“For people with mild or subclinical symptoms, exercise can reasonably be considered a frontline treatment option,” he said. “However, there is no evidence from this study, or from the wider literature, to suggest that people should change or discontinue established treatments such as psychotherapy or medication.”

For many people with severe depression, even basic daily activities could be extremely challenging, he added, and their symptoms often needed to improve before they could attempt exercise.

Prof Michael Bloomfield, a psychiatrist at UCL, said: “It’s good news that group exercise such as Zumba can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression for some people, likely through a mix of physical activity, social connection, fun, dance and routine, and the evidence supports it as a potential useful adjunct to care.”

But he said for many people with more severe depression, taking part in energetic group activities was unrealistic. “For that reason, exercise should be seen as a complement to, not a replacement for, evidence-based treatments such as psychological therapies and medication where these are clinically indicated,” Bloomfield said.

*(Article source: The Guardian)*

## Office buzz: UK employers turn to beehives to boost workplace wellbeing

**Providers report rise in demand as companies seek mental health benefits and increased sense of community.**

*The Guardian* reports that in a growing number of workplaces, the soundtrack of the lunch break is no longer the rustle of sandwiches at a desk, but the quiet hum of bees - housed just outside the office window.

Employers from Manchester to Milton Keynes are working with professional beekeepers to install hives on rooftops, in courtyards and car parks - positioning beekeeping not as a novelty but as a way to ease stress, build community and reconnect workers with nature in an era of hybrid work and burnout.



“There’s something very special - almost spiritual - about enabling your employees to take time away from work to see how nature has created the greatest example of how every business should run,” said Chris Payne, a co-founder of Green Folk Recruitment.

“If every organisation ran like a beehive - with shared, purpose-driven goals, decentralised decision-making where individuals act autonomously for the collective good, and honest communication - it would be a very successful business indeed,” he added.

Twice a year, Payne takes his employees on a four-hour round trip to Buckley’s Bees in Crewe, where they learn beekeeping and how to construct hives. “When we’re qualified, we’ll bring the hives we’ve built back to our offices,” he said. “It will be a magical moment.”

Emma Buckley, the chief executive of Buckley’s Bees, has about 24 UK clients and more than 10 international ones. Business has grown so quickly that she is now recruiting additional staff.

“Our motivation is improving people’s mental health, which employers increasingly understand is closely linked to nature,” she said. “It’s amazing to see the engagement on people’s faces as soon as we start talking about bees: they get completely lost in the world of bees and forget all about their troubles.”

Buckley runs lunchtime workshops for employees and installs cameras inside hives so they can observe the bees from their desks. “We even have one company that livestreams into their break room,” she said.

Mark Gale, the founder and managing director of BeesMax Ltd, said the experience was calming, educational and oddly bonding: a rare opportunity for employees to step away from screens and care collectively for something fragile and alive.

“It’s like nothing else you could possibly experience during a working day,” said Gale, who rents out and manages hives at sites including the QEII Centre in London, the video games developer Codemasters and the DoubleTree by Hilton hotel chain. “One minute employees are eating their sandwiches at their desk - and the next, they’re in full body suits with 10,000 bees flying around them.”

Gale said demand had increased so much that he was taking on new, full-time staff. “The increase is entirely organic,” he said. “It’s all word of mouth.”

Supporters of office apiaries say the appeal goes beyond novelty, pointing to workplace wellbeing, team building and tangible evidence of environmental commitment that companies can showcase to clients and staff alike.

Some teams report that the bees have become a source of camaraderie, and that in a workplace culture where perks often consist of gym subsidies or free snacks, nature-based experiences feel refreshingly purposeful and even quietly radical.

“A gym discount or fruit bowl is nice, but the bees create a shared story and a sense of stewardship,” said Phillip Potts, the general manager of Park House, on London’s Oxford Street, which has seven floors of office space.

“Our tenants say it is the most unusual and memorable workplace perk they have experienced - and our queen bee has developed something of a cult following in the building,” he added. “We call her Philippa.”

Damson Tregaskis, the founder of Hive5 Manchester, has also noticed an increase in demand. “Employers want to encourage workers to connect more with nature,” she said.

But as the trend spreads, so do questions about its environmental impact. Ecologists and conservation bodies warn that the rapid growth of managed honeybee colonies - particularly in towns and cities - may not be the unalloyed good it appears to be, when viewed through a biodiversity lens.

The concerns apply across the UK, from regional cities to market towns. Any place with limited green space risks putting additional pressure on already declining wild insect populations.

