

The List



# get on your hobby horse

The devil makes work for idle hands. And feet. And minds.  
So whether you shoot it, mix it, nail it or nurture it,  
pick a new pastime for a fun-filled spring, says Corrie Jackson







**CREATIVE SAUCE**  
The writing desk, the writhing pole, the shooting dart or the mixing bowl

**1 Shoemaking**  
If you are frustrated by having to take out a second mortgage every time you want to get your hands on a pair of Jimmy Choos, then why not learn how to make your own? Budding Blahniks can enrol on a two-day shoemaking course at Prescott & Mackay (020 7923 9450; www.prescottandmackay.co.uk), where you learn the tricks of the trade and leave with your own pair of beautifully crafted mules. Courses cost £225, and take place in central London, just near the delights of Bond Street. For an extra £295, you can buy the shoemaking kit that accompanies the lessons, so you can continue to develop your newly acquired cobbling skills at home.

**4 Creative writing** Unleash your inner Brontë and put pen to paper - all under the watchful eye of the British Council, which holds creative-writing courses across the country. Prospective Tarantinos can brush up on their screenplay-writing skills on the 'English and Film Studies' course held at the University of East Anglia in Norwich on 8-26 March; and those who dream of becoming the next JK Rowling might find 'Writing Stories for Children', held at Missenden Abbey, Buckinghamshire, on 16-18 May, just the thing to get them started. For course details and prices, ring 020 7930 8466, or visit [www2.britishcouncil.org/arts-literature.htm](http://www2.britishcouncil.org/arts-literature.htm).

**QUILL TO WIN**  
Get writing

**2 Cooking**  
If you're more domestic disaster than goddess, take a cookery crash-course. Enrica Rocca (07762 167900; www.enricarocca.co.uk) runs day classes, from £60, revealing the secrets of selecting the best ingredients and making perfect pasta, risotto and antipasti. Bettys Cookery School (01423 814016; www.bettyscookeryschool.co.uk) holds courses in cooking with pastry, chocolate and fish, as well as dishes to make for spring, from £50. Once you've mastered the basics, hone your skills with the experts. From £85 a person including lunch, Tasting Places (020 7460 0077; www.tastingplaces.com) arranges lessons with leading chefs in their restaurants, including the Ivy's Alan Bird and Nobu's Mark Edwards.

**3 Pole-dancing**  
Kate Moss wrapping her limbs around a pole in that White Stripes video has spawned a swarm of pole-dancing wannabes. Give it a go with Polestars (020 8244 0612; www.polestars.net) in London where a six-week course, £110, teaches you every tantalising trick you need. If, at the end of the course, you can't tear yourself away from the pole then invest in your own. Pamela Anderson. Metal company Metalast (www.metalast.co.uk), has launched a sideline in dancing poles, from £299. Or take a group of girlfriends table-dancing at the London School of Passion (020 8211 9499; www.london.schoolofpassion.com). Guaranteed to boost your confidence, a four-hour session costs £75.

**5 Archery**  
Actress Keira Knightley is making lessons to prepare for summer blockbuster *King Arthur*, sexy Orlando Bloom brandished a bow in *The Lord of the Rings* and Geena Davis reached the semi-finals of the US Olympic archery trials in 1999. There is nothing more satisfying than wielding a bow and arrow, and would-be Robin Hoods can choose from over 1,100 clubs in the UK to practice their technique. To find your local club, ring the Grand National Archery Society (01952 677888; www.gnas.org).



**REAL TRADITION**  
Sit on the high stool, step back in time, sculpt a beel or harvest the wine

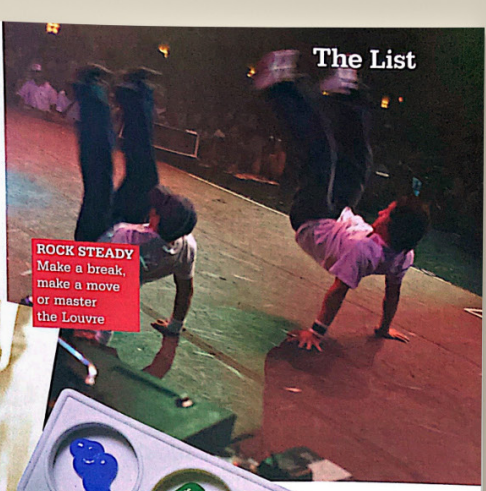
**6 Winemaking**  
Become the most popular girl in town and produce your own vintage. Plumpton College (01273 890454; www.plumpton.ac.uk) runs courses, £800, teaching grape harvesting, processing, clarification and bottling. Alternatively, try wine-tasting at La Réserve (www.lareserve.co.uk), where classes range from 'Flow to Taste', £30, to the more specific 'Elegant and Aromatic Whites', £35.

**7 Breakdancing**  
Clear the dancefloor and impress your friends with the windmill, turtle or six-step. Pineapple Studios (020 7655 4004; www.pineapple-uk.com) and the Basement Dance Studio (020 7700 7722; www.jumpanddance.com) are where it's at.

**LET'S DO LUNGE**  
Fence yourself, spaced and fit



**10 Fencing** Known as 'physical chess', fencing is guaranteed to give you a full mental and physical workout. Madonna's sword-bearing antics in *Die Another Day* and the runaway success of *Pirates of the Caribbean* have prompted a surge in the sport, with health clubs in the US introducing 'Fencersise' classes. Ralph Fiennes enjoyed the sport so much when filming *The Avengers* that he joined London fencing club Swash & Buckle (020 8829 9947; www.swashandbuckle.org.uk), which gives 10-week courses, from £95. For your nearest fencing club, visit [www.britishfencing.com](http://www.britishfencing.com).



