



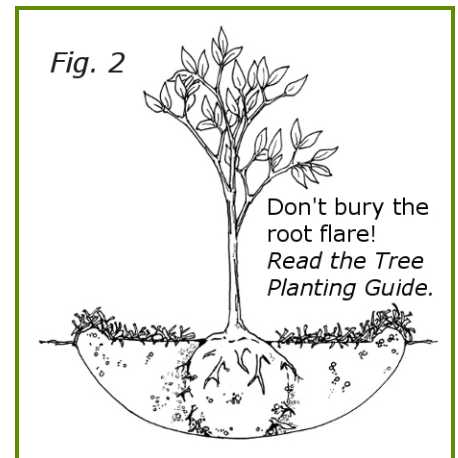
Best Trees for Denver

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That's right! We've compiled our list of favorite trees to plant in Denver neighborhoods. These species are generally tough, resilient trees that tolerate Colorado's arid environment and Denver's urban conditions. We consult with the Denver City Forester and other trusted tree experts and also base our list on our experience planting 60,000 trees in Denver over the past 50 years.

Before the List... Important Notes!

- Species diversity is critical!** Let's plant a healthy, diverse forest – one resilient against pests like the [Emerald Ash Borer](#), which threatens 1 in 6 trees in Denver. As a beloved past programs staffer once joked “What happens if the ‘Scarlet Honeylocust Driller’ comes to Denver and half of our city trees are honeylocusts?”
- Right Tree, Right Place.** A wisely placed tree is an asset that grows over time. A poorly sited tree can become a hazard.
 - Use our [Street Tree and Yard Tree Spacing Guidelines](#) to determine where to plant your tree (scroll to 'Planning for Your Tree' section). Be sure to get a [permit for your street tree](#). (We take care of this for you when you plant thru our [Denver Digs Trees program](#).)
 - Choose a species appropriate for your site. Read each species description and consider which trees make the most sense for your site, taking into account space constraints, existing soil and light conditions, water availability, and other context and conditions.
 - Use our [Tree Planting Guide](#) to get your tree off to a strong start and avoid the major pitfalls that can take decades off your tree's life.
 - Use our [Tree Care Guide](#) to support your tree's health and survival.



Additional Notes:

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And Now... THE LIST!

We've organized our favorite tree species into **Large Shade Trees**, **Medium Shade Trees**, and **Small Ornamental Trees**. All the listed species are deciduous trees (trees that drop their leaves for the winter). No evergreens are included here. Check back later for a list of our favorite Fruit Trees!

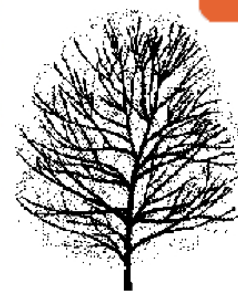
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LARGE SHADE TREES

American Sycamore

Plantanus occidentalis

Nearly identical to the majestic London Planetree, this impressive and fast-growing tree can reach 70 feet tall, with a round crown spreading 50-60 feet. The adaptable and disease-resistant planetree features large, maple-like leaves and beautiful patchy bark with colors of creamy white to olive green. It sets 1-inch wide, round, fuzzy-looking fruits in the fall.



Bur Oak

Quercus marcoparpa

This long-lived, impressive oak can reach heights of 60-70 feet with a full canopy of equal width. This fine specimen tree has lustrous green leaves, furrowed dark grey bark, and acorns with fringed caps. The Bur Oak grows well in various soil types and tolerates city heat, pollutants, and drought once established. Its moderate growth rate can be increased with more frequent watering.



Catalpa

Catalpa speciosa

This large, whimsical tree has an irregular, rounded crown with spreading branches and huge, heart-shaped leaves. Drought tolerant and a fast grower, the Catalpa reaches heights over 60 feet with a roughly 30-foot spread. In June, clusters of white, orchid-like flowers make a dramatic show, followed by long bean-like seed pods.

