

Hickory Nut

Prized as shade trees with golden brown autumn color and often interesting shagbark, hickory trees are of the *carya* genus.

Varieties adapted to the climate bear delicious nuts to Zone 4. Hickories reach a height of 120 feet and need five to 10 years before bearing nuts.

Planting and care

Plant 30 to 50 feet apart. Planting holes must be deep enough to hold 3-foot-long taproots without bending them. It is safer to plant the nuts. If you buy a tree, set it 2 to 3 inches deeper than it grew at the nursery. Water as you fill to settle soil. At planting time, cut the tree back one-third to one-half to compensate for root loss. Mulch well. Hickories will need little more care.

Pollination

Needs more than one variety.

Harvesting

Gather nuts as they fall, or shake the tree. Refrigerate after shelling and use soon. Properly dried, hickory nuts will keep for several weeks at room temperature, for several months in a cool and dry place, and for more than a year in a freezer.