

Planting Shrubs and Trees & That First Important Year for Them

Shrubs and trees require special care their first year as they establish a good root system. Environmental conditions, the size and variety of the plant determine how long it takes for it to acclimate to its new home. The larger the plant, the longer it will need supplemental care. During this period of their growth, they should put a great deal of their energy into developing a healthy and strong root system that is key to success.

When to plant: What season of the year you plant will be a determining factor to how quickly it becomes established. Container shrubs or trees can be planted anytime of the year. Spring and fall are the seasons that are the easiest times to plant and be successful. Shrubs and trees planted during the heat of the summer will require more attention to help them get through that season.

Watering: All shrubs and trees will require supplemental watering after planting for up to a year. You CANNOT rely on your sprinkler system to be a sufficient source of water, especially during the summer months. Use a hose to directly apply an ample amount of water for the tree. This will show in a puddle around the rootball of the tree or shrub. Let the water absorb into the soil then repeat the process.

Though it is hard to say exactly how much water the plant will need, the following is a guide that may help you:

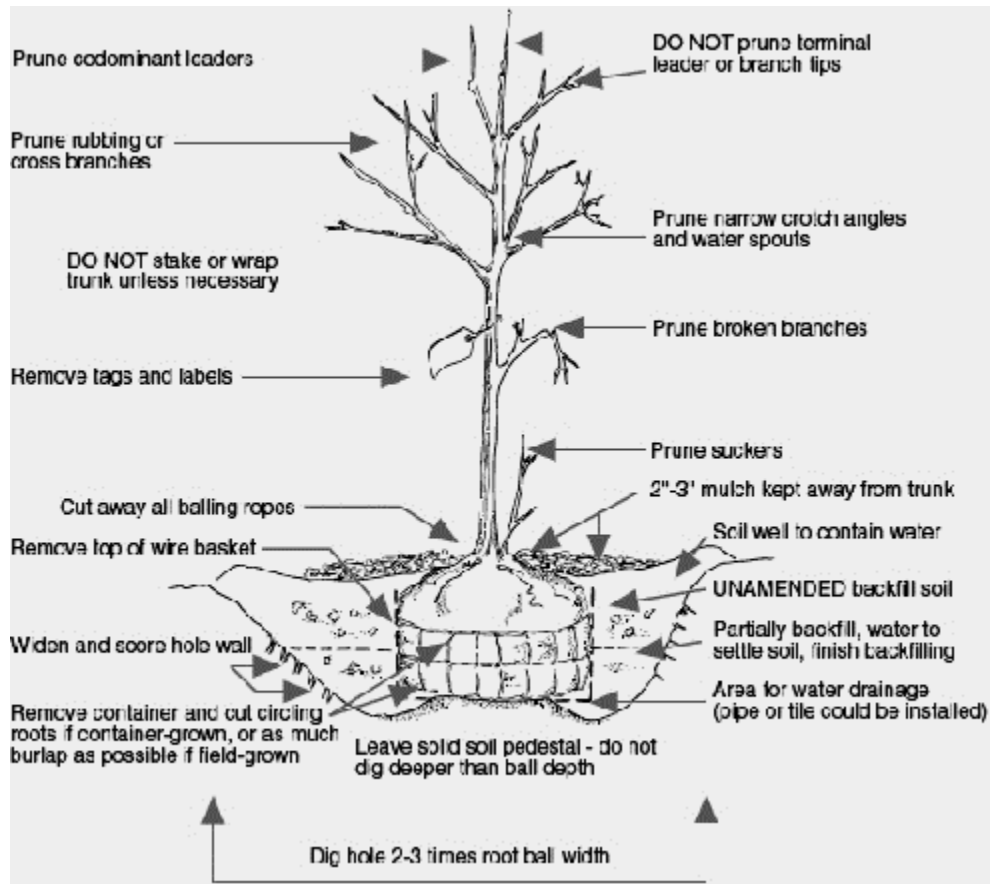
1. **Winter:** 1 time per week.
2. **Spring and fall:** 2 time per week.
3. **Summer:** 3 times per week.
4. You can also use soaker hoses to provide a slow drip to the individual plants.

Apply approximately two inches of mulch around the shrub or tree to conserve moisture.

Fertilization: Application of a liquid root stimulator is very important at planting time. Water in the new plant with a root stimulator twice a month for the first six months. If the plant prefers acidic soil (dogwoods or Japanese maples), apply a soil acidifier. Nitrogen fertilizers will encourage green growth and are not required at planting time or the first year. After the first year, use a general purpose fertilizer each spring and fall. You can use the same fertilizer you use on the grass in your lawn.

