

Picea

Picea (*Pinaceae*)



abies (P. excelsa), Common Spruce

Origin: northern and central Europe. Conifer with narrow, columnar habit, straight trunk and branches which are evenly spaced apart, almost horizontal, slightly bending at the ends. Bright green, pointed needles, 1.5-2.5cm. Long, pendulous cones (10-15cm), cylindrical, pale brown when mature. Greatly used in forestation up to 2.200 m above sea level, grows in all normally fertile soil and tolerates limestone. It is the most popular plant for use as a Christmas tree.

abies "Inversa" (P. abies "Inversa Pendula")

Weeping version of the above. Will grow erect if supported, then bends over at the top. Side branches droop vertically, close to trunk. Those near the base often sweep the ground, carpeting it. Suitable for small gardens. Same growing requirements as above version.



Picea



glauca "Conica"
(*P. albertiana conica*)

Origin: Canada. One of the most popular dwarf conifers because of its perfect conical habit which, with age, spreads out at the base. Fine, soft foliage, pale green in spring, green in summer, green with bluish shades in winter. Requires cool soil, well drained, not calcareous. If it is planted in soil that is too dry the red spider mite will attack it. Use: rock gardens, containers, pots or large trough.

omorika, Serbian spruce

Origin: Serbia. Conifer with narrow conical crown and short branches which are initially bent, then grow upwards, forming a graceful curve. Needles, glossy dark green on top, with two white lines underneath. Cones, 6 cm, dark purple, right from start. Thrives in almost all soils, except too compact or stagnant terrain. Use: on its own, in groups, for tall, protective barriers. Young plants are popular as Christmas trees.



Picea



omorika "Nana"

Dwarf form of *Picea omorika* with broad, dense, compact habit, roundish when young, then conical. Growing requirements: like *P. omorika*.

orientalis

Native of the Caucasus, where it reaches much larger dimensions than in Europe, it has a very tall, regular conical habit, with well-spaced branches. It has the shortest needle of the species, dense, growing radially on the very dark green, but glossy, branches. The 6-9 cm cones are purple when they appear, brown when mature. Eye-catching in April-May, during flowering, for its red male flowers and purplish-violet female ones. Very hardy, prefers fertile soil. Plant singly, even in medium-sized gardens, as it grows slowly, especially when young.





**orientalis "Aurea"
(P. orientalis "Aureospicata")**

Differs from the above, for its even slower growth, but mainly for the bright sulphur-yellow of its buds in springtime, which lasts until early summer; seen from a distance, it appears to be flowering. Growing requirements and uses: as for Picea orientalis.

pungens "Fat Albert"

Cultivar of Picea pungens notable for its dense, erect pyramidal habit, with slightly upward-growing branches and steel-blue needles. Oblong cones 5-10 cm, initially greenish, then brown.





pungens "Glauca Globosa"

The most sought after dwarf conifer. Rather sparse and a little uneven in the first years, it soon becomes dense and spherical and later slightly conical. With age it spreads out and flattens but stays compact. Magnificent silvery blue foliage all year. Hardy and adapts to all types of soil although it prefers fresh and loose soil. Tolerates heat, drought and even urban air better than other Piceas. Use: the ideal plant for rock gardens and troughs, planted as a freestanding specimen or with other different coloured dwarf conifers. When trained into a standard tree it creates a wonderful effect near houses, in the middle of small plant arrangements, or as a tall feature amongst lower flowering plants.

pungens "Hoopsii", Blue spruce

One of the most beautiful blue conifers. It is a very regular conical shape with spreading branches, horizontal, slightly turning upwards at the ends. Long, rigid, pointed needles, very close together, bright steel-blue. When the sun shines on the tree in spring it glows a silvery blue. Long, cylindrical, pale brown cones, 6-10cm long, weeping, which form above all on the upper part of the plant. It adapts to all types of soil as long as it is not too calcareous or too acid. It withstands drought better than other Piceas and tolerates pollution. Use: very effective as a free standing specimen on lawns, in front of houses or in groups of three in parks.

