

# Aucuba

## *Aucuba japonica*

This tough, very slow-growing evergreen shrub tolerates a wide range of soils, performs well in deep shade, has attractive glossy green leaves and bright-red fruit. The variegated forms brighten any area in the landscape with deep shade. Leaf variegation differs dramatically from plant to plant; some have leaves with only a few flecks of yellow, whereas others seem to have yellow leaves with a few flecks of green. Aucuba makes a nice house plant, and it performs well in a container in the shade. Aucubas prefer a rich, sandy loam with some organic matter but they will adapt successfully to a heavier soil as long as drainage is good. They are best when used in mass, planted close together because they grow so slowly. Plant two to three feet apart for the best landscape effect. Pruning is seldom necessary because of the slow growth rate. The irregular, multi-stemmed habit of growth makes Aucuba a natural for informal plantings, while the dense, compact form makes it useful as a free-standing specimen in small areas.

**Type:** shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7B through 9

**Uses:** mass planting; container or above-ground planter; foundation; cut foliage/twigs; accent

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Height:** 3 to 8 feet      **Spread:** 3 to 4 feet

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

**Light requirement:** plant grows in the shade

**Soil tolerances:** slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests; no diseases are of major

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Photo: UF/IFAS