

Tips to take photos in your garden

1. Get into the habit of walking around, looking at your garden through a rectangle made by your thumbs and index fingers (take care no-one sees you doing this, as it looks frightfully posey). This will help you identify plant combinations that “work” in close-up, new angles and “vistas” even in a small garden, of which you had been previously unaware.
2. Eliminate the sky from your pictures (also, if you can, expanses of grass unless glimpsed through a veil of foreground plants). If you close in on your garden like this, it appears to have no boundaries. In photos, the planting takes on a special lushness.
3. Do not expect pictures taken in the full glare of the midday sun to have any atmosphere: they will look flat and even vibrant colour may bleach out.. Instead, get up early, when sparkling dew or spiders web festoons may add a touch of magic. Or take pictures in the evening, when the light has a different kind of warmth and softness.
4. In fact, light is everything. Learn where it falls to best effect in your garden at different times of day. Some plants, especially those with red-ribbed leaves (eg Begonia grandis evansiana, Cotinus Grace, Persicaria Red Dragon) look their most glorious when planted where they are backlit by the sun.
5. Colour: something weird grips the minds of people who name plants, especially new varieties. There is no getting away from it, “black flowered plants” which are currently very trendy, are not actually black. They are usually an intense, light absorbing dark red. Planted *en masse*, they look about as glamorous as widows weeds. Try planting them with a bit of bling to bring them to life: a touch of orange, cream or lime green, and they are transformed. And beware of nearly all plants described as “blue”. They are almost always purple and furthermore look very much so in photographs.