

## The japanese privet

**Ligustrum japonicum rotundifolium, Ligustrum japonicum revolutum, Ligustrum japonicum variegatum.**

**Family:** Oleaceae.

**Origin:** Japan and Korea.

This evergreen plant with oval leaves whose coloring differs from genus to genus has a specially beautiful gray and soft bark. The flowers are white and grow in a vertical pyramidal form. The growth of this tree is quite fast which makes it specially attractive for bonsai growing and forming.

**Light:** Privets need much light, in summer keep the trees in mid shadow, the fine leaves could get burnt in the direct sun. Be sure to keep the soil humid, this will reinforce the resistance against the sun.

**Temperature and exposure:** Trees should be protected from temperatures below 3° Celsius in winter. In summer protect the plants from direct insolation, especially in very hot regions like the mediterranean area.

**Pruning and cleaning:** Always remove the dry or fallen leaves. Pinch the new sprouts with your nails. Lateral branches should be left with only one knot. During the growing period, cut the branches leaving only two pairs of leaves per branch. Structure pruning should be done in wintertime. To obtain flowers, branches must be cut when winter ends.

**Repotting / Soil:** Repot every two to three years cutting a bit more than the half of the fine roots and plant the tree in a bigger pot. Ligustrums look nice in ceramic pots, I prefer dark green or blue colors. The form of the pot can be circular or rectangular. The mixture of soil I recommend is composed of 1/3 of compost, 1/3 of humus and 1/3 sand.

**Wiring:** The main season for wiring is from June to August when the tree is in the growing period. Don't keep the wires for more than 5 months and protect the sensible branches with raffia. Be careful when you bend the branches because they break easily.

**Watering:** Water abundantly in spring and summer and be sure to reduce the watering drastically in winter. Be sure to shower or vaporize the trees as often as possible as they are accustomed to humid climates.

**Fertilizer:** Organic solid fertilizer should be applied starting in March, reducing the dose during the hot summer days and stopping completely at the end of autumn. Never apply on recently repotted or affected plants.

**Diseases:** Privets are not very sensible. The only plague I have suffered on my exemplar was an attack of aphids which I removed manually. If the attack persists, consult the remedy's page to find some additional information.