

Your guide to choosing and planting your perfect hedge



Welcome to our Guide to Hedges

Everyone at farmandgardensupplies.co.uk is dedicated to ensuring that you get all the information you need to choose, plant and care for your new hedge.

We supply customers from all over the UK - from large estates, equestrian centres and farms to family gardens. This simple guide is designed to help you choose the right hedge, and show you how to plant and care for it so that you can enjoy your new hedging for many years to come.

In addition to showing the different types of hedges you can choose from, this guide also has a handy chart to identify which hedges we believe will best meet your specific requirements, be it for security, privacy, decorative, managing live-stock, encouraging wildlife or any combination of the above.

The key to a beautiful hedge is that it should not only meet your requirements but also not look out of place in its setting, and by following our planting suggestions and guide on how to care for your hedge it will thrive from the minute you plant it and stay healthy for you to enjoy.

We believe that the best type of hedgerow to plant is from bare-root stock in its dormant state between November and March and with the right planting, support and a little care you can enjoy a beautiful and functional hedgerow.

Every year we research and source the best certified bare-root stock we can find, to give you the best quality and value native hedging for you to confidently plant.

Finally, if you have any questions at all about your hedge please feel free to call us on 01420 768 242 anytime or e-mail farmandgardensupplies@hotmail.com and we will be happy to help - whether this is in choosing the right hedge or maintaining it in the future - we pride ourselves on the service we offer to our customers and we are always be delighted to hear from you - we particularly love receiving pictures on progress!

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Any Questions? Simply call 01420 768 242 weekdays for friendly advice

Hedge Types

Broadly speaking you can divide hedges into two groups - those ideal for gardens such as box hedging and privet and those hedge plants which are best suited for bordering land and fields and larger gardens.

Firstly we will run through the classic plants for a traditional hedgerow you will see across the country bordering fields and paddocks—we also suggest for any hedgerow over ten metres you plan out a mixed hedgerow so that you have flowers and berries all year round for interest and local wildlife - our look-up chart later on will show you which hedges we recommend for this.

We haven't included every hedge and tree species we offer so if you want to look at other options please just visit www.farmandgardensupplies.co.uk or give us a call on 01420 768 242.

HAWTHORN (*Crataegus Monogyna*)

Hawthorn is the most popular native hedge and the basis for most mixed hedgerows seen in the countryside. It is very easy to grow and does well in all types of soil and sun conditions. It can be used in back-gardens as well to attract wildlife.

Apart from the fact that it is easy to plant and maintain it is fast growing and has fragrant white flowers called May blossom from April onwards, followed by large red berries known as 'haws' in the Autumn. As Autumn moves towards Winter the leaves turn a golden brown before falling in November with the first frosts.



We recommend that you plant in a double row between 5 and 6 plants in total per metre to provide a lovely thick hedgerow - you can choose either one or two year old bare root plants - the two year old plants being branched rather than the single stemmed one year old plants.

In a mixed hedgerow you should typically plan for between 50% and 75% Hawthorn mixed with other native species - the most popular of which we have illustrated over the next couple of pages.

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Popular Mixed Hedgerow Species

Blackthorn (Prunus Spinosa)

Blackthorn is very popular to mix with Hawthorn because their flowering seasons complement each other very well.

Blackthorn is the harbinger of spring with blossom often appearing as early as February and continues flowering until Hawthorn takes over in April, giving you a flowering period of four months. In the Autumn it has beautiful black berries or 'sloes' which are loved by many wildlife species.

Blackthorn grows vigorously so should usually make up 10%- 25% of a mixed hedgerow. For anyone looking for security, Blackthorn makes an ideal single species hedge as it is covered in thorns.



Dogwood (Cornus Sanguinea)



Dogwood is another great choice for a mixed hedgerow because in addition to small cream flowers in the Spring and early Summer the stems turn into a range of red and yellow colours in the Winter bringing a lovely variety to your hedgerow throughout the year.

