



Growing Guide for Pears

Pears are a delicious and nutritious fruit to grow in the Northeast garden. Pear trees add beauty to the landscape with white blossoms in the spring and colorful foliage in the fall, along with an abundant harvest of fresh fruit.

Light:	Full sun, no less than 8 hours
Soil:	Most soil types that are well drained
Zone:	4-9
pH:	6.5
Moisture:	Average, 1-2 inches/week
Fertilizer:	10-10-10 or equivalent, ¼# - 2# depending on age of tree in spring
Pollination:	Requires at least 2 varieties
Tree Height:	Dwarf- s-12'; semi-dwarf- 12-20'; standard – 25'

Pear Varieties

Bartlett (EU)
D'Anjou (EU)
Bosc (EU)
Moonglow (EU)
Luscious (EU)
Hosui (Asian)
Juicy Jewel (Asian)
Kikusui (Asian)
Red Robin (Asian)
Shinseiki (Asian)
Tawara (Asian)
Twentieth Century (Asian)
4 in 1 Pear (Asian and EU)





Plant care

Purchase trees from a reputable garden center. Plant trees in an area with full sun and have a soil test done; the pH should be 6.5. Remove weeds and grasses that may compete with the tree for water and nutrients. Tree spacing should be 12-15 feet apart if the trees are semi-dwarf, wider spacing if trees are standard size. Dwarf trees can be spaced 8-10 feet apart.

Plant in the spring before the tree develops many leaves, mid -April –May. Do not add any fertilizer to the plant or planting hole at this time. In 2-3 weeks, fertilizer can be applied in a wide band (16-20") around the tree at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ # 10-10-10 or something equivalent. Organic Pro-Gro, as another option, would be applied at $\frac{1}{2}$ # per tree. Keep the tree well-watered during the growing season. A thin layer of mulch may be applied around the tree to help with weed control and water retention. Staking the tree during the first year will help develop a strong root system. Use a trunk guard to protect the bark from winter vole damage.

Pruning

Pear trees are pruned to a central leader system (main stem in the center of the tree where branches originate). At planting, cut the leader (center growing shoot) back to 36 "above ground level and remove all branches below 18" from the ground. If the tree is well branched, remove any branches with angles (area where branch meets the trunk) of less than 60°. Do only minimal pruning at this time to encourage strong growth. Young trees need little pruning before bearing fruit, usually not until 2-3 years after planting depending on the size of the tree at planting, and only to maintain the dominance of the central leader.

Prune mature trees by removing water sprouts (shoots that go straight up inside the tree) and branches that are too big near the top of the tree. A mature pear tree's height can be maintained at 15-18' by cutting the main leader back to a weak side branch. Some branches may need to be removed to allow light and air into the tree canopy. Try not to remove more than 25% of overall growth, since this will stimulate lush new growth and make the tree more susceptible to fire-blight, a bacterial disease common to pears.

Fertilizer

Fertilize young pear trees in the spring (April/May) with 1# of 10-10-10 garden fertilizer or equivalent. On older trees, check the amount of growth put on the previous season. If it is 10" or more, no fertilizer is needed, otherwise use 1# of 10-10-10.





Insects and diseases

Pear trees have some disease and pest problems. Pears are susceptible to fire blight, a bacterial disease that appears in warm, damp weather. The tips of the shoots turn black and turn down like a hook. The best control is to prune out the infected wood, being careful not to touch other parts of the tree, and to burn or discard infected wood in the trash. Remember to disinfect your equipment between cuts to reduce the spread of the disease (1:10 bleach to water). Use Bonide All Seasons oil to control insect pests that over winter on the trees. This is done before bloom. One of the best approaches to control both disease and insects is to use the Bonide Fruit and Nut spray which has both a fungicide and insecticide. Applications are usually made before bloom, just after bloom, and several times during the growing season. Always remember to read the label and follow those directions. Remember to use the right equipment for the job. A pressurized sprayer works well. The fruit and nut spray also comes in a concentrate that can be hooked up to a garden hose. Porcupines are fond of pear trees and can cause serious damage to pear trees. Look for damage in late spring and summer.

Harvest, Storage and Use

Pears should be harvested unripe, and allowed to ripen from the tree, or they may turn mushy inside. Asian pears can be allowed to ripen on the tree. They are ready for harvest when they have a slight color change to a lighter green color and are easily removed from the tree with a slight twist. The stem should part easily from the tree. Pears should be allowed to ripen at approximately 60°F and are ready when the flesh near the stem end gives slightly when pressed. Pears can be stored longer, if kept refrigerated, before ripening at 60°.

Pears are delicious when eaten fresh and can also be used in salads, cobblers, jams and many other dishes.

For more detailed information, use the following link:

https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000589_Rep611.pdf

<https://extension.unh.edu/resource/growing-fruit-training-and-pruning-young-apple-and-pear-trees-fact-sheet>

<https://extension.unh.edu/blog/how-do-i-prepare-my-backyard-fruits-winter>

<https://www.mygardenlife.com/recipes-edibles/pollination-charts-for-fruit-bearing-trees-and-shrubs>





	Pollen Source												
	20th Century (Asian)	Anjou (European)	Ayers (European)	Bartlett (European)	Bosc (European)	Hosui (Asian)	Juicy Jewel (Asian)	Kieffer (European)	Kikusui (Asian)	Luscious (European)	Moonglow (European)	Reddy Robin (Asian)	Shinseiki (Asian)
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