VINES

ANNUAL VINES

Annual vines are fast growing, showy and can be grown up wires or string to provide decoration and shade. They make ideal plants for patio and balconies where perennials would not survive the winter. They can also be used as fillers near newly planted perennial vines. Most require full sun.

Sweat Pea (Lathyrus ororatus)
The climbing sweat pea, strictly ornamental, has perfumed flowers on long stems. The colours range from white to purple. They perform best in cool weather and are ideal for a sunny balcony. Start seeds early indoors or plant them outdoors in the spring as soon as the ground can be worked.

Pole Beans (Phaseolus coccineus)
These rampant climbers provide shade as well as food. The scarlet runner produces brilliant red flowers all summer long. The beans should be eaten when young and tender.

Cucumbers and Melons (Cucurbitaceae)
Vine cucumbers and melons can be grown on a net mesh or up strings. Heavy fruit will need extra support

Morning Glory (Convolvulaceae)
The morning glory is an excellent quick cover for a fence or trellis. Direct seeding in a sunny location must wait until danger of frost is past. For earlier results, transplants can be started indoors.

Other ornamental annual vines include the thunbergia, climbing nasturtium and gourds.

VINES WITH TENDRILS

Clinging vines attach themselves by means of a coiling, thread-like growth or tendril that wraps around whatever support is available. This support could be a chain-link fence, latticework or horizontal wires. Some tendrils grow from the stem, others from the tips of the leaves.

Clematis (Ranunculaceae)
This attractive vine, with a wide range of varieties, will thrive for many years in all but the most severe climates of Canada. They prefer alkaline soil, full sun, and a cool root system. Place another low-growing plant in front to provide shade.

Perennial Sweat Pea (Lathyrus)
This hardy perennial is a vigorous climber that can reach 6' and has a mass of pink - mauve flowers. It grows well in a wide range of conditions and must be given support.

Grapes (Vitaceae)
Although grapes are not considered an ornamental vine, a grape arbour with hanging clusters of fruit is exceedingly pleasing. The varieties recommended for colder areas produce fruit suitable only for jellies and wine; in milder regions, table grapes can also be grown.

SELF-SUPPORTING VINES

These vines attach themselves to brick, stone or boards by means of rootlets that grow from the stems; they don't need any additional form of support. Most are rampant growers and are an excellent choice for covering the sides of a house or a wooden fence.

Virginia Creeper (Vitaceae)
This very hardy, rapid growing, deciduous native vine, is ideal for covering walls and chain-link fences. The leaves turn a brilliant scarlet in the fall.

Climbing Hydrangea (Hydrangea anomala petilaris)
The climbing hydrangea is native to Japan and China. It enjoys partial shade and does well on the northeast side of a building where the stonework is rough. The strong rootlets take a very firm hold allowing the vine to send out branches one to three feet long that bear leaves and large clusters of white flowers in late June.

Trumpet Vine (Campsis radicans)
The trumpet vine is best suited to southern Ontario. It produces large, trumpet-shaped, orange - scarlet flowers in midsummer. Once established, this vine grows rapidly and will need pruning

Wintercreeper (Euonymus fortunei)
Another introduction from Japan, the wintercreeper is an evergreen vine that prefers a shady location. Like other evergreens, wintercreepers should be well soaked just before winter (especially important around houses) to provide an ample supply of moisture at their root system, and should be given a good mulch after freeze-up. There are many varieties of wintercreeper; some are ideally suited as ground cover on banks that are too steep to mow.

TWINNING VINES

This group of vines will twine themselves around lampposts, drain pipes, wires, chain-link fences or arbours. Once established, they require little care except for pruning.

Dutchman's Pipe (Aristolochia durior)
Well-established plants of this old-fashioned favourite are often seen in older sections of towns and villages. The huge leaves are excellent for screening purposes and, when used to cover an arbour, will quickly provide shade for a hot summer days.

Bittersweet (Celastrus)
Bittersweet is a fast-growing vine renowned for its colourful fruit that split open in the fall exposing red and orange-coated seeds. When grown on the side of a building it may need pruning. It also makes an excellent cover for low stone walls.

Bittersweet vines have separate sexes; that is, some plants are male, others female. Although all vines will produce foliage and flowers, only pollinated females will produce the beautiful berries; hence, it is essential to have a male plant within pollinating proximity (a few hundred yards).

Honeysuckle (Lonicera)
Although there are many different members of the honeysuckle family, the vine varieties best suited to the Canadian climate are those bred in Dropmore, Man. Dropmore scarlet, the most popular of this group, produces bright scarlet flowers with orange centres from early summer until fall. These honeysuckles need full sunshine and, once established, will reach 6 – 8' high.

Another hardy honeysuckle is flava, with its very attractive yellow flowers. Less hardy and suited only to British Columbia and southern Ontario is Hall's Japanese honeysuckle. This fragrant beauty has white flowers that turn soft yellow with age. It's a delight when grown over a doorway or on a porch; it can be grown in sun or shade.