



AMERICAN ARBORVITAE CARE

LIGHT

American arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*), including Emerald Green or Smaragd, grows in full sun to partial shade. Dense shade produces thin foliage. Choose a site sheltered from harsh drying winds and leave room for the cultivar's mature size; narrow hedging trees, globes, and low mounds require different spacing.

WATER

Water slowly through the root ball and surrounding soil after planting. Check moisture regularly and water deeply when needed, keeping roots evenly moist during establishment. Adjust for rain and drainage rather than following a fixed daily schedule. Continue checking during dry autumn weather until the ground freezes.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use moisture-retentive, well-drained soil; this species accepts neutral to alkaline conditions and some wetter ground, but dislikes repeated drought. Keep the root flare visible and mulch lightly away from stems. Avoid compacted planting trenches and isolated holes that collect water. Do not add acidifier simply because this is an evergreen.

FEEDING

Use a soil test to guide fertilizer and pH changes. Healthy plants may need no routine feeding. If nutrients are needed, use a modest spring application of tree or shrub fertilizer at the label rate. Avoid heavy nitrogen and late-season feeding; browning is not automatically evidence of a nutrient deficiency.

SEASONAL CARE

Preserve the natural shape and prune lightly when necessary. For a hedge, trim green growth gently in spring or early summer, keeping the base wider than the top. Avoid cutting into bare interior wood or making drastic height reductions. Dwarf specimen forms usually need little pruning beyond removing damaged growth.

HELPFUL TIPS

Deer frequently browse American arborvitae, so protect vulnerable plantings. Snow and ice can spread or break stems; avoid locations hit by sliding roof snow. Some older interior foliage drops naturally, and golden or bronze winter color may be cultivar-specific. Progressive browning needs a moisture, root, exposure, or pest check before treatment.