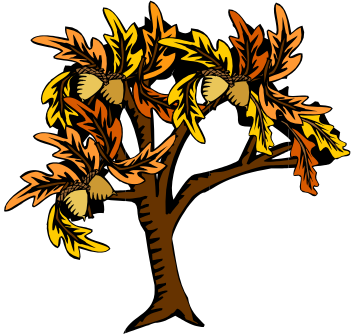




Tips and Hints to Take Home

Shrub & Tree Planting Guide



Plant Land suggests you follow these simple instructions to be sure your newly purchased shrubs and trees do well. Getting them off to a good start is important for their long-term health and short-term survival. Container grown plants

can be successfully planted from early spring to late fall if you carefully follow the directions on this sheet. Most B&B (balled & burlap) plants can also be successfully planted from early spring to late fall if handled correctly. Bareroot material should never be planted after the end of May and requires such specific handling that it is not covered on this sheet.

When you get your plants home... handle them gently and give them a good watering. Plant all purchases as soon as possible. Put B&B plants in shade and cover the root ball with soil, mulch, newspaper or cloth that is thoroughly wet. It is very important that the root ball does not dry out for even a short period. It is best to plant B&B material right after purchasing. Plants in pots can be held for longer periods but normally require watering everyday. The cool parts of the day are the best times to plant. Early morning or late evening when temperatures are mild and sunlight less intense are be good times to plant. If time is an issue, remember that you can dig the hole anytime and do the actual transplanting later.

When you chose your planting site... be sure you have selected a location that meets the plant's needs for light, moisture and size. The Plant Land staff can suggest shrubs and trees for any site. If you are unsure about drainage conditions, we suggest you perform this little test. Dig your hole to depth (don't worry about width for this) and fill it with water. If it takes more than one hour to drain, you need to improve the drainage. Good drainage is very important for nearly all

plants. Sites that drain too quickly also need improvement. If your hole drained in less than 10 minutes, it is draining too fast and will need to be improved.

Slow drainage can be improved if the surrounding soil is not solid clay. Solid clay presents its own set of problems and only certain types of shrubs and trees will be able to survive in it. If the drainage is slow due to a combination of clay and otherwise poor soil structure, you can add peat or compost to improve conditions. The worse the soil is, the more generously you need to dig the hole. If a shrub or tree has enough good soil to form strong roots in its first seasons, it will be able to make due with poorer soil further out and down. However, this is also one reason why solid clay can be difficult. Solid clay can be impenetrable and roots will circle in the 'good' area you created, eventually killing the plant. The good news is that relatively few areas are truly solid clay. If you do have bad clay, you must be careful what shrubs and trees you try to grow and take another step or two to prepare your hole. Many areas have high clay content but can be improved with enough peat and compost. Areas that drain too quickly need the same amendments (peat and compost) to improve conditions. Good soil preparation is important. Remember you are planting a shrub or tree that will live for decades so take some time to give it a good start.

When you are ready to plant... dig your hole at least half again as deep and wide as the root ball or the pot. If your soil is particularly bad, dig twice as deep and wide. Remove any rocks larger than a golf ball. Mix the native soil with peat or compost (or a combination of both) so that it is half native soil and half amendments. Do not plant in straight peat or compost. Your plant requires native soil.

Put enough of your soil/amendments mix back into the hole so your plant will be at the same soil depth as it was when purchased. Do not plant deeper or shallower as both can cause injury to shrubs and trees. You can add bone meal, super phosphate or transplanting fertilizers at this time. These products are primarily geared to promote root growth or ease transplant shock

for the plant. Their use is generally considered optional although you may find we recommend them for some plants. Do not add growing season type fertilizers to the hole. They can cause root burn and are not needed the first season.

Take plants out of both plastic and fiber (paper) pots. Fiber pots used for shrubs and trees do not decompose fast enough and should be removed to avoid problems. If the roots are circling the container, use a knife to loosen them, especially around the bottom. Tightly wound roots may require drastic cutting. With a sharp knife, make several cuts straight down the sides of the root ball at even intervals. Take care not to remove too much root material and do not handle roots roughly.

B&B plants should be placed in the planting hole with the burlap and twine intact. Once the plant is at the proper depth, cut the twine away from the trunk and fold the burlap down to the top of the root ball. Tuck the excess burlap down around the root ball. Do not try to remove the burlap. We are careful to use untreated burlap and it will rot away in one season. Removing burlap can lead to mishandling of the roots and contribute to plant failure.

As you refill the hole with the soil/amendment mix, be sure to tamp the soil down firmly around the roots. It helps to stop when the hole is about half full and add water to soak in. It is very important to get rid of air pockets in the planting hole. They can cause roots to dry out underground. It is also important to be sure the roots have good contact with the soil so tamp as you fill. Fill the hole so that about 1" or so is left at the top. This area will become your watering basin. Mound the soil in this basin slightly so that water runs away from the trunk. Water the plant thoroughly immediately after planting. Fill the basin several times and let the water soak in. Once the plant is established, usually after a year or two, the basin may be leveled. In the meantime, fill the basin with mulch such as wood chips to help hold moisture and keep down weeds.

Once you have finished planting... don't worry about adding fertilizers for the first season. Your shrub or tree came with slow release fertilizers and do not require more. If your site is windy, newly planted trees may require staking until the root system is established. Support the tree with stout stakes that are as high as the first major limbs. Use protected twine to tie the tree to the stakes. Old garden hose makes an excellent soft protector. Do not secure the tree so it is completely motionless. It is actually desirable to allow a small amount of movement of the trunk so the tree will develop a strong, well-anchored root system. Staking

may also be needed for small trees that do not have well developed root systems. You may also need to consider fencing small trees to protect against deer for a few seasons. Deer damage can cause severe problems and even death to a young tree.

As your new plant grows... remember that newly planted shrubs and trees benefit from deep watering. Turn the hose on low, place it close to the trunk and allow water to soak into the root area over a long period. A newly planted tree with a 1" caliper (trunk size) can use up to 5 gallons of water per day during hot weather. Overhead sprinkling used for lawns will **NOT** deliver enough water to a newly planted plant. They simply require hand watering for at least the first season. A drip system should be set higher for the first season and the plant may still need additional hand watering. Natural rainfall typically does not provide enough water for newly planted shrubs or trees. How often water is needed will depend on the time of year, weather conditions and the size of plant. To determine whether a plant needs water, probe carefully around the root zone and check the moisture level of the soil. Do not wait for signs of wilt before watering. During our hot, dry summers, deep watering 2-3 times a week is recommended. For some stretches, it may be necessary to water a newly planted shrub or tree **daily**. During prolonged periods without rain, check the soil moisture often.

You can use general all-purpose fertilizers for most trees and shrubs. We recommend simple 16-16-16. Be sure to read labels on weed and feed lawn products. Many can damage to trees and shrubs, especially newly planted ones.

Remove any tags that are on the plants. We strongly suggest that you keep tags so you can provide information if you have any questions later. One easy method is to staple tags onto the pages of a small spiral notebook. You can add planting dates, locations and purchase information easily.

Most plants will not require any pruning for the first season. If any branches are broken during transport or planting, prune them off with a neat cut. Pruning needs for trees and shrubs vary a great deal so we recommend checking with the professionals at Plant Land before you make any cuts. Please call us if you have any questions about planting your new shrub or tree.