

## Ferns for acid soils

### British native ferns

<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard fern
<i>Cryptogramma crispa</i>	Parsley fern

### Foreign ferns

<i>Blechnum chilense</i>	Chilean hard fern*
<i>Blechnum penna-marina</i>	Little hard fern
<i>Polypodium scolopendri</i>	Leathery polypody*
<i>Woodwardia virginica</i>	Virginia chain fern

## Ferns that will tolerate acidic and neutral soils

### British native ferns

<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady fern, plus many cultivars
<i>Dryopteris</i> species	Male ferns and Buckler ferns
<i>Gymnocarpium dryopteris</i>	Oak fern
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	Royal fern
<i>Phegopteris connectilis</i>	Beech fern
<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	Common polypody

### Foreign ferns

<i>Athyrium niponicum</i> 'Pictum'	Japanese painted fern
<i>Polystichums</i> e.g. <i>tsus-simense</i>	Tsus-sima holly fern

### Further reading

Ferns. Wisley Handbooks	Martin Rickard	RHS
Gardening with Ferns	Martin Rickard	David and Charles
Encyclopedia of Garden Ferns	Sue Olsen	Timber Press
Fern Grower's Manual	Hoshizaki & Moran	Timber Press
BPS website:	www.eBPS.org.uk	Nov 2011



## British Pteridological Society

Ferns for different garden conditions

All the ferns mentioned here are hardy in most places in the British Isles. Those marked with an asterisk (\*) will need winter protection in the very coldest areas. Most ferns also need protection from strong winds.

## Ferns for wettish conditions

Most ferns prefer to have moist but well-drained sites. A few can tolerate very wet sites.

### British natives for wet sites

<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady fern, plus many cultivars
<i>Dryopteris cristata</i>	Crested buckler fern
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	Royal fern, plus cultivars
<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>	Marsh fern

### British natives for moderately wet sites

<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard fern
<i>Gymnocarpium dryopteris</i>	Oak fern
<i>Phegopteris connectilis</i>	Beech fern

### Foreign ferns for wettish sites

<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>	Ostrich fern
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Sensitive fern
<i>Woodwardia fimbriata</i>	Giant chain fern*

## Ferns for dryish places

All ferns need some moisture, but a number will grow in dryish shade, and some will tolerate a sunny aspect if they are not too dry. Clay soils will retain moisture better than sandy or peaty soils. Most of these ferns will also thrive in wetter but not waterlogged situations.

### British native ferns for dryish places

<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	Hart's tongue and cultivars
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly male fern and cultivars
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Broad buckler fern
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male fern and cultivars
<i>Polypodium</i> species	Polypody. Many cultivars available
<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Hard shield fern
<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	Soft shield fern. Many cultivars available.

### Foreign ferns for dryish places

<i>Adiantum aleuticum</i>	Aleutian maidenhair - needs protection from wind
<i>Adiantum venustum</i>	Himalayan maidenhair
<i>Cyrtomium fortunei</i>	Fortune's holly fern
<i>Dryopteris cycadina</i>	Shaggy wood fern
<i>Dryopteris erythrosora</i>	Autumn fern
<i>Dryopteris sieboldii</i>	Siebold's wood fern
<i>Dryopteris wallichiana</i>	Wallich's wood fern
<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas fern
<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	Western sword fern

## Ferns for sunny places

Most ferns prefer to have some shade, at least from mid-day sun, but the following will grow in open, sunny positions as long as their roots do not dry out.

### British native ferns

<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady fern and cultivars
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly male fern and cultivars
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male fern and cultivars
<i>Polypodium</i> species	Polypody

### Foreign ferns

<i>Cheilanthes lanosa</i>	Hairy lip fern – hardy, needs good drainage, protect from winter wet
<i>Dryopteris erythrosora</i>	Autumn fern
<i>Polystichum polyblepharum</i>	Tassel fern

## Soil pH

Some ferns seem to tolerate a range of soil pH (acid or alkaline) e.g. many *Adiantums*, *Cyrtomium*, and many *Dryopteris*, but some will only do well in one soil type, either basic or acidic.

## Ferns for basic or limestone soils

### British native ferns

<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	Hart's tongue plus cultivars
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>	Maidenhair spleenwort
<i>Cystopteris fragilis</i>	Brittle bladder fern
<i>Gymnocarpium robertianum</i>	Limestone oak fern
<i>Polypodium cambricum</i>	Southern polypody
<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Hard shield fern