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Small deciduous trees for privacy and color

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Quick Facts

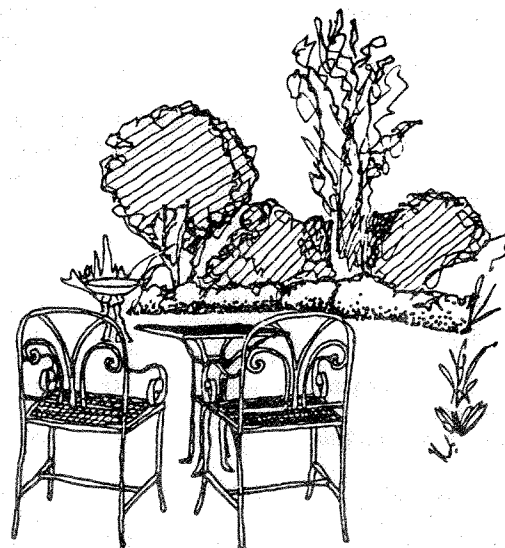
Small trees provide colorful flowers, fruit and foliage.

Use small trees as a screen for privacy.

Consider available space and soil adaptability when selecting small trees.

If space allows, several kinds of small trees provide variation in foliage texture, flowers and showy fruit.

Make sure water requirements of the tree match the conditions at your site.



Selection and Planting

Examine space before planting. Allow for adequate width to keep walkways, entryways, driveways or buildings and structures clear. Many small trees, although short, can spread as much laterally as vertically.

Soil: It is important to prepare soil before planting. Loosen the soil several feet in all directions from the spot you wish to plant. If the soil is a heavy clay texture and hard to work, add aged manure or compost and work into the soil at least 12 inches deep. See Service in Action 7.417,

How to plant trees and shrubs.

Color and texture: For landscape variety, plant several different kinds of trees if space allows. Through careful selection, you can have flowers, colorful and interesting fruits, varied foliage texture and fall colors.

Water: Table 1 indicates the general soil moisture needs of each small tree. Try to match the plant with the moisture conditions of the site. Trees tend to grow too rank if they are low-moisture trees planted in an irrigated lawn. On the other hand, trees that require moderate to heavy

moisture will do poorly if placed in an area where little or no supplemental irrigation can be applied.

The table includes small trees, some shrub-like, that are useful for privacy screening as well as adding interesting foliage textures and fall colors. Most can be used beneath power lines with little or no need for pruning to maintain clearance of lines.

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Table 1. Growth rate: f = fast; m = moderate; s = slow. Soil moisture: L = low-water needs; can withstand drought. M = moderate water needs; normal lawn watering, H = heavy water needs; more than normal lawn watering.

