

Fagus sylvatica
Common beech, European beech



Fagus sylvatica (common beech, European beech) is the king of the forests in the temperate climate of Europe. This dominant large tree grows in particular in beech woods without underplanting although can also be found in mixed woodland. The formidable species grows slowly but can ultimately attain a height of 35 metres with a very densely branched and egg-shaped to round crown. Exceptional specimens, and also the largest beeches in the world, with an ultimate height of 46 metres, can be found on the fertile loamy soils of the Sonian Forest near Brussels. Belgium.

The glossy, slightly undulating and smooth-edged leaf of *Fagus sylvatica* emerges bright green and changes to dark green in summer and in the autumn the tree puts on a dazzling display to end the year with beautiful yellow to orange autumnal foliage. The beech also stands out especially in winter thanks to its finely branching structure and mighty trunk, and the characteristic grey, smooth and fine bark. *Fagus sylvatica* bears inconspicuous pale-yellow male and female catkins at the end of May and early June. The beech nuts which appear in the autumn are a very familiar sight to all however with their bristly husk and are consumed by, among others, birds and small mammals.

Fagus sylvatica is a real climax tree which will thrive in shaded sites on fertile, damp soils. The tree is sensitive to drought, wet and compaction. Nevertheless, it grows on diverse soil types and also on chalky soils provided they are rich in nutrients and permeable. Since the beech creates a lot of shade not many plants will grow beneath it. *Fagus sylvatica* is always used a lot as a majestic, solitary tree in parks and avenues. Its precious timber means the beech is widely planted in woods and landscapes where it is also of great significance ecologically. *Fagus sylvatica* is greatly suited for use in topiary and, therefore, also obtainable in espalier or hedge form.

SEASONAL COLOURS

jan	feb	mar	apr	mei	jun	jul	aug	sep	okt	nov	dec

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, feathered trees, multi-stemmed trees, trees for climbing, shade trees, characteristic trees, woodland planting stock | **Topiary on stem**: beehive, block, cylinder, trapezium, pyramid, cone, roof-trained, level, multi-stem umbrella, pleached | **Topiary**: beehive, globe, egg-shaped, cylinder, block, column, trapezium, cone, hedge, hedge element, archway, pleached, bonsai

USE

Location: avenue, park, central reservation, large garden, cemetery, countryside, ecological zone | **Pavement**: none | **Planting concepts**: food forest, shade-tolerant, urban planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: wide egg-shaped | **Crown structure**: dense | **Height**: 25 - 30 m | **Width**: 20 - 25 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 5B - 7B

ASPECTS

Wind: slightly tolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level**: moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: dry, moist | **Light requirements**: sun, partial shade, shade | **pH range**: acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant**: birds, small mammals

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: discrete, small | **Flower colour**: daffodil | **Flowering period**: May - June | **Leaf colour**: dark green, buds bright green | **Leaves**: deciduous, ovoid, polished, undulate | **Autumn colour**: yellow-orange, brown | **Fruits**: edible, small, husk | **Fruit colour**: brown | **Bark colour**: grey | **Bark**: smooth | **Twig colour**: grey-brown | **Twigs**: bare, zigzagging | **Root system**: shallow, compact, central root

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