English Oak

Quercus robur

The English Oak grows to 50-60 feet in our area and is very



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spreading branches. English Oak will tolerate a wide range of soil pHs, including clay, but prefer well-drained soil and full sun. Denver Water lists English Oak as moderate to low in water demand. The leaves are dark green in the summer, turn brown in the fall and may hang on into winter. The acorns are quite small. English Oak covered much of England just 50 years ago. They provided the wood of King Arthur's table (allegedly), of great cathedrals and of three-decker English warships said to require up to 3,500 trees.

London Planetree

Platanus x acerifolia

Nearly identical to the majestic American Sycamore, this impressive and fast-growing tree can reach 70 feet tall, with a round crown spreading 50-60 feet. The adaptable and disease-resistant planetree features large, maple-like leaves and beautiful patchy bark with colors of creamy white to olive green.

It sets 1-inch wide, round, fuzzy-looking fruits in the fall. The Park People often sources 'Bloodgood' and 'Exclamation' varieties for our *Denver Digs Trees* program.

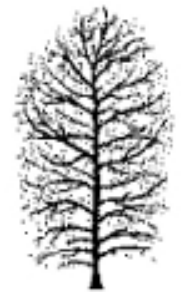


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Tulip Tree

Liriodendron tulipifera

A stately tree that gets its name from the pale yellow, tulip-shaped flowers that bloom in the spring. This large tree can grow up to 90 feet tall and 45 feet wide. Its large bright green, tulip-shaped leaves turn a golden-yellow or clear-yellow color in autumn. The Tulip Poplar prefers fertile, moist soil and needs plenty of room to develop.



Western Hackberry

Celtis occidentalis

A Colorado native, the drought- and urban-tolerant Common Hackberry is one of our most adaptable and hardy trees. It grows relatively rapidly to a height of 50-70 feet with a variable, often upright oval, shape. In early fall, its small fleshy fruit changes to dark red or black, attracting Cedar Waxwings and other birds throughout winter. Plant this tree to provide urban wildlife with food and shelter!



MEDIUM SHADE TREES

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Hophornbeam also has ornamentally attractive bark and trunk features inherited from its close relatives in the birch family: its gray-brown bark forms vertical strips that exfoliate at the ends, while the trunk and main branches develop a muscle-like appearance.

American Sentry Linden*

Tilia americana 'American Sentry'

Grows 40+ feet with an upright form spreading 20-30 feet. Produces rich white flowers in the summer that emit a pleasant, spicy fragrance. Yellow fall color. Lindens perform best when planted in irrigated blue grass or with organic mulch. Use tree wrap to protect this tree's thin, young bark from winter sunscald. Moderate growth rate.



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*All lindens are susceptible to damage from the Japanese Beetle. We recommend planting it in areas with low cover by lawn grass as this is where the beetles lay their eggs and mature.

American Yellowwood

Cladrastis kentuckea

This hardy tree has a broad rounded crown of delicate branches reaching 25-30' in height in the Denver area. It tolerates high pH as well as acid soils and likes full sun. It's fragrant pendulous creamy white spring flowers are similar to Wisteria and in full flower appears to be dripping white rain. The flowers are followed with a small papery pod. The leaves open yellowish green, turning bright green in the summer striking a sharp contrast to the darker green of most ashes, maples and oaks. The leaves turn yellow to golden yellow in the fall. It is called yellowwood because the heartwood is yellow. It has a very smooth, thin light grey bark which is subject to winter sunscald and sunburn so it should be planted in the winter shade of other trees or buildings. Prune only in summer.

Caddo Sugar Maple

Acer saccharum 'Caddo'

[Description to come.]

Chinkapin Oak

Quercus muehlenbergi

[Description to come.]

Corinthian Linden

Tilia cordata 'Corzam'

The 'Corithian' Linden is an elegant, compact tree that takes on a pyramidal form as it matures. This



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Aesculus x carnea 'Fort McNair'

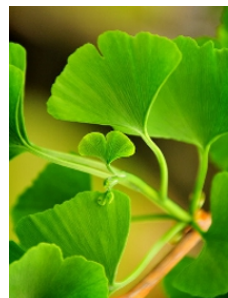
This horsechestnut grows 30-40 feet tall with a wide, rounded crown. It features dark green, palmately compound leaves with 5 leaflets each. In late spring, erect 5-8 inch clusters of pink flowers with yellow throats emerge. The 1-1.5 inch long, round fruit has a light brown husk and glossy brown seed. The Fort McNair variety boasts improved resistance to leaf diseases.



