

HOW ARE THEY CREATED

A bonsai is generally trained from the time it is very young to achieve the desired proportions. Seedlings or cuttings are often allowed to grow in the field before training to develop thick trunks and root bases more quickly—qualities necessary to give the illusion of age. However, good bonsai can also be created from nursery stock or specimens collected from the wild.



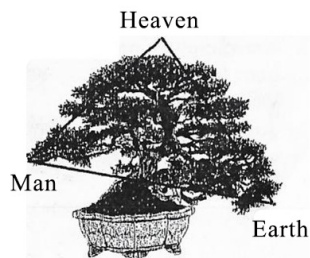
Hokidachi

Through selective pruning and wiring of the branches, a young sapling can take on the appearance of an aged tree. New growth in the foliage and the roots are encouraged and directed until the tree reaches a finished state—which may well take decades! A mature bonsai's growth is slowed (much like that of its natural counterpart) by restricting the roots in a small container and pruning the foliage.

The art of bonsai is unique in that it is constantly changing with the seasons and the artist's vision. Unlike a finished work of art, bonsai are dynamic reflections of nature and the person that sculpts them.

THE ASYMMETRICAL TRIANGLE

The basic bonsai form is a pleasing natural shape and is symbolic of Japanese philosophy.



Bunjingi

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For a list of recommended reading, helpful site links, articles, and more, visit the Bonsai Society of Florida at www.bonsai-bsf.com

ABOUT TBS

The Tallahassee Bonsai Society is a group of individuals of all ages and skill levels who love Bonsai. Meetings are held the second Sunday of every month at the Leon County Extension Office, 615 Paul Russell Road, in Tallahassee.

For information call the TBS Secretary and Email Site Administrator Jeff Barringer at (850) 528-3793, or email tallahasseebonsai@gmail.com for information about visiting our club.

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BONSAI



Han-kangai

A LIVING ART

PREPARED BY THE
TALLAHASSEE BONSAI SOCIETY



WHAT IS A BONSAI?

Bonsai is the art of miniature trees. The artist shapes a bonsai to portray a sense of naturalness and balance. The artwork is intended to bring to mind a natural scene—a majestic lone tree, an ancient forest, a cliff-dwelling pine—and evoke a sense of inner contemplation of humanity’s place in nature.

The art of growing dwarf trees began in ancient China as an element of popular miniature landscapes. It later was introduced to Japan, where bonsai was developed and refined for centuries as an art of its own. Today, the art of bonsai is practiced extensively throughout the U.S. In almost every part of the world, each culture expresses its unique views of nature in the materials and techniques used.



CLASSIC BONSAI STYLES

Here are a few of the classic bonsai styles (with their equivalent Japanese names).

Formal Upright (chokkan)	Root-over-rock (ishitsuki)
Informal Upright (tachiki or moyogi)	Twisted trunk (nejikan)
Slanting (shakan)	Octopus (takozukuri)
Semi-cascade (han-kengai)	Clump (kabubuki)
Cascade (kengai)	Twin-trunk (sokan)
Literati (bunjing)	Raft (ikadabuki)
Broom (hokidachi)	Sinuous Root (netsunagari)
Coiled (bankan)	Forest (Yose-ue)
Spilt-trunk (sabamiki)	Two-tree (soju)
Driftwood (sharimiki)	Three-tree (samban-yose)
Wind-swept (fukinagashi)	Tray Landscape (bonkei)
Exposed root (sekijoju)	Herbaceous Accent Plants (kusamono)

Styles Source: *The Art of Bonsai: Creation, Care, and Enjoyment*. By Yuji Yoshimura and Giovanna M. Halford.



BONSAI CARE

With a bit of knowledge, a bonsai is easy to maintain. Besides aesthetic requirements (like pruning shoots on deciduous trees and pinching needles on junipers), the basic requirements for health are:

- fresh air (outside)
- good sunlight (only light shade)
- consistent water
- regular fertilizer
- occasional repotting (once every 2-3 years)
- dry feet (keep them off the bare ground)

Most bonsai need to live outdoors but will tolerate display inside for 1 to 3 days—just keep them out of directly blowing air conditioning.

If they are outside, they will usually require thorough watering daily. If the soil isn’t well-draining, you may need to water less frequently. When a bonsai needs repotting (about every two years), you should use a mostly inorganic, well-draining soil mix.

Bonsai need fertilizer, especially during the growing season. Slow-release pellets are ideal, but liquid fertilizer may also be used.

Remember, if your bonsai is sick, act immediately. Consult a book or an expert. With a little luck your tree will be happy again.