

TREE PLANTING BASICS

The Right Tree in the Right Place

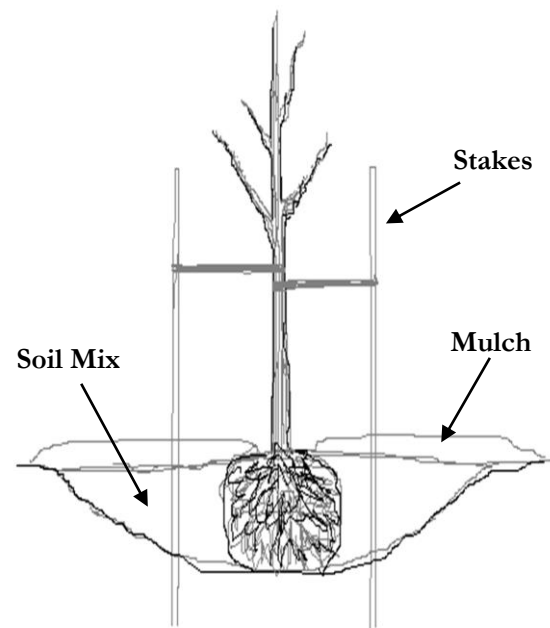
Consider the site before selecting a tree. How much sun does it get, and at what time of day? What are the soil and drainage like? Is the area open to winds or sheltered? How much and what kind of shade do you want your tree to cast? Do you want fruit, flowers, or wildlife habitat? Answering these questions BEFORE selecting and planting your tree will help ensure success. If you have any questions about tree selection please visit our Information desk. We want to help you succeed!

Planting

Once you have the right tree for your space it's time to plant. Dig a hole about twice the diameter of the rootball and slightly deeper. If the soil is heavy clay it is best to add up to 1/3 compost. If there are any drainage issues correct them before planting. Adding pumice to the soil can help. Compost will break down in a year or two, whereas pumice is a permanent addition. Mix the compost/pumice into the mound of soil thoroughly before backfilling.

Carefully remove the tree from its container and loosen the roots. If there are large, circling roots consider removing them. If left in place they may strangle the tree as it grows. Lower the tree into the hole, preferably by the rootball rather than the trunk. Be sure to set the tree in the hole at the same level as it was in the container. If there is a graft (a swollen point where the trunk and roots join) it should remain at least 2" above ground. If buried the graft may rot, killing the tree. If the area is very windy consider adding stakes to support the tree. Remove them after the first year.

Gently but firmly backfill the amended soil into the hole. Don't leave any air pockets. If the soil is dry you may want to fill the hole halfway and then water the tree thoroughly. After it drains backfill the remaining soil. Mound a ring of soil around the tree at about a 6-12" radius from the trunk. The ring should be about 2" high, designed to trap and hold water, funneling it down around the roots of your newly planted tree. To conserve moisture consider topping the soil ring with 1-2" of mulch (keep it away from the trunk). When finished planting, water slowly and thoroughly.



Tree Planting Diagram

After Care

During the first 2-3 growing seasons your tree will need to be watered occasionally. Frequency will depend upon weather and soil retentiveness. To water effectively bring your hose to the ring you made and turn it on low. The water should slowly fill the ring without overflowing. Less frequent, deep watering is the goal. Let the hose run gently for about 30-45 minutes. This will help the tree develop a strong, deep root system. Once established your tree probably won't need any additional water. Again, if you have any questions feel free to stop by our Information desk.