

A3825

Lilacs

FOR

cold climates

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LILACS HAVE BEEN CULTIVATED FOR OVER 400 YEARS. ORIGINATING IN EUROPE AND ASIA, THEY WERE BROUGHT TO AMERICA IN THE MID-1700S WHERE THEY'VE REMAINED GARDEN FAVORITES EVER SINCE. CURRENTLY, MORE THAN 1,800 CULTIVARS OF LILACS EXIST, OFFERING A STUNNING RANGE OF FLOWER COLORS, BLOOMING PERIODS, INTENSITY OF FRAGRANCE, AND PLANT SIZES. THIS PUBLICATION IS INTENDED TO HELP SORT THROUGH SOME OF THE TOP CULTIVAR CHOICES AND PROVIDE ADVICE ON HOW TO PLANT, PRUNE, AND CARE FOR THESE LOVELY FLOWERING SHRUBS.



Selecting lilacs

With the vast quantity of cultivars to choose from, perhaps the best way to narrow your choices is by considering mature plant size, bloom timing, ornamental features, and disease resistance before you decide on a specific flower color. Identifying these details will suggest certain species to focus on or avoid.

DISEASE RESISTANCE. Be sure to check the cultivar's relative susceptibility or resistance to diseases. Diseased plants are unlikely to produce good flower displays from year to year. Rather than spend time and money treating diseases, select a species with good disease resistance. (For details about the most common diseases of lilacs, refer to the section on diseases that follows.)

LILACS WITH FALL COLOR

Syringa × *hyacinthiflora* 'Maiden's Blush' and 'Vesper Song'

S. meyeri 'Palibin'

S. oblata

S. oblata subsp. *dilatata*

S. pubescens subsp. *patula* 'Miss Kim'

S. reticulata 'Ivory Silk'



PLANT SIZE. Lilacs come in many sizes and shapes, making them excellent choices for a wide variety of uses. Small lilacs can be used near buildings as foundation plants; larger plants can be massed to create an informal, unshaped hedge for privacy or a shrub border; and tree lilacs can be used individually as specimen plants. Evaluate the desired planting location and intended use: Is there room for a lilac that grows 12 feet tall and 10 feet wide, or will the space only accommodate a plant half that size? Do you care if it sends up suckers (new growth from the roots)? Choosing the right plant for the space can save you hours of pruning time.

ORNAMENTAL FEATURES.

To extend interest beyond the bloom period, you might wish to consider cultivars that offer attractive features at other times of the year. For example, plants with small leaves have a fine-textured look, cultivars with variegated leaves (multi-colored) make beautiful specimen plants, and some species offer good fall color.

BLOOM PERIOD. If time of bloom is important to you, decide when you'd like the plant to be in bloom. The species listed in this publication are organized according to bloom period. Be aware, though, that actual bloom dates will vary based on location and weather. Lilac blooms only tend to last 7–14 days. By planting a variety of species, overlapping bloom times can extend the length of flowering to 5–6 weeks. Other flower features to consider include the size and density of the blooms and whether you prefer single florets (four petals) or double florets (eight petals).



**SMALLER LILACS
SUITABLE FOR
FOUNDATION PLANTINGS**

Syringa × *hyacinthiflora* 'Excel' and
'Maiden's Blush'

S. × *laciniata*

S. meyeri 'Palibin'

S. pubescens subsp. *julianae* 'George
Eastman' and 'Karen'

S. pubescens subsp. *microphylla*
'Superba'

S. pubescens subsp. *patula* 'Miss Kim' and
'KLMone' (Miss Susie™)
Both can grow larger, but are often
managed smaller.

S. vulgaris 'Marie Frances', 'Wedgwood
Blue', and 'Wonderblue'

S. Fairy Tale Series® 'Bailbelle'
(Tinkerbelle®), 'Baildust' (Fairy
Dust™), 'Bailina' (Thumbelina™),
'Bailming' (Prince Charming®), and
'Bailsugar' (Sugar Plum Fairy®)

S. hybrids 'Josée', 'Minuet', and 'Red Pixie'



Site selection

There are three critical questions to ask when deciding where to plant your lilac:

