



Fabulous

PERFECT PINE I sold Meghan Markle & Prince Harry their first Christmas tree – follow my 8 hacks to get the best from your festive fir

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IT is not even December but eager Christmas fans already have their trees up – maybe to make up for last year’s restricted festivities.

The [Queen has a fabulous 15-footer](#) all a-twinkle at Windsor Castle, while celebs rush to be first with the fir on social media as they post images of theirs.



Want to know how to keep your tree fres beyond? Follow these tips from Veronika Meghan Markle their first one together c

Buy from a small, local seller, not a big chain



Pines at local dealers tend to be harvested after those that go to big chains, meaning they are fresher. Credit: Getty

THIS way, you are doing your bit to support a small business.

You can also expect a more personal touch to the service you receive, which adds to the magic at this time of year, especially for children.

Another good thing, these pines tend to be harvested after those that go to big chains, meaning they are fresher.

Nordmann Firs and Fraser Firs last the longest, up to four weeks indoors on average.

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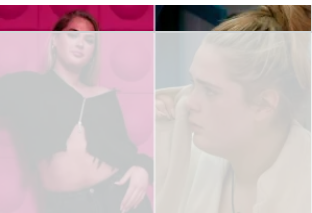
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Take care if driving it



Once home, strip away its protective netting as soon as possible Credit: Shutterstock

CHOOSING a tree is the fun bit, getting it home the tricky part.

If driving, flatten the back seats of your car or bring rope to tie your purchase to the roof.

Once home, strip away its protective netting as soon as possible and stand it outside for a few hours before bringing it in.

This gives it time to settle into its natural form so when you come to decorate it, you will know the best branches from which to hang baubles.

Lop a bit off bottom of trunk, so it can drink



Saw off a few inches at the foot and the fresh cut opens pores in the wood, helping it to suck up water Credit: Shutterstock

LIKE you snip stems at the bottom of a bouquet of flowers, do similar with the trunk of your Christmas tree.

Saw off a few inches at the foot and the fresh cut opens pores in the wood, helping it to suck up water and stopping branches drooping, getting brittle and shedding needles

At Pines and Needles we will do this for you. We'll use a hand saw. Other suppliers may do it too.

Use special spray to



Also known as an anti-desiccant, this is widely available and leaves a thin, transparent waxy film over the needles' pores to stop moisture escaping.

Credit: Shutterstock

ONE little-known trick is to treat your tree with what is called an anti-transpirant spray.

Also known as an anti-desiccant, this is widely available and leaves a thin, transparent waxy film over the needles' pores to stop moisture escaping.

I would look for one geared toward indoor plants rather than industrial use. Make sure you do this before you string up the lights and decorate, in case it leaves a small residue.

Pour it a drink to keep it hydrated



Watch the water level. If it falls below the foot of the trunk, the tree cannot drink

Credit: Getty

LIKE us, your tree get thirsty at Christmas. Put it in a stand with water. It can drink up to THREE PINTS a day, depending on its size and your home's warmth.

Watch the water level. If it falls below cannot drink, its pores gum up with s water when you refill.

Change the water if it gets smelly. Sy maybe not the one you use to prepar



Heat, as well as air-con units or dehumidifiers, will dry it out much faster

Credit: Shutterstock

TREES are creatures of habit and prefer steady conditions.

When choosing a spot for yours, try to keep it away from fireplaces or radiators.

Heat, as well as air-con units or dehumidifiers, will dry it out much faster.

Equally, do not position right in front of a window, as this will block winter sunlight, as and when we get it, from warming your home – and that means higher leccy bills.

Give it an aspirin and it will feel much better



Try dropping an aspirin into the water in the stand to give it a boost, or even a dash of lemonade

Credit: Shutterstock

A LITTLE pick-me-up now and again, just like humans enjoy, can work wonders for your tree and give it a new lease of life.

Try dropping an aspirin into the water in the stand to give it a boost, or even a dash of lemonade.

If you really want to treat your tree, you can also give it a little extra food – you may have some pouches of tree food with blooms you had before.

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LED lights are not only more energy-efficient, they also give off less heat

Credit: Shutterstock

BE a bright spark this festive season. If you have been dressing the branches with the same fairy lights for years, it may be time for an upgrade.

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LED lights are not only more energy-efficient – saving you money on those ever-higher electricity bills – they also give off less heat.

This means they will not dry out your tree quite as much as those traditional filament bulbs tend to do.



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Britain's wonkiest Christmas tree baffles