Ginkgo

Ginkgo biloba

Best known for its unique bright green, fan-shaped leaves, the ginkgo develops from a narrow shape with little branching in youth to a pyramidal, symmetrical broad crown 50 feet tall and 30 feet wide. The Autumn Gold cultivar is seedless and features beautiful deep yellow fall color. Often referred to as a living fossil because of its long history on this planet, the ginkgo is pest-free and heat and pollution tolerant once established.



Glenleven Littleleaf Linden

Tilia cordata 'Glenleven'

Reaching 50 feet tall by 35 feet wide, the elegant Littleleaf Linden features upright, compact branching, fragrant clusters of cream-colored flowers, and heart-shaped leaves. Its formal, pyramidal shape becomes oval to gum-drop shaped as the tree matures.

Greenspire Littleleaf Linden

Tilia cordata 'Greenspire'

Neat, trim looking pear shaped tree canopy with heart-shaped glossy leaves. Cinnamon colored bark. Fragrant pale yellow flowers in early summer. Yellow autumn leaves. Reaches a height of 33 to 50 feet, spread of 30 feet. Good accent tree.

Maintains a single leader with nice branching habit similar to all littleleaf lindens. Often used as a street tree. The cordata is a native of Europe and the Greenspire is a fairly new variety.



Hardy Rubber Tree

Eucommia ulmoides

A relatively new species for Denver's urban forest, the Hardy Rubber Tree - widely recognized for its pest-free foliage, drought hardiness, and extreme cold tolerance - is expected to thrive in our climate. It

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features lustrous dark green leaves that lighten to a paler green before dropping in the fall. Its dense



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Imperial Honeylocust

Gleditsia triancanthos inermis

The drought tolerant and urban hardy Imperial Honeylocust is thornless, and produces few pods. Growing 35 feet tall and wide, this compact, formal honeylocust features a rounded crown and wide branch angles that resist storm damage and create a horizontal spreading branch pattern. Its small green leaflets cast a light shade and turn yellow in autumn.



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Japanese Pagodatree

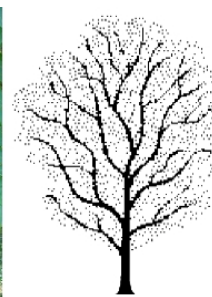
Styphnolobium japonicum

The Japanese Pagodatree reaches 40-50 feet tall with an equal spread and rounded shape. Its small leaflets cast a dappled shade, allowing grass to grow beneath. In August, showy clusters of pale yellow to creamy white pea-like flowers cover its crown. These flowers are followed by decorative drooping seed pods that look like strings of beads. The fast growing pagodatree is known to be tolerant of tough urban conditions, including heat, pollution, and drought.

Kentucky Coffeetree

Gymnocladus dioicus

While diminutive in its first years, this tree is full of visual interest. The Kentucky Coffee Tree is light, graceful, and airy, transforming into a picturesque craggy tree in winter. Its double compound leaves emerge with a pink to purplish tinge, gradually changing to rich bluish green, and then yellow in fall. This hardy and resilient tree can reach 50 feet tall and 35 feet wide, developing an oval to vase-shaped form.



Mongolian Linden

Tilia mongolica

[Description to come.]

Norwegian Sunset Maple

Acer truncatum x platanoides 'Norwegian Sunset'

This mid-sized maple has an upright oval shape with good branching and a uniform canopy. It reaches 35 feet tall and 25 feet wide, and its glossy dark green leaves turn yellow-orange to red in the autumn.

Ohio Buckeye

Aesculus glabra

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Ulmus wilsoniana 'Patriot'

A hybrid of the Urban and Prospector Elms, the hardy Patriot Elm is resistant to pests and Dutch elm disease. It features an upsweeping crown that develops into a lovely vase shape, similar to the beloved American Elm. This vigorous grower matures to 50 feet with a 40-foot spread and features dark green leaves that turn yellow in the autumn.

