



# Fiddle Leaf Fig

# Ficus Lyrata

Information provided by Little Red Nursery LLC  
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**LIGHTING: Moderate to Bright ~ WATERING: Moderate to Low**

Fiddle leaf figs (*Ficus Lyrata*) are so named for their large, beautiful, flat leaves that can reach up to 15 inches long and 10 inches wide. These showy, tropical trees can grow up to 40 feet tall in the wild, but usually grow between 15 and 25 feet tall in home landscapes. Fiddle leaf figs are also often grown in containers. This tree is hardy and relatively free of pests and diseases.

**CLIMATE:** Fiddle leaf fig trees are tropical plants. As such, they can only be grown outdoors year-round in the warm, humid climates of South Florida and parts of southern California. These areas are defined as US Department of Agriculture growing zones 10b through 11.

**LIGHT:** Make sure your plant has the right amount of light. Abundant but not direct light is recommended. Too little light will cause the plant to lose leaves and thin out. It also tends to grow towards the light giving the impression that it is leaning. Rotate the plant every so often to keep it growing straight and to ensure bushiness.

**SOIL and WATER:** Fiddle leaf fig trees are relatively adaptable and will grow in clay, sandy, loamy, alkaline and acidic soil. Don't over water the plant. The Fiddle leaf fig does well with short dry periods between watering. The frequency of watering depends on the amount of light the plant gets. One good way to determine how often you should water is to let the pot dry out until the new growth at the top begins to wilt slightly. Calculate the time that has elapsed from the last watering and subtract a day or two to determine ideal frequency of watering. This way you will be watering the plant just before it starts to wilt the next time.

**FERTILIZING:** *Ficus lyrata* trees are heavy feeders and grow quickly if fertilized once a week during the growing season. Use a fertilizer marketed for broad-leaved evergreen plants, which are often labeled as houseplant fertilizers.

**PRUNING:** Fiddle leaf fig trees need to be pruned in order to maintain their size and shape. The Fiddle leaf fig comes in both bush and tree forms. Prune to encourage branching and bushiness. The Fiddle leaf fig tends to grow a tall single stem when indoors. This long stem will normally not be able to keep itself upright and will require some sort of support. To encourage a more "free like" form, prune the top in the early spring before new growth forms. It is one of the easiest of the *Ficus* varieties to grow, making it a good choice for beginners. This houseplant tends to grow slowly, so if you decide to prune it in order to make the plant more compact, do keep this in mind.

**TIPS:** Be careful not to expose the plant to dry heat or drafts. Like other *Ficus* tree plants, the Fiddle leaf fig has a tendency to drop its leaves when exposed to too much dry heat or drafts and go into a sort of dormant recovery mode for a period of time. Some figs, such as the Sacred Fig, will do this as part of their normal growth cycle, just prior to the growth of new leaves. Clean the dust off of the leaves once in a while to allow the plant to absorb as much light as possible. Don't try to do this with your hands, as rubbing the leaves can damage them slightly and cause them to bleed little drops of white milky sap. Use latex gloves if you are allergic to this plant.