

Things to entertain and enthuse you during Coronavirus

As many of us endeavour to stay well, we still need things to keep the brain ticking over while we spend time at home staying safe.

These are in three groups

- YouTube channels– A tiny selection of the more interesting channels available
- Internet – Another small sample of the better opportunities available that were available during the peak of lockdown –some of these, eg some of the theatre productions may not still be available
- Activities at home – practical and rewarding things to fill your time.

Selection of YouTube channels:-

- **TED Talks** (<https://www.youtube.com/user/TEDtalksDirector>) - This channel was founded in 1984, with TED standing for “Technology, Entertainment, and Design”. They are known for their concentrated (ie no more than 18 minutes) but accessible lectures on a myriad of topics. They benefit from some very high profile speakers, eg Bill Gates “Mosquitoes, Malaria and Education”.
- **Big Think** (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvQECJukTDE2i6aCoMnS-Vg>) - This is considered to be one of the best sources of interviews and mini-lectures on stimulating topics and ideas eg the universe in a nutshell by Michio Kaku.
- **The B1M** (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6n8I1UDTKP1IWjQMg6_TwA) - Host and founder of this channel, Fred Mills, takes you on a tour of some of the biggest and most interesting building projects on the planet. The videos are from around the world and most are under 10 minutes. But for something with more local interest try “Inside Big Ben’s Makeover”.
- **Easy Languages** (<https://www.youtube.com/user/magauchsein>) – If you have had enough of Lockdown lingo and want to try somebody else’s lingo instead, this is the place to go. The channel records interviews in many countries and subtitles them in both the local language and English to help you learn both the language and some of the local culture. For some humour as well why not try “7 More Things Not To Do in Germany”.
- **Great Big Story** (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCajXeigtFL-rb5-gXI-aG8Q>) - This is an offshoot of CNN based in New York and London that produces short films and micro-documentaries from 100 countries around the world about culture, inventions, science and politics! You can try a range from “What breakfast is like around the world” to “Building a prosthetic arm from Lego”.
- **The Tim Traveller** (https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+tim+traveller) – Tim is a Briton who produces eccentric travelogues. When we cannot travel ourselves, why not share some of Tim’s experiences. You could see the forgotten underground seashell temple in Margate of all places or the Monster Excavators Digging The Biggest Hole In Europe in Hambach, Germany.

Internet based opportunities:-

- **Chelsea Flower Show** – the Chelsea Flower Show this year had to be cancelled but if you missed seeing it you can revisit the BBC’s coverage with highlights from previous years and various interviews. You may need a BBC account to access this site. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007lyhs>
- **Keukenhof Gardens** – These beautiful Gardens in the Netherlands are offering a 360° tour as the gardens are currently closed. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUEI2iINhpY>

- **Château de Villandry** – amongst the most beautiful gardens in the world, Château de Villandry in the Loire region of France now offers a virtual tour. <https://www.chateauvillandry.fr/en/explore/an-overview-of-villandry/virtual-tour/>
- **ZSL London Zoo** – Bringing the Zoo to us during lockdown, this offers webcams, animal antics and zookeeper interviews. <https://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/virtual-london-zoo>
- **Chester Zoo** – The most visited zoo in the country and featured regularly on TV. On their home page look at “Things to Zoo at home” and click on “Watch our virtual zoo”. <https://www.chesterzoo.org/>
- **Taronga Zoo** – Australia’s premier Zoo offering views over Sydney’s amazing harbour has set up Taronga TV to keep wildlife fans happy during lockdown with a similar range of facilities to ZSL. But with the time difference, their webcams offer the novelty of live coverage of nocturnal creatures during our day time! <https://taronga.org.au/taronga-tv>
- **Glyndebourne Opera** – video streaming of performances recorded in East Sussex – operas available change periodically - <https://www.glyndebourne.com/on-screen/>
- **Berlin Philharmonic** - Classical Music video streaming with a redeemable voucher which gives free access to their extensive archive - <https://www.digitalconcerthall.com/en/home>
- **Guggenheim Museum, New York** – Online access to their collection - <https://www.guggenheim.org/collection-online>
- **Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam** - A variety of art works and articles to view - <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/rijksmuseum>
- **Uffizi Gallery Florence** – A variety of art works and articles to view - <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/uffizi-gallery?hl=en>
- **British Museum** – Brilliant virtual tour of hundreds of artifacts in the British Museum identified by timeline, region or theme, each with pictures and explanations (in addition to Curators Corner below) - <https://britishmuseum.withgoogle.com/>
- **English Heritage** – For many of their properties there is a history and virtual tour, eg for Stonehenge and Dover Castle - <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/>
- **National Theatre** – Live streaming of a different performance each week - <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/nt-at-home>
- **Shakespeare plays** – Clips from the RSC at <https://www.rsc.org.uk/education/teacher-resources/online-performances> or at The show must go on - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOAj4ANGKw&t=3327s>
- **Royal Opera House** – Our house to your house series with regular changes - <https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalOperaHouse>
- **British Museum** – Curators Corner videos which also change each week <https://www.youtube.com/user/britishmuseum>
- **Science Museum** - Virtual tours etc <https://www.youtube.com/user/sciencemuseum>
- **National Trust** – Regular podcasts available from the National Trust - <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/listen-to-podcasts-from-the-national-trust>

Activities around your home:-

- Have you revisited your photo albums either to sort them out or to remind you of the times before lockdown??
- Have you sorted out your shed or your garage recently??
- Have you written down your own family memories or your family history??
- Sort out the loft or the spare room – wherever things go that you are not sure what to do with!

- “Spring clean” your paperwork – have you got bills etc going back years, well now is the opportunity to sort them out.
- Revisit your bookshelves – which books have you not read yet? Which ones are well worth reading again?
- Your own Repair Shop – the BBC Repair Shop programme is filmed at the Weald and Downland Museum which we now won’t be visiting until July **2021**. Do you have a cherished item that is looking a little sad – a family heirloom or something that has special memories. Why not have a go at restoring the item to its former glory – it can be very satisfying!

Please do make the most of your time while staying well and staying safe!!