

DROUGHT TOLERANT PLANTS FOR LANDSCAPING IN SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN – Abbreviated Version

In the tables, the nonitalicized first name is the common name(s) for a plant, and the second name is its botanical name.

A. DECIDUOUS TREES

TALL TREES – 40-100 feet in height; plant at least 40-50 feet apart; columnar species, 20-30 feet apart			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catalpa, Northern (<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>) •* Coffeetree, Kentucky (<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i> and cvs.) • Elm, Hybrid (DED resistant only) (<i>Ulmus</i> x 'Hybrids') • Elm, Japanese (J.E.) (DED resistant only) (<i>Ulmus</i> x <i>japonica</i> and cvs.) • Filbert, Turkish; Hazelnut (<i>Corylus colurna</i>) • Ginkgo; Maidenhair Tree (Male only) (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i> and cvs.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •* Hackberry, Common (<i>Celtis occidentalis</i> and cvs.) Hickory, Shagbark (<i>Carya ovata</i>) • Honeylocust, Thornless (<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var.) Oak, Black (<i>Quercus velutina</i>) * Oak, Bur (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>) Oak, Northern Pin (<i>Quercus ellipsoidalis</i>) • Oak, Pin (<i>Quercus palustris</i>) * Oak, White (<i>Quercus alba</i>) • Planetree, London (<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>) 		
MEDIUM TREES -- 30-40 feet in height; plant at least 20-35 feet apart, depending on spread			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corktree, Macho Amur (Male only) (<i>Phellodendron amurense</i> 'Macho') • Elm, Emerald Sunshine Japanese (<i>Ulmus</i> x <i>japonica</i> 'JFS-Bieberich') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elm, Lacebark; Chinese Elm (<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>) •* Gum, Black; Black Tupelo (<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>) 		
LOW TREES – 15-30 feet in height; plant at least 15-30 feet apart, depending on spread			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crabapples, Flowering (Disease/scab resistant only) (<i>Malus</i> spp. and certain cvs.) * Hawthorn, Cockspur (<i>Crataegus crus-galli</i> and cvs.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hawthorn, Washington (<i>Crataegus phaenopyrum</i>) Hawthorn, Winter King (<i>Crataegus x viridis</i> 'Winter King') Redbud, Eastern (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>) 		

B. EVERGREEN TREES

TALL TREES – 60-80 feet in height; plant at least 25-35 feet apart, depending on spread			
Fir, White; Concolor Fir (<i>Abies concolor</i>)			
MEDIUM TREES -- 40-60 feet in height; plant at least 25-35 feet apart, depending on spread			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pine, Red (<i>Pinus resinosa</i>) Spruce, Serbian (<i>Picea omorika</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Spruce, White (<i>Picea glauca</i>) 		
LOW TREES – 15-40 feet in height; plant at least 10-25 feet apart, depending on spread			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juniper, Chinese (<i>Juniperus chinensis</i> and cvs.) * Redcedar, Eastern (<i>Juniperus virginiana</i> and cvs.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spruce, Black Hills (<i>Picea glauca</i> var. <i>densata</i>) 		

