CREEPING WILLOW CARE

LIGHT

Creeping willow (Salix repens) is a low, spreading deciduous shrub for an open site in sun or light shade. Allow room for its natural breadth rather than expecting an upright ornamental tree. It can suit moist borders or naturalistic plantings, but should not be treated as a walkable lawn substitute.

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

Little regular pruning is needed. Remove damaged or misplaced stems selectively and thin congested growth only when necessary. If shaping is required, work after flowering to retain the catkin display. Keep its low shrub habit rather than using the heavy pruning intended for large willows or formal stem crops.

HELPFUL TIPS

Low spreading growth and seasonal leaf loss are normal. Keep nearby weeds from smothering young plants, removing them without digging through the root system. Monitor spread along paths and borders. Moisture needs depend on soil and exposure; check the root area rather than assuming all willows need permanent standing water.