



European Pear *Pyrus communis*

European pears should be planted in full sun with well-drained soil. They should be harvested when still firm, as they will continue to ripen at room temperature or in the refrigerator after picking. *Allowing pears to fully ripen on the tree can result in gritty texture and poor flavor* (Iowa State University Extension and Outreach). To check for readiness, gently squeeze the neck of the pear — it should have a slight give when ripe. Different cultivars have their best uses: some are ideal for fresh eating, while others are better suited for baking, canning, or preserving.

Ayers

USDA Zone: 5–9

Harvest: Mid-August to early September

Flavor: Sweet, mild, buttery texture

Fruit: Medium size; yellow skin with occasional red blush

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–18 ft tall × 10–15 ft wide

Pollination: Self-fertile; production improves with a pollinizer



Bartlett

USDA Zone: 5–9

Harvest: Mid-August to early September

Flavor: Sweet, juicy, classic pear flavor

Fruit: Large; yellow when ripe with traditional pear shape

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–18 ft tall × 10–15 ft wide

Pollination: Partially self-fertile; improved yields with cross-pollination



Golden Russet Bosc

USDA Zone: 5–9

Harvest: Late August to September

Flavor: Sweet, rich, firm flesh

Fruit: Elongated; russeted golden-brown skin

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–18 ft tall × 10–15 ft wide

Pollination: Requires cross-pollination



Harrowsweet

USDA Zone: 4–8

Harvest: Late September (approximately 3 weeks after Bartlett)

Flavor: Sweet, juicy, dessert quality

Fruit: Medium to large; yellow with light red blush

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–16 ft tall × 10–14 ft wide

Pollination: Requires cross-pollination



Kieffer

USDA Zone: 4–9

Harvest: Mid-September to October

Flavor: Mildly sweet; firm texture

Fruit: Large; yellow with occasional red blush, oval shape

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–18 ft tall × 10–15 ft wide

Pollination: Self-fertile



Moonglow

USDA Zone: 5–8

Harvest: Early to mid-August

Flavor: Mild, sweet, low grit

Fruit: Medium to large; smooth yellow skin

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–18 ft tall × 10–15 ft wide

Pollination: Requires cross-pollination



Potomac

USDA Zone: 5–8

Harvest: Late August to early September

Flavor: Mild, buttery, sub-acid

Fruit: Medium size; green skin with light blush

Tree Size (Semi-Dwarf): 12–16 ft tall × 10–14 ft wide

Pollination: Benefits from cross-pollination



Tree size, harvest dates, and fruit characteristics may vary depending on climate, soil conditions, cultural practices, and rootstock. Flavor descriptions represent general characteristics.

Images Sourced From:

“Ayers Pear Tree” Photograph. *Rusty Mangrum Nursery*.

<https://www.rustymangrumnursery.com/fruit-trees/plants/fruit-trees/plants/pear-trees-european/ayers-pear-tree> Accessed 7 January, 2026.

“Pear” Photograph. *Dave Wilson Nursery* <https://www.davewilson.com/nurseries/products/fruit-trees/pear/> Accessed 7 January, 2026.

Shane, Bill. *Harrow Sweet pears almost ready for harvest*. Photograph. *Southwest Michigan Fruit Update – September 5, 2023*, Michigan State University Extension, 6 Sept. 2023, <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/southwest-michigan-fruit-update-september-5-2023>. Accessed Jan. 2026.

Moon Glow Pear. Photograph, *Moon Glow Pear, Standard*, Kansas State University Extension – Chisholm Trail District, https://www.chisholmtrail.k-state.edu/lawn_garden/comm_gardens/Moon%20Glow.html. Accessed Jan. 2026.

Potomac. Photograph. *Potomac*, Adams County Nursery, Inc., <https://acnursery.com/product/potomac/>. Accessed Jan. 2026.

Reference Sources:

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Tree Fruit: Pear Cultivars

Supports: Harvest windows, flavor characteristics, fruit size/shape, pollination behavior

URL: <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/422/422-017/422-017.html>

Accessed: Jan 2026

USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map

Supports: USDA zone ranges for pear cultivation

URL: <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>

Accessed: Jan 2026

Midwest Tree Fruit Production Guide – Pear Section

Supports: Pollination compatibility, harvest ranges, orchard spacing standards

URL:

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://extension.purdue.edu/county/vigo/_docs/Midwest-Home-Fruit-Production-Guide_B940.pdf

Accessed: Jan 2026

USA Pears – Bartlett and European Pear Variety Profiles

Supports: General fruit characteristics and harvest timing for Bartlett-type pears

URL: <https://www.usapears.org/>

Accessed: Jan 2026

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach – *How to Harvest, Ripen, and Store Pears*

Supports: European pear harvest timing, ripening behavior, and storage guidance

URL:

<https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/how-harvest-ripen-and-store-pears>

Accessed: Jan 2026