



# Home Comforts Vol. 1

Because home is where your  
heart is ... with love from  
Bustle & Sew

# Welcome



The **Bustle & Sew Magazine** is not just a sewing magazine - rather it's a celebration of everything we love about our homes, the countryside around us and life here in the Somerset countryside - with stitching at its heart of course.

Every month we finish with an idea for your home and now, for the first time, I've collected fifteen of these thoughts into a single volume that I hope you'll enjoy - and please do feel free to share as much as you like with anyone else you think might enjoy them. They are arranged in month order as they originally appeared in the magazine.

*Helen xx*



# February



## Home Comforts

At this time of year the first daffodils are beginning to burst into bloom bringing a splash of bright yellow sunny flowers along hedgerows, garden paths and all kinds of unexpected places. They're a sign that winter really is coming to an end, even though it may not feel that way. Bring a few inside and display in a variety of containers to brighten your home and bring a touch of spring indoors.

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# March



## Home Comforts

Ask some friends around for afternoon tea - less effort than Sunday lunch, and a lot easier too with more time to sit and enjoy a good chat! Everything can be prepared (or purchased) in advance so all you need to do is set out a pretty table and then gather friends around you for a relaxing afternoon!

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April



## Home Comforts

Spring is the time to get out and about again as the days grow longer and the weather (finally!) Begins to get warmer. While you're out and about pick some beautiful spring blooms and display in an old teapot for an instant pop of spring colour indoors

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May



## Home Comforts

At this time of year all the home magazines recommend spring cleaning, throwing open doors and windows and brushing away cobwebs and dust. Well this is all very well, and has to be done of course - but why not treat yourself to a little (much more fun) spring cleaning? Enjoy a relaxing hour or two folding and sorting your stash - you'll be able to find everything much more easily - and if you're anything like me, simply gazing upon those beautiful, well-ordered stacks of fabric will fill you with delight!

June



## Home Comforts

June is the month when the herb garden begins to come into its own - and one of the prettiest and most useful herbs - in my opinion at least is the humble chive with its miniature pom-pom shaped flowers of lilac, mauve and purple. Snip them off and scatter into your salads and soups for a burst of flavour and pop of colour. Chop the stalks finely and add to buttery new potatoes or simply grab a handful to make a simple display in a mug or jam jar - perfect for bringing the summer garden indoors.

# July



## Home Comforts

July is the time to enjoy lazy afternoons in the garden, basking in the warm summer sunshine. It's fun to make a soundtrack for your summer days. Just take the time to create a play list including all your favourite songs that you'll love to hear all summer. Parties in the garden with friends, long journeys and even evenings spent sitting outside all call for the right tunes - and you'll have them all ready to enjoy the whole season long.

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# August



## Home Comforts

Light up the dusk at evening events with pretty little hanging lights. Use recycled glass jars and make handles for the from pliable galvanised wire. First cut a length of wire a little longer than the circumference of your jar. Then cut a length for the handle and twist each end into a nice firm loop. Thread the first length through these loops and then wrap it around your jar just below the rim. Twist the ends together until the wire is nice and tight, sitting snugly against the glass, then bend back the twisted ends neatly against the jar. Magical!

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## September



### Home Comforts

September brings the culmination of the year's endeavours outdoors, and a bountiful harvest of blackberries, plums, damsons and other orchard fruits. Make the most of the glut by stewing your fruit with a little sugar and serve cold with cream or ice cream on late summer afternoons spent outdoors with friends and family - after all there won't be many more warm days to come this year, so it's best to seize the moment and enjoy them while they last.

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# October



## Home Comforts

I love planting bulbs in the autumn, tucking those little papery roots safely beneath the soil, then forgetting all about them until the days begin to grow longer once more and they reward me with an explosion of bright cheerful colour, one of the earliest signs of spring. You should always plant at three times the depth of the bulb with the tip pointing upwards in natural looking groups - odd numbers work best - toss your bulbs in handfuls gently onto the ground and plant them where they land. If you have a lot to plant then it's worth investing in special long-handled planter to make life easier!

