

# Hedging Plants for Canberra Gardens

*To create a healthy and attractive living fence in your garden, read on...*

## Planting and maintenance

The most important point to remember;  
a stunning, bushy, well-shaped, healthy hedge is not a low maintenance  
one;

**YOU GET OUT OF IT WHAT YOU PUT IN!**

- **Prepare your ground thoroughly before planting.** It is very important to give your new plants a good start. Dig compost into your soil and turn the area over with gypsum if you have clay soils. See our pamphlet 'clay soils in Canberra' for more information.
- **Plant your hedging shrubs half a metre apart** to achieve a dense, bushy hedge (closer together for slow-growing plants such as English Box).
- **Trim the top and sides of the hedge regularly** (at least 3 times per year), **and from a very young age ( ideally at time of planting)**. If you allow the plants to reach the desired height before trimming, you will be left with a mass of bare branches at the bottom of your plants, and a small amount of green on the top.
- **Water and fertilise your hedge regularly**, as the plants will compete vigorously for food and water.
- **Try to trim the hedge** so that **the bottom is wider than the top**. Sunlight directed to the bottom of the plants will encourage more green foliage in these areas.

## Plant selection

### Hedging Plants under 1 metre

***Abelia grandiflora nana*** – pink flowers in summer, foliage turns bronze in autumn.

***Correa "Dusky Bells"*** – Australian plant with pink bell flowers autumn. Full sun or part shade.

***Correa glabra*** – a tough aussie plant with bright green foliage and red or green/yellow bell flowers autumn and winter. Very hardy in hot, dry spots.

**Dwarf *Callistemon* varieties** – many colours, trim after flowering.

***Hebe species*** – hardy, long-flowering shrubs. Many forms and colours available.

***Escallonia 'Pink Pixi'*** – a tough shrub with glossy foliage and pink flowers in spring/summer.



***Pittosporum* “Shorty”** – grey/green neat foliage. No flowers.

***Pittosporum* “Green Pillar”** – shiny green tidy formal hedge. No flowers.

### **Hedging Plants over 1 metre**

***Abelia grandiflora*** – stunning hedge if pruned regularly. Shiny new growth, pink flowers summer. Will form a hedge 1-1.7m tall.

***Buxus sempervirens*** – English Box. Very slow-growing hedge to 1.5m. Needs regular feeding. Good for formal gardens (but don't hold your breath!)

***Callistemon* species** – Bottlebrush. Beautiful soft new growth and colourful, bird-attracting flowers. Loves regular pruning and watering. Will grow up to 2.5m tall, depending on species.

***Various conifers*** – many conifers (such as *Cupressocyparis leylandii* Castlewellan Gold and *Cupressus torulosa*) can grow quickly, and will easily grow above head height. *Only attempt this one if you are prepared to trim very regularly, as you can damage or kill the plants if they are cut back into the old, woody stems.*

***Escallonia* species** – a beautiful hedge to 1.5m if pruned, fertilised and watered **very regularly.**

***Grevillea victoriae*** – dense grey foliage and rusty red flowers. Plant in well-drained soil with a good mulch cover. 1-1.5m tall. Fantastic for hedges.

***Grevillea iaspicula*** – Wee Jasper Spider Flower – a hardy, lime green shrub to 2m with cream/pink flowers winter. Very tough.

***Photinia* species** – most common hedge in Canberra. Will grow to 6m if unpruned. Red new growth and cream flowers late spring. Flowers can adversely affect those who suffer from hayfever.

***Pittosporum* species** – common hedge or screen in Canberra. Fine foliage, blends in with any type of garden. Can grow to a 3m hedge. Do not overwater.

***Westringia fruticosa*** – Native Rosemary. A lovely, tidy hedge when trimmed. White flowers throughout the year.

So think *beyond* the Photinia hedge! – There are many interesting plants that will make a stunning living fence, and will provide food and shelter for our local birds.

