



## Planting Shrubs and Trees

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Good grass is important, but it is only one element to beautiful landscaping. Your lawn can be enhanced by adding attractive trees, shrubs and beautiful flowers. Although trees and shrubs are hearty plants, they must be planted correctly to survive.

Very early spring is a great time to plant shrubs and trees because they will have time to become established before the hot, dry summer. They can be planted in the summer, but because of extended periods without rain, you must be very diligent about watering. Fall is another great time to plant since rain tends to be plentiful and the tree is headed into dormancy for the winter. During the winter dormancy, the roots are growing but the tree does not have to support branch growth and leaves.

### Tools & Materials Checklist

- Tree or shrub
- Shovel
- Canvas or plastic sheeting
- Peat moss
- Plant food
- Spading fork
- Garden hose with access to water
- Tree pruner or hand pruner
- Pruning spray
- Tree wrap
- Cord



#### **Step 1: Dig a Hole**

The first step in planting trees and shrubs is to give them plenty of room. Make the hole in which the tree or shrub is to be planted wide enough for the longest root to be laid into it without crowding. A rule of thumb is to make the hole in which the tree or shrub is to be set 1-1/2 times as large as the diameter of the roots of the plant.

#### **Step 2: Pile the Soil**

You can save yourself considerable cleanup time by piling the soil dug from the hole onto canvas or plastic sheets. This also prevents the piled dirt from killing or damaging the grass around the hole.

#### **Step 3: Mix in Peat Moss**

It is a good idea to mix some peat moss into the soil when replacing it around the newly set plant or tree.

#### **Step 4: Add Plant Food**

If the shrub or tree is in a container, dig the hole at least 2" deeper than the root in the container. Loosen the soil below the root and add a small amount of plant food.

#### **Step 5: Remove from Container**

Remove the shrub or tree from its container and lower it into the hole. Refill the hole with thoroughly loosened soil. Then, form a mound with additional soil around the edge of the newly dug hole. This provides a basin to hold water until the plant is thoroughly rooted in the new location.

#### **Step 6: Unwrap the Roots**

If the tree or shrub is a bare-root plant, unwrap the roots of the tree after the hole is dug and place it in position. Hold the plant upright with a spading fork while you tamp the loose dirt around the roots. Always set the shrub or tree about 2" lower in the ground than it was originally set before replanting.

Steps 7 – 11 on Back



### Step 7: Water Thoroughly

Use plenty of water when resetting balled or bare-root plants. Fill the basin around the tree and let the water soak in thoroughly. After one complete soaking, re-soak it again. Water is essential to a new shrub or tree in the first few days after replanting. Keep the hole wet during this period. Be sure to build up a basin arrangement to keep water on the plant for several days. Water your new plant every week to 10 days during a dry spell.



### Step 8: Trim & Shape

After planting the tree or shrub, trim it to the shape and size desired. Pruned limbs will heal faster if you make slanting cuts just above the bud. Spray pruned areas with special pruning spray immediately after trimming to deter insects and disease organisms.



### Step 9: Wrap the Trunk

Protect the new plant against injury and disease by covering the lower part of the tree trunk with a tree wrap. Start the wrap just above the roots and a little below soil level. Continue wrapping to just below the lowest limb. Hold the wrap in position with cords.



### Step 10: Lightly Feed

Keep the soil loose around the new plant and give it a good start by feeding it lightly with plant food. Soak the food into the soil by watering. Feed any new plant with plant food in the spring and fall until it reaches maturity.



### Step 11: Plant in Groups (Optional)

You can create interesting groups of trees by tying different varieties together and setting them out in a bunch. Hold them in position with cords. The cords will rot away quickly after they are placed in the ground. Follow the same planting instructions if you decide to plant in groups.

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