



Supplies & Resources



SUPPLIES

- Wire in several gauges, either aluminum or copper (preferably annealed).
- Wire cutters (bonsai wire cutters are easier to use and make a neater job than domestic wire cutters)
- Sharp scissors
- A few well-forked (ramified) branches cut from a garden shrub for practice purposes.
- For work with broadleaved species, you'll need anodized aluminum wire in a range of sizes from 4 mm down to 1 mm (the larger 5 mm and 6 mm wires are rarely used).
- For work on conifers, copper wire is best, but it must be heat annealed. (Electrical annealing does not soften the wire enough). The range from 8-gauge to 20-gauge will do. For heavy branches you may need 6-gauge, and for really fine work you may want 22-gauge. If you can't find a good supplier of annealed copper wire for bonsai, you can gather a variety of sizes of scrap telephone and electrical wire and anneal it yourself.

FOR PRACTICE

Rather than begin with a complex live tree, I recommend cutting a few small branches from a garden shrub — juniper, yew, pine — something that is twiggy and reasonably flexible. You can wire and re-wire these as many times as you like without running the risk of damaging a valuable plant.

Don't get disheartened if your first attempts don't work out too well. Wiring is like riding a bicycle: when you start to learn, you fall off every time and it seems as if you'll never get the hang of it. Then, almost suddenly, you get it, and from then on it becomes second nature — a skill you will never lose.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Colin's website — colinlewisbonsai.com
- Kaizen Bonsai — kaizenbonsai.com
 - Great online tool store

BOOKS

- *Growing & Displaying Bonsai* by Colin Lewis & Neil Sutherland (Sterling, 2002)
- *Bonsai Survival Manual* by Colin Lewis (Apple Press, 2003)
- *The Complete Practical Encyclopedia of Bonsai* by Ken Norman (Anness, 2009)
- *The Complete Book of Bonsai* by Harry Tomlinson (Abbeville Press, 1991)
- *Bonsai Handbook* by David Prescott (New Holland, 2003)

The National Bonsai & Penjing Museum's North American Pavilion located at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington DC was dedicated on October 1, 1990. Named after bonsai master John Y. Naka the North American collection is intended to reflect the diversity of North American Bonsai in species, styles, containers, artists and artistic philosophies.