1. WILL THE PLANT RECEIVE ENOUGH SUNLIGHT TO THRIVE AND PRODUCE FLOWERS?

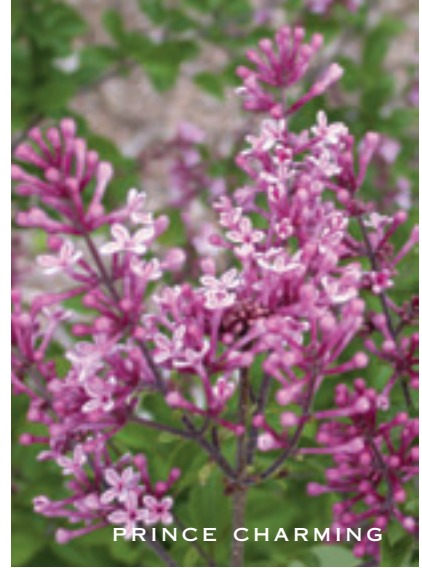
Lilacs require at least 6 hours of direct sunlight a day to properly set flower buds for flowering the following spring. The amount of light determines the plant's appearance and quantity of flowers. Lilacs planted in too much shade will either flower poorly or not at all. Lilacs planted too close together will grow tall and leggy and flowering will occur only at the top of the plant.

2. WILL THE MATURE PLANT FIT IN THE SPACE?

The planting site should be large enough to accommodate not only the ultimate height and spread of the plant, but also the root system. Large lilacs planted in small spaces will inevitably spread to crowd out other plants.

3. DOES THE SITE HAVE ADEQUATE DRAINAGE?

Lilacs can tolerate a wide range of pH (prefer pH 6.0–7.0) and soil conditions as long as they are well-drained. Poor drainage will stunt growth and limit flowering, cause root deterioration, and eventually kill the plant. You can improve drainage before planting by incorporating topsoil or organic matter (peat, composted leaf mulch, or compost) to raise the area so roots can get established in well-drained soils.



Care of lilacs

To ensure rapid establishment and hasten the plant's ability to produce blooms, the care you provide the first few years after planting is important. Following the advice outlined below will help to assure healthier plants, which in turn can reduce the need for pesticides, especially fungicides.

WATERING NEEDS

Lilacs should be watered immediately after planting and again two to three times per week for the first month. After that, plants should receive 1 inch of water (rainfall or irrigation) once a week. During hot, dry weather you may need to water more frequently to keep plants from wilting. Be careful not to overwater—lilac roots will rot if water can't drain away. To help keep plants from drying out over winter, continue to water weekly until the ground freezes in late fall if no rain has occurred.



NUTRITION

Do not fertilize newly planted shrubs or trees the first year after planting as they need to put their energy into establishing a healthy root system to better support shoot growth. Once the lilac is established (2–3 years), fertilizers may be needed. A soil test should be taken to determine phosphorus and potassium levels in the soil. If either nutrient is limited, a complete fertilizer containing nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) can be used. A 5-10-5 or a 10-10-10 fertilizer is a good choice. Apply the fertilizer at the base of the plant after flowering. Always follow the application rates on the label. Be careful not to overfertilize plants or to use fertilizers containing more than 20% nitrogen. Too much nitrogen can cause excessive vegetative growth at the expense of flower bud development; in extreme cases it can kill the plant.

MULCH

Mulch around the base of lilacs will help them retain moisture, keep the roots cool, and suppress weed development. Organic mulches, such as shredded bark, cypress mulch, composted wood chips, and leaf mold are excellent choices for use around lilacs. Spread mulch in a ring 2–3 inches deep around the base of the plant. Keep the mulch 1–2 inches from the base of branches or the trunk to allow good air circulation and to prevent stem and root rots and injury from rodents.

PRUNING

Newly planted lilacs will not need much pruning for the first 2–3 years. Pruning recommendations will depend on the plant's bloom period, growth pattern, and location.



TIMING. Lilacs are usually best pruned when they're dormant, typically in March or early April. Pruning at this time of year has several advantages: it's easiest to see what you're removing, there's little insect and disease activity, and pruning cuts close faster. The drawback, though, is that you will sacrifice some flowers. The next best time to prune is immediately after flowering but before plants set flower buds for next year's bloom. If you prune too late in the season, you will remove next year's flower buds.

TECHNIQUE—RENEWAL PRUNING FOR SUCKERING SHRUBS.

Lilacs that sucker readily, such as common and early lilacs, should be pruned every 1–3 years to encourage new growth and flowering. Remove approximately one-third of all branches that are larger than 1½ inches in diameter. Cut the branches out at ground level using a pruning saw or loppers. New shoots will develop at the base of the plant. Vigorous young growth often produces more flowers compared to older, larger-diameter branches. Removing larger branches also helps to decrease the plant's susceptibility to lilac borer infestations (see the section on insect management for details about this pest). This pruning technique allows lilacs to flower each year and maintains the size of the plant.

