Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) and their relatives offer a large group of plants that can be adapted to almost any garden style and situation. In fact, a wonderful garden could be constructed entirely around a collection of maples. Height, habit, leaf form, seasonal color and interesting bark vary widely among the numerous cultivars. This offers opportunities for interplay with other plants.

Maples flourish in humus-rich, well-drained soil. While they are reasonably drought tolerant once established, supplemental water during summer dry spells results in stronger growth and a generally healthier tree. Fertilize in early spring with a balanced fertilizer such as Dr. Earth All Purpose fertilizer. Maples can be pruned judiciously, with an eye to enhancing a plant’s overall shape and natural beauty. If possible, avoid gardening underneath a Japanese maple – damage to the roots can be an entry point for a maple’s greatest foe – the soil-borne fungus called verticillium wilt.

In general, Japanese maples are medium-growing, vase-like trees that grow to 15 to 20 feet tall and 12 to 15 feet wide in about ten years. Over time, they can get much larger. They are adaptable to sun or part shade and are generally hardy to -10°F. Fall color is usually striking and can be shades of yellow, orange or red.

Many varieties with pale or variegated leaves need afternoon shade or filtered light to keep the leaves from burning. Most Japanese maples do well in containers; however, bear in mind that plants in containers are more vulnerable than plants in the ground to temperature extremes and drought.

Many Japanese maples offer spectacular fall foliage color and/or colored bark through the winter. In early fall, Sky Nursery gets in fresh stock of varieties noted for their fall and winter interest. Below is a list of varieties we plan to offer this fall. As always, please call or email to check availability and prices.

The following list gives more information on specific cultivars. We first list our *Acer palmatum* cultivars by approximate size: laceleaf varieties, dwarf varieties, small trees, and medium trees. After that we list cultivars of *Acer japonicum* and *A. shirasawanum*. 
ACER PALMATUM DISSECTUM (LACELEAF) VARIETIES

‘Baby Lace’ Height 2-4 feet; width 2-4 feet. Prefers partial shade. Hardy to -20°F. Foliage opens a beautiful mix of pink, red, and green, turning solid light green in the summer. Excellent yellow, orange, and red fall color.

‘Baldsmith’ Height 5-6 feet; width 5-8 feet. Sun or part shade. Apricot-salmon new growth turns to green flushed with pink. Very beautiful red-orange fall color.

‘Crimson Queen’ Height 3-6 feet; width 5-6 feet. Sun or part shade. Dark red leaves all summer—bright scarlet in fall. Most popular laceleaf variety.

‘Inaba shidare’ Height 4-6 feet; width 5-8 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to 0°F. One of the darkest purple-red laceleafs—holds color all summer. Brilliant crimson in fall.

‘Orangeola’ Height 3-5 feet; width 4-6 feet. Sun or part shade. Red color fades a bit in summer, and then turns brilliant orange-red in fall.

‘Red Dragon’ Height and width 3-4 feet. Sun or part shade. Deepest red laceleaf maple—hold color well. Scarlet fall color.

‘Seiryu’ One of the few laceleaf Japanese maples with an upright habit. Slow-growing, vase-shaped tree. Height 12-15 feet; width 6-10 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to -10°F. Green foliage has a delicate and graceful effect. Light-gold fall color. Does well in containers.

‘Tamukeymama’ (BOLDRED LACELEAF MAPLE) Height and width 5-6 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to 0°F. Very dark purple-red foliage holds color well. Bright scarlet fall color.

‘Viridis’ (GREEN LACELEAF MAPLE) Height 2-6 feet; width 3-6 feet. Sun or part shade. Intense light green color all summer. Yellow and orange in fall.

‘Waterfall’ Height 6-8 feet; width 8-10 feet. Sun or part shade. Green foliage, darker than ‘Viridis.’ Gold streaked with red-orange in fall.
ACER PALMATUM SHRUBBY & DWARF VARIETIES (UNDER 8 FEET)

‘Aka shigitatsu sawa’ Slow-growing, vaselike tree. Height 6-8 feet; width 4-6 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to -10°F. New leaves are cream with red and green veining, turning darker in summer. Good fall color of red with overtones of both gold and purple. Does well in containers. Protect from hot sun.

‘Bihou’ Slow-growing, upright tree. Height 7-8 feet; width 3-4 feet. Sun or part shade. Tiny foliage is yellow green; bright golden-yellow fall color. Twigs and branches have vivid coral to yellow bark in winter.

‘Ilarian’ Slow-growing, upright tree. Height 7-8 feet; width 3-4 feet. Tiny leaves are green variegated with white and pink. Orange fall color.

‘Kamagata’ Slow-growing, vaselike tree. Height 3-4 feet; width 3-4 feet. Hardy to 0°F. Red-edged light green leaves turn full green in summer. Leaf edges curve slightly up. Fall color is yellow to orange with a touch of red.

‘Kiyohime’ Slow-growing, rounded shrub. Height 4-5 feet—spread 3-4 feet. Very dense and compact. Orange-tinged new growth turns rich green, then yellow-orange in fall.

‘Koto maru’ Slow-growing, dense, upright shrub. Height 4-6 feet. Tiny foliage emerges lime-green edged with red, turns deeper green in summer. Orange-red fall color.

‘Koto no ito’ Slow-growing, upright tree. Height 6-8 feet; width 4-5 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to 0°F. Narrow green leaves turn shades of yellow in fall.

