

Unique Conifers Make Gardens Special

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Selecting Conifers

What kind of drainage does the site have?

How much sunlight does the area receive in the summer?

What size conifer would work best in the site? Importance of growth rates.

2-2-2 Drainage Test Dig hole 2' deep. Fill with water & let drain. Fill a second time & time drainage. If the hole does not drain in 2 hours, you have poor drainage in that area. In areas with poor drainage, plant trees high with half the root ball out of the clay layer or create trenches where water can go. French drains can also work.

Planting Guide Plant trees in a martini glass shaped hole that is wider at the top. Do not make hole too deep. Root growth is stimulated by disturbed soil and concentrates in the upper layers.

Required Sunlight Choose a plant based on the light conditions of the area in summer.

Full, deep dark shade: 3 hours or less. **Partial shade:** 4-6 hours of sun **Full sun:** 8 hours or more of sun. **Morning sun:** cool morning sun with afternoon shade. **Afternoon sun :** hottest sun of the day

FULL, DEEP, DARK SHADE: 3 hours of sun or less

Buxus – Boxwood *Buxus x 'Green Mound'*

Taxus – Yew *Taxus baccata 'Amersfoort'* English Yew

Tsuga – Hemlock *Tsuga canadensis 'Gentsch White'* white tipped hemlock

Tsuga canadensis 'Pendula' *Tsuga canadensis 'Bennett'*

PARTIAL SHADE: 4-6 hours of sun

Picea abies – Norway Spruce *Picea abies 'Weeping Blue'* *Picea abies 'Elegans'* dwarf

Pinus strobus – White Pine *Pinus strobus 'Blue Shag'* Dwarf White Pine

Pseudotsuga menziesii – Douglas Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii 'Graceful Grace'*

Thuja occidentalis – Arborvitae *Thuja occidentalis 'Degroots Spire'*, 'Yellow Ribbon'

FULL SUN: 8 hours of sun or more

Juniperus – all Junipers *Picea* – all other Spruces *Pinus* – all other Pines *Larix*-Larch

Metasequoia-Dawn Redwood *Taxodium*-Bald Cypress

COOL MORNING SUN

Abies koreana 'Aurea' *Picea glauca* (Dwarf Alberta Spruce) *Picea glauca 'Conica'* pygmy forest

Picea glauca 'Pixie' 40-year-old

Picea orientalis 'Compacta' Oriental Spruce

Pinus cembra Swiss Stone Pine

Pinus parviflora 'Yatsubusa' Dwarf Japanese White Pine

AFTERNOON SUN: *Pinus x 'Jane Kluis'*

Rate of Growth: How fast does the desired plant grow?

Miniature: less than 1" per year *Tsuga canadensis* 'Jervis'

Dwarf: 1-6" per year *Picea abies* 'Clanbrassiliana Stricta'

Intermediate: 6-12" per year *Pinus cembra* 'Glauca Nana'

Large: 12" or more per year *Pinus strobiformis* 'Suzy's Duzy'

Uses of Conifers

Block negative lines of sight

Intense color forms

Blue: *Abies lasiocarpa* var. *arizonica*, *Abies concolor* 'Blue Cloak', A.c. 'Canidcans', A.c. 'Compacta', *Picea pungens* 'Montgomery', *Picea omorika* 'Pendula', *P. o.* 'Nana'

Yellow: *Pinus strobus* 'Winter Gold' (turns golden in the winter), *Pinus sylvestris* 'Aurea', *Picea pungens* 'Aurea', *Pinus mugo* 'Aurea', *Juniperus x pfitzeriana* 'Saybrook Gold', variegated *Pinus parviflora* 'Ogon Janome'

Incline plane: Stage trees on an inclined plane to increase the viewing of each one.

Abstract & Unique Trees

Juniperus rigida 'Pendula', *Picea omorika* 'Pendula Bruns', *Pinus strobus* 'Pendula' young and old, *Picea abies* 'Pendula', *Pinus parviflora* 'Blue Wave', *Ginkgo biloba* 'Pendula', *Pinus strobus* 'Niagara Falls', *Sciadopitys verticillata* 'Winter Green', *Picea abies* 'Cobra', *Pinus koraiensis* 'Glauca', *Picea englemannii* 'Bush's Lace', *Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* 'Green Arrow'

Four seasons of Interest: Spring

Abies koreana 'Silberlocke' -in spring with upright cones & red pollen sacs

Pinus parviflora 'Bergman' -bright red pollen sacs

Pseudotsuga menziesii 'Extra Blue' -with cones in late spring

Pinus densiflora 'Umbraculifera' -in florescence with female flowers & male pollen

Pinus aristata -with cones (Bristlecone Pine)

Picea abies 'Acrocona' -red flowers appear on the tips of the branches

Pinus contorta 'Taylor's Sunburst' -new growth is yellow

Summer *Pinus tabuliformis* **Fall** *Taxodium distichum* **Winter** snowy scene

Soften the Hardscape with Trees and Plants

Where to study Garden Conifers

Hidden Lake Gardens Tipton MI

Chicago Botanic Garden Glencoe IL

Janesville Rotary Gardens Janesville WI

Lincoln Park Conservatory Chicago IL

There is peace, harmony, & order in the natural world. Go have fun in your garden.

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