



# TREES FOR WESTERN NEBRASKA

The following species are recommended for areas in the western half of Nebraska and/or that typically receive less than 20" of moisture per year. The size range indicated for each plant is the expected average mature height x spread for Nebraska.

## Large Deciduous Trees—typically over 40' tall

**Catalpa, Northern** - *Catalpa speciosa* (native; tough tree; large, heart-shaped leaves, showy flowers and long seed pods; 50'x 35')

**Coffeetree, Kentucky** - *Gymnocladus dioica* (native; amazingly adaptable; beautiful winter form; 50'x 40')

**Cottonwood, Eastern** - *Populus deltoides* (majestic native; not for extremely dry sites; avoid most cultivars; 80'x 60')

**Elm, American** - *Ulmus americana* (disease resistant varieties include 'Valley Forge' and 'New Harmony'; 50'x50')

**Elm, Japanese** - *Ulmus davidiana* var. *japonica* (cold tolerant; rounded; glossy green; 'Discovery' is a cultivar from Manitoba Canada; 45'x 45')

**Elm, Rock** - *Ulmus thomasi* (distinctive corky stems; upright habit; DED resistance in west; 50-60'x 30-40')

**New Elm, Hybrids** - many disease resistant hybrid elms have been developed and show promise, including:

1. 'Accolade' - looks like American elm; Morton Arboretum hybrid of *U. japonica* and *U. wilsoniana*; 50'x 40'
2. 'Cathedral' - tough and adaptable; developed in Wisconsin; *U. pumila* x *U. japonica*; 40-50'x 40-50'
3. 'Frontier' - smaller, glossy leaves; lacy bark pattern; purple fall color; *U. parvifolia* x *U. carpinifolia*; 40' x 30'
4. 'New Horizon' - *U. japonica* x *U. pumila*; upright habit; strong branch structure; 50'x30'
5. 'Triumph' - cross between 'Vanguard' and 'Accolade'; very adaptable; vigorous upright growth habit; 60'x 40'
6. 'Vanguard' - an improved Siberian elm hybrid; VERY tough and adaptable; glossy leaves; 50'x 45'

**Hackberry** - *Celtis occidentalis* (native; tough and reliable; distinctive warty bark; arching habit; good street tree; 50'x 50')

**Honeylocust** - *Gleditsia triacanthos* (native; very tough and reliable; provides dappled shade; 55'x 40'; many seedless/thornless forms available including 'Northern Acclaim', 'Imperial', 'Moraine', 'Shademaster', 'Skyline')

**Linden, American** - *Tilia americana* (native; large leaves; drought tolerant; heavy shade; fragrant flowers; 60'x 40')

**Linden, Littleleaf** - *Tilia cordata* (very tight, pyramidal form; dense shade; many cultivars available; 45'x 30')

**Maple, Freeman** - *Acer* x *freemanii* (hybrid between red and silver maples; tolerates wet soils; good fall color; 45'x 35'; common cultivars include 'Autumn Blaze', 'Celebration', 'Marmo', 'Sienna Glen' and 'Scarlet Sentinel')

**Oak, Bur** - *Quercus macrocarpa* (outstanding native; big and majestic; very tough and reliable; 60'x 75')

**Oak, Chinkapin** - *Quercus muehlenbergii* (great native tree; tolerates high pH soils; narrow, chestnut-like leaves; 50'x 40')

**Walnut, Black** - *Juglans nigra* (native; proven throughout Nebraska; tough and reliable; good lumber tree; 60'x 45')

## Medium Deciduous Trees—typically 20-40' tall

**Aspen, Bigtooth** - *Populus grandidentata* (native to northern U.S.; attractive green/white bark; narrow habit; 35'x 25'; European Aspen (*P. tremula*) is similar and has been used to create narrow forms such as 'Pyramidalis' and 'Tower')

**Aspen, Quaking** - *Populus tremuloides* (native to Nebraska and Rocky Mountain region; attractive creamy bark & fluttering leaves turn golden-yellow; main trunk short-lived with re-sprouting from roots; best planted with room to colonize; 30'x 15')

**Buckeye, Ohio** - *Aesculus glabra* (native; very tough & adaptable; rounded form; interesting 'buckeye' fruit; 30'x 30')

