Maidenhair Fern (Adiantum pedatum a.k.a. Adiantum aleuticum)
Maidenhair Fern Family

Why Choose It?

Maidenhair Fern looks cool—cool like waterfall chutes and deep dark woods. Its airy fronds will re-fresh a dull shady corner under the eaves or fill in a patio planting. With shiny black stems that contrast beautifully with the green of its leaves, Maidenhair Fern looks more delicate than it is.

In the Garden

Superb for a shady or damp site, Maidenhair Fern will green up a bed on the north side of a house or fence. Plant it where you can to contemplate its cool on a hot afternoon. This fern will help show off more colorful shade lovers, like impatiens or begonias.

The Facts

Maidenhair Fern has palm-shaped fronds with 3 to 8 fingers each. The fronds stand 1-2 feet tall on dark, wiry stems and will die back each year. New leaves will unfurl each April. While Maidenhair Fern loves a forest-y, humus-rich soil, it will also grow in heavier soils. After thorough watering for a couple of years, it will thrive in a shady spot with little summer water.

Where to See It

Watch for Maidenhair Fern along forested stream banks, waterfalls, and rocky seeps from sea level to mid-elevations in the mountains.
And, hey, where else can you see it?

If it’s too hot to hike or garden, look for Maidenhair Fern in the basket collections of a local museum. Many Native American basket makers used the fern’s shiny black stems to decorate their work.

You can find out more information about native plants, including where to buy them, from the Washington Native Plant Society.

www.wnps.org

206-527-3210 or 1-888-288-8022

Native Plant Spotlights

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