

HOW TO

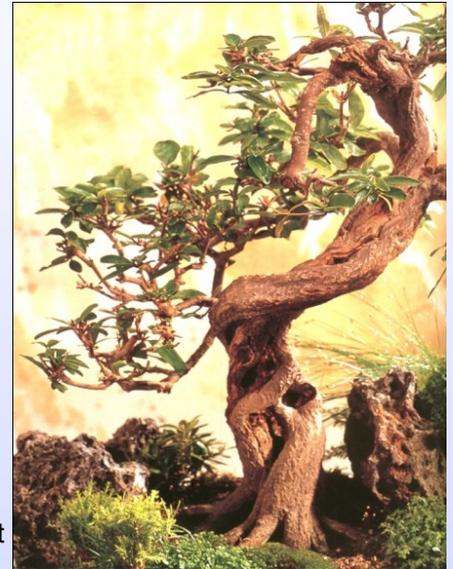


get going with Bonsai Culture

We are pleased to offer you expert advice on purchasing Bonsai Trees and a re-potting and pruning after sales service for our Bonsai customers.

As Bonsai Trees are becoming increasingly popular, we try to offer a wide choice of plants, both evergreen & deciduous, easy as well as rare.

RE-POTTING As Bonsai are grown in small pots, occasional re-potting will be necessary to provide fresh soil and this should be done in Autumn or Spring. Small trees, especially deciduous ones, require re-potting every second year, but older trees only every third or fourth year. Turn the Bonsai out of the pot and remove about 60% of the soil, being careful not to damage the roots. Trim off any roots which appear to be damaged or which are too vigorous - taking care to leave as many fine roots as possible. (See section *Keeping them small*)



CONTAINERS Mature Bonsai are usually planted in containers which are wider than high. In fact the wider the container is in relation to its height, the more artistic the tree will look. Whatever container is used . . .

It Must Have Good Drainage.

The tree should not be planted in the centre of the container; a more picturesque effect is obtained by planting towards one side and placing a small rock in the space. Place a layer of gravel at the bottom of the container and over this a layer of compost. The roots should then be spread out over the compost and the container filled. The soil should then be packed round the roots of the tree and then piled up round the trunk of the tree. This allows deeper roots to be accommodated in a shallow container.

Do Not Add Fertilizer At This Stage.

A little fancy gravel or moss placed on the surface of the soil will also help to improve the effect. All these little extras can transform a tree in a pot into a miniature landscape. Now add water slowly until the compost is well soaked and allow to drain. The Bonsai should now be placed in a shady spot for about two weeks. If planted or re-potted in Nov/Dec, ensure that the tree is kept indoors from winter cold.

These instructions have completely avoided the use of Japanese words such as the Bonsai expert would employ to classify the many different styles of Bonsai, as there is no need for complex terminology for the novice to produce an acceptable Bonsai. These instructions have been made as simple as possible and if they are carefully followed, even beginners will succeed in raising beautiful little trees in miniature.

COMPOST Because only a small amount of soil is used, it is essential that care is taken in its preparation. The medium should consist of a mixture of average garden soil, leaf mould or peat and a little sand. The resulting mixture should be fairly light and must not settle into a solid 'mud pie' when watered. The mixing in of fine gravel as used in aquariums is beneficial with soggy soil.

LEAVES & LEAF CUTTING

Many young deciduous trees produce leaves which are out of proportion to the size of tree and leaf cutting is one method of reducing leaf size. If a tree is healthy and producing healthy growth, the leaves may be cut off entirely using sharp scissors, but leave the leaf stalks on the tree. These will wither and drop off in 2-3 weeks, to be followed by a second and more plentiful growth of smaller leaves. This is usually done in June, giving the tree a false Autumn with time to grow again before the true Autumn. Note: A tree with poor growth or weak branches should have only half the leaf removed.

