# Fast Growing Tree Selection Guide

### Horticultural Characteristics

- Good Fall Color
- Unusual/Showy Fruit
- Distinctive Bark
- Tolerates Wet Soils
- Tolerates Dry Soils

### Use in Zone

- 6
- 7
- 8

### Height/Spread

- Bald Cypress: 60-100'/40-50'
- Japanese Zelkova: 60-80'/30-40'
- Lacebark Elm: 40-60'/30-40'
- Red Maple: 40-60'/25-40'
- River Birch: 50-60'/40-50'
- Sawtooth Oak: 50-60'/30-60'
- Tulip Tree: 80-100'/30-40'
- Willow Oak: 40-60'/30-60'

### Common Name/Botanical Name

- Bald Cypress: Taxodium distichum
- Japanese Zelkova: Zelkova serrata
- Lacebark Elm: Ulmus parvifolia
- Red Maple: Acer rubrum
- River Birch: Betula nigra
- Sawtooth Oak: Quercus acutissima
- Tulip Tree: Liriodendron tulipifera
- Willow Oak: Quercus phellos

### Tolerates Dry Soils

- Bald Cypress
- Japanese Zelkova
- Lacebark Elm
- Red Maple
- River Birch
- Sawtooth Oak
- Tulip Tree
- Willow Oak

### Tolerates Wet Soils

- Bald Cypress
- Japanese Zelkova
- Lacebark Elm
- Red Maple
- River Birch
- Sawtooth Oak
- Tulip Tree
- Willow Oak

### Very Desirable

- Bald Cypress
- Japanese Zelkova
- Lacebark Elm
- Red Maple
- River Birch
- Sawtooth Oak
- Tulip Tree
- Willow Oak

### Good

- Bald Cypress
- Japanese Zelkova
- Lacebark Elm
- Red Maple
- River Birch
- Sawtooth Oak
- Tulip Tree
- Willow Oak

### Not Recommended

- Bald Cypress
- Japanese Zelkova
- Lacebark Elm
- Red Maple
- River Birch
- Sawtooth Oak
- Tulip Tree
- Willow Oak

---

*Please note: Certain species may not be suitable for specific locations due to environmental factors or pest problems.*

- Bald Cypress: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- Japanese Zelkova: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- Lacebark Elm: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- Red Maple: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- River Birch: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- Sawtooth Oak: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- Tulip Tree: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.
- Willow Oak: Tolerate wet soils but have problems with limb breakage.

---

*For the home gardener:*

- Choose a site that suits the tree's needs.
- Consider local climate and soil conditions.
- Space trees appropriately to prevent competition.
- Regularly inspect trees for signs of disease or pests.
- Prune as necessary to maintain health and structure.
Shade trees are versatile parts of our landscapes. In addition to the obvious use of a shade tree—to provide relief from the summer sun—properly placed trees can channel summer air; frame outdoor views; add substantially to the value of homes; and even affect our moods. When the homeowner selects a tree, fast growth is a primary concern. The reason is obvious: The homeowner doesn’t want to wait 15 to 20 years to enjoy the benefits. The faster the tree grows, the better. This criteria usually dominates the selection of trees for the home landscape.

Many trees are advertised as “fast growing.” Some are good selections; many others are not. What starts as satisfying—seeing rapid growth—can later become a source of regret. The following information will assist the homeowner in making informed decisions when selecting fast growing trees.

Site Analysis
Every tree species has environmental conditions for optimum growth and every planting site has an environment to offer. The more closely the site meets the plant’s requirements, the less likely future problems. Your county Extension office can assist you with your soil analysis and provide additional information.

Placement
Fast growing trees can be divided into two categories: long-lived, to be used as permanent shade trees; and fairly short-lived, to be used only as temporary shade trees. For both categories, select locations with care so permanent trees won’t outgrow their locations and temporary trees won’t interfere with slower growing, more permanent trees.

Concentrate shade trees on the western and southern sides of the building or area where additional shading is desired. However, do not neglect the southeastern exposure. During midsummer it can get hot early in the day, so provide some shade on this side of buildings, especially residences.

Culture
Thorough soil preparation enhances good plant growth. A large planting hole several times the size of the root ball and with well-worked backfill soil will produce a greater margin of success. If the soil is sandy, add organic materials such as soil conditioner or compost. Especually in poorly drained soils, add organic materials such as ground pine bark to improve water holding capacity. Amending an entire bed with organic material can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial.

Plant Hardiness Zones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>Extremely High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Analyis
Shade trees are versatile parts of our landscapes. In addition to the obvious use of a shade tree—to provide relief from the summer sun—properly placed trees can channel summer air; frame outdoor views; add substantially to the value of homes; and even affect our moods. When the homeowner selects a tree, fast growth is a primary concern. The reason is obvious: The homeowner doesn’t want to wait 15 to 20 years to enjoy the benefits. The faster the tree grows, the better. This criteria usually dominates the selection of trees for the home landscape.

Many trees are advertised as “fast growing.” Some are good selections; many others are not. What starts as satisfying—seeing rapid growth—can later become a source of regret. The following information will assist the homeowner in making informed decisions when selecting fast growing trees.

Site Analysis
Every tree species has environmental conditions for optimum growth and every planting site has an environment to offer. The more closely the site meets the plant’s requirements, the less likely future problems. Your county Extension office can assist you with your soil analysis and provide additional information.

Placement
Fast growing trees can be divided into two categories: long-lived, to be used as permanent shade trees; and fairly short-lived, to be used only as temporary shade trees. For both categories, select locations with care so permanent trees won’t outgrow their locations and temporary trees won’t interfere with slower growing, more permanent trees.

Concentrate shade trees on the western and southern sides of the building or area where additional shading is desired. However, do not neglect the southeastern exposure. During midsummer it can get hot early in the day, so provide some shade on this side of buildings, especially residences.

Culture
Thorough soil preparation enhances good plant growth. A large planting hole several times the size of the root ball and with well-worked backfill soil will produce a greater margin of success. If the soil is sandy, add organic materials such as soil conditioner or compost. Especually in poorly drained soils, add organic materials such as ground pine bark to improve water holding capacity. Amending an entire bed with organic material can be beneficial.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.

There are several important steps in the planting procedure. Plant at the proper depth, avoid excessive packing of the fill soil, construct a water basin to hold water initially, water the tree in after planting, and mulch with 2 to 3 inches of an organic material such as ground pine bark. Amending an entire bed with organic materials can be beneficial. There is an adequate root system. Keep all types of trees moist at all times prior to planting.