



# Trademark Usage & Guidelines

Trademarking plant names helps protect the hard work of our breeders and makes it easy for consumers and landscapers to purchase the plants they want. The trademarking process is time-consuming and costly, and using trademarked plant names in accordance with the guidelines set out by the United States Patent and Trademark Office is the best way to preserve the value of these marks. Here are the basic rules you should follow when writing about trademarked plants:

## Trademarks should include the ™ or ® symbol.

Ideally, include the ™ or ® throughout all printed and on-line material, but at a minimum these must be included at the first and/or most prominent use of the mark in the document:

BLACK LACE™ *Sambucus*  
SUGAR TIP® rose of Sharon

In most text programs (i.e., Microsoft Word), these symbols are created automatically by enclosing TM or R in parentheses. Alternatively, press and hold the Alt/Option key while typing 0174 (pc) or R (Mac) for ® and 0153 (pc) or 2 (Mac) for ™.

## Never misrepresent trademarks as cultivars or varieties by placing them within single quotation marks.

Double quotation marks are also incorrect:

Incorrect: 'Sugar Tip', 'Sugar Tip®', "SUGAR TIP", "SUGAR TIP®"

Whenever possible, type the trademark name in uppercase or in a different font than you are using for the cultivar, botanical, or common name. Do not, however, use Italics, which denote a botanical name:

Correct: BLACK LACE™ *Sambucus*, **Black Lace**™ elderberry , Black Lace™ elderberry  
Incorrect: *Black Lace*™ *Sambucus*

## Trademark names are adjectives. They should not be used as nouns or verbs.\*

Trademarks are adjectives that modify a generic noun. Properly using a trademark name as an adjective is simple -- just follow the trademark (the adjective) with the name of the product (the noun). A good test for proper usage is to check if the sentence would still be meaningful even if the trademark name were to be removed:

Correct: Buy ARCTIC SUN™ dogwood for unusual winter color.  
Incorrect: Buy ARCTIC SUN™ for unusual winter color.  
Correct: Use FINE LINE® buckthorn as a hedge.  
Incorrect: Use FINE LINE® as a hedge.

## Do not use marks in the plural.\*

Because trademarks are not nouns, they may not be made plural to express the concept of more than one plant.

Correct: Buy two LITTLE LIME® hydrangeas.  
Incorrect: Take some LITTLE LIMES® to the truck.  
Incorrect: Buy two LITTLE LIMES®.

Note, however, that trademarked terms that end with "s" such as PURPLE PEARLS® beautyberry or WINE & ROSES® weigela are unaffected as the legal mark itself is plural.

\*It is not always possible or practical to comply with these last two guidelines and still preserve a readable, informative document, but it should be at least attempted in every case.



## General botanical name usage guidelines

1. When using a plant's scientific name, it should appear completely in italics, with the first letter of the genus name capitalized and the specific epithet in lower case.

Correct: *Cornus stolonifera*, *Spiraea japonica*

2. If citing a hybrid species, the x indicating the cross should also appear in italics.

Correct: *Abelia x grandiflora*, *Ceanothus x pallidus*

3. If the specific epithet is unknown, or the plant is of mixed but unknown lineage, the abbreviation "sp." for species can be used. It should not, however, appear in italics.

Correct: *Rosa* sp., *Rhododendron* sp., *Chamaecyparis* sp.

4. When referring to a genus multiple times within a single context, it is permissible to abbreviate subsequent mentions of the genus using only its first letter.

Correct: Examples of popular lilacs include common lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), late lilac (*S. villosa*), and Japanese tree lilac (*S. reticulata*).

5. Cultivars are designated through the use of single quotation marks; each word in a cultivar name should begin with a capital letter. Cultivars should never appear in italics.

Correct: *Clematis* 'Sweet Summer Love'

Incorrect: *Clematis* 'sweet summer love', *Clematis* 'Sweet Summer Love'

6. If using a cultivar with a botanical name, it should follow it; with a common name, the cultivar should precede it.

Correct: *Calycanthus* 'Aphrodite', 'Aphrodite' sweetshrub

Incorrect: 'Aphrodite' *Calycanthus*, sweetshrub 'Aphrodite'

7. Common names are governed only by the rules of English grammar. Capitalization is not necessary except when the common name begins a sentence or contains a proper noun. Do not use quotation marks or different fonts with common names.

Correct: winterberry holly, sweet autumn clematis, Virginia creeper, rose of Sharon



*Calycanthus* 'Aphrodite'  
and *Clematis* 'Sweet  
Summer Love'

Should you ever have any questions about how to properly cite any of our plants, the Spring Meadow Nursery website is the best reference: [www.SpringMeadowNursery.com](http://www.SpringMeadowNursery.com). You are also welcome to contact our marketing department for assistance during business hours:

Jane Beggs-Joles  
Shannon Downey  
Stacey Hirvela  
Mark Osgerby

[jane@springmeadownursery.com](mailto:jane@springmeadownursery.com)  
[shannon@springmeadownursery.com](mailto:shannon@springmeadownursery.com)  
[stacey@springmeadownursery.com](mailto:stacey@springmeadownursery.com)  
[mark@springmeadownursery.com](mailto:mark@springmeadownursery.com)

616-223-3369  
616-223-3368  
616-223-3375  
616-223-3366

We thank you for all you do to generate enthusiasm about our plants and for being a reliable source for both garden centers and home gardeners. Your continued assistance in preserving the integrity and value of our trademarked plant names is a crucial part of everyone's success!