

# Bonsai Tree

*Trimming, Sculpting and Pruning*





# **BONSAI TREES: GROWING, TRIMMING, SCULPTING AND PRUNING**

## **PART 6**

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# TO GROW OR NOT TO GROW

You can start your bonsai from seed, but be warned, it can take awhile to see your results. Unless you're starting your bonsai hobby at age 4, being able to see the fruits of your labor will probably not come to reality. While it may be nice to be able to have complete control over your bonsai from the beginning, we have to advise against it.

Seeds take a relatively long time to germinate and become a proper plant to use for bonsai - with preferably a 1/2-1" (1-2cm) diameter trunk (unless you want to do mini-bonsai which are about 4" high and a totally different practice). Life's too short to sit, watch and wait for a tree to grow.

Trees used in bonsai aren't special in any way. They are exactly the same as the trees you see all around you every day. So, essentially, don't plant your bonsai from seed. Get some more immediate satisfaction by purchasing a young sapling from a nursery or garden center. In doing so, you'll be able to cultivate not only the tree, but your skills as a bonsai artist as well!

Bonsai are ordinary trees or plants, not special hybrid dwarfs. Small leafed varieties are most suitable, but essentially any plant can be used, regardless of the size it grows to in the wild.

Go to your local nursery or garden store and see if you can find some low-priced plants that have relatively thick trunks and good bonsai potential that you can turn into bonsai through training (pruning, wiring etc.) You can even look around your garden and see if you have any potential bonsai plants there that you could use.

A bought Bonsai is not a bad Bonsai. Only the quality of the tree determines what a good and talented plant is. Not its origin.

But the experiences and story of a collected tree will add mental and historical value to a Bonsai that makes it increase its value as a piece of art.

In general, select a specimen, that will be tolerant of the stress of being cut, wired, and replanted. Specimens like Cotoneasters, Lonicera and Juniperus, are advisable starters for Shohin growing. They can be found on nurseries in sizes suitable for beginners work.

Make sure that you buy a tree that grows well in your "neck of the woods". You must be sure that whatever tree you choose will thrive well where you live. Be sure that the plants you consider meet the requirements for good bonsai.

Let's look at some prime species for bonsai tree growing.