

All features great and small

Well-placed accessories can transform a garden, writes Ross Moyse



USE YOUR IMAGINATION: Garden accessories have come a long way from a couple of colourful gnomes fishing in a pond.



LIKE the icing on the cake there are many attractive features that will add to the framework and complete the 'dressing' of a garden. Features can range from pergolas (metal or wood), water features, furniture or sculpture to beautiful pots such as the blue pot shown (top left) and the slanted pots (centre).

Without such features a garden is so often lacking, although you may have all of the surfaces and plants in place. With them, a garden can be transformed – just like a room in a house.

The location of these features is essential to their success, as is their size – particularly so in small gardens. Far too many people regard choosing and locating features as a matter of dotting them around the garden with little regard to their effect on the overall design.

In this situation the eye becomes confused and restless, the reverse of the effect they should have, which should be to guide the eye or to give a pleasing surprise as it suddenly becomes visible or to draw you to another part of the garden. They should fit comfortably into their surroundings.

Materials are amazingly diverse, including stone, wood, concrete, metal and glass fibre and with glass becoming more popular. The picture bottom left shows images of leaves and a flower encapsulated in glass and hung between oak sleepers. The images could be your own or supplied by a professional of anything you can imagine – even portraits of the family.

Furniture is very diverse in its materials and design from wood, metal, plastic and concrete to glass and even canvas and wicker like the Orbit chairs shown at the side of the pool in the picture (top right). A well-designed bench located in the

right position doesn't necessarily have to be sat on – they make wonderful focal points. Features can also provide that certain 'feel', whether they are modern or traditional. They can add a touch of humour as the pot shown (centre right) or even startle

you into looking at your surroundings (see tulip vase bottom right).

Remember to anchor your features if easily removable and visible to the general public – often expensive pieces in front gardens get stolen. Obviously the advantage of them being moveable is that you can take them with you if you move.

Finally, do not forget to illuminate so they can be enjoyed in the dark winter evenings.

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