



Backbone Valley Nursery, Inc.

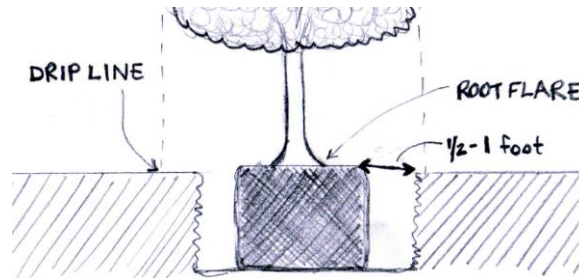
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Tree Planting Instructions

- 1.) Pick a species of tree that will do the best in your soil type and zone. Be sure to buy a locally grown tree as they will adapt best to the soil and water types of your area.
- 2.) Be sure to choose a quality container grown tree species that does not have girdling roots.
- 3.) Keep in mind how big your tree will grow! Pick the correct spot to plant your tree:
 - Away from power lines
 - Clear of buildings
 - In a well drained area where water doesn't sit after a rain (for most trees)
 - Away from septic drain fields and water pipes
 - Away from shelf rock or large rock boulders. You may have to build up around the root ball.
- 4.) Dig a hole that is just as deep as the root ball (no deeper!) and about 1-2 foot wider than the root ball of your tree. Dig a hole with rough, jagged sides rather than perfectly smooth, rounded sides. See picture below:



- 5.) Remove the container, inspect the root system. If the roots of the tree are growing in a spiraling motion cut with a knife or unravel them so they will spread out instead of grow in a circle. New roots will flush and grow from these cuts.
- 6.) Place your tree in the hole gently and make sure that when planted the top of the root ball will be even with the surrounding soil level but NOT BELOW GROUND LEVEL. Being a little high is better than being too low. If you need to remove the tree and add soil back to the bottom of the hole, then now is the time to do it. Keep in mind that this soil added back to the bottom will compact when watered in so make sure you add enough.
- 7.) It is very important that you do not cover up the natural root flare of the tree with soil or mulch. It is also important that the tree doesn't settle and allow soil or mulch to cover the root flare of the tree.
- 8.) If you have good, well drained soil, then amend the original native soil 30% with premium compost. If you have poor soil then bring in a quality planting mix that has a combination of granite sand, topsoil, composted pine bark, and premium compost. Do not use bagged potting soil to plant your tree but it is safe to use a bagged garden soil or landscape mix. We recommend our bulk custom landscape mix.
- 9.) We also recommend using fertilizer tablets specifically for planting trees. We recommend a natural based fertilizer tablet that feeds for one year and contains beneficial microorganisms. Use the correct amount of tablets for the size of tree you are planting and place them around the root ball in the bottom 1/3 of the hole. Do not use tree fertilizer spikes.
- 10.) In addition to fertilizer tablets, we recommend amending the soil with a mycorrhizal fungi inoculant that will help with overall vigor and speed the growth of your tree. Mix the mycorrhizal fungi inoculant powder evenly into the upper 8 inches of the backfill soil next to the root ball.
- 11.) Position your tree so that its best features are facing the desired viewing area, and check that the tree is standing straight. Continue to check the orientation and keep it straight as you begin to add soil.

- 12.) Add soil a little at a time around the root ball and SLIGHTLY tamp it down around the root ball with the handle of the shovel. Build a dam around the outside of the root-ball with the excess soil. This will allow more water to stay around the root zone.
- 13.) Liquid root stimulator applied about once a month for the first year will be very beneficial to your tree.
- 14.) Be sure to stake your tree well with three to four anchor points to avoid shifting which causes new roots to break off. We recommend the Arborbrace tree staking kit. Make sure the tree remains staked well for at least one year and check often to see if you need to tighten it up or make adjustments. You may remove the staking when you can give the trunk of the tree a good shake and you do not see the ground around it move or jiggle at all.
- 15.) Be sure to give your newly planted tree a good layer of mulch that is at least 2-3" deep and extends a little past the drip line of the tree (the outside edge of the canopy) and be sure to pull the mulch away from the trunk of the tree so as to not cover the root flare up. Be sure to reapply mulch yearly.
- 16.) **Water your tree religiously for at least one year using the following guidelines and subsequent years if we experience high heat or drought conditions.** Make sure you are saturating the entire root ball and the soil area beyond it as well. Be sure to water deep and **DO NOT RELY ON SPRINKLER IRRIGATION.** Please note that this is just a general watering guideline and if you have heavy clay soils it is very easy to overwater a tree and kill it.

Guidelines for Watering Your Tree for the First Year

Temperature	Frequency of Watering
90-100 Degrees	every day
80-90 Degrees	every other day
50-80 Degrees	twice a week
Winter	once a week

- 17.) Clay and other poorly draining soils may not require as much water as indicated above. Overwatering or trees staying too wet can be as damaging as trees being too dry. The best way to check for soil moisture is to dig down under the mulch 3 or 4 inches and feel if the soil is moist.
- 18.) **Sleep, Creep, and Leap:** It takes at least three years of good watering and feeding for a tree to get fully established. You may not notice a lot of growth up top on your tree for the first two years. This is because it is putting all of its energy into a healthy root system down below. If you cared for your tree well, you should start to see substantial growth by the third year.
- 19.) Do not use weed and feed type products in any areas nearby trees. These products can severely stunt or even kill your trees and is very detrimental to beneficial soil biology. This applies to both mature and young trees.
- 20.) Be sure to put a deer cage around your tree trunk to protect it from deer rubbing their horns on it.
- 21.) Apply an organic based granular fertilizer twice a year around the drip line of your tree. We recommend Espoma brand Tree-tone fertilizer or Ladybug brand 8-2-4 granular fertilizer. We do not recommend the use of tree fertilizer spikes.
- 22.) See our tree care and maintenance recommendations for long term care and maintenance of your tree.

We give no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the productiveness or life of nursery stock we sell and will not be responsible for result secured upon transplanting.