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# November



## Home Comforts

Dried lavender is a long-lasting legacy of summer. If you don't have the time or inclination to strip the flowers and sew them into classic lavender bags, then simply trim the stems, tie them into small bunches and arrange them in a basket on a shelf, table or windowsill. Gently squeeze a bunch every time you pass by and wait for the evocative fragrance of high summer days to emerge - bliss!

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## December



### Home Comforts

Frosted fruits make a lovely (and almost healthy!) Christmas centrepiece. You can use this technique on almost any smooth-skinned fruit though the most effective are those deep and rich in colour, glowing golds and oranges and deep plum colours look especially dramatic. Wipe the fruit clean and brush the surface with a layer of beaten egg white (don't over beat this though, it should be rich and smooth but not frothy). Then dust with caster (superfine) sugar or a mixture of caster and granulated sugar and leave the fruit to dry thoroughly to create the frosted effect.

January



## Home Comforts

Snowdrops are beginning to appear in woodlands and gardens across the country and by the end of this month many will be in bloom. There are more than 500 varieties of snowdrop and it's nearly time to plant them. They're best planted in the green (as plants rather than bulbs that is) at the beginning of February so now is the time to sit down with a nice cup of tea and browse the gardening websites and catalogues to choose the prettiest for your own patch. Meanwhile, when they bloom, bring a few indoors to enjoy - they last for nearly a week when placed in water in a cool place.

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## February



## Home Comforts

As well as making yummy treats, lemons have lots of uses around the home. Try freshening and moisturising the air in your home on dry winter days by making your own room scent that also doubles as a humidifier. If you have a wood-burning stove, place an enamelled cast-iron pot or bowl on top, fill with water, and add lemon (and/or orange) peels, cinnamon sticks, cloves, and apple skins. No wood-burning stove? Use your stove top instead and just simmer the water periodically.

You can use lemons to give your microwave a good clean without risking scratching the surface with harsh cleansers. Simply mix 3 tablespoons lemon juice into 1 ½ cups water in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High for 5-10 minutes, allowing the steam to condense on the inside walls and ceiling of the oven. Then just wipe away the softened food with a cloth.

## March



## Home Comforts

Now is the time for planning summer colour in your garden as it's time to get back outside and prepare your borders for sowing bedding plant seeds.

A sketchbook and a basic palette of watercolour paints will allow you to play around with colours and textures - and eventually to devise a scheme that will fill your borders with colour and scent throughout the summer months and beyond.

# April



## Home Comforts

Mixed spice is the traditional - and totally perfect - ingredient for Easter bakes. To make your own blend 1 tablespoon each of allspice, cinnamon and nutmeg, 2 tablespoons mace and 1 teaspoon each of ground coriander, cloves and ginger and store in an airtight jar.

A lovely alternative to giving chocolate at this time of year is to add mixed spice, grated lemon rind and raisins or other dried fruit to your biscuit dough, bake and then bundle in a stack tied with a pretty pastel ribbon as a gift.



**BUSTLE & SEW**  
LOVE TO SEW AND SEW WITH LOVE

Why do we love to stitch? After all you can purchase mass-produced textile items at many high streets stores for very little cost. These days handmade means something special - a unique item created with love, a gift from the heart, not one that can be bought.

Hand stitching is also a great way to personalise an item, or perhaps to breathe new life into an old favourite that has seen better days.

**Bustle & Sew** offers my own unique patterns, designed to appeal to all skill levels and bring out all your natural creativity. And you can keep up to date with all the latest news from Somerset where I live as well as the newest patterns and much more over on the **Bustle & Sew Blog**.



**PS** If you love stitching, then you're sure to enjoy my Bustle & Sew Magazine. It's delivered by email to your in-box each month and is crammed full of ideas, projects, features, articles, patterns and more to inspire you. Your family and friends will soon be queuing up to take delivery of your new Bustle & Sew creations. To learn more please visit the **Bustle & Sew website**.

*Helen xx*



You are welcome to share this collection of tips as much as you wish provided you leave all references to Bustle & Sew and my links in place.

Thank you.

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