Plant Name	Height	Spread	Branch Shape	Rate	Growth Moisture	Soil Aesthetic Value/Cultural Hints
Alder, Thinleaf <i>Alnus tenuifolia</i>	15'	10'	upright, clump	m	H	Use in moist sites. Cone-like clusters remain in winter.
Aspen, Quaking <i>Populus tremuloides</i>	30'	15'	upright, columnar	f	M	Does best in rich, moist soil. Root suckers in groves.
Birch, Rocky Mountain or Water, <i>Betula occidentalis</i>	20'	15'	upright, clump	m	H	Use in moist soils. Yellow fall color.
Cherry, Canadian Red <i>Prunus virginiana</i> 'Shubert'	30'	20'	upright, clump	f	M	Leaves both red and green on same plant. Tends to root sucker like aspen.
Cherry, European Bird <i>Prunus padus</i>	30'	15'	upright, spreading	m	M	Fragrant chains of white flowers in spring. Fruit good for jellies.
Chokecherry, Amur <i>Prunus maackii</i>	25'	20'	upright, vase	m	M	Striking, shiny orange-red bark. White flowers.
Crabapple <i>Malus</i> spp.	Sizes and shapes vary as indicated below:			m-f	M	Many varieties available. Below are listed some for various aesthetic uses.
'Bechtel'	25'	20'	rounded			Double pink flowers. Usually no fruit.
'Red Splendor'	25'	15'	upright			Single rose-red flowers. Purple fruit.
'Radiant'	25'	15'	upright			Single pink or red flowers; red\purple fruit.
'Royalty'	15'	15'	upright			Dark red flowers. Purple foliage.
'Snowdrift'	15'	15'	rounded			White flowers; red fruit.
'Spring Snow'	20'	15'	upright			Usually fruitless. Dense foliage.
'Dolgo'	30'	25'	spreading			White flowers. Fruit good for jelly.
'Centurion, Red Baron'	20'	10'	upright			Rosy-red flowers. Red fruit. Street tree.
Golden Raintree <i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>	25'	20'	upright, rounded	f	L	For dry sites. Panicles of yellow flowers in summer. Chinese lantern-like pods. May freeze back some years.
Hawthorn, Cockspur <i>Crataegus crus-galli</i>	20'	15'	stiffly upright	m	L	Showy white flowers and red fruit. Glossy foliage. Thorny, useful for bird sanctuary.
Hawthorn, Downy <i>Crataegus mollis</i>	25'	20'	broad globe	m	M	Showy white flowers in spring. Red fruit late summer. Bronze fall color.
Hawthorn, Toba <i>Crataegus x mordenensis</i>	15'	15'	rounded	m	M	Fragrant, double, white flowers. Red fruit.
Hawthorn, Russian <i>Crataegus ambigua</i>	20'	15'	upright, spreading	m	L	Finely cut glossy leaves. White flowers, persistent red fruit.
Hawthorn, Washington <i>Crataegus phaenopyrum</i>	20'	15'	upright, spreading	m	M	White flowers; showy orange-red fruit. Red-orange fall color. Prominent thorns.
Lilac, Japanese tree <i>Syringa reticulata</i>	20'	20'	stiffly upright	m	M	Creamy panicles of flowers in late spring.
Maple, Amur <i>Acer ginnala</i>	25'	15'	broad, spreading	m	H	Sometimes shrubby. Scarlet fall color. Avoid in alkaline soils.
Maple, Wasatch <i>Acer grandidentatum</i>	25'	15'	broad, spreading	m	L	Survives in very dry sites once established. Orange-red fall color.
Oak, Gambel's <i>Quercus gambelii</i>	15'	10'	upright, clump	s	L	Forms groves by creeping root stocks. Often more shrubby than tree-like. Needs acid, well-drained soils to do well.
Pear, Callery <i>Pyrus calleryana</i>						
'Aristocrat'	25'	20'	upright, open	m	M	White flowers in early spring. Red to bronze fall color.
'Bradford'	25'	15'	broad, oval	m	M	Subject to freeze injury some years.
'Redspire'	25'	10'	narrow, upright	m	M	Tight, conical tree for accent and possibly subject to freeze injury in some years.
Plum, Double-Flowering <i>Prunus triloba multiplex</i>	15'	10'	upright, clump	m	M	Often shrubby. Double, deep pink flowers in spring. Moist soils best.
Plum, Newport <i>Prunus cerasifera</i> 'Newport'	25'	15'	upright, vase	m-f	M	Pinkish-white flowers followed by maroon-red foliage. Avoid wet sites.
Redbud, Eastern <i>Cercis canadensis</i>	30'	20'	upright, spreading	m	M	Pink flowers along twig before foliage. Plant in part shade.
Russian-olive <i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	30'	25'	broad, spreading	f	L	Silvery foliage and fragrant yellow flowers. Tolerates most soils and dry conditions.
Serviceberry, Shadblow <i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	25'	15'	upright	m	L	Showy white flowers in spring. Crabapple-like red fruits make good jelly.
Sumac, Staghorn <i>Rhus typhina</i>	2'	20'	broad, spreading	f	L	Orange to red fall color. Spreads by suckers. Lacinata, has fernlike foliage.