How to Plant Trees and Shrubs

Whether you have purchased a container-grown plant, or one that is ball-and-burlapped (B&B), remember that these plants will have the tendency to dry out quickly. Plant as soon as possible! If you must "hold" the plants for a while, keep them in a cool, sheltered area out of strong wind and direct sunlight. If you hold them more than a week, heel them in with organic mulch (such as sphagnum moss, leaves, or sawdust). Try not to lift containerized or B&B plants by the trunk or crown; handle them by the soil ball or pot.

How to Plant

Before you dig, put down a sheet of plastic or canvas next to the hole. The soil you remove can be put on the plastic, making it easier to clean up afterward. Mixing in soil amendments will be neater, too.

In loose, well-drained soil, dig the hole at least twice the size of the container or B&B root ball. Flatten the bottom of the hole and stand in it to firm the soil so that the plant doesn't settle in deeper later.

Plastic pots: Plastic pots *must* be removed. Invert the pot and give it a sharp tap to remove the plant. If the root ball does not slide out, cut the side of the pot until it can be removed. If the roots are heavily matted or wrapping in a circular pattern, loosen them with your fingers or cut the outer circling roots with a sharp knife.

Fiber Pots: Plants in **fiber or paper mâche pots** can be left in these pots. However, the upper ¼ to ⅓ of the pot should be cut away. You may also slash the bottom and sides in several places to hasten pot deterioration. No part of a fiber pot should be exposed after planting.
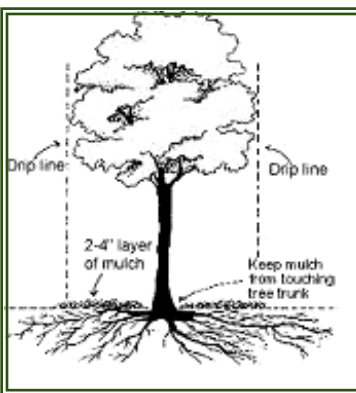
Balled-and-Burlapped Plants:

B&B plants should be set in the hole with twine, burlap, and wire basket intact. Stand the plant in the center of the hole and carefully backfill with soil. The top of the soil ball should approximately an inch higher than the surrounding soil surface. Next, cut all twine or wire from the top of the soil ball and the trunk. Completely remove wire baskets, taking care not to disturb the soil of the root ball. Roll back the burlap to below the soil surface. If the burlap is made of plastic, remove it completely. Do not amend soil on a heavy soil site. You may amend very well-drained or light, droughty soils with one part sphagnum peat moss to two parts soil. **To avoid burning the roots, do not put dry fertilizers or fresh manure in the**

> *Whether containerized or B&B, keep the original height of the soil in the pot approximately an inch higher than the surrounding soil level.*
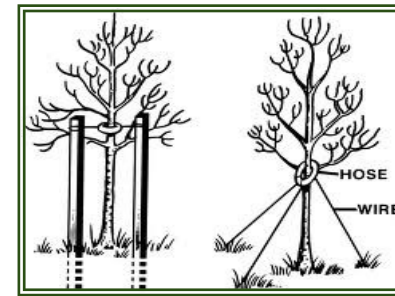
backfill mix!

Create a Dike

With the remaining soil mix, create a slightly mounded "dike" or dam around the planting hole. Mulch the plant with an organic mulch 2-3" thick. Avoid high, thick mulches around the plant. The mulch should be in a thin layer adjacent to the base of the plant; increase the depth to about 3 inches as you move away from the plant. You do not want mulch to be piled up against the bark of the tree, as this will invite insects and/or disease. Mulch helps to conserve moisture, prevent runoff, deter weed growth, and protect against the shrub or tree's worst enemies—damage from weed eaters and lawn mowers. It also presents a clean, finished appearance.

Drip line · Drip line · 2-4" layer of mulch · Keep mulch from touching tree trunk

Staking

Drive stakes into the ground before you backfill the hole, to be sure you don't drive the stakes through the root ball and damage the roots. Newly planted trees and tall shrubs need to be staked for protection against wind damage. While this protection is essential, a tree that is **too** securely staked will not develop natural strength of its own. For that reason, always allow for some movement of the trunk in the wind. The tree or shrub will develop its own support, and staking will no longer be necessary. Usually one year is long enough. Do not allow the staking material to remain so long that it actually bites into the bark.

