

your garden needs...



...Abutilon

Species: *Abutilon hybridum*

Family: Malvaceae

Common names: Flowering maple, Chinese bellflower

Height: 100cm (40 inches) but variable

Grow as: annual, or conservatory plant

Flowering period: June to September

Use packetseeds.com flowering maple mixture for pots and containers.

Abutilon hybridum includes many hybrids of abutilon species with flowers varying from white to shades of yellow, orange and red. It is a tender perennial and can be grown through the winter if protected from frost. Best suited to pot and container growing.

Growing: Do not allow plants to dry out - leaves will drop off if plants wilt. Plants are tender and will not survive exposure to frost, so place outside after risk of frost has passed. Flowers can be up to 8cm (3 inches) across.

Grow in pots or containers outside in a sunny position, **or**

Use in a flower bed in a sunny, sheltered position with well-prepared soil, **or**

Grow indoors as a conservatory plant. Shape and control the plant by pruning in autumn and again in the early spring before new seasons growth starts.

Sowing: Sow March to April. Germinate at 22–24°C (72–75°F), seedlings should emerge quickly. Seed should be covered. Prick out as soon as large enough and grow on ideally at 15–18°C (60–65°F). Pot on as needed. Moderate fertilizer needs. Pinch at the 10 leaf stage to encourage branching.

The genus *Abutilon* is a genus of numerous species composed of deciduous, tender shrubs and trees which belong chiefly to the tropical regions of the Old and the New World. They have handsome foliage and attractive large flowers.

The origin of *A. hybridum* is unknown, but includes a variable complex of species with *A. striatum*, *A. darwinii* and others. The leaves may be unlobed but can be three- or occasionally five-lobed. The margins are serrate to dentate and the leaves may be smooth or softly hairy underneath. The drooping bell-shaped flowers are held in axillary flower stems. The coloured blooms are often obviously veined. In some plants, the sepals are darker than the petals and add an extra ornamental aspect.



