

Landscape Plants to Use in Borders and Screens

Plants used for borders and screens serve several important design functions such as blocking undesirable views, separating areas in the yard, creating vistas, and adding vertical dimension to an area, among others. In recent years, increasing attention has been devoted to the function of environmental or climate control with plant materials. Properly located border or screen plants will buffer highway noise and dust, deflect wind currents away from home, cast shade in summer for cooling, and allow sun penetration in winter for heating a structure.

Once the functional aspects have been determined, select plants that will be tolerant of your soil and exposure conditions. Then select those which offer aesthetic value during several seasons of the year.

Always properly prepare the planting site, space plants at least one half their mature size apart, water during dry periods and control weeds, insects, and diseases as needed.

Space limitations preclude lengthy lists, however, the plants listed below represent some of the major plant groups that can be used for borders, screens, hedges, and wind-break purposes.

BORDERS AND SCREENS

Shrubs - Deciduous species

Aronia
Berberis (Barberry)
Ligustrum (Privet)
Clethra
Lonicera (Honeysuckle)
Cornus (Dogwood)
Philadelphus (Mockorange)
Rhamnus frangula (Buckthorn)
Cotoneaster divaricata (Spreading Cotoneaster)
Euonymus alatus (Burning Bush)
Rosa species (Rose)
Pyracantha coccinea (Firethorn)
Ribes (Currant)
Spirea
Hibiscus syriacus (Shrub Althea)
Viburnum
Hydrangea

Shrubs - Evergreen

Berberis (Barberry)
Taxus (Yew)
Buxus (Boxwood)
Chamaecyparis
Thuja (Arborvitae)
Ilex (Holly)
Rhododendron P.J.M.
Juniper

Trees - Deciduous species

Acer (Maple)
Fraxinus (Ash)
Betula (Birch)
Morus alba (White Mulberry)
Carpinus betulus (European Hornbeam)
Quercus (Oak)
Crataegus (Hawthorn)
Salix (Willow)
Elaeagnus angustifolia (Russian Olive)
Tilia cordata (Littleleaf Linden)
Fagus (Beech)
Gleditsia triacanthos cultivars (Honeylocust)

WINDBREAKS

The most effective windbreaks are evergreens. However, since they grow slowly, fast growing deciduous plants are often planted in front of evergreens and should be removed as the evergreen matures.

Shrubs - Deciduous

Elaeagnus angustifolia (Russian Olive)
Philadelphus (Mockorange)
Kolkwitzia amabilis (Beautybush)
Syringa (Lilac)
Ligustrum (Privet)
Rhamnus frangula (Buckhorn)
Viburnum

Trees - Deciduous species

Acer (Maple)
Carpinus betulus (European Hornbeam)
Fagus (Beech)
Cornus mas (Cornelian Cherry Dogwood)
Tulip (Poplar)

Trees - Evergreen

Chamaecyparis
Ilex opaca (American Holly)
Picea (Spruce)
Thuja occidentalis cultivars (Eastern Arb)
Tsuga canadensis (Canada Hemlock)

Shrubs - Evergreen

Buxus sempervirens (Common Boxwood)
Thuja orientalis (Eastern Arborvitae)
Prunus laurocerasus (Laurel Cherry)
Thuja occidentalis (Eastern Arborvitae)
Viburnum Willowwood

Trees - Evergreen

Juniper Pinus (Pine)
Pseudotsuga menziesii (Douglas Fir)
Picea (Spruce)
Thuja (Arborvitae)

THORNY BARRIERS

Trees and shrubs with thorny stems are useful as more permanent barrier plants.

Trees

Crataegus (Hawthorn)
Quercus (Oak)
Gleditsia triacanthos (Honeylocust)
Tilia (Linden)
Ulmus (Elm)
Amelanchier

Shrubs

Rosa (Shrub Roses)
Berberis (Barberry)
Chaenomeles (Flowering Quince)
Acanthopanax
Eleagnus (Autumn Olive)
Pyracantha (Firethorn)

Source: OSU Ext. Elton M. Smith