TECHNIQUE—SHAPING

NON-SUCKERING SHRUBS.

Many of the smaller, non-suckering lilacs only need shaping after flowering to reduce the height of the shrub and maintain its form. This technique involves removing a branch back to a larger branch or bud. Do not shear lilacs in summer or fall as you will be removing flower buds for the following spring season.

TECHNIQUE—ANNUAL DEAD-

HEADING. Removing blooms within a week after they fade will improve a plant's appearance and help the lilac concentrate its energy into formation of flower buds for next year's bloom rather than seeds.



WHY DOESN'T MY LILAC FLOWER?

There are several reasons why a lilac plant may not flower:

1. Plants aren't receiving enough sunlight. Lilacs require at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day to produce flower buds.
2. Too much nitrogen (N) can lead to lush, green foliage at the expense of flower bud production. Lawn fertilizers are often high in nitrogen; avoid using them around the base of your lilac.
3. For the first few years after transplanting, the plant is putting its energy into establishing a root system rather than into leaf and flower development. Water routinely to encourage healthy plant establishment.
4. Pruning lilacs in summer will remove flower buds. Prune immediately after flowering to avoid this problem. Pruning during the dormant season is the best time to prune, but be aware that some flower buds will be removed.

DISEASE MANAGEMENT

The following diseases commonly affect lilacs grown in cold climates:

POWDERY MILDEW appears as a white powder on the leaves and develops rapidly during hot, humid weather. This fungal disease is unsightly and may cause some leaf loss, but it won't kill the plant. Prevention is the best treatment: plant resistant cultivars, select sites that receive full sun, and provide adequate spacing between plants to allow good air circulation. Remove and destroy infected plant debris to reduce the amount of inoculum present the following year. Fungicides may be used to treat the disease, but they are not recommended because powdery mildew is strictly a cosmetic problem.



BACTERIAL BLIGHT is a common and serious disease of all lilacs, although white-flowered varieties seem to be more susceptible. During cool, wet spring weather, brown spots with yellow halos appear on leaves and petioles. If the disease occurs before leaves are fully expanded, they will become distorted as they mature. Bacterial blight can also cause black streaking and dieback of twigs. Prune diseased branches 10–12 inches below visibly infected areas. Disinfect pruners between each cut and destroy the plant debris (do not compost). On plants that have a history of bacterial blight, bactericide treatments in early spring may be necessary.

LILAC WITCHES' BROOM OR DECLINE causes lilacs to produce tufts of short, spindly branches and yellow, distorted foliage. Infected branches often die, with the disease spreading to kill the entire plant. The pathogen is a phytoplasma, a bacterium-like organism that lives in the phloem (the food-conducting tissue) of infected plants. Phytoplasmas are typically spread by leafhoppers. There is no known cure—fungicides will not help. The best strategy is to remove infected plants as soon as symptoms appear. Avoid planting susceptible lilac species or cultivars.

VERTICILLIUM WILT leads to a sudden wilting and dieback of branches and is caused by a soil-borne fungus. Often, wilting branches first appear on one side of the shrub, but eventually the entire shrub will wilt and die. There is no treatment. If Verticillium wilt has been a problem at a particular site, avoid planting lilacs or other susceptible trees and shrubs there.

INSECT MANAGEMENT

Although you may find other insects on lilacs during the growing season, lilac borers and oystershell scale are the two most important pests of lilacs.

LILAC BORER is the chief insect pest of lilacs. During the immature stage, these small white larvae tunnel into the base of larger branches where they eat the wood. The branches weaken and eventually die, and affected shrubs will produce few if any flowers. The best control for this pest is to routinely prune out one-third of the largest diameter and weak branches back to the base of the plant. The insecticide permethrin can be applied around mid-June to kill the adults as they lay eggs.

OYSTERSHELL SCALE also attacks lilac stems. For most of its life, this pest is motionless beneath a hard waxy shield that resembles a tiny mussel shell. Scales are difficult to control because the covering effectively protects both the adult and the egg masses. In the spring, the eggs hatch and the nymphs (immature scale) emerge to find a place to feed. They settle down to begin sucking plant sap and within 1–3 weeks develop their own protective covering. Feeding damage causes leaves to turn yellow and become distorted. For heavy infestations, the best control is to remove and destroy the plant. For lighter infestations, dormant oil sprayed onto the stems and trunk of lilacs during the dormant season will smother the scale insect.



