



York Bonsai

Basic Care Guide – Ligustrum (*Chinese Oval Leaf Privet*)

Ligustrum bonsai trees are similar in habitat to Chinese Elms but are more included to be less deciduous than the Elms. These semi evergreen bonsai trees are semi hardy once hardened off and can produce small white flowers in summer.

Position

As with most outdoor trees the Ligustrum bonsai tree prefers a position in full sun to partial shade but will tolerate higher levels of shade than some trees. Some scorching may occur on hot and windy sunny days so some protection is advised as the air can be very dry in these conditions.

The trees, especially smaller ones, will benefit from frost protection to prevent die back of some of the finer trees. Prolonged exposure to persistent frosts should be avoided.

Watering

These bonsai trees need to be kept moist but not over wet during the growing season and slightly drier during the winter months and avoid watering in the evening if there is a frost forecast as the wet soil can freeze easier and also expand cracking the pot.

Trees should be checked in winter to ensure that they do not dry out as cold winds can cause evaporation of moisture from the soil.

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. The trees will benefit greatly from a feed containing no nitrogen from around early September until the new spring buds have opened.

Avoid feeding with high levels of nitrogen before the trees have opened their spring leaves as this can cause large leaf formation which looks unbalanced.

Re Potting

Some Ligustrum 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

Ligustrum back bud easily so finely structured leaf pads can be developed easily. The leaf pads should be kept healthy looking but thin enough to allow light to stimulate branch and leaf growth.

If the temperature and light balance is wrong these trees have a tendency to grow long pale branches when they are actively growing in too much shade as they search for light but this is easily controlled by position.

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.