

Small urban lots place many constrictions on plant choices. Columnar plants are strategic in these situations. In addition, tall and narrow shapes provide a very strong structural element to gardens of all sizes. The following list offers some suggestions of columnar to conical (cone-shaped) plants for a tight area. Plants are subject to seasonal availability.

Plants with an * are evergreen.

Columnar plants 10' tall and under

****Buxus semp*** 'Grahm Blandy'- A narrow form of English boxwood. Grows 3-6"/year in height. But is not wider than 3'. Full sun to part shade.

Berberis thunbergi 'Helmond's Pillar'-A deciduous barberry with dark maroon leaves. It matures at 4-5' tall and 2' wide. Requires full sun.

****Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*** 'Barry's Silver'- Stunning conifer with soft light green foliage and prominent white tips. Matures at 6' tall and 2' wide. Excellent drainage, protect from hot sun.

****Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*** 'Blue Surprise'- Soft feathery powder blue foliage with purple tints in winter. Matures at 8' tall and 2-3' wide. Full sun and excellent drainage.

****Chamaecyparis pisifera*** 'Boulevard'- Very soft blue curly foliage with purple tints in winter. Slow to 8-12' tall and 4-6' wide. Full sun, good drainage.

****Chamaecyparis thyoides*** 'Red Star'-Tiny green star shaped foliage turns maroon in winter. Slow growing dwarf conifer (1-

3"/year) stays narrow. Requires full sun. Tolerant of many soil types.

****Hedera helix*** 'Poetica'- structural, upright and shrubby ivy. Grows to 3-4' tall and 2-3' wide. Requires full to partial sun.

****Ilex crenata*** 'Sky Sentry', or 'Sky Pencil'- Small rounded glossy leaves and black berries. Slow growing to 10' tall and 1 1/2' wide. Needs full to partial sun.

****Juniperus communis*** 'Compressa'-A conical plant with grey green foliage. Slow growing (3-6"/year) reaching 2' tall and 6" wide in ten years.

****Juniperus communis*** 'Gold Cone'- Bright yellow foliage in spring and summer. Grows 3-6"/year reaching 6' tall and 2' wide. Needs full sun and good drainage.

****Picea glauca*** 'Conica'- Dwarf Alberta Spruce. Cone shaped plant with compact foliage. Grows 3"/year, to 8'-12' tall and 3-5' wide. Requires full sun.

****Pinus sylvestris*** 'Sentinel'- A dwarf and narrow form of Scott's pine with bluish needles and reddish bark. Slow growing to 4' tall and 1' wide in ten years. Needs full sun and good drainage.

****Taxus baccata*** 'Amersfoort'- An unusual yew with stubby, wide needles and distinctive structure. Grows 1-3"/year (no information on mature size). Full sun to partial shade.

****Taxus x media*** 'Beanpole'-A dense pillar of dark green foliage. Very slow growing (1-3"/year) indefinitely. Full sun to part shade. Protect from severe winter winds.

****Thuja occidentalis*** 'Degroot's Spire'- Very narrow form of arborvitae with spirally arranged foliage. Grows 6-12"/year indefinitely. 8' tall and 1' wide in ten years. Full sun to partial shade.

Columnar plants 10'-20' tall

****Chamaecyparis obtusa*** 'Gracilis'- Slender Hinoki Cypress. Artistic structure is complimented by dark green fan like foliage. Grows 3-6"/year reaching 20' tall and 4-5' wide. It can reach 30' in time. Full sun to part shade. Good drainage.

Columnar apples- A self-fertile apple that reaches 12' tall and 3' wide. White flowers with a pink blush in the spring and colorful fruits in the fall. Three varieties available, 'Golden Sentinel', 'North Pole', and 'Scarlet Sentinel'. Full sun.

****Ilex vomitoria*** 'Will Flemming'- A dense column of tiny, shiny dark green leaves. Grows 6-12"/year reaching 15' tall and 2-3' wide. Full sun to partial shade.

****Juniperus scopulorum*** 'Skyrocket'- Silvery blue spire of scaly foliage. Grows 12"/year reaching 10-15' tall and 3-5' wide. Full sun and good drainage.

****Juniperus scopulorum*** 'Gray Gleam'- A sleek conical evergreen with grey green foliage. Grows 12"/year reaching 15'+ tall and 5' wide at the base. Full sun and good drainage.