Cultivar Descriptions

The lilacs listed in this section represent some of the many cultivars that are commercially available. The list is by no means comprehensive and there are many other cultivars worthy of use. Check with your local nursery or garden center or search online for availability of specific cultivars. Cold hardiness ratings are based on the USDA cold hardiness zone map.

The species are sorted into four groups: early, midseason, late-season, and tree lilacs.

Syringa x hyacinthiflora
Early flowering lilac, hyacinth lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

PARENTS: *S. oblata* x *S. vulgaris*

SIZE: Most grow 7–12 feet tall with a spread of 8–10 feet; upright, wide-spreading form; suckering; gets leggy with age unless pruned annually.

LEAF: Leaves are large, thick, and leathery. Some cultivars have burgundy fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant flower clusters are more loose and open than common lilac.

DISEASES: Many cultivars are resistant to powdery mildew.

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant when dormant or right after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

White—‘Mount Baker’ (single flowers)
‘Sister Justena’ (single flowers)

Violet—‘Pocahontas’ (single flowers)
‘Vesper Song’ (single flowers; burgundy fall color)

Bluish—‘Blanche Sweet’ (single flowers with a trace of pink)

Lilac—‘Assessippi’ (single flowers)
‘Excel’ (single flowers; compact plant, 6 feet tall)

Pinkish—‘Anabel’ (double flowers)
‘Maiden’s Blush’ (single flowers; burgundy fall color; compact plant, 5–6 feet tall)

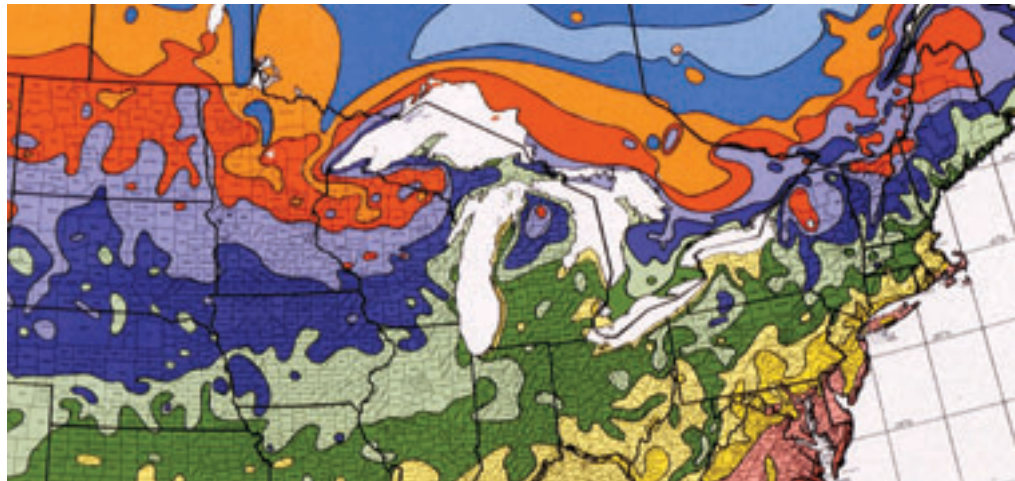
Magenta—‘Esther Staley’ (single flowers)
‘Evangeline’ (double flowers)
‘Pink Cloud’ (single flowers)

Purple—‘Royal Purple’ (double flowers)



USDA COLD HARDINESS ZONES AND AVERAGE ANNUAL MINIMUM TEMPERATURES

- 35° to –40°F **3a**
- 30° to –35°F **3b**
- 25° to –30°F **4a**
- 20° to –25°F **4b**
- 15° to –20°F **5a**
- 10° to –15°F **5b**





Syringa oblata
Broadleaf lilac, early lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

SIZE: Grows 8–12 feet tall and spreads 8–10 feet; upright, compact form; suckering.

LEAF: Long, thick leaves; new growth is bronzy; turns wine-red in fall.

FLOWER: Begins flowering at a younger age than other lilacs.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew; heat tolerant.

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant when dormant or right after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

White—'Betsy Ross' (single flowers)

Pink—subsp. *dilatata*: Korean early lilac (single flowers)

Blue—subsp. *dilatata* 'Cheyenne' (single flowers)



ESTHER STALEY

Syringa x chinensis
Chinese lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 4a

PARENTS: *S. protolaciniata* x *S. vulgaris*

SIZE: Grows 8–12 feet tall and spreads 8–12 feet; upright, wide-spreading form with arching branches; non-suckering.

