

Small urban lots place many constrictions on plant choices. Columnar plants are strategic in these situations. In addition, tall and narrow shapes provide a very strong structural element to gardens of all sizes. The following list offers some suggestions of columnar to conical (cone-shaped) plants for a tight area. Plants are subject to seasonal availability.

Plants with an \* are evergreen.

### Columnar plants 10' tall and under

**\**Buxus semp* 'Graham Blandy'**- A narrow form of English boxwood. Grows 3-6"/year in height. But is not wider than 3'. Full sun to part shade.

***Berberis thunbergi* 'Helmond's Pillar'**-A deciduous barberry with dark maroon leaves. It matures at 4-5' tall and 2' wide. Requires full sun.

**\**Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Barry's Silver'**- Stunning conifer with soft light green foliage and prominent white tips. Matures at 6' tall and 2' wide. Excellent drainage, protect from hot sun.

**\**Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Blue Surprise'**- Soft feathery powder blue foliage with purple tints in winter. Matures at 8' tall and 2-3' wide. Full sun and excellent drainage.

**\**Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Boulevard'**- Very soft blue curly foliage with purple tints in winter. Slow to 8-12' tall and 4-6' wide. Full sun, good drainage.

**\**Chamaecyparis thyoides* 'Red Star'**-Tiny green star shaped foliage turns maroon in winter. Slow growing dwarf conifer (1-

3"/year) stays narrow. Requires full sun. Tolerant of many soil types.

**\**Hedera helix* 'Poetica'**- structural, upright and shrubby ivy. Grows to 3-4' tall and 2-3' wide. Requires full to partial sun.

**\**Ilex crenata* 'Sky Sentry', or 'Sky Pencil'**- Small rounded glossy leaves and black berries. Slow growing to 10' tall and 1 1/2' wide. Needs full to partial sun.

**\**Juniperus communis* 'Compressa'**-A conical plant with grey green foliage. Slow growing (3-6"/year) reaching 2' tall and 6" wide in ten years.

**\**Juniperus communis* 'Gold Cone'**- Bright yellow foliage in spring and summer. Grows 3-6"/year reaching 6' tall and 2' wide. Needs full sun and good drainage.

**\**Picea glauca* 'Conica'**- Dwarf Alberta Spruce. Cone shaped plant with compact foliage. Grows 3"/year, to 8'-12' tall and 3-5' wide. Requires full sun.

**\**Pinus sylvestris* 'Sentinel'**- A dwarf and narrow form of Scott's pine with bluish needles and reddish bark. Slow growing to 4' tall and 1' wide in ten years. Needs full sun and good drainage.

**\**Taxus baccata* 'Amersfoort'**- An unusual yew with stubby, wide needles and distinctive structure. Grows 1-3"/year (no information on mature size). Full sun to partial shade.

**\**Taxus x media* 'Beanpole'**-A dense pillar of dark green foliage. Very slow growing (1-3"/year) indefinitely. Full sun to part shade. Protect from severe winter winds.

**\**Thuja occidentalis* 'Degroot's Spire'**- Very narrow form of arborvitae with spirally arranged foliage. Grows 6-12"/year indefinitely. 8' tall and 1' wide in ten years. Full sun to partial shade.

### Columnar plants 10'-20' tall

**\**Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Gracilis'**- Slender Hinoki Cypress. Artistic structure is complimented by dark green fan like foliage. Grows 3-6"/year reaching 20' tall and 4-5' wide. It can reach 30' in time. Full sun to part shade. Good drainage.

**Columnar apples-** A self-fertile apple that reaches 12' tall and 3' wide. White flowers with a pink blush in the spring and colorful fruits in the fall. Three varieties available, 'Golden Sentinel', 'North Pole', and 'Scarlet Sentinel'. Full sun.

**\**Ilex vomitoria* 'Will Flemming'**- A dense column of tiny, shiny dark green leaves. Grows 6-12"/year reaching 15' tall and 2-3' wide. Full sun to partial shade.

**\**Juniperus scopulorum* 'Skyrocket'**- Silvery blue spire of scaly foliage. Grows 12"/year reaching 10-15' tall and 3-5' wide. Full sun and good drainage.

**\**Juniperus scopulorum* 'Gray Gleam'**- A sleek conical evergreen with grey green foliage. Grows 12"/year reaching 15'+ tall and 5' wide at the base. Full sun and good drainage.