Tregaskis is conscious of this. “I know really big companies who have been interested but their motivation has been, for want of a better word, greenwashing,” she said.

“Even in these cases, though, you can connect with the people on the ground and make sure you make a real difference,” she added.

Buckley is also keenly aware of these issues, pointing to research suggesting that in areas with high density of hives, honeybees can compete with native bees, butterflies and hoverflies for limited nectar and pollen.

“We’re careful not to take on any business in locations that are densely populated or already have a lot of beekeepers,” she said.

Office apiaries stem from two modern anxieties: the scramble to improve workplace wellbeing, and the need to be seen acting as nature declines. In a single lunch break, the bees’ quiet hum can offer a moment of both.

*(Article source: The Guardian)*

*Do you have an interesting story or article?*

*If so send us an email by visiting:  
[www.ourplace.co](http://www.ourplace.co)*



# Romantic retreats: 10 of the best hotels, pubs, cabins and cottages for a cosy UK getaway

It's an ideal time of year for snuggling up on a countryside break. We pick accommodation from shepherds' huts in Somerset to a chateau in Wales.

## Stylish lakeside huts in Somerset

Six vintage-style "luxury huts" spaced out around a lake make up The Shepherds Hut Retreat in south Somerset. They have modern kitchens and bathrooms, private areas with hot tubs, and fancy features such as telescopes, gin bars, pizza ovens, fire pits and hammocks. There is also a woodland sauna on site.

The newest hut, 1898, is the grandest, and is inspired by the Pig hotels. It is a mile's walk to the Lord Poulett Arms, a thatched 17th-century pub in the village of Hinton St George, and half an hour's drive to the beaches of the Jurassic Coast in east Devon and Dorset. From £169, [coolstays.com](http://coolstays.com)

## A Jacobean manor in Kent

Boys Hall, a gorgeous Jacobean manor house near Ashford, is now a restaurant with rooms. The pub area has comfy chairs and a wood burner; lounges with inglenook fireplaces, sofas and books; there's more than a hectare (2½ acres) of grounds, including a rose garden. The restaurant is a light, oak-framed space serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, including a weekly changing set menu of Kentish produce (three courses for £30; perhaps venison terrine, braised beef cheek stew and winter berry trifle). The nine rooms feature original stone mullion windows, oak panels and beams, plus rolltop baths and four-poster beds. From £220 B&B, [boys-hall.com](http://boys-hall.com)

## A fairytale farm cottage in the Malvern Hills

Wishbone is a 16th-century, fairytale cottage hidden away on an ancient fruit farm. The stone and timber barn is half-covered by foliage on the outside, but the inside has been beautifully restored and converted. There is a vaulted ceiling above the open-plan kitchen, dining and living areas, a bedroom with a king-size bed and an en suite shower room. Original wattle and daub panels, brick floors and beams add to the charm, and barn doors open on to the patio. Beyond the orchard in front of the cottage are fields with oak trees and a lake. From £850 for two nights, [uniquehomestays.com](http://uniquehomestays.com)

## A thatched pub in Bedfordshire

The Sun Inn is a 17th-century, recently refurbished thatched pub in the riverside village of Felmersham. It has open fires, guest ales and food sourced from its own farm. Its curried kid goat offal with fermented chilli might not be everyone's idea of a date-night dinner, but there are steaks, pork chops and veggie options too. Upstairs are two rooms: a deluxe, dual-aspect double, or, for those really pushing the boat out, a two-storey suite. The latter has exposed stone walls, wooden beams and a freestanding copper bath. Couples can visit Felmersham's 13th-century church, St Mary's, and take strolls along the River Great Ouse. From £135 room-only, [thesunfelmersham.com](http://thesunfelmersham.com)

## An arty cottage in the Scottish Borders

A single-storey stone lodge on a private track between parkland and a wood, Lilylaw was once home to the gamekeeper of the Minto Estate. It is not for shy couples, being largely open-plan, with a low wall separating the bedroom from the living area, and a clawfoot bath in the bedroom (there is a separate bathroom too). The decor is inspired by English country house hotels; there is a wood burner, large windows and lots of contemporary artworks; and a garden with a partially walled terrace. Perhaps best of all, guests can request a key to explore Fatlips Castle, a 16th-century reiver's tower on top of Minto Crags. From £559 for two nights, [crabtreeandcrabtree.com](http://crabtreeandcrabtree.com)

