

The mugo pine

Pinus mugo. Some other examples of pines are **Pinus insularis**, **Pinus parviflora**, **Pinus koraiensis**, **Pinus comunis**, **Pinus cembra**.

Family: Pinaceae.

Origin: Cold regions of the northern hemisphere. Japan.

There are more than 80 species of pines, being the most important genus of the conifers. Only in France exist more than 20 species which can live up to 600 years. Pines differ in the number of needles, two, three or five per group.

Temperature and exposure: Pines prefer zones with high temperatures, but also resist cold temperatures and inclusively freeze. They prefer windy sites with good ventilation and are very sensible against pollution.

Pruning and cleaning: Eliminate the old and dry needles which turn yellow in autumn. Be sure to keep clean the inside of the tree eliminating dead branches and needles. Also clean the soil to avoid rotten bark or roots. About the month of april prune the needles down to 1/3 of their size between your fingernails, never use scissors. Once a year all new grown pins should be removed to get a dense growth. Do this in spring. Branches should be cut in autumn, always cut slightly above a group of needles.

Light: Pines need as much sun as possible, they don't like shadow at all.

Repotting / Soil: Repot every four or five years eliminating only 1/3 of the roots and plant in a bigger and deep pot. Pines look great in earth colored pots, better dark than light but always deep enough. The type of soil I would recommend is composed of 1/3 of compost, 1/3 of humus and 1/3 of sand. The particular pine I am talking about prefers cool and humid grounds, this fact differs from pine to pine.

Wiring: Wire in autumn and winter avoiding to hurt the needles trapped between wire and the wood. If necessary, repeat the operation every year.

Watering: Water frequently but be sure that the drainage of the pot is effective. As pines support hot winds it is not necessary to vaporize them a lot. In case you have pollution in your living area, shower the pine from time to time in order to clean it.

Fertilizer: Like with nearly all trees apply organic solid fertilizer starting in march, reducing the dose during the hot summer season and stopping completely at the end of november. Never apply on recently repotted or weak plants.

Diseases: Pines can be attacked by a lot of diseases and parasites, a lot of them can be avoided keeping the trees clean of dry needles, branches and pollution. I have had no diseases on my plants yet, so I really can not recommend any treatments, please consult any good literature if you should find any symptom on your trees.