



**City Fruit** provides info about fruit trees at [www.cityfruit.org](http://www.cityfruit.org) and has trained volunteers who are willing to help with residential fruit trees. Contact [info@cityfruit.org](mailto:info@cityfruit.org)

**Finding a pollinator for your fruit tree requires a little research.** Early blooming trees can pollinate each other, and mid- and late-blooming trees can pollinate each other. Early and late-blooming trees can't pollinate each other because their bloom times are too far apart.

The Raintree Nursery catalog provides charts showing which varieties can pollinate each other for each type of fruit.

In most cases, pollinating fruit trees requires at least two trees, and they should be different varieties, as discussed below. The trees should be within about 50 feet of each other, because pollen is too heavy and sticky for the wind to carry, leaving bees to do the job.

### Self-fruitful (or self-fertile) trees vs. cross-pollination

In order to ensure that your fruit tree is pollinated, choose a self-fruitful variety or be sure that there is another compatible tree nearby (a pollinator that blooms when your tree blooms).

**Self-fruitful (self-fertile)** trees are those that produce fruit with their own pollen or with pollen from the same cultivar (cultivated variety). Self-fruitful trees don't necessarily require another tree for pollination, although they may produce better if there is more than one tree in the area.

**Cross-Pollination** is required for most fruit trees: that is, they need pollen from another tree, which must be a different cultivar. Triploids are cultivars that will not pollinate other varieties—or themselves: they must be pollinated by another variety.

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**Apples** don't pollinate themselves. You must have two different varieties. In addition, apples don't pollinate other fruits. The following apple varieties are triploids—that is, they don't pollinate any other apples: Gravenstein, Jonagold, Red Boskoop, Shizuka, Karmijn, King and Bramley.

**European Pears** need a pollinator. Because pear blossoms are relatively unattractive to bees, plant pear trees near each other to promote pollination.

**Asian Pears** of all varieties are good pollinators, but each tree needs to be pollinated by a different variety. Asian pears bloom before European pears, but late-blooming Asian pears may pollinate early-blooming European pears. The Shinseiki may be partly self-fertile.

**European Plums** that are self-fruitful (self-fertile): Golden Transparent Gage, Purple Gage (partially), Cambridge Gage (partially), Italian Prune, Longjohn (partially), and Stanley.

**Japanese Plums** that are self-fertile: Hollywood, Methley, Shiro (*partially*).

**Sweet Cherries** that are self-fertile: Black Gold, Lapins, Sweetheart, Vandalay.

**Tart Cherries** that are self-fertile: Almaden Duke, English Morello, Montmorency, and Surefire.

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**This article is based on the following sources:**

*Pollination is Essential in Home Orchard*, by B. Rosie Lerner of the Purdue Extension  
*Raintree Nursery Catalog*