

Bonsai (“bone-sigh”, from Japanese meaning ‘tray planting’) is an ancient horticultural method of growing dwarf trees first practiced in China well over 800 years ago. Today, it is a well-recognized art form, especially in Japan. Some specimens are hundreds of years old and famous with bonsai enthusiasts around the world.

In the art of bonsai, trees are either dwarfed or smaller growing shrubs are trained to look like trees. Rockledge Gardens’ bonsai are between three and five-years-old and are intended to provide an attractive, reasonably priced plant for those who are casually interested in growing bonsai. Those with a deeper interest in this fascinating hobby will undoubtedly wish to start and train their own bonsai. Rockledge Gardens offers bonsai pots and a wide variety of plants suited to this purpose.

Most bonsai will not serve well as houseplants since they require bright light and can be kept indoors only for short periods—2 or 3 days at a time. Specific light needs depend on the variety.

When purchased, our bonsai is not a finished product. It continues to grow and develop throughout it’s life. Branch pruning and pinching off new growth must be done periodically. Trim whatever you feel needs to be done to maintain a miniature tree look. Often less foliage is best. Also, after a bonsai has been in a pot for several years, the roots will need to be trimmed back.

Bonsai pots should have large drainage holes, consequently the plant should be watered thoroughly and frequently, especially in hot weather. Never leave bonsai sitting in a pan or saucer or bonsai pot with water in it. After a few days of sitting in water the roots of the plant will begin to die.

Fertilize bonsai with **Dynamite** or **Osmocote Plus** every six months.

Bonsai should not be considered low maintenance plants, but they are a lot of fun for the “hands on” type of person. For more information go to: www.bonsaisocietyofbrevard.org

