



The BCLS Landscape Services List of Recommended Trees and Shrubs for Outdoor Container Planting

The most important criteria for selecting plants for outdoor containers are: (i) hardiness for site; (ii) suitability of growth habit for container size and shape; and (iii) features that give the plant particular year-round or seasonal interest or usefulness.

Trees and shrubs that are kept outdoors in containers are exposed to a wide - and rapidly changing - range of environmental extremes. In comparison to in-ground plantings, the root systems of container plants are more exposed to winter freezing - thawing cycles, hot summer temperatures, and drying out of the rootball soil. Therefore, only very hardy trees and shrubs should be used for year-round, outdoor container plantings.

The most suitable trees and shrubs for container plantings also have growth rates and habits that allow them to be kept reasonably "under control" and in scale with their containers and surroundings. In addition, plant features such as branch structure, leaf texture and color, and seasonal flowers or fruit should all be taken into account in deciding whether the plan is appropriate for the location.

The following list is not exhaustive, but does include many of the best and most dependable trees and shrubs for container plantings. Plants that prefer sun are marked with a single asterisk (*); plants that prefer shade are marked with a double asterisk (**). Most plant varieties can be planted safely in spring, summer or early fall; plants that can also be safely planted later in the fall are marked with an "F". For a more complete description of hardy woody plants and perennials suitable for containers, please refer to Linda Yang's excellent book, *The City Gardener's Handbook* (Random House 1990) (esp. Chapters 4 and 7).

The following list of suggested container plants is organized by plant category, and varieties are listed within each category by alphabetical order of botanical name:

NEEDED EVERGREENS (Conifers)

- Weeping Blue Atlas Cedar *
- (*Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca')
- Compact Hinoki Cypress - and dwarf varieties */**
- (*Chaemacyparis obtusa* 'Compacta')
- Juniper - all varieties * F
- (*Juniperus*)
- Spruce - dwarf and weeping varieties * F
- (*Picea*)

- Pine - dwarf and weeping varieties * F
(*Pinus*)
- Japanese Yews */** F
(*Taxus cuspidata* varieties)
- Hybrid Yews */** F
(*Taxus x media* varieties)
- Arborvitae */** F
(*Thuja occidentalis* varieties, esp. compact types)

BROADLEAVED EVERGREENS

- Largeleaf Korean Boxwood */**
(*Buxus microphylla* 'Korean Largeleaf')
- Newport Blue Boxwood */**
(*Buxus sempervirens* 'Newport Blue')
- Cotoneaster *
(esp. *C. dammeri* and *C. horizontalis* cvs.)
- Euonymus - all evergreen varieties **
- China Girl/Boy Holly */**
(*Ilex cornuta* hybrids)
- Blue Hollies */**
(*Ilex x meservae* varieties)
- Firethorn *
(*Pyracantha* - all varieties)

DECIDUOUS FLOWERING TREES

- Flowering Hawthorns * F
(*Crataegus* species)
- Magnolia *
(esp. smaller hybrid varieties)
- Flowering Crabapples * F
(esp. compact *Malus* varieties, incl. Sargents, Red Jade)
- Flowering Pear * F
(*Pyrus calleryana* varieties)
- Japanese Pagoda Trees * F
(*Styphnolobium japonica*)

DECIDUOUS FLOWERING SHRUBS

- Barberry Varieties **
(Berberis)
- Hybrid Flowering Quince * F
(Chaenomeles Hybrids)
- Shrub Dogwoods * F
(Cornus alba and sericea varieties)
- Harry Lauder's Walking Stick * F
(Corylus Avellana 'Contorta')
- Russian Olive *F
(Eleagnus angustifolia)
- Bellflower */**
(Enkianthus campanulatus)
- Burning Bush */** F
(Euonymus alata 'Compacta')
- Rose of Sharon *
(Hibiscus syriacus)
- Sea Buckthorn*
(Hippophae chamnoides)
- Bayberry *
(Myrica pensylvanica)
- Cinquefoil * F
(Potentilla varieties)
- Spirea - esp. compact varieties * F
- Dwarf Korean Lilac * F
(Syringa palibiniana)
- Fragrant Viburnum * F
(Viburnum x Juddii)
- Dwarf Weigela varieties *
(Weigela florida cultivars)
- Yucca or Adam's Needle *
(Yucca filamentosa varieties)

DECIDUOUS SHADE TREES

- Japanese Maple */** F
(Acer palmatum varieties)
- Young's Weeping Birch *
(Bertula pendula 'Youngii')
- Maidenhair Tree *
(Ginko biloba)
- Honeylocust varieties * F
(Gleditsia triacanthos cvs.)
- Flowering Callery Pear *

(*Pyrus calleryana* varieties)
European Linden * F
(*Tilia cordata*)
Japanese Keaki Tree * F
(*Zelkova serrata* cvs.)

WOODY VINES

Trumpet Vine * F
(*Campsis radicans*)
Euonymus ** F
(*E. Fortunei* varieties)
Hardy English Ivy Cultivars **
(*Hedera helix* cvs.)
Honeysuckle *
(*Lonicera Heckrottii*)
Wisteria varieties *F
(*W. sinensis* and *floribunda*)

ROSES

Flower Carpet Roses
Meidiland Roses esp. -
'Bonica' * F
'White Meidiland' * F
'Scarlet Meidiland' * F
Old Fashioned Shrub Roses - compact varieties *
(including 'Sea Foam', 'The Fairy', 'Max Graf')
rock rose varieties * F
(*Rosa rugosa* and hybrids)
Hybrid Tea Roses - compact varieties *
Hybrid Floribunda Roses - compact varieties*

PERENNIALS

Astilbe species and hybrids **
Chrysanthmum species and hybrids *
Coreopsis species and hybrids *
Daylily (*Hemerocallis*) varieties * F
Hosta varieties **
Sedum varieties * F

GRASSES

Sedge Grass *

(Carex varieties)

Blue Fescue

(Festuca glauca)

Maiden Grass

(Miscanthus varieties)

Fountain Grass

(Pennisetum varieties)

HERBS

All hardy varieties