

Medium Shrubs
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This group of shrubs gets around 4 to 6-7 feet in height and should be given a minimum of 4-6 plus feet to spread. The height and spread info was gathered from personal observations and reliable references. Remember that these are only suggestions and can vary widely depending on growing conditions.

If used next to the foundations of the house give them room to spread, planting no closer than 4 feet from the house. Good for corner plantings, gardens and shrub borders. Some plants I have listed in this group can be kept smaller by minimal proper pruning techniques.

Key to the chart

- *** has been a proven winner for me
- ** has been a proven winner but with a few problems
- * has not been a good plant for me
- no star means I have not grown it or used it but have seen it enough times in the same place and feel confident about giving it a try

Colors

brown – I have grown this or used it in landscape jobs

blue – I have observed it enough times and feel confident to use it

This is a brief description of the plants. Go to www.plantstogrow.com and copy paste the name of the plant into the search box for more information on the plant

Amelanchier stolonifera ([Prince Williams Amelanchier](#))

5-6 feet plus tall

white flowers in early spring edible red fruit

nice fall color

can sucker and form colonies

size is in the upper limits of medium shrubs

[Aronia melanocarpa](#) ([Black Choke Berry](#)***)

5-6 plus feet tall

can sucker and form thickets

full to part sun

white flowers clusters of black fruit

nice fall foliage of oranges, reds, yellows

tolerates wet soils

- [Autumn Magic](#)*** – has larger fruit than the species, mine is growing by the edge of a swamp, it loves it there
- [Iroquois Beauty Black Chokeberry](#)-2-3 by 4-5 feet (HS)

Berberis koreana (Korean Barberry)

4-6 feet tall by equal spread full sun
yellow flowers, one of the showiest I have seen
green leaves
red fall color
thorns

Berberis thunbergii (Japanese Barberry***)

5-6 plus tall by equal spread
full sun
green, reddish, yellow leaves
spines
red fruit

- Yellow Barberry-yellow foliage, tolerates part sun 4 by 4
- Sunation-leaves open greenish yellow than change to golden, upright 4 by 4 plus
- **Red Barberry*****-red foliage, 5-6 by 5-6 feet I have old plants in a job that are pushing these size limits
- Marshall Upright-burgundy to purple foliage, upright growth habit
- **Rosy Glow*****-4-5 by 4-5, burgundy to purple foliage, new growth has a pink mottling

Buddleia – (Butterfly Bush**)

this could be put in the small shrub chart usually dies back to the ground in the winter regrows in the next year
down south I have seen 6 by 6 and greater does attract butterfly's

Cornus pumila (Dwarf Dogwood***)

4-5- by 4-5
I have never personally grown this plant but have seen the same plants for many years
tolerates some shade
white flowers red stems
red to purple tinge in the leaves

Cornus Isanti (Isanti Dogwood***)

5 plus by 5 plus white flowers red twigs
seems to live up to the compact trait that is attached to this Dogwood

Cotoneaster apiculatus (Cranberry Cotoneaster ***)

1-3 feet by 4-6 foot spread
I have old plantings easily reach this size
full to part sun ornamental red fruit

- Blackburn-reported to be an improved Cranberry Cotoneaster
- Wish Bone Cotoneaster-not as hardy, branches are wish bone shaped

Cotoneaster lucidus (Hedge Cotoneaster***)

commonly used as hedges,
I have seen a lot of these and all are heavily pruned
listed as 6-8 feet

small flowers
good "parking lot" plant
could also be used as a large shrub

Euonymus alatus compacta (Compact Burning Bush*)**

a compact version of its larger cousin one in my yard is 6-7 by 6-7 and still growing
can reach 8 by 8
fiery red foliage in the fall

Fothergilla gardenia (Mount Airy Fothergilla)

5-6 feet tall sun to part sun
white flowers lacking petals look like bottle brushes
blooms early spring before the leaves

Hydrangea arborescence (Annabelle Hydrangea *)**

4-5 by 4-5

large white mop head flowers blooms mid-summer

cut to the ground in the late fall or spring

I have used this plant many times and can be found in my garden,
cut flowers

heirloom plant

- White Dome-5-6 feet tall, large flat white flowers
- Bella Anna** -pink/red flowering Anna Bella, doesn't seem to be as vigorous as Annabella
- Incrediball - gigantic white flower heads, much larger than Annabella

Hydrangea macrophylla (Endless Summer*)

a marketing rip off!!!

close to impossible to get it to perform as predicted

wait till the new improved version or try to duplicate the exacting requirements

Overall the H macrophylla are difficult to grow properly in zone #5

- Lemon Daddy*- I have been growing this for two years and it is nowhere as vigorous as predicted
- Nikko Blue*-a pre Endless Summer
- Forever and Ever series- reported to be one of the good performers of the H. macrophylla ???
- Pink Elf***- grew this for three years in a garden and it was a good performer

Hydrangea paniculata (PG Hydrangea*)**

4-6 by 4-6 plus feet white triangular flowers

All are very hardy and rather easy to grow

prune in late fall or early spring

I have used this plant and its cultivars many times in my landscape jobs very dependable

- Quick Fire***-4-5 plus height and spread, white flowers, one of the earlier paniculata type to bloom
- Fire and Light- 6 by 6 plus feet, white changing to bright pinks and reds
- Little Lime Light- 4-5 by 4-5, smaller version of Lime Light
- Little Lamb-5-6 by 5-6 feet, white flowers

