

## Fine Vines

Vines can be wonderful garden features, especially if you first consider the twists and tangles of how and where to use these understated garden treasures.

**I. Take a great vine** (Any from the list below!)

**II. Learn what's good about it, to know if it fits *your* needs. For instance:**

- If it can grow to 30 feet or more... do you have a barn to cover?
- How does it attach itself to a supporting object? If it is not self-sticking but twines, it will probably not be suitable for a stone wall.
- If it is manageable in size and mannerly in its growth... that suits a small trellis or arbor and a gardener with limited time for pruning.

**III. Seek at least one good tip from those who've grown it. For instance:**

Variegated kiwi vine leaves can be dramatically colored in green, white and pink, so no need for flower! Yet in USDA hardiness zone 5 grow it where it has some protection from spring frosts, or it will likely have all-green foliage.

[www.clematis.com](http://www.clematis.com) - Great all-vine website, use home page's "encyclopedia" tab

**IV. Grow it where it will thrive, not simply survive.**

"Part sun" (a.k.a. "part shade") means 4 to 6 hours SUN per day.

Most vines in their natural settings become established and look their best when they have their feet in an understory, in soil made rich from leaf litter of trees.

**IV. Today's line-up:**

(\* = hardy perennial in USDA zone 5; others do not survive local winter)

A. \***Clematis** - *Clematis* species and hybrids

1. What's best about it:

Large flowers, and most of these vines are manageable in size

2. A tip I consider valuable toward growing it:

*NOT* for full shade; prune at least a little every year

B. \***Porcelain vine** - *Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*:

1. What's best about it:

Variegated 'Elegans': Subtly elegant foliage. All: berries an engaging surprise

2. A tip:

Grown overhead, expect berries to fall! May be invasive.

C. \***Climbing hydrangea** - *Hydrangea anomala petiolaris*:

1. What's best:

Even in winter, beautiful (for cinnamon bark and clean lines)

2. A tip:  
What scrambles along the ground can delay the whole vine's bloom
- D. **\*Chocolate vine/Five leaf akebia** - *Akebia quinata*:
1. What's best:  
Good in shade, intriguing maroon, dangling flowers
  2. A tip:  
Can be invasive, escape into nearby woods
- E. **\*Honeysuckle vine** - Hall's or Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica* Hallsiana) and Goldflame honeysuckle (*L. x heckrottii* and *L. brownii*)
1. What's best:  
Long bloom time; manageable size vine
  2. A tip:  
Prone to mildew so don't tuck them in air flow dead zones
- F. **\*Trumpet vine, trumpet creeper** - *Campsis radicans*:
1. What's best:  
Big bright midsummer flowers; hummingbirds and orioles
  2. A tip:  
So big, such suckers! So grow it surrounded by mowed lawn.
- G. **\*Dutchman's pipe** - *Aristolochia durior*:
1. What's best:  
Lushness: Quickly creates deep, cool shade
  2. A tip:  
If caterpillars eat the leaves, make a toast for pipevine swallowtail
- H. **\*Wisteria** - *Wisteria chinensis*, *W. floribunda*:
1. What's best:  
Purple bloom, romantic. Japanese *W. floribunda* more fragrant.
  2. A tip:  
Prune hard March and July for best floral show and size control;  
don't let it twine or grow it on small trellises/supports
- I. **\*Bittersweet** - *Celastrus scandens*:
1. What's best: Fall explosion of orange berries
  2. A tip: Buy male and female; don't let it twine around living wood
- J. **\*Boston ivy** - *Parthenocissus tricuspidata*:
1. What's best:  
Fall color - wow! And berries for birds (grape relative)
  2. A tip:  
Be aware it is self-attaching, can damage or mar wood/aluminum

**K. Morning glory - *Ipomoea tricolor*:**

1. What's best: Big flowers in cool colors

2. A tip:

Simply cannot bloom well if nights are lit or much over 70 degrees.

**L. Blackeye Susan vine - *Thunbergia alata*:**

1. What's best: Fast growth, bright flower

2. A tip:

Don't let it become a heap, give it supports to drape leaf stems over

**M. Mandevilla (Dipladenia) - *Mandevilla x amabilis*:**

1. What's best: Big, tropical-look pink flowers

2. A tip:

Jungle native needs steady moisture, never dry, and heavy fertilizer

**N. Moon flower vine - *Ipomoea alba*:**

1. What's best:

Dramatic big, white fragrant flowers (open in p.m.)

2. A tip:

Jungle native: Grow it rich, moist and hot. Rinse leaf undersides every few days (mites).

**O. Passion flower vine - *Passiflora* species:**

1. What's best: Fascinating, intricate flowers

2. A tip:

Don't believe it's hardy here; may survive but bloom never great

**P. Hardy kiwi vine - *Actinidia kolomikta*:**

1. What's best: Variegated white-and-pink leaves. Fragrant flowers.

2. A tip:

Variegated leaves occur on mature wood. If foliage killed by spring frost, 2nd growth leaves will be green, so protect from late frost.

**Q. Your garden center staff has great taste in plants - but no one carries it all:**

So of course there are always others: \_\_\_\_\_

hyacinth bean a.k.a. Lablab vine (*Dolichos lablab*)

cup-and-saucer vine (*Cobaea scandens*)

canary creeper (*Tropaeolum peregrinum*)

\*hardy kiwi vine (*Actinidia kolomikta*)

\*silver lace vine (*Polygonum aubertii*)

\*euonymus (*Euonymus fortunei* varieties)

\*Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)]