## Off-grid cabins in West Yorkshire

Three off-grid cabins have just opened at Denton Reserve, a 1,000-hectare rewilding estate near Ilkley in West Yorkshire. The decor is pared-back and calm, and cabins have floor-to-ceiling windows, large skylights, king-sized beds and rain showers. Couples can stargaze from their cabin or around the fire pit (blankets and astronomy books are provided), and look out for the resident tawny, little and barn owls. The cabins are powered by solar batteries and named after plants now sown on the estate: Cotton Grass, Peat Moss and Cross Leaved Heath. It is a 10-minute walk to the Penny Bun gastropub, which serves Denton produce. From £220, [dentonreserve.co.uk](http://dentonreserve.co.uk)

## A Welsh Chateau

Lovers don't need to cross the Channel to stay in a chateau - there is one on the south coast of Ynys Môn (Anglesey). Chateau Rhianfa was built by John Hay-Williams in the mid-19th century as a gift to his wife Sarah, inspired by her sketches of chateaux in the Loire Valley. The fairytale Grade II-listed property has a restaurant, wine cave, banqueting hall, drawing room and music room, and gardens with views over the Menai Strait to Eryri (Snowdonia). The 27 bedrooms are in the main chateau, lodge and cottages, and include a suite with a four-poster bed. From £145 B&B, [chateaurhianfa.co.uk](http://chateaurhianfa.co.uk)

## A treehouse in Powys

What could be more romantic than staying in a treehouse? Ty Coedwig (Forest House) is in a patch of ancient oaks, surrounded by farmland and four miles from Newtown in Powys. A wooden walkway leads to the open-plan kitchen and living room, which has a chesterfield sofa and French doors on to the decking. The bedroom has a vaulted ceiling and a kingsize bed, and the bathroom has a two-person shower and double sinks; both have huge windows. There is an outdoor bath and a slide down to the forest floor, where there is a fire pit and a swing. The nearest pub, the Dolau Inn, is 1½ miles away. From £346 for two nights, [uniquehideaways.com](http://uniquehideaways.com)

## A Gloucestershire barn

The Lavendrye Barn is at the end of a tree-lined lane in the grounds of a Tudor manor house in Lydney, near the Severn estuary. The ivy-clad stone barn has a snug with a log fire, a vaulted kitchen, a mezzanine bedroom and a modern shower room. It has been recently renovated but is still full of original features, including exposed stone walls and oak beams. French doors lead out on to the walled garden, where there is a wood-fired hot tub with views over the Severn. The wildflower meadow beyond has recliners, hammocks, a fire pit, barbecue and pizza oven. Walking trails lead from the door through the surrounding ancient woodland. From £180, [hostunusual.com](http://hostunusual.com)

## A country house hotel in Wiltshire

The former rectory of All Saints' church in the village of Crudwell, north Wiltshire, is now the Rectory hotel. The early 18th-century, Grade II-listed building is made from pale Cotswold stone, and has a simple, relaxed country house vibe. There are 15 bedrooms in the main house, all with rolltop baths, and a three-bedroom cottage in the grounds. Couples can sip cocktails at the bar and dine at the restaurant where the new head chef, Damian Clisby, serves set lunches (£25 for three courses) and candlelit dinners (mains include roast partridge with cauliflower, chanterelles and madeira sauce, and Cornish sea bass with shellfish sauce). The hotel has a sister pub just over the road, with log fires and local ales. From £160 B&B, [therectoryhotel.com](http://therectoryhotel.com)

(Article source: *The Guardian*)



# It's what Sundays are made for! The 10 best roasts in London

Whether you're after a traditional pub roast or a restaurant serving Sunday lunch in style, you've come to the right place.

Sunday lunch. There's nothing quite like it. An elemental meal, one that Londoners take incredibly seriously. Debates about what constitutes the 'perfect' Sunday roast have been known to last for hours.

There is no shortage of top roasts in London. We've rounded up the city's best Sunday meals from a host of pubs, restaurants and breweries all around town. What makes a good roast? For us, it's simple; a welcoming room is a good start, maybe in a pub with an open fire. Then it comes to the plate - we need perfect roast potatoes, well-cooked lamb, beef or pork and a decent plant-based option too. A Sunday roast is more than just lunch - it's self-care. From snug neighbourhood staples to more bijou gastropubs, we've got something for every taste (if that taste is for comforting mounds of roast meat/plant based goodness, lashings of gravy and carbs for days).

A lot of these places get quite busy, so you're always advised to book ahead to avoid disappointment.

## 1. The Duke of Cambridge

**What is it?** A revolutionary roast by London's OG organic pub.



**Why we love it:** Don't get all the fuss about organic grub? Islington's The Duke of Cambridge will win you over in a single mouthful. Back in 1998 this backstreet boozer in Angel was certified Britain's first organic pub by the Soil Association - and all these decades later it's thriving on the same ethically-sourced ingredients.

