

Shaping Topiaries

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Densely growing plants, such as yews or box-trees are best for so-called topiaries. Thick branches, which divide into finer and finer twigs, form the main axes of the desired shape. In order to train the branches in the desired directions, you can fix the flexible twigs with wire.

Geometrical shapes such as pyramids are best trimmed by tying string along the desired edges, or by using a wooden frame. Fit the frame around the plant and cut off all protruding shoots. In this way, you can achieve many different shapes, such as cubes, globes or pyramids:

You can also trim plants with longer trunks into decorative shapes, making them an eye-catcher in your garden. Pot plants are particularly suitable for trimming into geometrical shapes:

For more unusual shapes, such as animals, you should make a cage out of wire netting and fit this around the bush. You can then easily cut along the surface of the wire netting. It is important to use a handy hedge trimmer which provides an exact cut. All shoots which project from the cage should be trimmed off several times per year in order to encourage a more bushy growth. The time needed to achieve the desired shape depends on the size and the growth rate of the bush. Really impressive topiaries generally need several years to reach the desired effect.

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