Create a CONTEMPORY GARDEN POND

A water feature brings calm and serenity to your **OUTSIDE SPACE** and there are designs to fit the most modern-looking urban plot

Creating a pond is a fantastic way to bring a relaxing, calming feel to your outdoor space, but it's important to get the style right if it's to work with the rest of the garden. Contemporary ponds, like the ones in reader Angie Barker's garden, are about clean, crisp lines and geometric shapes. Water plants can be included, but they are usually limited in number as they would distract from the simplicity of the pool. Planting around the pond should be kept clear of the pond sides to avoid fallen leaves and petals building up as debris in the bottom and affecting the quality of the water. Also, some of these could be toxic to any fish.

Garden designer Lizzie Tulip who created the beautiful rill garden over the page, at Stillingfleet Lodge Nursery in Yorkshire says, "Water, given the right proportions and scale, can add something incredibly special to a garden. Ponds, rills, water bowls and most water features can be selected to work in the design of a modern garden, creating reflections of the sky and adding sound and movement."

SUNKEN PONDS

A sunken pond is just that, a hole dug in the ground where the water is level with the surrounding ground. Inside the hole, a base and walls are constructed from either bricks, breeze blocks or concrete. This is then lined or sealed to make it watertight.

There are numerous ways to line your pond, so it's best to consult an expert. One option is a box-welded liner (available from www.water-garden.co.uk) that has been made to fit the exact measurements of your pond. Unlike a flexible liner you'll have no cumbersome material or folds where debris can build up. This type of liner is perfect for water features with geometric shapes.

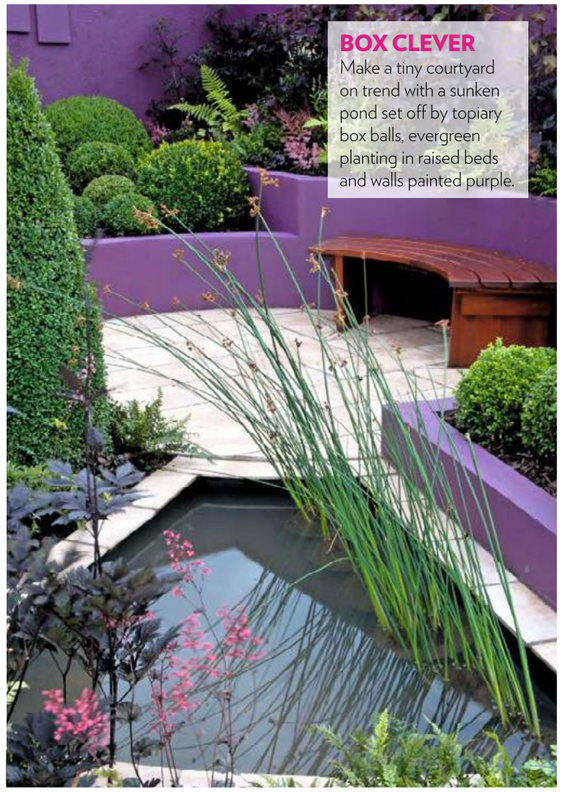
An edging material in either wood, stone, slate or metal can then be put in place to secure the liner, giving the pond a neat finish. It's important, though, to use materials you've used elsewhere in the garden if you want to create a cohesive feel to the design. Too many different materials can make a space feel cluttered, and the aim in a modern garden is for a minimalist, sleek feel.

The amount of construction required with, say, a raised pond or rill (channel of flowing water) mean these are best left to builders or landscape designers with experience of pond construction. Award-winning designer Peter Reader of www.readerlandscapes.com recommends using contractors who are members of the Association of Professional Landscapers or the British Association of Landscape Industries. "There's nothing worse than a leaking water feature, and issues like freezing in winter can cause damage if the construction is poor," he says.

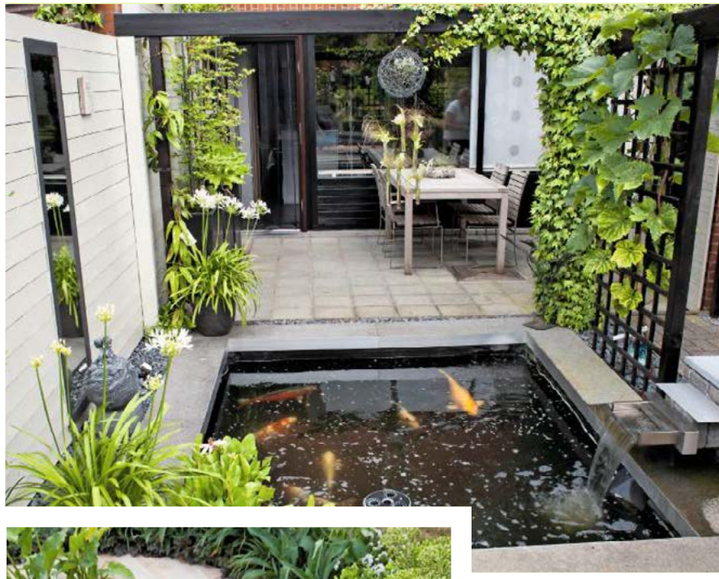
For small water features, a simpler option is using a rigid preformed geometric-shaped liner. Mark out the size of your liner on the ground, dig a hole to the correct depth and then insert the liner. Backfill, making sure the liner is level by using a spirit level. Then edge with your material of choice. You could use this option sunk into decking, like Angie Barker's pond.

RAISED PONDS

These are raised above ground. They can have walls all around and be a central feature of the garden, or they can be part of a natural or man-made slope with walls on just some of the sides.



BOX CLEVER
Make a tiny courtyard on trend with a sunken pond set off by topiary box balls, evergreen planting in raised beds and walls painted purple.



▲ADD FISH
A deep koi pond lends a relaxing Oriental feel to a garden. Straight sides will deter any pet from getting too friendly.

◀GO WILD
Lush planting encourages wildlife to visit your pond. Leave a slope on one side or hang chicken wire over an edge so small mammals can get out if they fall in.

BREAK WITH TRADITION
John reversed the usual plan of seating by the house and a pond further back. It has made more of the water feature, and created a more usable space.

FORGE A LINK
A bridge is the ultimate way to connect house and garden

JOHN DAVIES
"I was asked to redesign a run-down garden but retain a water feature. I created a canal across the entire width of the garden as you come out of the house so that you had to cross it to enter the garden proper. Unusually, I placed the main seating area at the back of the garden so you could sit away from the house, surrounded by plants, with a view back to the water feature. The space is conceived as courtyard garden. I used *Lythrum virgatum* 'Dropmore Purple', a plant often used at the edge of pools, to link the garden planting with the water feature."
www.johndavieslandscape.co.uk

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