



# Japanese Maples

Native to Japan and Korea, Japanese maples are prized as specimen trees because of their handsome sinewy trunks and graceful branching habit. They come in a variety of sizes and forms, such as upright, weeping, broad leaf or lace leaf.

*The varieties listed below are some of the most popular cultivars carried by Green Acres:*

### ***Acer palmatum***

Height: 15-25ft | Width: 15-25ft

This is the basic, un-grafted seedling form of a Japanese maple. It has broad green leaves and a mottled gray-green trunk. Fall color is yellow, orange and red.

### ***Bloodgood***

Height: 15-18ft | Width: 15-18ft

A perfect specimen of a red, upright Japanese maple with deep reddish purple foliage. Foliage retains deep color well into the summer. Bright red fall color.

### ***Crimson Queen***

Height: 9ft | Width: 9ft

Beautiful weeping lace leaf type with striking burgundy foliage. Fall color is bright reddish purple.

### ***Emperor One***

Height: 15-20ft | Width: 15-20ft

An upright variety with bright red leaves. It's comparable to Bloodgood, but grows slightly faster. Scarlet fall color.

### ***Inaba Shidare***

Height: 8-10ft | Width: 4-6ft

An elegant lace leaf specimen with unusually large leaves. Holds its deep reddish burgundy color through the summer. Crimson fall color.

### ***Red Dragon***

Height: 4-6ft | Width: 3-4ft

A dwarf form of weeping Japanese Maple with beautiful red lace like leaves. Does well in containers. Bright red fall color.

### ***Sango Kaku***

Height: 20-25ft | Width: 18-20ft

This beautiful maple has year round interest. Leaves emerge bright green in the spring, and turn yellow in the fall. Bright red bark is visible in the winter.

### ***Seiryu***

Height: 10-12ft | Width: 10-12ft

An unusual upright variety with delicate lace like leaves. Bright green leaves turn orange and gold in the fall.

### ***Viridis***

Height: 4-6ft | Width: 8-12ft

A beautiful example of weeping green lace leaf. Leaves emerge yellow green and have a showy yellow gold fall color.

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## Caring For Your Maple

### **Sun Tolerance**

While most varieties of Japanese Maples will not thrive in full sun in our climate, some can adapt to sun very well. Varieties which have broad, red leaves tend to adapt the best, while lace leaf varieties don't fare as well. The key to successful adaptation is sufficient irrigation, and a thick layer of mulch to blanket the roots away from the trunk.

**Tip:** When the Sacramento heat is unbearable, application of Bonide™ Wilt Stop can help your Japanese Maple adapt to the afternoon sun by creating a protective barrier, slowing water loss through the leaves.

### **Watering**

Japanese Maples have very delicate leaves, with thin branches meaning water doesn't move very quickly up from the roots, and their leaves will show damage if the soil becomes too dry. A 2-4" layer of mulch around the roots slows the evaporation of water in the soil, keeping the roots cool and moist. To avoid crown rot, keep the mulch a few inches away from the trunk of the tree.

The frequency of watering a Japanese Maple depends on:

- Soil texture
- Sun exposure
- Wind exposure
- Size of the tree
- Season

There is no single answer on how many times per week you should water your maple, because it varies so much depending on the factors listed above. However, it is always a good idea to water deeply, yet infrequently. Each time you water, thoroughly penetrate the root zone, and give the water a chance to evaporate out of the soil before watering again.

### **Pruning**

Japanese Maples have a naturally graceful growth habit. Accentuate their natural beauty by thinning to allow light into the canopy, and avoid "heading" or "shearing" cuts.

Each year, remove any dead branches or branches that are crossing. It's always better to prune off a branch while it is small than it is to prune a large branch; it will leave a smaller wound. Avoid early heavy pruning if you would like your maple to acclimate to the sun.

The tree will need as much energy as it can get from its leaves to build its sun tolerance. The best time to prune is in late winter, before the tree leafs out. Because it is still dormant, you avoid shocking it too much, and because it has no leaves you can see the structure of the tree more clearly.

### **Troubleshooting**

Signs of stress mean, it's time to do an inspection. Closely examining the tree from the roots up is the best way to assess the problem. Keep in mind, a newly planted tree may just be experiencing transplant shock and will likely recover once it's established. New trees acclimating to the sun may show signs of sunburn on the outer leaves for the first few years.

### **Inspection Check List**

- » Starting at the roots, probe the soil with your fingers (wait a few days after watering). Does the soil feel wet? If so, there may be a problem with the drainage, or you are watering too frequently. Tree roots need oxygen as well as water to thrive, so soil should never feel wet for long periods of time.
- » Examine the crown of the tree where the roots meet the trunk. Is it above or below the soil line? The crown should never be allowed to sink below the soil line, or become buried by mulch. The crown should be flush with the soil level. It is easier to add more soil than it is to remove it, so always plant on a slight mound to compensate for settling.
- » How does the tree trunk look? The bark on a Japanese Maple is very thin, and damaging it will slow the growth and vigor of the tree. Apply white tree trunk paint to remedy this scorching.
- » Finally, examine the branches and leaves. Leaf curling, ants, oozing sap and yellowing leaves are some symptoms of a pest problem. For help identifying a pest, bring a picture or a sample to the Garden Solutions department of any Green Acres Nursery location.

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