



For the joy of gardening!

Estabrook's

JAPANESE BLACK PINE CARE

LIGHT

Japanese black pine (*Pinus thunbergii*), including Thunderhead, needs full sun. Choose a suitable site for the cultivar and confirm its winter hardiness for your Maine garden. Allow room for dense, irregular branching rather than assuming a compact nursery specimen will remain at that size.

WATER

Water the original root ball and surrounding soil deeply when they begin to dry. New pines need regular checks through the first growing seasons, including dry autumn weather. Allow drainage between waterings. Do not assume rain has reached a dense root ball beneath the branches.

SOIL & PLANTING

Plant in freely draining soil with the root flare at the surface. Avoid prolonged winter saturation and keep mulch off the trunk. This species is used in coastal landscapes, but new transplants still need careful watering and shelter from severe exposure. Container roots require additional winter protection.

FEEDING

Feed according to a soil test and plant vigor rather than a strong annual routine. Poor drainage, drought, or an unsuitable site cannot be corrected with extra nitrogen. Follow the label for any recommended application and keep fertilizer away from the trunk and dry, stressed roots.

SEASONAL CARE

Preserve the cultivar's natural framework and remove damaged branches selectively. If size control is needed, lightly shorten soft new spring candles before needles fully expand. Avoid cutting into bare old wood, which may not refill. Do not top the plant or apply intensive bonsai pruning to a landscape specimen.

HELPFUL TIPS

The conspicuous pale terminal buds are characteristic. Do not use aggressive bonsai decandling routines on a landscape plant, especially where the growing season is short. Needles and branches differ from Japanese white pine. Check expanding shoot loss or discolored outer needles before applying fertilizer or making extensive cuts.