**Lilac, Japanese Tree** - *Syringa reticulata* (billowy white flowers in May; attractive bark; can grow to 30'x 25')

**Locust, Black** - *Robinia pseudoacacia* (good on poor, dry soils and hot sites; short thorns; fragrant white flowers; 35'x 25');

**Maple, Boxelder** - *Acer negundo* (native to G.P. floodplains; very tough and adaptable; compound leaves; 30'x 25')

**Maple, Bigtooth** - *Acer grandidentatum* (Rocky Mountain relative of sugar maple; multi-stem habit; orange fall color; 30'x 20')

**Oak, Bur-gambel** - *Quercus macrocarpa* x *gambelii* (hybrid of gambel oak and bur oak; for west. G.P.; 25-40'x 25-45')

**Oak, Upright English** - *Quercus robur* var. *fastigiata* (a narrow form of English oak; seed grown; hardy; 40'x 5-10')

**Pear, Ussurian** - *Pyrus ussuriensis* (glossy leaves; nice fall color; 25'x 20')

**Willow, Laurel** - *Salix pentandra* (attractive, glossy foliage; fast growth; needs consistent moisture; short lived; 35'x 30')

**Willow, Misc.** - *Salix* spp. (several species/types to choose from in the nursery trade including some with golden and/or contorted twigs or weeping habit; all willows need consistent moisture and are typically short lived; *Salix alba* 'Tristis' is a common weeping willow)

## Small Deciduous Trees—typically under 20' tall

**Apricot, Manchurian** - *Prunus mandshurica* (tough, cold hardy but short lived; attractive pink flowers; 15'x 15')

**Cherry, Canada Red** - *Prunus virginiana* 'Shubert' (purple-leaf form of native chokecherry; suckering habit; tough; 20'x 20')

**Cherry, Sour (tart)** - *Prunus cerasus* (selected for cold hardiness and fruit production; useful in baking; several cultivars worth trying include 'Evans', 'Meteor', 'Montmorency' and 'Northstar'; protect in western Nebraska; 15'x 15')

**Chokecherry** - *Prunus virginiana* (tough native; attractive white flowers in spring; good for birds; suckering habit; to 20' tall)

**Chokecherry, Amur** - *Prunus maackii* (beautiful metallic amber to dark red-brown bark; short lived; 20'x 15')



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**Crabapple, Flowering** - *Malus* spp. (a wide variety of selections with varied flower/fruit colors and size ranges available; choose plants in late summer to avoid disease problems and to see fruit set; proven cultivars include 'Adams', 'David', 'Donald Wyman', 'Harvest Gold', 'Prairifire', 'Spring Snow', 'Sugar Tyme' and 'Zumi Calocarpa' among many others)

**Dogwood, Corneliancherry** - *Cornus mas* (tough, reliable; large shrub or small tree; early yellow flowers; red fruit; 15'x 15')

**Dogwood, Gray** - *Cornus racemosa* (native; large shrub or small tree; good dusty-red fall color; multi-stem habit; 15'x 10')

**Hawthorn, Cockspur** - *Crataegus crusgalli* (nice white flowers; glossy green leaves; abundant red fruit; 15'x 15'; variety *inermis* is a nice thornless form; Lavalley Hawthorn (*Crataegus* × *lavalleyi*) is a striking hybrid that grows 15'x 10')

**Hawthorn, Downy** - *Crataegus mollis* (native to northern and western GP; downy leaves in spring; low, spreading habit; 15'x 15')

**Hawthorn, misc.** - *Crataegus* spp. (other hawthorns worth trying include 'Crimson Cloud' (*C. laevigata*) with red flowers; and Russian Hawthorn (*C. ambigua*) that is very thorny and tough). Note: Most hawthorns are prone to rust and other leaf-spot diseases; do not plant near cedar trees.

**Hoptree (Wafer Ash)** - *Ptelea trifoliata* (large shrub or small tree; rounded form; distinctive disc-like fruit; 15'x 15')

**Maackia, Amur** - *Maackia amurensis* (seldom seen legume; worth a closer look; attractive summer flowers; 25'x 20')

**Maple, Tatarian** - *Acer tataricum* (multi-stem habit; easy to grow; drought tolerant; good fall color; 20'x 15');

**Oak, Gambel** - *Quercus gambelii* (native to Rocky Mountains; variable multi-stem habit; prefers well-drained soils; 20'x 15')

