

# *Acer pseudoplatanus*: Sycamore Maple<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

This large deciduous tree is normally seen at 40 to 60 feet in height although Sycamore Maple is capable of reaching over 100 feet in height. The spreading branches form an oval or rounded canopy and the dark green, three to seven-inch-diameter, lobed leaves do not ordinarily become showy in the fall, changing only to a muted yellow before dropping, but this will vary. The gray to reddish-brown, scaly bark flakes off in small scales to reveal the showy, orange, inner bark. The green, springtime flowers appear in three to six-inch-long hanging panicles among the leaves in late spring and are followed by one to two-inch-long, winged seeds.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Acer pseudoplatanus*

**Pronunciation:** AY-ser soo-doe-PLAT-uh-nus

**Common name(s):** Sycamore Maple, Planetree Maple

**Family:** *Aceraceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5A through 7B (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** invasive non-native

**Uses:** sidewalk cutout (tree pit); tree lawn > 6 ft wide; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; shade

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

## Description

**Height:** 60 to 70 feet

**Spread:** 40 to 60 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

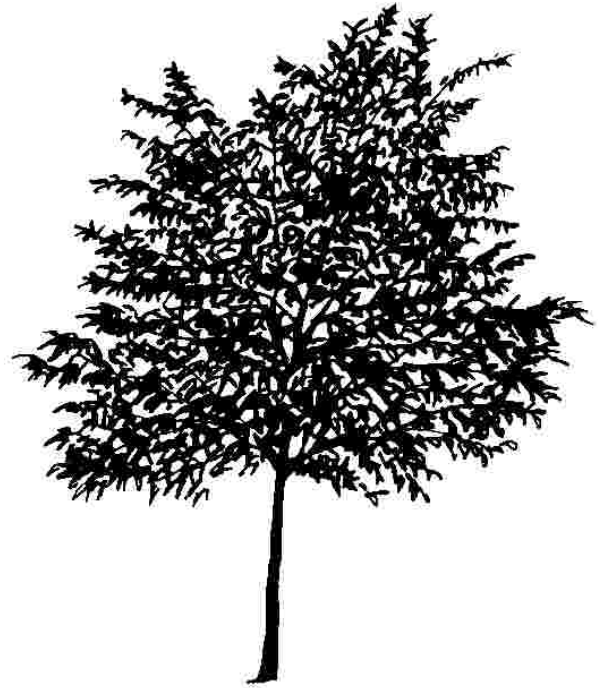


Figure 1. Young *Acer pseudoplatanus*: Sycamore Maple

**Crown shape:** round, spreading

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** serrate, lobed

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Figure 2. Range

**Leaf shape:** ovate  
**Leaf venation:** palmate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous  
**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** green  
**Flower characteristics:** not showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** elongated  
**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches  
**Fruit covering:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** green  
**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** little required  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** gray, brown  
**Current year twig thickness:** medium  
**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

### Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; occasionally wet; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** high

### Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** no  
**Ozone sensitivity:** tolerant  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** susceptible  
**Pest resistance:** sensitive to pests/diseases

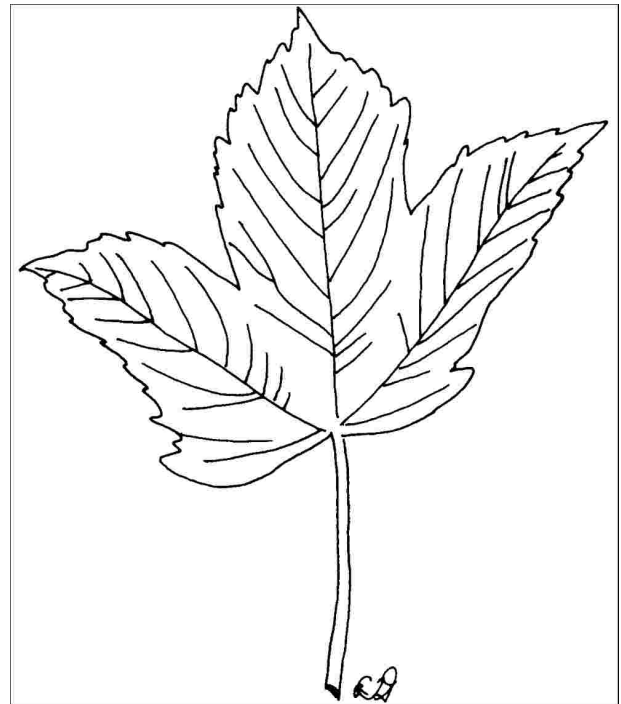


Figure 3. Foliage

## Use and Management

This is a large tree which requires space to spread. Not for the small landscape, its large, falling leaves and early defoliation in the fall can create a challenge for even the most enthusiastic gardener. Many bags of leaves will be raked from beneath this handsome tree. This tree may be best saved for the park or other large open-space planting site since its coarse texture blends poorly with residential and many commercial landscapes.

Sycamore Maple grows in full sun or partial shade on almost any well-drained soil, acid or alkaline. Sycamore Maple is quite adaptable to various soils and is also highly salt-tolerant. Little pruning is needed to develop a good trunk and branch structure.

### Pests

No pests are of major concern.

## Diseases

Sycamore Maple is susceptible to trunk and branch cankers.