

# Garden party prep and etiquette for when the rain ends

Here's what to buy now to get ready for entertaining outdoors. By Katrina Burroughs and Victoria Brzezinski



Morso Forno outdoor oven, £999, [morsoe.com](http://morsoe.com)

## Navigate the etiquette of the 'new normal'

The socially distanced barbecue is the perfect excuse to avoid awkward air-kissing, keep your expensive wine to yourself and get guests to clean the bathroom (but not the kitchen). Here is our guide to coronavirus garden party etiquette.

- Up to six people from different households can now meet in private gardens and on roof terraces, as long as you are healthy and stay two metres apart. Stand back when you open the front door to wave greetings from afar.

- Not everyone is ready to reunite. Some may fear their

bubble getting too big, too soon. The prime minister has also warned against "seeing people from too many households in quick succession". Agree the rules of engagement beforehand and don't be afraid to say no.

- Bringing your own beer is likely to be the more Covid-19 secure option. It will also save







Oil drum barbecue, preorder online from Sunday June 7, £49.99, [aldi.co.uk](http://aldi.co.uk)

hosts money — and guests can splurge on something special that they won't have to share.

- Guests can bring their own chairs, or wipe down your garden furniture with household cleaner before and after a visit. Dine banquet-style at opposite ends of one long table, or bistro-style around multiple sets.

- Don't use plates or cutlery that someone from another house has touched. Ask guests to bring their own, or wash your hands before and after ferrying tableware directly between the dishwasher and the garden. Instead of everyone handling the same buffet utensils, let one person dish up plates for the rest to fetch one by one.

- Visitors can walk through the house only to access the garden, or to use the lavatory. Leave doors open so they do not have to touch anything.

- Designate a separate guest bathroom if possible. Supply soap, paper towels (or separate towels that should be washed afterwards), and antiseptic wipes to clean the taps, flush



Hana Garden melamine tableware range and tealight holder, from £3.49, acrylic tumblers in smoky blue, £3.99 each, [lakeland.co.uk](http://lakeland.co.uk)

and door handle.

- Guests “must not go inside to help the host carry the food out or to help with the washing up”, government guidance says.

- When the British summer turns soggy, don't flee to the garage or shed. “These are all

indoor areas and where the risk of transmission is higher,” the guidance adds.

- No matter how bored the kids are, don't share pools or climbing frames. Badminton, anyone?

**Martina Lees** ■

