

Apple

Malus domestica · Rose family

DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Deciduous perennial tree
MATURITY 2–4 years to first fruit



SUN
Full sun



WATER
Regular, deep



SOIL PH
6.0–6.8



SPACING
3–6m depending
on rootstock



DEPTH
graft union
above soil

01 Chill hours & pollination

Apples need a winter chill period to fruit well, and most varieties need a different variety nearby for cross-pollination. Both matter more than almost any other factor for a good crop.



loose stake, first year

02 Planting

METHOD	Plant with the graft union above soil; stake for the first 1–2 years.
SOIL	Well-drained, moderately fertile.
TIMING	Plant bare-rooted trees in winter while dormant.

04 Problems

- **Codling moth** — larvae tunnel fruit; use pheromone traps and bagging.
- **Black spot** — fungal leaf and fruit spotting in wet climates; choose resistant varieties.
- **Woolly aphid** — white fluffy colonies on bark; prune out and treat.
- **Poor fruit set** — insufficient chill hours or no pollinator; check both.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY

Comfrey

Daffodil

Chives

AVOID NEARBY

Walnut (allelopathic)

ROTATION NOTE

Not applicable — long-lived perennial tree.

03 Growing care

- Choose a variety matched to your region's winter chill hours.
- Plant a compatible pollinator variety nearby, or graft multiple varieties onto one tree.
- Prune in winter to an open, airy shape.
- Thin developing fruit if very heavily set, for better size and less limb strain.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Fruit comes away easily with a slight upward twist, seeds have browned.
METHOD	Twist and lift rather than pull straight down.
CURING	None needed for eating fresh.
STORAGE	Cool, dark, ventilated. Many varieties keep 2–4 months.