

# Dwarf Pomegranate Care Sheet

---



Brought to you by  
S & S Bonsai of Colorado Springs, Colorado  
(Most of the included information is obtained from several  
online sources.)



**S & S Bonsai**  
Steven Alford

1024 Bonfoy Ave.  
Colorado Springs CO 80909

Bus: 719-633-9110 cell: 719-332-0546  
fax: 719-633-9110 support@bonsaitoolchest.com  
www.bonsaitoolchest.com

*"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if  
you were to live forever."  
—Mahatma Gandhi—*

## The Dwarf Pomegranate

(*Punica granatum var. nana*)

**General Information:** Pomegranate trees have been cultivated since prehistoric times. In ancient Egypt and ancient Israel it was considered a sacred plant to be worshipped.

The Dwarf Pomegranate, *Punica granatum var. nana* is a very popular and admired tree in bonsai - for both its fruiting and flowering qualities. Every aspect of this form is dwarf compared to the basic pomegranate - from its overall size to its finer leaves and smaller flowers and fruits. Due to this, it is a plant especially recommended for miniature bonsai and small styles. Apart from the pomegranate's stunning seasonal yellow-orange or red 'trumpet style' flowers, it presents so many other notable characteristics. It has a marvelous naturally-twisting style trunk, that very easily adopts a gnarled, ancient appearance - something widely sought in bonsai. Its leaves are a dark green with shades of bronze. After flowering, the plant fruits, producing attractive spherical-like red golf-ball sized pomegranates.

### CARE

**Temperature:** The tree is not hardy and needs to be regarded as a greenhouse subject or, at the very least, a plant that must be kept in frost-free conditions. The plant may be overwintered at either a cool or relatively warm temperature, 43°-50°F, or up to 64°F. The plant is best kept at temperatures in the 70's. With the warmer temperatures, however, the plant will grow less compact, and more spindly.

**Lighting:** Place pomegranates in good light. They like sunlight, but must be kept watered. They must be protected from frost. Either all year round indoors at a well ventilated southerly or

westerly window, or outside from late spring until early autumn in a sunny position; once the leaves have fallen, bring back indoors again.

**Watering:** Keep damp at all times. Before mid-season, shade the tree slightly to conserve moisture. By keeping the pomegranate slightly dry in mid to late Spring, the tree is encouraged to set flowering shoots. A lot of water at this stage will induce lush leaf shoots. After flowers appear, water is given freely for the rest of the season. In winter, when it has shed its leaves, it needs only moderate watering.

Pomegranates like water, so do not use pots that are too shallow.

**Fertilizing:** Feed when leaves swell until the flowering period, using half strength Miracle-Gro, or a similar feed, alternately with 0-10-10 every 10 days. After the flowering period, if there are any fruit formed, recommence the feeding cycle but also feed monthly until early autumn with fish emulsion. Do not feed in winter at all.

**Pruning / Training:** The plant should be pruned hard before any new shoots emerge in Spring, to make way for the new growth. Older branches can be pruned in midseason. New shoots are pinched from early summer, keeping between two and five leaves on each shoot, depending on the branch's position in the crown, once new shoots have reached a length of 6". More mature trees can be pruned at an earlier stage.

Flower buds are produced at this period, and earlier pruning can remove them. Flowering shoots are usually shorter than leaf shoots. Do not cut flowering shoots if it is flowers you want. Remember to check as you work: flowers are carried at the terminals. Repeat trimming as necessary. One- and two-year old branches can be styled easily by wiring. Older branches will have to be guyed down.

Wire in mid-season, using aluminum wire. All wood is brittle and breaks easily.

**Insects / Pests:** Essentially trouble free, pomegranates may sometimes be affected by aphids. Pomegranates kept indoors are often attacked by whitefly. This pest is very difficult to control and can best be eradicated by spraying down the tree with a strong jet of water (especially on the undersides of the leaves) and then sprayed with a soap and water mixture. Whiteflies can be kept to a minimum by assuring that there is very good ventilation in the area. Outdoors, pomegranates are also susceptible to greenfly infestation. Treat with pyrethrum or a similar insecticide.

**Propagation:** The pomegranate is easily propagated from cuttings and seed or by layering and division.

**Repotting:** Repot in mid-spring when the buds are forming. Young trees are repotted every year. Older plants are repotted as indicated by root production, which means gently tapping the root mass free of the pot and checking for areas of soil not yet permeated with root. If there is still soil available, repotting is delayed for another season.

Never use shallow containers when potting because this tree flowers well when slightly root-bound and it needs soil capacity and a reservoir effect to support it in this condition.

Containers in quiet blues, yellows and unglazed browns and grays are suitable.

Soil should consist of two parts sand, five parts mixed composted peat and leaf mould and three parts Turface.

**Design and Styling:** Suited to bonsai styles such as informal upright, forest, cascade, literati, tree on rock, root over rock, twin trunk, windswept, group and twisting trunk style