

# Oregon White Oak

*Quercus garryana*

Garry Oak

Native deciduous tree up to 100 feet tall throughout the Pacific Northwest. The Oregon White Oak has an open, rounded crown. Historically very common in the valley and lowland high savannah environments often in groves. The valleys have largely been cleared for agriculture and the Oregon White Oak left in windrows and property lines. It is tolerant of many soil, temperature, and moisture regimes and will be also be found in forests mixed with Douglas Fir. Absent fire, Douglas Fir will gradually overcome Oregon White Oak. Native Americans annually burned the valley floors, giving it an edge. Most older Oregon White Oaks bear the scars of these fires. Between fire and storm damage, it is rare to find a mature tree without cavities and rot pockets. These are used by a wide variety of birds and mammals as nesting sites.



## Identification

### Leaves

Deciduous, simple, deeply lobed, oblong, 3-7" long, upper surfaces shiny green but the lower surfaces are paler. One of the last trees to lose its leaves in fall.



### Bark/Wood

The mature bark is brownish gray and shallowly fissured in a checker-like pattern. The wood is pale, coarse grained, heavy, hard, and strong. Darkly stained.



### Flower/Fruit

Monoecious; flowering in early spring. Acorns mature in one year and are up to 1.5" long, ovoid, and brown. Acorn cups are thick and scaly.



### Form

Open grown trees can be very broad with a distinctly rounded crown. Those in groves are much taller and narrower. Deeply tap rooted.



### Uses

Oregon White Oak is a staple for wildlife. Squirrels, deer, and livestock eat the acorns and young shoots. Large timber trees are used for railroad ties, construction, flooring, and furniture and is sold as white oak. Preferred host of mistletoe.

### Ethnobotany

Native Americans used acorns as a food staple. Early settlers selected large trees for ship building and the wood's resistance to decay contributed to its use as fence posts.

### Native Distribution

British Columbia south to California, west of the Cascade range and below 4000 feet.

### Establishment

Seeds should be protected from predation. Transplant early due to tap root.

## Growing Conditions and Culture

Mature Size 100'Hx70'Wx6'dbh  
 USDA Zone 3-8  
 Light Requirements Part to Full Sun

Soils Diverse  
 Drought Tolerant? Yes  
 Inundation Tolerant? Yes

### Pests/Damaging Agents

Susceptible to soil compaction and disturbances as well as changes to water cycles. Crown rot and root rot not common other than where perpetually wet.

### Similar Species

### Propagation

Seed - immediately viable. Seed does not store well and often attacked by insects.

### Source(s)

Existing, ancient trees.