**Oak, Wavyleaf** - *Quercus undulata* (shrubby but can be trained as a small tree; semi-evergreen; needs testing; 15'x 15')

**Plum, American** - *Prunus americana* (shrubby but can be grown as a small tree; tough and adaptable; edible fruit; 15' x 12')

**Plum, Newport** - *Prunus cerasifera* 'Newport' (dark purple-green foliage; edible plums; tough but short lived; 15'x 15')

**Privet, New Mexican** - *Forestiera neo-mexicana* (creamy-mottled bark; multi-stem habit; for western G.P.; 12'x 12')

## Evergreen Trees

**Douglasfir** - *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (soft blue-green needles; distinctive cones; graceful habit; avoid open sites; 50'x 30')

**Fir, Concolor** - *Abies concolor* (attractive blue-green, long, upswept needles; most reliable fir for Nebraska; 50'x 25')

**Juniper, Chinese** - *Juniperus chinensis* (tight growing juniper; tree form types available include 'Keteleer'; 15-25'x 10-15')

**Juniper, Rocky Mountain** - *Juniperus scopulorum* (native; blue-green foliage; prefers well drained, drier soils; 20-35'x 15-20')

**Pine, Austrian** - *Pinus nigra* (common, tough, easy to grow; attractive bark; similar to Ponderosa Pine; disease prone; 50'x 35')

**Pine, Bristlecone** - *Pinus aristata* (use on well-drained soils only; great looking "bottle-brush" branch tips; 25'x 20')

**Pine, Bosnian** - *Pinus heldreichii* var. *leucodermis* (great looking tree; dark green; similar to Austrian pine; 45'x 30')

**Pine, Jack** - *Pinus banksiana* (extremely hardy; irregular, gnarled growth habit; windswept look; 40'x 25')

**Pine, Limber** - *Pinus flexilis* (native; slow growing; soft needles; very flexible branches; plant on well-drained soils; 50'x 30')

**Pine, Pinyon** - *Pinus cembroides* var. *edulis* (very stout, short needles; well-drained soils only; large edible nut; 25'x 20')

**Pine, Ponderosa** - *Pinus ponderosa* (native; best on well-drained soils; attractive cinnamon-brown-black bark; 65'x 30')

**Pine, Scotch** - *Pinus sylvestris* (beautiful cinnamon orange bark; easy to grow; 60'x35'; **caution: Pine wilt disease is killing many trees in eastern Nebraska - the tree is longer recommended for planting in eastern part of the state**)

**Pine, Southwestern White** - *Pinus reflexa* (graceful five-needle pine; 'Vanderwolfs' a common form; 35'x 20')

**Pine, Swiss Stone** - *Pinus cembra* (to 50' tall; similar to Korean Pine; seldom seen; edible nut; soft foliage)

**Redcedar, Eastern** - *Juniperus virginiana* (very tough; nice striated bark on mature trees; 40'x 30')

**Spruce, Black Hills** - *Picea glauca* var. *densata* (alternative to blue spruce; slower growing; native to Black Hills; 50'x 30')

**Spruce, Colorado** - *Picea pungens* (very adaptable; common throughout Nebraska; wide size range from 45-70'x 15-35'; variety *glauca* is the common "Blue Spruce" and includes brighter blue cultivars such as 'Hoopsi', 'Moerheim' and 'Thompson')

## Trees for the Daring (trees that need further testing or require special site conditions)

**Ash, Manchurian** - *Fraxinus mandshurica* (from Asia; upright growth; drought tolerant; may be resistant to EAB; 40'x 30')

**Arborvitae, Eastern** - *Thuja occidentalis* (narrow habit; vertically layered foliage; 'Techny' a common form; 20-25'x 5-15')

**Cherry, Black** - *Prunus serotina* (native; eye-catching when in flower; fast growing, adaptable; 35'x 20')

**Cottonwood, Lanceleaf** - *Populus* × *acuminata* (native; naturally occurring hybrid; narrow leaves; for west. G.P.; 50'x 35')

**Filbert, Turkish** - *Corylus colurna* (also called tree hazel; pyramidal shape like linden; scaly bark; 35'x 25')

**Ginkgo** - *Ginkgo biloba* (very interesting leaf; good yellow fall color; distinctive upright habit; tolerant of poor soils; 45'x 35')

**Hawthorn, Washington** - *Crataegus phaenopyrum* (attractive foliage, flower and fruit; tough; relatively disease free; 20'x 20')

