



Guide to Planting Trees and Shrubs

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Balled and Burlap (B&B)

Transport your tree carefully. Do not drop it—the impact can damage the roots severely. Always plant B&B material immediately.

Dig a hole about 6” larger diameter than the root ball. Depth should be identical to the depth of the root ball, so be sure to use something like the shovel handle to measure how deep to make your hole. Fill hole with water and allow it to drain unless soil is already wet. Then gently place tree into hole. Once in the hole, cut the strings around the ball. Peel back the upper part of the burlap, taking care not to damage visible roots. Cut the burlap off the top part of the ball. Do not attempt to remove the burlap from the bottom 2/3’s of the root ball. It may already have root hairs in it even if no roots are protruding, and removing the burlap can damage water uptake for the tree. Fill the hole with water and allow it to drain. Backfill the hole. Water one more time. No compost or soil amendments or fertilizers are required.

Staking is generally optional, and should be for 1 season at most. Most trees do not require staking. Keep tree well watered.

Container trees/shrubs

Follow the same rules as above, but before planting soak the container and allow 3-4 hours for the plant to get a good drink. Slide the tree out of the container (tipping the tree on the side makes that easier) and gently place into hole. If there are dense roots along the outside of the pot, you can gently loosen them and cut any circling roots. Plant to the same depth as in the container, or if the graft is still well above ground, you may cover up to the graft. Water as for B&B.