



DEMYSTIFYING THE ART OF TREE SELECTION

Developed by Ramie Pierce,
City of Tacoma

Putting the right tree in the right place

Tree Species

The number of tree species might total 25 percent of all living plant species...

- Did you know that there is an estimate of 100,000 tree species worldwide?!
That's pretty overwhelming...
- Only a fraction of those grow here...and even fewer are right for what you want/need.

Narrowing the Field

- Determining what conditions exist-think about your area with different filters
- Deciding the qualities you are looking for in a tree
- Giving you the ability to search for a large tree with yellow fall color that will take morning sun and tolerate poorly-drained soils...

What does right tree mean?

Right tree, right place is a mantra you may have heard before. It's used by landscape, nursery, urban forestry professionals to help get the message out.

The right tree is the tree that is best suited for the area it's being planted in and the expectations of the entity planting it.

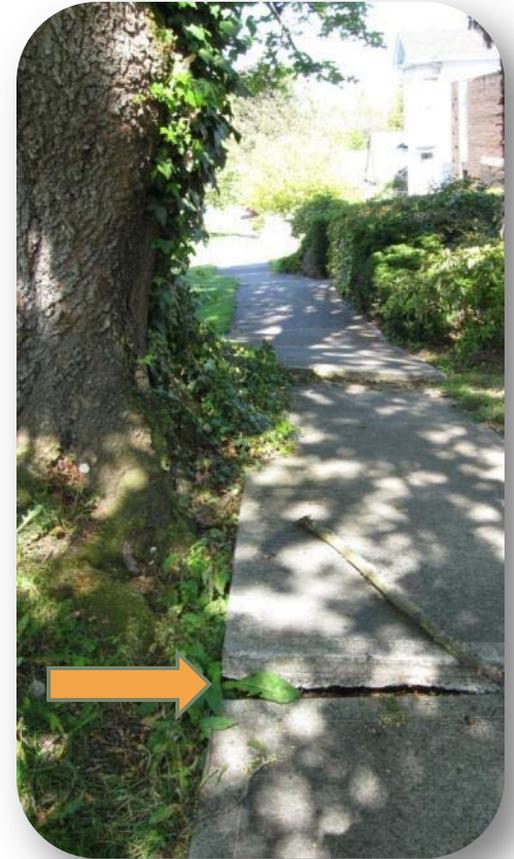
Qualities of a right tree?

- ❑ Interferes with overhead utility lines
- ❑ Obstructs sight at corners and intersections



Qualities of a right tree?

- ❑ Causes damage to house
- ❑ Damages sidewalk
- ❑ Gets bigger than the space it's in



Where is the right place?

The right place. What is that exactly? A place where the right tree can grow to its destined size and have minimal or no negative impacts on urban infrastructure.

Qualities of a right place?

- ❑ Right next to a building foundation
- ❑ Compacted soil
- ❑ Paved
- ❑ In front of a Stop sign
- ❑ Low overhead utility lines



Factors to consider: tree

Why are you planting?

- Shade-energy savings
- Beauty
- Buffer/Screen
- Seasonal interest
- Frame view



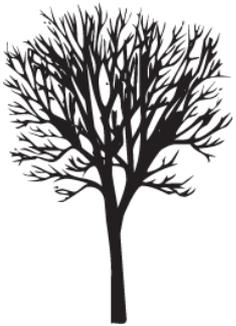
Tree characteristics

- Size
- Habit/Form
- Culture
- Growth Rate
- Foliage
- Bark
- Flowers
- Fruit
- Liabilities



Tree Characteristics

Size at maturity



Small
15-25' Tall



Medium
25-40' Tall



Large
40-70' Tall



Extra Large
70'+ Tall

Tree Characteristics

- Size at purchase time
- Cost-varies greatly and depends on species approx. \$20-\$200



