



Small Trees and
Shrubs for
Autumn Colour

Autumn and winter are good times to plant trees and shrubs; the moist soil and cooler weather are ideal for letting the roots get established before the tree has to support actively growing leaves and flowers. When choosing trees for small garden you need to check the eventual height and spread or you could crowd out other plants (or block your view!) Below are my top seven small trees and shrubs that will provide you with brilliant autumn colour.

Common Name	Botanical Name	Comments	Photograph
Coral Bark maple	<i>Acer palmatum</i> var. <i>dissectum</i> 'Sango-kaku'	This slow growing tree can eventually reach 8m and has colour all year with coral coloured winter stems, lime green summer leaves and then pink and red autumn leaves.	
Black gum 'Wisley bonfire'	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i> 'Wisley Bonfire'	This slow growing tree can eventually reach 12m high and provides a brilliant autumn show turning gradually from green to orange, red and yellow over many weeks in the autumn.	
Crab Apple John Downie	<i>Malus</i> 'John Downie'	Will eventually reach 8 – 12m high with white spring flowers, orange crab apples and vibrant yellow and orange autumn leaves.	

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Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	In the autumn this shrub will produce sweet blue berries and bright red leaves. The early spring flowers will provide valuable pollen and nectar for bees.	
Coastal azalea	<i>Rhododendron atlanticum</i>	This deciduous, dwarf azalea will grow between 90cm and 1.2m with spring flowers and maroon and red autumn leaves.	
Dwarf Burning Bush	<i>Euonymus alatus</i> 'Compatus'	This hardy shrub will grow 2.4m high; its green leaves turn bright red in the autumn. Plant in full sun in well-drained soil.	
Beauty Berry Profusion	<i>Callicarpa bodinieri</i> var. <i>giraldii</i> 'Profusion'	This shrub will grow to 2.4 – 4m high with leaves turning pinky in the autumn and vivid, glossy purple berries.	

Tree and Shrub Planting:

Dig a large hole when planting; at least twice as wide as the root ball/pot and one and a half times as deep. Sprinkle bonemeal inside the hole and then mix in plenty of compost or manure with the soil you have dug out before backfilling. Heel in the roots firmly and, for trees, add a stake on the windward side of the trunk. Finally, water in well after planting, continue to water if the weather is dry.