



Pome Tree Class

Pome fruits consist of a central "core" containing multiple small seeds, which is enveloped by a tough membrane and surrounded by an edible layer of flesh.^[1] Pome fruit trees are deciduous, and undergo a dormant winter period that requires cold temperatures to break dormancy in spring.^[1] Well-known pomes include the [apple](#), [pear](#), and [quince](#).^[1]

The word *pome* entered English in the late 14th century, and referred to an apple or an apple-shaped object. It derived from the [Old French](#) word for "apple": *pome* (12th century; modern French is *pomme*), which in turn derived from the [Late Latin](#) or [Vulgar Latin](#) word *poma* "apple", originally the plural of Latin [pomum](#) "fruit", later "apple". (Wikipedia)

1. Create a Microclimate

- a. Improve soil conditions
- b. Identify sandy or wet spots
- c. Provide shade
- d. Mulch & cover crop bare spots 1-2 feet of mulch is recommended.

2. Chill Hours

- a. Select varieties with low chill hours
- b. Phoenix area averages 450 chill hours per year
- c. A chill hour is when temperatures are between 32-45 degrees
- d. Is it self-pollinating or does it require a mate?
- e. Plant for successive ripening

3. Understand Rootstock

- a. Don't use it for size control, dwarf, etc.
- b. Prune to control size
- c. Want adaptability for our climate and soil conditions
- d. We recommend M-111 rootstock for the Phoenix area, Zone 9B

4. Varieties to Grow

- a. Apple - Anna, Dorsett Golden, Fuji, & Gala

- b. Pear - Kieffer
- c. Greenlife, A&P, Whitfills - reputable nurseries that use good root stock

5. Spacing

- a. Plant approximately 10 feet apart minimum, 20 feet is better.

6. Chose Location

- a. Not too close to house, walls, or brick/block walls. 20ft at least.
- b. Clear rocks 20 feet away from tree.
- c. Afternoon shade is best, so on the East side of houses or to the East of shade trees to protect from afternoon sun.
- d. Mulch all around the tree 1-2 feet thick.

7. Planting

- a. Do not cover the graft, bump at the base of the tree.
- b. Create berm to absorb water
- c. Fill hole with 50% compost / 50% natural soil
- d. Compact soil to get rid of air pockets, can cause root rot.
- e. Sprinkle castings on top, then mulch 6" inches minimum, 12" better
- f. Mulch - keeps ground cooler, uses much 50% less water, feeds beneficial bacteria, fungi, that feed the roots, worms, and other organisms.

8. Apply Worm Tea

- a. Living microbes
- b. Stimulates root growth
- c. Foliar feeds through the leaves
- d. Provides some extra protection against sunburn and frost damage.

9. Fertilizing

- a. Use natural and organic - compost, castings, worm tea, and BSFL fertilizer
- b. Valentine's Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day
- c. Castings - slow release, microbes that feed the plants.
- d. Compost - organic material, feeds the microbes, provides nutrients to the soil
- e. BSFL Fertilizer - Slow release, evenly balanced NPK, made here on the farm, sustainable. (Use only when needed)

10. Pruning

- a. Sharpen and sanitize tools

- b. Prune in January when tree is dormant
- c. If the tree has not lost its leaves by January 1, defoliate the tree to force it into dormancy.
- d. Size control - never prune more than 25% off
- e. Goblet shaped scaffolding branches
- f. Scaffolding branches should be about knee high at the time of planting.
- g. 4 - 6 scaffolding branches
- h. Cut at 45 degree angle down at outward facing node
- i. Apply spacer if needed
- j. Prune any broken, crossing, or damaged limbs
- k. Keep the center open for air circulation and sunlight
- l. Easy to trellis or espalier



11. Watering Mature Trees

- a. Infrequently - once per week (April - June)
- b. 4 - 5 gallons per hour, once per week

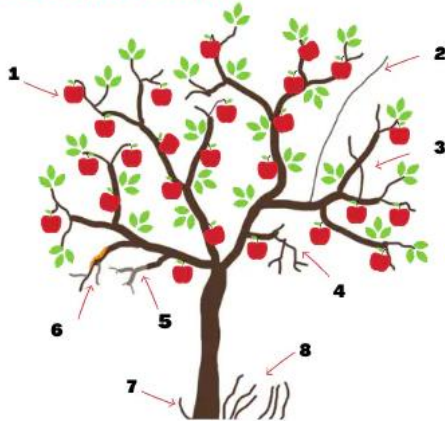
- c. Finger test or Moisture meter
- d. July - September (2X per week)
- e. Oct - December (Every other week)
- f. December - March (every 2-3 weeks depending on rain)

12. Fruit

- a. For the first 2 years focus on protecting your tree and maximize root growth. Shade from afternoon sun first two summers.
- b. Year 1 - very little fruit, probably bitter or sour.
- c. Year 2 - more fruit, better tasting.
- d. Year 3 - first full yield and crop of fruit.
- e. Harvest in June and July

Helpful Pictures

BEFORE PRUNING



WHAT TO REMOVE

1. Some Fruit
2. Water Sprout
3. Crossing Branches
4. Broken Branches
5. Dead Branches
6. Diseased Branches
7. Growth Arising
Below the Graft
Junctions
8. Suckers Growing
From Base of
Trunk & Roots

AFTER PRUNING





Adding a Spacer



Sharpening Tool



Pruning Spray



Disinfectant & Biodegradable Wipes for tools

