



TREE PLANTING GUIDE

SELECTING A TREE

Please make sure the tree you plant is suited to your climate zone and will survive the local soil and weather.

Call a local plant nursery and ask them to recommend a hearty native species. Ask the nursery staff to tell you if the tree likes full sun or shade or has any other special requirements.

DON'T PLANT TREES THAT

- Are known to be invasive in your region
- Can't stand up without support
- Have wounds on their trunk.
(Look under the tree wrap)
- Are too big in too small of a pot
- May cause problems by dropping limbs, raising sidewalks, getting pests and diseases, or perish easily from extreme heat or cold.

1



CHOOSE A LOCATION

- Depending on if your tree likes full sun or partial shade, choose an area that provides it with the light it needs.
- Avoid planting under telephone wires or near solar panels that your tree may grow to shade.
- Choose a location where the tree can easily receive water on a regular basis.

2



GET READY

- Your tree will be “bare-rooted” and wrapped in a protective substance to hold the roots together, or it will come with the roots in dirt in a pot.
- If your tree is bare-rooted, plant immediately to avoid roots drying.
- If your tree is potted, tip the pot over while holding the base of the tree, squeeze or tap the pot to loosen the soil, and gently pull to unpot when you are ready to plant.

3



PLANT

- Dig a hole. Your hole needs to be big enough for the roots to sit fully inside.
- Gently spread out the roots. If you see any damaged or twisted roots, cut them off.
- Set the tree in the hole to see how it fits. The collar/root flare should be just at soil level or a little above.
- Fill in dirt. Don't add anything to the dirt like mulch, peat moss, or fertilizer.
- Build a circular dirt dam around the outer edge of your tree planting area to retain water.
- Stomp dirt around the root ball firmly. This should create a small depression into which water can settle.

4



WATER

- Water the tree immediately after planting. This is critical for its survival.
- Avoid stepping on the wet soil around the tree.
- Water the tree regularly until established. Let the root zone dry out between waterings.
- Do not water if temperatures approach or drop below freezing.

5



MULCH

- Choose a mulch that is dry and hasn't been exposed to potentially harmful contaminants.
- Mulch the surface of the soil around your newly planted trees two to four inches deep.
- Don't pile the mulch up against the trunk—leave space for the trunk to breathe.

6



STAKE (IF NECESSARY)

- Only stake newly planted trees if they are too weak to stand on their own. Remove stakes as soon as tree is established.
- Use one or two wooden stakes and pound them firmly into the soil 6-12 inches from the tree trunk.
- Anchor to tree. Rope, wire, or cable should never be placed directly on tree stems or branches—use material with a broad, smooth surface.
- Suitable materials to wrap around the tree stem include wide canvas strapping, strips of old carpeting, bicycle inner tube, and burlap.

7



PRUNE

- You will not need to prune your tree for a year after you plant.
- You may trim broken or rubbing branches, but don't remove more than 1/5 of the branches.
- After the first year, if there are shoots growing up from the bottom of the tree, trim these "suckers" back to the base.
- Do not prune the top of the tree!
- For fruit trees, seek out professional guidance from an arborist or handbook.

8



CARE AFTER PLANTING

- Young trees benefit if they are irrigated, fertilized, and weeded.
- Water them according to nursery instructions.
- If trees don't grow well and aren't a healthy green color, fertilize—but don't overdo it!

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ENJOY

"To plant trees is to give body and life to one's dreams of a better world."

- Russell Page



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