

**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
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hollies can survive indoors with special care. Indoor holly plants need a cool, sunny spot that is well-ventilated. When the holidays are over move the plants to a garage or sun porch. You can plant outside as soon as the ground thaws.

The holly plants we buy at Christmas time are often English holly, *Ilex equifolium*. Grown commercially in the temperate Northwest, the plants are shipped East for us to enjoy. This variety may not be hardy enough to grow outdoors in wind shipped locations.

American holly, *Ilex opaca* has the same red fruit and spiny leaf

Holly has become a traditional plant favorite for many gardeners during the holiday season. Enjoy hollies outdoor all year long. Or,

shape as its English counterpart and is much easier to grow. While the leaf surface on the American holly is not nearly as glossy as its English cousin, the American variety is native to much of the East Coast and will survive in all but the coldest parts of the state.

American hollies have an upright and somewhat loosely pyramidal shape. After a number of years they grow to about 25 feet but periodic light pruning will help keep plants smaller. When pruning, do not keep the outer layer of foliage too dense. Often shaded inner leaves drop thus weakening the vigor of the plant.

Two other hollies are worth noting. The Chinese holly "*Ilex cornuta*"—native to Eastern China and Korea, has shiny, irregular-shaped leaves that makes a bushy, dense and rounded shrub. Like the English holly, it has bright red fruit and glossy foliage. This variety grows to about eight to ten feet tall and just about as wide.

The Meserve hollies "*Ilex x Meservcae*" include cultivars like Blue Prince, Blue Princess, Blue

Angel, Blue Girl, Blue Boy and others. They are called the blue hollies because of the deep bluish-green leaves.

The Meserve hybrids are very hardy. They have red berries, the bright glossy leaf surface characteristic of their English holly parent and some of the Japanese holly leaf shape. After about 15 years some have reached 12 to 15 feet high with a width of 10 feet. They seem to be naturally pyramidal, a shape many gardeners try to force on the more open form of the American holly with pruning.

Lastly, if planting your holly outdoors, only the female plants are capable of producing red berries. It's suggested that you plant a male in among your female hollies, or plant the male hollies at the back of your property for optimum pollination. Half the reason for planting hollies is to enjoy their beautiful berries, so remember to plant both.



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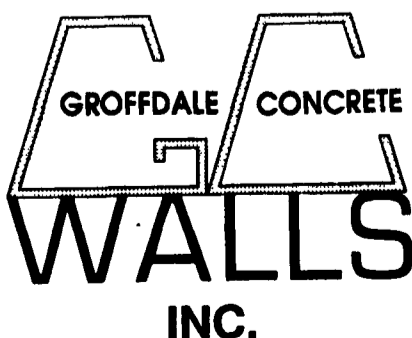
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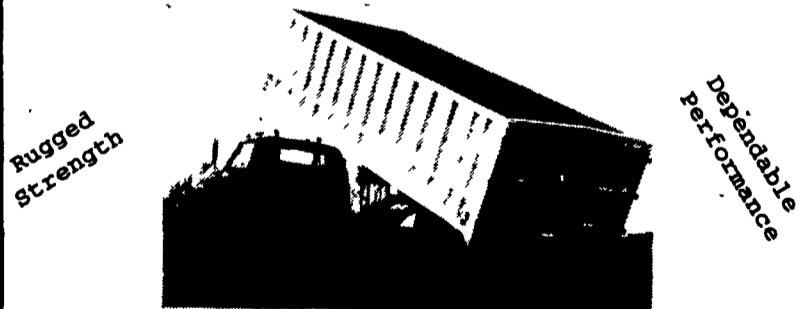


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