



## Balcony Gardens

Due to size and environment, planting on balconies can be difficult. Exposure to wind, hot sun or total shade all have an effect on potted plants. Although most plants will grow in pots, extra water and attention is often required to keep them looking good. Below are a few examples of tough, versatile plants that will happily survive pots and most balconies while remaining contained.

### Crassula

One of the many types of succulent, Crassula often have rounded leaves and small starry flowers in Autumn and Winter. Often known as 'Jade Plant', the larger varieties can eventually reach 3 metres in height. Growing very slowly, these plants are ideal for pots and balconies and tolerate the most extreme drought.



Many other forms of succulent would also suit balcony gardens.

### Conifers

Due to the slow nature of their growth, many conifers grow well in pots. Consideration must be made of wind on the balcony, as these taller trees will often be blown over when potted. Height and width will vary considerably.

### Cordyline

Similar in appearance to the Phormium, this palm-like plant also has stiff upright leaves, usually on a single 'trunk'. With strappy architectural foliage, several species have a bronze or purple leaf, providing striking colour in a restricted space such as a balcony. Cordyline respond well to pruning of their single stem, producing multiple shoots from the base in response.



### Dracaena

Another strappy plant, the Dracaena, originating from Africa and Asia prefers very little water. Often confused with Cordyline, Dracaena can vary in colour depending on variety. A popular variety is 'Tricolor' which has a leaf with a cream, red and green striped pattern. This species is often grown indoors and will tolerate shade and reasonably low temperatures.

### Liriope

Liriope is a neat clumping grass from 20 - 50 cm tall with upright green or variegated foliage. Liriope flowers during summer, with small spikes ranging from white through to deep purple depending on variety. All varieties of Liriope are extremely drought tolerant.

## Metrosideros

Shrub varieties of *Metrosideros* are often used in planter boxes and pots due to their glossy foliage and bright brushy flowers similar to those of the *Eucalyptus*. Originating in the South Pacific these plants are extremely drought tolerant and respond well to clipping.

## *Murraya paniculata* (Orange Jessamine)

A compact rounded shrub, *Murraya* has glossy green leaves and responds extremely well to pruning. Small creamy white flowers in Spring and Summer fill the air with a sweet, almost citrus perfume. Growing to 3 metres if left to grow naturally, *Murraya* is happy in pots when it is kept clipped.

## *Phormium* (New Zealand Flax)

With stiff upright 'clumping' leaves, *Phormium* vary in size from the smallest at 40-50 cm tall through to a few metres in height. The wide range of colours also makes *Phormium* an ideal plant for dramatic effect. Originating in New Zealand, *Phormium* are perfectly suited to our environment and are particularly drought tolerant.

