DAPPLED WILLOW CARE

LIGHT

Dappled willow, including Hakuro Nishiki and Flamingo, grows in sun to partial shade with reliable moisture. Good light supports the pink, white, and green foliage display; protect from severe drying wind and scorching reflected heat. Plants may be shrubs or grafted standards, which require different handling when pruned.

WATER

Water slowly through the root ball and surrounding soil after planting. Check moisture regularly and water deeply when needed, keeping roots consistently moist during establishment. Adjust for rain, weather, and soil conditions rather than a fixed daily schedule. A new root ball can dry out even beside damp ground.

SOIL & PLANTING

Plant with the root flare at or slightly above the surrounding ground level. Keep any graft union above soil. Mulch lightly across the root zone without touching stems. Protect roots from compaction, lawn equipment, and repeated digging. Leave room for the plant's mature spread rather than relying on repeated hard cutting.

FEEDING

Use a soil test to guide fertilizer and pH changes. Healthy willows may need little feeding. If nutrients are needed, apply a modest spring dose of tree or shrub fertilizer at the label rate. Avoid heavy nitrogen and late-season feeding; fertilizer cannot correct poor siting or damaged roots.

SEASONAL CARE

On an established shrub, prune in late winter or early spring to encourage colorful young growth, then shape lightly if needed. On a grafted standard, prune only the head above the graft and remove rootstock shoots promptly. Never cut the trunk below the graft as if renewing an own-root shrub.

HELPFUL TIPS

Pink and white new growth normally becomes greener as it matures. Brown, crisp edges can indicate drying or scorch, while vigorous plain-green shoots may be reversion or rootstock growth. Check their origin before removal. Avoid forcing repeated fresh growth with heavy fertilizer, and keep moisture consistent through summer.