

Lilly Pilly

Syzygium australe · Myrtaceae, native to Australia

DIFFICULTY Easy

TYPE Evergreen perennial tree, native to Australia

MATURITY 2–3 years to first useful crop


SUN
Full sun to part shade



WATER
Regular, more drought hardy once established



SOIL PH
5.5–7.0



SPACING
2–4m



DEPTH
as per pot

01 A dual-purpose tree

Lilly Pilly is grown as widely for its dense, hedge-friendly foliage as for its fruit — the tart-sweet pink berries make a good jam, while the tree itself doubles as an attractive, easily-shaped screen or hedge.



loose stake, first year

02 Planting

METHOD	Plant from a nursery pot, staking loosely for the first year if exposed to wind.
SOIL	Rich, well-drained soil; tolerates a wide range once established.
TIMING	Plant in spring or autumn, avoiding the hottest part of summer while establishing.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

04 Problems

- **Psyllid insects** — cause pimply leaf galls; mostly cosmetic, rarely damaging.
- **Waterlogging** — ensure sharp drainage, especially while young.
- **Bird competition for fruit** — net if you want the full harvest.
- **Fruit fly** — net or manage as fruit ripens in warmer zones.

03 Growing care

- Water regularly while young; more drought hardy once established.
- Prune to shape if used as a hedge — it responds well to regular trimming.
- Feed lightly in spring for the best fruiting.
- Tolerates light frost once established, in contrast to many other bush foods.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Fruit turns bright pink to red and gives slightly when pressed, usually through summer and autumn.
METHOD	Pick by hand once fully coloured.
CURING	None needed — good fresh, though tart-sweet rather than sweet alone.
STORAGE	Fridge a few days; freezes well, and makes a good jam or jelly.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying for long-term storage) or Freezing Produce (freezing a harvest surplus) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Other hedge-friendly natives	Waterlogged, poorly drained spots	Not applicable — long-lived perennial tree.