

Natural Hedges

Shearing is a labor-intensive, horticulturally unsound practice. It encourages excessive new growth and can lead to unhealthy plants and increased waste. What's more, sheared hedges have lots of deadwood under the dense green crown because of lack of light reaching into the hedge. The dieback in the center of the plant increases its flammability.

The plants on this list don't need to be sheared to form a hedge. Many cultivars of these species also may be appropriate for natural hedges. Several common hedge species are not listed here because they typically require shearing. When planting natural hedges, it's important to allow room for each plant to grow to its natural shape and size.



Botanical Name	Common Name	CA Native	Sun/Soil	Height	Spread	Water Requirement	Reference
Small (spread 2-4')							
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i> 'Crimson Pygmy'	Dwarf barberry		Full sun to part shade	1.5'	2.5'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Calamagrostis</i> 'Karl Foerster'	Reed grass		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	3-5'	2-4'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Cistus x purpureus</i>	Orchid rockrose		Full sun	4'	4'	Little-None	Sunset
<i>Cistus</i> 'Sunset'	Pink rockrose		Full sun/Excellent drainage	3'	3'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Convolvulus cneorum</i>	Bush morning glory		Best in sun, tolerates some shade	2-4'	2-4'	Moderate/Low	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Dietes bicolor</i>	Fortnight lily		Sun or part shade	2-3'	2-3'	Occasional-None	EBMUD
<i>Juncus effusus bruneus</i>	Green rush	●	Full sun or light shade	2.5'	2.5'	Ample/Drought Tolerant	Sunset/CNP
<i>Juncus patens</i>	California gray rush	●	Full sun or light shade	2'	2'	Ample/Drought Tolerant	Sunset/CNP
<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	Spanish lavender		Full sun/Good drainage	3'	2-3'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Lavatera thuringiaca</i>	Bush mallow		Full sun/Good drainage	6-8'	4'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>	Sticky monkey flower	●	Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	3-4'	3-4'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Myrtus communis</i> 'Compacta'	Dwarf myrtle		Full sun/Excellent drainage	4'	4'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Nandina domestica</i> 'Compacta'	Heavenly bamboo		Sun to part shade	4-5'	3'	Little	EBMUD
<i>Phlomis lanata</i>	Phlomis		Full sun/Good drainage	2'	3'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>	Potentilla		Full sun/Good drainage	1-3'	2.5-4'	None-Moderate	Sunset
<i>Rhaphiolepis</i> 'Ballerina'	Indian hawthorn		Full sun to part shade	2-3'	3-4'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Santolina rosmarinifolia</i>	Santolina		Full sun	2-3'	2-3'	Occasional	EBMUD
Medium (spread 4-6')							
<i>Arctostaphylos hookeri</i>	Monterey manzanita	●	Full sun to part shade	18"-4'	4'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Arctostaphylos</i> 'Greensphere'	Greensphere manzanita	●	Full sun to part shade	4'	4'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California sagebrush	●	Full sun/Excellent drainage	2-5'	4-5'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Cistus x hybridus</i>	White rockrose		Full sun/Excellent drainage	3-5'	3-5'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Citrus</i> 'Improved Meyer' dwarf	Dwarf Meyer lemon		Full sun	6'	6'	Regular/Moderate	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Coleonema pulchrum</i>	Pink breath of heaven		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	5'	5-6'	Moderate/Moderate	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Eriogonum arborescens</i> , <i>E. giganteum</i>	Wild buckwheat	●	Full sun/Good drainage	3-4'	4-5'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	California buckwheat	●	Full sun/Good drainage	2-3'	4'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Euryops pectinatus</i>	Euryops		Full sun	3-5'	3-6'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	Oregon grape	●	Full sun to part shade	6'	5'	Moderate-Occasional/Moderate	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Mahonia pinnata</i>	Mahonia	●	Full sun to part shade	4-5'	4-5'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Myrtus communis</i>	Myrtle		Full sun/Excellent drainage	4-6'	4-6'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/ WUCOLS R1
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Heavenly bamboo		Sun to part shade	6-8'	3-4'	Little	EBMUD
<i>Nerium</i> 'Petit Pink'	Oleander		Full sun	3-5'	3-5'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Phlomis		Full sun	4'	6'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Phormium</i> 'Maori Maiden'	Flax		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	3-4'	4-6'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Phormium tenax</i> varieties	Flax		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	1-5'	2-6'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Polygala dalmatiana</i>	Sweet pea shrub		Full sun or light shade/Good drainage	3-5'	3-5'	Regular/Low	Sunset/WUCOLS RQ
<i>Rhamnus californica</i> 'Mound St Bruno'	Rhamnus	●	Sun or part shade	4-6'	4-6'	Occasional	EBMUD

