

Planting Trees and Shrubs

- BEFORE YOU PLANT

Nothing is more important in growing plants than growing them in the correct spot – therefore; select an appropriate plant for your site based on the plants sunlight, soil, moisture, and exposure needs. Also make sure the ultimate size of your plant is going to fit the area you're going to plant it in. Make sure the plant is hardy to our zone 3b-4a area. Remember to call the Digger's Hotline to have all the underground utilities marked in the area where you're going to dig.

- PREPARE THE PLANTING SITE

A favorable soil environment is critical for the survival of newly planted trees and shrubs. First, rid your planting site of any weeds, grasses, or brush that might compete with your new plant. Next, dig a hole that is 2-3 times wider than the root ball and about one inch shallower than its depth. Roughen up the sides of the hole. Recent research indicates that in most instances it is not necessary to change the composition of your native soil. If you wish, you can amend your native soil with a small amount of compost, rotted horse manure or peat, using a ratio of nine parts soil to one part compost. Mix the organic matter into the native soil.

- PLANTING DEPTH IS CRITICAL

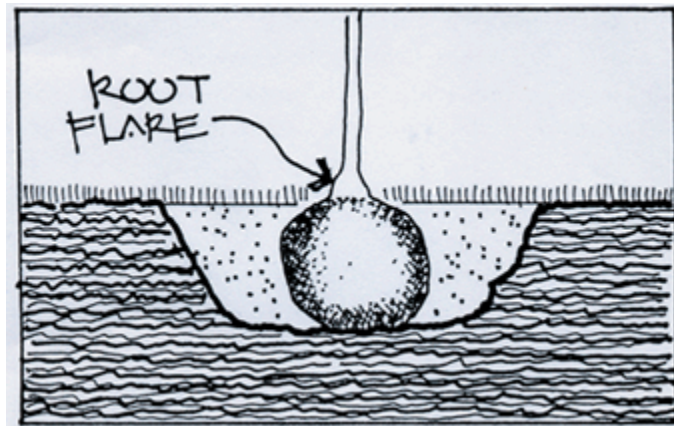
When planting container plants, first set the container on its side next to the planting hole, then give the bottom and sides of the container a hard whack. Grab the base of the plant and gently pull on the plant; if it resists coming out, whack the sides and bottom again – usually you will get the plant out this way. Avoid breaking the root ball, even if it means cutting the sides of the pot to remove the plant. Once out, rough-up/cut the sides of the root ball with a cultivator or knife – this prevents root girdling.

Grasp the root ball and set the plant in the hole. The uppermost roots in the root ball should be level with the surrounding soil, or preferably just slightly (1") above it. Place backfill soil underneath the root ball if necessary to get the plant at the correct height. **THIS IS IMPORTANT.** Press additional soil around the root ball until the planting hole is about two-thirds full. Fill the hole with water and let it drain down. Add more soil until the hole is full, pressing with your hands to firm the soil and get rid of any air pockets. Soak the plant thoroughly with a hose – if the soil settles a little, add more soil, and water again, saturating the soil. Finally, add 3" of organic mulch, with the stem area dished out to 1" to prevent stem rot. Keep the soil around the plant evenly moist until it is growing vigorously. Whenever the soil starts to dry out, water it deeply. Watering young plants regularly and deeply is probably the single most critical step in their early development.

- PLANTING BALLED AND BURLAPPED TREES

First, prepare your planting hole as above. Set the balled and burlapped tree next to the hole upright, so that you can measure the height of the root ball with a tape measure. Next, lay a

stick or a board across your planting hole and check the depth of your hole, making sure the hole depth is slightly less (1") than the height of the root ball. Make sure the "root flare", or crown, is going to be above ground. (finding the root flare may mean removing soil from the top of the root ball) I.E.:



Adjust the hole up or down as necessary. Most B&B trees are too heavy to lift by the root ball, so roll the tree next to the hole, grab the trunk, tip upright, and gently slide/wiggle the tree into the hole. Be careful on larger trees because the trunk can "whiplash" as the tree slides into the hole. Center the tree in the hole and check the depth. At this point, if the tree is in a wire basket, remove the twine and burlap from around the stem, and remove as much wire material as possible. Back fill about one-third and then step back and see if the trunk is vertically plumb (check from two vantage points, 90 degrees from each other). Adjust if necessary, then backfill to two-thirds and fill the hole with water. After the water has drained, fill the hole to the top, firming with your foot (gently) to remove any air pockets. Mulch with 3-4' diameter circle at a depth of 3", dishing out near the stem to about 1" to prevent root rot. Water well again.

- MORE INFORMATION

If you need more information on planting trees and shrubs, try the following sources for help:

- County extension offices for your county
- Dial U (University of Minnesota) 1-900-988-0500 (it's a \$3.00 call).
- <http://www.hcs.ohio-state.edu/hcs/hcs.html> (this site has lots of horticulture information)
- Earthworks – you can call our office with any questions, concerns or problems.

Remember, keep your plants healthy, and check them often. GOOD LUCK!

- GUARANTEE

We want you to be completely satisfied and happy with our plants. We will cheerfully refund, credit, or replace, (your choice) one time, any plant that has been properly cared for but has failed to grow. Because plants are living things, a nursery and its customers have a shared responsibility. Our job is to provide you with healthy, vigorous and hardy plants; your job is to promptly plant them and give them proper care after planting. If you give our plants proper care and they do not grow, we will gladly make good on our guarantee.