

# How to Plant

## Planting Instructions for Trees & Shrubs

### Before Your Plant

**1.** Assess the site before you do anything. This will help you select the right plant for the right place. Points to consider are:

- Sun vs. shade
- Windy locations
- Spacing
- Hardiness zone
- Poorly drained or wet areas
- Mature size of the plant

**2.** Know the pH requirements of the plant(s). A simple soil test can determine the pH of soil. Bring a half-cup of DRY soil to our Lawn & Garden Information Desk; we will gladly test your soil's pH for FREE.

### Preparing the Planting Hole

**1.** Dig the hole as deep as, and 2 to 3 times as wide as, the original soil ball or container diameter. If the soil is especially sandy or has a lot of clay, amend it with organic matter such as compost, peat moss, composted or dehydrated cow manure. Otherwise, the soil or backfill that comes out of the hole is what goes back in.

**2.** Slope the sides of the upper portion of the hole. Scrape the sides of the planting hole (if it appears smooth or glazed) using a garden fork or handheld cultivator.

**3.** An organic plant food, such as Bio-tone™ Starter Plus plant food, can be mixed into the soil at the time of planting to help get plants off to a good start.



### Planting Balled & Burlapped Plants

- 1.** Lift balled plant only by the ball, never by the above ground portion. Set in planting hole and step back to see if the plant is positioned the way you want it.
- 2.** The top of the root ball should be level with the surrounding soil.
- 3.** Untie natural burlap, cut it off or tuck it down into the hole and remove all twine. Synthetic burlap, ropes or twine should always be completely removed. Remove the top tiers of the wire if the plant is in a metal planting cage. Trim off any broken roots.

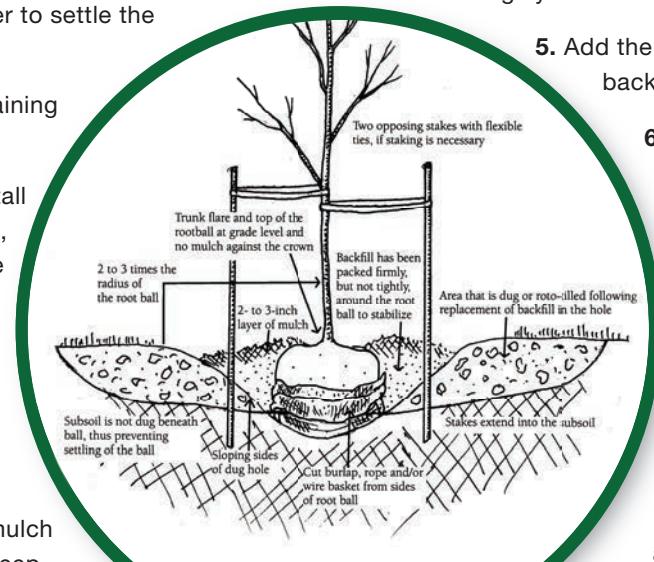
- Do not dig the hole any deeper than the root ball.
- Do not bury the branches or trunk; planting too deep can eventually cause the plant to decline and die.

**4.** Backfill the hole halfway and thoroughly water to settle the soil.

**5.** Add the remaining backfill.

**6.** Build a 3-4" tall saucer, or berm, of backfill at the outside edge of the original soil ball to hold water. Add water slowly.

**7.** Apply a 2-3" layer of cedar mulch in the saucer. Keep mulch a few inches away from the stems or trunk of the plant.



### Planting Containerized (Potted) Plants

- 1.** Carefully remove plant from the container.
- 2.** If the roots are tightly massed, tease them out with your fingers or handheld cultivator, or use a knife to make vertical cuts. This encourages the roots to grow outward into the new soil and not girdle the plant. Trim back any roots that are broken.
- 3** Make sure the top of the plant's soil is level with the surrounding soil.
- Do not dig the hole any deeper than the root ball, or bury the branches or trunk; planting too deep can cause the plant to decline and die.
- 4.** Backfill the hole halfway and thoroughly water to settle the soil.
- 5.** Add the remaining backfill.
- 6.** Build a 3-4" tall saucer, or berm, at the outside edge of the original container ball to hold water. Add 2-3" of cedar mulch in the saucer. Slowly add water to the saucer, filling it to the brim.



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## After-Care

**Watering:** Proper watering is necessary for establishment and long-term plant health. Over- or under-watering can be fatal for any plant. If rainfall has been adequate (an inch of rain per week), you may not need supplemental water. Otherwise, 1" of water (a good deep watering) every 5 to 7 days (especially during the summer) is usually adequate for the first two years. Use a soaker hose to conserve water and get water to the root zone area where it's needed. Organic mulch will decompose over time; so, reapply mulch as needed to maintain a 2-3" layer.

**Pruning:** At the time of planting, only prune to remove damaged and/or diseased branches. With trees, structural pruning is generally done several years after planting.

**Note:** Newly planted trees and shrubs may not always put forth significant new top growth during the first year or two because most of its energy goes toward root growth at this time.



### For All Your Planting Needs

#### Bio-tone™, Holly-tone™ OR Plant-tone™

- Bio-tone™ Starter Plus plant food is an all-purpose starter food that reduces transplant shock and encourages root growth.
- Holly-tone™ is for planting and feeding acid-loving plants.
- Plant-tone™ is an all-natural, organic plant food and soil conditioner.
- Dr. Earth™ Planting Mix This is the ideal soil additive to enrich your soil when planting all trees and shrubs. Mix this complete organic blend containing mycorrhizae to give your plants' root system a jumpstart.