‘Mikawa yatsubusa’ (MIKAWA DWARF JAPANESE MAPLE) Slow-growing, mounding tree. Height 4-5 feet; width 3-4 feet. Sun or part shade. Very dense and compact. Light green leaves overlay each other like shingles on a roof. Wonderful bonsai subject. Fall color shades of red, orange, or yellow, depending on sun.

‘Ryusen’ AKA ‘Ryusei’ Height 4-6 feet, depending on staking; width 3-4 feet. Unique, extremely cascading form. Can be trained to a desired height, or allowed to weep over a wall or deck, where it can trail up to 20 feet. Likes sun. Bright green foliage in summer. Spectacular fall color—bright red over golden-orange base.

‘Sharp’s Pygmy’ Slow-growing, rounded tree. Height 2-3 feet; width 2-3 feet. Small leaves are green with purple overtones. Excellent bonsai specimen. Orange to red fall color.

‘Shin deshojo’ Slow-growing, spreading tree. Height 4-6 feet; width 4-6 feet. Flaming scarlet new foliage turns reddish green in summer. Red and orange fall color. Good bonsai subject.

‘Shishigashira’ Immediately recognizable due to its tight habit and crinkled foliage. Slow-growing, upright tree. Height 4-6 feet; width 2-3 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to 0°F. Bright green leaves turn orange in fall. Among the very last Japanese maples to change colors and drop its leaves. Good patio tree or bonsai.
ACER PALMATUM SMALL VARIETIES (8-15 FEET)

‘Atrolineare’ (WILLOWLEAF JAPANESE MAPLE) Slow-growing, vase-like tree. Height 10-12 feet; width 8-10 feet. Narrow leaves are dark, black-red, turning bronze later. Fall color is bright red. Outstanding specimen tree.

‘Bonfire’ Slow-growing, upright tree. Height 10-12 feet; width 6-7 feet. Hardy to -10°F. Crimson new growth turning green in summer. Showy flame-red fall color.

‘Emperor I’ (AKA ‘Red Emperor’) Medium-growing, open, airy tree. Height 12-15 feet; width 8-12 feet. Likes sun to part shade. Hardy to -20°F. Similar to ‘Bloodgood’ but holds its red foliage color better into late summer. Crimson in fall.

‘Fireglow’ Slow-growing, vase-like tree. Height 12-15 feet; width 10-12 feet. Sun or part shade. Scarlet new foliage turns to dark wine-red for the summer; leaves hold color well. Crimson and red fall color.

‘Katsura’ Slow-growing, rounded tree. Height and width 10 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to 0°F. Fantastic soft yellow and orange new growth turns green in summer, yellow and orange edged red in fall. Does well in containers.

‘Kurui jishi’ Slow-growing upright tree. Height 8-10 feet; width 4-6 feet. Hardy to 0°F. Deep green star-shaped leaves turn yellow in fall. Edges of leaves curl upwards.

‘Orange Dream’ Vigorous-growing, upright tree. Height 12-15 feet—spread 8-10 feet. Sun or part shade. Bright orange new growth turns lemon-yellow tipped with red. Slowly turns to yellow green in summer, then bright yellow-gold in fall.


‘Tobiosho’ (ISELI’S RED JAPANESE MAPLE) Medium growing upright tree. Height 12-15 feet—width 6-8 feet. Dense foliage canopy—spectacular fall display. Green foliage turns gold, orange, and red in turn, ending vivid scarlet. Fall color best when tree is grown in full sun.

‘Tsukushigata’ Medium-growing rounded tree. Height 10-12 feet; width 6-8 feet. Likes sun. Leaves emerge shining purple, becoming dull purple in summer and crimson in fall. Does well in containers. Leaves turn green in shade.

‘Twombly’s Red Sentinel’ Medium-growing columnar tree. Height 8-14 feet—spread 6-10 feet. Sun or part shade. Hardy to 0°F. Deep red leaves; bright red fall color.

‘Ukigumo’ (FLOATING CLOUD JAPANESE MAPLE) Slow-growing, upright tree. Height 8-12 feet; width 4-6 feet. Beautiful landscape specimen—foliage is pastel green touched with pink and white. Variegation varies from year to year, plant tends to be paler in shade. Fall color is apricot to gold. Does well in containers. Protect from hot sun to prevent sunburn.
ACER PALMATUM MEDIUM VARIETIES (15+ FEET)

‘Arakawa’ (PINE BARK or ROUGH BARK JAPANESE MAPLE)  Medium-growing upright tree. Height 15-20 feet; width 10-15 feet. Green leaves turn bright yellow-gold in fall, sometimes overlaid with scarlet. Rough bark turns corky with age.


‘Sango kaku’ (CORAL BARK JAPANESE MAPLE) Medium-growing, vase-like tree. Height 15-20 feet; width 8-12 feet. Sun or part shade (although bark color is better in sun). Light green leaf turning gold with light red in fall. Coral bark is striking in winter (bark color fades as tree ages). Does well in containers.

OTHER JAPANESE MAPLE SPECIES


Acer shirasawanum ‘Aureum’ (GOLDEN FULL MOON MAPLE)  Medium-growing rounded tree. Height 15-20 feet; width 12-15 feet. Part shade. Yellow leaves all summer. Fall colors are orange through red, sometimes purple. Does well in containers. Protect from hot sun.

A. shirasawanum ‘Autumn Moon’  Medium-growing rounded tree. Height 8-10 feet; width 6-8 feet. Sun or part shade. Yellow leaves flush rose in the summer, turning peachy orange in fall. Protect from hot sun.