



# Caring For Figs

## Choosing a Site:

Figs should be planted in a full sun location. Figs can be planted in a container or in the ground.

## Planting:

Dig the hole twice as wide as the pot but no deeper. If the soil is heavy clay, amend with one-third organic soil amendment. Place the tree in the hole so it rests slightly above the surrounding soil level. Fill in hole with backfill, building a water basin slightly wider than the root ball around the tree. Water the tree thoroughly. Paint the trunk with white latex paint to avoid sunscald.

## Fertilizer:

Fig trees grow satisfactorily in moderate soils without fertilizer. If growth is unsatisfactory then an application of Nitrogen is needed in the early spring. Don't fertilize in the summer.

## Pruning:

Figs can be trained to be either a bush or a tree. The bush form is easier and more practical in the Oregon climate because of the frequent winter freezes. Each year after the first, remove 1/3-1/2 of the annual growth and all but 3 to 6 feet of the strongest stalks. Remember to keep the center of your fig tree open. This will allow it to get more sun and higher quality fruit. Figs can be pruned severely and kept small- as low as 5ft. When pruned this way the early crop is sacrificed. Figs planted in containers are also restricted in growth.

## Harvesting:

Some varieties bear small fruit that ripen in the summer as well as the main fall-ripening crops. The figs bear fruits continuously over a period of 6 weeks. Remove any unripe fruit in the late fall. For the best flavor figs should be picked until the fruit wilts at the neck and bends over the stem. If any milky latex develops at the stem end when the fruit is picked, it has not reached its full ripeness.

## Winterizing:

All varieties are killed to the ground by temperatures at or below zero degrees F. At zero to ten degrees F., hardy varieties will be injured only on the ends of the branches. Trees more than three or four years old will grow back from the buds below the ground. It is wise to wrap your tree to protect it from the cold if you live in an area where temperatures fall below ten degrees F. To help your fig harden off for the winter, irrigation should be shut off after September 15th.

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