

3 in 1 Bonsai Set

Contents

Seed Starter Kit

- 3 sachets of seeds
- mini propagator with lid
- 2 coir disks

Transplanting Kit

- bag of soil
- traditional bonsai pot
- slate chippings



Getting Started

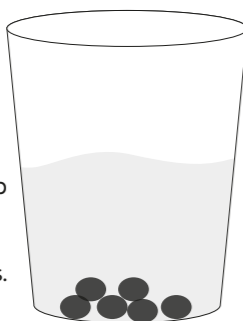
Soaking Seeds

To speed up germination you can soak your seeds overnight.

Carefully open the seed sachets and empty the seeds into lukewarm water. Leave the seeds to soak overnight, this will soften the shell helping to speed up the germination process.

After 24 hours seeds can be drained and sown as per the sowing instructions.

Follow the cooling and warming processes for best results - Stage 3 & 4.



Sowing Seeds

Preparing The Coir Disks

You will need...

- mini propagator
- approx. 60ml water
- 2 coir disks

Stage 1 - prepare seed growing medium.

Simply place the coir disks into the propagator tray. Add the water and leave to absorb. The coir will expand to 3 times its original size.

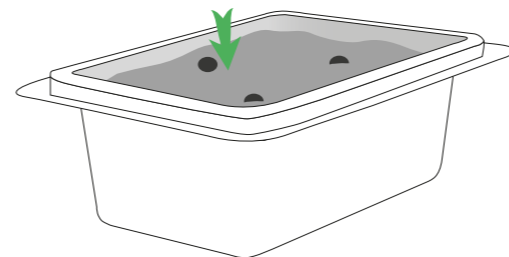
Once the coir has stopped expanding, stir it around to ensure there are no hard lumps. If you need to add extra water do this a little at a time, until you have soil-like growing medium.



Stage 2 - sow seeds into propagator.

Place seeds onto the damp coir and press them down.

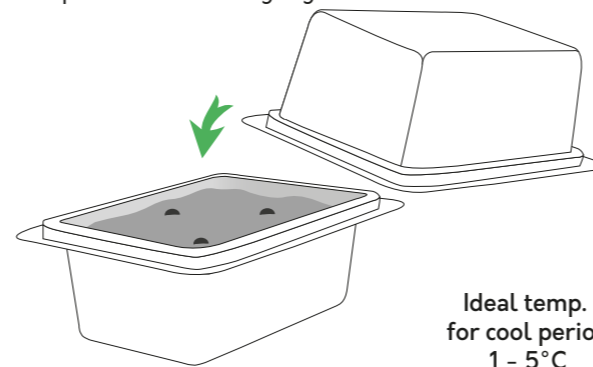
Tip: sow one variety at a time, labelling each variety.



Stage 3 - chill seeds to mimic the natural cycle of growth.

Place the propagator lid onto the base.

Begin 'cold stratification' process by placing in the fridge for up to 1 month to begin germination.

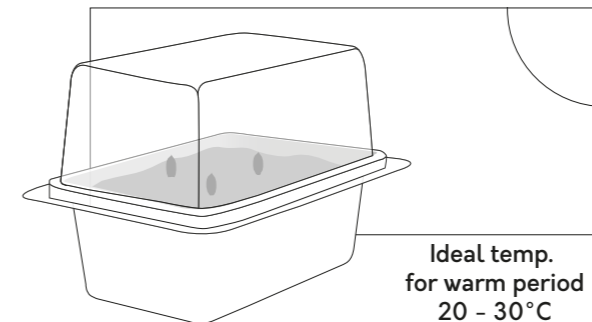


Ideal temp.
for cool period
1 - 5°C

Stage 4 - warm seeds to activate new growth.

Place the propagator on a warm, sunny windowsill and wait for the seedlings to emerge.

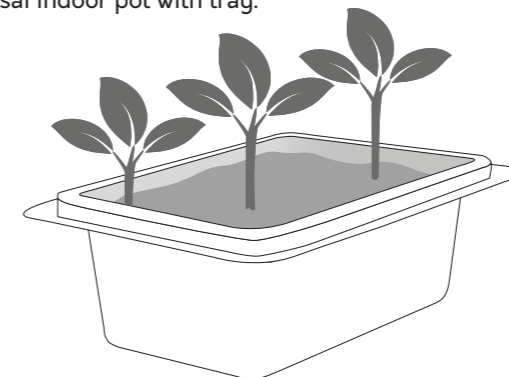
This technique is called 'warm stratification'.



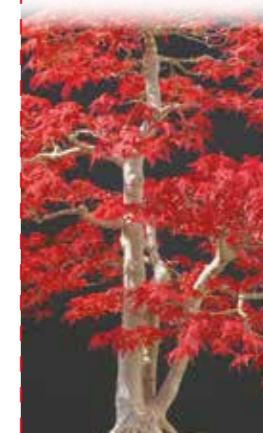
Ideal temp.
for warm period
20 - 30°C

Stage 5 - transplant into indoor pots.

Once seedlings are large enough to handle they can be transplanted into its forever home of a traditional bonsai indoor pot with tray.



