Fireball Japanese Maple

Acer palmatum 'Fireball'



Fireball Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

This dwarf variety features bright red spring color that darkens in summer, then fire engine red once again in fall; has a very compact rounded habit, perfect for containers or as an accent in the garden; keep evenly moist and add organic matter to soil

Ornamental Features

Fireball Japanese Maple is primarily valued in the landscape or garden for its ornamental globe-shaped form. It features subtle corymbs of red flowers rising above the foliage in mid spring before the leaves. It has attractive green-variegated dark red foliage with hints of burgundy which emerges scarlet in spring. The small palmate leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding crimson in the fall. The rough gray bark and red branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Fireball Japanese Maple is an open multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned in summer after the leaves have fully developed, as it may 'bleed' sap if pruned in late winter or early spring. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Fireball Japanese Maple is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Fireball Japanese Maple will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This shrub does best in a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in partial shade. Keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Fireball Japanese Maple makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use 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.