That foundation is just unbeatable: flavour gushes out of each dice of carrot, beet and swede; the red cabbage exquisitely balances sweet and sour; gently crunching roasties tickle with light saltiness, rosemary and garlic; the towering Yorkshire pud is deftly neither too thick nor thin, crispy or soggy.

Making the most of the extreme quality of ingredients, the centrepiece - chicken or lamb from north Wales' Rhug Estate, roast squash or Cornish day boat fish - swaggers in its simplicity, and it's all so meticulously complimentary. On top of all that, the Duke is an extraordinarily lovely place to see out a Sunday; all gorgeous green tiles, rustic wooden décor and, with its huge street windows and skylights, basked in natural light.

**Time Out tip:** Don't just settle for just the roasts - the starters and sweet treats are just as flavourful. My pick are two olive oil-tastic dishes: the freshly baked sourdough with olive jam to start and the gloriously gloopy, olive oil drenched Montezuma crèmeux to finish.

**Address:** 30 St Peter's Street, Islington, N1 8JT.  
**Roasts available:** Sundays 12-5pm.  
**Expect to pay:** Roasts £24-30.

## 2. Old Nun's Head (pictured top left)

**What is it?** Fit Roasts by name, fit roasts by nature, with impressive veggie and vegan options in one of our favourite London pubs.

**Why we love it:** Taking residence at surely the only 1930s boozer to also feature a Britney Spears shrine behind the bar, Nunhead's Old Nun's Head is a treat for both drinkers and diners. Sup on an excellent selection of craft ales and, on Sundays, indulge in their impressively varied roast selection, brought to you by the saucily-titled Fit Roasts.

For the meaties, there's a quartet of options including rolled lamb shoulder, rolled pork belly, quarter chicken and topside of beef, while their plant-based options feature veggie and vegan haggis. All come with a full cast of roast potatoes, maple carrots, parsnip puree, cauliflower cheese, greens, yorkshires (including vegan versions) and gravy. Feed us baby, one more time.

**Time Out tip:** If you can't make it on a Sunday, The Old Nun's Head is also home to one of the best pizzas in London; Dough Hands are in residence from Tuesday to Saturday.

**Address:** 15 Nunhead Green, Nunhead, SE15 3QQ.  
**Roasts available:** Sunday 12-6pm or until they sell out.  
**Expect to pay:** From £16 per person.

## 3. The Angel

**What is it?** A sturdy Sunday offering in a revamped pub with big bistro energy.

**Why we love it:** This charming Highgate Village gastropub is now run by the same team as the nearby Red Lion & Sun. Roasts are hefty; our slow roasted belly of pork was a whopper, with a vast crust of golden crackling, a hilariously large yorkshire pudding, spuds, carrots and a deeply meaty gravy. Vegetarians are well catered for - the beetroot and mushroom wellington was a beast of dish, complete with all the trimmings and a veggie gravy to boot. Airy and bright, the space feels more like a Parisian brasserie than a north London boozer.

**Time Out tip:** Not many gastropubs have a frozen margarita machine. Make use of the one at The Angel and order a fro-marg as the perfect pudding replacement.

**Address:** 37 Highgate High Street, Highgate, N6 5JT.  
**Opening hours:** Sundays 12-5pm.  
**Expect to pay:** Roasts £24-25.

## 4. The Macbeth

**What is it?** A rowdy Portuguese luncheon in a revamped Hoxton boozer.



**Why we love it:** This former indie sleaze hangout now serves excellent Portuguese cuisine and as of February 2026 has added a Sunday menu to its repertoire. Trad diners can go for roast beef with all the trimmings, but the roast chicken with a heap of flavourful rice and house-made piri-piri sauce is the must-order, coming on like the most elite Nando's you've ever had the pleasure of dealing with. Perfectly smooshy spuds are slotted onto the plate, for extra carb-on-carb realness, and it comes with a heroically dressed and super-fresh feeling salad as well. Alas, when we went they had just run out of a sensational looking side of cheesy leeks, but order their seasonal vegetable gratin if you can. There are also sharing fish pies and starters of salami, as well as majestic little bifanas.

**Time Out tip:** Our rhubarb and banana pudding was a creamy and layered tiramisu-adjacent revelation. If it's on the menu, order it.

**Address:** 70 Hoxton Street, N1 6LP.  
**Opening times:** Sunday lunch served 1-5pm.  
**Expect to pay:** Half roast chicken £27, roast beef £28.

