

Colorful shrubs for PNW landscapes

Shrubs are the backbones of our gardens, they provide color, contrast and add needed year around structure to landscapes. A vast range of selections are out there allowing you to add something to any garden location that catches your fancy. Broadleaf evergreens provide year around foliage and presence. Deciduous shrubs offer seasonal foliage and fall color. There are so many choices for you to express your style as a gardener!

Always be sure to utilize the right shrub for the right place in the garden. Sun or shade? Growth habit? Can it be pruned? What shape/how fast will it grow? How much room do I have? Does it bloom on old wood or new growth? When does it flower? Add some foliage color or contrast? Need evergreen or deciduous? Answering questions like these will allow you to choose a shrub that will bring you years of enjoyment in the landscape.

Consider using shrubs as foundation plants, in mass plantings, as hedges/screens/barriers, or as garden specimens. Sometimes one fits the bill, but other times using them in groupings or swaths is the way to go. Think about height, habit and foliage – contrast of color and foliage often makes a more interesting landscape. Always consider the layering technique – you can have height in back and work your way down to shorter border plants in foreground.

All of the deciduous shrubs will sport bright fall color of varying degrees – we will dive into the best ones in our fall color/winter interest class in the autumn.

Now, as one of our grower partners Bailey Nursery would say, “Get your shrub on - let’s get twiggy with it!”

Let’s take a look at sun vs. shade shrubs for the spring season, shrubs for the summer season, and some fabulous foliage shrubs for PNW gardens...

Spring Bloomers For Sun/Part Shade

There is a huge selection of Rhododendrons, Azaleas, and Camellias for our PNW gardens. We can find a color and bloom time to meet most every need. These are covered in our Rhododendron class coming up.

California Lilac (Ceanothus)

Deutzia

Flowering Currant

Forsythia

Lilacs

Mexican Orange

Mock Orange

Mountain Laurel (Kalmia)

Osmanthus

Pearl Bush

Pieris (Lily of the Valley shrub)

Quince

Spiraea

Sweetspire

Viburnums

Weigela

Spring Bloomers for Part Shade/Shade

Daphne odora	Fothergilla
Leucothoe	Mountain Laurel (Kalmia)
Oregon Grape	Osmamthus
Sarcococca	Skimmia
Winter Hazel	

Summer Bloomers for Sun/Part Shade

For summer sunny bloomers, let's start with the rose. There is no other plant in sun that will bloom over a longer period, with a bazillion choices offering fragrance and color. These are covered in our rose classes. Another long summer-into-fall bloomer for sun is "PeeGee" or panicle Hydrangea - available in a number of varieties. These will be covered in our Hydrangea classes.

Abelias	Beautyberry
Butterfly Bush	Caryopteris
Crape Myrtle	Daphne 'Eternal Fragrance'
Escallonias	Gardenias
Hebe	Hypericum
PG Hydrangeas	Potentilla
Rockrose	Rose of Sharon/Althea

Summer Bloomers for Part Shade/Shade

For summer shady bloomers, let's start with Hydrangeas. Mophead/Bigleaf/Lacecap varieties always offer the longest season of bloom for the garden. These are covered in our Hydrangea classes.

Calycathus (Allspice)	Summersweet
Symphiocarpus/Snowberry	

Foliage Shrubs for Sun/Part Shade (Spring/Summer)

Look to utilize foliage colors and variegation to add interest to the landscape in sun. These all bloom in various times of the year as well.

Barberry	Box Honeysuckle
Boxwood	Distylliums
Elderberries	Euonymous
Japanese Holly	Ninebarks
Osmanthus	Smoke Bush
Twig Dogwoods	Willows

Foliage Shrubs for Part Shade/Shade (Spring/Summer)

Utilize variegation and bold colors to add contrast and brighten up dark areas in shade. These all bloom in various times of the year, but their foliage, to me, is the main interest.

Aucuba

Box Honeysuckle

Boxwood

Diervillea – red/orange

Distyliums

Fatsia (Aralia)

Heavenly Bamboo

Hybrid Mahonias

Japanese Holly

Osmanthus