Prospector Elm

Ulmus wilsoniana 'Prospector'

The Prospector Elm offers the American Elm's lovely vase shape while also offering resistance to pests and Dutch elm disease.

This vigorous grower matures to 50 feet with a 25-foot spread and has leaves that emerge orange-red, mature to green, and have yellow fall color. This tree prefers sunny locations and is shade intolerant.



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Redmond Linden

Tilia americana 'Redmond'

This linden has a uniform, tightly pyramidal form and reaches roughly 55 feet in height and 25 feet in width at maturity. Its large heart-shaped leaves are glossy green in the summer and turn light yellow or green in the fall. Summertime yields drooping clusters of fragrant, creamy yellow flowers. Lindens perform best when planted in irrigated blue grass or with organic mulch. Use tree wrap to protect this tree's thin, young bark from winter sunscald.

Ruby Red Horsechestnut

Aesculus x carnea 'Ruby Red'

Medium sized tree grows at a medium rate to 30-35 feet high and almost as wide with an rounded form. Its palmate compound leaves have 7 leaflets that start light green turning dark green in the summer to brown-yellow in the fall. Its large showy rose red flowers are 5-12 inches long appearing in May or June. It will tolerate alkaline soils and prefers full sun or light shade. It prefers moist, well-drained soils and is less drought tolerant than some varieties. The 2-2 ¼ inch nuts mature in September and October and are light brown and spiny with one to three shiny dark brown seeds inside.

Skyline Honeylocust

Gleditsia triacanthos inermis

This popular honeylocust has a strong, straight trunk, upright spreading branches, and is broadly pyramidal. It is thornless and podless and prized for its hardiness in urban settings and drought. Growing 45 feet high and wide, the honeylocust's small leaflets cast a light shade and turn a golden yellow in autumn.



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yellow in autumn.



Shingle Oak

Quercus imbricaria

[Description to come.]

State Street Maple

Acer miyabei 'Morton'

The State Street Maple reaches 50 feet tall and 30 feet wide with an upright oval shape. It features large, glossy dark green leaves, corky bark in youth, and yellow fall color. This maple also has excellent drought and cold tolerance. Relatively shade tolerant.

Sugar Hackberry

Celtis laevigata

[Description to come]

Sycamore Maple

Acer pseudoplatanus

This large deciduous tree is normally seen at 40 to 60 feet in height although it is capable of reaching over 100 feet in height. The spreading branches form an oval or rounded canopy and the dark green, three to seven-inch-diameter, lobed leaves do not ordinarily become showy in the fall, changing only to a muted yellow before dropping, but this will vary. The gray to reddish-brown, scaly bark flakes off in small scales to reveal the showy, orange, inner bark. The green, springtime flowers appear in three to six-inch-long hanging panicles among the leaves in late spring and are followed by one to two-inch-long, winged seeds. Moderate growth rate.

Swamp White Oak

Quercus bicolor

Once established, this rugged, hardy oak has excellent drought tolerance. Its broad, rounded crown reaches heights of 50 feet with a similar spread. The Swamp White Oak's leaves are a lustrous dark green on top with a velvety silver underside, lending this tree a dramatic visual effect in breezes. In fall, the leaves usually turn yellow, but sometimes reddish bronze, and usually do not hold on into winter.



Texas Red Oak

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Quercus buckleyi

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sites. Reaching 50-60 feet tall and 40-50 feet wide, this vigorous grower starts with an upright oval form that develops softly arching branches.



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Turkish Filbert

Corylus colurna

A popular street tree in Europe, the Turkish Filbert has strong, broad pyramidal form and clean foliage. Once established, this hardy tree is tolerant of heat, cold, drought, and pollution. It grows to 45 feet with a 20-foot spread and has handsome dark green summer leaves, sometimes turning yellow to purple in the fall.

Yellow Buckeye

Aesculus flava/octandra

[Description to come.]

SMALL ORNAMENTAL TREES

Amur Maackia

Maackia amurensis

[Description to come.]

Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry

Amelanchier x grandiflora 'Autumn Brilliance'

The Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry features a spreading, vase shaped growth habit, maturing at 15-25 feet tall with a similar spread. It has spectacular white flowers, edible fruit that attracts birds, purplish young leaves, and brilliant red fall color. Shade intolerant.