**Hophornbeam (Ironwood)** - *Ostrya virginiana* (native understory tree; shaggy bark; yellow fall color; hop like fruit; 20'x 15')

**Lilac, Pekin** - *Syringa pekinensis* (creamy white flowers; attractive, flaky bark; similar to Jap. tree lilac but not as large; 20'x 15')

**Linden, Silver** - *Tilia tomentosa* (similar to *T. americana*; dark, shiny leaves have silvery underside; 50'x 40')

**Maple, Miyabe** - *Acer miyabei* (similar to hedge maple but appears to be more adaptable; thick, glossy leaves; 30'x 25')

**Maple, Norway** - *Acer platanoides* (dark green leaves; dense shade; many grafted cultivars available; prone to frost cracking; 40'x 35')

**Maple, Red** - *Acer rubrum* (very popular for red fall color; becoming over-planted; good for wet sites and irrigated lawns; 40'x 30'; common cultivars include 'Autumn Spire', 'Burgundy Belle', 'Northfire', 'Red Sunset', 'Rubyfrost')

**Maple, Shantung** - *Acer truncatum* (glossy, distinctive leaves; rounded form; proving to be tough/reliable; 15'x 15')



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**Mountainash**, - *Sorbus* spp. (Mountainash species are occasionally found in Nebraska; they generally have nice white flowers and good fall color in both fruit and leaf; all are more suited to higher elevations and are short-lived in Nebraska; 25'x 20')

**Oak, English** - *Quercus robur* (similar to white oak; tough, reliable; long, abundant acorns; narrow types available; 60'x 50')

**Oak, Mongolian** - *Quercus mongolica* (similar in appearance to Bur Oak; performing well in N. Dakota; 50'x 45')

**Oak, Red** - *Quercus rubra* (reliable native; common, tough and adaptable; nice red fall color; 50'x 50')

**Oak, Shumard** - *Quercus shumardii* (rarely planted; drought tolerant; similar to red oak; good fall color; 45'x 40')

**Oak, Swamp White** - *Quercus bicolor* (popular; attractive glossy leaves with silver underside; good for wet or dry soils; 60'x 50')

**Pine, Korean** - *Pinus koraiensis* (edible nut; soft, attractive needles in groups of five; looks promising; 50'x 30')

**Pine, Lodgepole** - *Pinus contorta* (similar to Ponderosa Pine but with needles in twos and more twisted; 50'x 30')

**Pine, Mugo** - *Pinus mugo* (variable growth habit; short needles; tough and adaptable; tree forms can grow to 15-40'x 15-25')

**Pine, Red** - *Pinus resinosa* (northeast U.S. native; slow growing; reddish bark; 40'x 30')

**Pagodatree, Japanese** - *Sophora japonica* (uniformly round; attractive, late summer flowers in creamy panicles; 30'x 30')

**Poplar, Balsam** - *Populus balsamifera* (fast growing; strong balsam fragrance; typically short lived; 65'x 45')

**Poplar, Silver** - *Populus alba* (tough & adaptable; silvery/white leaves; suckering, weedy habit; can grow up to 80' x 65')

**Redbud** - *Cercis canadensis* (native; attractive purple flowers in early spring; select from hardy seed source; 20'x 15')

**Smoketree, American** - *Cotinus obovatus* (blue-green leaves; yellow-orange fall color; plummy, smoke-like flowers; 20'x 15')

**Serviceberry (Juneberry)** - *Amelanchier* spp. (serviceberries are multi-season plants with early-spring white flowers, glossy leaves, tasty fruit and nice fall color; many cultivars available; serviceberries prefer some protection or part shade; wide size range from 10-20'x 10-20')

**Spruce, Norway** - *Picea abies* (pendulous (weeping) branch tips; tolerates moist sites; largest of the spruce growing to 70'x 40')

**Spruce, White** - *Picea glauca* (very cold hardy; shorter needles than *P. pungens* and slower grower; 50'x 30')

**Spruce, Serbian** - *Picea omorika* (weeping habit more graceful than *P. abies*; attractive dark cones; slower growing; 45'x 20')

**Sycamore** - *Platanus occidentalis* (tough native; beautiful mottled and creamy/white bark; good on wet sites; up to 80'x 50')

**For more tree and plant resources, visit [plantnebraska.org](http://plantnebraska.org).**