



Mugo Pine

Pinus mugo

Alex X. Niemiera, Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

Summary:

Foliage: 1 to 2 inch long needles; 2 needles per fascicle (bundle); evergreen

Height: Depends on cultivar

Spread: Depends on cultivar

Shape: most dwarf types have a low mound form or an upright oval form; the species is a medium to large multi-stem tree form

Main Features: Generally only dwarf forms of mugo pine are sold at garden centers; the species (non-dwarf) is a multi-stem medium to large tree. Dwarf forms vary in their growth rate from 1 to 8 inches per year, and in their form (mounded to upright oval). Hence, cultivar selection is important to match the cultivar to the available garden/landscape space. Cultivars are useful in mass, as foundation plants, and to frame a landscape element (e.g., entryway, walkway, art work); individual cultivars will be discussed in the Additional Information section. Mugo pine tolerates dry and alkaline soil.

Plant Needs:

Zone 3 to 7 (will languish in hotter portions of zone 7)

Light: Full sun

Moisture: Average to dry

pH range: Acid to alkaline

Functions:

Dwarf forms of mugo pine are useful in mass, as foundation plants, and to frame a landscape element (e.g., entryway, walkway, art work).

Care:

No special care is needed. If pruning is required, then candle growth (newly emerging shoots in spring) should be cut in half.

Additional Information:

There are numerous cultivars in the trade (more than 40). Some of the popular ones are: 'Mops' slow-growing globe-shaped form

var. pumilo (Pumilo Group) wide-growing form

'Sherwood Compact' slow-growing flat mound form

'Slowmound' slow-growing mounded form

'Tannenbaum' tall-growing form (10 feet +) with a dense conical form