

Alkaline Soil

Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Comments
Trees & Shrubs			
<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	silver maple	45-75'	Fast growing, brittle wood; yellow fall color; most conditions.
<i>Aesculus glabra</i>	buckeye	20-40'	Attractive palmately compound leaves; yellow/orange/red fall color.
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	barberry	2-5'	Spreads 2-5 ft.; colorful foliage in summer and fall.
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	hackberry	40-60'	Large shade tree for tough sites.
<i>Cotinus coggygria</i>	smokebush	6-15'	Produces showy smoky-silver to pink panicles July - Sept.
<i>Cotoneaster lucidus</i>	cotoneaster	8-10'	Small pink flowers; black fruit; excellent for hedge and xeriscape.
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	green ash	40-60'	Vigorous growth habit.
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos inermis</i>	honeylocust	30-60'	Thornless varieties are best; rapid grower; provides filtered shade.
<i>Hydrangea arborescens</i>	hills of snow hydrangea	3-5'	Spreads 3-5 ft.; mop-head blooms of pink in alkaline soil.
<i>Hydrangea paniculata</i>	panicle hydrangea	6-8'	Showy white to pinkish blooms in summer.
<i>Juniperus horizontalis</i>	creeping juniper	1-2'	Excellent groundcover; tough and dependable on poor soils.
<i>Juniperus chinensis</i>	Chinese juniper	2-6'	Gold to green foliage depending on variety; best in full sun.
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	ironwood	25-40'	Interesting hoplike fruits in fall and brown leaves add winter interest.
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	Austrian pine	50'	Spreads to 20 ft.; vigorous, dense grower; dark green.
<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>	bush cinquefoil	2-3'	Long bloom season; flowers white, pink, gold or yellow.
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	chokecherry	20-40'	Native tough smaller tree; white flowers in early spring.
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	bur oak	40-60'	Easy to grow; drought tolerant; long-lived.
<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	lilac	8-15'	Reliable, fragrant spring flowers.
<i>Viburnum</i> spp.	viburnum	4-18'	Many excellent varieties; white flowers; colorful fall berries.
Perennials & Vines			
<i>Achillea</i> spp.	yarrow	18"-3'	Drought tolerant; attractive fern-like foliage and flat topped bloom.
<i>Astilbe xarendsii</i> or <i>A. chinensis</i>	astilbe	15-36"	Long bloom season; spikes of white, pink, lavender or red; moist soil.
<i>Clematis</i> spp.	clematis	5-15'	Excellent blooming vine; many colors and bloom times; shade roots.
<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>	sweet William	8"	Biennial; white and pink fragrant flowers; self-seeds like perennial.
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	coneflower	2-3'	Great native perennial; prefers well-drained soil and full sun.
<i>Heemerocallis</i> spp.	daylily	1-3'	Tough; long season of daily bloom; many flower colors.
<i>Heuchera sanguinea</i>	coral bells	12-24"	Blooms early to mid-summer on spikes of brightly colored flowers.
<i>Hosta</i> spp.	hosta	4"-4'	Hundreds of varieties of this hardy shade plant.
<i>Lonicera</i> spp.	honeysuckle	10-20'	Colorful tubular flowers from June to Sept; attracts hummingbirds.
<i>Phlox subulata</i>	creeping phlox	4-8"	Low growing spring bloomer; foliage makes good edging plant.
<i>Phlox paniculata</i>	garden phlox	3-4'	Dependable showy flowers; wide range of colors; midsummer to fall.
<i>Salvia nemorosa</i>	salvia	8-24"	Flower spikes in early summer; rebloom if deadheaded.

In general, ornamental grasses are tolerant of alkaline pH; there are many to choose from including native grasses. Herbs such as wormwood, *Artemisia absinthium*; borage, *Borago officinalis*; chamomile, *Chamaemelum nobile*; parsley, *Petroselinum crispum*; and thyme, *Thymus* spp., grow well in alkaline conditions. Legumes such as beans and peas, peppers, and spinach are good vegetables to grow in high pH soils.



'Emerald Triumph' viburnum is a U of M introduction that grows quickly to 6-10'.

Compiled by Esther Filson, Washington County Master Gardener. Alkaline soil is common in Minnesota. Many Master Gardeners, including Esther, a Master Gardener for 25 years, have had plenty of experience with alkaline soils. This list includes some of the best plants for soils with a pH of 7.0-8.0.