








# Shrubs, Perennials, & Groundcovers for Shade Gardens





































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**Table 1. Key to Icons:**



















Description		Description	
Mostly Sun to Full Sun		Low Moisture, little or no supplemental water	
Light Shade, more than 4 hours sun		Medium Moisture, needs periodic watering	
Medium Shade, dappled, 2-4 hours sun		Consistent, high Moisture	
Full Shade, Little or no direct sun			

**Table 2. Deciduous Shrubs:**


























Plant Name	Shade	Moisture	Size	Comments
Ambrosia <i>Abelia x grandiflora</i>			4-5'T 4-6'W	Flowers are pink and fragrant, blooms all summer. Glossy green foliage, orange-red in fall. Semi-evergreen in Wichita. Tolerates a pH range of 6.0 to 7.5. Hardiness zone (HZ) 6 – 9.
Bottlebrush buckeye <i>Aesculus parviflora</i>			8-12'T 10-15'W	Showy, 12" white flowers in June. Better pest tolerance than other buckeyes. The eye-catching plant makes a great focal point. pH 6.0 to 8.0. HZ 4 – 8.
Deutzia 'Nikko' <i>Deutzia gracilis</i>			2'T 5'W	Low-growing dwarf shrub, bright green leaves on arching branches display deep burgundy fall color. pH 6.0 to 7.5. HZ 5 – 8.
Dogwood <i>Cornus species</i>			4-5'T 3-4'W	A beautiful upright shrub that displays white blossoms in May giving way to bright red berries in the fall. Cut back every other year to keep the color in the stems. pH 5.0 to 7.5. HZ 2 – 8.
Dwarf Witch Alder <i>Fothergilla gardenii</i>			3-4'T 3-4'W	'Mt Airy' has fragrant, white flowers in May. Blue-green foliage turns yellow, orange, and red in fall. Prefers acid soil, but adapts to neutral and alkaline soils. pH 5.0 to 6.5. HZ 5 – 9.
Easter Rose <i>Kerria japonica</i>			4-6'T 6-9'W	Arching plant with yellow-green stems. Bright yellow flowers in mid-spring and sporadically through the season. Does very well in low fertility soils. pH 5.5 to 7.5. HZ 4 – 9.
Hydrangea, Oakleaf <i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i>			4-8'T 3-5'W	White flowers in summer, changing to pink, then brown. Coarse, oak-leaf shaped foliage. pH 5.5 – 6.0. HZ 6 – 9.
Hydrangea, Smooth <i>Hydrangea arborescens</i>			3-5'T & W	'Annabelle' produces panicles of flowers up to 1' wide in mid- to late summer. Cut back to ground each winter. Blooms on current year's growth. Flowers age to pale green. pH 6.0 to 8.0. HZ 3 – 9.
New Jersey Tea <i>Ceanothus species</i>			3-4'T 3-5'W	Small white flowers in summer. Tolerates dry sites. Native from eastern Kansas to east coast. Fixes nitrogen. pH 4.5 to 7.5. Does well in clay, loam, or sand. HZ 4 – 10.
St. Johnswort <i>Hypericum prolificum</i>			2-5'T 3-4'W	Blue-green foliage, bright yellow 1" flowers in summer. Well-adapted to dry, heavy soils. pH 6.0 to 7.0. HZ 5 – 9.
Summersweet <i>Clethra alnifolia</i>			3-8'T 3-5'W	Fragrant white or pink flowers in summer. Good for heavy shade and wet sites. pH 4.5 to 6.5, but tolerates higher pH. HZ 3 – 9.
Virginia Sweetspire <i>Itea virginica</i>			3-5'T & W	Fragrant white racemes in summer. Deep red fall foliage color. Does best in moist sites. pH 5.5 to 7.0. HZ 5 – 9.
Viburnum, Arrowwood <i>Viburnum dentatum</i>			8-10'T 10-12'W	Creamy white flowers in late spring, followed by blue-black berries. Fall color varies from yellow to red-purple. Adapts to clay. pH 4.0 to 6.5. HZ 3 – 8.
Viburnum, Burkwood <i>Viburnum x burkwoodii</i>			8-10'T 6-8'W	Flowers pink in bud, opening to fragrant white clusters 3" across in mid-April. Quite adaptable to poor soils, compacted soils, soils of various pH (5.0 to 7.5). Leaves can be green when they drop. HZ 5 – 8.
Viburnum, Am. Cranberry <i>Viburnum trilobum</i>			8-12'T & W	White 4" clusters of flowers mid-spring followed by red fruits in fall. Fall foliage color ranges from yellow to red-purple. There are dwarf varieties. pH 6.0 – 8.0. HZ 3 – 7.
Winterberry Holly <i>Ilex verticillata</i>			6-12'T & W	A deciduous holly. Separate male and female plants. Bright red berries on females in fall. Prefers moist, acid soil. pH 3.5 to 6.0. HZ 3 – 9.

