



## Common Plant Characteristics That Influence Flammability

### low flammability plants

- Green leaves only on plant
- Thick, fleshy leaves or stems
- Broad leaved
  
- Produces small amounts of dead and fine materials below plant
- Open growth form with low density of leaves and small twigs along branches
- Low levels of volatiles, oils, or resins
  
- High moisture content, succulent
- Dead leaves/twigs retained on plant

### high flammability plants

- Dry leathery leaves
- Needle-like or very fine leaves
- Production of large amounts of dead leaves below the plant
- Dense, compact form
  
- Abundant, dense foliage
  
- High oil or resin content including gums and terpenes
- Foliage with low moisture content
- Shaggy bark

Select firewise shrubs with the following in mind:

- Select the “right plant for the right place” by choosing plants that are well adapted to the conditions where they are to be planted and by considering their flammability characteristics.
- Prune regularly to maintain vertical and horizontal separation from other plants, especially those close to structures.
- Periodically remove dead or diseased plant material from plants within your home landscape.
- Remember, there are no “fireproof” plants. All plants and organic mulches will burn in extreme weather or fire conditions.



## FireWise Landscaping Plants

There is no such thing as a “fireproof” landscape (unless it is completely covered in concrete), but there are landscapes that are “Firewise” and can help prevent the spread of fire damage.

### General concepts to keep in mind when choosing and planting Firewise species are:

A plant's moisture content is the single most important factor governing its volatility. However, oil and resin content plus other factors in some species render them flammable even when the plant is well-watered.

1. During extended periods of drought, when the risk of wildfires is highest, your plant choices and their placement in the landscape could make your home vulnerable to fire damage.
2. Deciduous plants tend to be more fire resistant because their leaves have higher moisture content and their basic chemistry is less flammable. When deciduous trees are dormant, there is less fuel to carry fire through their canopies.
3. In some cases, there is a strong correlation between drought tolerance and fire resistance. For example, a plant may shed its leaves or needles during extreme drought. Other drought-tolerant species may have smaller leaves or thick, succulent leaves. These plants offer less fuel or have a higher moisture content, both of which help reduce fire hazard.

4. Consider the following when choosing plants and laying out landscaping:

- Plants that have a higher water content.
- Plants that don't tend to take fire from the ground towards windows or the roof, because these are the sensitive area in our homes.
- Avoid ornamental grasses such as Gulf muhly, because they have a tendency to dry out and become easily ignitable.
- Use the areas near your house for your hard scapes like rocks, fountains and walkways. These are a good barrier that the fire has difficulty jumping, unless you get high winds (forty mile per hour or higher).
- Mulch to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. Mulch can be organic (hardwood mulch recommended) or inorganic (gravel or rock). Avoid pine bark, pine needles, or other materials that can easily carry fire.

Deer resistance ('deer'column) - N=none, M=medium, H= high

### Recommended large hardwood trees:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Maple, Big-toothed or Red	<i>Acer grandidentatum</i> or <i>A. rubrum</i>	N
Mexican Sycamore	<i>Platanus mexicana</i> (more drought-tolerant)	H
Oak	<i>Quercus</i> ( <i>Post-stellata</i> , Texas <i>Red-texana</i> , <i>Shumard-shumardii</i> )	N
Pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	N
Plateau Black cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i> var. <i>eximia</i>	N

**Recommended large hardwood trees: (continued)**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Sugar Hackberry	<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	M
Texas Ash	<i>Fraxinus texensis</i>	N
Texas Pistache	<i>Pistacia texana</i>	M
Sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	H
Walnut, Black or Texas	<i>Juglans nigra</i> or <i>microcarpa</i>	N

**Medium-sized trees could include:**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Mexican Buckeye	<i>Ungnadia speciosa</i>	M
Mexican Plum	<i>Prunus mexicana</i>	N
Mexican redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>mexicana</i>	M
Roughleaf Dogwood	<i>Cornus drummondii</i>	N
Texas persimmon	<i>Diospyros texana</i>	M
Texas redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>texensis</i>	M
Western soapberry	<i>Sapindus drummondii</i>	H

**Recommended small trees/shrubs are:**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
American beautyberry	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	N
Anacacho Orchid	<i>Bauhinia congesta</i>	H
Black Dalea	<i>Dalea frutescens</i>	M
Dessert Willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	M
Elbowbush	<i>Forestiera pubescens</i> var. <i>pubescens</i>	M
Esperanza (Yellow bells)	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	M
Evergreen Sumac	<i>Rhus virens</i>	M
Fragrant Sumac	<i>Rhus trilobata</i> ( <i>R. aromatica</i> )	M
Flame Acanthus	<i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus</i> var. <i>wrightii</i>	H
Texas Mountain Laurel	<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	H

**Recommended herbaceous perennials:**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	H
Blanketflower	<i>Gaillardia x grandiflora</i> (some Native)	M
Butterflyweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	H
Columbine	<i>Aquilegia</i> (some Native)	M
Coreopsis - perennial species	<i>Coreopsis</i>	M
Englemann daisy	<i>Engelmannia peristenia</i>	N

**Recommended herbaceous perennials: (continued)**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Fleabane	<i>Erigeron</i> (some Native)	M
Lantana	<i>Lantana horrida</i> (some Native)	H
Lupine	<i>Lupinus</i> (some Native)	M
Primrose	<i>Oenothera</i> (some Native)	N
Penstemon	<i>Penstemon</i> (some Native)	N
Salvia, Sage	<i>Salvia</i> (some Native)	H
Shrubby boneset	<i>Ageratina havanensis</i>	M
Skullcap	<i>Scutellaria</i> (some Native)	H
Turk's cap	<i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i> <i>var. drummondii</i>	M
Yarrow	<i>Achillea</i> (some Native)	H

**Also Recommended:**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Agave	<i>Agave</i> (some Native)	H
Cactus	<i>Cactaceae</i> (some Native)	H
Nolina	<i>Nolinaceae</i> (some Native)	H
Yucca	<i>Yucca</i> (some Native)	H

**Do not plant near the foundation:**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Agarito	<i>Mahonia trifoliolata</i>	H
Ornamental Grasses	(native & non-native)	H
Possumhaw Holly	<i>Ilex decidua</i>	M
Yaupon Holly	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	M

**AVOID the following:**

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>deer</u>
Baldcypress	<i>Taxodium distichum</i> ( <i>&amp; Montezuma - mucronatum</i> )	M
Juniper (Cedar)	<i>Juniperus</i> (native & non-native)	H
Pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	H
Pine	<i>Pinus</i> (native & non-native)	H
Upright rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> (all varieties)	H

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