

## 1- SEEDLING

- Elm
- maple
- LARCH



one or two year old cuttings or seedlings are perfect for starting these projects. I used a 1 yr old cutting from WFC that cost me \$4.00. I look for species that grow very quickly that's why I listed the cuttings to the left. Although many species will work well.

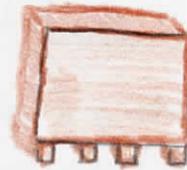
## 5- prepare tree & rock



tree



rock



Growbox

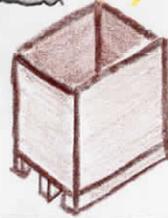
Now your tree has matured a bit. your trunk has thickened. You have a suitable rock for the style you wish to create. Build or buy a grow box container. Make sure it's large enough to hold the tree & rock.

## 2- Grow Grow box inground



take your seed/cuttings and plant them in a larger container. Spread the roots and clean up any crossing or odd structures. Allow the tree to grow freely for a year or two. - No pruning.

## 6-



IN EARLY spring - remove the tree from its container. Clean the roots and position it on your rock. Take your time and try to make this look as natural and flowing as possible. Once you have this set - take some raffia, nurseryman's tape, burlap, twine, etc. and secure the tree to the rock. Make sure to pull the roots down and secure them along the rock. Place the rock & tree in your box - and add your growing soil.

## 3- Style & Planting

- Broom
- formal
- informal
- cascade

Now that you have your tree growing in a large pot or grow box. Examine it. Determine what your tree will be. What style do you see developing?

## 7- Grow (again)



Spring has sprung and your tree is awake! you water, feed, and feed some more. At this point in the process you want as much growth as possible both above and below the soil. As unsightly as the grow out periods can be, you must refrain from pruning. All the ugly, long internodes & huge leaves will be corrected soon - "relatively".

## 4- Rock & planting

- tray
- over
- through
- deep wrap



While the tree grows... hunt for rocks that may suit your tree and the style you envision. Keep in mind, you probably will change your mind several times.

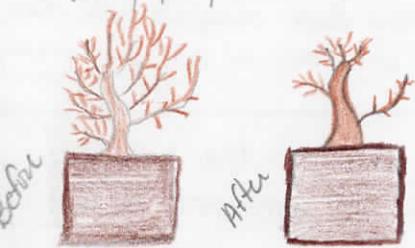
## 8- Adjustments

So after the season winds down and you are preparing for spring (for me this is end of Jan). Gently lift your tree. Examine the roots & the bindings with extreme caution. Do not trim the roots; but reposition the ones that need it. Re-attach the tree similarly to step 6. and prepare for another season of growth.

## 9- Development

Once steps 6-8 have been completed to your liking - i.e. your trunk thickness & taper are satisfactory. Then you need to take your design principals and apply them to your tree. For the sake of this demonstration, I am going to reference my Chinese Elm.

### A.- Define the line (early spring before bud break)



### B- Initial Style (early spring before bud break)



## 10 - Soil removal

Now we have basic shape, lines and pool development started. Next the soil needs to be removed. Now depending on your tree design & rock size. This may/may not be done quickly. For my example I have a deep root over rock & my roots have a long distance to grow. These trees will possibly take a couple years to remove the soil properly. Start inch by inch over the course of the growing season. Do not rush this. All your work could be for naught!

## 11- refinement

Soil is removed, branches are developing a pot has been chosen. Now it comes together. Repot your tree. Be careful not to do too much to your root structure. Also be mindful to keep your soil/medium adequate to hold moisture



Larch - Masculine meets feminine. Cold hardy tree which makes great bonsai in various styles. These trees can be manipulated into crazy shapes. Pruning & wiring need to be well planned & executed due to limited bud production annually. Branches grow from two years or older bud growth. Pruning induces ramification, proper fertilization & sun exposure are also important.

## 12- Maintenance

This can often times be the most challenging thing to do for bonsai artists. Keeping a tree in "show" state is not realistic nor healthy for most species.

Elms - These trees are probably the easiest to maintain. They grow quickly, they tolerate heavy pruning. They respond well to wire. They bounce back from drought & neglect. Clip & grow technique are simple & effective. Structural pruning is easy.

Maples - Hardy tree with grace & feminine beauty. Quick grower. Responds well to wire training. Pruning needs to be thought out. Heavy branches & growth needs to be removed to keep growth compact & tidy. Growth habits lend well to "restoring" if branches become unkempt. Defoliation and clip & grow techniques work well.