



Caring for Bonsai Plants

A bonsai is a miniature tree grown in a shallow container, carefully pruned and shaped to resemble a full-sized tree in nature. The word bonsai means “tree in a tray” in Japanese. Bonsai is a form of pruning living trees to maintain them at a specific size— it is not a specific species of plant—but a horticultural art form that combines patience, pruning, and care to maintain balance between growth and size.

Light

- Place in bright, indirect light—south or west-facing windows are ideal.
- Some species (like juniper) prefer outdoor summering in partial sun.

Water

- Check soil daily; water when the top layer begins to dry.
- Water thoroughly until it drains from the bottom of the pot.
- Avoid letting the soil dry out completely or stay soggy.

Temperature

- Indoor tropical bonsai: keep between 18–24°C (65–75°F) year-round.
- Outdoor species (e.g., juniper, pine): protect in winter by moving to a cold frame or unheated garage once temperatures fall below freezing.

Fertilizer

- Use a balanced liquid bonsai fertilizer every 2–4 weeks from spring to early fall.
- Reduce feeding during winter dormancy.

Pruning & Repotting

- Regular pruning maintains shape and encourages branching.
- Repot every 2–3 years in spring, using bonsai-specific soil mix.
- Consider root pruning during repotting to maintain a healthy balanced plant
 - Brush/wash away soil to expose roots
 - Trim long thick or circling roots using clean, sharp scissors
 - Remove up to 1/3 of the root mass – do not over prune
 - Repot in fresh soil, spreading roots evenly

Common Issues

- Yellowing leaves → Overwatering or poor drainage.
- Leggy growth → Not enough light.