In the Autumn the hedge will produce a dark purple berry often called a Dogberry. These are preferred by many wildlife species to orchard fruits so Dogwood is often grown around organic fruit fields to protect crops.

In keeping with all the hedging plants we provide, Dogwood can tolerate most soils and sunlight conditions, but it does prefer slightly alkaline soils with at least some sunlight.

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Field Maple (Acer Campestre)

Field Maple is one of the hardiest species for a native hedgerow, able to survive even the harshest of winters.

It can make a beautiful deciduous hedgerow on its own but is more often part of a mixed native hedgerow.

It is one of our favourites because in the spring the new growth is tinged with pink and later in the season it makes a beautiful contrast to other hedge species when the leaves turn to an orangey yellow in Autumn.



Hazel (Corylus avellana)



Hazel is probably the second most common deciduous hedgerow species in a mixed hedgerow.

After early spring flowering it produces catkins followed by Hazel or cob nuts in the Autumn. These are enjoyed by both local wild-life and people!

It is fast growing and has broad leaves, and like Beech can be used either in a mixed hedgerow or as a single species for privacy around gardens.

Rowan (Sorbus Aucuparia)

Rowan is a fast growing and ideal for a mixed native hedgerow - its red fruit in the Autumn make it a perfect option if you like to attract birdlife into your garden.

Like the Field Maple it is very hardy and offers a lovely leaf variety in a hedgerow in the summer and has clusters of small white flowers between the base of the leaves in the Spring.



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Hedge types ideal for gardens

Essentially you can plant any hedge in a garden and many traditional hedges are equally at home in an urban or domestic setting.

If you want security as a key consideration then Blackthorn is a really good option although we do recommend you put a stock fence on the garden side of the hedge to stop people and pets getting too close to the thorns.

Hazel is also used for garden hedges but Beech and Hornbeam are a more popular option because they carry their leaves all year round for extra privacy. Planting density is very similar to native hedgerows as a double row with a total of six plants per metre.

Beech (Fagus)

For privacy Beech is ideal - if you prune every year it will vigorously grow into a dense hedgerow and keeps its leaves as they turn into a golden brown in the Autumn right through the Winter.

Purple Beech has the same properties as Green Beech and is often considered as the 'Rolls Royce' of garden hedges - you can even alternate between both types for a more variegated hedgerow display and this keeps your hedge more cost effective .

Beech is also a versatile hedge in terms of soil type - it will suit pretty well any type of soil so long as it is not waterlogged for any period of time.

Whilst we have shown it here in a domestic setting Beech is also common in a traditional mixed native hedgerow.

We do not recommend Beech hedges for equestrian properties because Beech nuts are poisonous to horses.



Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*)



An alternative to Beech is Hornbeam. It has a serrated leaf and like beech, when it changes colour in the Autumn, the russet leaves are generally kept all winter offering privacy all year round.

It will quickly grow to about 6ft tall and with regular trimming will make a dense hedge.

Box (Buxus Sempervirens)

A box hedge is the ideal choice for a dense low hedge. It needs very little maintenance - you can clip or prune it into pretty well any style you like and it is often used for Topiary.

You can plant 4 -5 plants per metre, depending on the density you are after. The bare root plants will come with a very dense root system and can be ordered in set quantities of 10.

We are very aware of Box blight so have researched sourced our hedges from Belgium from a producer who uses little fertiliser to produce stronger plants and has had no record of blight on the nursery.



Golden Privet (Ligustrum Ovafolium Aureum)



Like the Box we only supply field grown privet hedges with a very strong root system in multiples of 10.

Privet hedges can grow up to 3m tall but are simple to prune to any height you need - the plants we supply are already 2 years old and are 60-90cm tall - for a thick hedge we recommend 5-6 plants per metre.

Yew (Taxus baccata)

Yew is another very popular evergreen hedge forming a dense hedgerow for privacy up to 3m tall.

We like them because the new growth in Spring is a lighter green giving a lovely two tone colour scheme throughout the summer.

We sell 4 year old field grown bare-root plants with an excellent root system, up to 60cm tall in packs of 10. You should plant in a single line at 3 to 4 plants per metre.

These are a fraction of the cost of a typical container bound alternative.

Yew is poisonous so we do not recommend for planting near livestock or for equestrian purposes and care should be taken if you have young children.



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Hedge Look-up Chart

We are often asked for our preferences for different types of hedges and uses so have created a simple look-up chart below on our most popular hedges.

Where we have left a box blank it is because we have tried not to make too many judgement calls on whether for example you think Hawthorn is an ornamental hedge or not, but just tried to reflect the typical uses of different species and those plants which are particularly good for a specific use.

Although Beech and Hornbeam are deciduous we have also marked them as all year round leaf cover as they keep their leaves all winter and provides privacy all year.

We also stock a wide range of trees and other hedge plants - you can find these on our website: www.farmandgardensupplies.co.uk.

For screening taller buildings such as nearby houses or barns we would recommend the Lombardy Poplar, White Willow, Scots Pine, Norway Spruce, or Silver Birch.

The Lombardy Poplar, White Willow and the humble Silver Birch are fast growing at 5-6ft a year so offer ideal screening solutions if that is what you are after.

Larger hedge shrubs and trees make fantastic backdrops to a mixed hedge - our favourite is the Rosa Rugosa - you can mix it with a hedgerow and it flowers right through the summer which then gives way to red rose hips in the Autumn providing food for local wildlife.

The Wild Cherry is another very popular choice to stand in front of a hedge to give contrasting colours, as indeed is the Red Oak. Neither of these species are recommended for livestock as they can be poisonous.

	min. order quantity	Deciduous	Evergreen/all year leaf cover	Mixed Hedge	Wildlife	Equestrian	Spring Colour	Autumn Berries/Fruit	Ornamental	Security	Privacy
Hawthorn	25	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Blackthorn	25	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y		Y	Y
Dogwood	25	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Hazel	25	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Field Maple	25	Y	N	Y			Y	Y			
Rowan	25	Y	N	Y	Y		Y	Y			
Beech	25	Y	Y	Y		N	Y	N	Y		Y
Purple Beech	25	Y	Y	Y		N	Y	N	Y		Y
Hornbeam	25	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	N	Y		Y
Box	10	N	Y	N		N		N	Y		
Golden Privet	10	N	Y	N		N		N	Y		Y
Yew	10	N	Y	N		N		N	Y		Y

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Planting Guide

The two most common questions we are asked are: How far apart should I plant my hedge plants?, and How do I make sure my plants get the best start? Let's deal with each one in turn:

How far apart to plant hedge plants and how to plant them

As a general rule for a mixed hedge you should plant in a double row with a total of 5-6 plants per metre. If your hedge is for screening or for managing livestock we recommend 6 per metre.

Plants should be in two rows 50cm apart ideally but certainly no closer than 30cm, set-out in a zig-zag pattern.

For 6 plants per metre, plant the back row first with each 33cm apart. Mark out the front row 30-50cm from the row you have just planted. Then simply plant the front row evenly spaced between the back row plants to make your zig-zag pattern.

For establishing an ornamental garden hedge we suggest a single line of plants 20 to 25cm apart.

The key to success when you receive your hedges is to plant them as soon as you can and make sure that they never dry out, especially before and during planting when they are exposed to the air - 10 minutes left out on a windy or sunny day can seriously check the growth of your plant, so always keep them in the sealed plastic bag we send them in and take them out one at a time.

If you need to store them for a few days, seal the plastic bag they are delivered in and store outside away from direct sunlight or in an unheated shed or building.

Frost will not hurt your plant but warmth will.

When you plant them out make sure you cover the roots but no more than a couple of centimetres above them and heel in firmly.

Try to avoid planting in frosted ground - it is more difficult to make sure that the root system is properly covered when the soil is lumpy.

How to care for my plants

There are several things you can do to ensure the best possible start for your hedgerow.

Firstly when preparing the soil for planting, remove as many weeds as possible as these will compete with your new hedge plants for nutrients and water. Using a mulch membrane can help suppress weed growth and keep in moisture.

