



"The bonsai is not you working on the tree: you have to have the tree work on you."

-John Naka
(Horticulturalist, Bonsai Enthusiast)

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now."

-Chinese Proverb

BONSAI STARTER KIT - INSTRUCTIONS

In The Box



**x1 INSTRUCTION
MANUAL**



**x1 PAIR BONSAI
PRUNING SHEARS**



**x1 SHAPING
TWEEZERS**



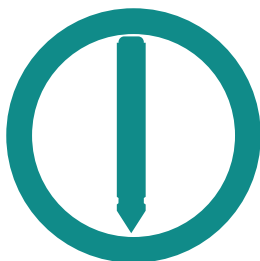
**x8 EXPANDABLE
PEAT SOIL DISCS**



**x8 PLASTIC
SAUCERS**



**x8 MOISTURE
PROOF SEED VIALS**



**x8 PLANT
MARKERS**



**x8 BIODEGRADABLE
PEAT GROWING POTS**

PINUS ARISTATA**Genus: PINUS****Family: PINACEAE****Species: ARISTATA**

With lovely blue green foliage, Pinus Aristata is typically found at very high altitudes. This tree is perfect for bonsai as its trunk and branches can become twisted and asymmetrical, giving it a unique and otherworldly appeal.

**Pre-Sowing**

Soak in warm water for 24 hours.

Sowing

Sow the seeds 1/4" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seed.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

6-8 hours of daily sunlight. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

3-5 weeks

JACARANDA MIMOSIFOLIA**Genus: JACARANDA****Family: BIGNONIACEAE****Species: MIMOSIFOLIA**

Frequently called Blue Jacaranda, Black Pouí, or Brazilian Rosewood, the Jacaranda produces beautiful, long lasting purple-blue flowers.

Pre-Sowing

Soak in warm water for 24 hours.

Sowing

Sow the seeds 1/4" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seed.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

Jacaranda loves sun and hot weather. At least 6-8 hours of sunlight, more if possible.

Time to Germinate

2-6 weeks

DELONIX REGIA**Genus: DELONIX****Family: FABACEAE****Species: REGIA**

Endangered in the wild, but cultivated around the world, Delonix Regia is known for its vivid red, vermillion, yellow, orange flowers. Sometimes called "The Royal Poinciana", Delonix is the national flower of St. Kitts and Nevis.

**Pre-Sowing**

Soak in boiling (or very hot) tap or water for 24 hours. No need to continually re-heat the water, the initial shock from the hot water will begin the scarification process.

Sowing

Pick out seeds that imbibe (take on water), re-treat those that don't. Sow the imbibed seeds 1/4" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seeds.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

Delonix loves sun and needs a good amount of sunlight. 6-8 hours of daily sunlight minimum. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

2-5 weeks

METASEQUOIA**Genus: METASEQUOIA****Family: CUPRESSACEAE****Species: GLYPTOSTROBOIDES**

Metasequoia, also known as the “Dawn Redwood”, is the shortest of all redwoods. This species is fast growing and considered a critically endangered conifer tree.

Pre-Sowing

No soaking required.

Sowing

Surface sow roughly 1/8" to 1/16" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seed.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

Abundant sunlight. 6-8 hours of daily, minimum. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

2-6 weeks

ULMUS PUMILA**Genus: ULMUS****Family:****Species: PUMILA**

Known as the "Siberian Elm" or "Dwarf Elm" *Ulmus Pumila* is a fast-growing bushy species that can prosper in many different climates. Drought resistant, *Ulmus* grows in almost every contiguous state in the U.S.

**Pre-Sowing**

Soak in warm water for 24 hours.

Sowing

Sow the seed 1/16" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seed.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

Abundant sunlight. 6-8 hours of daily, minimum. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

2-6 weeks

FICUS RELIGIOSA**Genus: FICUS****Family: MORACEAE****Species: RELIGIOSA**

Commonly referred to as the "Sacred Fig", Ficus Religiosa is regarded as sacred by the followers of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism. Buddhist tradition describes how Guatama Buddha reached enlightenment while meditating under a Ficus Religiosa.

**Pre-Sowing**

Soak in warm water for 24 hours.

Sowing

Sow the seeds 1/4" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seed.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

Ensure enough sunlight, 6-8 hours of daily sunlight minimum. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

3-5 weeks (germination can be slow).

CINNAMOMUM CAMPHORA**Genus: CINNAMOMUM****Family: LAURACEAE****Species: CAMPHORA**

Known as the "Camphor Tree", *Cinnamomum Camphora* has been used in everything from essential oils to herbal remedies. Once mature, this evergreen tree can produce green foliage with clumps of tiny white flowers. Crushed, the leaves give off a smell of camphor.

