

PLACEMENT:

Being a tree, genetically, bonsais grows best outdoors. The best location is in the garden under the shade of a tree or a shaded patio where the bonsai will receive the **sunlight** and not direct extended periods of the harsh afternoon **sunshine**. Some tree species prefer full sun while others, mainly tropical trees, can adapt to stay indoors in a well-lit and airy room. The ability of a species ability to survive indoors, comes back to the trees natural environment. The majority can only be brought into the home for a week or so at a time - for display purpose - before being returned to their permanent home. Others may survive for months indoors, but essentially they are being starved of their natural full spectrum of growing light, ultra-violet, and slowly starving. This is because UV radiation is refracted away from glass. (97% of UV-B and 37% of UV-A)

A house or office does not correspond to the natural environment of trees. To keep a bonsai in a satisfactory condition indoors, you need to know more of the tree's life cycle and its particular needs relating to its atmospheric surroundings. 90% of bonsai need to live outdoors. The other 10% will survive, given the right conditions, but may not thrive.

TEMPERATURE

Indoor bonsai are trees whose natural climate corresponds most closely with the climate inside the house. Tropical plants are more suitable for indoor bonsai, because in their native countries there are scarcely any seasonal fluctuations and little variation in temperature, which corresponds to our western home conditions.

LIGHT and HUMIDITY

Sufficient light is of vital importance to your indoor bonsai, for without it the tree could not survive. Light (ultra violet) is essential for photosynthesis. Windows refract UV light, so light coming through a window could be starving your tree of its ability to produce food. Tropical bonsai have adapted to living in dense shade with low levels of light and high humidity.

The ideal indoor position is near a bright window. Light does not mean sunshine, but brightness. Artificial full spectrum light must be provided if the natural light is insufficient. With the right lightning an indoor bonsai can survive anywhere indoors provided that the temperature and humidity levels are suitable.

Sufficient humidity is vital for every indoor bonsai, for when the air is dry the tree "transpires" and it loses more water it can take in via the roots. Air conditioners will dry out the air even further. If the air in the house or office is too dry, you should create a higher humidity in the immediate vicinity of the trees, by placing a fountain near the trees or placing them in a container full of pebbles that are kept moist. Trees will also need a lukewarm shower every few weeks to get rid of dust and enable them to breathe properly again.

HEAT

Heat will directly effect the rate at which a bonsai soil dries out. A tree placed in full sunshine will dry out very quickly, and your bonsai is very likely to die should the roots become dry for an extended period of time. The harsh midday sun and afternoon sun are the biggest dangers. Rather place your bonsai in full shade or morning sunshine, to enable it to get maximum sunlight. Again there are factors that influence this decision, such as tree species, depth of pot, colour of pot and water retentive properties of the growing medium. Also do not expect moss to grow in a tree that gets full sunshine and vice versa, a tree that likes full sunshine may rot and develop a fungus if placed in full shade so as to develop the moss.