

STEPS FOR PLANTING TREES & SHRUBS

Step 1 ~ Digging the Hole and Soil Preparation



Proper site preparation before and during planting can reduce the amount of time the plant experiences transplant shock and allows the tree to quickly establish in its new location. Dig the hole 50% wider and only as deep as the root ball. Prepare soil by mixing 2/3 soil and 1/3 organic matter. Use a plant starter fertilizer to help plants become established quickly, reduce transplant shock, promote root development and more vigorous plant growth. Follow the manufacturer's directions.

Step 2 ~ Planting a tree or a shrub

Container grown: remove plant from container, loosen the roots all the way around, even on the bottom. If the root system is too tight to loosen with your fingers, cut through roots slightly with a knife or pruning shears. Make three or four one-inch deep cuts. Gently pull apart.



Balled & Burlapped: center plant in hole 1 to 2 inches above existing grade. Cut and remove all rope or twine from the root ball and trunk. Burlap should be left on, but loosened and pulled away from trunk and tucked below the soil surface. If there's a wire cage, cut and remove the burlap that's above the cage but leave the cage on. Remember to move trees carefully. Roll the root ball on its side and steer it into the hole with the trunk. Straighten the tree upright in the hole.

Step 3 ~ Watering & Backfilling

Once in place, thoroughly water the ball of the tree. Backfill with soil mix and pack firmly. Make a saucer of soil around the plant. Water thoroughly with a slow soaking, this will settle the soil and prevent air pockets. (Water with plant starter mixed to label directions). Let the water trickle for 30 minutes to an hour. Be sure to keep your new tree or shrub well watered for the first year. In dry weather, that could mean two to three times per week. A tree watering bag can be used to help in the watering.



Step 4 ~ Staking

Smaller trees should be staked only if they feel unstable or have a tendency to lean. For larger trees and trees in a windy or sloping area, use three wires secured to anchor stakes in firm ground. Where the wires touch the tree, they should be covered with a piece of hose so the support doesn't dig into the bark. Also do not make the wires too tight, allow for some movement. Never leave staking on more than one year.



Step 5 ~ Mulch

Mulching is one of the most beneficial things that can be done for the health of the tree. Mulch can reduce water loss from the soil, minimize weed competition, and improve soil structure. Apply a 2 inch layer of mulch, keeping an open space of 3 inches around the trunk or base of the plant to allow for air circulation. (Mulch against the trunk can lead to bark rot).

Watering

The most important thing you can do for your new plants

The key to watering plant material is to provide the plant with slow, deep soaking water. Plants should be slowly soaked to a depth of 4 inches, which is about an inch of water per week. This is necessary during the first year. Let the hose run slowly at the base of the plant until the water has penetrated to the root depth. Too much water can be a problem, feel the soil. If it is wet, do not add water. Also, frequent light watering is not as effective as a thorough soaking two to three times per week.

Fertilizing

Your new plants should be given a plant starter type fertilizer for the first season, in order to promote root growth and establishment. After the first year, regular fertilizers can be used in Spring and Fall. Avoid using a fertilizer meant for mature plants on newly planted material, as it could cause damage to your plant. It is essential for new plants to develop a healthy root system, top growth will follow.

Special Care Plants

Azaleas, Hollies, Rhododendrons and Dogwoods all need well-drained, acidic soil, high in organic matter and a shady location. When planting, mix 2/3 of the removed soil with 1/3 planting mix.

Insects & Diseases

Keep an eye out for holes, edges being notched, spotting, brown leaves or needles. This could be a sign of insect or disease. Ask our professional staff for help identifying the insect or disease and to recommend options.