

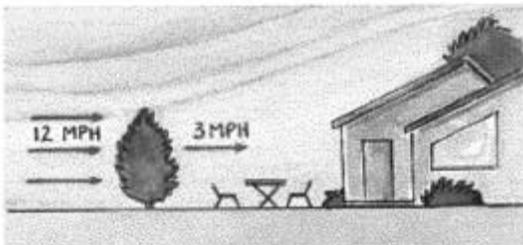
Unique Garden Centre

WINDBREAKS

What Does A Windbreak Do For You?

As most of us know, it can get very windy here. In the summer, the winds dry the soil, break branches and can even cause damage to buildings. In the winter, we have the wind chill factor that can make an average winter day unbearable. The winds wreak havoc in winter with increased heat loss from buildings, by blowing away snow cover on plants and drying out evergreens.

Hedges and windbreaks can make a huge difference in the enjoyment of your yard. A well planned windbreak will help reduce moisture loss, help trap snow in winter, protect buildings and provide greater enjoyment of your yard both summer and winter.

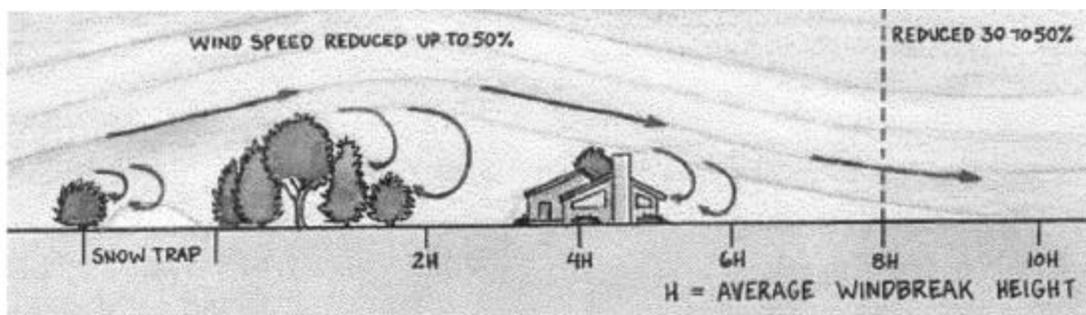


When protected by a hedge, a wind speed of 12mph (20 kph) can be reduced to 3 mph (5 kph). Some of the wind will be directed up and over the area, making an afternoon on this patio much more comfortable.

How To Design An Effective Windbreak

A windbreak is more than a single hedge and there is more to planning a windbreak than simply planting rows of trees. First of all you will need to determine the direction of the prevailing winter winds. Often they come out of the north or northwest, so you would want protection on those sides of your home. If you live in a more exposed area such as an acreage or farm, you know that storms can come from any direction and a complete shelterbelt is desirable.

In the example below, the small hedge on the outside traps snow to save on shoveling close to the house. Notice that it's placed away from the main windbreak. If the hedge were closer to the windbreak trees, the wind would lift the snow up and over, dumping it closer to the house. The taller shelterbelt trees protect the yard by taming and redirecting winds. Note the wind patterns that follow the trees. Some of the wind curls over the top of the trees and the rest is lifted over the house roof, creating a calm zone. As it continues on, the wind falls back to the ground. But even at a distance of eight times the average height of windbreak, the wind speed is still reduced up to 50%. As an example, 240 feet away from a tree belt height of 30 feet, a 20mph wind can be reduced to 10mph.



As you can see,

additional trees around the rest of this yard would keep a major portion of the wind elevated keeping the interior of the yard calmer and more enjoyable.

For The Best Shelterbelt Design

- Keep shelterbelt trees 100 feet from roadways and main buildings.
- Plant 2 to 5 rows, depending on space. If limited to 2 rows, plant row 1 & 5. (see diagram above)
- Plant at recommended spacing between rows for proper wind control and health of trees.
- Poplar trees are fast growing, but short lived on the prairies. When using them for shelterbelts plant them outside the shrub row for early protection and to facilitate removal of dead trees.
- Recommended trees and shrubs for shelterbelts on the prairies include Hawthorn, Silver buffaloberry, Caragana, Chokecherry, Sea buckthorn, Common lilac, Burr Oak, Green Ash, Manitoba Maple, Poplar, Acute Willow, Colorado & White Spruce, Scots Pine, Siberian larch.

