

Japanese Maple

Acer palmatum

There are many cultivars of Japanese maple with a wide variety of leaf shapes and color, growth habits, and sizes. Japanese maple has a height and spread of about 20 feet, but there are much smaller selections available. The multiple trunks are muscular-looking, picturesque, grey, and show nicely when lit up at night. Japanese maple is grown for its green or red colored leaves, interesting growth habit and fine leaf texture. Fall color ranges from bright yellow through orange and red, and is often striking, even on trees grown in total shade. Growth habit varies widely depending on cultivar from globose, branching to the ground to upright, vase-shaped. The globose varieties look best when they are allowed to branch to the ground. Variegated types are a bit more difficult to grow and are subject to leaf scorch. This large shrub or small tree tends to leaf out early, so it may be injured by spring frosts. Leaves often scorch in hot summer weather in zones 7b and 8, unless they are in some shade or irrigated during dry weather. These trees grow fine on clay soils as long as the ground is sloped so water does not accumulate in the soil.

Type: deciduous small tree

USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 8B

Uses: specimen; deck or patio; container or planter; trained as a standard; bonsai

Origin: not native to North America

Height: 15 to 25 feet **Spread:** 15 to 25 feet

Light requirement: part sun to part shade

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: none

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

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Photo: UF/ IFAS