1 gallon



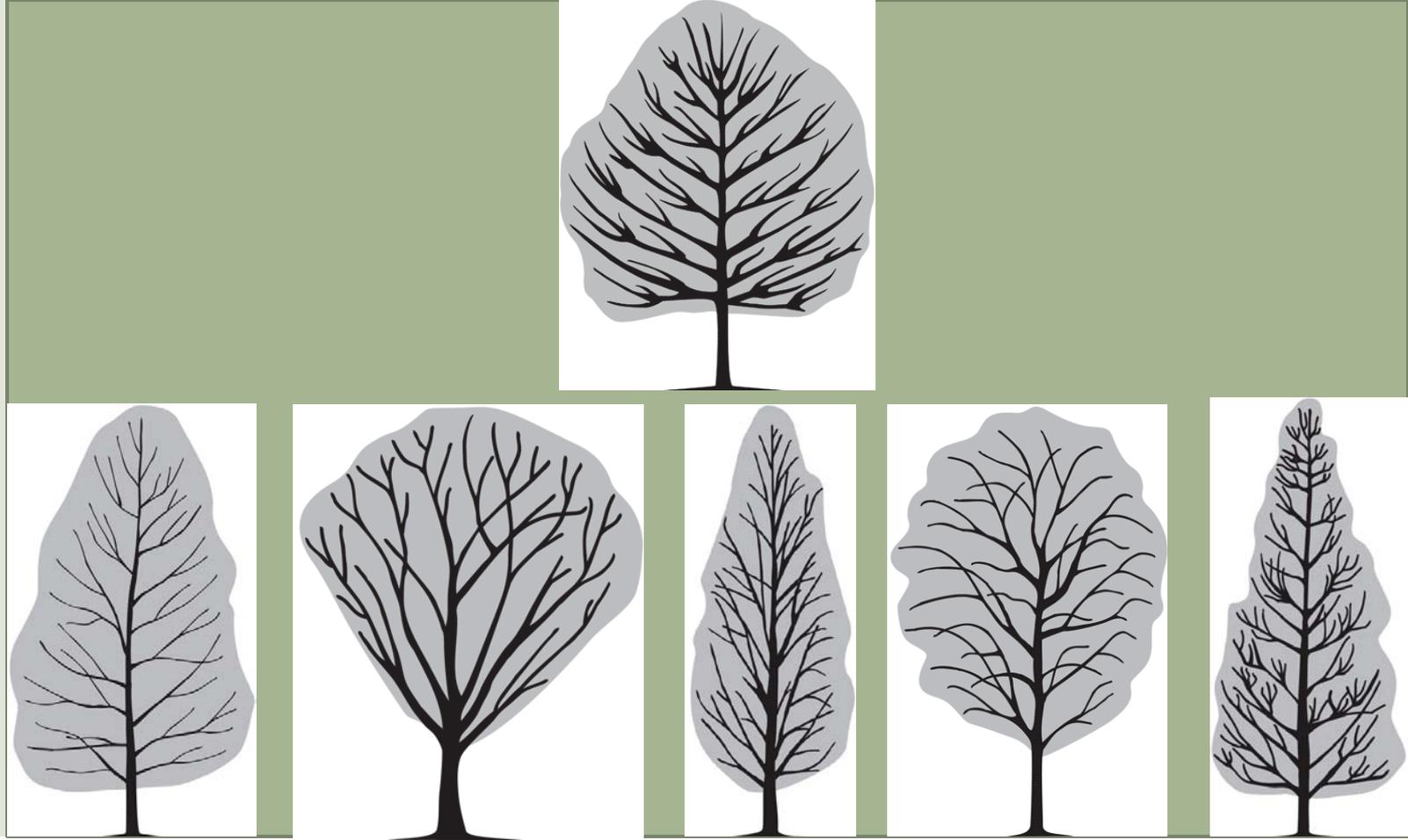
5 gallon



10 gallon



15 gallon



Tree Characteristics

Form: single stem, multi-stem, columnar, pyramidal, round, vase

Habit: suckers, low branching, weeping, upright, responds well to pruning, or not...

Tree Characteristics

- Light: Full sun, part sun/shade, shade-tolerant



- Soil: rocky, sandy, well-drained, fertile



- Water: moist, regular, drought tolerant



Tree Characteristics

- Rate of growth refers to the vertical increase in growth unless specified differently. Rate, as is true for size, is influenced by numerous variables such as soil, drainage, water, fertility, light, exposure, ad infinitum.

