



## RHS Level 3 Certificate Principles of Garden Planning, Construction, and Planting

### 4: Specialist Elements in the Establishment of Garden and Urban Plantings

Courses for  
Royal  
Horticultural  
Society  
Qualifications

Outcome 3.1 Describe the use of pruning to produce decorative forms of ornamental trees and shrubs, including pleaching.

**Pleaching** is the art of training trees into a raised hedge (**stilt hedge**). Normally, deciduous trees are planted in lines, then shaped to form a flat plane above the ground level. Branches are woven together and due to a natural phenomenon (inosculation) the trees will grow together to form a rigid barrier.

Pleached trees are a great idea for creating privacy from surrounding buildings. Most pleached trees have a 1.8m clear stem, a frame on top of 1m high and a width of anywhere between 1.2m to 2.5m. Once wired together the trees can be clipped to keep their shape. These are perfect for high screening where room is limited as the trees can be planted close to the boundary.





Tabletop forms used for shading, e.g. outside cafes and for other seating areas.

The natural grafting (inosculation) involved in pleaching can also be used to produce decorative forms:

