

Platanus occidentalis

(American sycamore, American Planetree)

Plant American sycamore in full sun and sites with moist, fertile soil. It does demonstrate considerable tolerance for drier and the more shallow soils associated with residential suburbs, as well as seaside gardens. This tree develops substantial surface roots so it should not be planted too closely to buildings or sidewalks, which will buckle under pressure. Another caveat to planting sycamore is its susceptibility to anthracnose. Infected trees show their symptoms in varying degrees. Usually, they leave out late, their leaves are blotched and badly infected trees tend to drop their leaves early—sometimes in early summer. This is a specatular shade tree for large, open lawns and spacious avenues. Be sure to plant it away from highly trafficked public areas. Their fruits can be annoying in more pristine neighborhoods and drop on parked cars.



Plant Image

Landscape Information

Pronunciation: PLAT-uh-nus ock-sih-den-TAY-liss

Plant Type: Tree

Origin: North America, Canada

Heat Zones: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Hardiness Zones: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Uses: Container, Shade, Street

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Fast

Tree Shape: Spreading

Canopy Symmetry: Symmetrical

Canopy Density: Dense

Canopy Texture: Coarse

Height at Maturity: Over 23

Spread at Maturity: Over 15 meters

Time to Ultimate Height: 10 to 20 Years

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Leaf Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Alternate

Leaf Venation: Palmate

Leaf Persistence: Deciduous

Leaf Type: Simple

Leaf Blade: 20 - 30

Leaf Shape: Star

Leaf Margins: Lobate, Incised

Leaf Scent: No Fragrance

Color(growing season): Green

Color(changing season): Green

Flower

Flower Showiness: False

Flower Scent: No Fragrance

Flower Color: Red

Seasons: Spring

Trunk

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Generally resists breakage

Number of Trunks: Can be trained to one trunk

Trunk Esthetic Values: Not Showy

Fruit

Fruit Type: Achene/Akene

Fruit Showiness: True

Fruit Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Fruit Colors: Brown

Seasons: Spring

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Fruit Image

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: Yes

Heat Tolerant: No

Drought Tolerant: Yes

Salt Tolerance: Moderate

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Clay, Loam

Soil Ph Requirements: Acidic, Neutral

Water Requirements: Moderate

Light Requirements: Full

Management

Toxity: No

Invasive Potential: Yes

Susceptibility to Pests and Diseases: Yes

Pruning Requirement: Little needed, to develop a strong structure

Surface Rooting: Yes

Diseases: Fungus

Edible Parts: None

Pests: Aphids, Lace bug

Plant Propagations: Seed, Cutting

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Bark Image



Other Image