If you see a problem with your plant, take a leaf sample or close-up photo into your local nursery or contact your County Agent at the County Extension Office.

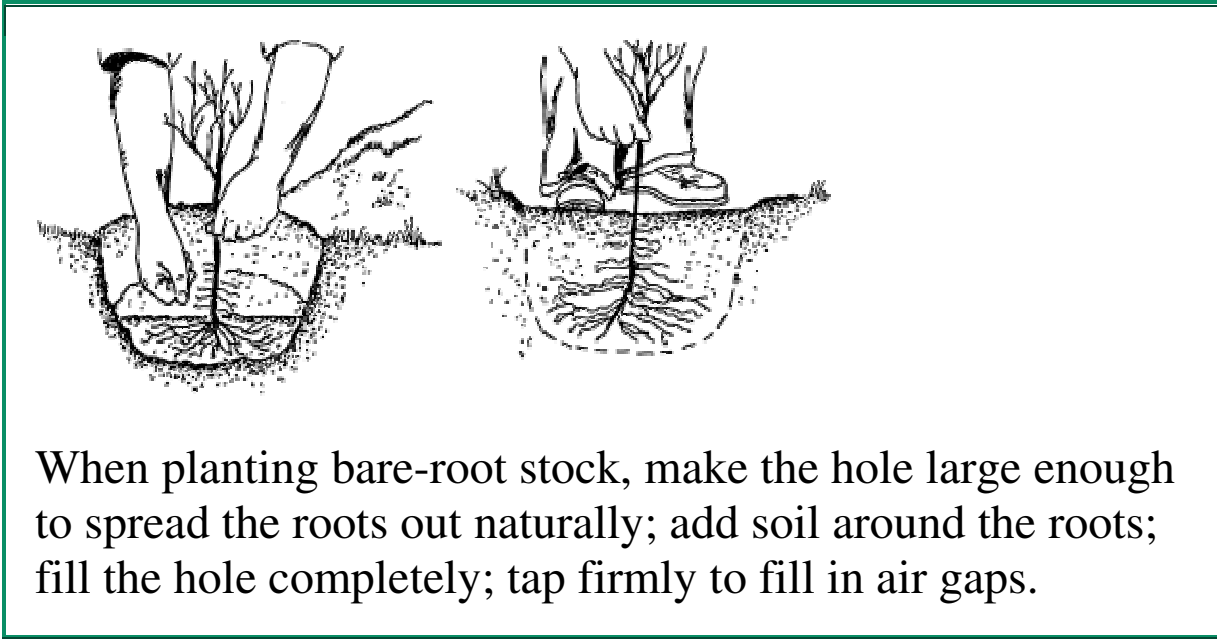
Planting a Shrub/Tree



Planting a Bare-Root Shrub/Tree

1. Keep the roots moist until you are ready to plant.
2. Dig a hole that is two to three inches larger than the plants root area.
3. Place the shrub/tree in the hole so that it is positioned at a depth slightly lower than the surface. You may need to dig a little more to get it just right. Be sure not to crush the root structure to "make it fit". It's better to take a moment and dig out another shovel of soil.
4. With the shrub/tree in the hole, fill the hole halfway. Pack the dirt around the roots.
5. Pour water into the half-filled hole and give it a few minutes to absorb the water completely.
6. Fill the remainder of the hole with soil.
7. Push gently around the base of the plant to create a small moat to hold water. Give your new shrub/tree lots of water and then water again after a day or two depending on your local weather.
8. Follow the above recommendations for the first year of your plant.

Planting a Bare-Root Stock Shrub/Tree



Planting a Burlapped Shrub/Tree

1. Keep the roots moist until you are ready to plant.
2. Dig a hole that is approximately one foot wider than the burlapped ball. Make sure your hole is big enough to accommodate the entire ball.
3. Place the tree or shrub in the hole so that it is positioned in the center of the hole.
4. Loosen the burlap from the trunk. Don't take it off since the cloth will rot underground and decompose naturally. If there are any wires around the burlap, be sure to remove it. If there is any plastic or cardboard on the root ball, carefully remove it.
5. Water the plant and let the water absorb completely.
6. Finish filling the hole with soil.
7. Push gently around the base of the shrub or tree to create a small moat to hold water. Give your new shrub or tree lots of water and then water it again after a day or two depending on your local weather.
8. Follow the above recommendations for the first year of your plant.