

How to protect your garden from pest and disease invaders

1 Plants coming in: this is the way that most pests and disease-spreading pathogens enter a garden!

What can you do?

- Use reputable suppliers who have been 'checked out'
- Source locally if possible
- Avoid cheap imports and semi-mature specimen trees from abroad

2 Plants on arrival need careful inspection.

Remember to:

- Check paperwork for compliance with purchase order form and plant passport if needed (eg EC Plant Passport UK/EW 12345)
- Only accept delivery if you are sure that the plants are healthy

3 Quarantine areas should be isolated from the main garden and the public.

What more can you do?

- Restrict access to the area
- Be scrupulous about hygiene
- Use dedicated tools
- Hold new arrivals for 2-6 weeks and monitor frequently

4 Day-to-day hygiene: many pests and pathogens are carried on boots!

It's important to:

- Wash all soil and plant material from footwear, and disinfect them
- Clean and disinfect tools and machinery

5 Basic path maintenance can help too.

How?

- Surfacing and levelling avoids puddles
- Cleaning and clearing removes leaves and plant debris that can harbour pests and pathogens

6 Good plant husbandry also matters.

What can you do?

- Use the right plant in the right place
- Mulch when planting perennial ornamentals to prevent soil splashing onto foliage
- Use space to help ventilation and reduce humidity
- Manage plants to encourage vigorous, healthy growth
- Prevent plants such as *Rhododendron ponticum* from choking the garden



7 Clear information helps keep visitors informed and aware.

Why put up a notice?

- To inform visitors of serious outbreaks
- To restrict access to ground under repair
- To suggest responsible behaviour eg clean shoes, not taking cuttings, keeping to paths, dogs on leads etc

8 Irrigation water should be clean and free from plant pathogens.

How can you ensure this?

- When using recycled water, eg collected off roofs, try to clean it before use (sand filtration works well)
- Cover water tanks to prevent leaves blowing in
- Regularly test water to check for pathogens

9 Organic waste can harbour pests and pathogens.

What should be done with it?

- All dead plants, prunings, fallen leaves etc should be collected and disposed of safely
- Composting is the best way, as it kills most pests and pathogens
- Or you could collect waste in a covered skip for removal to an approved landfill site
- Small amounts can be burnt where they lie

10 Plant collections know what you've got.

What can you do?

- Make a record of the plants in the garden
- Develop a management plan to conserve important plants
- Propagate important plants through the Plant Conservation Programme

11 Regular monitoring of the health of your plants lets you spot problems early and take prompt remedial action.

What can you do?

- Familiarise yourselves with the main pests and diseases of plants in your garden
- Get problems identified
- Report all suspicious symptoms to your Garden Adviser
- Notify suspect findings of quarantine pest and diseases to Plant Health authorities