

Why Should I Plant a Tree?

- To beautify your community and increase your property value
- To provide oxygen and reduce pollution
- To enhance wildlife diversity
- To provide shade and reduce cooling costs
- To moderate storm water runoff and control erosion

Which Species Should I Plant?

- Select trees that are site appropriate (native to your area, will not interfere with power lines, adapted to the soil conditions, etc.).
- Contact the Delaware Forest Service for a list of appropriate tree species for Delaware.
- Plant a variety of tree species to minimize losses from potential pest infestations (pests typically affect only one tree species).
- Other tree selection considerations include: aesthetics (flower color, fall foliage, etc.), wildlife food production, and tolerance to sun and shade.

When Should I Plant a Tree?

- Plant trees during the spring or early fall.
- When planting in spring, plant trees as soon as possible after the last chance of a hard freeze (typically after March 1 in Delaware).
- Certain tree species thrive better depending upon when they are planted (fall or spring); contact the Delaware Forest Service for advice.

What Should I Know About a Tree Before Buying It?

- Inspect the tree for wounds and girdling roots (roots that encircle the trunk or other roots).
- Ensure the size of the root ball is in correct proportion to the tree (the ball should be at least one foot in diameter for every inch of trunk diameter).
- How tall will the tree grow when it is mature?
- How far will the limbs spread?

What Should I Know About the Soil?

- Perform a soil test (available through the University of Delaware's Cooperative Extension Service) to check soil pH and other soil characteristics.
- Loosen the soil if necessary; compacted soil can lead to tree mortality.

What Must I Know Before I Dig?

- Are there utility lines (gas, electric, water, etc.) below the site? Call Miss Utility at 1-800-282-8555.
- If there are power lines above the site, make sure you are planting an appropriate tree species to avoid future problems.

How Should I Dig the Hole?

- Dig a hole two to three times wider than the diameter of the root ball; taper the sides so the hole gradually slopes to the surface at its edges.
- The top of the root ball should rest at or slightly above the surface of the ground.

How Should I Plant the Tree?

- Remove all strings and ropes after placing the tree in the hole.
- Gently remove the burlap.
- If a wire mesh is present, carefully cut and remove the mesh.
- Remove protective wrapping from the trunk.
- Carefully place soil back around the roots; do not fertilize or add additional soil.
- Gently tamp soil to remove large pockets of air; however, do not compact the soil.

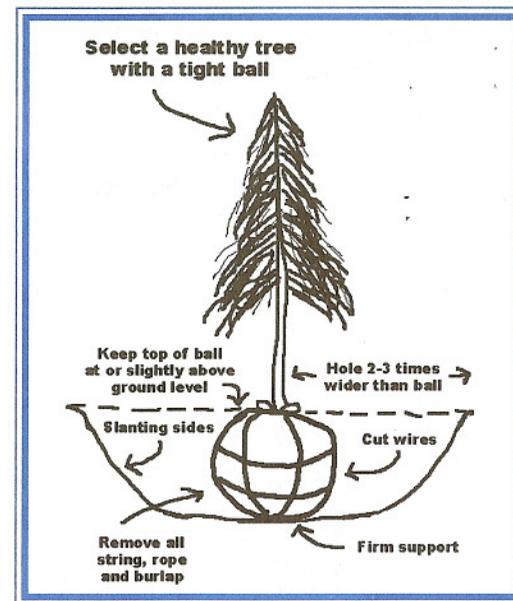
How Should I Care for My Tree?

- Immediately water your tree thoroughly after planting.
- Water your tree weekly during the growing season for the first year (it needs about one inch of water per week). Water more frequently in dry weather.

- Generally, it is not necessary to stake a tree; however, use stakes in windy areas or if vandalism is likely. If stakes are used, loosely tie them to the tree with soft, flexible materials (cloth, rubber hose, etc.). Remove the stakes after one year.

Should I Mulch My Tree?

- Mulch helps to retain moisture, reduce competition, and protect the tree from mechanical injury (lawn mowers, etc.).
- Mulch to a depth of 2 to 3 inches.
- Keep mulch 2 to 3 inches away from the trunk.



The diagram above illustrates proper planting techniques.

Planting Balled and Burlapped Trees

This brochure is designed to provide you with a few helpful hints on how to properly plant a container or balled and burlapped (B&B) tree. For more information on how to care for your trees, contact the Delaware Forest Service.

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TREE TIPS

from your
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