

PLANTING GUIDE FOR BONSAI

Growing bonsai has been considered a 1,000 year old ancient art that is heavily influenced by Asian culture particularly Chinese and Japanese culture. Bonsai trees are mainly for decorative and recreational purposes and it has been closely associated with Zen Buddhism due to the contemplative and meditative aspect of growing and nurturing them.

Proper care of bonsai:

A. Choose the bonsai variety suited to your local climate conditions. There are bonsai varieties that require warm conditions while others thrive in colder temperatures.

B. Determine whether to grow indoor or outdoor tree. Generally, indoor tree would receive less light and drier in texture compared to outdoor trees.

Indoor: Ficus, Gardenia, Camellia, Boxwood, Serissa

Outdoor: Cypress, Cedar, Maple, Beech, Ginkgo, Elm, Cypress, Birch

C. Choose bonsai size depends on the following factors:

- * container size
- *home or office space available
- *sun availability

D. When choosing a plant, look for vibrant, healthy-looking plants. After you have narrowed it down to a select few, imagine how it would look like after it has been pruned. The pruning and shaping process, which may take several years, is actually what makes raising bonsai trees a fulfilling experience.

E. Use a pot that is well-draining and should be big enough to allow soil to cover the roots of the plant. The pots cannot be too large otherwise it would look mismatched together with the bonsai tree. If you are unsure on the size of the pot, another way to go around this problem is to use plain containers first then transfer them when they have reached mature height.

Potting Grown Trees:

- A. Prepare the tree by pruning it according to the desired shape. If necessary, you may use hard wire to direct the growth direction of the plant.
- B. Take out the tree gently and carefully by using a potting shovel and clean the roots of dirt or anything that may obscure your vision of the roots.
- C. Trim the roots to maintain a neat and manageable bonsai tree.
- D. Ensure the pot is ready by putting fresh, new soil to reach its desired height. At the bottom of the empty pot, put a layer of coarse-grain soil as a base then on top of it, add a looser, finer soil.
- E. Pot the tree. Place the tree in your desired orientation. Make sure to cover the tree's root system with fine, well-draining soil. You may add a mesh screen over the pot's drainage holes to prevent soil erosion which happens when water flushes soil out of the pot through drainage holes.
- F. Provide tender, loving care for your bonsai tree. For 2-3 weeks, leave it in a semi-shaded area to shield it from wind and direct sunlight. Just water the plant for the time being, no need to use fertilizer until the transplanted roots have settled in.



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