



Quite Simply. Amazing.

growing guide

GRASSES: The Maiden Grasses

We call them Maiden Grasses, but this diverse group is also known as Eulalia, Japanese Silver Grass and by its botanical genus name of Miscanthus. They are the most well-known and popular of the ornamental grasses.

They are all sun-loving plants, thriving in any good garden soil. Like any grass they appreciate moist conditions and a *little* extra fertilizer, the same you use on your turfgrass. Too much fertilizer will cause the plant to grow like mad but the stalks will be so weak it won't be able to support itself. (The same thing will happen if the plant is in too much shade.)

All the species and cultivars we offer are "clump forming," non-invasive plants.

Ornamental grasses are the easiest perennial to care for. All they require is cutting back the old dead foliage as close to the ground as you can get around April 1st. If you do not remove the old foliage the new leaves will grow up around and through it but the plant will develop a premature dead center. Maiden grasses around ten years old tend to naturally die out in the center but you can rejuvenate them by digging and dividing the clumps in the early spring. Other than that there's nothing to growing these versatile, long-lived garden mainstays. The hard part is deciding which ones you want to grow. But why not try them all for the varying textures, colors and forms they bring to any garden?



The Miscanthus Cultivars Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Notes
<i>Miscanthus floridus</i> more correctly <i>M. 'Giganteus'</i>	Giant Miscanthus Stays up-right	12' to 15', in a good year to 18'	This is the largest grass we can grow in Central Illinois. It is a bold, dramatic clump forming, only slightly rhizomatous, plant. Culms (stems) to an 1½" in diameter. The foliage is wide, bamboo-like, & weeping like a huge green fountain. In a short, cool season it may not flower but when it does in early autumn the plumes are pinkish, changing to silver. Fall color is amber to almost bright orange in the Sept./Oct. sun; winter color is straw-like. Use as a specimen or screen. <i>Note: by mid-summer the lower leaves, about 3', brown and die off. If the legginess bothers you plant facer plants but be prepared to move them as the clump enlarges.</i>
<i>M. s. 'Adagio'</i>	Adagio Maiden Grass	4-5'	Similar to 'Yaku Jima' but with the August flowers held higher above the foliage. Narrow, green leaves have a yellow fall color . Flowers open with a reddish tint. A good choice for a smaller Maiden Grass.
<i>M. s. var. condensatus</i> 'Cabaret'	Cabaret Miscanthus	5-6' Stays Up-right	Thick ribbon-like foliage with milky white, linear striped centers, dark green leaf margins and blush pink flower stems. Copper to bronze -colored flowers in mid-September that open to a cream color.
<i>M. s. 'Ferner Osten'</i>	Far East Miscanthus	4-5'	Compact, strong grower, with dark foliage containing a bright silver mid-rib. The beautifully deep wine blooms begin in late July and last well into August, eventually ending the season by turn-

