



BLACK MULBERRIES **Cultural Instructions**

SITE & SOIL

Mulberries will tolerate a range of soils, provided they are well drained. They do best in a warm sheltered situation where they can be grown as bush, standard or half standard trees. In colder areas, espaliers trained against south or southwest facing walls or fences are best. Mulberries are slow growing, taking about eight to ten years to come into cropping. A mature tree will reach 6-9m (20-30ft) but can be contained considerably in a Root Control Bag.

PRUNING & TRAINING

In sheltered situations mulberries are best grown as bush or half standard trees (or if a large tree is required, standard trees). The formative pruning is similar to that for a bush apple, pruning in the dormant season (November to March). Broken or crossing branches should be removed or shortened and any dead or diseased branches cut out. Also any branches which spoil the shape of the tree and should be removed.

The formative training of espalier mulberries is similar to that for apples and pears. The pruning of fruiting laterals should be carried out in the summer to promote the formation of fruiting spurs. In late July or early August, side shoots should be shortened to four or five leaves.

[Click here to view our apple and pear instructions](#) which should be followed in respect of the formative pruning and espalier training of mulberries.

MANURING

In late February each year, broadcast over the rooting area (approximately equal to the spread of the branches) a compound fertilizer as recommended for apples.

HARVESTING

Mulberries should be eaten or preserved soon after harvesting. They ripen over a period of three to four weeks from mid-August. Fruit to be used for cooking should be picked when slightly under-ripe. Fruit for dessert should be picked when almost black, when it will part from the branch easily. Alternatively ripe fruit can be allowed to drop onto a clean surface such as a sheet of polythene or an old linen sheet (mulberry juice stains so do not use a ground sheet).