



## Virginia Tech Dendrology

**common persimmon** Ebenaceae *Diospyros virginiana* L. symbol: DIV15

**Leaf:** Alternate, simple, oblong to oval, 2 1/2 to 5 inches long, pinnately-veined, margin entire, lustrous green above and paler or whitened below.

**Flower:** Species is usually dioecious, both white to greenish-white and about 1/2 inch long; male flowers in 3's, female flowers solitary and urn-shaped, appear in late spring and early summer.

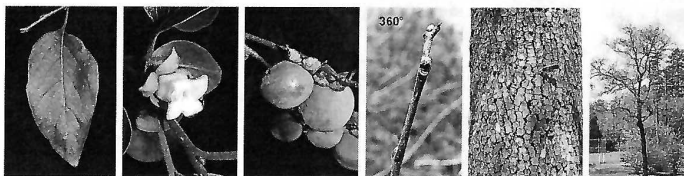
**Fruit:** A plum-like berry that is green before ripening, turning orange to black when ripe, 3/4 to 2 inches in diameter, leafy bracts on top of fruit. The fruit is very astringent and mouth numbing when green, sweet and edible when ripe after a hard freeze, matures in mid to late fall.

**Twig:** Slender, light brown to gray, maybe scabrous or pubescent; no true terminal bud and twig scar is often very prominent, buds triangular, appressed, dark red to black with 2 bud scales, leaf scar has one oval vascular bundle trace.

**Bark:** When young gray-brown with orange in fissures, later becoming much darker, breaking up into square scaly thick plates, reminiscent of charcoal briquettes (very unique).

**Form:** A small to medium sized tree to 60 feet with a round-topped crown of crooked branches. In forest stands the stem may be straight, tall, and slender.

**Looks like:** blackgum - sourwood - sassafras



**Additional Range Information:** *Diospyros virginiana* is native to North America. Range may be expanded by planting. Download the full-size PDF map.

**More Information:** Fall Color

**External Links:** USDAFS Silvics of North America - USDAFS FEIS Silvics - USDA Plants Database - Horticulture Information - USDAFS Forest Products Lab

All material © 2021 Virginia Tech Dept. of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation, Photos and text by: John Seiler, Edward Jensen, Alex Niemera, and John Peterson, Silvics reprinted from Ag Handbook 654; range map source information

## Virginia Cooperative Extension

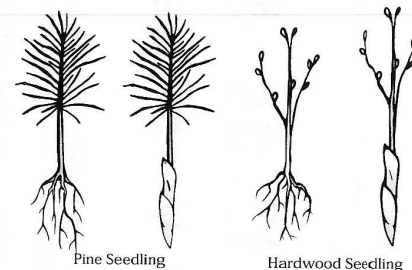


2003

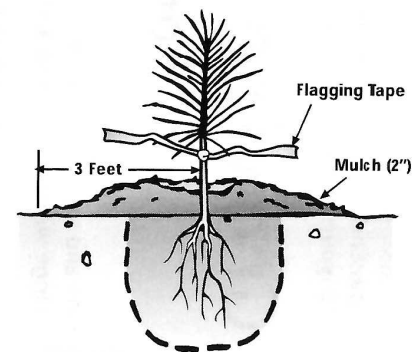
390-070

## How to Plant and Care for a Seedling

**Step 1. Keep roots cool and moist until planting.** For individual seedlings, wrap the roots in a moist paper towel and insert them into a plastic bag (roots only). Store seedlings in an unheated basement or refrigerator. Do not let the roots freeze.



**Step 2. Find a spot with plenty of sun that is away from your house and not under electric or phone wires.** Clear all grass within three feet of the seedling. (Young trees do not like to grow in the grass.) Dig a hole slightly deeper than the roots so that they do not bend in the planting hole. Do not plant the seedling any deeper than the first green needles or bud.



**Step 3. Put some garden mulch, pine straw, or leaves in the three-foot area around the tree to keep grass from growing back.** Mark your tree with flagging or a small stake so that a lawn mower does not cut it. (Young trees are hard to see). Give your tree water when it gets hot and dry outside.

**Note:** Your seedling will grow slowly the first year. Do not plant seedlings closer than 10 feet from each other. The best time to plant a seedling is while it is still dormant and the ground is not frozen (February through April).