Continued on pages 12-13...



### 5. The Mall Tavern (pictured top left)

**What is it?** An unfussy gem of a roast, in a buzzy boozier that makes Sunday afternoon feel like Friday night.

**Why we love it:** What makes a roast go from meh to marvellous? If you're anything like us the list is simple: excellent core cookery (of course), plenty of veg, generous gravy pouring, and the sort of general ambience that makes you want to order one more bottle of wine.

Rejoice then, because Notting Hill's The Mall Tavern has all this in buckets. Its Sunday menu is fairly traditional, with chicken, beef (with the option to add bone marrow), pork belly and nut wellington all accompanied by yorkies, roasties, carrots and greens. But then we arrive at the English language's greatest two-word combination: 'endless gravy'.

Finish it all off with desserts including a vegan brownie or 'tiramisu from the tray'. Their summer roast menu includes the slightly lighter option of a whole lobster, and seafood platters as well as Aperol slushies.

**Time Out tip:** The Mall Tavern's roast menu comes with suggested beer pairings to make your decision-making easier - a pale ale for beef or a Belgian ale for the wellington.

**Address:** 71 Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill, W8 4DY.

**Roasts available:** Sundays 12-10.30pm.

**Expect to pay:** Roasts are £22-26.50 per person.

### 6. The Rake at Compton Arms

**What is it?** A lovingly curated, herocially sized historical meat-feast.

**Why we love it:** Currently in residence at Highbury gastropub The Compton Arms, Rake like to serve up a touch of British culinary history with their meals. You'll not find hot honey-battered carrots here, but rather sides of old school clapshot (the trad Scottish dish of mashed swede, turnips and spuds), hefty bowls of medieval-looking spring greens and brimming bowls of cauliflower cheese. Roast pork belly, roast chicken, marinated beef rump, lamb leg or mushroom and veg turnover are your options for mains, and all are cooked impeccably.



**Time Out tip:** Order the house bread with whipped rosemary butter and braised cuttlefish with smoked sausage (a kind of cockney gumbo) if you want to go full King Henry VIII.

**Address:** The Compton Arms, 4 Compton Avenue, Islington, N1 2XD. **Roast times:** Every Sunday, 12.30-4.30pm.

**Expect to pay:** All roasts £25.

### 7. The Prince Arthur

**What is it?** Voguish kitchen talent dealing in upmarket roasts with a difference.

**Why we love it:** This classy London Fields boozier offers a sublime Sunday lunch, that isn't like other roasts. Not only are the vibes immaculate (candlelit tables, friendly dogs roaming about, and a some harmless, tipsy hipsters), but where else can you score a couple of confit duck legs, Toulouse sausage, or a fallow venison and bone marrow pie alongside your standard spuds, carrots and greens?

Everything comes with lemon butter cabbage, glazed parsnip, heritage carrot, crispy potatoes, Yorkshire puddings and gravy, with head chef Will Samuel making meaty magic in the kitchen. (And do order the creamy bavette tarate on chicken butter toast as a starter if you have a competitive appetite).

**Time Out tip:** Can't make it on a Sunday? The Prince Arthur has consistently ranked on the podium of Time Out's best London gastropubs so any visit here is a winner.

**Address:** 95 Forest Road, London Fields, E8 3BH.

**Roasts available:** Sundays from 12.30pm; last booking at 6.30pm. **Expect to pay:** Roasts are £22-39 per person.

### 8. Quality Chop House

**What is it?** A three-course feast in an iconic Victorian dining room.

**Why we love it:** This one means business. The cherry on top of the Quality Chop House's magnificent meaty menu, their Sunday roast is one to truly dedicate a whole afternoon to. In the starter corner, you've got an elevated selection that immediately sets them apart from your average pub fare, from a red mullet soup to Norfolk asparagus, hollandaise and potato.

Mains include Aberdeen Angus rump and brisket, but also a turbot option; served with roasties, leafy escarole, mustardy turnips and more. You'd be remiss not to pop on a side of their legendary confit potatoes for good measure. Finish up with a Kentish strawberry trifle or a decadent 72% chocolate mousse and revel in a Sunday well done.

**Time Out tip:** One of London's most atmospheric dining rooms, you'll want to stay for as long as possible. Pre-roast snacks such as smoked cod's roe and sweetbreads will help.