**\**Juniperus scopulorum* 'Moonglow'**- Intense silver blue foliage creates a dense pyramid. Grows 12"/year reaching 15-20' tall and 5-8' wide. Full sun.

***Laburnum anagyroides* ‘Sunspire’-**

Columnar Golden Chain Tree. Deciduous three lobed leaves and clusters of bright yellow pea shaped flowers in early summer. Green bark. Slow grower, 12-15’ tall and 5-8’ wide. Full sun.

**\**Pinus sylvestris* ‘Fastigata’-** Narrow form of Scotts pine. Thick blue green needles and reddish bark are a nice contrast. Grows 12”+/year reaching 20’ tall and 3-4’ wide. Full sun and good drainage.

**\**Taxus baccata* ‘Stricta’-** Irish Yew. Dark green spire. Slow growing (3-6”/year) eventually reaching 20’ tall and 3-5’ wide. Full sun to partial shade. Good drainage.

**\**Thuja occidentalis* ‘Holmstrup’-** Compact dark green foliage. Grows 6-12”/year. Conical habit, 8-12’ tall 4-5’ wide at base. Full sun to partial shade.

**Columnar plants over 20’ tall**

***Acer rubrum* ‘Bowhall’-** Narrow form of red maple. Bright red fall color. Grows 1.7’/year. Matures at 40-50’ tall and 10-15’ wide. Full sun.

***Acer rubrum* ‘Scanlon’-** Compact crown that turns rich orange and red in fall. Matures at 40’ tall and 15’ wide. Full sun.

***Carpinus betulus* ‘Franz Fontaine’-** Hornbeam. A dense pyramid of textured leaves. Reaches 30’ tall and 15’ wide. Full sun.

**\**Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* ‘Green Arrow’-** A graceful form of Alaskan Cedar with sweeping branches and feathery

foliage. Grows 12”+/year reaching 30’+ tall and 3’ wide. Full sun.

**\**Cupressus sempervirens* ‘Tiny Tower’, and ‘Stricta’-** Italian Cypress. A classic in columnar plants. ‘Tiny Tower’ reaches 25’ tall and 3-4’ wide. ‘Stricta’ reaches 40-60’ tall and 3-5’ wide. Excellent drainage, shelter from severe winds and cold. Full sun.

***Fagus sylvatica* ‘Red Obleisk’-** One of several beech cultivars that is narrow. Maroon leaves in summer. Grows to 35’ tall and 8’ wide. Full sun.

***Koelreuteria paniculata* ‘Fastigiata’-** Golden Rain tree. Feathery deciduous foliage is topped by sprays of yellow flowers in summer. Fast growing to 35’ tall and 6’ wide. Easy. Full sun.

**\**Pinus flexilis* ‘Vanderwolf’s Pyramid’-** A soft pine with striking steel blue needles. Grows 16”/year. Reaches 30’+ tall and 10-15’ wide. Full sun and good drainage.

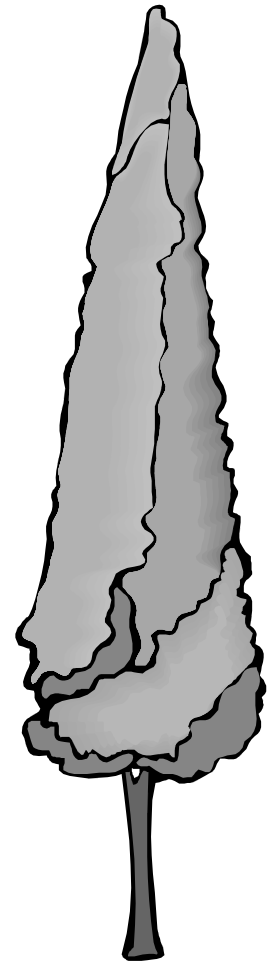
**\**Pinus strobus* ‘Fastigiata’-** A narrow eastern white pine. Grows 12”+/year. Reaches 40’+ tall and 10-20’ wide. Full sun and good drainage.

**\**Pinus sylvestris* ‘Bonna’-** A Scott’s Pine, which reaches 30’ tall and is very slender. Silver blue needles, and peeling cinnamon colored bark. Full sun, good drainage.

Information compiled by Laura Altvater

**Columnar plants**

**Narrow  
plants for  
tight spots**



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