LEAF: Small leaves; fine-textured foliage; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant flower clusters are sterile, so no seed capsules are produced.

DISEASES: Very susceptible to powdery mildew and susceptible to bacterial blight.

CARE: Renewal prune every 3 years, removing one-third of the largest branches at the base of the plant when dormant or right after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

Pink—'Saugeana' (single, pink to purple flowers)

Purple—'Lilac Sunday' (single, pale purple, profuse flowers; tolerant to powdery mildew)



LILAC SUNDAY

Syringa x laciniata
Cutleaf lilac or cutleaf Persian lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 4b

PARENTS: *S. protolaciniata* x unknown parent

SIZE: Grows 5–6 feet tall and spreads 5–8 feet; rounded, open form; non-suckering.

LEAF: Leaves have three to nine deeply cut lobes, giving the plant a fine texture; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant, single, pale-lilac, flower clusters are loose and small; flowers are sterile, so no seed capsules are produced.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; very heat tolerant.

CARE: Little pruning is needed, but some shaping is generally desirable after flowering, do not shear.

Syringa meyeri 'Palibin'
**Dwarf Korean lilac, Palibin lilac,
dwarf littleleaf lilac**

HARDINESS: Zone 4a

SIZE: Grows 4–6 feet tall and spreads 4–6 feet; slow growing, dense, compact, broadly mounded form; non-suckering. Available on a standard and often sold as a tree.

LEAF: Leaves are small, rounded, and glossy; fine-textured foliage; maroon to purplish fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant, single, pinkish-purple flower clusters in late May; few, if any, seed capsules are produced.

DISEASES: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; very heat tolerant.

CARE: Little pruning is needed, but some shaping is generally desirable after flowering, do not shear.

Syringa x persica
Persian lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

PARENTS: unknown

SIZE: Grows 4–8 feet tall and spreads 5–8 feet; upright, arching branches; suckering.

LEAF: Leaves are small, egg-shaped, dark green; fine-textured foliage; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant, single, pale lilac flower clusters in mid-May; sterile flowers, so no seed capsules are produced.

DISEASE: Very susceptible to powdery mildew and susceptible to bacterial blight.

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant when dormant or immediately after flowering; do not shear.



Syringa pubescens subsp. *julianae*
Juliana lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 4a

SIZE: Grows 4–5 feet tall and spreads 4–6 feet; upright, compact, horizontally spreading form; non-suckering.

LEAF: Leaves are small and somewhat velvety; fine-textured foliage; no fall color.

FLOWER: Very fragrant flower clusters in mid-May.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight.

CARE: Little pruning is needed, but some shaping is generally desirable after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

White—'Karen' (single, white to soft pale pink flowers fading to white)

Pink—'George Eastman' (single, pink to magenta flowers)

Syringa pubescens subsp. *microphylla* 'Superba'
Daphne lilac, littleleaf lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 5a

SIZE: Grows 5–6 feet tall and spreads 6–8 feet; upright, broad-spreading, dense form, fine textured; non-suckering.

LEAF: Leaves are small; fine-textured foliage; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant flower clusters are reddish in bud opening to single, deep pink flowers in late May; may rebloom lightly in summer.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; heat tolerant.

CARE: Little pruning is needed, but some shaping is generally desirable after flowering; do not shear.





Syringa pubescens subsp. *patula*
Manchurian lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

SIZE: Grows 5–7 feet tall and spreads 4–6 feet; dense, compact, upright to broadly rounded form; non-suckering.

LEAF: Medium-sized leaves tend to curl upwards; deep maroon to purple fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant flower clusters open in late May; few if any seed capsules are produced.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; heat tolerant.

CARE: Little pruning is needed, but some shaping is generally desirable after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

Lilac—‘Miss Kim’ (single, pale violet to lilac flowers)

Pink—‘Klmone’ Miss Susie™ (single flowers)



PAUL THIRION

Syringa vulgaris
Common lilac, French lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3a

SIZE: Grows 8–15 feet tall (some cultivars are smaller) and spreads 6–12 feet; upright, wide-spreading form; suckering; gets leggy with age unless pruned.

LEAF: Medium-sized, egg-shaped leaves are dark green to bluish-green; no fall color.