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

















**Table 3. Evergreen Shrubs:**

Plant Name	Shade	Moisture	Size	Comments
Hollies <i>Ilex varieties</i>	 		Varies	Many hollies have separate male and female plants, but some females will produce berries without a male, although fewer than with a male. Have 1 male for every 25 females. Can tolerate clay. pH 5.0 to 7.0.
Leatherleaf Viburnum <i>Viburnum rhytidophyllum</i>	 		10-15'T 8-12'W	A medium-fast grower, this plant is very adaptable to just about any soil, including light clay. Underside of leaf is gray-brown. White flower clusters in spring followed by red fruits turning to black in fall. pH 4.5 to 7.5.
Littleleaf Boxwood <i>Buxus microphylla</i>	 to 		Varies	Some varieties will yellow during winter, others are greener. 'Winter-green' maintains good green color through winter. Shallow-rooted plants, boxwoods need mulch to keep roots cool and moist. pH 5.5 to 8.0.
Oregon Grapeholly <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	 		Varies	Bright yellow clusters of flowers in spring followed by blue-black berries. Foliage resembles holly. Red-bronze from late fall to early spring, turning medium green in summer. pH 4.5 to 6.5
Nandina, Heavenly Bamboo <i>Nandina domestica</i>	 		Varies	An upright shrub with evergreen leaves that change to reddish-purple in fall, and many cultivated varieties. Shade to full sun. Tolerates some sand to mostly clay. pH 3.7 to 7.5. HZ 6 – 9.
Yews, Japanese <i>Taxus x media</i>	 		Varies	This evergreen is can be a shrub or tree. Its habit is narrow to broadly pyramidal. Fine, dark green leaves with spiny tips. Leaves turn to a reddish-green tint in winter. pH 4.5 to 8.5.

**Table 4. Ground covers & Perennials:**

Plant Name	Shade	Moisture	Size	Comments
Ajuga, Bugleweed <i>Ajuga reptans</i>	 		6-9"T	Ajuga prefers light shade to full shade and tends to be smaller, shorter and less healthy in full hot sun. And in an area that it likes, it will grow 2 to 5 inches tall. pH 3.6 to 7.5. Need to thin when it gets thick. HZ 3 – 8.
Astilbe (False spirea) <i>Astilbe</i>			6"-40"T	Numerous cultivars available, with flower colors ranging from white, to pink, red, and lavender during summer. Finely divided foliage is fern-like. pH 5.5 – 7.0. HZ 4 – 9. Native to eastern US.
Beebalm, Spotted <i>Monarda punctata</i>	 		1-3'T	This Kansas native is the equivalent of a juice bar for nectar-loving insects! It also resists all kinds of mites that could impact bees. Drought tolerant once established. All species are susceptible to powdery mildew. Sandy Loam soil. Neutral pH. HZ 3-9.
Bethlehem sage, Lungwort <i>Pulmonaria saccharata</i>	 		8-10"T	Cut plants back to 3 inches after blooming to rejuvenate the foliage. Sandy Loam to Clay Loam. pH 4.5 to 7.5. HZ 3 – 8.
Bleeding Heart <i>Dicentra species</i>	 		1-2'T	Old-fashioned bleeding heart, <i>D. spectabilis</i> , produces arches of blooms in spring and goes summer dormant in heat. <i>D. exima</i> fringed (fern-leaf) and its hybrids are smaller, have finer-textured foliage and repeat blooms. pH 5.5 to 7.5. HZ 2 – 9.
Blue Wood Aster <i>Aster cordifolius</i> aka <i>Symphyotrichum cordifolium</i>	 		2+'T	Fall bloomer; pale blue flowers with yellow centers. Likes average soil to well-drained soil. Tolerates clay. Attractive to butterflies & bees. Native range includes Kansas. Suitable to all soils & pH ranges. HZ 3-8.
Bluestar, Threadleaf <i>Amsonia hubrichtii</i>	 		2-3'T	Light blue flowers. The narrow foliage is @ 1/8" wide & 3" long. Golden-yellow fall color. Cut back 1/2 after it flowers as it does grow more. Milky sap. Clump will grow larger every year. Attractive to butterflies & bees. Native to Ok. & Ar. 6.5 to 8.0 pH. HZ 4-9.
Bowman's Root <i>Porteranthus species</i>	 		2-3'T	Also known as Indian Physic, it is easy to grow native for bright shade or partial sun. Likes fertile, evenly-moist soil that is acidic to neutral pH. The white flowers have 5 narrow, pointed petals. HZ 4-8. Native to states east of Kansas. Attractive to butterflies & bees.
Bugbane <i>Actaea simplex</i>			3-6' T	This species is native to Japan and has chocolate-leaved cultivars. They have compact spikes of white to pink flowers in late summer. This plant may languish in very warm temperatures as it likes cool roots. The flowers remain for three to four weeks. HZ 4+. pH 6-8. Attracts bees & butterflies.

