

# Bonsaitopia

## Care guide – Chinese Elm

Also called *ulmus parvifolia*. Originating in China, it is the best known bonsai, we find it in large supermarkets and that is why it is often the first bonsai. Often confused with the *zelkova serrata*, the *zelkova* bears similarities to the commonly known Chinese elm with a double-toothed leaf while the *zelkova* has a simply serrated, oval and pointed leaf.

### Location

It can live indoors as long as there is plenty of light, in which case it will keep the leaves throughout the year, or outdoors, where conditions are more suitable. In case of very cold winter, it will lose its leaves. The leaf will reappear in spring when the weather becomes milder. It is a funny tree due to its small, scalloped, dark green leaf and its intense and fine branching, much appreciated in bonsai. *Ulmus Parvifolia* is a very resistant bonsai, recommended for beginners as a first bonsai, it withstands some stress such as lack of water or light. In case of stress due to errors we advise you to use our bonsai stimulant.

### Soil

We always advise the use of Akadama, the ideal substrate for potting bonsai *ulmus parvifolia* and with the particularity of being easier to distinguish when it is dry (lighter) or humid (darker), thus facilitating the task of those who are responsible for watering

### Watering

The number of times we should water will depend on the type of bonsai, the quality of the substrate, the intensity of the sun that the plant receives, etc. Plants that live in pots depend on us to grow. The roots need water and air, so it is essential to let the substrate dry between each watering. As a rule, we only water it again when the soil on the surface starts to dry, (it is noticeable by the paler color of the substrate, easier with Akadama).

## Pruning

Maintenance pruning is carried out throughout the growing season, it consists of maintaining the predefined shape, leaving just two more new leaves to increase the size and volume of the bonsai. Structural pruning of the *ulmus parvifolia* bonsai is carried out in winter with the sap still (dormancy), the objective of structural pruning is to keep the tree compact and defined.

## Wiring

Wiring is a technique that must be done carefully. Wiring the *ulmus parvifolia* bonsai consists of wrapping an anodized aluminum wire around the trunk or branch to change its direction, in order to define the desired shape.

## Repotting

In general, it should be repotted every two or three years, removing 1/3 of the roots and also trying to carefully eliminate dead, injured or malformed roots. E. It consists of changing the soil, cleaning it practically completely, trimming the roots a little and placing it in another pot with a basic soil mixture (akadama and some compost or enriched soil). As long as you don't cut the "mother roots", nothing will happen and this will help to grow and improve your bonsai appearance.