

Pests and Diseases can be controlled or prevented by closely monitoring your trees. Homeowners unwilling to actively manage for diseases should not plant any new apple trees, and should remove any existing trees. Trees that may look otherwise healthy can still cause serious damage.

Codling Moth and Apple Maggot cause the common “worm in the apple.” This is a VERY serious problem, impacting our economy and the health of home and commercial orchards. Currently, Kittitas County is under quarantine for Apple Maggot, which means no “home grown” apples may be transported out of county.

Apple scab is a fungus that overwinters on dead apples leaves on the ground beneath the trees. Primary infections on new foliage occur in the spring and early summer during prolonged rainy periods.

Blight is a very communicable disease in which the tips of the branches turn brown and form a crook shape. Blight spreads rapidly from one tree to the next.

### **Good Apple Varieties for Eastern Washington:**

Early Ripening: Akane, Earligold, Gingergold, Gravenstein, Lodi, Paulared, Redfree\*, Summerred, Tydeman’s Early\*

Midseason Ripening: Chehalis\*, Empire, Liberty\*, McIntosh, Prima\*,

Priscilla\*, Royal Gala, Spartan

Late Ripening: Braeburn, Cortland, Fuji, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Idared, Jonagree\*, Jonagold, Jonamac, Melrose, Mutsu, Newtown Pippin, Red Delicious

*\*Scab Resistant*

**For more information  
visit the Master Gardener  
Diagnostic Clinic  
May through September**

*Tuesdays 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.*

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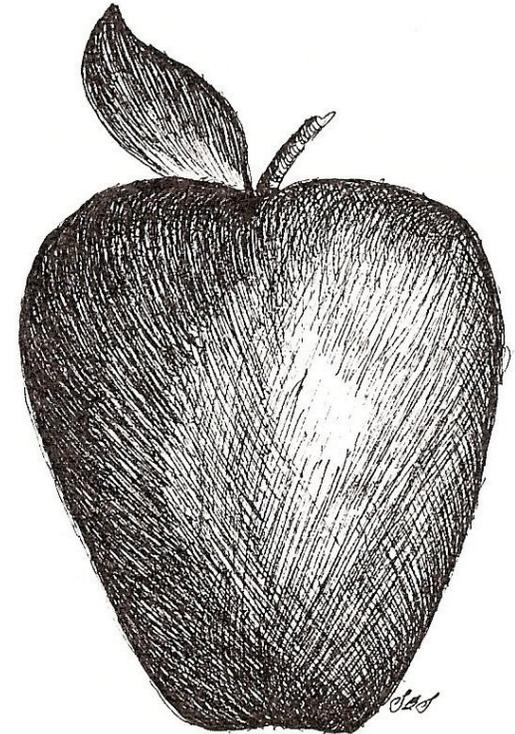


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# Apples

## For the Home Orchard



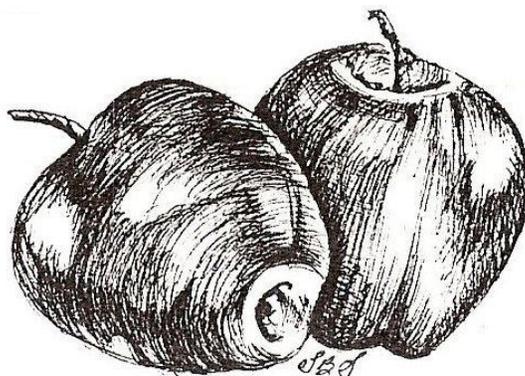
Questions and concerns for the best fruit production with the least amount of synthetic pest controls are becoming more important to the home gardener.

**Rootstock selection** is important when choosing a tree for your yard. The ultimate size of a tree depends on the vigor of both the rootstock and the grafted variety. They are also selected for efficient yield production, cold hardiness, disease resistance, and tolerance of different soil conditions, including poorly drained soils.

The most vigorous apple rootstocks are the seedlings, e.g. sprouted apple seeds. They can easily grow more than 30 feet with a grafted variety. A tree this tall makes it difficult to tend and harvest the fruit, so researchers in England developed a series of apple rootstock. The Malling series provides the grower to select trees that will grow at different heights ranging from dwarf (4 to 8 feet) to semidwarf (16 to 18 feet). The classification system begins with the letter M for Malling or MM for Malling Merton followed by a number. Higher numbers do not represent larger trees.

Most home orchardists select dwarf rootstocks such as M9 (40% of the height of a sprouted apple seed) or M26 (50% of the height). Trees on these rootstocks should be supported for optimal growth, making them good candidates for training along a trellis.

Semi-swarfs (MM106 and MM111) produce larger trees that require no support and are suitable for the home orchard.



Depending on the rootstock and soil productivity, trees should be spaced 4 feet to 25 feet apart in the row and twice this between rows. They need deep, well drained soil and exposure to full sun for best production.

Water young trees consistently in warm weather to get them off to a good start. An important factor in watering and disease prevention is to keep the blossoms dry. Drip irrigation, a soaker hose or a slow trickle of your garden hose at drip line will provide a good deep watering and is preferred by most orchardists. Be careful not to overwater at the base of the trunk. Excessive moisture can lead to crown rot.

Plant trees in full sun and in well-drained soil for best production.

Fruit will not set if the flowers are not pollinated. Use insecticides cautiously to avoid harming bees.

Ripening times may vary from year to year depending on the weather and sun exposure. Fruit continues to ripen in cold storage, so pick fruit before it is ripe if you intend to store it. You may wish to grow a range of apples with staggered maturity dates to get the fresh-off-the-tree apples throughout late summer and fall.

As it ripens, an apple will change color. The base color is the color underneath the red striping or blush of the apple. In most cases, the base color turns from greenish to yellowish when ripe. The surface color may develop before the fruit is actually mature.

Pruning the trees helps with fruit production. It also controls the ultimate size of the tree. Prune during the dormant season; after fall or early winter freezes, but before full bloom in spring. Do not paint pruning wounds with sealants. Sealants trap moisture, which can cause disease. The best protection for a wound is to leave the branch collar intact so the tree is protected from wood-rotting fungi.

