





Pear, Nashi, Quince *(Pyrus spp.)*

Type	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Height x Width (metres)	Spacing (metres)	Pollinator	Soil type	Sun	Moisture	Shelter	Plant	Harvest
	D	5–15 x 4–6	4–10	Y				Y	Winter	Autumn

Site

- Prefers a warm summer, cool winter, shelter from wind, and a cool, damp, shady site.
- Likes deep, well-drained clay soil. Copes with wet conditions, but doesn't produce as much fruit if waterlogged.

Care

- Easy-to-grow, long-lived trees.
- Quince is self-fertile.
- Pollinated by bees.
- You'll get more fruit if there's another suitable variety nearby for cross-pollination, or if you grow a double-grafted tree. Most pears and nashi cross-pollinate each other.
- Plant in winter.
- Mulch with well-rotted manure and rinsed seaweed, leaving a clear space around the trunk.

Modified central leader



Fruiting spur



Adapted from *Fruit Gardening in NZ*

Training & pruning

- Vigorous trees that need to be controlled if grown in an urban backyard.
- Training options:
 - freestanding tall pears – *modified central leader*
 - nashi, quince, dwarf pear – *espalier, cordon*
 - quince – *fan or bush*
- See the section 'Part 2 – Training' for details on early training for each of these shapes.

Once the tree is established

Pears carry the best fruit on 2–4-year-old spurs on the main branches.

- Fruiting laterals form on branches that grow flat, rather than upright – each spring, cut off any strong, upright laterals and keep the flatter-angled growth.
- Tie down vigorous growth to encourage the development of fruit buds.
- To get a succession of new fruiting wood:
 - remove the tips of the fruiting arms
 - shorten 2-year-old laterals to three or four fruit buds
 - remove older spurs.
- In summer, remove any diseased or damaged wood – cut this well below the infected area and remove it from your property. Sterilise your pruners with meths or bleach wipes.

Quince bears fruit on the tips of the previous season's growth and on spurs on older wood.

- Prune in winter to remove dead or diseased wood, old laterals and overcrowded growth. Don't shorten the laterals, as they carry the next season's fruit buds.



Companions

- Spring bulbs, tansy, alyssum, nasturtium, borage, comfrey, chives, garlic.

Harvest

- Dwarf trees bear fruit within 3–5 years; tall varieties take 5–9 years.
- Fruit ripens in autumn.
- Pick *pears* carefully just before they're fully ripe and let them finish ripening indoors. Eat fresh, or cook for freezing, bottling, desserts, jams, chutneys, savoury dishes. Dry them for use in cereal or trail mix.
- Leave *nashi* on the tree until fully ripe and eat them fresh, when crisp and juicy. Store in fridge for up to 3 months.
- Pick *quince* in midautumn before frosts. Store in a cool, dark place for 4–8 weeks, until the skin turns green. Use in marmalades, jellies, candies and pastes.

Health

- Have good levels of fibre and vitamins C and K (but most of the vitamin C is lost if the fruit is cooked).

Recommended varieties

Pear

Early: Williams Bon Chrétien

Mid: Princess, Beurre Hardy, Conference

Late: Beurre Bosc, Doyenne du Comice

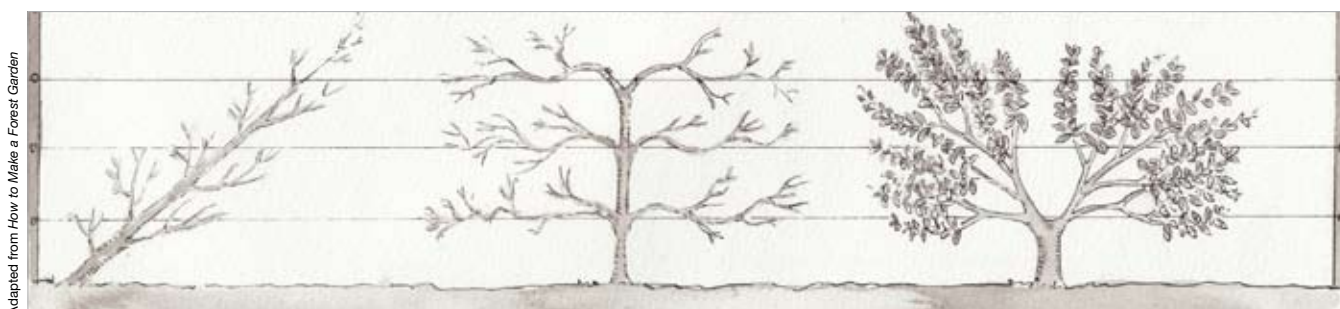
Very late: Winter Cole, Winter Nelis

Quince

Early: Van Deman

Mid: Vranja

Cordon, espalier and fan shapes



Adapted from *How to Make a Forest Garden*