

Thuja occidentalis

Kingdom: Plantae

Clade: Angiosperms

Order: Cupressales

Family: Cupressaceae

Subfamily: Cupressoideae

Genus: *Thuja*

Species: *T. occidentalis*



Thuja, also known as Arborvitae, is a coniferous tree or shrub that originates from North America and parts of Asia. It is commonly grown for its decorative appeal and has some cultural significance.

Height:

- *Thuja* species typically grow to heights between 10 and 20 meters, although certain species can reach up to 30 meters.

Uses:

1. Ornamental Uses:

- **Landscaping:** *Thuja* is a popular choice in gardens and parks due to its dense evergreen foliage, which makes it ideal for hedges and privacy screens. Its resilience and ability to maintain its shape with trimming make it a favourite in urban and suburban landscapes.
- **Windbreaks:** It is often planted to act as a natural wind barrier, protecting homes, farms and other areas from strong winds.

2. Medicinal Uses:

- **Traditional Remedies:** In some cultures, different parts of the *Thuja* plant, such as the leaves and bark are used in traditional remedies to treat conditions like coughs, colds, and arthritis. *Thuja* oil is also known for its antiseptic and antifungal properties but needs to be used carefully due to potential toxicity if not handled properly.

3. Wood Uses:

- **Durability:** The wood from *Thuja* trees is lightweight and resistant to decay, making it useful for fencing, shingles, and other light construction purposes, especially in outdoor settings.

Religious Importance:

- **Symbolism:** *Thuja* is often referred to as the "Tree of Life," which symbolizes eternity and protection. This name comes from its evergreen nature, representing longevity and resilience.