

## Hedging Plants for Canberra Gardens

*To create a healthy and attractive living fence in your garden:*

### Planting and maintenance

**The most important point to remember:** A stunning, bushy, well-shaped, healthy hedge is not a low maintenance one;

### You get out what you put in!

- **Prepare your ground thoroughly before planting.** It is very important to give your new plants a good start. Dig compost into your soil and turn the area over with gypsum if you have clay soils. See our pamphlet 'clay soils in Canberra' for more information.
- **Plant your hedging shrubs half a metre apart** to achieve a dense, bushy hedge (closer together for slow-growing plants such as English Box).
- **Trim the top and sides of the hedge regularly** (at least 3 times per year), **and from a very young age (ideally at time of planting)**. If you allow the plants to reach the desired height before trimming, you will be left with a mass of bare branches at the bottom of your plants, and a small amount of green on the top.
- **Water and fertilise your hedge regularly**, as the plants will compete vigorously for food and water.
- **Try to trim the hedge so that the bottom is wider than the top.** Sunlight directed to the bottom of the plants will encourage more green foliage in these areas.

## Plant Selection

### Hedging Plants under 1 metre

1. **Abelia grandiflora nana** – pink flowers in summer, foliage turns bronze in autumn.
2. **Correa "Dusky Bells"** – Australian plant with pink bell flowers autumn. Full sun or part shade.
3. **Correa glabra** – a tough aussie plant with bright green foliage and red or green/yellow bell flowers autumn and winter. Very hardy in hot, dry spots.
4. **Dwarf Callistemon varieties** – many colours, trim after flowering.



5. **Hebe species** – hardy, long-flowering shrubs. Many forms and colours available.
6. **Escallonia ‘Pink Pixi’** – a tough shrub with glossy foliage and pink flowers in spring/summer.
7. **Pittosporum “Shorty”** – grey/green neat foliage. No flowers.
8. **Pittosporum “Green Pillar”** – shiny green tidy formal hedge. No flowers.

## Hedging Plants over 1 metre

1. **Abelia grandiflora** – stunning hedge if pruned regularly. Shiny new growth, pink flowers summer. Will form a hedge 1-1.7m tall.
2. **Buxus sempervirens** – English Box. Very slow-growing hedge to 1.5m. Needs regular feeding. Good for formal gardens (but don’t hold your breath!)
3. **Callistemon species** – Bottlebrush. Beautiful soft new growth and colourful, bird-attracting flowers. Loves regular pruning and watering. Will grow up to 2.5m tall, depending on species.
4. **Various conifers** – many conifers (such as *Cupressocyparis leylandii* Castlewellan Gold and *Cupressus torulosa*) can grow quickly, and will easily grow above head height. *Only attempt this one if you are prepared to trim very regularly, as you can damage or kill the plants if they are cut back into the old, woody stems.*
5. **Escallonia species** – a beautiful hedge to 1.5m if pruned, fertilised and watered **very regularly**.
6. **Grevillea victoriae** – dense grey foliage and rusty red flowers. Plant in well-drained soil with a good mulch cover. 1-1.5m tall. Fantastic for hedges.
7. **Grevillea iaspicula** – Wee Jasper Spider Flower – a hardy, lime green shrub to 2m with cream/pink flowers winter. Very tough.
8. **Photinia species** – most common hedge in Canberra. Will grow to 6m if unpruned. Red new growth and cream flowers late spring. Flowers can adversely affect those who suffer from hayfever.
9. **Pittosporum species** – common hedge or screen in Canberra. Fine foliage, blends in with any type of garden. Can grow to a 3m hedge. Do not overwater.
10. **Westringia fruticosa** – Native Rosemary. A lovely, tidy hedge when trimmed. White flowers throughout the year.

So think beyond the Photinia hedge! – There are many interesting plants that will make a stunning living fence, and will provide food and shelter for our local birds.

