

Tree Profile: Ash - *Fraxinus*

General: According to *Wikipedia* the **Ash**, is a genus of flowering plants in the olive and lilac family, Oleaceae. It contains 45–65 species of usually medium to large trees, mostly deciduous though a few subtropical species are evergreen. The genus is widespread across much of Europe, Asia and North America.

It is highly regarded by 'Bonsai Enthusiasts' around the world for its bark variations and some flowering species.

Lighting & Temperature: They're very hardy and tolerate full sun to shade and can tolerate a windy spot if watered well. Frost tolerant to -10°C!

Watering: Frequently, especially during hot and windy weather, reduce watering in winter.

Feeding: Feed every two weeks during the growing season using a high nitrogen fertiliser for young trees in training! For older trees use a low nitrogen fertiliser to prevent the leaves from getting too big. Feeding less until the end of autumn will assist in reducing the leaf size too. Stop feeding when leaves drop.

Repotting: Best time in spring, before bud burst, every 1 - 2 years for young plants and every 4-5 years for older ones in free draining soil. Carry out root pruning up to two thirds at the same time!

Pruning: Structural branch pruning and shoot pinching is best done throughout the growing season and hard pruning in winter.

Leaf pruning every second year in late spring is important to reduce the size of the large leaves. Total defoliation can be done twice per season to increase ramification

Wiring: Anytime on younger branches, but on older branches using guide wires is recommended - they can be very brittle!

Propagation: Use hardwood cuttings in winter and cold-treated seeds in spring. Air-layer in late-Spring after spring growth has hardened.

Pests and diseases: Watch out for scale, root rot and sooty mold.

Styles: Formal & Informal Upright, Slanting, Semi Cascade, Single or Multiple Trunks, Group Planting and Root-over-Rock.

Not good for Shohin due to leaf size!

Some species suitable for bonsai:

Fraxinus excelsior, known as the **European ash** or **common ash**, to distinguish it from other types of ash, is flowering.

The bark on young trees is pale grey and smooth, becoming rough and vertically fissured on old trees. The buds are jet black.

Fraxinus angustifolia, the **narrow-leaved ash**, the bark is smooth and pale grey on young trees, becoming square-cracked and knobby on old trees. The buds are pale brown, which readily distinguishes it from the *Fraxinus excelsior*.

Fraxinus ornus, the **South European flowering ash**, the bark is dark grey, remaining smooth even on old trees.

The buds are pale pinkish-brown to grey-brown. The flowers are produced in dense panicles 10cm long after the new leaves appear in late spring.

