

Japanese Maple Care

Japanese maples are a welcome addition to any landscape. Their diversity of size, color, shape, and form is so great that their graceful beauty will fill any need.

There are hundreds of varieties of Japanese maples, but the basic shapes are upright or cascading forms. Upright trees typically have multiple branches very close to the ground and reach heights of 15 to 30 feet at maturity. The cascading, or thread-leaf varieties, are very slow growing and resemble shrubs more than trees. Leaf color for both forms range from yellow-green to maroon-red to a variegated white and pink.

Japanese maples are effective as small specimen trees in containers, accent plants in flowerbeds, patio trees in dappled shade, and in large areas.

The best location for a Japanese maple is an area receiving morning sun and afternoon shade. The delicate leaved varieties require shade from scorching sun. The coarser red laceleaves will take full sun, but they may sunburn for a year or two before they establish their root systems.

Japanese maples require moist, well-drained, slightly acidic soil. Organic material, such as Bumper Crop or compost, should be mixed into the soil at the time of planting. Mulch the root area 2 to 3 inches thick to conserve moisture and to keep the soil cool. Keep the mulch 6 inches away from the trunk of the tree. A consistent amount of moisture is critical for the Japanese maples. They have shallow roots and can dry out easily, so it is important to water frequently. Even soil moisture is harder to maintain in containers, so care should be given. Japanese maples are slow growing and therefore do not require a great deal of fertilizing. A once a year feeding of a balanced fertilizer in the spring is all your tree requires.

Except for removing dead or diseased branches, pruning is not required if you have enough space. Major pruning is done during dormancy - early February through mid-March. Trimming can be done throughout the year.

We carry a large variety of Japanese maples, including:

- Baldsmith** - cascading, green leaf
- Bloodgood** - upright, red leaf
- Butterfly** - upright, variegated green
- Crimson Queen** - cascading, red leaf
- Emperor I** - cascading, red leaf
- Garnet** - cascading, red leaf
- Red Select** - cascading, red leaf
- Sango Kaku** - upright, green leaf, red tips
- Seiryu** - upright, green leaf
- Shaina** - upright, red leaf
- Sharp's Pygmy** - upright, green leaf
- Ukigumo** - upright, green with pink leaf
- Viridis** - cascading, green leaf

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