Rubber Tree

Ficus elastica

Height: 30 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 10

Other Names: Rubber Plant, Rubber Fig

Description:

An ornamental accent plant producing large, oval, glossy green leaves; in frost free areas this variety can grow quite large; a popular houseplant in colder climates

Ornamental Features

Rubber Tree has attractive dark green evergreen foliage on a tree with a round habit of growth. The glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Rubber Tree is a multi-stemmed evergreen tree with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Rubber Tree is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Rubber Tree foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Rubber Tree
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Rubber Tree will grow to be about 30 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 50 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.

Rubber Tree is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.