


American holly [Aquifoliaceae](#) *Ilex opaca* Aiton  symbol:
ILOP



Leaf: Alternate, simple, evergreen, elliptical, 2 to 4 inches long, spiny toothed margin, thickened and leathery, shiny dark green above, much paler below.

Flower: Species is dioecious; dull green-white, male flowers on 3 to 7 flowered cymes, female flowers are solitary with a pleasant odor, appearing in late spring.

Fruit: Berry-like drupe, red, rarely yellow when ripe, 1/4 inch in diameter, containing ribbed nutlets; maturing in fall and persisting on tree into winter.

Twig: Slender, with rust-colored pubescence; buds small reddish brown, pointed.

Bark: Light gray and smooth regardless of size.

Form: A small tree to 40 feet, with a thick crown and pyramidal form, usually with branches to the ground.

Looks like: [large gallberry](#) - [Foster's holly](#) - [Chinese holly](#) - [dahoon](#)



Additional Range Information:
Ilex opaca is native to North America. Range may be expanded by planting. [See states reporting American holly.](#)

External Links:
[USDAFS Silvics of North America](#)
[USDAFS Additional Silvics](#)
[USDA Plants Database](#)
[Horticulture](#)

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