



# Agri Articles

(e-Magazine for Agricultural Articles)

Volume: 04, Issue: 05 (SEP-OCT, 2024)

Available online at <http://www.agriarticles.com>

© Agri Articles, ISSN: 2582-9882

## Bonsai

(Dr. C. Venkatesh, \*Kanmani K and Harshini C)

J.K.K. Munirajah College of Agricultural Science, T. N. Palayam, Gobi, Erode-638506

\*Corresponding Author's email: [kanmaniksy2404@gmail.com](mailto:kanmaniksy2404@gmail.com)

**B**onsai is the art of growing trees in a confined space to simulate certain environmental conditions such as great age, extreme weathering, twisted or contorted form, landscape, or other factors. Bonsai trees are modeled on and take inspiration from nature. In today's world with increasing population and reduction in size of home with no or very less area for garden, bonsai may create aesthetically pleasing look with various miniature trees. The idea of bonsai is to recreate some of nature's most stunning and beautiful effects on trees which are reduced in scale.

### Introduction

The word bonsai comes from the Japanese 'bon' meaning pan, and 'sai', a plant. It is the art of dwarfing and shaping trees or shrubs, growing them in small shallow pots or trays so that they remain miniature replicas of their natural counterparts in the wild. Bonsai is true miniaturization of natural real trees, not dwarf species, are kept small by rigorous pruning of branches. A tree or shrub grown by this method. There are certain misconception about bonsai one such is that bonsai are very old trees. This is not the whole truth old bonsai. Even a young tree can be trained and given appearance of old age by shortening the branches, so that the trunk looks thicker (hence older) in proportion. The same effect can be had also by training the branches downward as in old trees rather than upward as in young trees.

### The origin of Bonsai

Although the word 'Bon-sai' is Japanese, the art it describes originated in the Chinese empire. By the year 700 AD the Chinese had started the art of 'pun-sai' using special techniques to grow dwarf trees in containers.

Originally only the elite of the society practiced pun-tsai with native-collected specimens and the trees were spread throughout China as luxurious gifts. During the Kamakura period, the period in which Japan adopted most of China's cultural trademarks, the art of growing trees in containers was introduced into Japan. The Japanese developed Bonsai along certain lines due to the influence of Zen Buddhism and the fact that Japan is only 4% the size of mainland China. The range of landscape forms was thus much more limited. Many well-known techniques, styles and tools were developed in Japan from Chinese originals. Although known to a limited extent outside Asia for three centuries, only recently has Bonsai truly been spread outside its homelands.

### Cultivation and Care

Bonsai cultivation and care requires techniques and tools that are specialized to support the growth and long-term maintenance of trees in small containers.

**Material sources:** All bonsai start with a specimen of source material, a plant that the grower wishes to train into bonsai form. Bonsai practice is an unusual form of plant cultivation in that growth from seeds is rarely used to obtain source material. To display the characteristic

aged appearance of a bonsai within a reasonable time, the source plant is often mature or at least partially grown when the bonsai creator begins work. Sources of bonsai material include:

- ❑ Propagation from a source tree through cuttings or layering.
- Nursery stock directly from a nursery, or from a garden centre or similar resale establishment.
- ❑ Commercial bonsai growers, which, in general, sell mature specimens that display bonsai aesthetic qualities already.
- ❑ Collecting suitable bonsai material in its original wild situation, successfully moving it, and replanting it in a container for development as bonsai. These trees are called yamadori and are often the most expensive and prized of all Bonsai

## Techniques

The practice of bonsai development incorporates a number of techniques either unique to bonsai or, if used in other forms of cultivation, applied in unusual ways that are particularly suitable to the bonsai domain. These techniques include:

- ❑ Leaf trimming, the selective removal of leaves (for most varieties of deciduous tree) or needles (for coniferous trees and some others) from a bonsai's trunk and branches.
- ❑ Pruning the trunk, branches, and roots of the candidate tree.
- ❑ Wiring branches and trunks allows the bonsai designer to create the desired general form and make detailed branch and leaf placements.
- ❑ Clamping using mechanical devices for shaping trunks and branches.
- Grafting new growing material (typically a bud, branch, or root) into a prepared area on the trunk or under the bark of the tree.
- ❑ Defoliation, which can provide short-term dwarfing of foliage for certain deciduous species.
- ❑ Deadwood bonsai techniques called jin and sharisimulate age and maturity in a bonsai.



## Conclusion

Bonsai is the art of growing ornamental, artificially dwarfed varieties of trees and shrubs in pots. It is an ornamental tree or shrub grown using the art of bonsai. Bonsai trees that can bring positive energy, clean air and to detoxify your home. You don't need any extra effort for growing a few bonsai trees. Because it is as easy as maintaining any other plants, either in your garden or indoors. Very often bonsai trees are considered as living art forms. People in Japan, China etc. hand over bonsai trees to their next generation as ancestral properties. According to them, these are equally important to any other material gifts. Keeping such a valuable thing in our home will definitely bring positive energy. Moreover, nature is aware about the air purifying properties of plants. Those who are not having enough space for outdoor gardens, bonsai trees are best alternatives. Really bonsai is the miniature form of trees, that exactly resemble natural ones. Moreover, the word bonsai literally means plants that grow in containers. Surely, we can grow our own bonsai trees easily through simple steps. Always remember the following points before you start your own. Select native plants, that can easily adapt to the particular climates. Give proper caring at various stages of training, mostly like pruning, wiring, repotting etc. Never forget that your bonsai trees are unable to survive fully indoors. Hence, to maintain its health and beauty, keep the plants outdoors occasionally. Over watering as well as shortage of water, can make your bonsai trees unhealthy. Use potting medium with ingredients mixed in the right proportions for, proper drainage. Feeding the plant with a diluted fertiliser at regular intervals, is essential for keeping your bonsai healthy. Throughout its life time, we have to care the plant properly.

## Reference

1. Chadha, K. L. and Bhattacharjee. Ornamental Horticulture in India. ICAR, New Delhi, 1986.