

Picea abies - Norway Spruce (*Pinaceae*)

Picea abies is a common, large, pyramidal evergreen tree that serves as a bold accent or windbreak in the landscape. Norway Spruce is also available in dwarf and weeping forms that can be used for architectural and accent elements in the landscape.

FEATURES

Form

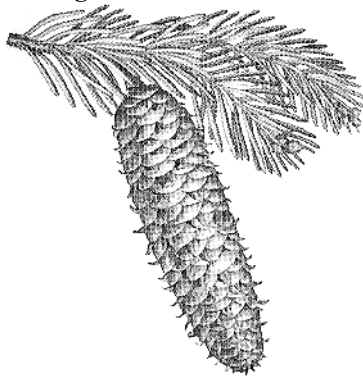
- large evergreen tree; 80' tall x 30' wide
- upright pyramidal, becoming conical with age
- somewhat horizontal secondary branches and pendulous branchlets
- medium rate

Culture

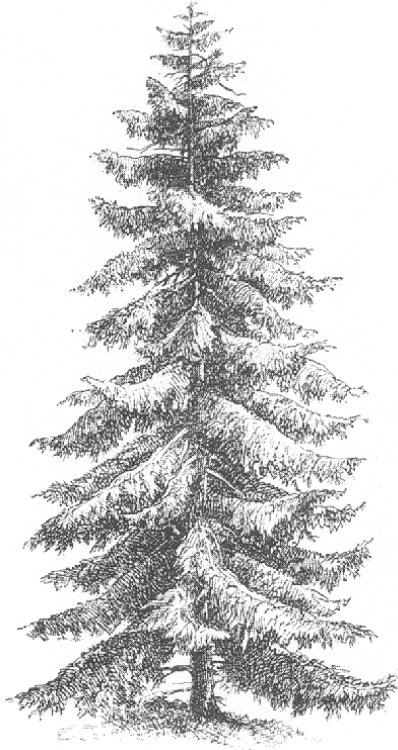
- full sun
- prefers a moist, acid, well-drained soil but can tolerate adverse conditions, as long as it is not placed in wet soils or shady sites
- virtually no disease or pest problems
- abundantly available in B&B form
- young trees are usually sheared during nursery production for a fuller, denser appearance at transplanting, as the young tree is naturally very open in its branching habit

- recovers quickly from transplant shock; it is a dependable favorite for screen or windbreak plantings, which are often neglected (and for all practical purposes not watered except by rain and snow) after transplanting
- trees of 4-10' size should be staked for 2 yrs. after transplanting to prevent windthrow

Foliage



- dark green needles to 1" long
- clustered on the upper two-thirds of the stem, with the needles pointing forward and therefore "soft" to the grip of the hand around the stem



Flowers

- inconspicuous
- monoecious

Fruits/Cones

- cones to 5" long, in the upper one-third of the tree
- light green with a purplish cast when immature, becoming brown with maturity

Twigs

- light brown with an orange cast
- needle scars raised on the stem

Trunk

- thick gray scales with age

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Function

- specimen, shade, or focal point tree
- windbreak when in rows
- large evergreen pyramidal tree

Texture

- bold texture throughout its life and thick density at maturity (fine texture in youth if sheared, thin density in youth if unsheared)

Assets

- evergreen tree with a classical alpine shape
- large evergreen tree with a medium growth rate
- branches to the ground
- pendulous branchlets give a reverse vertical effect

Liabilities

- can exhibit decline and dieback under severe heat and drought stress

Habitat

- Zones 2 to 7
- Native to Northern and Central Europe

SELECTIONS

Alternates

- large evergreen conifers that are used as specimens, screens, or windbreaks in sunny sites (*Abies concolor*, *Picea pungens*, *Pinus strobus*, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, etc.)

Cultivars - Variants - Related species

- P. abies* 'Nidiformis' - Bird's Nest Spruce - small shrub to 3' x 3' with an extremely slow growth rate; medium green with a depressed center in the top of the shrub (therefore resembling a "bird's nest"); this trait may be lost with age; full sun; as a foundation, specimen, or facer shrub; one of the most common small narrowleaf shrubs

- P. abies* 'Pumila' - Dwarf Norway Spruce - a miniature shrub similar in appearance to 'Nidiformis', except that the foliage is dark green, thinner, and more forward-pointing, with a slightly more vigorous growth rate

- P. abies* f. *pendula* - Weeping Norway Spruce - weeping form to 20' tall; useful as a specimen small tree



- Picea omorika* - Serbian Spruce - 50' x 25'; similar in growth habit to Norway Spruce, but branches are more alpine (ski-sloped) than Norway, stature is shorter, and the foliage is silvery-blue at the branch tips but bluish-green otherwise
- superior drought tolerance to Colorado Spruce