



Male Fern

Dryopteris filix-mas

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 30 inches

Sunlight: ● ●

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Common Male Fern

Description:

Graceful, arching fronds of forest green foliage, a vigorous grower; attractive fiddleheads unfurl in spring; keep evenly moist, provides habitat and shelter for birds and bees

Ornamental Features

Male Fern is primarily valued in the garden for its cascading habit of growth. Its tiny ferny compound leaves remain green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Male Fern is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with a shapely form and gracefully arching foliage. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Male Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Male Fern will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. As an evergreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.



Male Fern
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder





This plant does best in partial shade to shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is native to parts of North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.

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