



# the <sup>♥</sup> comfort of things

A FRAGRANT  
HOME

*There are certain things in your home that are like old friends: they always cheer you up. We feel the love for a house filled with gorgeous, uplifting smells*

Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**

In an ideal home, a window to the garden would always be open, allowing floral scents – honeysuckle or jasmine, perhaps – to drift in on a summer's breeze. The kitchen would be filled with the aromas of bread baking and coffee brewing, and upstairs, bedlinen, freshly unpegged from the washing line, would be piled in airing cupboards waiting for you to bury your nose in it.

Back in the real world, homes are more likely to whiff of wet dogs, unemptied bins and something indeterminate lurking beneath the floorboards. Any naturally occurring pleasant smells are often masked by fragrances more foul. The solution for a sweet-smelling home is, foremost, cleanliness. Get that tackled and you have carte blanche to

**"In an ideal home,  
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on a summer's breeze"**

introduce fresh, spirit-lifting scents of your own choosing.

The sense of smell is a powerful emotional trigger, with the ability to shift moods and prompt

memories. Keep your home fragrance-free and you miss out on a sybaritic pleasure. With so many different scents to choose from and an increasing number of ways to dispense them – from the trusty scented candle to high-tech integrated systems – finding the right one can be daunting. Think of fragrance as background music, though – not too obtrusive, playing quietly and tantalisingly in earshot – and it becomes more manageable. A little spritz here and there may be all it takes.

The more adventurous could introduce different aromas into different rooms. A zesty citrus fragrance feels right wafting through a bathroom, for example, whereas a bedroom suits something more relaxing – a lavender or floral reed diffuser, say, and a work room could benefit from an invigorating boost of peppermint.

Whichever fragrance you go for, don't be tempted to go for a cheap option. You don't want your home to smell like a minicab or for the only memory it evokes to be your great aunt's pine plug-in air freshener. Your nose deserves better than that.



## A GUIDE TO HOME FRAGRANCE

*There are many different ways to perfume your home. Try these, for starters*

### CANDLES

Buy cheap and your olfactory system will pay. Invest in a candle, made from premium wax and perfume-grade fragrance, though, and hours of transportative scent will be yours. Reine de la Nuit by Miller Harris is heady with the scent of tuberose; £45, [millerharris.com](http://millerharris.com).

### REED DIFFUSERS

Best for continual fragrance, as long as you remember to invert the reeds every couple of weeks. If you don't like the container the liquid came in, pour into one of your own, or learn how to make your own on our blog, [thesimplethings.com/blog/reed-diffuser](http://thesimplethings.com/blog/reed-diffuser). Bergamot Reed Diffuser, 200ml, £35, [geodesis.com/en](http://geodesis.com/en)

### ROOM SPRAYS

Great for spritzing around the home prior to guests arriving (or post, come to think of it). Look for ones that disperse fine droplets: you want a mist not a downpour. 58 Balancing Room Mist, is free from chemicals, and smells fresh and delicious; £23, [58lifestyle.com](http://58lifestyle.com).

### AROMA MISTERS

These eject a fragrant, thin, dry mist. Select an essential oil (lavender is great beside the bed to help you slumber), add a few drops to the water inside, plug in and inhale. Soothing and spa-like. Also has a dimmable light for extra ambience. Aroma diffuser, £59.95; [muji.eu](http://muji.eu).

## THREE TO MAKE, BUY OR CUSTOMISE

*Reassuringly old-fashioned, lavender bags will bring fragrance to wherever you put them, whether it's under a pillow, in a drawer or hanging in a wardrobe*



### 1 MAKE

To make a heart-shaped lavender bag, fold a piece of paper in half and draw one half of a heart on it. Make this large enough to allow for a seam. Cut around the outline and open. Pin the template to a piece of fabric, cut out, then repeat with another piece. Pin the wrong sides together, then sew leaving a gap. Turn inside out. Fill with dried lavender, then sew up the gap. Stitch a ribbon loop to the top of the heart to hang it up. Decorate as you wish with buttons, embroidery, etc.



### 2 BUY

Many a craftsperson has started their foray into making things with lavender bags. The fetching and decorative results of their endeavours (including heart-shaped versions) in a variety of fabric and finishes, can be found on [folksy.com](https://www.folksy.com) and [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com). No shortage of options on the high street, either: this set of three silk lavender bags tied with ribbon, £20, comes in a choice of fabrics by textile designer Clarissa Hulse, and is hand printed. [clarissahulse.com](https://www.clarissahulse.com).



### 3 CUSTOMISE

This is the right time to harvest lavender. Pick when the flowers are in bud rather than fully open, and cut where the leaves meet the stalk. Tie the stems in bunches with an elastic band and hang upside down in a dry, well ventilated place out of direct sunlight. When dry, strip the flowers from the stalks and store in a jar. If you are short of time or don't live near a lavender bush at the right moment, you can buy dried British lavender from [lavenderworld.co.uk](https://www.lavenderworld.co.uk) (£9.95 for 500g).



Aroma diffuser, £59.95, [muji.eu](https://www.muji.eu)

## HOME QUANDARIES

*We've just moved into a new house and have inherited a charity-shop odour, reminiscent of mounds of mouldy clothing, that is proving impossible to shift. The house smells particularly musty in the living room which the previous occupant lived in for the most part. How can we freshen it up a bit?*

**Answer in brief:** Try a thorough scrub, a bit of extra ventilation and a plate of baking powder.

I presume that you have given the living room a good clean, and replaced any whiffy carpets, curtains, etc? Cleanliness is the best route to freshness, along with plenty of fresh air. Keep windows open whenever possible and turn a fan on to create a through-draught. If the whiff persists, and you (sensibly) want to avoid chemical air fresheners, you could try sprinkling baking powder on to a plate and leaving it in the room. The baking powder should absorb the smell. Then you can mist with Muji's efficient diffuser (pictured left), choosing a cleansing essential oil you particularly like.

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**Izola Green Moss candle | £29**  
In a glass container.  
[hurnandhurn.com](http://hurnandhurn.com)



**Rosebud potpourri cone | £3.50**  
The sweet smell of roses.  
[pollyfields.co.uk](http://pollyfields.co.uk)



**Rectangular concrete scented candle | £20**  
Good enough to keep.  
[hurnandhurn.com](http://hurnandhurn.com)



**Wild Fennel incense cones | £16**  
With a sweet resinous scent.  
[haeckels.co.uk](http://haeckels.co.uk)



**Skandinavisk Fjord scented diffuser | £39**  
The smell of the forest.  
[printerandtailor.com](http://printerandtailor.com)



**Rise incense sticks | £7**  
A nice little gift.  
[oliverbonas.com](http://oliverbonas.com)



**Incense burner | £16**  
Use with an incense cone.  
[haeckels.co.uk](http://haeckels.co.uk)



**Jo Malone Pomegranate Noir room spray | £45**  
A spicy spritz.  
[johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)