**Address:** 92-94 Farringdon Rd, Clerkenwell, EC1R 3EA.

**Roasts available:** Sundays 12-3.30pm.

**Expect to pay:** £59 for three courses. Snacks start from £6.

### 9. Camberwell Arms

**What is it?** Sharing roasts in a south London gastropub from the gods.

**Why we love it:** A supercharged roast that knows how to kick off a party (ie. with scotch bonnet pork fat on toast), the Camberwell Arms' entire Sunday lunch menu is designed with similarly outrageous feasting in mind. Most of their mains are sharers for two, with slow cooked lamb, roast chicken, and sandy and black pork served alongside variations of roast potatoes and cabbage (hispi, cavolo nero and savoy), while their current veggie option is a courgette, moghrabieh and lemon aioli affair. The south London institution's menu changes often, but there are always eclectic starters, with ice creams, sorbets and cheeses on hand to finish.

**Time Out tip:** Take a snap on rooftop bar Frank's Cafe's iconic pink staircase during the summer season. You'll find it a short hop away in Peckham.

**Address:** 65 Camberwell Church Street, Camberwell, SE5 8TR.

**Roasts available:** Sundays 1-5pm.

**Expect to pay:** Sharing roasts start at £50 for two.

### 10. Buster Mantis

**What is it?** A ravishing Jamaican-inspired roast in Deptford.



**Why we love it:** According to Buster Mantis - a sleek eatery in a railway arch - they serve 'neither a traditional Jamaican Sunday lunch, nor a British one, but borrow some bits that [they] like from both'. It works. Starters include oxtail croquettes, saltfish fritters and pepper shrimp, while the fusion extends to their main event. Pork, chicken and lamb options come with roast potatoes, rice and peas, veg and a yorkshire pud, while their veggie option is a pumpkin-stuffed cho cho with callaloo. A trio of punches - Guinness, rum and tropical - ensure the drinks also follow the Caribbean flavour trail, while sides of mac and cheese and plantain are a must.

**Time Out tip:** Back in 2022, Deptford High Street was crowned Time Out's coolest London street. A few years later and there's still oodles there to help you fill a whole day of pleasant mooching.

**Address:** 3-4 Resolution Way, Deptford, SE8 4NT.

**Roasts available:** Sundays 1.30-6pm.

**Expect to pay:** Roasts start at £20.50 per person, with sides up to £6.

(Article source: Time Out)



# Save it for a rainy day: 13 activities and things to do at home when it's gloomy outside

**Few of us appreciate cold, wind, and rain. But rather than wishing for sunnier days, why not explore some new ways to have fun, get creative, and reap a sense of reward?**

There are plenty of rainy-day activities to try, and who knows, perhaps you'll discover a new hobby you can keep up, whatever the weather. With this in mind, we've pulled together a list of 13 things to do on a rainy day that we hope will brighten your mood. From taking an interior design course to creating an inspiring vision board, we'd love to know if you do any of the activities below, or have any additional ideas to share with us.

### Create a recipe book

If you have some of your own recipes (or recipes handed down to you from older relatives) that you love, why not pull them together into a recipe book that you can enjoy and gift to others?



How you decide to organise your recipe book - for example, whether that's by starter/main/dessert or meat/veg/sweets, is completely up to you. You could fill an entire book or just a few pages with the idea that you or your family can add new recipes to it over the years.

There are several ways you can customise your recipe book, too. Some people prefer a more minimalistic style, while others may want to put extra time and thought into creating a recipe book that looks beautiful. You can also choose to handwrite your book or type and print it.

### Take an interior design course

When you're at home, your attention may turn to the smaller details of your living space - like the peeling wallpaper you've been meaning to replace, the empty sideboard that could do with some jazzing up, or the stack of lumpy throw cushions on your sofa that need replacing.

Spending time at home can be far more enjoyable if you're in a space that brings you as much comfort, enjoyment, and relaxation as possible. So, if you're looking to breathe some fresh energy into your home and you're stuck for ideas, you could consider taking an interior design course.

Whether you want to learn more about putting together different colour schemes, discover popular styles and trends, or find out how to create a space plan, there's a course for everyone.

### Complete a jigsaw puzzle



Not only are jigsaw puzzles an entertaining way to spend a few hours (or days!), but they're also great for helping us relax and take breaks from technology while challenging our brains.

When solving a jigsaw puzzle, we use both sides of the brain and make connections between them, which improves our ability to learn, understand, and recall things. Plus, when we successfully place a puzzle piece, our brains release the neurotransmitter dopamine. Dopamine has a positive impact on mood, memory, motivation, motor control, and our ability to focus.