Botanical Name	Common Name	CA Native	Sun/Soil	Height	Spread	Water Requirement	Reference
<i>Ribes malvaceum</i>	Chaparral currant	●	Sun to part shade	5'	5'	Occasional-Moderate/Very Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Spiraea vanhouttei</i>	Spirea		Full sun or light shade	6'	8'	Regular-Moderate	Sunset
Large (spread 6-12')							
<i>Arbutus unedo</i> 'Compacta'	Dwarf strawberry tree		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	10'	10'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Arctostaphylos densiflora</i> 'Howard McMinn'	Vine hill manzanita	●	Sun to part shade/Good drainage	5-7'	6-10'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Bambusa multiplex</i> 'Alphonse Carr'	Alphonse Carr bamboo		Sun or part shade	15-35'		Little-Regular/Low	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Bambusa multiplex</i> 'Golden Goddess'	Golden Goddess bamboo		Sun or part shade	6-10'		Little-Regular/Low	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Berberis darwinii</i>	Darwin barberry		Full sun to part shade	5-8'	4-6'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Berberis x stenophylla</i>	Rosemary barberry		Full sun to part shade	6-10'	10-12'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Camellia japonica</i>	Camellia		Out of strong sun	6-12'	6-12'	Moderate-Regular/Moderate	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Camellia sasanqua</i>	Camellia		Out of strong sun	6-12'	6-12'	Moderate-Regular/High	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Dark Star'	Wild lilac	●	Full sun to part shade	6'	8'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Julia Phelps'	Wild lilac	●	Full sun to part shade	4-5-7'	7-9'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Snow Flurry'	Wild lilac	●	Full sun to part shade	8'	12'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i>	Blueblossom	●	Full sun to part shade	8'	12'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Choisya ternata</i>	Mexican orange		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	6-8'	6-8'	Occasional-Moderate/Moderate	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Chondropetalum tectorum</i>	Cape rush		Sun to part shade/Wet or dry soil	4-6'	4-6'	Occasional-Moderate/High	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Cistus x aguilarii</i>	Rockrose		Full sun/Excellent drainage	6'	6'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Correa</i> 'Carmine Bells' or 'Dusky Bells'	Australian fuchsia		Full shade to full sun	2-3'	6-8'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Echium candicans</i> ('fastuosum')	Pride of Madeira		Full sun/Good drainage	4-6'	6-10'	Little-None	EBMUD
<i>Grevillea rosmarinifolia</i>	Grevillea		Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	6'	6'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Loropetalum chinense</i>	Loropetalum		Partial shade in hottest climates	6-10'	6-10'	Regular/Low	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Mahonia lomarifolia</i>	Upright mahonia		Partial shade in afternoon	6-12'	6'	Regular/ Moderate	Sunset/WUCOLS R1
<i>Osmanthus fortunei</i>	Osmanthus		Full sun to afternoon shade	6-15'	6'	Occasional-Moderate/Moderate	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Rhamnus californica</i> 'Eve Case'	Coffeeberry	●	Full sun to part shade	4-8'	4-8'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Rhus integrifolia</i>	Lemonade berry	●	Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	3-10'	3-10'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Rhus ovata</i>	Sugarbush	●	Full sun to part shade/Good drainage	8-12'	8-12'	Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Rosa californica</i>	California wild rose	●	Full sun to part shade	3'	6'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> 'Tuscan Blue'	Rosemary		Full sun/Good drainage	4-6'	3-5'	None-Occasional	EBMUD
<i>Sarcococca ruscifolia</i>	Sweet box		Part to full shade	4-6'	3-7'	Occasional-Moderate/Low	EBMUD/WUCOLS R1
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i>	Westringia		Full sun/Good drainage	3-6'	5-10'	Occasional	EBMUD

Reference sources:

EBMUD: *Plants and Landscapes for Summer-Dry Climates*, May 2004, Nora Harlow (editor).

Sunset: *Sunset Western Garden Book*, Sunset Publishing Corp.

WUCOLS R1: Water Use Classifications of Landscape Species for Region 1 (No. Central Coast), University of California Cooperative

The Bay-Friendly approach to landscapes and gardens was pioneered in Alameda County by StopWaste in collaboration with home gardeners, landscape professionals and public agencies. Find out more at www.StopWaste.org.

