

Why Do You Even Want A Tree?

Trees can be moments of dreams come to life, often planted as a reminiscence of childhood, a memory from a vacation, a reminder of people once known. Picture a grove of slender aspen in the Rockies, a stately live oak in coastal Texas, that giant American elm in your grandparents yard. If there are trees in your landscape, you can thank the previous owner whose dream you are now enjoying.

Unfortunately, trees grown in unsuitable environments will have weak growth and short lives. Dreams dashed. So before you plant a tree, ask yourself this question:

Why do you even want a tree?

Fortunately, for every answer, there are trees that have proven themselves as outstanding stars in our Oklahoma landscapes. And the Oklahoma Proven program brings them to your attention.

Need Shade?

One of our best native oaks, the Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*) stretches 40-60' in height at a moderate growth rate of 13-24" per year and spreads an umbrella of shade 30-40' wide. Pyramidal in its youth, it matures to a broad, open crown. Acorns are not produced until the tree is 25-30 years old. In autumn, the 6" deeply lobed, shiny green leaves turn a quiet red. Best of all, Shumard tolerates all the tantrums of Oklahoma weather.



Shumard Oak

For a smaller yard, the Chinese Pistache (*Pistacia chinensis*) provides not only shade in summer, but a burst of yellow-orange-red in the fall. At a moderate growth rate of 13-24" per year, it matures at 30-35' with a spread of 20-30 feet. Awkward and gangly in its early years, it matures to a full, rounded canopy. Female trees produce red-ripening-to-blue fruit, inedible for humans but devoured by birds. Deep rooted and drought tolerant, Pistache is often used in



Chinese Pistache

Xeriscaping.

Need Evergreens?

With its lustrous, deep green coloring and dense, conical shape, Bosnian Pine (*Pinus heldreichii*) provides the traditional formality of an evergreen while being disease resistant and drought tolerant. Its strong central trunk provides sturdy support for its 40-50' height and 25-30' spread. New cones provide an unexpected pop of bluish-purple color.



Bosnian Pine

With its aromatic, soft, scale-like needles, the silvery blue Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*) provides an alternative coloring for the landscape. Growing at a moderate 13-24" per year, it can reach 40-50' in height and 15-20' in width and is drought tolerant once established. Beautiful as a specimen tree or grouped as a hedge or screen.



Arizona Cypress

Need a Smaller Patio Tree?

How about a tree that also attracts hummingbirds? Perfect for patios, the Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) reaches 15-30' tall with a 10-25' spread. Violet scented, white to pink, funnel-shaped flowers are a hummingbird favorite in early summer with blooms erupting periodically into autumn. Winter shows off the twisting branching structure. Drought tolerant, it can be used in the xeric garden. There is a good specimen on the south side of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service building by the west door.



Desert Willow



'Oklahoma' Redbud

And you can never, ever go wrong with the Oklahoma Redbud (*Cercis canadensis* var *texensis*). Discovered in the Arbuckle Mountains, 'Oklahoma' explodes with deep magenta flowers that cover the branches in spring and are followed by glossy, heart-shaped leaves. At 15-25' in height, this can be a perfect addition to any landscape.

So many trees. So many dreams. Go to this website and look at all the offerings, [Oklahoma Proven Trees](#). You'll want to plant a forest!

Then check the websites below for even more trees and a care guide to ensure the pieces of your dreams flourish.

[Deciduous Trees of Oklahoma, OCES factsheet NREM 5036](#)

[Missouri Botanical Garden-Trees for Oklahoma](#)

[Landscape Trees & Shrubs, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service](#)

[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center-Desert Willow](#)