FLOWER: Very fragrant flower clusters bloom mid- to late May (cultivar dependent); persistent seed capsules.

DISEASE: Susceptible to powdery mildew and bacterial blight (resistant cultivars noted below).

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant when dormant or right after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

White—‘Alba’ (single flowers)

‘Avalanche’ (large, single flowers; mildew resistant)

‘Beth’ (double flowers)

‘Bridal Memories’ (single flowers)

‘Edith Cavalle’ (double flowers; mildew resistant)

‘Fiala Remembrance’ (double flowers; mildew resistant)

‘Frederick Law Olmsted’ (single flowers)

‘Krasavitsa Moskv,’ also known as Beauty of Moscow (double flowers, pink buds open to white with a pink blush; bacterial blight resistant)

‘Madame Lemoine’ (double flowers; mildew resistant)

‘Miss Ellen Willmott’ (large, double flowers; bacterial blight resistant)

‘Monique Lemoine’ (double flowers)

‘Primrose’ (pale creamy white, single flowers; mildew resistant)

‘Rochester’ (single flowers)



SESQUICENTENNIAL

Violet—‘Agincourt Beauty’ (single flowers)

‘Alfred F. Holden’ (single, violet to purple flowers with silvery blush on petal reverse; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)

‘Charles Lindbergh’ (single, violet to blue flowers)

‘De Miribel’ (single flowers; weak grower)

‘Flower City’ (single, violet to purple flowers)

‘Le Nôtre’ (double flowers)

‘Sesquicentennial’ (large, single flowers)

Bluish—‘Ami Schott’ (double flowers)

‘Aucubaefolia’ (double flowers; variegated leaves)

‘Dappled Dawn’ (single flowers; variegated leaves)

‘Dwight D. Eisenhower’ (single flowers)

‘Mechta,’ also known as Dream (single, blue to lilac flowers)

‘Nadezhda,’ also known as Hope (large, double, blue to lilac flowers)

‘Président Grévy’ (large, double flowers)

‘President Lincoln’ (single flowers; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)

‘Wedgwood Blue’ (lilac-pink buds opening to blue, single flowers, slightly pendulous; compact, 6 feet tall; mildew resistant)

‘Wonderblue,’ also known as ‘Little Boy Blue’ (single, sky blue flowers; compact, 4–5 feet tall; mildew resistant)

Lilac—‘Hugo Koster’ (single flowers)

‘Letha E. House’ (single flowers; mildew resistant)

‘Michel Buchner’ (double flowers; bacterial blight resistant)

- Pinkish**—‘Belle de Nancy’ (double flowers; bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Charm’ (single flowers; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Edouard André’ (double flowers)
 ‘Edward J. Gardner’, also known as Flamingo™ (double flowers)
 ‘Katherine Havemeyer’ (double flowers; mildew resistant)
 ‘Lois Anee Uteley’ (double flowers)
 ‘Lucie Baltet’ (single, pale pink flowers)
 ‘Marie Frances’ (single flowers, compact, 5-6’ tall; mildew resistant)
 ‘Montaigne’ (double, pale pink flowers; bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Pink Elizabeth’ (single flowers)
Magenta—‘Arch McKean’ (single, dark magenta flowers; non-suckering; mildew resistant)
 ‘Atheline Wilbur’ (double to semi-double, light magenta to pinkish-violet flowers; mildew resistant)
 ‘Charles X’ (single flowers)
 ‘Clyde Heard’ (single flowers)
 ‘Congo’ (single flowers)
 ‘Fernand L. Pegot’ (double flowers)
 ‘Frederick Douglas’ (single flowers)
 ‘Glory’ (single flowers)
 ‘Mrs. Edward Harding’ (double flowers)
 ‘My Favorite’ (double flowers)
 ‘Paul Thirion’ (double flowers with a bluish hue; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Président Poincaré’ (large, double flowers; bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Rajah’ (single flowers; narrow, upright plant)
 ‘Vintage Wine’ (single flowers)



- Purple**—‘Adelaide Dunbar’ (double flowers; bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Alice Christianson’ (double to triple, light purple flowers)
 ‘Alvan R. Grant’ (single flowers)
 ‘Andenken an Ludwig Späth’ (single, dark purple flowers; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Anne Shiach’ (single flowers)
 ‘Charles Joly’ (double flowers; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Frank Klager’ (single, dark purple flowers)
 ‘Frank’s Fancy’ (large, single flowers)
 ‘Hulda’ (single flowers)
 ‘Margaret Fenicchia’ (single, purplish-violet flowers)
 ‘Monge’ (single flowers)
 ‘Prairie Petite’ (single flowers)
 ‘Rainbow’ (single flowers; new leaves open variegated)
 ‘Sarah Sands’ (single flowers)
 ‘Sensation’ (single flowers with a white border on each petal; mildew and bacterial blight resistant)
 ‘Yankee Doodle’ (large, single flowers; bacterial blight resistant)

