

Repotting

Bonsai trees are best repotted in the spring every two years. Top pruning for indoor bonsai can be carried out after repotting. Outdoor deciduous bonsai are best repotted as the buds just emerge from dormancy – evergreen trees a little later.

As well as **Bonsai Focus Repotting Mix**, you will need a pair of pruning scissors, a hook, mesh, wire and a container of the appropriate size to accommodate two years' growth.

Put on a pair of gloves and rework the mix so it regains its texture. For a more free-draining mix (especially for outdoor bonsai) add 10% horticultural grit.

Cut any wires and carefully ease the plant from the old container. Remove all the soil that you easily can with a chopstick or a root hook. Wash off the remaining soil – add **Root Ultra** to the water to encourage vigorous rooting. Trim off about thirty percent of the roots, especially the thick ones, cutting away any dead roots.

Cover the drainage holes in the new container with mesh and hold it in place using anodised aluminium bonsai wire. Insert wire for tying in the tree.

Add a layer of mix to the bottom of the container. Tie the wires around major roots or base of trunk, to secure the bonsai into the pot. Hold the bonsai in place and work mix well in between the roots using a chopstick, until the tree feels firm in the container. Add and work mix well until it fills the container, leaving no air pockets.

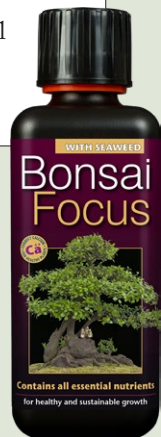
Water well from the top until there is run-off and keep in the shade for three weeks to allow new roots to grow.

Start feeding with **Bonsai Focus** four weeks after repotting – it will encourage healthy, bushy growth and prevent leaf yellowing.

Growth Technology products for healthy bonsai

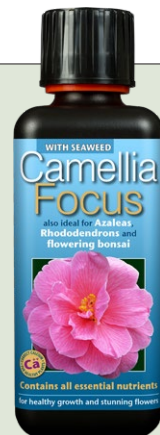
Bonsai Focus

A balanced nutrient solution for indoor and outdoor bonsai trees, manufactured to the highest standards from pure mineral salts and rich organic plant acids.



Camellia Focus

For bonsai azaleas or other acid-loving plants it is preferable to use **Camellia Focus**.



Root Ultra

The ultimate root promoter. **Root Ultra** promotes strong, vigorous, healthy rooting and minimises transplant shock. It is a complex blend of pure organic plant extracts, seaweed and vitamins that ensures the plant thrives in the new environment.



Bonsai Pruning Scissors

Ideal for the pruning of bonsai trees. Great for all round gardening use.



Bonsai Myst

Complete care for all bonsai.



Bonsai Focus Repotting Mix

Open textured to promote healthy root growth, and contains no added nutrients to ensure control of growth.



SB Plant Invigorator

A unique 3-in-one pesticide, mildewcide and foliar feed for all plants. Controls mealybug, spider mite, aphids, whitefly.

Suitable for use throughout the year – no harvest interval for edible crops. Safe to use in the home.

Other products from Growth Technology



The Growth Technology Promise

We are a British family business, making advanced, specialist products for thriving houseplants. We use the best quality ingredients to ensure the best results every time – no short cuts, no compromises. For all our products we consider first and foremost the plant's needs, sustainability for our environment, and value and convenience for the customer.

If you love your plants, give them everything. Give them Focus.



05UK

FREE

Please take one

Growth Technology
www.focus-on-plants.com

Making the Most of Your Bonsai

By Dr Manos Kanellos, plant physiologist and author



Practical advice and products for healthy bonsai

www.focus-on-plants.com

For a video on how to repot indoor or outdoor bonsai, as well as many types of orchids, please visit www.focus-on-plants.com



Caring for indoor bonsai

Care of an indoor bonsai tree is different from that of normal potted house plants. The main reason is that bonsai trees are planted in small pots and therefore have limited storage for nutrients and water. Tropical trees are much better suited for indoor bonsai than the ones from the temperate zone.

Temperature

A steady temperature rather than one which fluctuates a lot is highly recommended, so avoid draughts, or placing your bonsai on top of a shelf with a radiator underneath.

Light

Bonsais needs as much natural daylight as possible, but avoid direct sunlight which can scorch the leaves and speed up the water evaporation from the compost.

Watering

Your bonsai needs regular watering; it needs to be moist but not overly wet. The best method is to completely immerse the pot in water so the water level is above the soil. Wait until all the air bubbles have stopped rising, then place the pot on a drip tray. Water which drains off will evaporate and keep the foliage in a humid state. The warmer the room the more often you may need to water your bonsai. It could be once a day or once a week depending on the location. Test the surface of the compost; if it is moist wait a day or so then test again. Do not let your bonsai dry out completely or stand in water for long periods.

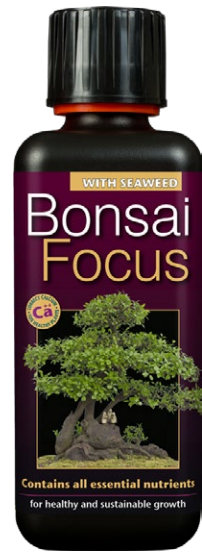


Humidity

Bonsais will benefit from regular misting (two to three times a week) especially in winter with central heating on. You can spray with soft water or use **Houseplant Myst** which will provide nutrients at the same time.

Feeding

Water your bonsai before you feed to avoid root burn. It is advisable to use a proprietary bonsai fertiliser such as **Bonsai Focus** which is highly recommended. This will help the tree to get the required nutrients for healthy growth. Feed every one to two weeks from February to October.



