



# ENGLISH BOXWOOD

English boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa') is the most popular and widely grown boxwood cultivar in the Mid-Atlantic region. Often referred to as dwarf boxwood, it has been planted extensively in colonial and formal landscapes. English boxwood has lined driveways, been planted as foundation plantings, and been used as a dwarf edging for flower gardens for centuries. English boxwood has an attractive dense, tight growth habit, making it a good choice for a specimen plant, as well as for hedging or topiary. The striking beauty of this plant in its ideal micro-environment has misled gardeners into using the plant in less desirable situations. Many times, this has resulted in plants that have not performed well.

It grows best in part shade. A location protected from harsh winter winds will help prevent winter damage from desiccation which can result in heavily bronzed foliage ("winter burn") or stiff tight foliage along the tips of the plant.

Plant English boxwood in well-drained soil with lots of organic matter. The best time to plant is fall, followed by early spring. Both times allow the plant to grow enough new roots to handle the stresses of winter and summer. Give them plenty of room, as they can become quite large over time. Dig a wide, shallow hole and do not plant too deep. Do not mulch boxwood.

Boxwood prefers a pH of 6.5 to 7.2, so you may need to add lime in late winter. We recommend having a soil test to determine the correct pH adjustment. Apply slow release fertilizers, such as cottonseed meal or Plant-tone, in spring. Prune *by hand* to shape in late winter or early spring—do not use mechanical pruners.

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