Fairy Tale Series®

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

PARENTS: *S. meyeri* ‘Palibin’ x *S. pubescens* subsp. *microphylla* ‘Superba’

SIZE: Grows 4–6 feet tall and spreads 4–6 feet; slow growing; upright to rounded; dense, compact form; non-suckering. Available on a standard and often sold as a tree.

LEAF: Small leaves; fine-textured foliage; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant flower clusters in late May; few if any seed capsules are produced.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; heat tolerant.

CARE: Little pruning is needed, but some shaping is generally desirable after flowering, do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

Lilac—‘Bailsugar’ Sugar Plum Fairy® (single, rosy-lilac flowers; compact plant)

Pink—‘Bailbelle’ Tinkerbelle® (wine-red buds open to deep pink, single flowers)

‘Baildust’ Fairy Dust™ (single, antique-pink (bluish-pink) flowers; still sold but has been discontinued by Bailey Nurseries)

‘Bailina’ Thumbelina™ (single, pale pink flowers)

‘Bailming’ Prince Charming® (deep wine buds open to lavender-pink, single flowers)





Syringa x josiflexa
Josiflexa lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 4a

PARENTS: *S. josikaea* x *S. komarowii* subsp. *reflexa*

SIZE: Grows 8–12 feet tall and spreads 6–12 feet; upright, wide-spreading form; non-suckering.

LEAF: Leaves are large and elongated; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant flower clusters bloom early to mid-June.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; some cultivars are very susceptible to phytoplasmas (lilac witches' broom).

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant during dormancy or soon after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

White—'Agnes Smith' also known as Miss USA™ (single flowers)

Pink—'James MacFarlane' (single flowers; poor performer; very susceptible to phytoplasmas (lilac witches' broom))

Purple—'Nellie Bean' (single flowers) 'Royalty' (single flowers)

Magenta—'Redwine' (single flowers)



DONALD WYMAN

Syringa josikaea
Hungarian lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 5a

SIZE: Grows 8–10 feet tall and spreads 8–12 feet; upright to arching, wide-spreading; suckering.

LEAF: Medium-sized leaves are somewhat wrinkled above; no fall color.

FLOWER: Fragrant, single, lilac flower clusters open in late May to early June.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight.

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant when dormant or right after flowering; do not shear.

Syringa x prestoniae
Preston lilac, Canadian hybrid lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3a

PARENTS: *S. komarowii* subsp. *reflexa* x *S. villosa*

SIZE: Grows 6–10 feet tall and spreads 6–10 feet; rigid, upright to rounded, dense form; suckering.

LEAF: Long, thick, leathery leaves; no fall color.

FLOWER: Lightly fragrant flower clusters open in early to mid-June; persistent seed capsules.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew and bacterial blight; many cultivars are very susceptible to phytoplasmas (lilac witches' broom).

CARE: Renewal prune one-third of the largest branches at base of plant when dormant or right after flowering; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

Pink—'Coral' (single, pinkish flowers, poor form)

Purple—'Donald Wyman' (single flowers)

Blue—'Nocturne' (single flowers)

Syringa villosa
Late lilac, hairy lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

SIZE: Grows 6–10 feet tall and spreads 5–10 feet; upright to rounded form; non-suckering; slow growing.

LEAF: Medium-sized, oblong leaves; no fall color.

FLOWER: Lightly fragrant, single, light rosy-pink flowers in narrow clusters in early to mid-June; flowers borne on current season's growth rather than previous year's wood (rare for lilacs).

DISEASE: Susceptible to powdery mildew.

CARE: Requires little pruning, but some shaping is often desirable after flowering; do not shear; may need to thin out older branches.

