



Wallsend Nurseries



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Bonsai Care Notes

CARE OF YOUR BONSAI

The Japanese word Bonsai, means “plant in a tray”. Bonsai therefore are hardy trees and shrubs, which have adapted for life in a shallow pot instead of in the open ground. These plants have been artistically trained to a pleasing shape similar to that of their larger counterparts in nature.

Bonsai do best if kept out of doors in a sheltered place where they get some sun each day, some rain, but never a lot of wind. They can live indoors for a few days at a time only. Be very careful about placing a pot in a sunny position behind glass, as the temperature there on a hot day can rise to quite alarming levels.

You must also be wary of reflected heat off walls, balconies etc.

WATER MUST BE GIVEN REGULARLY and a Bonsai must **NEVER** be allowed to dry out completely. Neither must it be drowned by over watering. As long as the surface soil is moist there may be no need to add more. When it is done watering must be thorough, so it is a good idea to soak the pot in a tray of water, which covers the soil level. Leave submerged until it is wet throughout. (Approx. 20min) and for the rest of the week water it from the top just enough to keep moist. This will vary from twice to even three times a day in very hot weather to perhaps once a week in mid winter, depending on the needs of the tree. For example, evergreen trees of which hold their leaves and continue to grow in winter, will need watering more often during this time than do deciduous trees which lose their leaves in autumn and do not grow at all until the following spring. Soil in a Bonsai should drain easily and water should be applied gently and until it runs through the drainage holes.

The moss on the soil is a good indicator of wetness, if sides of moss look dry and “curl” then it is dry and needs water. If brown and rotting i.e. dying, you are over watering.

If in doubt, ring and get advice, before it is too late.

FEEDING: To look it's best, a Bonsai must be really healthy -never starved or neglected. So during the spring, summer and autumn months, feed at weekly intervals with a soluble fertilizer at half the recommended pot plant strength. Remember to water the plant thoroughly beforehand and never fertilize a dry, sick or leafless plant.

SHAPING: To keep a Bonsai well groomed, regularly pinch out runaway growing tips. More drastic pruning is only necessary when the plant has put on a great deal of growth, which has spoilt the normal shape or if you wish to change the shape entirely.

REPOTTING: In fresh soil is necessary when the roots fill the pot. This is usually done in early spring or autumn-never by choice in the hottest or coldest months.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

FIGS: Most thrive best in warm, humid conditions with plenty of light. They require plenty of water, especially in summer. Figs can be kept inside if the correct light, water and warmth requirements are provided. But if kept inside for prolonged periods they will “stretch “ to the light and therefore distort the shape of the tree.

MAPLES: Must be protected from the hot summer sun and wind or they will burn. They do best in an easterly aspect where they get morning sun only (i.e. up to 11am or noon). Be careful not to over water in winter when the tree has lost its leaves.

CONIFERS: Need some sun all year round. In winter they prefer as much sun as possible and in summer do fairly well with only morning sun

Insects, and all other disease that affect trees grown in the ground can affect all Bonsai.

Grasshoppers can defoliate a tree, as can caterpillars, be aware and regularly look over your Bonsai when watering. Most problems can be solved by simply removing and destroying the offending “bug”. Weed your pot regularly.

ALL WIRE IS TO BE REMOVED IF SIGNS OF CUTTING- IN OCCUR.