

Small Shrubs

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This group of shrubs stay around 3 maybe 4 feet or less in height and should be spaced 3-4 feet on center. (2 ft on center for some of the smaller shrubs). Good around the foundation of a house. 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

1. The first column is data about the specific plant or the group
2. Second column is a list of cultivars or similar plants in the genus
3. Most plants are linked back to www.plantstogrow.com
4. stars***
 - *** 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
5. 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
 - red – not a good plant
 - purple- shrubs that can get larger than the perimeters listed for this group

[Berberis thunbergii var. atropurpurea nana](#) (Crimson Pygmy Barberry***)

1-2 feet tall by 3-5 spread
full sun for best color
slow growing
will take many years to reach size
burgundy foliage
thorny

- [Concord](#)- an improved Crimson Pygmy
- [Bonanza](#)***-yellow foliage, very slow growing
- [Burgundy Carousel Barberry](#)- red foliage 4 by 4 feet
- [Kobold](#)-dwarf green
- [Helmond Pillar](#)-upright form, burgundy red foliage 4-5 high by 1-2 feet spread

[Buxus koreana x sempervirens](#) (Green Velvet Boxwood***)

3 by 3 feet, maybe larger
full to part sun

- [Green Mountain](#)- upright hardy
- Chicagoland Green-reported to be resistant to

<p>a broadleaf evergreen tolerates light but slow to recover from heavy pruning slow growing</p>	<p>winter bronzing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Korean-straight species Korean has not been hardy for me in zone #5
<p><u>Caryopteris x clandonensis</u> (Caryopteris First Choice)</p>	
<p>3 by 3 feet dies back to the ground in zone five late blooming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow Fairy-grown for variegated foliage • Worcester Gold-grown for its golden yellow foliage • Dark Knight-dark blue flowers
<p><u>Cotoneaster Hessi</u>***</p>	
<p>12-18 inch tall by 3-5 foot spread has had nice red fall foliage color for me this plant maybe a bit too big for this group of small shrubs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Thumb***-a low, slow growing plant
<p><u>Daphne x burkwoodi</u> (Daphne Carol Mackie**)</p>	
<p>3 by 3 feet part sun to shade variegated foliage doesn't like soggy soils I like to use this plant in perennial gardens</p>	
<p><u>Eunonymus fortunei</u> cultivars</p>	
<p>listed as greater than 3 by 3 in zone #5 many will not reach this size the leaves are evergreen gold and white variegation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadale***-gold variegated leaves, the best of the lot • Emerald and Gold** -small gold variegated leaves, hardy but can suffer winter kill • Emerald Gaiety** -same as above but with white variegated leaves • Ivory Jade** -Canadale type leaves, white variegation, I get winter kill but not death on my plants • Vegetus** -straight green, hardy, can be a problem with scale • Sarcoxie** -similar to Vegetus, can be a problem with scale • Sun Spot** -less gold variegation than Emerald and Gold
<p><u>Forsythia viridissima</u> (Bronx Forsythia)</p>	
<p>2'-3' tall by 3'-4' spread yellow flowers in early spring compact Forsythia nice maroon fall foliage doesn't seem to be as florific as other Forsythia</p>	