Slow =
Less Than 12" per year

Medium/Moderate =
13-24" per year

Fast =
25" per year or greater



Tree Characteristics

Foliage: texture, color, seasonal change, size, evergreen v. deciduous

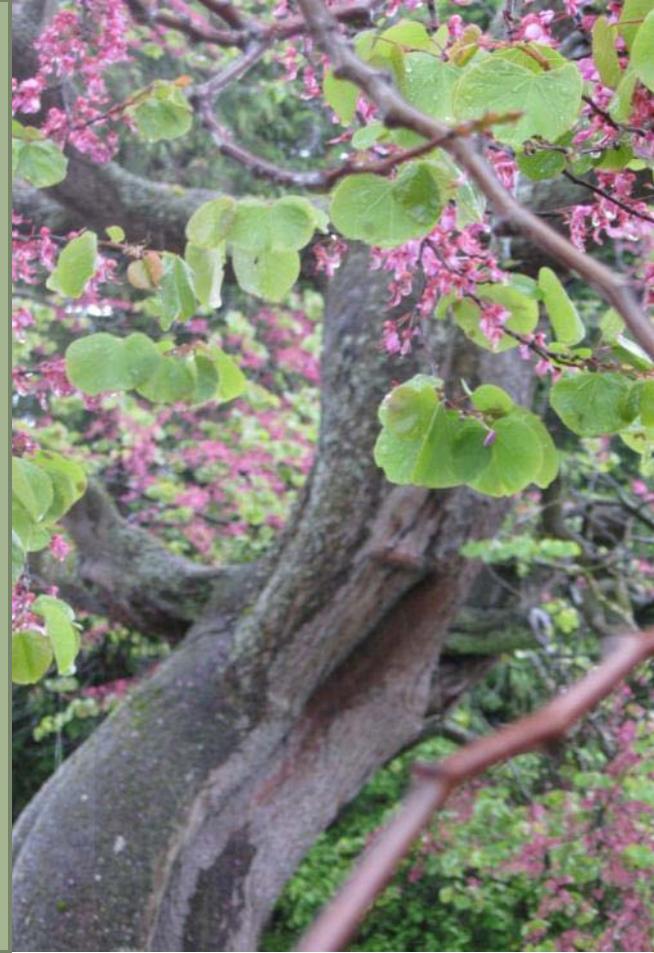
Above from left: Monkey Puzzle Tree, Ginkgo, Red Oak



Tree Characteristics

Bark: smooth, rough, exfoliating, color

Above from left: Ponderosa Pine, Tasmanian Snow Gum, Pacific Madrone and Jacquemonti Birch



Tree Characteristics

Flower: when (winter, spring, summer or fall), color, how long

Above from left: Catalpa, Eastern Redbud and Golden Raintree



Tree Characteristics

Fruit: size, color, wildlife benefit, edible, needs to produce fruit (edible)

NOTE: Fruit trees (apple, plum, etc.) are not permitted in the rights-of-way

Above from left: Strawberry Tree, Doug Fir, Walnut



Tree Characteristics

Liabilities: aggressive and/or very shallow root system, short life span, brittle wood, disease/insect susceptibility

Factors to consider: site

Air

- Air space
- Sun exposure
- Signs/stoplights
- Streetlights
- Proximity of buildings
- Overhead lines

Soil

- Soil/rooting space
- Soil type
- Proximity of underground utilities
- Pavement-sidewalks, road, alley

LOOK



Look up (buildings, utility wires, other trees)

Look down (soil, underground utilities, pavement)

Look around (buildings, other trees, safety, shade/sun)



Underground Utilities

Our standard is minimum of 5' from underground utility lines (gas, electric, water, sewer, phone/cable).

If water/sewer lines are old and have not been replaced or lined in last 20 years or so, it is highly recommended to do so prior to planting or to seek another tree planting location.



Site Considerations

What's wrong with this picture?