Other hybrid lilacs

HARDINESS: Zone 3b

CULTIVARS:

Pink—'Alexander's Pink' (*S. x josiflexa* 'James MacFarlane' x *S. x prestoniae* 'Ethel M. Webster'; single flowers; 6–8 feet tall; non-suckering; mildew resistant)

'Lark Song' (*S. sweginzowii* x *S. tomentella*) x *S. komarowii*; single flowers; 6–7 feet tall; few, if any seed capsules; non-suckering; mildew resistant)

'Miss Canada' (*S. x josiflexa* 'Redwine' x *S. x prestoniae* 'Hiawatha'; single, bright pink flowers; 6–9 feet tall; non-suckering; mildew resistant)

'Red Pixie' (*S. pubescens* subsp. *julianae* 'Hers' x *S. meyeri*; single, magenta to pink flowers; 4–6 feet tall; non-suckering; mildew resistant)

Purple—'Minuet' (*S. x josiflexa* 'Redwine' x *S. x prestoniae* 'Donald Wyman'; single, light purple flowers; compact, 5–6 feet tall; slow grower; non-suckering; mildew resistant)

Lilac—'Morjos 060F' or 'Josée' (*S. pubescens* subsp. *microphylla* x *S. pubescens* subsp. *patula*) x *S. meyeri*; single, lilac to rose-pink flowers; may repeat flower in fall; 4–6 feet tall; non-suckering; mildew resistant)



Syringa pekinensis
Peking lilac, Pekin lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 4a

SIZE: Tree growing to 20–25 feet tall with a spread of 15–20 feet; open, loose spreading to rounded form.

LEAF: Smooth, medium-sized leaves; no fall color.

FLOWER: Lightly fragrant (not a true lilac smell); single, creamy-white flowers in mid-June; tends to flower heavily every other year; persistent capsules.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew; moderately susceptible to bacterial blight.

FEATURES: Tolerant of urban conditions and winter salt; a good street or specimen tree; smooth to exfoliating bark.

CARE: Little pruning is needed except for removal of lower branches for clearance; straight species may be multi-stemmed, cultivars are usually single-stemmed trees; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

White—‘DTR 124’ Summer Charm® Peking lilac (dark green leaves; more upright form)

‘Morton’ (China Snow® Peking lilac, also known as Water Tower® or ‘Chicago Tower’; has very showy, cherry-like, exfoliating, peeling bark; vigorous shoots resulting in irregular form)

Yellow—‘Zhang Zhiming’ (Beijing Gold™ Peking lilac; single flowers; vigorous)

Syringa reticulata
Japanese tree lilac

HARDINESS: Zone 3a

SIZE: Tree growing to 20–25 feet tall with a spread of 15–20 feet; upright, rounded to oval form.

LEAF: Medium-sized, dark green leaves; most plants have no fall color, some cultivars turn yellowish.

FLOWER: Lightly fragrant (not a true lilac smell); single, creamy-white flowers in mid- to late June; tends to flower heavily every other year; persistent capsules.

DISEASE: Resistant to powdery mildew; moderately susceptible to bacterial blight.

FEATURES: Tolerant of urban conditions and winter salt; a good street or specimen tree; smooth, cherry-like bark.

CARE: Little pruning is needed except for removal of lower branches for clearance; straight species may be multi-stemmed, cultivars are usually single-stemmed trees; do not shear.

CULTIVARS:

‘Chantilly Lace’ (variegated leaves with creamy-yellow margins; prone to sunburn)

‘China Gold’ (yellow new leaves later turning green)

‘Elliott’, also known as Snowcap™ (compact, upright pyramidal form)

‘Golden Eclipse’ (variegated leaves, green with bright gold margins)

‘Ivory Silk’ (flowers at a young age; upright, oval habit; grows faster than ‘Summer Snow’; yellowish fall color)

‘PNI 7523’, also known as Regent® (vigorous, upright growth)

‘Summer Snow’ (broad, rounded form; slower growing)

‘Willamette’, also known as Ivory Pillar™ (narrow, upright pyramidal form)



IVORY SILK

For more information

Learn more about caring for lilacs from the following University of Wisconsin-Extension publications (learningstore.uwex.edu):

Caring for Deciduous Shrubs (A1771)

Lilac Disorder: Bacterial Blight (A2538)

Maple and Other Trees Disorder: Verticillium Wilt (A2537)

Powdery Mildew of Ornamentals (A2404)

Woody Ornamentals Pest Management in Wisconsin (A3597)

Visit University of Wisconsin-Extension Garden Facts (www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/GardenFacts.html) for these publications:

Bacterial Blight (XHT1093)

How to Properly Prune Deciduous Shrubs (XHT1015)

Powdery Mildew (XHT1005)

Verticillium Wilt (XHT1008)

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