****Juniperus scopulorum*** 'Moonglow'- Intense silver blue foliage creates a dense pyramid. Grows 12"/year reaching 15-20' tall and 5-8' wide. Full sun.

***Laburnum anagyroides* ‘Sunspire’-** Columnar Golden Chain Tree. Deciduous three lobed leaves and clusters of bright yellow pea shaped flowers in early summer. Green bark. Slow grower, 12-15’ tall and 5-8’ wide. Full sun.

****Pinus sylvestris* ‘Fastigata’-** Narrow form of Scotts pine. Thick blue green needles and reddish bark are a nice contrast. Grows 12”+/year reaching 20’ tall and 3-4’ wide. Full sun and good drainage.

****Taxus baccata* ‘Stricta’-** Irish Yew. Dark green spire. Slow growing (3-6”/year) eventually reaching 20’ tall and 3-5’ wide. Full sun to partial shade. Good drainage.

****Thuja occidentalis* ‘Holmstrup’-** Compact dark green foliage. Grows 6-12”/year. Conical habit, 8-12’ tall 4-5’ wide at base. Full sun to partial shade.

Columnar plants over 20’ tall

***Acer rubrum* ‘Bowhall’-** Narrow form of red maple. Bright red fall color. Grows 1.7”/year. Matures at 40-50’ tall and 10-15’ wide. Full sun.

***Acer rubrum* ‘Scanlon’-** Compact crown that turns rich orange and red in fall. Matures at 40’ tall and 15’ wide. Full sun.

***Carpinus betulus* ‘Franz Fontaine’-** Hornbeam. A dense pyramid of textured leaves. Reaches 30’ tall and 15’ wide. Full sun.

****Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* ‘Green Arrow’-** A graceful form of Alaskan Cedar with sweeping branches and feathery

foliage. Grows 12”+/year reaching 30’+ tall and 3’ wide. Full sun.

****Cupressus sempervirens* ‘Tiny Tower’, and ‘Stricta’-** Italian Cypress. A classic in columnar plants. ‘Tiny Tower’ reaches 25’ tall and 3-4’ wide. ‘Stricta’ reaches 40-60’ tall and 3-5’ wide. Excellent drainage, shelter from severe winds and cold. Full sun.

***Fagus sylvatica* ‘Red Obleisk’-** One of several beech cultivars that is narrow. Maroon leaves in summer. Grows to 35’ tall and 8’ wide. Full sun.

***Koelreuteria paniculata* ‘Fastigiata’-** Golden Rain tree. Feathery deciduous foliage is topped by sprays of yellow flowers in summer. Fast growing to 35’ tall and 6’ wide. Easy. Full sun.

****Pinus flexilis* ‘Vanderwolf’s Pyramid’-** A soft pine with striking steel blue needles. Grows 16”/year. Reaches 30’+ tall and 10-15’ wide. Full sun and good drainage.

****Pinus strobus* ‘Fastigiata’-** A narrow eastern white pine. Grows 12”+/year. Reaches 40’+ tall and 10-20’ wide. Full sun and good drainage.

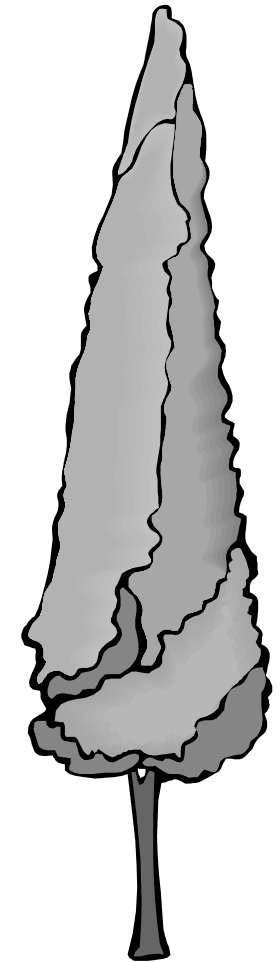
****Pinus sylvestris* ‘Bonna’-** A Scott’s Pine, which reaches 30’ tall and is very slender. Silver blue needles, and peeling cinnamon colored bark. Full sun, good drainage.

Information compiled by Laura Altvater

Columnar plants

Narrow plants for tight spots

Columnar plants



PORTLAND NURSERY