





# Apple (*Malus* spp.)

Type	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Height x Width (metres)	Spacing (metres)	Pollinator	Soil type	Sun	Moisture	Shelter	Plant	Harvest
	D	Dw 2–3 x 4 F 5–6 x 5	3 10	Y				Y	Autumn to winter	Autumn

## Site

- Needs a sunny site, sheltered from strong winds – moderate summer, winter chill.
- Tolerates a range of soil types, and prefers slightly acidic conditions.
- Needs good air circulation to prevent diseases.

## Care

- Plant in winter and mulch well.
- Tie to stakes for the first couple of years.
- Water regularly while it's fruiting.
- Cross-pollinated by bees and other insects – if there's no apple trees in your neighbourhood, plant two varieties or a multi-graft.
- Thin the fruit in early summer so it grows to a good size.

## Training & pruning

- Best as a *central leader*. Can be trained as *espalier* or *cordon* (details in 'Part 2 – Training').
- Once the tree is established, prune to remove crossing branches, dead or diseased wood, and to encourage new fruiting wood.

- Bears fruit on spurs and end buds (see diagrams). Fruit buds develop on 2-year-old wood, so keep new shoots for two seasons, then cut them back.
- Shorten or thin out about a quarter of the older fruiting wood each winter.
- Shorten the strong framework arms to an outward-facing leaf bud (see diagram).

## Companions

- Replace grass with spring bulbs, chives, garlic, tansy, comfrey, alyssum, nasturtium.

## Harvest

- Fruits within 2–4 years.
- Pick fruit when they have developed full colour – lift them gently from the tree so you don't damage the fruiting spurs.

## Health

- Use fresh, cooked, bottled or frozen.
- Dry for use in cereals, trail mix, snacks.
- Best health benefits if you don't peel the skin. Good for vitamins A, B and C, minerals, fibre, antioxidants.

## Recommended varieties

Buy disease-resistant varieties.

*Early:* Akane, Discovery, Gravenstein

*Mid:* Captain Kidd, Dayton, Egremont Russet, Prima, Worcester Pearmain

*Late:* Belle de Boskoop, Jonagold, Liberty, Kidd's Orange Red, Merton Russet

*Very late:* Bramley's Seedling, Sturmer Pippin, Cornish Aromatic

**Graft on a different variety:** [www.sces.org.nz/pmwiki.php/Content/Grafting](http://www.sces.org.nz/pmwiki.php/Content/Grafting)

## Central leader



## Fruiting spur



## Flower buds (rounded) leaf buds (pointed)



Adapted from Fruit Gardening in NZ