

ADVERTISING FEATURE



INDOOR OUTDOOR



IDEAS TO IMPROVE YOUR HOME AND GARDEN

Life's rich tapestry

No need to blow top over boiler

ITALIAN designer mosaics company Trend has added a fresh dimension to its authentic, handcrafted glass tiles range.

The new 1cm x 1cm micro mosaic tiles have all the decorative and long-lasting properties of the larger 2cm format, yet are perfect for even more intricate décor panels, borders, floors, walls and ceilings.

Conscious that their diminutive size might make them difficult to handle, Trend is mounting all 1x1s on its innovative trend+ polyurethane backing, creating a more user-friendly tiling system and helping to ensure a perfect finish for interior and exteriors alike.

The tiny glass squares offer another big plus as they include a higher percentage of recycled content. The opaque tiles are made from 80% post-consumer recovered glass.

The latest collection consists of 45 different colours and textures: mini-versions of Trend's popular Vitreo, Brillante and Shining mix'n'match series, eco-friendly

Feel contemporary tiles and the smallest of its exquisite Aureo 24 carat glass mosaics. Other than Aureo, none of these ranges have been offered in the micro-mosaic format before, greatly expanding the decorative possibilities now available under the Trend brand. Especially developed for the new 1 x 1 collection, the choice of colours extends from pearlescent or textured whites and genuine white gold leaf, through greens, golden hues and earthen tones, to pinks, ruby and deepest black. As might be expected from Trend's modern glass mosaics, the 1x1 tiles' technical performance is impressive too, with internationally accredited resistance to water absorption, harsh chemicals, thermal shock and frost. The closely-spaced grout lines create an additional anti-slip texture, making them ideal for flooring applications.

Trend's 1x1 collection is suitable for every room in the house.
 ● Details: Trend GB, Decimus Park, Kingstanding Way, Tunbridge Wells TN2 3GP, telephone 01892 509690.



■ TOPS FOR STYLE: Trend tiles add a classic look to any bathroom

THE last thing you want, especially at this time of year, is for your heating to go down. Bear in mind that the lifespan of an average gas boiler is 15-20 years. If yours is within that age range, or older, it's definitely a good idea to have it checked and assessed by a qualified heating engineer. Needless to say, if you've had it serviced regularly, it might last longer.

Replacing it with a new, high-tech model will make a significant difference to your heating bill. Statistics have shown that a new, high efficiency gas boiler with dedicated controls will bring down a typical gas bill by as much as 30%.

Not only will you be saving money, but you'll also be doing your bit towards reducing carbon dioxide emissions (CO2), a major contributor to global warming.

The latest gas boiler technology is quite remarkable. New models are so compact they will fit comfortably and unobtrusively inside a kitchen cabinet, provided they can be adequately ventilated to the outside. Older properties generally have a higher heating requirement than new build. Before you look at a new central heating system, it will pay dividends to apply for an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). In fact, an EPC is now mandatory when selling your property and if your home doesn't achieve a certain level of energy efficiency then you might have problems placing it on the market.

A qualified assessor will carry out tests and give you're home an efficiency rating, usually on a scale of one to ten (ten being the best).

For sound advice on EPCs and central heating, the Energy Saving Trust offers an ideal, independent starting point. Freephone 0800 512 012 or go online at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

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Still work to do

PAVING, fence building and pond digging are among the outdoor projects which can be completed in time for spring, assuming the weather is reasonably kind. Gardener contractors are usually less busy during the winter months so it is a good idea to get in touch now so you can start to turn your bright ideas into action. Experts at the Royal Horticultural Society say now is also an ideal time to consider installing garden lighting, water pipes and drainage. You could add lights and power points to sheds and outhouses, so that you can garden on wet days and in the evenings.

Go through your shed and remove any old, out-of-date garden chemicals. If in doubt of

how to dispose of them, your local authority tip should be able to help.

Rub down and treat wooden garden furniture when dry. Only use paints and preservatives in a well-ventilated area.

Check and repair pergolas and arches if needed. Clear leaves and twigs from guttering on greenhouses and sheds. On sunny days, ventilate the glasshouse or conservatory, to reduce the risk of fungal infections. It is worth investing in a maximum-minimum thermometer so you can accurately monitor your greenhouse temperature. The RHS website also offers advice on maintaining a garden pond.



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