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Bugloss <i>Brunnera species</i>			1-2'T	Green, heart-shaped leaves. Clusters of small, true-blue flowers in spring. Tolerates dry shade but prefers moisture. Native to Europe & Asia. Attractive to bees & butterflies. pH 5.5 to 7.5. HZ 3+.
Columbine <i>Aquilegia species</i>			1-3'T 1'W	Blossom colors range from blue and white to yellow, red or pink. Partial shade is preferred, as you'd find in light woodland gardens, but full sun is tolerated with slightly more watering & mulch. Attracts bees, butterflies. pH 6-8.5, HZ 3-8
Coral Bells, Am. Alumroot <i>Heuchera species</i>			1-2'T	Many varieties are grown for their foliage. Purple, green, variegated, and orange are included. Commonly found in limestone outcroppings in the Eastern US. Grows best in moist, well-drained soils. pH 6.0 to 7.5. HZ 3-8.
Crested Iris <i>Iris cristata</i>			5-10" T	One of the most common and shortest Iris at the time of flowering (4" in April). Spreads by rhizome, and likes to be on or near the surface. Native to OK & eastward. Attracts hummingbirds & bees. pH 6.1-7.5. HZ 3-9.
Foamflower <i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>			6-18" T	A small, delicate native species grown in gardens for its neat, interesting foliage and small spikes of creamy white flowers. Foamflower can be used as a groundcover, as it spreads slowly by underground rhizomes. Attracts pollinators. pH 6 – 7.5. HZ 4-8.
Golden Ragwort, Groundsel <i>Packera sp.</i>			6-12" T	This plant has large clusters of yellow flowers that brighten shady areas. Spreads rapidly by seeds and underground roots. More sun requires more mulch and water. Native east of Mississippi River. Attracts small bees & other pollinators. Prefers acidic to neutral pH (<6.8). HZ 4-9
Hostas <i>Hosta species</i>			3" – 3.5'T	Foliage colors range from solid green, yellow, blue, to variegated forms. Many produce stalks of white or lavender flowers. Prefer loamy soil. Native to Asia & some to USA. Attract bees & butterflies. pH 5.8 to 7.5. HZ 3+.
Indian Pink <i>Spigelia marilandica</i>			12-18" T	A long-lived perennial that has stunning color. Prefers neutral, well-drained soils for best bloom. Attracts hummingbirds and some butterflies. Late to emerge in spring, blooms early summer. Native south & east of Kansas. 6.5-7.5 pH. HZ 5-9.
Jacobs Ladder <i>Polemonium caeruleum</i>			6-20" T	Can be found in part shaded areas with a damp humus-like acid to neutral soil. Kansas native. Attracts bees & butterflies. pH 5.6-7.5. HZ 4-8.
Japanese Forest Grass <i>Hakonechloa macra</i>			12-24" T	'Aureola', 'All Gold', and 'Stripe it Rich' have striking gold variegated leaves with an attractive habit of falling over to one side. Grows in all soil types. Native to Japan. pH 5.5 to 7.5. HZ 5 – 9.
Larkspur <i>Delphinium exaltatum</i>			3-4'T	Native to Iowa, Missouri, & east. Summer-blooming perennial with deep blue-violet flowers that attract hummingbirds & butterflies. Likes well-drained, humus-rich slightly alkaline soil, but does not like clay. 6.5-7.5 pH. HZ 5-8.
Lenten Rose <i>Helleborus orientalis</i>			9-15" T & W	These evergreen plants are considered sub-shrubs based on their size. Wait until early spring to remove old foliage. Blooms for 3 months. pH 6.5 to 7.8. HZ 4 – 9.
Pigsqueak <i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>			6-12" T	Large, shiny evergreen leaves often develop purplish/red coloration in winter. Pink flowers are good for drying and preserving. pH 6.0 to 7.5. HZ 3 – 9.
Plumbago, Leadwort <i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>			10-14" T	Deep blue flowers from mid-August through fall. Yellow, red, and bronze fall foliage contrasts nicely with flowers. Slow to start growth in spring. The American Horticulture Society ranks this plant as one of the top 75 plants for the garden. Attracts bees. pH 5.5 to 7.5. HZ 5 – 9.
Skullcap, Heartleaf <i>Scutellaria ovata</i>			12-18" T	Native to Kansas, south & east US. Foliage has a metallic-purple appearance in spring. Flowers appear in mid-summer as a violet-blue color. Prefers dry, gravelly part shade.
Sweet Woodruff <i>Galium odoratum</i>			6-8" T	Prefers a loose moist leafy soil in some shade. Leaves quickly become scorched when growing in sun. pH 4.3 to 8.3. HZ 4-8.
Wood poppy <i>Stylophorum diphyllum</i>			12-18" T	Bright yellow flowers above blue-green foliage. Leaf underside has a silvery cast. Easy to grow native (Missouri, Arkansas & east). Plant may go dormant if soil dries out. Likes rich soil. pH 6.0 to 8.0. HZ 4-9.
Yellow Archangel <i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>			10-18" T	A clump perennial with yellow Spring flowers. Leaves have silver variegation. pH 6.5 to 8.0. HZ 4 – 9.

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