



PLANTS FOR CONTAINERS

Growing plants in containers gives you the freedom to use the plant in different configurations, and to use the pot itself as a decorative element. You will want to water more frequently than if the plant were rooted in the ground, and provide regular supplemental fertilizer. In periods of deep cold, move the pot to a sheltered location to protect the roots.

Trees

A multitude of small trees are suitable for growing in containers. As it grows, you may want to progressively pot the tree into larger containers, or remove it for periodic root pruning. Consider growing the tree in a pot for several years, and then planting it out in the landscape as it outgrows the container. Some good suggestions are Japanese maples, redbuds, contorted filbert, and dogwoods.

Shrubs

Conifers and broad-leaved evergreens are good for containers, too. Slower growing conifers such as dwarf hinoki cultivars are a good choice. For upright shapes, consider dwarf spruces, junipers, and columnar yews. Broad-leaved evergreen choices include hollies, *Euonymus*, and Oregon grape. Numerous flowering shrubs are suitable, such as *Spiraea* and flowering quince.

Perennials

Perennials are excellent choices for container growing. Use as accents with larger shrubs, or in combinations. Selections with unique features include *Heuchera*, semi-evergreen *Epimediums*, and Japanese painted fern, all of which are useful in lower-light areas. Full sun plants such as *Gaura*, *Delphinium*, and blue sea holly can add spice to a container as well.

Annuals

Annuals are a great way to add a quick splash of color to an empty corner, or to use in combination with shrubs and small trees. Use *Coleus*, annual *Salvia*, heliotrope, and showy *Petunia* which seems to have dozens of newly introduced varieties every year. Typical selections for cool weather include ornamental kale, primroses, and pansies. Consider an annual vine such as the rapid-growing ornamental sweet-pea.

Vines

In pots you have many options for the way you display vines. You can let the plant trail downwards, or train it onto a trellis. Mount the trellis to the pot, or use a strong stake driven deep into the soil. Evergreen vines include evergreen *Clematis* and star jasmine, both of which prefer a bit of afternoon shade. Other choices are fragrant jasmine, climbing roses, blooming clematis varieties, and creeping woodbine with its rich scarlet fall color.

Edibles

Blueberries, especially 'Top Hat' and the colorful semi-evergreen 'Sunshine' work great in containers. Herbs such as sage, basil, and cilantro can be brought inside in cooler weather. Rosemary is evergreen, and includes either upright shrubby forms or a trailing variety. And of course, annual vegetables such as tomato, pepper, and eggplant work great in pots.

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