This can seriously damage and/or girdle your tree. Larger trees should be guyed. To guy a tree, use three wires attached to three stakes. Thread a one foot piece of hose on each wire and have the hose-covered bit of wire loop around the tree at the lowest branch crotches. Make loops around the trunk very loose to avoid damaging the tree. Drive stakes into firm soil at least 18 inches outside the perimeter of the planting hole. Anchor the loose ends of the wires securely to stakes. Remove the stakes and guys before the wire girdles the trunk.

Generally, remove supports after one growing season for a 1-inch diameter tree, two seasons for a 2-inch diameter tree. For larger trees, guys may need to remain for three seasons or more. They should be inspected annually and adjusted to prevent trunk girdling.

Good deep watering is better than frequent shallow watering.

Watering

It is important to get the root system to branch into the surrounding area. At planting time, fertilize on top of the ground with 12-12-12 keeping away from the plant. Watering weekly, soak each plant with the open end of a hose at the base of the plant. Slowly move the end of the hose all around the base to completely soak the root zone.

If a hose is not readily available, provide at least 3 gallons of water to shrubs and 5 gallons of water to trees, weekly. If we have a good soaking rain, less water is needed. Water slowly to avoid runoff. Gradually increase the intervals between watering to encourage the root system to expand.

Key Points

- Choose plants that best fit your landscape and soil type.
- Plant as soon as possible to prevent plants from drying out.
- Handle plants carefully at all times.
- Make the hole large enough, two to three times wider than the container, or root ball. Be sure the bottom of hole is FIRM to keep the plant from settling to low.
- Plant root ball 1 inch above soil level. at which the tree or shrub was originally growing.
- Backfill planting hole with original soil that was dug out. It is generally not recommended to amend the soil.
- During the first year, fertilize once at the time of planting.
- Support tall trees with at least three wires and stakes for protection against wind damage.
- Be sure plants get adequate water for the entire first growing season.
- For more information, refer to Purdue University Extension Service brochure HO-100-W.

Information was gathered from Purdue University Extension Service brochure HO-100-W.

Garden Gate Greenhouse, Inc. Guarantee & Replacement Policy

At Garden Gate Greenhouse, Inc. we hold quality plants and customer satisfaction to the highest standard. While we would like to guarantee everything for life, it is simply not practical when working with live product. The following outlines our policies:

- Annuals, Houseplants, Tropical Plants, Bulbs, and Seeds are guaranteed to be in good condition when purchased. These items do not carry a guarantee.
- Perennials are guaranteed to survive the winter following the season in which they are purchased and planted and to leaf out in the spring.
- Trees and Shrubs are guaranteed to survive the winter following the season in which they are purchased and planted and to leaf out in the spring.
- Any plant purchased but left in the pot (unplanted) will carry no guarantee.
- Replacements are given in the form of plant exchange or a Garden Gate Greenhouse Gift Card. No cash refunds.
- The itemized receipt and the dead plant must be presented for a refund or replacement.
- The plant must be 100% dead in order to be replaced.
- Plants will be replaced one time only. Replacement plants do not carry a warranty.
- Plants that have been exposed to neglect or damage due to :wind, ice, salt, insects, or animals, vandalism, drought, lack of rain, winter weather, washouts or acts of nature beyond the company's control will not be guaranteed.
- Trees and shrubs that are planted too deep will not be guaranteed. Garden Gate Greenhouse, Inc. recommends to install plant root balls one inch above the soil surface.

NOTE: If your plants develop a problem, please call or visit Garden Gate Greenhouse, Inc. as soon as possible or contact your local Purdue County Extension Agent.

Planting
Trees & Shrubs

Guarantee & Replacement Policy

Garden Gate Greenhouse, Inc.

3415 E 500 S
Peru, In 46970
765-473-4992
www.egardengate.com