

# The Citrus Care Guide

Provided by Mid City Nursery

## Light and Watering Requirements:

Citrus like to be planted in a sunny location. We recommend an area with at least 6 hours of sun, preferably in the afternoon. Citrus require regular watering. They like moist, but not soggy soil conditions or locations with standing water. For young trees, water about 2 to 3 times a week during the hot summer months, giving your trees about 5 gallons of water a week. More mature trees (those that have been planted for 3 years or more) should be watered about every 7 - 14 days depending on the weather. During the winter months, the trees only need to be watered during periods when no rain has fallen for a couple of weeks. Citrus grown in containers will need more frequent watering, especially during the hot summer months. **Remember:** Timely, regular watering is essential for proper growth and fruiting of citrus.

## Fertilizing:

Citrus like to be fertilized for best growth and fruit production. Feed with a specially formulated Citrus Food, such as **EB Stone** or **Master Nursery Citrus Food**, once in the Spring, once in the early Summer, & once in the early Fall. Your Citrus Food should contain the following micro-nutrients for best results: calcium, iron, sulfur, manganese, and zinc.

Beginning in November, fertilize monthly thru February with **Master Bloom 0-10-10** or **EB Stone Ultra Bloom 0-10-10** to promote root development & blooms for the spring. Also, use an iron supplement such as **GreenAll F.S.T.** to help strengthen the plant & increase the juiciness & size of the fruit for the following season.

**Note:** Be sure not to give your Citrus high nitrogen too late in the fall. This can increase the chance of frost damage. It promotes new growth which is tender at the wrong time.



## Pruning:

The best time to prune citrus is in the Spring after last frost. Most citrus do not need major pruning. Prune to remove excessive growth or damage caused by frost.

## Common Questions and Problems:

### Fruit Drop:

Some fruit drop is normal. Usually during the first high temperatures in late Spring or early Summer a large portion of the immature fruit will fall, this is the trees way of naturally thinning itself. However, if you have continued fruit drop or fruit is dropping during other times, you may need to provide more regular watering.

### Common Insects Problems:

Some of the more common insects that bother citrus are aphids, scales, & mites. If you see a trail of ants going up your citrus, there are probably aphids or scale in your tree as well. Another indication is a sticky residue on the leaves. Most of the insects will be found on the backside of the leaves. Scale may be found along the branches as well & will look like bumps along the limbs. Scale can be white, black, or brown. Mites are hard to detect and look like tiny dots on the backside of the leaves. These insects are seen most often in the Spring & Fall, but can be a problem at any time of the year. For control of these insects, you can use **Master Nursery Pest Fighter Oil**, **Bonide Orchard Spray**, **Monterey Take Down Garden Spray**, or **Bonide Eight**. Placing **Ant Stakes** at the base of your citrus a few times a year will help eliminate ant nests in the area.

### Yellowing Leaves

Yellow leaves can be a result of several things. It could be lack of fertilizer & minerals, a watering problem, or insect damage. When diagnosing a problem, take into account how often you water, when & how often you fertilize, & when the last time you inspected your tree for insects. If the older leaves are turning yellow & the other leaves are a pale green, then you may need to add nitrogen. If the leaves are yellowing, but the veins on the leaves are green, then your citrus most likely needs iron. If the outer leaves are yellowing & some of the branches are dying back, the citrus may be getting too much water. Inspect the soil to see how moist the soil is. Leaves that are being damaged by insects will also turn yellow.