### Create an inspiring vision board

It's easy to become so busy with everyday life that we forget to dream and ask ourselves questions like: what do I want to get out of life? So if the weather is keeping you at home, why not consider creating an inspiring vision board?

A vision board is any sort of visual display that can act as a powerful reminder of whatever you want to be, have, or do in your life. It usually includes images, words, and/or quotes that represent your goals.

For example, you might use an image of a beach if you've always wanted to live by the sea, or a quote from someone you admire who has achieved something that you'd like to work towards. Vision boards are about hope, personal growth, and remembering what life's all about. They'll often grow and evolve as you do, so your vision board might look completely different from one year to the next.

### Start a blog (pictured top left)

Blogging is a bit like keeping a journal, except it lives online and is usually shared with others. You can share anything in a blog: thoughts, feelings, advice, experiences, or expertise - and it can be personal or professional.

You might choose to keep a day-in-the-life blog where you let people into the ins and outs of your life and allow them to really get to know you. Or you could keep a blog about something you're passionate about - such as travel, fashion, baking, or animals - to inspire others. If you're a business owner, perhaps you could start a blog full of tips on how to set up a business... the list is endless.

Once you know what you want to write about, setting up a blog is pretty simple, and it's completely up to you how often you create content for it.

### Bake something elaborate

As a society that's always in a rush, it's easy to prioritise speed and convenience when we're cooking and baking. But if you're spending the day at home, why not take the time to bake something elaborate and learn some new skills in the process?

If you're looking for somewhere to start, you could try this Charlotte royale recipe from Mary Berry, this Swedish princess cake from ScandiKitchen, or this rosemary focaccia bread from Gimme Some Oven.

Or, if you're a fan of The Great British Bake Off, why not have a go at making some of the show's bakes yourself? You can find a whole host of recipes from finalists on The Great British Bake Off's website - and you could even apply for the show if you're feeling brave!

*Continued on pages 16-17...*



## Make your own bubble bath and face mask

There are few things better than having a nice hot bubble bath and a pamper session on a blustery day. But toiletries and beauty products can be expensive, and half the time we don't even know what's really in them.

So, if you want to save some money, skip the chemicals, and get creative, why not have a go at making your own bubble bath? The only ingredients you'll need are castile soap, glycerin, distilled water, and essential oils and the process itself is quite straightforward.



## Declutter and reorganise your home

Decluttering is a brilliant way to reduce stress by freeing yourself from things you no longer need. As human beings, we're drawn to order and symmetry. So when our homes feel cluttered, our minds often feel cluttered, too, whether we realise it or not.



Decluttering and reorganising is also an opportunity to rediscover lost treasures and make daily living feel more manageable. After all, having something fall out of a cupboard every time you open it is a sure way to annoy you!

Many of us like the idea of decluttering, but putting it into practice and parting with items we've grown attached to can be tricky.

If you're wondering what to do with your clutter when you're finished, you could consider donating good-quality items to your local charity shop or even selling them to make some extra cash.

## Explore fun things to do online

When you're in the mood for some lighthearted entertainment, there are no limits to what you can do online. Whether you want to track sharks, check in with gorillas in eastern Congo, paint with flames, or explore the stars, the internet is a great place to turn when you need a distraction or something to make you smile.

For those who'd like to do something fun yet educational online, you could take a virtual museum or art gallery tour. Some of the places you could explore include the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in South Korea and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

## Work out at home

If the idea of exercising outside isn't so appealing in the rain, this doesn't mean that you have to skip your workout altogether. There are plenty of ways to get your blood pumping from the comfort of your home.

For those who love to dance, why not try an online class? There's a huge range of styles to choose from, including ballet, African dance, and walking dance workouts. There are also plenty of other exercises you can do at home, such as Pilates, yoga, Tai Chi, or lifting weights.



## Plan a trip (pictured top left)

A rainy day makes for the perfect opportunity to sit down and start planning your next adventure, especially if you've been itching to get away.

The process of discovering and learning about new places can often be exciting in itself. So even if you aren't sure when or where you want to go yet, there's nothing to stop you from exploring your options.