**ROCK STEADY**  
Make a break, make a move or master the Louvre

**8 Art courses** Tell your Monets from your Manets and amaze your friends with knowing comparisons of Turner's Venice and the Turner Prize. Inscape Fine Art Study Tours (01993 891726; www.inscapetours.co.uk) will help you get more from exhibitions; they provide a tutor to take you around the galleries and fill you in on the techniques used by the Masters, from £39. And budding Bridget Rileys can take matters into their own hands with private art lessons from Lee Campbell (07900 242997; www.leecampbell.co.uk), and let their artistic vision run riot.

**9 Singing lessons**  
Avoid those cringingly embarrassing moments around the karaoke machine, and learn how to sing. Visit [www.vocalist.org](http://www.vocalist.org) to track down your nearest maestro or, if you prefer safety in numbers, join your local choir. Perfect your pitch, and at the next office party they'll be laughing with you, rather than at you.

**11 Archaeology**  
If Indiana Jones and Lara Croft have got you fascinated by all things ancient, get involved with a local excavation. Digs taking place in 2004 include Barcombe Roman Villa in Lewes, Blacklands Romano-British site near Frome, Somerset, and Castell Henllys Iron Age fort in Pembrokeshire. For more details, ring the Council of British Archaeology, (01904 671417; www.britarch.ac.uk). For a more theoretical approach, the University of Cambridge offers weekend and day courses throughout East Anglia, from £20; on 13 March, the university's Dr Cally Oldershaw will be giving a lecture on famous diamonds and the myths that surround them, at the Natural History Museum in London. For course information and lectures, ring 01954 280399, or visit [www.cont-ed.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cont-ed.cam.ac.uk).

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ONE OF YOUR DREAMS,  
WITHOUT MAKE-UP.

NEW SKINCARE

REAMTONE

HYPERPIGMENTATION CORRECTOR  
UNIFORMITY - COLOUR IRREGULARITIES

dark spots, uneven skin tone and colour irregularities

The List



**CUTTING CREW**  
Oak inlay, floral display, behind the lens or into the fray

**WING IT**  
Take to the skies, slow, quick, quick, slow, dancing McQueen or wheels of steel

**12 Martial arts**  
Matrix-mania and Uma Thurman high-kicking her way through blood-fest *Kill Bill* make martial arts the 'must-do' activity of 2004. Karma in north London (020 7485 7474; [www.karma.co.uk](http://www.karma.co.uk)), the regular stomping ground of Jonny Lee Miller, is the place to go for zen-do, a variation on kickboxing, taught by World Champion Rafael Nieto. Annual membership starts from £500. Soho's the Third Space (020 7439 7333; [www.thethirdspace.com](http://www.thethirdspace.com)), where Alexander McQueen is often spotted, offers a variety of martial arts, including wing chun, capoeira and eskrima. Annual membership costs £990.

**17 Get snap happy**  
Central Saint Martins college in London (020 7514 7000; [www.csm.linst.ac.uk](http://www.csm.linst.ac.uk)) runs evening and weekend courses in photography, which cover everything from getting started to portrait photography, from £340 for 10 weeks.

**13 Flying**  
If *Pearl Harbor* inspires you to nod emphatically at Ben Affleck's 'Get me to a goddamn plane', then invest in flying lessons with Cabair (020 8953 4343; [www.cabair.com](http://www.cabair.com)). Gaining your Private Pilot's Licence can take just 32 hours, and costs from £3,395, after which you'll be free to soar away. You could try a taster lesson with Into the Blue (01959 578101; [www.intothelblue.co.uk](http://www.intothelblue.co.uk)); one-hour lessons cost from £145, nationwide.

month-long part-time courses, from £350. It also gives lessons in Ibiza for £40, so you can brag about the set you played at the heart of Europe's club scene. If all else fails, read *How to DJ* (£14.99, Bantam Press).

**15 Marquetry**  
Funk up your fusty furniture with the delicate art of marquetry. Marquetry Society annual membership costs £16. To find your nearest meeting, ring 0114 233 5105 or visit [www.marquetry.org](http://www.marquetry.org).

**18 Old-school dancing**  
Rekindle childhood memories of musty dance halls, and take up ballet, tap or ballroom dancing. Alexander McQueen's spring/summer show was inspired by the allure of dance, with models adorned in marabou-trimmed peach satin and silver sequins, twirling around a chandelier-bedecked Parisian ballroom. Danceworks (020 7629 6183; [www.danceworks.co.uk](http://www.danceworks.co.uk)) offers both classical and Russian ballet, from £5 daily, or annual membership fee. The Mark Elie Dance Foundation in Notting Hill (020 8964 2575; [www.markelie-dancefoundation.co.uk](http://www.markelie-dancefoundation.co.uk)) holds regular tap lessons, for £5 a class. For details on ballroom-dancing lessons, visit [www.mrwonderfuldancing.com](http://www.mrwonderfuldancing.com). □

**14 DJing**  
Itching to drop-mix, scratch and beat-match? Red Tape Studios in Sheffield (0114 276 1151; [www.redtape.org.uk](http://www.redtape.org.uk)) has short or long courses for mini-Morillos, from £15. London's Point-Blank Studios (020 7729 0000; [www.pointblanklondon.com](http://www.pointblanklondon.com)) offers

**16 Gardening**  
Feel the flower power. ACS Distance Education (0800 328 4723; [www.acsedu.co.uk](http://www.acsedu.co.uk)) runs a six-month part-time course on roses, including rose-breeding and garden design, from £216. London's Out of the Bloom (020 7482 3301; [www.outofthebloom.com](http://www.outofthebloom.com)) conducts flower workshops, from £165.