





# Olive (*Olea europaea*)

Type	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Height x Width (metres)	Spacing (metres)	Pollinator	Soil type	Sun	Moisture	Shelter	Plant	Harvest
	E	4-8 x 3-6	5-7	Y				N	Autumn	Autumn

## Site

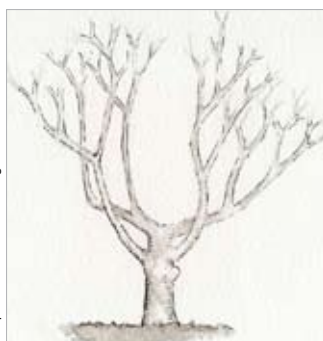
- Prefers full sun, a hot, dry summer and winter chilling.
- Tolerates frost in winter but not in spring.
- Copes with coastal conditions – young trees need staking against strong winds.
- Soil should be well drained, alkaline, and have lowish fertility.

## Care

- Easy to grow, long lived, height easily controlled with pruning.
- Plant during autumn or spring, taking care not to damage the long taproot.
- Space plants 5–7m each way. One or two trees are enough for pickling; more if you're growing them for oil.
- Has shallow roots as well as deep taproots – mulch well.
- Water while the tree is young and during dry weather to improve the fruit yield.
- Cross-pollination (by wind and bees) is needed for good fruit.

## Training & pruning

- Grows fast at first, then slows down – makes an attractive specimen tree or hedge.
- Best trained in a *vase* shape.



Vase shape

- At planting, shorten the central stem to force the growth of side shoots below that point.
- Next spring, keep about five of the strongest long new shoots as the main framework. Remove the tips of those shoots.
- Once the tree is established, each year remove the tips of the leaders and any very long shoots, to keep the shape open.
- Remove dead or criss-crossing branches, suckers and very low branches.
- Fruits on the previous season's wood, so don't cut off the new growth.
- Thin the fruit by hand soon after it has formed – this helps the tree bear even crops each year.
- Heavy pruning will pep up a tired tree.

## Companions

- Mediterranean herbs eg oregano, thyme.

## Harvest

- Bears fruit within 3–4 years.
- Leave olives for oil on the tree until they're fully ripe. Pick olives for pickling while they're still firm.

## Health

- Very high in monounsaturated fat, antioxidants and vitamin E. Good for digestion.

## Recommended varieties

- *Oil*: Chemlali, Koroneiki, Moraiolo, Picual, Sourani
- *Oil & Pickling*: Barnea, Manzanilla, Frantoio, Leccino, Nocellara, Pendolino.