Bonsai Growing Guide



Sweet Gum

Liquidambar Formosana

Sweet Gum is a stunning variety, which looks fantastic throughout the year but really comes into its own during the autumn months when the leaves change to create a spectacular display of reds, oranges and yellows.



Sowing

Chinese Sweetgum (*Liquidambar formosana*) are native to South China and Taiwan, which have a humid subtropical climate - with fluctuating temperatures. This means cold, wet 'stratification' is important and can be required for up to 60 days before introducing to warm humid conditions to complete the germination process. See [Sowing Seeds](#) for more detail.

Germination

Unfortunately not every type of seed is as easy to grow as others, Sweet Gum can be difficult to grow, but the results make it worth the effort. Germination can take from 1 to 3 months.

Top tips

- Once seedlings appear, keep plant warm and moist to mimic it's natural, native habitat conditions.
- Using a heatmat will keep the temperature constant without drying out or damaging the roots.

Pine

Pinus Halepensis

The Pine is an evergreen, meaning it will have vibrant green needles all year round. As the tree matures it will produce small cones and will lose these in the summer, as it would naturally in the wild to spread its seeds.



Sowing

Aleppo Pine (*Pinus halepensis*) are native to warmer climates, so a cold stratification not as important as other varieties, but will still benefit from a short time in the cold to stimulate the change in 'seasons' or temperatures to force the seed to germinate when introduced to the warmth. See [Sowing Seeds](#) for more detail.

Germination

This variety of pine should germinate relatively quickly, usually within 1 month of being in a warm sunny environment, but it can take some seeds longer to germinate so patience is important.

Top tips

- Seeds from fallen cones can be planted to grow further bonsai.
- Growing pine indoors in warmer conditions will encourage needles to stay short, in bristly clumps.
- Cooler conditions will encourage long needle growth.

Redbud

Cercis Chinensis

Chinese Redbud's make a particularly beautiful bonsai but they are known to be one of the harder specimens to grow. Perseverance and patients will ensure you get a stunning display of tightly compacted bright pink blooms.



Sowing

Chinese Redbud (*Cercis chinensis*) is similar to the Sweetgum as it is native to China and commonly found colouring states across America. Redbud seeds will require a cold, wet 'stratification' process for 30 days before introducing to warm humid conditions to complete the germination process. See [Sowing Seeds](#) for more detail.

Germination

Redbud seeds have relatively good germination rates. Under the correct growing conditions; some seeds will germinate and begin to sprout shoots just 1 week from being introduced to the warmth, but others can take up to 3 months.

Top tips

- Once seedlings appear, keep plant warm and moist.
- Using a heatmat will keep the temperature constant without drying out or damaging the roots.

Transplanting

Ideal Windowsill Houseplants

Once seedlings are large enough to handle, they can be transplanted into their forever homes. Included in this kit is a traditional indoor pot with drip tray, which looks great with one bonsai plant. You could grow all your bonsai in different style pots or even in a long windowsill planter to create a miniature indoor forest!

Allow plants to become strong enough to be moved, without damaging the roots or stems. Gently squeeze the propagator tray to loosen the growing medium and release the seedlings from the tray. Carefully tease the roots out with some tweezers, whilst gently holding the stem of the plant to guide them out.

Transplant each of your bonsai seedlings to larger pots where they will continue to grow and can eventually be trained and styled into unique shapes.

Ensure each planter is filled with good quality soil and has a drainage hole in the base to allow water to drain out freely. Bonsai plants do not like to sit in water, but the soil should be kept moist for best results.

Adding slate chippings on top of the soil, around the plant will ensure the soil is kept moist, without the water evaporating in warmer conditions.

The best way to water your plant is by placing the pot into water, allowing the water to soak up from the base.

Tree plants grow incredibly slowly, so your bonsai will be ready to prune and train with wires approximately 3 years from sowing.

Caring For

Nurture Your Bonsai

Feeding

Feed every two weeks with a liquid bonsai food or organic fertiliser during the cooler months. Over the summer bonsai don't require food but misting with water using a spray bottle at the end of the day when the temperature is at its coolest will keep the tree hydrated. Provide an iron supplement several times a year to improve the soil.

Pruning

Bonsai take time to establish, so pruning should only be done once the plant becomes strong and sturdy, usually 3 years from sowing. Pruning your bonsai will encourage dense foliage growth, rather than height and long branches. Allow several branches of leaves to grow enough to get a feel of how you would like your bonsai to look. Once the stems become long with several sprouting branches, trim back towards the trunk. This will encourage new foliage buds to grow. Once pruned the main branches should be well defined with an open structure.

Wiring

A crucial technique to train and style your Bonsai tree; by wrapping wire around the branches of a tree you can bend and reposition the branches. Choose a wire suitable for your bonsai and carefully wind around the trunk or main branches you wish to bend. Make sure the wire is not tightened, but gently curled around each branch and bent very slowly. Watch the tree closely during the growth season and remove the wires in time to prevent them from cutting into the bark.

For more information, hints and tips please visit our website www.plentyofbang.co.uk
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