



For the joy of gardening!

Estabrook's

JAPANESE MAPLE CARE

LIGHT

Japanese maples in *Acer palmatum*, *A. japonicum*, and *A. shirasawanum* generally prefer a sheltered position with morning sun or light, dappled shade. Protect fine-cut, golden, and variegated leaves from hot afternoon sun and drying wind. Some sun improves red leaf color; exposure tolerance varies by cultivar.

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

Choose fertile, moist, well-drained soil. Keep the root flare visible, with any graft above ground, and mulch lightly away from the trunk. Avoid waterlogged soil and disturbing shallow roots. Container trees need drainage holes, regular moisture checks, and winter protection for their more exposed root balls.

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

Prune sparingly, allowing upright, dwarf, and cascading selections to keep their natural habit. Remove dead or crossing shoots with small cuts; avoid routine shearing and heavy size reduction. Summer after leaf expansion is useful for light shaping. Remove shoots arising below the graft, and protect emerging foliage from late frost.

HELPFUL TIPS

Leaf scorch can result from wind, drying soil, or excessive sun; check conditions before adding fertilizer. Golden and variegated selections usually appreciate extra shade. Match mature size and cold hardiness to the cultivar. This guide excludes the separate cold-hardy Korean hybrid and woodland maple groups.