C. DECIDUOUS SHRUBS

TALL SHRUBS -- 8-10 feet in height, sometimes 15 feet in height; plant at least 4-6 feet apart			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherry, Manchu or Nanking (<i>Prunus tomentosa</i>) Cotoneaster, Manyflowered (<i>Cotoneaster multiflorus</i>) * Dogwood, Gray (<i>Cornus racemosa</i>) Fringetree (<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>) Lilac, Chinese (<i>Syringa x chinensis</i>) Lilac, Common (<i>Syringa vulgaris</i> and cvs.) Lilac, Hyacinth (<i>Syringa x hyacinthiflora</i> and cvs.) Lilac, Preston (<i>Syringa x prestoniae</i> and cvs.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Plum, American (<i>Prunus americana</i>) Smoketree; Smokebush (<i>Cotinus coggygria</i> and cvs.) * Sumac, Smooth (<i>Rhus glabra</i>) * Sumac, Staghorn (<i>Rhus typhina</i> and cvs.) Viburnum, Arrowwood (<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>) * Viburnum, Blackhaw (<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>) Viburnum, Burkwood (<i>Viburnum x burkwoodii</i>) 		
MEDIUM SHRUBS -- 5-8 feet in height; plant at least 3-4 feet apart			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chokeberry, Red (<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>) Cotoneaster, Hedge (<i>Cotoneaster lucidus</i>) * Hazelnut; American Filbert (<i>Corylus americana</i>) Jetbead (<i>Rhodotypos scandens</i>) Lilac, Miss Kim (<i>Syringa patula</i> 'Miss Kim') Lilac, Meyer; Palibin Lilac (<i>Syringa meyeri</i> 'Palibin') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Privet, Regel's Border (<i>Ligustrum obtusifolium</i> var. <i>regelianum</i>) Rose, Father Hugo (<i>Rosa hugonis</i>) Rose, Rugosa (<i>Rosa rugosa</i> and cvs.) Spirea, Vanhoutte (<i>Spiraea x vanhouttei</i>) Weigela, Old-Fashioned (<i>Weigela florida</i> and cvs.) 		

C. DECIDUOUS SHRUBS (continued)

LOW SHRUBS – 2-5 feet in height; plant at least 2½-3 feet apart		
* Chokeberry, Black; Aronia Berry (<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>)	* Honeysuckle, Dwarf Bush (<i>Diervilla lonicera</i>)	
* Cinquefoil, Bush; Potentilla (<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i> and cvs.)	Lead Plant (<i>Amorpha canescens</i>)	
Coralberry, Indiancurrant (<i>Symphoricarpos orbiculatus</i>)	Rose, Virginia (<i>Rosa virginiana</i>)	
Cotoneaster, Cranberry (<i>Cotoneaster apiculatus</i>)	* Snowberry (<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>)	
Cotoneaster, Rock (<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>)	Spirea, Japanese (<i>Spiraea japonica</i> , non-invasive cvs.)	
Currant, Alpine (<i>Ribes alpinum</i>)	Spirea, Snowmound (<i>Spiraea nipponica</i> 'Snowmound')	
Forsythia, Bronx (<i>Forsythia viridissima</i> 'Bronxensis')	* Sumac, Fragrant (<i>Rhus aromatica</i> and cvs.)	
Honeysuckle, Clavey's Dwarf (<i>Lonicera x xylosteoides</i> 'Clavey's Dwarf')	Willow, Silver Creeping (<i>Salix repens</i> var. <i>nitida</i>)	

D. EVERGREEN SHRUBS

TALL SHRUBS – 8-10 feet in height, sometimes 15 feet, plant at least 6-8 feet apart, depending on spread		
Juniper, Chinese (<i>Juniperus chinensis</i> and certain cvs.)		
MEDIUM SHRUBS -- 2-8 feet in height; plant at least 4-6 feet apart, depending on spread		
Juniper, Blue Star Singleseed (<i>Juniperus squamata</i> 'Bluestar')	Needle, Adams (<i>Yucca filamentosa</i> and cvs.)	
Juniper Chinese (<i>Juniperus chinensis</i> and certain cvs.)	Pine, Mugo (<i>Pinus mugo</i> var. <i>mugo</i> and cvs.)	
* Juniper, Oldfield Common (<i>Juniperus communis</i> var. <i>depressa</i>)		
LOW SHRUBS – 6-24 inches in height; plant at least 4-6 feet apart depending on spread		
Juniper, Chinese (<i>Juniperus chinensis</i> and certain cvs.)	* Juniper, Creeping (<i>Juniperus horizontalis</i> and cvs.)	
Juniper, Petite Common (<i>Juniperus communis</i> and cvs.)	Juniper, Savin (<i>Juniperus sabina</i> and cvs.)	

E. ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

TALL GRASSES -- 4-6 feet in height		
* Bluestem, Big; Turkeyfoot (<i>Andropogon gerardii</i> 'Sentinel')	Moor Grass, Tall Purple (<i>Molinia caerulea</i> ssp. <i>arundinacea</i> and cvs.)	
Dot Grass, Little (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Puenktchen')	Porcupine Grass (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Strictus')	
Feather Grass, Silver (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Silberfeder')	Reed Grass, Feather (<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> 'Karl Foerster'; 'Stricta')	
* Indian Grass (<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> and cvs.)	Switch Grass; Panic Grass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i> and certain cvs.)	
Maiden Grass; (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> and certain cvs.)		
Japanese Silver Grass		
MEDIUM GRASSES -- 2-4 feet in height		
* Bluestem, Little (<i>Andropogon scoparius</i> and cvs.)	Oats, Northern Sea (<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>)	
Fountain Grass (<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i>)	Switch Grass, Blue or Red (<i>Panicum virgatum</i> and certain cvs.)	
LOW GRASSES -- 8-24 inches in height		
Dropseed, Sand (<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>)	June Grass; Hair Grass (<i>Koeleria macrantha</i> ; <i>koeleria cristata</i>)	
Fescue, Blue (<i>Festuca ovina glauca</i> and cvs.)	Oat Grass, Blue (<i>Helictotrichon sempervirens</i>)	
Gramma, Blue (<i>Boutelouca gracilis</i>)	Sedge, Pennsylvania (<i>Carex pensylvania</i>)	
Gramma, Sideoats (<i>Boutelouca curtipendula</i>)		

F. GROUNDCOVERS

GROUNDCOVERS		
Juniper (See Low Evergreen Shrubs) (<i>Juniperus</i> spp. and cvs.)	Sumac, Gro-Low Fragrant (<i>Rhus aromatica</i> 'Gro-Low')	

G. VINES

VINES		
* Bittersweet, American (<i>Celastrus scandens</i>)	Hydrangea, Climbing (<i>Hydrangea anomala</i> spp. <i>petiolaris</i>)	
Creeper, Engelmann Virginia (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>)		

NOTES: The following abbreviations represent: cvs. – cultivars; spp. – species; ssp. – subspecies; and var. – variety. Recently installed plants initially require proper care including watering, fertilizing, and pruning until roots are established within two to three years. Thereafter, little or no watering is needed except during extreme prolonged drought conditions. Generally *Miscanthus sinensis* and *Miscanthus sacchariflorus* species should not be planted; however, certain cultivars of such grasses determined not to be invasive are acceptable.

- Street Tree. Only Dutch elm disease (DED) resistant and male Ginkgo trees should be selected for this purpose. A variety of trees should be planted for diversity and to help avoid the wide-spread loss of trees through disease and pest infestations. As a general guide, species diversity should be established with no more than 20 percent of plants from one “family” (i.e. Honeylocust), no more than 10 percent from one “genus” (i.e. Thornless Honeylocust), and no more than 5 percent from any single “species” (i.e. Imperial Thornless Honeylocust), including “cultivars” and “varieties.”

*Wisconsin native.

Source: *E. R. Hasselkus Ph. D., A Guide to Selecting Landscape Plants for Wisconsin, 1998, and Laura G. Jull, Ph. D., Drought Tolerant Woody Landscape Plants, 2012, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Madison, Wisconsin; Michael A. Dirr, Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses, 5th Ed., Stipes Publishing Company, Champaign, Illinois, 1998; Richard D. Schein, Ph. D., Street Trees: A Manual for Municipalities, Treeworks, State College, Pennsylvania, 1993; Henry D. Gerhold, Willet N. Wandell, and Norman L. Lacasse, Landscape Tree Factsheets, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 2005; Henry D. Gerhold, Norman L. Lacasse, and Willet N. Wandell, Compatible Tree Factsheets for Electric Lines and Restricted Spaces, Including Evergreens for Screens, 2nd Ed., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 2001; M. Hockenberry Meyer, D. B. White, and H. Pellett, Ornamental Grasses for Cold Climates, North Central Regional Extension Publication 573, University of Minnesota-Extension, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1998; Rick Darke, The Color Encyclopedia of Ornamental Grasses, Timber Press, Inc., Portland, Oregon, 1999; Frank S. Santamour, Jr., Trees for Urban Planting: Diversity, Uniformity, and Common Sense, U.S. National Arboretum-Agricultural Research Service, Washington D.C., 1990; and SEWRPC.*

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