

Planting Your New Tree Or Shrub

Step 1

Dig a wide, shallow hole that's three to five times as wide as the root ball and almost as deep. The plant should sit on solid ground so it won't sink as the soil settles.

Step 2

•For container plants. Remove the plant from the pot and loosen roots that are circling the plant. If you can't pull the roots apart, use a knife to make four or five vertical slashes in the rootball. The idea is to give the roots a "bad hair day" so they grow out into the soil instead of continuing to grow in a circle.

Set the plant in the hole so that an inch or two of the rootball is above the existing grade.

•For balled-and-burlapped plants. Place the plant in the hole and make sure an inch or two of the rootball is above the existing grade. Remove all rope and twine and then cut and remove burlap from the top half of the rootball.

If there's a wire cage, cut and remove the burlap that's above the cage but let the cage on.

Step 3

Mix two-thirds of your excavated native soil to one-third peat moss, compost or Country Market Planting Mix and backfill the hole about halfway. Water, then fill the hole the rest of the way. Water with Root Stimulator mixed to label directions.

Step 4

Add two inches of mulch over the top of the soil, but be sure to keep the mulch about two inches away from the trunk. (Mulch against the trunk can lead to bark rot.)

Step 5

Saturate the rootball thoroughly by laying a hose, set on trickle, into the "reservoir" around the plant you've created with the mulch. Let the water trickle for 30 minutes to an hour.

Be sure to keep your new tree or shrub well watered. In dry weather, that could mean two to three times per week.

Step 6

Unless you're planting a tree in a windy or sloped site, you probably won't need to stake. If you do stake, be sure to use a wide strap, a wire inside a piece of hose or other soft, insulating material so the support doesn't dig into the bark. Never leave staking on more than one year.

How to plant perennials & groundcovers

Step 1

Prepare the planting bed by loosening the soil to a depth of one foot or more. Add peat moss, compost or Country Market Planting Mix — up to one-third the volume of your native soil, depending on the quality of that soil — and mix the amendments in well.

If you're planting only a single perennial, dig a hole twice as wide and one-and-a-half times as deep as the root ball. Improve the soil as above.

Step 2

Remove the plant from the pot and fray out the roots to keep them from growing in a circle.

Step 3

Set your plant in the hole so that it's level with the existing grade or about a half-inch above grade. For two-gallon or larger-sized pots, plant about one inch above existing grade. Do NOT plant the plant deeper than it was in the pot.

Step 4

Backfill the hole with soil, gently tamp and then water with Root Stimulator mixed according to label directions. Make sure you water enough so that the bottom of the rootball is moist. (Insert a stick or probe alongside the rootball to check.)

Step 5

Cover the soil with about two inches of mulch, but be sure to keep the mulch about two inches away from the base of the plant.

When you get your plants home...

- Don't let them sit! Plant your new plants as soon as possible. If you can't get them in the ground right away, keep them well watered and out of dry or windy areas! Plant roots dry out very quickly above ground in pots.
- Water well. This is the most important thing you can do for your new plants, especially in the first few years. You may need to water new trees and shrubs two or even three times per week in hot, dry weather. When you do water, put on enough to wet the soil down to the bottom of the rootball.

For perennials, check plants daily during hot weather. Some may need daily waterings until they're established.

•Questions? Just ask! Our staff is always ready to help. Please call or stop by for our free in-store tip sheets and diagnostic services. We want your garden to be a successful one!