

Apple Tree Pollination Guide

Based on our 2026 Apple Selection

Apple trees require **cross-pollination** to produce fruit. This means most apple varieties need a **different apple variety blooming at the same time** nearby for successful pollination.

Good news: with the wide range of apples we carry, pollination is usually easy to achieve in Pacific Northwest gardens.

The Basics of Apple Pollination

- Most apple trees **cannot pollinate themselves**
 - Two compatible varieties must bloom **at the same time**
 - Bees and other insects transfer pollen between trees
 - Crabapples are excellent pollinators for standard apples
 - Combination (multi-grafted) apple trees are **already pollination-ready**
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Bloom Timing Groups

(Based on typical PNW bloom overlap)

Early Blooming Apples

These bloom first in spring and pollinate best with other early or mid-season apples.

- Akane
- Gravenstein
- Red Gravenstein

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- Summerred
- Sunrise
- Sunrise Magic
- Williams Pride
- Yellow Transparent
- Zestar

Good pollination partners:

Other early apples or crabapples such as Dolgo or Whitney.

Mid-Season Blooming Apples

This is the largest group and the easiest for pollination.

- Ashmead's Kernel
- Belle de Boskoop
- Blushing Delight
- Chehalis
- Cox's Orange Pippin
- Honeycrisp
- Hudson's Golden Gem
- Jonagold
- Liberty
- Macoun
- Snowsweet

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- Spartan
- Tasty Red

Good pollination partners:

Most early or mid-season apples, crabapples, or another apple nearby in bloom.

Late Blooming Apples

These bloom later and should be paired with mid- to late-season varieties.

- Cosmic Crisp
- King
- Melrose
- Spitzenburg

Good pollination partners:

Mid-season apples such as Honeycrisp, Liberty, or crabapples.

Crabapples as Pollinators

Crabapples are **exceptional pollinators** and can pollinate nearly all apple varieties.

Crabapples in our selection:

- Centennial
- Dolgo
- Whitney

Why crabapples work so well:

- Long bloom period

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- Heavy flower production
- Highly attractive to pollinators

A single crabapple can pollinate **multiple apple trees** within range.

Columnar Apples and Pollination

Columnar apples pollinate like standard apples and **still need a partner**.

Columnar varieties offered:

- Gold Sentinel
- Northpole
- Scarlet Sentinel
- Tangy Green

Tip:

Plant two different columnar varieties together or pair with a nearby standard apple.

Combination Apple Trees

Combination apple trees already contain **multiple compatible varieties grafted onto one tree**, making them ideal for small gardens.

Apple combinations in our list include:

- Apple Combo 1
- Apple Combo 2

No additional pollinator needed, though yields may increase if another apple or crabapple is nearby.

How Close Do Trees Need to Be?

- Ideally within **50–100 feet**
 - Even closer is better in small gardens
 - Neighboring apple trees often count
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Easy Pollination Advice for New Gardeners

- Plant **two different apple varieties**
 - Choose varieties with **overlapping bloom times**
 - Include a crabapple if space allows
 - If space is limited, choose a **combination apple tree**
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Common Pollination Questions

Will one apple tree produce fruit?

Usually no — most apples require a second variety.

Can my neighbor's apple tree pollinate mine?

Yes, if it blooms at the same time and is nearby.

Do I need bees?

Yes — avoid spraying during bloom and plant pollinator-friendly plants nearby.