



For the joy of gardening!

Estabrook's

KOUSA DOGWOOD CARE

LIGHT

Kousa dogwood grows in sun to partial shade, with light afternoon shade helpful on hot sites. Allow room for its spreading mature crown. Variegated selections such as Wolf Eyes appreciate shelter from scorching sun and drying wind. Match the final size to the cultivar; even compact selections keep growing.

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, weather, and drainage rather than watering daily by the calendar. Avoid repeatedly drying a new root ball or leaving it saturated.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use moist, well-drained, preferably acidic soil. Kousa dogwood tolerates some dryness once established but does not tolerate waterlogged ground. Keep the root flare and graft above soil and mulch lightly away from the trunk. Protect shallow roots from repeated cultivation, compaction, and abrupt changes in soil level.

FEEDING

Use a soil test to guide fertilizer and pH changes. Healthy plants may need no routine feeding. If nutrients are needed, apply a modest spring dose of tree or shrub fertilizer at the label rate. Avoid heavy nitrogen, late-season feeding, and adding lime automatically to acid-loving dogwoods.

SEASONAL CARE

Preserve the natural branching framework and prune sparingly. Remove dead, damaged, rubbing, or misplaced growth with small selective cuts. If light shaping is needed, work after flowering. Avoid topping, shearing, or the hard renewal pruning used for colorful-stem dogwood shrubs. Remove shoots from below a graft before they become established.

HELPFUL TIPS

Kousa dogwoods normally flower after leaves emerge and later than *Cornus florida*. Strawberry-like fruits and mottled, peeling mature bark are normal. Pink bracts and purple new leaves may be cultivar traits, including Eternal Scarlet and Smokeshow. Disease resistance is generally better than flowering dogwood, but unhealthy foliage or dieback still deserves diagnosis.