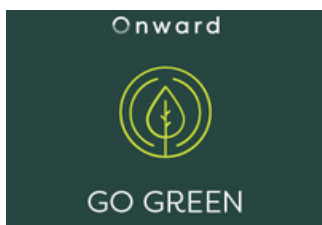


THE LAVENDER GUIDE

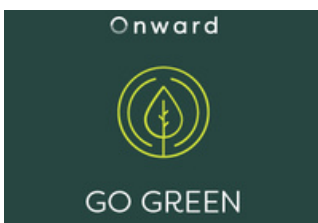


Onward **GROUNDWORK**
GREATER MANCHESTER

How to grow lavender

Quick facts

- Easy to grow shrub
- Flowers in late spring and summer
- Evergreen foliage, usually silver-grey or grey-green
- Best planted in spring, in free-draining soil
- Thrives in full sun and is drought tolerant
- Many types are hardy, but avoid planting in cold, damp spots
- Prune annually to keep compact
- Easy to propagate from cuttings
- Leaves and flowers used for drying
- Flowers are very attractive to bees and other pollinating insects



How to grow lavender

Where to plant

Lavender looks great in flower borders, herb gardens and as a low hedge or edging to a border. It also grows well in containers.

Lavender is a Mediterranean plant (it needs it not always in geographic origin) and needs lots of sun and fast-draining soil. It will not survive long in shady, damp or extremely cold conditions.

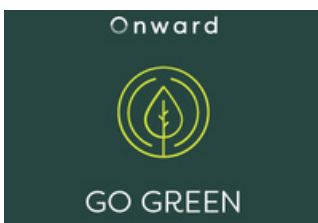
It prefers poor, dry or moderately fertile soil, including chalky and alkaline soils. Lavender will not thrive in heavy clay soil or any soil that becomes waterlogged over winter.

How to plant

Prepare your garden soil

Dig over any free-draining soil and remove the weeds before planting. If your soil is heavy, plant on a 20-30cm (8in-1ft) mound, ridge or in a raised bed where the roots will not sit in wet soil.

Lavender is easy to plant and takes just a few minutes. Plant the lavender as soon as possible after buying. Space plants about 90cm (3ft) apart if growing in groups. If planting a hedge, space plants 30cm (1ft) apart or 45cm (18in) for larger cultivars. After planting, water regularly, especially in dry weather, for the first season.



How to grow lavender

Watering

Newly planted lavender should be watered regularly during its first summer.

After that, once it's well established, lavender is drought tolerant so rarely needs watering when grown in the ground unless there are severe drought conditions.

Plants in containers do need regular water in summer, as they dry out quickly, and the roots have a limited amount of soil in which to search for moisture. In winter, keep the containers fairly dry, maybe in a cold greenhouse or in the rain shadow at the base of a wall to keep off excessive rain, which will help improve the plants' tolerance to cold weather.

Feeding

Lavender likes soil that is quite low in nutrients, so plants don't generally need feeding.



How to grow lavender

Deadheading

Cut off spent blooms to encourage more to form. However, you can leave them in place towards the end of the flowering season as food for seed-eating birds such as goldfinches.

Pruning and training

Left to their own devices, lavender can become woody and ungainly, so to keep plants compact and attractive, it's best to trim them annually in late summer, just after flowering has finished. Remove any spent flower stalks and about 2.5cm (1in) of leaf growth. Foliage can be clipped over in spring if growth is untidy or frost damaged. Lavender does not break new growth easily from old stems so don't cut back into the woody stems.



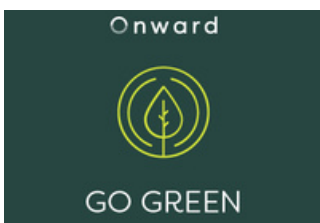
How to grow lavender

Caring for older plants

Even if pruned annually, older lavender plants can become straggly, very woody and mis-shapen so, as they are fast growing and establish quickly, they are best replaced if you want to keep everything looking neat.

Propagating

You can easily make more lavender by taking softwood or semi-ripe cuttings from young plants in early to midsummer. You can also take hardwood cuttings after flowering in late autumn, preferably from new flushes of growth. Plants grown from cuttings will be identical to the parent plant.

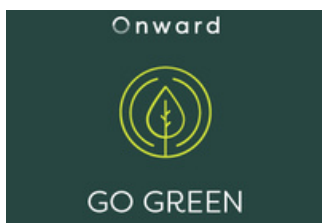


Things you can do with lavender

Lavender oil: With a wooden mallet, bruise freshly cut organic lavender flowers, stems & leaves and stuff them into a 500ml mason jar, cover with oil (light olive, almond or jojoba) & let sit for 48 hours. Strain (repeat the above steps again for a stronger fragrance) & store oil in a dark glass jar.



A few drops of lavender essential oil on the skin can help soothe bug bites.

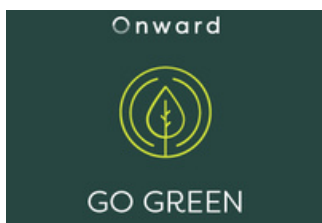


Things you can do with lavender

Sprinkle lavender essential oil on your pillow at night for a peaceful night's sleep (this is safe for the whole family, babies & toddlers included).



Add lavender essential oil to your after-sun cream to help soothe sun-burned skin.

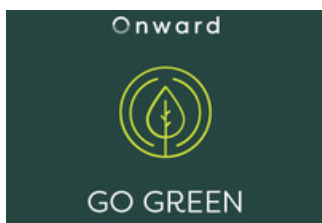


Things you can do with lavender

To ease yourself into a tranquil night's sleep, add 4-5 drops lavender essential oil to a hot bath at bedtime.



Make a calming tea made with dried lavender flower heads, chamomile, oat straw and other calming herbs.

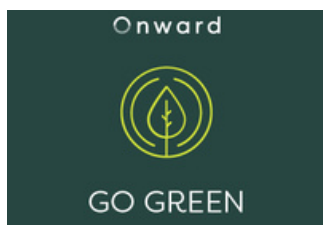


Things you can do with lavender

You can bake with organically grown lavender by adding it into scone, cake or cookie recipes – do a search online to find a recipe that appeals to you.



Add organic lavender blooms to your homemade blackberry jam for a nice & fragrant variation.

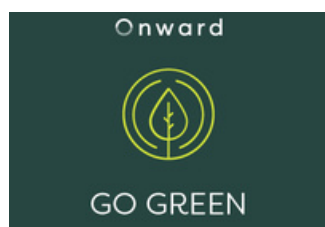


Things you can do with lavender

Use organic lavender flower blooms to decorate a cake.



Use pressed lavender blooms to decorate homemade cards.



Things you can do with lavender

Tie a handful of fresh lavender flowers together with decorative string or ribbon, and hang it on a door for a cozy & fragrant décor.



Make a Dream Pillow by stuffing dried flower heads into a sachet and place under the pillowcase at bedtime or place a lavender pillow in your linen wardrobe to add a sweet scent to clothes.

