For the joy of gardening!
Estabrook's

SILVER MAPLE CARE

LIGHT

Silver maple grows rapidly in full sun to light shade and becomes a very large shade tree. Site well away from buildings, overhead wires, driveways, sidewalks, septic systems, and drains. Its broad crown and shallow root system require generous space; it is unsuitable for a confined planting strip.

WATER

Water slowly through the root ball and surrounding soil after planting. Check moisture regularly and water deeply when needed, keeping the roots evenly moist during establishment. Adjust for rain, soil drainage, and weather instead of following a fixed daily schedule. Newly planted trees need attention before established trees show drought stress.

SOIL & PLANTING

This species tolerates moist to wet ground and many soil types, including sites that are too wet for sugar maple. Keep the root flare at the soil surface and mulch away from the trunk. Do not bury exposed roots or pave over them. Avoid planting where surface roots will create conflicts.

FEEDING

Use a soil test to guide fertilizer and pH changes. Healthy trees may need no routine feeding. If nutrients are needed, apply a modest amount of tree fertilizer in spring at the label rate. Keep fertilizer off the trunk and avoid heavy nitrogen or late-season feeding that promotes tender growth.

SEASONAL CARE

Young trees benefit from careful structural training to develop well-spaced branches and sound attachments. Weak wood can break in storms or heavy snow, so inspect for damaged or poorly attached limbs. Have an arborist assess larger branches. Avoid topping, which creates further weak growth; make only small necessary cuts.

HELPFUL TIPS

The silvery undersides of the leaves are normal. Large surface roots and fast growth are characteristic, not problems solved by fertilizer or cutting roots. Monitor the crown after storms and keep people clear of hanging branches. This guide is for silver maple itself, not the separate red/Freeman maple group.