



Opposite A painted treehouse raised just five feet from the ground sits within a picturesque weeping willow tree and has an idyllic balcony overlooking the river. From £16,000, The Treehouse Company. This page, clockwise from top left Balanced between and around two lofty fir trees, this quirky tree house is reached by a unusual curving staircase and its balcony is scented by the fir cones that fall on it from the branches above. From £16,000, The Treehouse Company. This rustic-style treehouse is finished with waney-edged timber cladding. It also has a rope bridge connecting to a second deck area. From £25,000, Blue Forest. This inviting treehouse has the added dimension of an open, decked lower level. This provides a delightful setting for al fresco summer dining, and is a versatile space for children and adults alike. A rope swing has also been added to the structure underneath. From £12,000, Squirrel Design Treehouses.



TAKE TO THE TREES

Some garden buildings are, quite simply, pure extravagance and exist, like children's playhouses, just to be enjoyed. Tree houses certainly come into this category, but they needn't only be used as hideaways – they're perfect spaces for entertaining too. Just imagine inviting your friends to a magical evening of drinks and conversation amongst the branches of your favourite tree!

Paradoxically, you don't even need a tree to have a treehouse. Says Sarah Trotter of Squirrel Design: "If there are no suitable

trees, the house can be supported solely on legs and with the addition of some climbing plants you can create a natural setting."

Treehouses look best when made from materials such as waney-edged boards for the walls, cedar shingles for the roof and hemp rope for the walkways and handgrips. These natural colours and textures help the structure blend into its surroundings.

Planning permission

The general guidelines for garden buildings apply to treehouses too, but as each structure is unique, it is advisable to first consult your local authority. Large treehouses almost always require permission, as do those being sited in conservation areas, and if your tree has a Preservation Order it's important to liaise with your local authority to find out how or even if you can proceed.

"If a tree is not thick enough to carry the structure itself, we can always use support legs to help bear the weight"

Sarah Trotter, Squirrel Design