CHASTE TREE CARE

LIGHT

Chaste tree (Vitex agnus-castus and garden hybrids), including Blue Diddley, Queen Bee, Shoal Creek, and Flip Side, flowers best in full sun. Give the cultivar enough room for its mature spread. A warm, sheltered position is especially useful near the colder edge of its range.

WATER

Water slowly after planting to moisten the entire root ball and nearby soil. Keep young plants evenly moist while roots establish, checking beneath the mulch before watering again. During prolonged dry weather, provide a thorough soaking rather than frequent light sprinkling. Avoid prolonged saturation.

SOIL & PLANTING

Excellent drainage is important, especially over winter. Plant at the nursery soil level and mulch around the root zone without burying the crown. Avoid low, persistently wet areas. Check the cultivar's hardiness against your site before planting; selections differ in cold tolerance.

FEEDING

Avoid heavy feeding of healthy plants. Check light, moisture, and drainage before treating weak growth with fertilizer. Use a soil test to guide any needed nutrients, apply shrub fertilizer in spring at the label rate, and water afterward. Keep concentrated fertilizer away from stems.

SEASONAL CARE

Flowers form on new growth. In spring, wait until living buds or basal shoots reveal winter damage, then remove dead stems and shape selectively. In cold gardens the top may die back while the roots survive. Do not mistake slow spring emergence for failure too early.

HELPFUL TIPS

Established plants tolerate some drought. A cultivar that survives as a large woody shrub in a warm region may behave more like a dieback shrub in Maine. Remove unwanted seedlings where they appear, and preserve the trunk if growing a tree form with a surviving woody framework.