



York Bonsai

Basic Care Guide – Chinese Elm (*Ulmis Parvifolia*)

Chinese Elm bonsai trees are amongst the most popular and easy to care trees. They offer great tolerance which makes them ideal trees for those starting in bonsai; older specimens are often magnificent and aged trees.

These semi deciduous bonsai trees can be either indoor or outdoor and this is largely dependent on their exposure to temperatures and age; most varieties can be acclimatised to outdoor conditions with time.

Position

Like the majority of bonsai trees the Chinese Elms prefers a position with good light but care should be taken not to place indoor trees in areas of very dry air such as in a window in full sun or above a radiator.

Hardy outdoor trees should still be given frost protection as sub zero temperatures can damage roots and fine branches. If you are unable to place the tree anywhere sheltered in winter then against a house wall covered with fleece offers good protection.

Watering

These trees are thirsty and the ones in freer draining soils, as Akadama, need checking regularly to ensure they do not dry out. Conversely they do not like to be over watered nor have their roots stood in water. Submersion watering should be avoided where possible as it can cause roots rot. Trees are best watered from above as it helps keep soluble salt and mineral levels more regulated. Yellowing of the leaves can be an indication that they tree is too wet or dry with Elms.

Feeding

Feed these bonsai trees regularly on a balanced feed during the growing season. Smaller trees are easier to feed with a liquid bonsai feed while slow release options are far better with larger examples. Indoor trees can be fed all year round with the same feed but frequency should be reduced out of the growing season. Outdoor trees should have feed containing nitrogen stopped from around early September until the new spring buds have opened.

Re Potting

Some Chinese Elms can have very vigorous root growth as it is important to check these trees annually to see if they need repotting – Remember if the trees roots cannot grow or are compacted then its water and nutritional intake will be seriously affected.

Smaller trees need repotting every year into a free draining soil mix.

Pruning

Due to their fine branch structures Chinese Elms can be pruned and shaped with general maintenance clipping but leaf pads should be managed so they keep shallow and airy to encourage new growth and ramification. Chinese Elms produce new branches on the same side as the leaf when pruned and back bud very easily.

Our contact details are available on line at www.yorkbonsai.co.uk should you need any advice or assistance.

This guide is free to download but please respect the work we put into these.