

INFORMATION

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HEDGING PLANTS

A *formal hedge* is a continuous line of shrubs or trees in which the individuality of each plant is lost. An *informal hedge* is a line of shrubs or trees in which some or all of the natural outline of the plant is preserved. Unlike a plant-covered screen or fence, a hedge requires little or no support.



CHOOSING A HEDGE It is usual to plant just one variety, but this is not always desirable. The all green types of Holly or Privet can be mixed with the variegated forms to produce a more colourful hedge and green leaved Beech can be inter-mixed with the purple leaved variety.

- * If you want a densely clothed, formal hedge which will provide privacy then choose a traditional hedge.
- * If strict formality is not required, you can grow a flowering hedge, which is usually informal as regular clipping would reduce or remove the floral display.
- * For dividing areas within the garden, a low growing hedge will be required, made up of shrubs which do not exceed 3ft or are kept below that height by regular pruning.

THE TRADITIONAL HEDGE - formal and dense

CARPINUS (Hornbeam)

In most cases it retains its leaves over winter and has the added advantage of being reliable in heavy and wet soils. Trim in August. Will quickly attain a height of about 8ft or more.

CRATAEGUS (Hawthorn)

Tough, quick growing and forms a barrier that is impenetrable. The usual recommendation is to plant it as a mixed hedge with Beech, Privet, Holly or Hornbeam.

CUPRESSOCYPARIS (Cypress)

C. Leylandii is the quickest growing of all hedges reaching a height of 10ft in 5-6 years. Young plants are spindly - keep them staked and regularly trimmed for the first few years.

FAGUS (Beech)

Can be trimmed to produce a tall, formal hedge which will serve as an excellent windbreak. Tolerates exposed sites. Trim in August - tackle any hard pruning in February.

ILEX (Holly)

Excellent for both sunny and shady sites. Alternate male and female varieties to ensure berries and if practical, trim with secateurs rather than shears.

LIGUSTRUM (Privet)

Quick growing, tolerant of poor conditions and hardy. The leaves are usually retained over the winter. It is essential that new plants are cut back hard.

PRUNUS (Laurel)

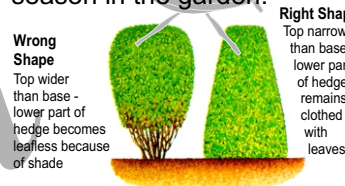
Make fine, tall hedges which are shiny leaved and dense. Needs plenty of room to grow. If possible, prune with secateurs rather than shears.

TAXUS (yew)

An excellent dense hedge which can be kept quite narrow.

PRUNING AND TRIMMING

Initial Pruning For a dense, formal hedge it is essential to build up a plentiful supply of shoots at the base and this calls for hard pruning after planting. Bare root plants should be cut back to about half of their height - Container grown plants to about two thirds of their original height. Do not prune the plants again during their first growing season in the garden.



Second Year Pruning Clip the hedge lightly on about four occasions between May and August. The purpose of the second year

pruning is to increase the density and to create the desired shape *before* the requisite height is reached.

THE FLOWERING HEDGE - informal and colourful

BERBERIS (Barberry)

Slender arching branches are clothed with narrow evergreen leaves. In spring the yellow flowers appear. Once they fade the hedge should be trimmed.

ESCALLONIA (Escallonia)

Tolerant of salt laden air. Red flowers appear in June. Trim immediately after flowers fade to encourage a second flush.

LONICERA (Honeysuckle)

Leaves are shiny and box like. The flowers are small but they are followed by prominent, black berries. Support is usually necessary.

PYRACANTHA (Firethorn)

Leaves are small and the berries are abundant. It grows well in chalky soils and on exposed sites. Prune lightly after flowering.

ROSA (Rose)

Some Shrub and a few vigorous Floribunda roses make excellent hedges, but the hedge will have to be an informal one as these plants cannot stand constant clipping back.

SPIREA (Spirea)

The arching branches bear loped leaves which colour well in autumn. In May the little white flowers open. Trim once the flowers have faded.

THE LOW GROWING HEDGE - neat and compact

BERBERIS (Barberry)

There is a colourful dwarf form (B. thunbergii atropurpurea 'Nana') which makes a compact formal hedge about 1.5ft high. Pick a sunny spot to ensure brighter reddish leaves. Deciduous - trim after leaf fall.

BUXUS (Box)

B. sempervirens will stand regular clipping to maintain it as a formal low growing hedge.

LAVENDULA (Lavender)

Once the flowers fade, the stalks should be cut, but the trimming to shape must be delayed until April.

PRUNUS (Crimson Dwarf)

P. cistena is a coppery leaved dwarf variety which can be grown as a formal hedge about 3ft high. Trim once the blooms have faded.

ROSMARINUS (Rosemary)

Small flowers appear along the stems in spring - trim the hedge when these blooms have faded. Dislikes poorly drained soil.

SANTOLINA (Lavender Cotton)

S. chamaecyparissus 'Nana' has silvery evergreen foliage and bears bright yellow flowers between June and August. Grows to about 1ft tall and should be trimmed in April. Remove dead blooms after flowering.

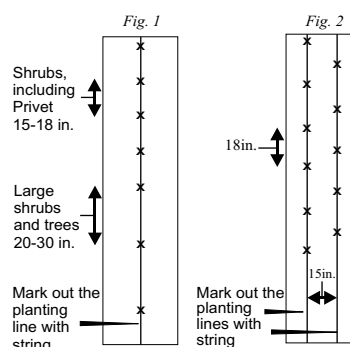
PLANTING A FORMAL HEDGE

Your first job is to decide the planting line and this is not quite as straightforward as it seems. The edge of the pavement or along your neighbour's fence may seem the right place at planting time, but in a few years there is the serious problem of encroachment onto his property or the overhang across the street. Having decided on the planting line, dig a 3ft wide strip.

Single row planting

is recommended where economy is a vital factor

and where quick screening is not essential. (see Fig. 1).



Double row planting is recommended for spindly shrubs such as 'Privet' and where maximum screening is required as quickly as possible. (see Fig. 2).