Pruning and wiring

It is important to regularly trim your bonsai to keep its shape or style. This is called the 'clip and grow' method. When a new shoot has elongated, and has between six and eight new leaves, it should be trimmed back to two to four leaves. This may be every two months or so depending on the vigour of the tree. With regular pinching back the tree will fill out better. A pair of pruning scissors such as Growth Technology's **Bonsai Pruning Scissors** is very suitable.

Alternatively, you can use the wiring method. You can use anodized aluminium or copper wire which has been annealed. The wire comes in various sizes from 0.5 to 6.00 mm in diameter. The wire is wrapped around the trunk or branch then bent into the shape your styling requires.

Problems & solutions

Yellow or fallen leaves

If your bonsai starts to show a change of colour, with leaves turning yellow, do not be alarmed. This could be due to a number of reasons such as a shock to the tree caused by being very dry or very cold. If any of these have occurred, adjust the environment.

Depending on the species, fallen leaves could be a natural occurrence. The tree is not dead, but just going into temporary dormancy, so be extra careful with watering. Fallen leaves will be replaced by a new set of leaves four to eight weeks later.

Fungal diseases

Bonsai trees can be subject to fungal problems just like trees in nature. As soon as you notice problems use an appropriate fungicide and follow the instructions on the label. **SB Plant Invigorator** is highly recommended for mildew and it is widely used preventatively.

White 'threads' on leaves White fluffy insects in plant crevices

These are most likely mealybugs. Remove with a cotton bud dipped in methylated spirit and wipe the leaves clean regularly to prevent an infestation. Additionally, spray with **SB Plant Invigorator** as per the instructions on the label. After the first signs spray at least twice a week for two weeks to kill off any remaining insects.

Leaves curling

This normally indicates either aphids, coddling moth grub or even a spider's nest. Check inside the leaves and spray with **SB Plant Invigorator**.

Water does not drain through the pot

This is usually because the growing substrate has degraded and it indicates the need for repotting.

Roots are coming out the drainage holes or the tree is lifting out of the pot

This indicates the need to repot the bonsai and trim the main root.

Brown tips on leaf edges

This is likely to be caused either by sun scorching the leaf tips or soil drying out. Move to a shady position and/or water regularly.

Long, leggy growth

On outdoor bonsai this can be due to very wet weather and over-fertilising. To keep growth ramifications tight, trim new growth back to two leaves as soon as the centre shoot has elongated.

For indoor bonsai this is usually due to lack of light. Move to a brighter position.



Caring for outdoor bonsai

Because outdoor bonsai grow faster than those grown indoors, the results of reshaping, wiring and pruning are evident much sooner. The most important technique to bonsai is pruning which is what keeps it miniaturised and in shape. The goal is to create a bonsai that looks natural. The spring and summer are the seasons when significant pruning may be required but this will depend on the type of tree. After flowering remove the dead flowers and developing seed pods, especially with species such as Azalea and Gardenia etc.

Temperature

Outdoor bonsai should be placed in a sheltered position, free from strong winds. A bamboo or reed screen is ideal. Some species such as Japanese maples require protection from spring frosts which can damage the developing new growth. Wooden stands are best to raise the trees off the ground to avoid damage from animals etc.

Light

Outdoor bonsai should be placed in a sheltered position with some shading during the day.

Watering

Your bonsai needs regular daily watering in dry weather. In very hot spells, the frequency may need to be increased to two or three times a day. The best time to water is in the evening; rain water is best although tap water can be used. A fine rose on the hose or watering can is best to ensure the soil is completely soaked especially in periods of high temperatures. Morning watering is also beneficial,



but avoid getting the foliage wet if a hot day is forecast. Alternatively, you can completely immerse the pot in water so the water level is above the soil. Wait until all the air bubbles have stopped rising, then place the pot on a drip tray.

Outdoors in the winter your tree should receive enough water from rain. If the tree is kept in a greenhouse it may require water every two to three weeks. Evergreens such as pines and junipers need water if they are still growing in late winter or early spring.

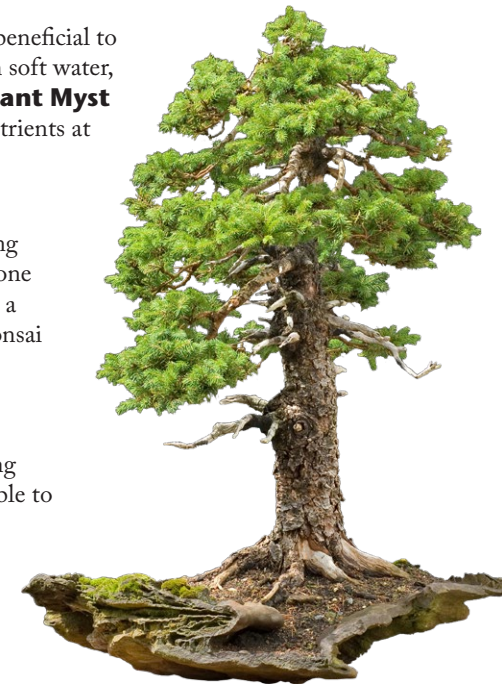
Humidity

Occasionally it is beneficial to spray the tree with soft water, or with **Houseplant Myst** which provides nutrients at the same time.

Feeding

During the growing season feed every one or two weeks with a specialist liquid bonsai fertiliser such as **Bonsai Focus**.

For bonsai azaleas or other acid-loving plants it is preferable to use **Camellia Focus**.



For more information on houseplant care, visit www.focus-on-plants.com