



Getting started

Easy plants to start with

Start with fruiting plants that aren't too fussy, e.g. feijoa, lemon, mandarin, orange, plum, persimmon, hazelnut, an apple that is resistant to black spot, and various berries.

Varieties of each fruit that perform well in organic home gardens in this region are listed in the section 'Part 3 – Essential Plant Info', and are also summarised in a chart in the section 'Part 4 – Other Useful Info' and on our website. The stonefruit varieties (except for plums) are not totally disease resistant – they often get curly leaf and brown rot in this region, even when they're called 'resistant'.

Plan well ahead

If you select varieties that are less common, order them at the nursery in summer, so they arrive for planting in winter – nurseries often sell out before then.

Planting a fruit tree in winter, rather than any other time of year, helps it get well established because:

- the tree's energy is in its root zone then, rather than in leaf growth
- there's plenty of moisture in the ground, so the tree doesn't get stressed.

Main points to remember for success

- Fruiting plants need sun.
- Protect them from strong winds.
- Dig drains if the soil gets waterlogged.
- Add organic matter to improve the soil.
- Water the plants regularly until they're established.
- Choose varieties and/or rootstocks that suit your soil type (e.g. clay, sandy, silty).
- Choose varieties that don't flower when you have frosts.
- Plant a pollinator if required.
- Protect near-ripe fruit from birds.

