



Streamsides
Trees

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR BONSAI

THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME

I hope you enjoyed your recent visit to Streamsides Trees and are pleased with your new creation which you can nurture for many years.

Bonsai are famous for being difficult to look after, so here is some guidance to help based on my own experience. I'm afraid I cannot guarantee success, though!

During the process of creating a bonsai, the tree is 'stressed' and may well sulk for a few weeks. Don't panic! Although you can always contact me if you have any concerns. I would also love to hear how you are getting on and see photos of your progress.

Julia

POSITION

All of the trees I use are hardy to the British weather and can be kept outside throughout the year. They prefer a shady spot, as strong sunlight may burn areas which had previously been covered by leaves or needles.

They are all quite young trees which should survive a British Winter or frosty conditions, however if the weather is exceptionally cold you could bring the tree indoors temporarily.

Deciduous trees will lose their leaves in Autumn! But you can look forward to leaf buds appearing in Spring. Some may have flowers or fruit in future years which grow at full size regardless of how small the tree is.

WATERING AND FEEDING

Keep the soil/ compost reasonably damp at all times. As the pot is small, this may mean watering twice a day in hot, dry or windy conditions.

Do not feed for the first month as the roots need to get used to new surroundings. Personally I would only feed once or twice in the Summer.

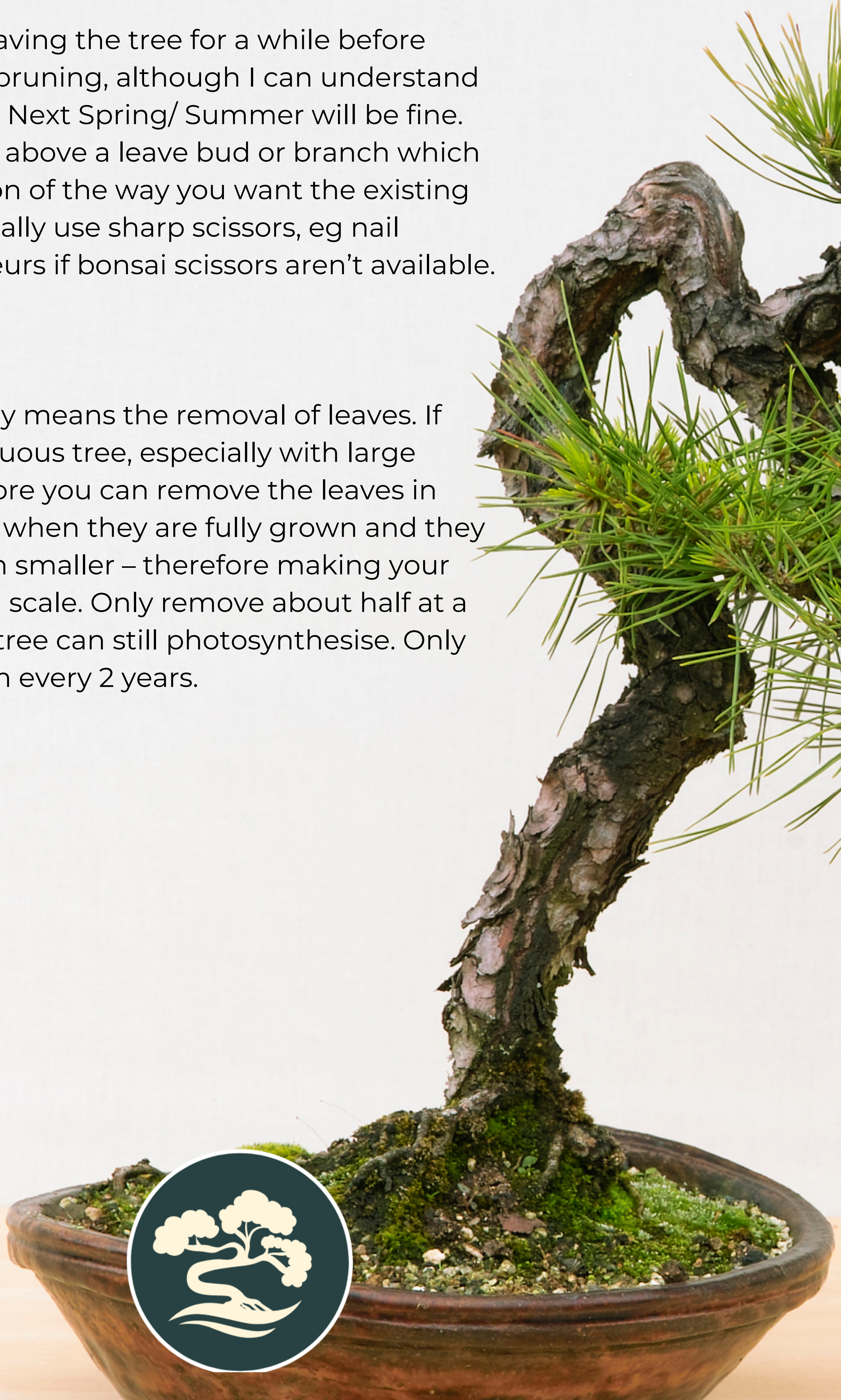
There is no need to buy expensive 'bonsai food', normal diluted liquid plant food is fine.



PRUNING AND DEFOLIATION

I recommend leaving the tree for a while before doing any more pruning, although I can understand your temptation! Next Spring/ Summer will be fine. Cut immediately above a leaf bud or branch which faces the direction of the way you want the existing branch to go. Ideally use sharp scissors, eg nail scissors or secateurs if bonsai scissors aren't available.

Defoliation simply means the removal of leaves. If you have a deciduous tree, especially with large leaves eg sycamore you can remove the leaves in Spring/ Summer when they are fully grown and they will regrow much smaller – therefore making your tree look more in scale. Only remove about half at a time so that the tree can still photosynthesise. Only do this maximum every 2 years.



REMOVING THE WIRE AND REPOTTING.

I recommend leaving on the wire for a year – however if you can see it cutting too much into the bark, it may be worth removing it. If the tree is holding the shape you want, then you don't need to rewire. Or, you can rewire and leave it a bit longer.

Typically bonsai enthusiasts repot in Spring, it's best not to disturb the roots in the Winter months.

You can use the same pot – or buy a ceramic one of any shape.

Remember that you have tied in the roots and once un-potted, you can then gently trim some of the roots to fit the new pot.

I use a normal potting compost with formite and vermiculite to make it a bit grittier to help with the drainage. Note - there are numerous opinions on this and beware of costly 'bonsai compost' which is unnecessary.



PESTS AND DISEASES

I'm afraid these happen and they are difficult to prevent. If possible, display your tree so that it's not touching any other.

There are all sorts of products you could use – or I simply remove the affected leaves.

OTHER INFORMATION

Any internet search will answer your question - there are many experts out there! My favourite by far is Peter Chan from Heron's Bonsai, he has many YouTube videos on pretty much every topic.

Pots, wire and equipment can be bought from Amazon or any Bonsai shop online. Again Heron's Bonsai has the best selection, and the nursery in Lingfield (near Gatwick) is really worth a trip.

Julia Griffin

Streamside Trees, 43a Basingbourne Road, Fleet Hampshire GU52
6TG Email: streamsidetrees@gmail.com
Facebook: Streamside Trees
Instagram: [streamside_trees](https://www.instagram.com/streamside_trees)

