

Perennials for Shade

One of the most common problems with shade in the garden, IS THE LACK OF IT!

In a new home, in a new subdivision, where can you grow lush leafy ferns, Astilbes and Hosta? There are so many plants that actually LIKE SHADE! If you can create a garden in the shaded north side of your home, then you can enjoy a broad range of plants that thrive in shade.

ALL SHADE IS NOT THE SAME

Part Sun - Part Shade

At our latitude in summer, even the north side of the house gets sun. Rising in the far north-east in the morning, it catches the north side and again from the north-west as it sets. Plants on the east and west side get at least six hours of sun in the summer, sufficient for all plants except the true sun worshippers.

Open Shade

On the north side of the house, but open to the sky. Plants listed for light shade will do well.

Light Shade or Filtered Sunlight

Dappled shade; light or shadow move with the sun, like under a Locust or Birch. Lawn grass does well and so do most plants. Not shady enough for true shade lovers.

Medium Shade

The north side of the house, further obstructed by overhead branches. A shade-tolerant lawn grass will still grow and now we can plant Astilbe and Hosta.

Deep Shade

(In the plant list, those for deep shade are indicated “*”)

Permanent year-round shade from buildings and large evergreens and shade trees. Usually found in the older residential areas. Grass will not grow well, but ferns will.

Dry Shade and Moist Shade

Deep shade is often moist since it does not receive the sun's heat, but it can be dry under large trees that take all available moisture. There are very many plants for moist shade; dry shade is more difficult but the problem can be overcome by watering and mulching. A good perennial for dry shade is Barrenwort (Epimedium).

All shade is not the same. Deep shade is usually found in older gardens where trees are mature. In deep shade, the soil will usually be cool and moist in perfect conditions for Ferns and Hosta.

The large-leaved Hosta are luxurious in shade, some with glossy, dark green foliage,

others are variegated green and white or green and gold. They all have attractive lily-like flowers mostly in shades of blue. One very nice variety is Royal Standard, with dark green leaves and fragrant white flowers.

Ferns are easy-to-grow, maintenance-free plants that mostly need or prefer cool, moist shade. As ferns become popular, an increasing number of varieties are appearing at garden centres. Ostrich Fern, Lady Fern and Sensitive Fern have long been favourites. Now available is Japanese Painted Fern, with blue-gray fronds, and colourful Autumn Fern with young coppery foliage. The Christmas Fern and Holly Ferns are evergreen.

Astilbe are the most beautiful plants for shade with their gorgeous plumes of red, pink or white flowers in June and very attractive spring foliage that remains green and handsome all summer - as long as the soil is moist.

Hosta, Ferns and colourful Astilbes will make a very attractive show in combination and are long-lived perennials for a garden in the shade.

Perennials for light shade or part day sun

(Those that take deep shade are marked with “*”)

Anchusa	Astilbe*	Peony
Monarda (Bergamot)	Oriental Poppy	Brunnera
Bergenia*	Marsh Marigold	Solomon's Seal*
Balloon Flower	Primrose	Saxifrage*
Carpathian Harebell and other Campanula	Gold Moss	Nepeta
Meadowrue	Chives	Spiderwort*
Foxglove*	Trillium	Chrysanthemum
Trollius	Planted Daisy	Viola
Feverfew	Shasta Daisy	Aconitum
Cimicifuga	Columbines	Bleeding Heart
Arabis	Gas Plant	Goatsbeard
Purple Coneflower	Leopard's Bane	Globe Thistle
Filipendula	Garlic Chives	Geum
Gold Star	Macleaya	Perennial Geraniums
Tall Phlox	Christmas Rose	Obedient Plant
Day Lily	Jacob's Ladder	Coral Bells
Bethlehem Sage*	Hosta*	Veronica
Siberian Iris	Cardinal Flower	Lupines
Creeping Jenny (Lysimachia nummularia)*	Gooseneck and Yellow Loosestrife	Purple Loosestrife
Virginia Bluebells*	Japanese Anemone	

Perennial ground cover for shade

Ajuga	Epimedium*	Creeping Potentilla	Sedge
Goutweed*	English Ivy	Periwinkle	Lily-of-the-Valley*
Crown Vetch	Halls Honeysuckle	Euonymus	Wild Ginger
Cotoneaster	Virginia Creeper	All ferns*	Wintergreen*
Duchesnea*	Pachysandra*	Many ornamental grasses	