

Keeping our gardens in blooming health

How to protect your garden from plant pests and diseases

1 Sourcing plants

Most pests and diseases enter the garden in association with new plants.

- Use local, reputable suppliers
- Consider propagating your own plants (from seed or locally sourced cuttings, etc.)
- Where possible, purchase plants grown in the UK; avoid semi-mature specimen trees imported directly from abroad
- Take care when importing plants, cuttings or seeds privately (including via the internet)

2 Plants coming into the garden

Remember to:

- Inspect plants for signs of pest or disease before purchase
- Keep new plants, especially large perennials, in an isolated part of the garden for a few weeks and observe regularly for symptoms of plant pest and disease before planting
- Monitor the health of new plantings; if new or unusual symptoms are observed contact the supplier or RHS Gardening Advice

3 Good plant husbandry

Right plant in the right place.

- Locate and manage plants appropriately to reduce stress and increase pest and disease resistance
- Mulch when planting perennial ornamentals
- Prune when diseases are less prevalent
- Use space to help ventilation and reduce humidity
- Avoid overhead watering

4 Garden hygiene

Some pests and diseases can be moved in soil and plant debris.

- Clean garden tools, equipment and footwear thoroughly, and use a garden disinfectant
- Ensure water butts are covered
- Consider having tools dedicated to one area, e.g. propagation areas, the allotment
- Use new pots and trays wherever possible or clean thoroughly between use

5 Regular monitoring

Monitoring helps you spot problems early and take prompt remedial action.

- Familiarise yourself with the common pests and diseases of plants in your garden (see: rhs.org.uk/advice/plant-problems)
- Get unknown problems identified
- Report suspicious symptoms to RHS Gardening Advice

6 Garden waste can harbour pests and diseases

What should be done with it?

- Compost or bury green waste
- Burn woody material or use council refuse sites

