



## Planting a Tree

1. Before planting a large tree, make sure that the chosen location and conditions are appropriate to the species of tree to be planted. Consider the mature size and height of the tree and choose the location carefully. Make sure that foundations, power lines, cables, gas and water lines and not in the way.
2. Plant during the cooler part of the day. Examine the structure of the tree and decide on the best orientation. Dig a hole that is at least 2-3 times the width of the root ball and slightly shallower than the root ball depth. Remove plant from container. Examine the roots. Unwind circling roots and spread the roots out evenly over soil pedestal before backfilling the hole.
3. Backfill the planting hole with the unamended\* native soil that came out of the hole. Break up clumps with a shovel and water as needed to settle the dirt. Do not compress the backfill soil as this can compact the soil, preventing water from reaching the roots and not allowing the roots from expanding beyond the ball. Make sure the root flare (the base of the tree where the roots are located) is not covered up with soil. (\* Extremely heavy clay soils can sometimes be amended with a quarter compost to increase drainage.)
4. Do not add fertilizer the first year that the tree is planted. For a healthier tree, it is important that its energy is focused on developing a strong root structure, not on artificially accelerated top growth. Recommend these two amendments when planting or transplanting a tree:
  - a. Root Activator. (Carl Pool Root activator). A root activator stimulates the growth of feeder roots that increase a tree's water and mineral absorption capability. A root activator is not a fertilizer. .
  - b. Rhizanova™ Mycorrhizal fungi inoculant. Mycorrhizal fungi have a symbiotic relationship with the tree, attaching to the roots and setting out filaments that bring important nutrients to the plant roots, while the plant reciprocates by providing the mycorrhizae with sugars.
5. Add 2-3" of a good quality mulch (native hardwood, Lady Bug Sylvan) around the base of the tree. Do not place the mulch directly against the base of the trunk, as that can promote insect infestation and disease. Besides a pleasing aesthetic, a mulched area helps to insulate and maintain soil moisture, control weeds, improve soil biology and protect the tree from "weed whackers" and "rogue lawnmowers".
6. Do not stake a tree unless it is top-heavy, very thin and leggy, appears to need support or is in a windy location. Do not keep a tree staked over a year. (Staking will weaken a tree.)
7. When first planting a young tree, prune only torn or broken branches, codominant leaders and narrow crotch angles. Do not prune terminal leaders or branch tips. Never prune the lower branches of a young tree. Lower branches are left on the trunk of the tree to manufacture food (through photosynthesis) for the tree. Studies have shown that unpruned trees establish faster and have a stronger root system than trees pruned at the time of planting. Prune to shape a tree after 2-3 years when it is established.
8. Watering a tree on a regular basis is critical to the health and survival of the tree. Watering rates will depend on the conditions at the time of planting, but usually should be watered deeply at least 3 times per week. (Deep watering ensures the water reaches the whole rootball and surrounding soil, not just the top 2"). Water all around the tree, including where the new roots will be growing into, not only at the base of the trunk. As the tree becomes established the rate of watering can be cut down, but supplemental watering is critical for the first year. Supplement trees with water in times of drought. Do not rely only on sprinkler systems, but deep water with a hose or soaker hose. Avoid overwatering.