## Unleash your creativity

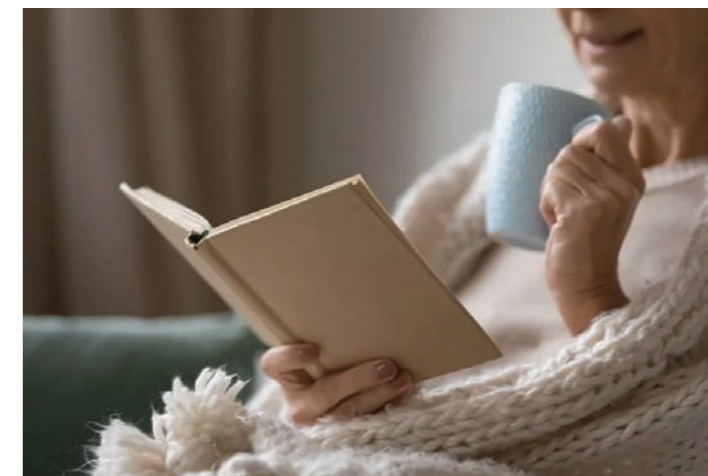
Nothing says 'rainy-day activity' like getting stuck into some arts and crafts and exploring your creative side. And the list of creative things you can do is endless. From painting and macramé to carpentry and origami - there's something for everyone.

Learning a new craft is also just the beginning. Once you get to grips with the basics, who knows what kind of exciting projects you could immerse yourself in?



## Get lost in a book or TV series

A good story can make for one of the best forms of escapism, and it's amazing how many hours can fly by when you're invested in a compelling book or TV series.



If you enjoy reading and need a few new book ideas, we have plenty of articles on our books, literature and writing section that might pique your interest, including 16 crime and mystery books that you won't be able to put down, 18 of the greatest adventure books, and 15 inspiring self-development books.

For those who'd rather become engrossed in a good series, some of the most talked-about ones at the moment that you might like to try include Black Doves (Netflix), Bad Sisters (Apple TV+), and Man on the Inside (Netflix).

## Final thoughts...

When it's gloomy outside, it's only natural that this might affect our mood - especially if we have to cancel plans. But there are plenty of things we can do to lift our spirits and fight cabin fever.

As a society, we've generally been led to believe that days spent at home due to bad weather are a negative thing. But in today's fast-paced world, it can also encourage us to slow down and take some well-needed respite.

*(Article source: Rest Less)*

# Please help us rescue and care for vulnerable hedgehogs - **Britain's favourite mammal**

A shocking study has revealed that hedgehogs are rapidly vanishing from our countryside, with numbers **HALVED** in the last 20 years.

I am delighted to tell you that Britain's hedgehog has won favourite mammal in a UK poll.

The UK's only spiny mammal won with 35.9% of the 5,000 votes, more than double that of the Red Fox, who came in second place with 15.4%. The Red Squirrel came third with 11.4%, out of a shortlist of 10 charismatic UK mammals.

Unfortunately, hedgehogs are rapidly vanishing from our countryside as numbers have **HALVED** in the last 20 years, a shocking study has revealed.

Henry Johnson, hedgehog officer, People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) said:

"We Brits seem to love hedgehogs for a whole range of reasons, including their cute appearance, their role as slug controllers and the way they have colonised our gardens with such aplomb. This is why it is so sad to see them decline, with one in three lost since the millennium."

Threats to hedgehogs come mostly from us. In rural areas, our farmland increasingly lacks the diversity of habitats hedgehogs need and the invertebrates they feed on. In towns and cities green spaces are lost to development, paved over or increasingly fragmented. Hedgehogs are also very prone to road traffic accidents.

This is why we have launched this special Annual Appeal to protect Britain's favourite mammal.

At Hedgehog Rescue Rehabilitation and Care Centre we respond immediately to rescue injured hedgehogs. A vet is called in straight away and the hedgehogs are monitored and cared for. Once fit and well they are released back into the wild.

Hedgehog Rescue is now conducting its Annual Appeal. Only by continuing our huge effort and long-life commitment can we give these wonderful animals a safe, happy and contented life.



We care for many hedgehogs here at our rehabilitation centre. Hedgehogs just like these:

## 'Julie'



'Julie' (pictured left) came in last Autumn, quite small, out in daylight and had ticks. She stayed a few weeks, put on enough weight, and made a full recovery. She was released back to her own territory by the finder.

## Baby Hedgehogs

These 2 hedgehogs came in as very small babies and had stayed with us a few weeks, gaining weight and giving us a chance to sort out their health issues. They had several ticks and needed worming. When they were 100% ready, we released them close to where they were found.



These hedgehogs are some of the lucky ones. Others are less fortunate.

As a friend who knows what a wonder animals can be, I hope you will support our Annual Appeal. Your kind gift will help us rescue and care for many more vulnerable hedgehogs - Britain's favourite mammal.

**To donate to Hedgehog Rescue, go to:**  
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/hedgehogrescue>  
**or write to: Raisemore, Unit 2, Home Farm, Bishopswood, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 5QZ**

