



NEW GARDEN  
LANDSCAPING & NURSERY

newgarden.com  
email:info@newgarden.com

**New Garden Village**  
5572 Garden Village Way  
Greensboro, NC 27410  
phone: 336-665-0291

**New Garden Gazebo**  
3811 Lawndale Dr.  
Greensboro, NC 27455  
phone: 336-288-8893

# Juniper Bonsai

Please take time to read this care sheet thoroughly. If you follow these guidelines and add a little common sense and tender loving care, you can enjoy your Juniper Bonsai for many years to come. Good luck, and enjoy!

## Watering:

Proper watering is critical. Feel the surface of the soil every morning. If the soil is fairly moist, then you do not need to water. If the soil is only slightly moist, then it is time to water. Water from above until the soil is completely soaked. During hot, dry weather your tree will need frequent watering. Direct sunlight and wind can cause the soil to dry out rapidly. Very small bonsai in small pots can sometimes dry out in a day or less. Be alert to changing conditions.

Misting can be helpful when the air is dry. Misting should not be considered a substitute for watering. ALLOW THE SOIL OF YOUR JUNIPER TO DRY DOWN BETWEEN WATERINGS, BUT NEVER ALLOW THE SOIL TO BECOME BONE DRY.

## Light:

You should give your juniper as much direct sunlight as possible. For all but the very smallest bonsai, this means a southern window when indoors and full sun when outdoors. If your juniper is very small, we recommend that you protect it from the hot midday sun.

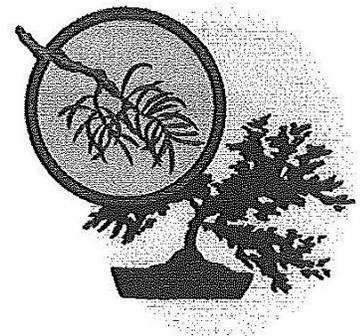
## Fresh Air:

### Outdoors

Good air circulation and fresh air are essential for health. If possible, put your juniper outside in the spring when the temperature is above 45°F and leave it out all summer and fall. When night temperatures fall below 35°F your juniper bonsai will need some protection. You can either bring it into the house, or you can winter it in a cold frame, unheated garage, or some other cold but well-protected place. (Do this only if your juniper has been outside all fall. Do not move it directly from indoors out to the cold.)

### Indoors

If your juniper is indoors, keep it on an open window sill when possible. In the winter, try to find a bright window in a room that cools down at night. If the air is stagnant, we suggest using a fan for a few hours each day. Avoid placing your bonsai close to a heat source.



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# Juniper Bonsai cont.

*(Continued from page 1)*

## **Fertilizing:**

Your juniper does best with frequent feeding during the growing season (spring, summer, and fall). We recommend organic rather than chemical fertilizers. We use Bonsai fertilizer pellets. Scatter them on the surface or gently push them into the soil. Apply about one pellet per square inch of soil surface. Pellets last about two months. For a richer mix, supplement with Neptune's Harvest fish emulsion fertilizer about every two weeks.

## **Pest Prevention:**

Clean your juniper once or twice a month by removing dead or unhealthy foliage. Wash each time you water by running the water through the foliage. Misting is useful when the air is dry, as it provides extra moisture and helps keep the foliage clean. Spider mites are a threat to your juniper. Hold a white piece of paper under your tree and gently shake the foliage. If there are mites, some will fall onto the paper. If you look very closely, you can see them slowly crawling around. If your juniper has mites, treat with an insecticidal soap. Repeat every four days until they are eliminated.

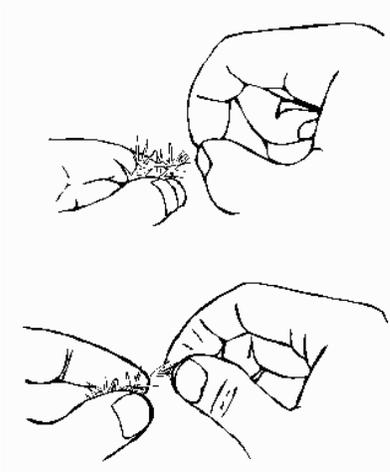
## **Repotting and Styling:**

Most bonsai need to be repotted every two or three years. Occasional trimming (and perhaps wiring) will also be necessary to keep your bonsai looking good. Here are the very basics of shaping your juniper bonsai:

If the foliage on your juniper gets too dense, thin it by snipping small pieces off using small, pointed pruning shears. Thin just a bit to allow air and light to circulate well. Then, reduce the length of the softer green "branches" by snipping or pinching off a few segments. To maintain the same size for an extended time, remove all new, softer growth from the tips after it develops in spring-it will usually be a lighter green color and softer to the touch (see illustration left).

We recommend consulting a good book or a competent enthusiast for advice on more advanced pruning techniques.

Thank you, enjoy your bonsai, and don't forget to water!



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"Where your imagination takes root"