



BLUE HOLLY CARE

LIGHT

Blue or Meserve holly (*Ilex x meserveae*) grows in sun to partial shade. Choose a site protected from drying winter winds. Check the named cultivar's hardiness for your garden; exposed Maine sites can damage foliage even when the plant is otherwise suitable for the region.

WATER

Water new shrubs thoroughly when the root ball begins to dry. Keep checking during dry autumn weather before the ground freezes. Established plants need supplemental water during extended drought. Avoid both persistent saturation and frequent light watering that leaves the deeper root ball dry.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use moist, well-drained, slightly acidic soil. Keep the root flare at the surface and leave the trunk clear of mulch. Give plants room for their mature height and spread. A shrub placed too close to a walkway may need constant pruning of its spiny foliage.

FEEDING

Feed conservatively according to soil-test results. Yellowing can be related to soil pH, drainage, or root stress, so do not treat every pale leaf with more fertilizer. Follow the label for any recommended application and avoid stimulating tender growth late in the season.

SEASONAL CARE

Prune only as needed to remove damaged stems or maintain shape, usually in late winter before spring growth. Heavy pruning can reduce the berry display. Allow winter-damaged foliage time to show whether stems remain alive before making extensive cuts. Wear gloves when handling the spiny leaves.

HELPFUL TIPS

Female cultivars such as Blue Princess and Blue Maid need a compatible male with overlapping bloom for berries; Blue Prince is a common partner. Confirm the sex and pollinizer recommendation for Berryific or other named selections. Male plants provide pollen but no fruit. Holly berries are not edible.