- [Lime Light***](#)-even though it never gets as lime color in early bloom as marketed, still a great plant, one of my favorites, will get larger
- [Pinky Winky***](#)- white changing to reds from the bottom up, flower inflorescence a little looser. A large medium or small large shrub, 6-8 feet
- [Vanilla Strawberry](#)- white turning to strawberry, if the conditions are correct

[Ilex verticillata \(Michigan Holly***\)](#)

reported to reach over 6 by 6 feet mine have stayed much smaller
small inconspicuous white flowers

ornamental red berries

plant 3 female to 1 male plant

likes a moist acidic site can have nice yellow fall foliage

- [Red Sprite***](#)-larger and more red berries

[Lonicera xylosteum \(Clavey's Dwarf Honeysuckle***\)](#)

4-6 by 4-6 gray/green foliage

sparse bloom of small yellow flowers can be kept smaller by pruning

I have had old plants never prune reach 5 by 5 a tough "parking lot" plant

[Physocarpus \(Summer Wine***\)](#)

5-6+ by 5-6+

Branches have a weeping habit

deep burgundy red foliage whitish pink flowers red fruit

one of my favorite Physocarpus (Nine Bark)

I use this whenever possible in landscape designs

[Rhus aromatic \(Lo Gro Fragrant Sumac ***\)](#)

Center stems reach 2 feet tall and then tapers to the edge

the plants in my yard have spread at least up to 6-8 feet

green fragrant foliage if crushed

can have bright red fall color a "Parking Lot" plant

great ground cover for difficult sites

[Rhododendron \(PJM Rhododendron***\)](#)

4-6 by 4 feet

will get larger in warmer areas

need well drained humus rich acid soil

in Zone #5 I have seldom seen large plants can be picky about the site best part sun, moist, acidic soil

well worth the effort

[Aglo***](#) -early bloomer, very hardy, been in my garden for over 10 years, purple leaves in the winter, 4 by 4

[Gibraltar](#)-vivid orange, I have seen this bloom many years at the Boerner Botanical Gardens

[Korean](#)-I have seen this bloom many years at the Chicago Botanical Gardens

[Stewartstonian](#)- dark orange or orange red flowers, green leaves turn wine red in fall, 4 by 4 feet

[Ribes alpinum \(Alpine Current**\)](#)

4-6 by 4-6 feet

I have never seen them this plant big because they are commonly used as hedge plants

I go past an old hedge of this plant and many areas defoliate very early, while others stay green much longer
there definitely is a difference in resistance between strains

Salix purpurea nana (Dwarf Arctic Blue Willow***)

reaches 5 by 5 or more
willow-like branches bluish leaves
can be cut flat to the ground and will regrow

Spiraea fritschiana (Korean Spirea***)

3 feet high with a spread of 4-5 full sun
nice white flowers
this is a big small or a small medium plant

Spiraea nipponica (Snowmound Spirea***)

3-5 by 3-5 feet
full sun

Spiraea prunifolia (Bridal Wreath Spirea**)

5-6 by 5-6 or greater
I have seen very large old plants (guestimate 8 by 8)
open with weeping branches white flowers heritage shrub
could also be used as a small large shrub

Spiraea x arguta (Garland Spirea**)

5-6 by 5-6
reminds me a lot of Bridal Wreath, maybe more compact white flowers

Spiraea x cinerea (Grefsheim Spirea)

4-5 by 4-5
reminds me of a Bridal Wreath Spirea but more compact and not as pendulous white flowers

Syringia (Lilac)

there are some nice medium size lilac cultivars available 5-6 by 5-6 feet full sun
I am rating them a **, since they seem to last only 5-6 years for me and then some decline
I will still use them

problems may be site related
could also be used as a small large shrub

- **Miss Kim****- have used this many times, the one in my yard was beautiful, 5-6 by 5-6, lasted about 6 years than declined, flowers similar to the Common Lilac, just smaller
- **Tinker Bell****-wine red buds changing to a deep rosy pink, once again mine lasted only 4-5 years
- **Dwarf Korean****-similar to Miss Kim but flowers and leaves are smaller, darker colored flowers

Viburnum dentatum (Blue Muffin Viburnum)

5-7 tall by 4-5 foot spread full to part sun white flowers blue fruit
a compact version of the Arrowwood Viburnum

Viburnum opulus compactum (Compact European Cranberry Bush***)

about ½ to ¾ the size of regular European Cranberry Bush

5-6 by 5-6

white flowers red berries

can be a bit open in form

Viburnum trilobum compactum (Compact American Cranberry Bush***)

about ½ to ¾ the size of the regular American Cranberry Bush

5-6 plus feet tall with a spread of about ¾ the height

seems to be more compact, upright in form white flowers

- **Alfredo****- a better selection of the species, seems to be a shy bloomer, lots of erect stems, I have had some problems with sections of the plant dying and the rest living

Weigela (Weigela***)

there are many different medium size cultivars of Weigela and many more being developed

French Lace***-deep pink flower, leaves with yellow variegation

Rainbow Sensation- green and light yellow, splashed with pink, pink flowers, 4 by 4 feet

Weigela Canary-light yellow colored flowers

Wine and Roses***-burgundy to red foliage , deep pink flowers

White Knight-green foliage with white flowers

Variegated-similar to French Lace but with lighter pink flowers

Rev 09.19