<u>Hypericum frondosum</u> (Hypericum Sunburst ^{***})	
3 by 3 usually has some winter kill prune back and it will quickly recover neat yellow flowers	
<u>Itea virginica Henrys Garnet</u> (Virginia Sweetspire Henrys Garnet ^{***})	
3-4 by equal or greater this is at the upper limits of a small plant tolerates wet conditions drooping trusses of white flowers red fall foliage color my plants are growing at the edge of a swamp	
<u>Ligustrum x vicariyi</u> (Golden Privet ^{**})	
I have seen this a lot larger in warmer zones In zone # 5 probably 3 by 3 golden yellow foliage fall color winter kills back, but will recover	
<u>Potentilla fruticosa</u> (Potentilla cultivars ^{***})	
2-3 by 2-3, or a bit larger flowers best in full sun common but still a good plant pruned back had at least every 2-3 years avoid most pink, tangerine and red types the flowers fade when the weather gets hot never live up to the picture on the label	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Abbotswood</u>-white, very florific, one of my favorite whites • <u>Gold Drop</u> -yellow, old variety but still good • <u>Goldfinger</u>-one of my favorite yellow • <u>Gold Star</u>-smaller plant with very large yellow flowers • <u>Pink Beauty</u>*-pink flowers early, fades to yellow, I have seen fantastic specimens of this plant in cooler areas, don't believe the label • <u>Primrose Beauty</u>-a nice light lemon yellow flower • <u>Mango Tango</u>-yellow flowers with orange to red centers, flowers can be glossy • Mc Kay White-nice white flowers
<u>Ribes alpinum</u> (Green Mound Alpine Current ^{***})	
3-4 by 3-4 feet green no flowers to speak of sun, tolerates some shade easily kept smaller by pruning mounded form very disease resistant to quote a friend of mine a "parking lot" plant	
<u>Rosa</u> (Shrub Roses)	
there are hundreds of good shrub roses most can be kept 3-4 by 3-4 with annual pruning pruning is necessary to keep the plant healthy in good form and increase flower production there is a vast difference in the plants performance between the different cultivars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Fairy Rose</u>-a profusion of soft pink flowers • <u>Meidiland Red Rose</u> – and older variety, definitely one of my favorites • <u>Nearly Wild</u>-light pink, can get larger than 3-4 by 3-4

<p>some can reach medium shrub size, most need to be pruned hard each year for vigor and to keep them in the small category</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many more cultivars
<p>Spiraea albiflora (Japanese White Spirea**)</p>	
<p>2-2 by 2-3, small shrub white flowers full sun I have had some chlorosis problems with this plant but will still use it</p>	
<p>Spiraea (Spirea bumalda and japonica cultivars ***)</p>	
<p>2-3 plus by 2-3 plus full sun flowers red-pink, rose, white very hardy should be pruned hard every 2-3 years fairly common many of the gold yellow foliage cultivars lose the color or it fades in the heat there are a bazillion cultivars in this group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Alpine</u>-one of the smaller Spirea, pale pink flowers • <u>Anthony Waterer</u>-old cultivar, Neon Flash is better • <u>Crispa</u>-pink flowers, wavy leaves, not as florific as others but cool leaves • <u>Dakota Charm</u>-a small version of the iconic Gold Flame Spirea. • <u>Frobellei**</u>-similar to Anthony Waterer but a little larger, Noen Flash is an improvement • <u>Gold Flame**</u>-an older cultivar, Magic Carpet is better • <u>Goldmound**</u>-one of the many yellow cultivars • <u>Limemound**</u>-not one of my favorites • <u>Little Princess</u>-one of the smaller cultivars, small pale pink flowers, twiggy • <u>Magic Carpet</u>-an improved compact Gold Flame • <u>Neon Flash***</u>-the best of the deep pink cultivars • <u>Shirobana</u>-dark pink, light pink and white flowers at the same time, might be the same as Bubble Gum
<p>Viburnum opulus nanum (Dwarf European Cranberry Bush***)</p>	
<p>2 by 2 feet grows best in partial to shaded areas twiggy green foliage shy bloomer</p>	
<p>Weigela florida (Weigela cultivars***)</p>	
<p>this genus has a large number of cultivars sizes ranging from small to large</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Java Red</u>--3-4 by 3-4 feet, olive to dark green foliage with a purple tinge, red buds opening to pink flowers • <u>Midnight Wine</u>-small, 1-2 by 1-2 feet, slow growing, dark burgundy Maroon foliage • <u>Minuet</u>-3 by 3 feet, deep pink to ruby red

	<p>flowers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monet-multicolored foliage, red flowers, 2 by 2 feet, a neat plant, jury is out • Pink Poppet***2-3 by 2-3, covered with pink flowers in spring, one of my favorites, very hardy
<p>Yucca filamentosa (Yucca cultivars***)</p>	
<p>Yucca are actually broadleaf evergreen plants 2-3 by 2-3 feet (foliage) tolerates dry areas tall stalks of white flowers sharp pointed leaves I have some old groups in my yard by the driveway, and when blooming they are show stoppers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adams Needle-straight species Yucca, green leaves • Bright Edge- may die back to the ground, but regrows, cut out non variegated shoots, seedlings are usually all green,, yellow margins with green center • Color Guard-gold yellow center with green edges, pink to red tinge in the fall • Golden Sword- may die back to the ground, but regrows, cut out non variegated shoots, seedlings are usually all green
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