



# Pruning Japanese Maples

Pruning Japanese Maples is a classic case of needing Natural Pruning. Most of the pruning is done from inside by thinning and shortening individual branches. When you are through, ideally it does not look like the tree has been pruned.

## Early training

Most Japanese Maples grow into a small tree. Generally they prefer to be in the shelter of larger trees.

The preliminary shaping depends on location, because they are often planted near a house or larger tree. You prune to establish the main structure remembering to keep them away from the house and high enough to allow walking under where necessary. Develop main branches 2 to 3 ft apart on the main trunk spaced around the tree in an open area; when planted near a house, building or larger tree you need to focus the branching structure away from these.

Don't completely remove unwanted branches immediately. Shorten them to encourage most of the growth into the main branch structure. This allows the extra foliage to feed the root system and trunk for stronger growth.

Whips should be tipped slightly to help develop branching. Branches that are growing in unwanted directions, need to be either redirected by pruning or shortened to allow other branches to fill in.

Seedling trees have substantial variation in their growth pattern. Your main goal is to develop a slightly spreading tree with a layered look. In some cases this means encouraging horizontal branching of the secondary branches. In other cases encourage upright branching of the main structure.



## Later training



Later pruning is intended to control size (if needed), continue to direct the tree from the house or larger tree and opening up the tree to make a light airy appearance. In general thin the tree to allow more light into the center, to the plantings under the tree and to allow the structure to be admired!

Be careful when making large cuts to not expose other large branches to direct mid day sun. This causes major sunburn damage. Too much heavy pruning often causes major suckering and a dramatic change in the appearance of the tree unless corrective pruning is done later that year and over the next several years. Accentuate the layered look, stepping back during the process and keep an even look throughout the entire tree.





# Japanese Maple Varieties

Note – some varieties are available seasonally and in smaller sizes only.

## Dwarf forms

Beni Hime – Very dwarf, small leaves, grows to about 3 ft. with reddish color in spring

Kamagata – dwarf selection to about 5 ft. yellow fall color.

Mikawa Yatsubusa– dwarf selection with clumpy foliage, growing to about 5 ft.

Shaina – Sport of atropurpureum, fine textured red foliage grows about 6 or 8 ft.

Murasaki Kyohime – Dwarf form (3-5 ft) with small foliage and reddish purple at the edge of the foliage in the spring.

## Mid sized forms

Beni Tsukasa – small to medium sized form to 10 ft + with striking pink, red and green spring foliage color.

Butterfly – variegated white, pink and green foliage, slender growing slowly to 8-10.'

Shishi Gashira – small growing crinkled green foliage to about 10'.

Purple Ghost – Unusual coloring red, purple with distinctive veination. size ? 10-15' ?

Shishio Improved – Medium sized maple with striking scarlet foliage in early spring aging to pink and green. Grows 10-15'

Uki gumo – distinct variegated form with pink and white spots on the foliage in spring and early summer grows to 10'13'

## Full sized forms

Beni Kawa –Red twig form growing to 25 ft or more. Yellow fall color.

Bloodgood – dark red foliage, holds its color well, full sized tree to 30 ft +.

Orange Dream – medium to large sized to about 20,' golden yellow spring color with golden orange fall color.

Emperor One – Deep red foliage, holds its color well, full sized Japanese Maple to 30'

Ruth's Red – New deep red, Jim is trying it to determine its' sun tolerance. Probably to about 20.'

Sango Kaku – Red twig maple, smaller branches red colored, green foliage, slender to 20 to 25.'

Sumi Nagashi – Fine textured red foliage form growing to 30.'

Seiryu – Green lace leaf form growing to 30,' fall color blend of purple, red and gold. Tolerates sun and heat well.

## Small lace leaf forms

Baby Lace – very fine textured Japanese Maple with reddish cast turning green and scarlet fall color.

Crimson Queen – Lace leaf type with red foliage, weeping growth to 6-8.'

Emerald Lace – Very fine textured green Japanese Maple with burgundy fall color.

Garnet – red lace leaf type that grows somewhat faster and taller than Crimson Queen.

Green Hornet – green lace leaf type, we are being told it is more heat resistant.

Waterfall– green lace leaf type with weeping branches.