

CHOOSING

Small young shrubs tend to be easier to grow and more successful than larger plants. Remember that while you may buy a small plant, it will spread and grow over the next 5-10 years.

At your garden centre or nursery you will find that most shrubs are container-grown and therefore ideal for planting throughout the year. However, some are bare rooted and only available in autumn/winter.

In all instances look for evenly distributed stems, healthy well-spaced top growth and plump healthy buds.

If a plant doesn't look healthy, ask your garden centre or nursery to check for well-developed roots that are firm and white/pale brown.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR SHRUBS

- Shrubs need very little attention once established. For the first few years, water well in dry spells and sprinkle the soil with a general fertiliser each spring.
- Some shrubs require occasional pruning. Refer to the label for information or ask your garden centre or nursery for advice.
- A layer of compost, bark, cocoa shells or even gravel (mulch) spread on the soil around the plants will hold water and nutrients and keep weeds down.



CARING FOR SHRUBS IN WINTER

- Before the first frosts, move any tender plants in containers into a greenhouse or conservatory.
- Your deciduous shrubs will lose their leaves in winter, leaving bare, woody stems. Any plants of borderline hardiness should have the base protected with a 15cm thick layer of bark chips or straw, held in place with netting or fleece and secured with pegs. Remove in spring.
- Evergreens maintain their attractive foliage throughout the year, but if weather is severe, drape a woven protective fleece over newly planted shrubs and knock off snow from branches to prevent breakage.



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Spade
 - Fork
 - Watering can
 - Secateurs
 - Bonemeal if planting in autumn or winter
 - Growmore if planting in spring and summer
 - Garden compost, well-rotted farmyard manure, planting compost or mushroom compost
 - Shrubs
- For more information:
www.rhs.org.uk/advice
www.plantforlife.info

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- Tel: **0118 930 3132** or visit www.the-hta.org.uk
- PlantforLife - visit www.plantforlife.info



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THE EASY GUIDE TO GROWING SHRUBS



Photography: Tim Sandall/*The Garden*, GPL/Christi Carter

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WHERE DO I START?

If you want to create shape and structure in your garden, shrubs are a great investment! These permanent bushes can provide foliage, fragrance, flowers and fruit – depending on the type of shrub you buy. With careful planning, you can enjoy beautiful shrubs all year round. You just need to take a moment to decide what you need.

Do you want foliage, fragrance, flowers, fruit – or a combination? What size shrubs do you want? Think about how they will grow and spread. Do you want a year-round display of shrubs that changes with the seasons?

Do you have a particular type of soil, as some shrubs are fussy about where they grow? It's easy to test your soil – ask your local garden centre or nursery for advice or see our leaflet *Managing the Soil*.

We have recommended some popular shrubs opposite for different qualities, with the Latin name first, followed by the common name, so you can locate them easily in your garden centre or nursery.

PLANTING

PREPARATION & PLANTING TIME: 30 MINS

- Shrubs can be planted at any time provided the soil is not too wet or frozen. Deciduous plants will be bare-leaved from late autumn to early spring but can still be planted.
- Before planting, stand your plant in its pot in a bowl of water so that the compost is wet through.
- Clear the area of any weeds and dig a hole twice the size of the pot. Fork over the bottom and mix in some well-rotted farmyard manure, garden or proprietary planting compost.
- Place the shrub in the hole to check it's big enough.
- Tap the plant out of its pot and tease out any congested roots.
- Place it in the hole, making sure that the top of the roots are just below soil level.
- Fill in the surrounding hole and firm down the soil with your foot.
- Sprinkle a handful of bonemeal around the plant.
- Water well and keep watering for the next few weeks.
- If you're planting in a dry spot, make a slight depression around the shrub to ensure water soaks into the soil.



AUTUMN FOLIAGE & FRUIT

Amelanchier lamarckii (snowy mespilus) – white spring flowers, very good autumn colour. 4m

Chaenomeles (Japanese quince) – white, red or orange flowers in early spring, followed by large yellow edible fruits. 1.5m

Cotinus 'Flame' – quick-growing shrub with large bronze foliage and clouds of delicate pale purple rose flowers. 2.5m

Euonymus (spindle tree) (pictured) – vivid red autumn leaves and rosy-pink berries in full sun. 3m

Pyracantha (firethorn) – masses of white flowers in spring and yellow, orange or red berries. 2.5m

Spiraea – hardy dwarf shrub with superb autumn foliage and white or pink summer flowers. 1m

Viburnum opulus 'Aureum' – yellow foliage in spring and summer, glowing red in autumn. White summer flowers and red berries. 1m



GROUND COVER

Ceanothus thyrsiflorus var. *repens* An easy-to-grow, mound-forming, evergreen shrub with powder-blue flowers in May and June. 75cm

Cotoneaster dammeri – spreading, evergreen with white flowers and bright red autumn berries. 15cm

Hebe pinguifolia 'Pagei' – yellow cup-shaped flowers in summer with an orange centre. 15–30cm

Hypericum calycinum (pictured) – large bright yellow flowers during summer, evergreen foliage. 40cm

Mahonia aquifolium – dark evergreen leaves and clusters of yellow flowers in early spring. 50cm

Sarcococca hookeriana var. *humilis* – well-behaved suckering evergreen with intensely scented small white flowers in late winter. 60cm

Vinca (periwinkle) – blue, purple or white flowers and green or variegated leaves, evergreen. 20–30cm



FLOWERS & FRAGRANCE

Buddleja (butterfly bush) – plumes of scented flowers in white, pink and purple. 1–3m

Choisya ternata (Mexican orange blossom) – white fragrant flowers in spring/summer, aromatic evergreen foliage when crushed. 1.5m

Cytisus varieties (broom) – yellow, orange or red flowers in early summer. Those of *C. battandieri* are pineapple-scented. 30cm–1.5m

Daphne mezereum – rosy plum or white very fragrant flowers in February or March. 1m

Elaeagnus angustifolia – tough evergreen with intensely perfumed flowers, small but plentiful in earliest spring. 1.8m

Philadelphus 'Belle Etoile' (mock orange) – white with very fragrant flowers in June/July. 2m

Syringa (lilac) (pictured) – pretty, sweetly scented summer flowers. 3m



CONTAINERS

Acer palmatum (Japanese maple) – fine small tree for a pot, great autumn colour and various sizes

Brugmansia (angel's trumpets) (pictured) – magnificent display of trumpet-shaped flowers. Give a cool, dry indoor spot in winter. 2m

Choisya 'Aztec Pearl' – showy white, orange scented flowers on an evergreen shrub. 1m

Cordylone – excellent focal points in a tub in a sheltered site. 1.5m

Cornus (dogwood) – a range of distinctive stem colours in winter including red, black and yellow, and feathery foliage in summer. 1m

Hydrangea macrophylla varieties (pictured front cover) – large heads of white or pink flowers or blue, depending on soil type, in late summer. 1.5m

Sarcococca – evergreen shrub with wonderfully scented flowers in late winter/early spring. 1m

