American Elm

Ulmus americana



American Elm in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 80 feet

Spread: 50 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 2

Other Names: White Elm, Water Elm, Gray Elm, Swamp Elm

Description:

Undisputably the most ornamental of all shade trees, a stately vase-shaped specimen, the ultimate street tree forming an overhead arch, very hardy and extremely adaptable; however, use caution where Dutch elm disease is known to be a problem

Ornamental Features

American Elm is primarily valued in the landscape for its ornamental globe-shaped form. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The large serrated pointy leaves turn an outstanding gold in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

American Elm is a deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a high maintenance tree that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Disease

American Elm is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Shade



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Planting & Growing

American Elm will grow to be about 80 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 50 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 100 years or more; think of this as a heritage tree for future generations!

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is an amazingly adaptable plant, tolerating both dry conditions and even some standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America.



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