



# GROWING *edibles* IN PERTH

## Scrumptious Apples

Apples are a perfect tree for any size home garden. These old-fashioned staples are both pretty and practical. For many, they evoke a nostalgic feel of homegrown simplicity. There are plenty of varieties available, from the crunchy red flesh of 'Crimson Crisp' to the traditional cooking apple 'Granny Smith'.

All apples require a 'cross pollinator' i.e. a compatible variety that flowers at the same time. The bees take pollen from one tree to another and cross pollinate the flowers so that fruit forms. Without a suitable mate (or cross pollinator) fruit won't be produced. We can help you select two or more compatible varieties to ensure fruit production.

Apples also require a cool winter. High chill varieties need cold conditions to set the fruit. These are called high chill varieties. For those lucky enough to have a garden in an area that gets frost, try your hand at old-fashioned varieties such as 'Cox's Orange Pippin' or 'Jonathan'. For those in more coastal areas, we recommend low chill varieties such as 'Dorsett Gold' and 'Ana'. These don't require the chill of a frost and will still set fruit in warmer climates.

For many home gardeners, the delicious fruit on an apple tree is just a bonus. They are often grown simply as a feature tree. Their soft, romantic blossoms herald the beginning of spring. The flowers are followed by deep green leaves that create plenty of shade. Autumn colours develop as the weather cools off again before the trees shed their leaves to let in the winter sunlight.

Modern grafting techniques and breeding have led to some interesting forms. Apple trees are now available as dwarf forms (approx. 2m tall at maturity), full sized trees (4m tall), multi-grafted with two or more varieties grafted onto one tree (4m tall) as well as the architecturally stunning narrow columnar forms (60cm wide x 3m tall).

Plant apple trees in an open, sunny position. They will tolerate a wide range of soils but prefer free draining with plenty of added compost. Feed with a WA compatible slow release fertiliser each season and water well during the fruiting season.

Apples are a resilient tree and show little susceptibility to pest and disease. Their dense fruit makes them unappealing to fruit fly compared to softer stone fruit. Netting during fruiting season can help to keep hungry birds at bay.

Now is the perfect time to pick a pair of apples, so view our range online at <https://guildfordgardencentre.com.au/.../fru.../soft-skin/apple/> or pop in store soon for some expert advice.

*This is intended as general information only. Please ask one of our horticulturists for specific advice for your situation.*