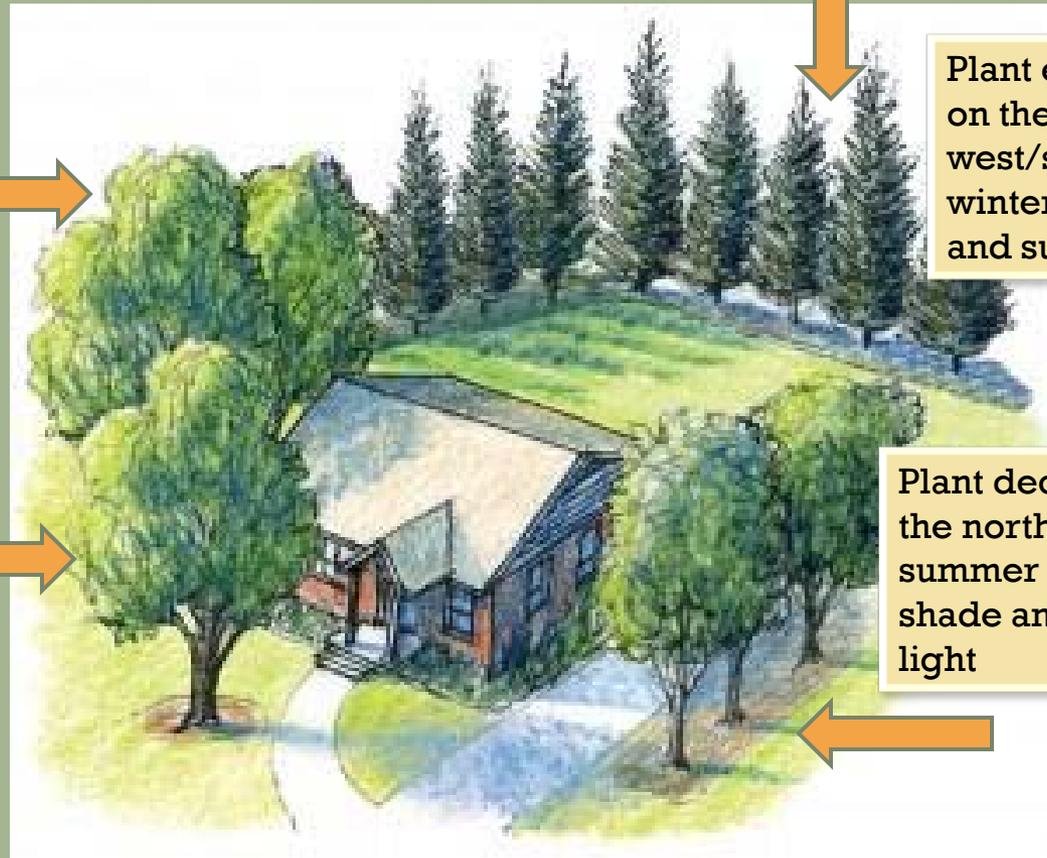


Site Considerations

Soil/rooting space: Is there any? How much?

Plant deciduous on the south side for summer shade and winter sun

Plant deciduous on the east side for summer morning shade



Plant evergreens on the west/southwest for winter windbreak and summer shade

Plant deciduous on the north side for summer afternoon shade and winter light

Site Considerations

Shade/energy savings



Site Considerations

Infrastructure: streetlights, intersections, utilities, buildings, pavement, etc.

Questions to ask yourself

- For what reason(s) am I planting a tree?
 - ▣ Summer shade, seasonal interest, screening, wildlife, etc.
- Where do I want to plant a tree? Is there enough room there for a S/M/L/XL tree?
- What kind of soil do I have there?
 - ▣ Poorly-drained, well-drained, fertile

Questions to ask yourself

- What kind of light is there?
 - ▣ Full sun, part shade (morning or afternoon?), shade
- Are there utilities or other infrastructure I should plan around?
 - ▣ Streetlights, buildings, utilities, other trees, etc.



Now What?

- Now that you have an idea of what kind of tree you want, where do you look/ask to narrow down the possibilities even more?
 - ▣ Local nurseries (not home improvement centers)
 - ▣ Local Arborists
 - ▣ The library/internet
 - ▣ Our Recommended Street Tree List

Resources

www.seattle.gov/trees

- Information on Seattle's trees and tree policies

www.seattle.gov/transportation/treeplantapp.htm

- Street tree planting permit applications

www.callbeforeyoudig.org

- Utility locate service

www.treesaregood.com

- Find Certified Arborists