

Dwarf Plants

Dwarf plants are a very diverse and intriguing group. Prized for their versatility and adaptability, dwarf plants are especially well suited for use in rock gardens, container plantings, and where a small specimen is needed. There are dwarfs that can be used as groundcovers, in full sun to full shade, and for use in formal or informal plantings.

The word “dwarf” can mean many things, from having a growth rate of 1” per year or growing to only half the size as what is considered “normal” for that species. The most accepted way to classify a plant as a dwarf is based on its rate of growth. Plants that grow anywhere from 1”-6” per year, or grow to a 1’-6’ size in 10-15 years are considered dwarfs. Dwarfs are great to use in a low maintenance landscape, because they do not require the pruning and care that larger, faster growing shrubs do. Dwarfs make great foundation plants in small areas along a home or driveway, where others shrubs would spread out and cover walkways, block driveway views, etc.

There are hundreds of dwarf varieties, many of them being conifers, or needled evergreens. Broadleaf evergreens and deciduous shrubs also have varieties that are considered dwarfs. In addition to a wide range of sizes, dwarfs come in many colors, textures, and shapes. They can be tall and narrow, upright pyramidal, rounded, low-spreading, or weeping. Listed below are many of the most popular dwarf varieties.

Dwarf Conifers		Dwarf Conifers	
Botanical Name	Common Name	Botanical Name	Common Name
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> 'Kosteri'	Kosteri Cypress	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Hetz Midget'	Hetz Midget Arborvitae
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> 'Nana Hage'	Hage Hinoki Cypress	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Linesville'	Linesville Arborvitae
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> 'Nana Lutea'	Gold Hinoki Cypress	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i> 'Jeddeloh'	Jeddeloh Weeping Hemlock
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> 'Snowkist'	Snowkist Cypress		
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> 'Tsatsumi'	Twisted Hinoki Cypress	Dwarf Broadleaf Evergreens	
<i>Chamaecyparis pisifera</i> 'Cream Ball'	Cream Ball Cypress	<i>Azalea</i> 'Gumpo Pink'	Gumpo Pink Azalea
<i>Chamaecyparis thuyoides</i> 'Top Point'	Top Point Cypress	<i>Azalea</i> 'Gumpo White'	Gumpo White Azalea
<i>Cryptomeria japonica</i> 'Compressa'	Compressa Jap. Cedar	<i>Buxus</i> 'Jensen'	Jensen Boxwood
<i>Cryptomeria japonica</i> 'Yellow Twig'	Yellow Twig Jap. Cedar	<i>Euonymus</i> Jap 'Microphyllus'	Boxleaf Euonymus
<i>Juniper communis</i> 'Gold Cone'	Gold Cone Juniper	<i>Euonymus</i> Jap 'Micro Variegata'	Var. Boxleaf Euonymus
<i>Juniper horizontalis</i> 'Motherlode'	Motherlode Juniper	<i>Ilex crenata</i> 'Helleri'	Helleri Holly
<i>Juniperus squamata</i> 'Blue Star'	Blue Star Juniper		
<i>Microbiota decussata</i>	Russian Cypress	Dwarf Deciduous Shrubs	
<i>Picea abies</i> 'Little Gem'	Little Gem Spruce	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i> 'Bagatelle'	Bagatelle Barberry
<i>Picea abies</i> 'Nidiformis'	Bird's Nest Spruce	<i>Deutzia gracilis</i> 'Nikko'	Dwarf Nikko Deutzia
<i>Picea glauca</i> 'Conica'	Dwarf Alberta Spruce	<i>Lagerstroemia</i> X Chickasaw	Chickasaw Crape Myrtle
<i>Picea pungens</i> 'Glauca Nana'	Globe Blue Spruce	<i>Lagerstroemia</i> X Tightwad	Tightwad Crape Myrtle
<i>Pinus Mugo</i> 'Mops'	Mops Mugo Pine	<i>Nandina</i> 'Harbor Belle'	Harbor Belle Nandina
<i>Pinus Mugo</i> 'Slowmound'	Slowmound Mugo Pine	<i>Rhododendron</i> 'Purple Gem'	Purple Gem Rhododendron
<i>Pinus strobus</i> 'Blue Shag'	Blue Shag Pine	<i>Weigela florida</i> 'My Monet'	My Monet Weigela
<i>Taxus baccata</i> 'Repandens'	English Yew	<i>Weigela florida</i> 'Midnight Wine'	Midnight Wine Weigela