Bigtooth Maple

Acer grandidentatum

This hardy Rocky Mountain native grows to 20-25 feet tall with a similar spread. Its leaves feature the distinctive maple shape with 3-5 lobes and can turn hues of yellow, orange-red, and red in the fall. Once established, the Bigtooth Maple is drought tolerant and has no pest or disease issues.

Cole's Select Serviceberry

Amelanchier x grandiflora 'Cole's Select'



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This pest-resistant, ornamental tree reaches 20-25 feet tall and 15-20 feet wide. It has a rounded habit and features attractive glossy, dark green leaves that occasionally turn purple-red in the fall. In early spring, rounded clusters of small yellow flowers put on a showy display and are followed by edible olive-shaped fruits, which are often consumed quickly by birds.

Eastern Red Bud

Cercis canadensis

A beautiful and popular accent tree, The Eastern Redbud's purple-pink flowers appear all over the tree's branches and trunk in early spring. Surprisingly hardy, the redbud grows to 25 feet with a 20-foot spread, is somewhat shade tolerant, and has a yellow fall color.



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Flowering Pear - Chanticleer, Cleveland Select

Pyrus calleryana - 'Chanticleer', 'Cleveland Select'

Maturing to 30 feet tall and 15 feet wide, this pyramidal pear tree's compact form fits nicely into narrow spaces. It has profuse white flowers in the spring and glossy green foliage that turns reddish purple in the fall. The Cleveland Select also has good fireblight resistance, is less susceptible to early freezes than other pear varieties, and features fruit only a ½-inch wide.

Hot Wings Tatarian Maple

Acer tataricum 'Gar Ann'

This species grows to 20 feet tall with a similar width. The 'Hot Wings' variety has strong branching structure, improving its endurance in storms. It features scarlet red winged samaras (fruit) and brilliant red-orange fall foliage. This particular tree stands out from all the other Tatarian maples for six weeks every summer with its breath-taking scarlet red samaras (helicopters) contrasting with the rich green foliage giving it an appearance of being in bloom. In the spring, clusters of yellow-white flowers cover the tree after the leaves appear. Fall leaf color transforms from orange-red on the outside of the tree to yellow in the middle.



Japanese Tree Lilac

Syringa reticulata

This urban tolerant, cold hardy tree is popular for its large upright clusters of fragrant, creamy white flowers. The tree lilac's shape is oval or pyramidal when young but rounds out as it grows to 20-25 feet tall with a 15-foot spread.

Peking Tree



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The Peking Tree Crabapple is known for its strong disease

resistance and its intense deep pink flowers that emerge in spring. Flowers are followed by a glossy dark red 1/2 inch fruit that attracts wildlife and birds. Its leaves emerge reddish purple and mature dark green. This beautiful, upright tree reaches 15-20 feet tall with a similar spread.

Robinson Crabapple

Malus 'Robinson'

The Robinson Crabapple is known to be very disease resistant. This rapid grower reaches 25 feet tall with an upright spreading form of a similar width. Its leaves are an attractive bronze-green, and its dark pink blossoms are followed by a small (3/8") red fruit that attracts birds.



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Spring Snow Crabapple

Malus 'Spring Snow'

This dense upright oval variety of crabapple will reach a height of 20-25 feet and a width of 15 feet. It is fruitless and has large, fragrant white blossoms in the springtime. The Spring Snow's bright green summer foliage turns yellow in the fall, and it is moderately resistant to fireblight.

Three-flower maple

Acer triflorum

[Description to come.]

Waveleaf Oak

Quercus undulata

[Description to come.]

Winter King Hawthorne

Crataegus viridis 'Winter King'

Reaching 20 feet tall and 25 feet wide, this popular hawthorn has a wide vase shape. The Winter King is an attractive tree with silver-gray bark that contrasts nicely with dark green, glossy leaves. It features clusters of white flowers in late-May, golden autumn color with shades of red and purple, and spectacular fall/winter shows of persistent 1/4-inch bright red fruits that attract birds. Strong, angular lines of its branching pattern and sparse 1" thorns give it a bold appearance in the winter.



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