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Botanical Name	Name		
<i>M. s.</i> 'Gracillimus'	Maiden Grass Rounded form	5' to 8' tall	One of the oldest & best known of the grasses. Very graceful habit with fine textured foliage with a narrow white stripe on each leaf. One of the last to flower in September with copper-red plumes. Golden yellow fall color ; winter color straw-like.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Graziella'	Graziella Maiden Grass	7'	Narrow green leaves are somewhat more upright than 'Gracillimus'. Very fluffy blooms are silver in August/September. Fall color is a rich copper red/orange ; winter color golden. A beautiful & refined selection.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Little Kitten'	Little Kitten Maiden Grass	1.5'-2.5'	This new dwarf Maiden Grass has narrow, green, arching foliage that only reaches about 15" tall and 1' wide at maturity. Showy, cascading flowers are silvery-white with pink or reddish tinges and develop in late summer, reaching to 30", well above the mound of foliage. Somewhat shade tolerant.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Malepartus'	Malepartus Maiden Grass	6-8'	The early September blooms of this cultivar open silver, turning very fluffy-white when dry. Wider leaves than 'Graziella' but similar form. Gold, red & orange fall color.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Morning Light'	Morning Light Maiden Grass Stays upright	3' to 4'	3' to 4' Very narrow foliage is uniformly white-variegated. Very refined. Beautiful next to water or back lit by the sun. Blooms late with reddish flowers.
<i>M.</i> 'Purpurasens'	Flame Grass Stays upright	5'	Blooms very early in July/Aug. with narrow, vertical flowers. Narrow ½" leaves are slightly gray-reddish green a hint of the fall color. In autumn reliably colors to tints of orange, red, purple, yellow. In winter the plant mellows to a pumpkin color. Somewhat shade tolerant but the fall show will be more pastel. Provide extra moisture in dry locations. A very beautiful small grass.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Sarabande'	Silver Spider Maiden Grass	to 6'	Similar to 'Gracillimus' but with narrower leaves & a finer overall texture. Golden-copper flowers in August.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Silberfeder'	Silver Feather Maiden Grass	5' to 7'	Large feathery flowers are silver (Go figure.) & held high above the green leaves. Stems are naturally lax & may flop but do so gracefully. A long-time favorite in England.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Strictus'	Porcupine Grass	6' to 8'	A very handsome grass with broad horizontal cream bands on bright green leaves. Spiky, upright habit displays the variegation boldly. Flowers in September with reddish plumes.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Variegatus'	Variegated Maiden Grass	to 7'	An ancient cultivar with familiar white-striped leaves. Makes a very dramatic landscape focus. Blooms in mid-September with strongly red-tinted plumes.
<i>M. s.</i> 'Yaku Jima'	Yaku Jima Maiden Grass	Usually less than 5'	Actually a catch-all term for many smaller <i>Miscanthus</i> . Variably small-sized plants with narrow leaves.



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GLASSES: Fountain Grasses

Fountain Grasses are beautiful warm season landscape plants producing a fountain of flowers emerging from cascading foliage. They usually begin blooming in June and the show continues into October. All the types we offer are "clump forming" grasses that are best divided in the early spring. They all thrive in full sun to bright shade, in any soil other than one permanently wet, and are not bothered by summer heat or humidity. Some tend to self-sow but usually not to the point of becoming weedy.

Use them as backdrop plants in the perennial garden, or in clumps next to roses, Veronica, Delphiniums, Coneflowers and other upright plants to bring motion and the illusion of water to your gardens. Of course, they also look great combined with other grasses, too!

Characteristics Include:

- Graceful yet dense clumps add interest to perennial gardens and landscape borders.
- Slender, grass-like foliage in all shades of green, and variegated too.
- Showy seed heads in late summer.
- Full sun to light shade, average soil.

Experience has shown that leaving the plants to stand tall all winter actually improves their hardiness. Wait until March or April to prune back last year's growth. In addition, it adds winter interest as they stand in stark contrast to a white winter, and rustle in the breeze.



Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Notes
<i>Pennisetum alopicuroides</i>	Fountain Grass	3' to 4'	3' to 4' Narrow 1/2" medium green arching foliage turns golden-yellow in the fall. Cream-white flowers are dense, resembling large foxtails beginning in June, continuing through the fall. Most effective in groupings of 3. Full sun to bright shade with consistent moisture. Will self-sow, but usually not particularly invasive.
<i>P. a.</i> 'Hameln'	Dwarf Fountain Grass	2' to 3'	Cream-white flowers begin in late July. Very compact & dense. Excellent for massing as a ground-cover in sunny areas.
<i>P. a.</i> 'Little Bunny'	Little Bunny Fountain Grass	less than 12"	A very dwarf selection reaching only 18" when in full bloom. Flowers in August.
<i>P. a.</i> 'Moudry'	Moudry Fountain Grass, Black Flowering Fountain Grass	3'	A very dramatic, handsome grass! Deep, dark green arching leaves & flowers are very dark purple. Flowers late, September, but the effect is worth the wait. When provided ample moisture & a little extra fertilizer this plant stops traffic!
<i>P. setaceum</i> 'Rubrum'	Purple Fountain Grass, Red Fountain Grass .	to 4'	Beautiful deep red-maroon leaves are somewhat more upright than the cultivars above. Purple flowers all summer. Excellent in decorative containers. Provide moisture & fertilizer. <i>This is an annual grass in Central Illinois & must be replanted every year.</i>

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