We recommend bonemeal fertiliser when you plant your hedges - as well as being economical, it is the ideal slow release nutrient mix and will last at least through to the end of the spring growing season - just mix in a handful with the soil before you plant your hedge down to about a spade's depth.

Using bonemeal can reduce the growing time to a full hedgerow by at least a year and you will have a much stronger and bushier hedge.

For additional feeding we recommend chicken pellet fertilizer but not until after spring.

You will be amazed to find that we offer great deals for bonemeal, mulch membrane and even chicken pellets! - simply add them to your order from www.farmandgardensupplies.co.uk.

March is always a critical month for your new hedges as it is the time they are most vulnerable to drying out as winter turns to spring.

The important thing is to keep the soil moist at all times. A mulch membrane can help, but you will need to water your new hedge in dry weather.

When pruning cut in an 'A' or upside down 'V' shape so light can evenly reach all parts of the hedge - this ensures you end up with even growth top to bottom on your hedgerow.

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Planting Guide

How to care for my plants

Rabbit Guards

The next very important aspect to caring for your plants is to avoid damage from rabbits - unless you live in an urban area, rabbits can destroy your new hedge very quickly.

Our most popular selling items are rabbit spiral guards with bamboo canes for support.

Simply push the bamboo cane into the ground next to your new hedge plant and place the spiral rabbit guard around both of them.

Again these are relatively inexpensive to buy and can be re-used time and again—we only sell the best quality branded guards we can find as cheap imitation products are not as effective and don't last as long.



We have had many customers having to buy new hedges or request an urgent delivery of rabbit guards to try to protect damaged hedge plants so if you are in any kind of semi-rural or rural location or know that there is a rabbit warren nearby we urge you not to see your hard work and investment be destroyed and use this very inexpensive but very effective solution.

A rabbit spiral guard is usually 60cm - if hares are to be found in your area then it is wise to pay a few extra pence to use the 75cm guards.

Rabbits will always bite through a plant or if it is too thick you will see teeth marks. Hare damage is easily identified as they tear the bark and peel it back.

The guards come in a variety of colours to minimise the impact—the picture opposite is light green but you can also get them from us in brown or clear.

For hedges spiral guards are ideal -if you are planning a tree planting scheme you should use tree shelters—these will also protect your saplings from various types of deer.



The shelters come pre-fitted with ties and also provide protection from cold winds, with the tube acting like a mini greenhouse - you just plant your sapling and pop the guard over the top and then place a stake next to it and just secure the ties.

It is also good protection from lawn mowers, strimmers and being trampled on which is just as well in our household with children and dogs generally running around the garden with no thought for the plants!

Planting Guide

Item checklist for you hedges

Because we believe it is really important to plant your hedges as soon as possible after delivery we thought it would be useful to create a simple checklist of items you should have ready to hand for the first full season so that you are raring to go and your hedge will be thriving and healthy for many years to come:

ITEM	TICK
Hedge layout plan (if you are using more than one type)	
Bonemeal Fertiliser	
Mulch Membrane	
Rabbit/Tree guards	
Stakes	
Gardening Gloves	
String and pegs to mark out hedge plan	
Garden fork and spade	
Hose pipe	
Chicken Pellets	

I hope you found this guide to hedging useful and you are now ready to order your hedges and equipment to plant your hedges! Remember we wont send out your hedges until they are ready after a couple of frosts to ensure they are dormant - any earlier and they will simply die so please be patient - usually they are despatched around the bend of November.

We are always here to give you some friendly advice whenever you need it both before you order and afterwards - just call us on 01420 768 242 and we will be delighted to chat to you. If you prefer simply e-mail us at: farmandgardensupplies@hotmail.com and we will get back to you just as soon as we can.

Finally, if you like, please send us photos of your hedges and trees and let us know how they are doing - we are very keen to keep in touch and see how you and your plants are getting along and we can swap stories on the way!

From all the team at Farm and Garden Supplies

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