American Beech

Fagus grandifolia



American Beech
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 70 feet

Spread: 50 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Description:

A natural beauty, one of the most stately large shade trees you can have in your yard; rather particular about growing conditions, needs rich soil and adequate moisture, best in a setting that mimics its natural habitat

Ornamental Features

American Beech has dark green deciduous foliage which emerges gray in spring on a tree with an oval habit of growth. The serrated pointy leaves turn an outstanding harvest gold in the fall. The smooth silver bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.



American Beech in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

American Beech is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

American Beech is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Shade

Planting & Growing

American Beech will grow to be about 70 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 50 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 5 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 120 years or more; think of this as a heritage tree for future generations!

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This species is native to parts of North America.



American Beech bark
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder