

Ornamental Grasses

Great textural additions to any style garden, from formal to cottagey to modern, as single specimens or planted in large groupings. Some have extraordinarily showy flowers, while others offer evergreen foliage or fall color. Fairly low in maintenance and high in impact, they are indispensable in today's landscaping. In general all ornamental grasses are deer resistant (with the exception of the fleshier lily relatives i.e. Liriope).

Botanical Name	Common Name	Size and Comments
Agave spp. - Century Plant *Super architectural and tough as nails!		
Agave 'Blue Glow'	Blue Glow Agave	2' H x 2-3' W - solitary rosette of blue foliage with a burgundy/brown margin. Full to part sun, good drainage and minimal summer water. Protect when winter temps dip below 20
Agave bracteosa 'Calamar'	Squid Agave	2' H x 3' W - spineless, non-clump forming, good drainage
Agave gentryi 'Jaws'	Jaws Century Plant	2-3' H x 3'+ W - awesome green agave, heavily toothed leaf margins with red spines, great in containers, needs sharp drainage! (protect from wet winters to ensure hardiness) full to part sun
Agave neomexicana	New Mexico Century Plant	2' H x 2-3' W - very hardy species, will colonize in time (esp. in sandy soils), needs good drainage, very heat/drought tolerant, full-part sun
Agave parryi	Parry's Century Plant	18-24" H x 24-30" W - very hardy species, will colonize in time (esp. in sandy soils), needs good drainage, very heat/drought tolerant, full-part sun
Andropogon spp. - Big Bluestem		
Andropogon gerardii 'Blackhawks'	Blackhawks Big Bluestem	4-5' H x 2' W - Prairie native, very hardy/adaptable to a wide range of soils, deep rooting, full sun. Upright habit (best w/ less fertile/moist soils), dark purple foliage w/glints of blue, deepens in fall
Andropogon g. 'Red October'	Red October Big Bluestem	5-6' H x 2' W - upright habit, blue-green foliage w/red tips turning brilliant red in fall, enhanced by burgundy turkey foot-shaped blooms
Bouteloua gracilis - Blue Grama Grass		
Bouteloua g. 'Blonde Ambition'	Blonde Ambition Blue Grama	3' H x W - fine textured blue/green foliage w/unique flag-like flowers on stiff stems - excellent winter interest! and adaptable to tough sites as well
Calamagrostis spp. - Feather Reed Grass		
Calamagrostis x a. 'Karl Foerster'	Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass	4-5' H x 2-3' W - cool season grass that breaks dormancy in Feb., low mound of foliage with an upright column of showy seed-heads in early summer, great vertical accent or en masse
Calamagrostis a. 'El Dorado'	Gold Variegated Feather Reed Grass	4' H x 2' W - yellow variegated selection, does well in part sun, smaller than K. Foerster
Calamagrostis a. 'Overdam'	Variegated Feather Reed Grass	4' H x 2' W - cream variegated foliage, does well in part sun (or at least without reflected heat), smaller than K. Foerster and blooms are creamier in color

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Calamagrostis brachytricha	Korean (Shade) Reed Grass	3-4' H x 2-3' W - a taller grass for shade! with showy mauve tinted plumes in late summer/fall
Carex spp. - Sedge *All of the below sedges are evergreen, but can be cut back every few years to refresh		
Carex buchananii	Leatherleaf Sedge	24" H x 18-24" W - coppery evergreen foliage contrasts beautifully with blue/silver tones, vase shaped habit, full sun with regular moisture (but good drainage), may re-seed, cut back to refresh if needed every few years
Carex comans 'Frosted Curls'	New Zealand Hair Sedge	12-18" H x 24" W - finely textured, floppy mound
Carex elata 'Aurea'	Bowles Golden Sedge	24" H x 18-24" W - upright, ample moisture, part sun
Carex flagellifera 'Kiwi'	Kiwi Weeping Sedge	18" h x 18-24" W - fountain-like habit, sage green cultivar
Carex glauca (flacca) 'Blue Zinger'	Blue Zinger Sedge	18" H x 24" W - blue foliage for shade!, more clump forming than species, great en masse, tolerant of alkaline soils & clay, moist to dry, part to full shade
Carex morrowii 'Aureo-variegata'	Variegated Japanese Sedge	12" H x 18" W - great edger in part sun
Carex m. 'Ice Dance'	Ice Dance Japanese Sedge	12-18" H x 24-36" W - upright, spreads by rhizomes
Carex oshimensis 'Evergold'	Variegated Japanese Sedge	12-18" H x 18-24" W - very similar to C. m. Aureo-variegata, part sun to shade
Carex o. 'Evercolor Everest'	Variegated Japanese Sedge	12-18" H x 18-24" W - white variegated form, wider blades
Carex o. 'Everdi'	Green Sedge	8 - 12" H x W - compact, good en masse
Carex o. 'Everillo'	Everillo Golden Sedge	20" H x 24" W - golden/chartreuse arching mound (great sub for C. 'Bowles Golden')
Carex pennsylvanica	Oak Sedge	18" H x 24" W - semi-evergreen, spreads by rhizomes, native throughout prairie, upper midwest in dry woodland settings, great lawn alternative (natural meadow) for shadier areas
Carex testacea	Orange Sedge	18-24" H x 24"+ W - olive green w/orange overtones in sun, will seed around in moist environments
Chasmanthium latifolium - Northern Sea Oats		
Chasmanthium latifolium	Northern Sea Oats	2-3' H x W - arching habit w/dangling oat-like seed heads that fade to tan and are great dried, woodland's edge native to eastern US, prefers moist soils in sun to part shade, will re-seed heartily under ideal conditions
Chasmanthium l. 'River Mist'	Variegated Sea Oats	2-3' H x 3' W - white variegation, showy seed heads in summer, part sun, moist
Cortaderia selloana - Pampas Grass		
Cortaderia selloana	Pampas Grass	8-10'+ H x W - can seed around, big and bold, semi-evergreen
Cortaderia s. 'Pumila'	Ivory Feathers Dwarf Pampas Grass	3-5' H x 4-6' W - bold creamy plumes, semi-evergreen, hardier than straight species
Dasyilirion spp. - Sotol or Desert Spoon		

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Dasyilirion wheeleri	Common Sotol	3' H x W - native to Chihuahuan desert, hardy to Z6!, evergreen (silver) toothed blades, very architectural. mature plants bloom with creamy flower spikes up to 9'! give sharp drainage
Deschampsia cespitosa - Tufted Hair Grass		
Deschampsia cespitosa	Tufted Hair Grass	2-4'H x 2'W - semi-evergreen native, likes part sun to light shade and moist soil, will seed around, showy/airy blooms, good erosion control
Deschampsia c. 'Pixie Fountain'	Dwarf Tufted Hair Grass	18-24" H x 16-20" W - more compact selection of native, super hardy, evergreen, will take wet soils
Festuca spp. - Fescue *Evergreen bunchgrasses that are tolerant of heat, drought and poor soils		
Festuca californica	California Fescue	2-3' H x W - native, wider blue-green blades, takes more shade, great under oaks
Festuca glauca 'Elijah Blue'	Elijah Blue Fescue	12-18" H x W - most common variety, very blue, can seed around
Festuca idahoensis 'Siskiyou Blue'	Siskiyou Blue Idaho Fescue	12-18" H x W - steely blue foliage, longer lived than Euro counterpart
Festuca i. 'Stanislaus River'	Stanislaus River Idaho Fescue	12" H x W - more compact, blue-green foliage, long lived
Hakonechloa macra - Japanese Forest Grass *All like rich/moist soil in part-full shade		
Hakonechloa macra	Green Japanese Forest Grass	18"H x 18-24" W - straight species is hardier, more vigorous and more tolerant of sun/heat, a great foil for variegated/golden shrubs
Hakonechloa macra 'All Gold'	Golden Japanese Forest Grass	18" H x 24-36" W - fluorescent gold foliage!
Hakonechloa m. 'Aureola'	Golden Variegated Japanese Forest Grass	12-18 H x 18-24" W - most commonly used, great around trees in mass
Hakonechloa m. 'Fubuki'	White Variegated Japanese Forest Grass	14" H x 16" W - more compact habit, slower growing, great for brightening up a dark space
Hakonechloa m. 'Beni Kaze'	Japanese Forest Grass	18-24" H x 24-30" W - all green variety w/ awesome red fall color, more vigorous than variegated forms
Helictotrichon sempervirens - Blue Oat Grass		
Helictotrichon sempervirens	Blue Oat Grass	2-3' H x W - evergreen(blue), likes it hot and dry w/good drainage, easy care (just comb in spring), dainty seed heads rise up to 4-5'
Helictotrichon s. 'Saphirsprudel'	'Sapphire Fountain' Blue Oat Grass	2-3' H x W - more robust, slightly wider blades, better w/humid conditions
Hesperaloe parviflora - False Red Yucca *Evergreen hummingbird magnet! (give full sun and good drainage)		
Hesperaloe parviflora	False Red Yucca	2-3' H x 3-4' W - Spikes of tubular coral flowers rise up to 5-6' in summer, great in containers too!
Hesperaloe p. 'Desert Son'	Yellow (Blooming) False Yucca	2-3' H x W - Buttery yellow blooming cultivar, slightly less vigorous
Imperata cylindrica - Japanese Blood Grass		

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Imperata cylindrica 'Red Baron'	Japanese Blood Grass	1-2' H x 2'+ W - red tips throughout the season (best in full sun), tolerates wet soil, spreads by runners
Juncus spp. - Rush *Evergreen PNW natives that grow in moist places (stream/river side + ditches)		
Juncus effusus	Soft Rush	2-3' H x W - stiffly upright green foliage, little brown seed heads
Juncus ensifolius	Swordleaf/Daggerleaf Rush	12-24" H x W - flat green lades, large brown seed heads
Juncus patens	California Gray Rush	2'+ H x W - stiffly upright blue/gray foliage, more heat and drought tolerant than J. effusus
Liriope spp. - Lily Turf *Evergreen groundcovers for part-full shade, great en mass		
Liriope muscari	Big Blue Lily Turf	2' H x W - bright green foliage and dark purple blooms (like grape hyacinth) in summer
Liriope m. 'Silvery Sunproof'	Variegated Lily Turf	15-18" H x W - yellow/white variegated form, lighter purple flowers, most sun tolerant variety
Liriope spicata 'Silver Dragon'	Variegated Creeping Lily Turf	12" H x 24"+ W - white variegated foliage, light purple flowers, dense ground cover (spreads by runners)
Miscanthus spp. - Maiden Grass		
Miscanthus s. 'Adagio'	Dwarf Maiden Grass	5'H x 3' W - compact form, multi-colored highlights in fall
Miscanthus sinensis 'Gold Bar'	Compact Zebra Grass	4-5' H x 2-3' W - slow growing compact zebra grass w/condensed striping pattern, burgundy flower plumes
Miscanthus s. 'Gold Breeze'	Gold Breeze Zebra Grass	5-7' H x 2-3' W - more vigorous than 'Gold Bar' w/softer fountain-like habit, concentrated horizontal gold banding, bronzy plumes
Miscanthus s. 'Gracillimus'	Maiden Grass	5-6' H x 6'+ W - slender blades w/silvery midrib, orange fall color, can seed around a lot
Miscanthus s. 'Little Kitten'	Dwarf Maiden Grass	2-3' H x 2' W - smallest cultivar, short plumes, bronzy fall color
Miscanthus s. 'Morning Light'	Variegated Maiden Grass	3-4' H x W - white variegated sport of 'Gracilimus'
Miscanthus s. 'Rotsilber'	Red and Silver Maiden Grass	6-7' H x -4-5' W - red tips and plumes, vigorous, great in a mixed screen
Miscanthus s. 'Yaku Jima' ('Yakushima')	Compact Maiden Grass	3-4' H x W - compact form, red fall color
Miscanthus s. var. 'Purpurescens'	Flame Grass	3-4' H x W - wider, non-serrated blades, orange-maroon fall color, like moist soil
Molinia spp. - Moor Grass		
Molinia caerulea ssp. caerulea 'Moorflamme'	Purple Moor Grass	3' H x 2.5' W - compact mound of blue-green foliage, early blooming w/a haze of airy tan flowers (awesome when backlit), gold/coppery fall color, sun-part sun w/regular water, long lived
Molinia c. 'Variegata'	Variegated Moor Grass	18-24" H x W - slower growing, part sun, likes moist soils
Molinia caerulea ssp. arundinacea 'Skyracer'	Tall Moor Grass	3' (6-8' in bloom) H x 2-3' W - finally a tall grass for shadier conditions!
Muhlenbergia spp. - Muhly Grass		

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Muhlenbergia capillaris	Pink Muhly Grass	3' H x 3-5' W - semi evergreen, likes good drainage, haze of pink flowers in fall is out of this world!
Muhlenbergia c. 'Fast Forward'	Fast Forward Pink Muhly Grass	2-3' H x W - everything we love about the species but more refined foliage/shape and earlier to bloom (August!), still going strong into winter
Muhlenbergia c. 'White Cloud'	Pink Muhly Grass	3-4' H x 4' W - a white blooming selection, slightly later in fall and with a more upright habit, persists well into winter
Muhlenbergia rigens	Deer Grass	3' H x W - CA native, evergreen foliage with 2' tan flower spikes. Tolerates clay, seasonal flooding
Ophiopogon spp. - Mondo Grass * Evergreen groundcover in the Lily family (related to Liriope too)		
Ophiopogon japonicus	Mondo Grass	12" H x 12-18" W - dark green low mound, spreads slowly by runners, part-full shade, light purple flowers
Ophiopogon j. 'Nana'	Dwarf Mondo Grass	3-6" H x 12" W - makes a dense carpet, great on shady hillsides, under trees, in Asian style gardens
Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens'	Black Mondo Grass	8-12" H x 12-15" W - unique black foliage (most pronounced with sun, although afternoon shade is still best to prevent scorching) w/light purple-white flowers
Panicum spp. - Switch Grass *All are tolerant of a wide range of soils and have very airy flower plumes		
Panicum virgatum 'Cloud Nine'	Tall Switch Grass	7-8' H x 4-6' W - upright, blue foliage w/gold fall color, great miscanthus sub
Panicum v. Heavy Metal'	Heavy Metal Switch Grass	4-5' H x 2-3' W - very upright form, blue foliage w/gold fall color
Panicum v. 'Hot Rod'	Hot Rod Switch Grass	3-4' H x 2-3' W - upright habit, the MOST burgundy colored selection yet, colors up early in the season, reddish blooms too
Panicum v. 'Northwind'	Northwind Upright Switch Grass	4-6' H x 3-4' W - very upright form, blue/green foliage w/gold fall color
Panicum v. 'Rotstrahlbusch'	Red Ray's Switch Grass	3-5' H x 3' W - red tips and red fall color
Panicum v. 'Shenandoah'	Shenandoah Switch Grass	3-4' H x W - burgundy fall color
Pennisetum spp. - Fountain Grass		
Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Burgundy Bunny'	Dwarf Fountain Grass	18" H x W - burgundy highlights throughout the season
Pennisetum a. 'Little Bunny'	Dwarf Fountain Grass	12-18" H x W - good edger, white/tan plumes
Pennisetum 'Little Honey'	Dwarf Variegated Fountain Grass	12" H X W - creamy whited variegated foliage, very dwarf selection, tolerates part sun
Pennisetum a. 'Hameln'	Dwarf Fountain Grass	2-3' H x W - classic landscape grass, white/tan plumes, can re-seed
Pennisetum a. 'Moudry'	Black Flowering Fountain Grass	3' H x W - last of species to flower, large dark plumes, foliage has wider blades
Pennisetum a. 'Piglet'	Dwarf Fountain Grass	18-24" H x W - great in between size
Pennisetum orientale	Oriental Fountain Grass	18-24" H x 24-30" W - more upright, long plumes w/rosy tint

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Pennisetum o. 'Karley Rose'	Karley Rose Fountain Grass	3' H x 3'+ W - larger than species w/ even rosier plumes
Phormium spp. - New Zealand Flax *Evergreen, sword-like blades - very architectural *mostly Zone 8, best in a protected site		
Phormium 'Amazing Red'	Dwarf New Zealand Flax	2' H x W - red foliage
Phormium tenax 'Atropurpureum'	Red New Zealand Flax	5-6' H x W - hardiest variety, bronzy/burgundy foliage
Phormium 'Bronze Baby'	Dwarf New Zealand Flax	3' H x W - red foliage
Phormium 'Jack Spratt'	Dwarf New Zealand Flax	18" H x W - smallest cultivar, reddish/brown foliage w/twisty tips
Phormium 'Pink Stripe'	Variegated New Zealand Flax	4-6' H x W - upright olive green blades w/pink margins
Phormium 'Platt's Black'	Dwarf New Zealand Flax	3-4' H x W - one of the darkest cultivars
Phormium 'Shiraz'	Dwarf New Zealand Flax	2-3' H x W - compact cultivar w/ wine colored foliage
Phormium 'Sundowner'	Variegated New Zealand Flax	5'H x 4-6'W - olive green edged w/peachy pink
Phormium 'Tom Thumb'	Dwarf New Zealand Flax	2-3' H x W - smallest green cultivar, olive blades w/brown margins and twisty tips
Schizachyrium scoparium - Little Bluestem *Prairie natives tolerant of poor soils, simple tan inflorescence sparkle when back-lit and are an important food source for birds		
Schizachyrium s. 'Standing Ovation'	Standing Ovation Little Bluestem	3-4' H x 18" W - blue-green foliage, purple towards the stem base, tightly upright habit, dramatic fall colors range from copper to plum
Schizachyrium s. 'Blaze'	Blaze Little Bluestem	2-4' H x 1-2' W - prairie native, upright blue foliage w/red fall color
Schizachyrium s. 'Carousel'	Carousel Little Bluestem	2-3' H x W - blue-green foliage w/pink summer highlights, more broad-vase shaped, coppery fall color, stiff stalks of tan flowers persist in winter, tolerant of a wide range of soils
Sesleria spp. - Autumn Moor Grass		
Sesleria autumnalis	Autumn Moor Grass	12-18" H x W - evergreen bunch grass, adaptable in full/part sun, great edger or en masse
Sisyrinchium spp. - Blue/Brown/Yellow Eyed Grass		
Sisyrinchium angustifolium 'Lucerne'	Lucerne Blue Eyed Grass	12" H x 18" W - Eastern Us native Iris relative, perwinkle blue flowers larger than the species, also seeds around less and is hardier overall
Sisyrinchium californicum	Yellow Eyed Grass	8" H x 12" W - CA native to wet/boggy areas, blooms late spring, full to part sun, can self seed
Sisyrinchium 'EK Balls'	EK Balls Blue Eyed Grass	6" H x 12" W - compact, long blooming, tolerant of a range of conditions, full to part sun
Sisyrinchium 'Devon Skies'	Devon Skies Blue Eyed Grass	4-8" H x 12" W - prolific and long blooming iris relative, takes poor conditions, rocky soil, heat/drought

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Sisyrinchium idahoense	Idaho Blue Eyed Grass	8-15" H x W - native to open woodlands/wet meadows throughout western US. Rich lavender flowers, but a shorter bloom time than named selections
Sporobolus heterolepis - Prairie Dropseed		
Sporobolus heterolepis	Prairie Dropseed	2-3' H x W - prairie native, heat/drought tolerant, great fall color, looks good en masse, blooms have slight fragrance
Stipa spp. - Feather Grass *Evergreen, heat and drought tolerant		
Stipa (Nasella) tenuissima	Mexican Feather Grass	2' H x 2-3' W - finely textured bright foliage/flowers, re-seeds prolifically! (good erosion control - or cut back before seed ripen)
Stipa gigantea	Giant Feather Grass	2-3' H x 3-4' W -evergreen, early summer blooms rise up 5-6' (or taller) are amazing when backlit
Stipa g. 'Little Giant'	Dwarf Giant Feather Grass	2' H x W - evergreen, petite version of the species with 3-4' flowers spikes
Xerophyllum - Bear Grass		
Xerophyllum tenax	Bear Grass/Indian Basket Grass	2-3' H x W - Native to sub-alpine west, evergreen, early summer white poker shaped bloom spikes, great for dry shade
Yucca spp. *Evergreen, heat and drought tolerant, very architectural		
Yucca brevifolia	Joshua Tree	8-12' H x 6-8' W - Mohave desert native, hardy to Zone 6! needs sharp drainage, gravel mulch and minimal supplemental water during summer. Protect during extreme winter weather until well established
Yucca filamentosa ssp. smalliana 'Bright Edge'	Variegated Adam's Needle	2' H x 3' W - creamy/gold margins, tall ivory flower spikes (to 4'+) in early summer, smaller than species
Yucca f. 'Color Guard'	Variegated Adam's Needle	2-3' x 3-5' W - gold central stripe, tall ivory flower spikes (to 4'+) early summer, pink tints in cold winter-spring
Yucca f. 'Excaliber'	Adam's Needle	2' H x 3-4' W - compact blue leaved form, spikes of ivory bells attract loads of pollinators
Yucca rostrata 'Sapphire Skies'	Sapphire Skies Blue Beaked Yucca	6-10' H x 3-4' W - Hardest of trucked species, native to N. Mexico. Slow growing, powder blue foliage makes a striking accent