

# GARDENING IN SHADE



When gardening in shade it is wise to shift the focus away from riots of colour to cool oases filled with relaxing shades of green. Little dashes of subtle colour throughout (perhaps in containers) are all that's needed to complete the picture.

## DEGREES OF SHADE

It is helpful to know the type of shade you are dealing with when choosing plants for the shade garden.

### 1. LIGHT SHADE

No direct sun but the space is open to the sky. e.g. Near north facing building walls.

### 2. PARTIAL SHADE

Six hours of direct morning sun & no sunlight in the afternoon. e.g. East facing aspects.

### 3. DAPPLED SHADE

Six to eight hours of sunlight filtered through the branches and leaves of tall trees.

### 4. SHADE

No direct sun.

## MODIFYING SHADE

You can increase light in shady places by utilizing some of all of these suggestions:

- Paint walls or fences white or a pale colour to reflect light back into shady areas.
- Careful removal of lower branches of tall trees will allow more light to come through.
- Learn to rely on foliage for colour; white, cream or yellow variegation brightens shady corners.
- Highlight pathways with light coloured paving or walkway materials.
- Use garden ornaments as focal points with plantings around them.
- Mirrors placed in strategic locations can reflect light.

## SHADE GARDEN SOIL

Most shade plants appreciate a moist soil rich with organic matter. Incorporate Sea Soil, Soil Energizer, compost or leaf mould to shade plantings.

## PLANTS FOR SHADE GARDENS

The plants listed below either prefer shade or are adaptable to shady situations depending on the degree of shade. Some experimentation may be necessary.

### 1. TREES

form the middle to upper layer of the shade garden.

A bold framework of bare trunk & branches gives the shade garden its 'bones'. Vine Maple, Golden Fullmoon Maple, Japanese Laceleaf Maple, Dogwoods, Stewartia, Forest Pansy Redbud.

### 2. SHRUBS

a) These shrubs actually prefer shade. Aucuba, Fatsia, Leucothoe, Sarcococca, Skimmia.

b) Many others perform beautifully in light in partial shade. Evergreen & Deciduous: Azaleas, Boxwood, Camellia, Choisya, Winter Daphne, Shubby Dogwood, Euonymus, Hardy Fuchsia, Hydrangeas, Kerria, English Laurel, Mahonia, Nandina, Pieris, Rhododendron, Salal, Sambucus, David's Viburnum, Yews and others.

### 3. VINES

clamber up trees, fences and walls or cover trellises, gazebos, obelisk and arbors. Akebia, Clematis varieties, Climbing Hydrangea, Parthenocissus varieties, Schizophragma.

### 4. ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

provide texture and flow. Carex 'Evergold', Carex 'Ice Dance', Carex 'Bowles Golden', Hachonechloa varieties, Northern Sea Oats.

5. **GROUNDCOVERS** carpet the garden 'floor' or help to stabilize shady slopes.  
Ajuga, Asarum, Baby's Tears, Bergenia, Bunchberry, Corsican Mint, Epimedium, Euonymus, Ferns, Galium, Gaultheria, Lamium, Leptinella, Lily-of-the-Valley, Liriope, Mahonia, Pachysandra, Vinca, Wood Sorrel.
6. **PERENNIALS** supply the spots of colour so desired in the shade garden.  
Aconitum, Aquilegia, Astilbe, Bergenia, Corydalis, Dicentra, Ferns, Geranium varieties, Helleborus, Hostas, Ligularia, Phlox stolonifera, Polemonium, Polygonatum, Pulmonaria, Rodgersia, Saxifraga, Tiarella, Tricyrtis, Trillium, Viola labradorica, Heuchera, Heucherella and others.
7. **ANNUALS** bright pops of summer colour. Browallia, Coleus, Fuchsia, Impatiens, Mimulus, Begonias.

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