



USDA Forest Service
Northern Research Station
Northeastern Area



COLUMNAR



CONICAL



BROAD UPRIGHT



VASE SHAPED



BROAD SPREADING



BROAD OVAL

Selecting Tree Characteristics

Trees have many favorable qualities and provide a variety of benefits. With proper consideration prior to planting, the end result of planting trees can be extremely favorable as trees give shade, shelter, visual interest and can increase the value of property. More over, trees are a source of enjoyment. If you plan on planting trees in your yard, take into account the following design strategies that a landscape architect does when selecting trees.

Site Location

When selecting trees for a planting design a Landscape Architect's main goal is to find the right tree for the right location. The characteristics of the site will answer a lot of questions on what is feasible to plant in a given location. Plants should be placed in a location where they will thrive and not merely survive. Before you decide to plant a tree, ask yourself the following questions: Does this location provide the sun exposure and culture (water, fertility, pH) the tree needs to reach its destined size?

If the tree will be planted near the road, what is its tolerance to salt? Will its growth interfere with utilities, sidewalks, site distances or other site amenities? Moreover, does the location provide adequate space for the tree to grow to its full potential? Nurseries will provide information on hardiness, exposure and culture on plant tags and will sell plants that are appropriate for the area.

Tree Evaluation Criteria

- Site Location
- Adjacency to Other Trees
- Sun or Shade
- Soil Type
- Tree Shape, Size and Height
- Overall Landscape Design Fit

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