

Future 
Flood 
 **Force**



The soak zone challenge

Make your own rain garden

You'll need a patch of ground, a spare afternoon
and this mission pack!

What's a rain garden?

It's a shallow, sunken bed filled with layers of gravel, soil and plants. It soaks up rainwater like a sponge and stops water from going where it shouldn't – like your garden, driveway or even your home.



Your mission kit:

Tick them off as you go!

- Spade or a garden fork
- Gardening gloves
- Gravel or pea shingle
- Topsoil
- Watering can
- Some flood-busting plants

Flood-busting plants

Here are some plants that drink a lot more rainwater than your average lawn. They've been putting up with British rain for thousands of years!



Marsh marigold



Bugle



Ragged robin



Cuckoo's flower



Purple loosestrife



Water mint

How to create your rain garden

1 Choose your spot

Find a patch of ground that's roughly 1x1 metre and in a low-lying spot. Make sure it's not too close to your house – about a metre or two away should be fine.

2 Dig it out

Dig out your patch to a depth of about 15 to 20cm, keeping the sides sloped so water can flow into it naturally.

3 Add the gravel layer

Pour gravel or pea shingle into the bottom of your basin to about 5cm and spread it evenly – this is your drainage layer.

4 Add the soil layer

Add peat-free top soil on top of the gravel, filling your basin to just below ground level. When your plants' roots grow down into the soil, it'll create tiny channels to pull water deeper in.

5 Plant your flood busters

Now you're ready to get planting. Pop the taller plants, like purple loosestrife, towards the back and centre. Lower plants, like bugle, should go around the edges.

6 Do the splash test

Time for a splash test! Give the whole bed a good soak with the watering can. Then stand back and watch the water collect and slowly disappear.