



Shade Garden

During Texas summers we're thankful for our shade trees! Some trees are dense, shutting out most of the sun, and some have a high canopy that lets some light through. But there are plants that will happily grow no matter what amount of shade you have in your yard. If your yard has a lot more shade than you want, you can even have an arborist thin out some of the trees.

DETERMINE WHAT KIND OF SHADE YOU HAVE

Partial sun and partial shade usually mean 3–6 hours of sun/shade each day, preferably morning and early afternoon sun.

Full shade is bright light but little or no direct sun; what we often refer to as dappled light. Most people assume full shade means no light but plants require some form of light to produce carbohydrates (sugars) for normal plant processes such as reproduction, protection and growth.

In Texas, **the afternoon sun** is stronger, and most shade plants will suffer. But you can find a plant that will take both sun and part shade for those areas.

TIPS FOR DESIGNING YOUR GARDEN

Even if you don't use a lot of flowering plants, you can have a visually interesting shade garden by using plants with different textures, different shades of green, different sizes, etc. For instance, ferns such as Wood Fern, Christmas Fern, and Japanese Holly Fern, add texture and interest.

Also when designing, it's a good idea to use lower plants in the center so you can view across your shade garden. Repetition of some plants in a large swath can be striking, instead of having one of each different plant species. A bench or table and chairs will add a comfortable place to sit and observe your shade garden.

EXAMPLES OF SHADE PLANTS

Tall: Aucubas, Gingers, Turk's Cap, American Beautyberry, Firespike, Gardenias

Medium-size: Cinnamon Ginger, Leopard Plant, Cast Iron Plant, New Look Celosia, Split-Leaf Philodendron, Coralberry, Yellow Flag Iris, Shrimp Plants, Crinum, Azaleas

Vines: Tangerine Beauty Crossvine, Butterfly Vine (part shade), Carolina Jessamine

Low: Begonias, Vinca Major, Caladiums, Purple Heart, Evergold Sedge, Coleus, Impatiens

Feel free to use a few potted plants, too!

QUESTIONS?

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