

Container Gardening Trees and Shrubs

Add a special touch to your patio, deck, or terrace by creating a year-round focal point, screen, or grouping of hardy trees or shrubs in containers. Container planting can enhance your surroundings. By following these simple steps, you can have a beautiful, year-round garden that will last for years.

CONTAINER SELECTION: Your container should be a durable pot that will handle below-freezing weather. It should be large enough to allow the roots of the plant to grow. It absolutely must have drainage holes so that the roots won't rot. When using a large container, consider using sliders or wheels under the pot.

PLANTING: Add a 2 inch layer of gravel, potshards, or packing peanuts in the bottom to prevent the soil from clogging the holes. Using a good quality potting soil, set your plant in the pot so that it is about 1 inch below the top rim of the pot.

WATERING: Water thoroughly when planting and then allow the soil to dry slightly between watering. Check the soil about 2 inches down and, if it feels dry, water until water runs out the bottom of the pot.

FERTILIZING: As you water your plant, the nutrients in the soil will be depleted, so they must be replenished to keep your plant healthy. Use an all purpose slow release organic, or all purpose water-soluble fertilizer. Discontinue feeding in late summer.

MAINTENANCE: To prepare your plant for winter, mulch the soil. You may even wrap the pot with bubble wrap or burlap to help insulate the roots. Young trees and evergreen shrubs, such as boxwood, would benefit from a burlap screen to prevent windburn. If possible, cluster your plants in a sheltered location or put them in the garage. Water your plants when there is an extended period (3-4 weeks) without precipitation. Even though plants are dormant in winter, they do require some water. Never water when the temperature is below freezing.

Johnson's carries a large selection of beautiful pots, as well as trees and shrubs, that are suitable for container planting. Here is a sampling:

Arborvitae - *Thuja occidentalis*

Boxwood - *Buxus sempervirens*

Cherry, flowering - *Prunus serrulata*

Dwarf Alberta Spruce - *Picea glauca*

False Cypress - *Chamaecyparis*

Holly - *Ilex*

Japanese maple - *Acer japonicum*

Juniper - *Juniperus*

Mugo pine - *Pinus mugo*

Pieris - *Pieris japonica*

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