Pre-Sowing

Soak in warm water for 24 hours.

Sowing

Sow the seeds 1/4" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seed.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

6-8 hours of daily sunlight minimum. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

2-5 weeks

ENTEROLOBIUM CYLOCARPUM**Genus: ENTEROLOBIUM****Family: FABACEAE****Species: CYLOCARPUM**

Often called "Elephant-ear tree", because of the shape of the seed pods, Enterolobium is valued for its ability to grow in a variety of conditions. Fully mature, the Enterolobium is majestic, making it a great candidate for Bonsai.

**Pre-Sowing**

Soak in boiling (or very hot) tap or water for 24 hours. Repeat the process for seeds that did not imbibe (take on water)

Sowing

Pick out seeds that imbibe, re-treat those that don't. Sow the imbibed seeds 1/4" deep, tamp the soil down on top of the seeds.

Watering

Feel the soil regularly to see when it needs watering. When the soil is just about to dry out, give it a drink. Not before then. Soil should be moist but not saturated.

Required Sunlight

6-8 hours of daily sunlight minimum. Avoid direct sunlight immediately after germination.

Time to Germinate

2-5 weeks

GROWING YOUR SEED

Pre-Work

Takes place after the seeds have been soaked

1. Read specific planting instructions for each seed.
2. Set up a workspace where you can prepare the pots, soil, saucers, etc.
3. Write each seed's name on each of the 5 plant markers.
4. Set each of the pots on top of the 5 saucers.
5. Place a plant marker next to each pot.

Adding Soil

1. Add 1 soil disc to each of the 5 biodegradable pots.
2. Heat a pot or tea kettle of water to roughly 125° or just before boiling. The soil discs expand faster when in contact with hot water.
3. Slowly pour $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup of hot (not boiling) water on 1 soil disc. Soil will expand gradually as you pour the water. For best results pour $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cup, wait 60 seconds, pour another $\frac{1}{4}$, and repeat.
4. Once the soil has expanded and feels moist, stir the soil to aerate.
5. This process should take around 5-10 minutes. To make sure the soil has reached its full expanded size, gently feel the soil for any hard or unexpanded pieces.
6. Let the soil cool before planting the seeds.
7. Squeeze or push the down eliminate any excess water if there is any.

Sowing

1. In one pot, dig 3-4 small holes about an inch apart with your finger. Holes should be roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep, to accommodate the seeds.
- 2a. Pour the contents of one seed packet into your hand.
- 2b. Remove one type of imbibed seeds from pre-soak water.
3. Sprinkle 1 seed into each hole
4. Cover the seed with excess soil.
5. Gently tighten or tamp down the soil

What Happens Next

Once the seeds are planted, they will typically germinate in 2-6 weeks depending on the variety. At about 3 to 4 inches in height, the seedlings will begin to compete for space, sunlight, and nutrients. To create the hardiest bonsai possible, begin to "thin out" the weaker seedlings by taking a pair of scissors and trimming the weaker plants at their base (at soil level). The remaining stronger seedlings should be spaced about 2 inches apart. Doing this will allow the strongest plants to survive and thrive.

After roughly 2 to 3 months, thin the plants again to allow for only 1 hardy seedling in the pot. Fertilize the pot with a low nitrogen fertilizer 1-2 times during the growing season to improve the growth rate.

Becoming A Bonsai

Growing bonsai is an exercise in patience. For the tree to reach maturity will take several years. You can leave your seedling in the biodegradable pot to grow for the first year, but in subsequent years, the tree should be moved to a larger more permanent home. By repotting the bonsai after the first year (typically in spring), the roots will have an opportunity to spread out, and additional growth will occur.

As the bonsai grows into maturity, you will be able to shape the tree into its desired form. There is a plethora of techniques philosophies on this topic that are available to guide you when you reach this stage.

Growing Tips

AVOID THE COLD AND FROST: Temperatures below 32°F will damage or kill the plants. Make sure to keep the plants warm if they are going to be exposed to this type of climate.

SEEDS NEED THE SUN: Each of the seeds in this kit require copious amounts of non-direct sun each day (at least 6-8 hours).

ROTATE THE POTS PERIODICALLY: Pots should be rotated a quarter to a half turn every few days to avoid weak or brittle stems.

GOOD VENTILATION AND AIRFLOW ARE ESSENTIAL: Both are helpful for preventing bacteria or fungi from infecting your bonsai.

PRUNING IS IMPORTANT: Don't be afraid to prune your bonsai as it matures. This is important for both the plant's health as well to create the tree shape you desire.

