

# Real Estate

## GREEN HOUSE

### Trees up the wall

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Bonsai in Japanese means a tree in a tray with emphasis on the word tree. A novel concept to present this art of miniaturising trees in a creative way is to train them to grow against and through a wall. Creation of such a wall 'embroidered' with miniature trees will add a dramatic touch to a home garden.



The size of the wall should complement the garden and should also accommodate at least 6-7 potential bonsais to give a majestic look. To avoid difficulties in cultivation and drying out of plants grown in the wall, there should be a provision for slabs behind the wall where pots can be placed. The roots and some portion of the stem of bonsai are passed through the front side of the wall to the rear to create a living sculpture of leaves and stems in the front according to the desired design.

This whole process will help in camouflaging the pot for the bonsai giving an impression of the bonsai growing on the wall. Small leaved ficus species such as ficus benjamina, retusa, microcarpa, longisland and compacta are evergreen and are the ideal plants for this novel concept. These are easy to grow and can be well-trained with some skill to grow against a wall.

Aesthetically, it is better to have the same species of plants as the water and nutrition needs of such plants would be similar. This also gives an integrated effect and attention is not divided in viewing different species. However, a wall decorated with mixed species of bonsai can also be experimented with.



### Wall specifications

- The wall should be at least 10-15 cm thick and can be made of any material. It can be given any texture and colour to compliment the foliage, stem and even flowers of the bonsai.
- Some square or round openings should be made in the wall depending upon the size of the wall and also on the number and size of the plants to be grown.

- Slabs at appropriate places should be made at the back of the wall for placing the pots for the bonsai to grow.

### **How to create**

- Select the potential bonsai having a long stem to facilitate its insertion through the openings in the wall. Remove it from the pot so that it can be repotted behind the wall later.
- Insert the roots and some stem of the bonsai through the front of the wall.
- Take a pot of suitable height and the bonsai having roots at the back of the wall is potted keeping in mind the overall design of the miniaturised trees to be reflected in the front.
- Ensure that the pot is placed on the base made in the wall for the purpose in such a manner that the plant is in a balanced and comfortable position for its overall growth.

### **Right grooming tips**

- The selected area for the wall should get at least 1-2 hours of sunlight. This 'sunshine' will help these miniaturised trees stay healthy and grow better.
- Evergreen plants should be selected to have a year round attractive element in the garden.
- Pinching and pruning of these bonsai is carried out periodically during the growing season to encourage the pattern and allow them to grow artistically against the wall.
- Fertilise the plants with NPK (nitrogen, phosphorous, potash) twice in growing season. However foliar fertiliser if sprayed on the plants will bring an instant healthy shine on the leaves.
- The requirement of water depends upon the amount of sunlight available. In general the golden rule is to water only when the top soil gets dry.