

# shopping

EVENING  
STANDARD  
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## THE BEST/124 HELP IN THE GARDEN

Londoners love their gardens and we can even buy our plants in Oxford Street. Many of us, however, are short of time, and even the greenest of fingers can do with the occasional helping hand. Here are some of London's happy band of horticultural helpers who will come to the rescue and cheerfully share your growing concerns. **BARBARA CHANDLER**

### BEST FOR BACK YARDS

**Patios, Pots & Pergolas, 12 Burstock Road, Putney, SW15 (0181-789 8585).** 'We'll tackle the smallest, dingiest plot,' promises Susan Held who has been working with husband Charles for ten years. They design, construct and maintain gardens - their speciality is small town gardens - using traditional materials, such as York stone, bricks, granite setts and cobbles. 'We can transform even the most neglected and overgrown back yards.' They also offer a delivery service for ready-planted window boxes and hanging baskets.

### BEST FOR INSTANT GARDENS

**World's End Nurseries, 441-457 King's Road, SW10 (0171-351 3343).** Master horticulturist James Lotery runs a team of enthusiastic gardeners who pride themselves on quickie transformations. 'We've got everything we need back here

at the nursery,' James explains. 'It's just a question of putting the right thing in the right place.' A complete range of services includes lawns, patios, terraces, roof gardens and trellises. They will draw up the design, prepare the site, bring the plants (including mature shrubs and trees if required) and do all the hard work - you just add a deck chair and a cool drink.

### BEST FOR PAVING

**Gardenworks, 62 Battersea High Street, SW11 (0171-738 2640).** Hard landscaping is the speciality of Simon Dent and his small team. They can build retaining walls and lay paving stones in regular slabs or broken pieces - choose from various types of natural or reproduction stones, or bricks in patterns such as herringbone, basket weave or running bond. See samples in their small yard. Prices start from around £50 per square metre, which includes laying. Clearing and digging out a site is extra. For an instant weathered look, there are special treatments involving liquid manure and yoghurt!

### BEST FOR WATER FEATURES

**David Bellamy, 71 Tantallon Road, SW12 (0181-675 2141).** For that special wet look, consult David Bellamy, stonemason turned aquatic

engineer - a good combination for his current profession. Pools, lakes, waterfalls, grottos, fountains - these are what he does best. 'We take particular care to blend our work into the overall garden design.' Prices start from around £300 for a small pond, to which plants can be added for an extra charge. Child-proof designs can be made, such as shallow running water over rocks and stones.

### BEST FOR PLANTING

**Ned Trier, 82 Wandsworth Bridge Road, SW6 (0171-371 0775).** However clever a garden design, it will not come to life without the right plants. Endlessly enthusiastic and well-informed, Ned Trier will advise, supply and plant everything for the London garden or conservatory, drawing on 15 years experience as a 'plantsman', and sourcing from specialist nurseries.

### BEST FOR WOMEN

**The Lady Gardener, Flat 2, 24 Hillyard Street, SW9 (0171-582 4756).** 'Many elderly women or women living on their own like to employ a female,' explains Ann Chalk, who gave up office work for the great outdoors. Her services range from planting window boxes (spring and autumn are the popular times) to maintaining communal gardens, and she



visits many private clients on a regular basis, charging around £10 an hour.

### BEST FOR LAWN

**Trimlawns, 26 St Albans Villas, NW5 (0171-267 8271).**

Jon Nickels loves laying grass. 'It's an instant thrill - a morning's muddy patch is transformed into a smooth green lawn by evening.' Over 20 years, he's got to know the requirements of London's varying soils, plus the trick of getting quantities of soil and turf through terraced houses without gritty grief. Prices start at around £8 per square metre for prepared ground, or from around £12 if soil must be dug over.

### BEST FOR MAINTENANCE

**Jason Evers Gardens, 12 Cleaver Street, SE11 (0171-582 2430).**

Jason Evers ('plantsman/overhauler') will lovingly get to know the quirks of your particular plants and plot. He aims to offer a 'friendly flexible service... with the bonus of unusual ideas'. Working in a nursery, he acquired a knowledge of plants, before completing training in landscape gardening. Services include window boxes and tubs, turfing, and training climbing plants, plus lovingly looking after gardens all over London at fees from around £9.50 an hour.