

## ***Acer japonicum***<sup>1</sup>

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### **Introduction**

Full-moon maple is a small, deciduous tree that reaches 10 to 15 feet in both height and width, creating a smooth, rounded canopy (Figure 1). It fits well into the oriental garden due to its exotic silhouette. The cultivar 'Acontifolium' is exceptionally cold hardy, having survived temperatures of 25°F below zero. The deeply divided, soft green leaves have 9 to 11 lobes and are delicately displayed on thin, drooping branches. The cultivar 'Vitifolium's' leaves are less divided, providing a coarse texture in the landscape. Leaves take on a beautiful yellow to red coloration in the fall before dropping, making this small, dense plant really stand out in the landscape. Fall color has been described as exceptional. The hanging clusters of showy, purple/red flowers appear in late spring and are followed by the production of winged seeds. The full-moon maple's flowers stand out among the maples.



**Figure 1.** Full-Moon Maple.

**Pronunciation:** AY-sir juh-PAW-nick-um

**Common name(s):** full-moon maple

**Family:** *Aceraceae*

**Plant type:** tree

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5 through 7 (Figure 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Acer japonicum*

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**Uses:** near a deck or patio; container or above-ground planter; trained as a standard; bonsai

**Leaf shape:** ovate

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

**Leaf venation:** palmate

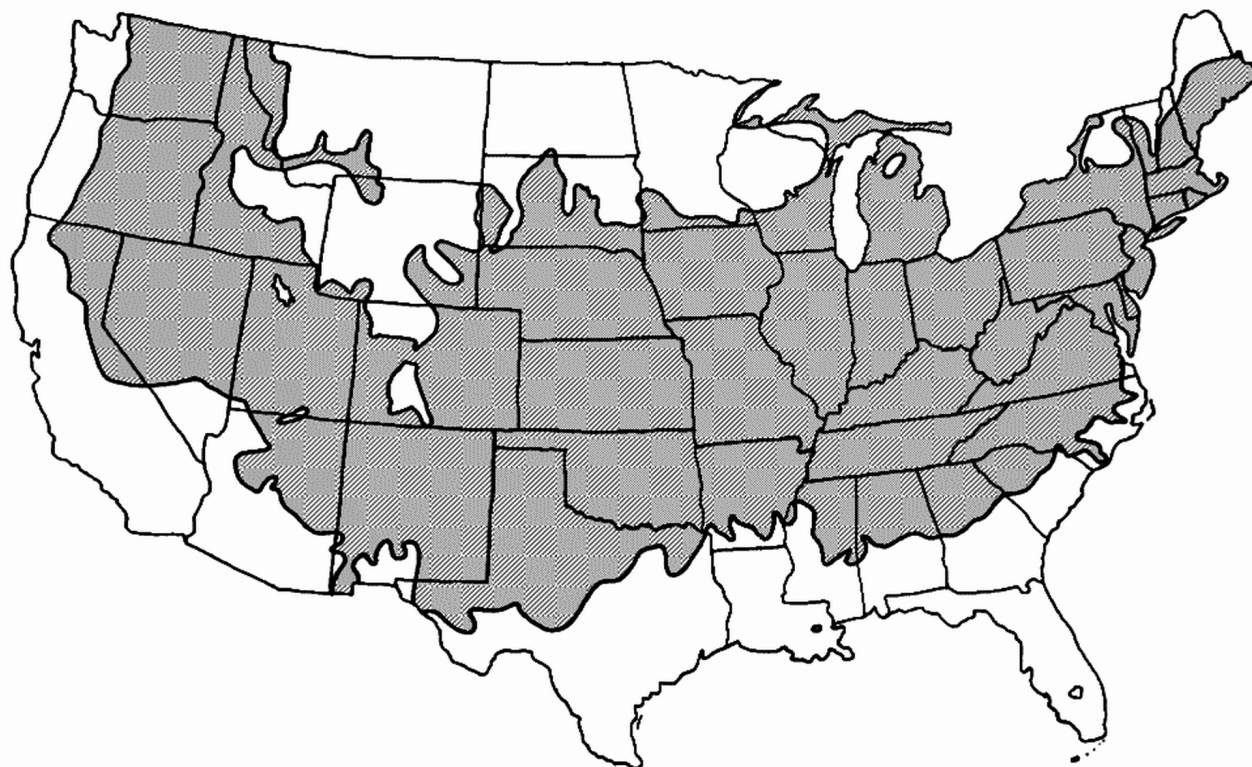


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

### Description

**Height:** 10 to 15 feet

**Spread:** 6 to 10 feet

**Plant habit:** round

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** medium

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** lobed; parted

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** orange

**Fall characteristic:** showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** purple/red

**Flower characteristic:** showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** 0.5 to 1 inch

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** green

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; no thorns

**Current year stem/twig color:** green

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

### Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in the shade

**Soil tolerances:** clay; acidic; well-drained; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerance:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** not applicable

### Other

**Roots:** usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

### Use and Management

This maple is well-suited for the residential landscape as well as the commercial setting. Planted near a patio or deck, it will generate many comments from friends and other visitors. It is probably best used as a specimen, planted to attract attention to an area. It should live for at least 20 years. Nice specimens can be viewed at arboreta, but few nurseries currently offer these cultivars for sale. This

may change as nursery operators and homeowners discover the trees.

Full-moon maple can be grown in sun to almost full shade. Nice specimens can be seen growing in the filtered shade of tall, overstory trees, or where there is 2 to 6 hours of direct sun shining on the plant. Where the sunlight is intense, the tree will benefit from having its roots shaded or mulched to help keep the soil cool. A generous helping of mulch out to the edge of the canopy is beneficial.

### Pests and Diseases

None of major concern except for verticillium wilt.