

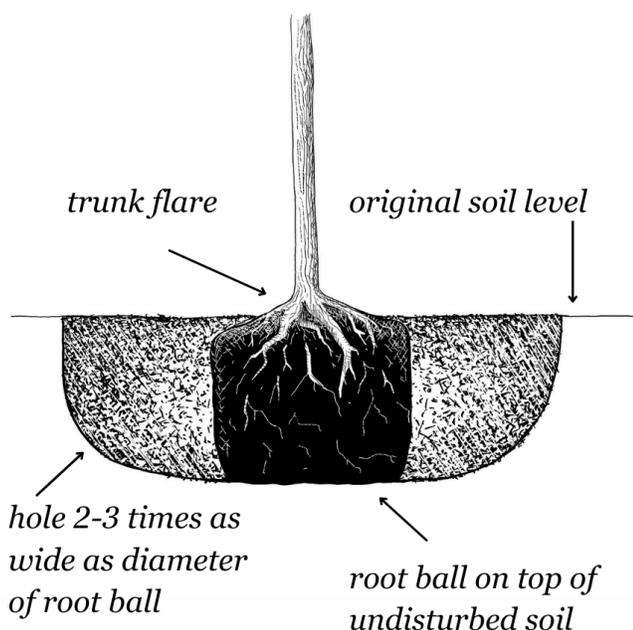
# PLANTING GUIDE

## TREES + SHRUBS

*By properly planting and caring for your new tree or shrub, you will ensure its long-term success.*

### TWO IMPORTANT RULES:

- 1) The planting hole should be twice as wide and 1-2 inches shallower than the height of the root ball.
- 2) The **trunk flare should be visible above the soil surface**. Burying the trunk flare is a common mistake which leads to tree decline or death.



## Successful Planting Step-by-Step

*For a demonstration of these techniques, watch our video on proper planting at [mahoneysgarden.com/video-proper-planting-with-patrick/](http://mahoneysgarden.com/video-proper-planting-with-patrick/)*

**Step 1 - Dig a hole.** Dig a hole that is twice as wide and 1-2 inches shallower than the height of the root ball.

**Step 2 - Prepare your new plant.** Remove the plant from its nursery container and check the roots. Gently loosen the roots with

your hands. If the roots are growing in a circle, use a sharp knife to cut an X across the bottom of the root ball and 3 or 4 vertical slices along the sides.

Trees that are purchased “**balled and burlapped**” should be placed in the planting hole with the burlap still in place. Once in the hole, use scissors or wire cutters to cut away the burlap, rope and any wire caging, all the way to the base of the root ball. **Remove all wire and burlap from the planting site.**

**Step 3 - Amend and Plant.** Encourage early root development by supplementing the soil removed from the planting hole with Mahoney’s Rooted Goods Compost Planting Blend and Bio-Tone Starter Plus to encourage root development.

- Mix Planting Blend 50/50 with soil removed from the hole to backfill.
- Sprinkle Bio-Tone Starter Plus in the hole so that it will make contact with the plant’s roots.
- Place the plant on top of Bio-Tone Starter.
- When the plant is in place, fill the hole half way with mixed soil and water.
- Finish backfilling and gently tamp the soil to remove air pockets.

**Step 4 - Create a berm.** Create a water-holding basin or berm around the plant, this will direct water down to the roots.

**Step 5 - Water.** The initial watering of a new plant should be done by hand to completely soak the root ball and fill the berm surrounding the plant.

**Step 6 - Mulch.** Mulch can be applied to a depth of 2-3 inches to help conserve moisture. Importantly, it should be kept away from the base of the tree or shrub. Be sure not to create a mulch “mountain” around the base of any tree or shrub. This can invite fungal disease and will starve the tree of needed oxygen.

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## TREES + SHRUBS

### Animal Protection

Newly planted trees and shrubs can be especially vulnerable to browsing from animals like deer and rabbits while they are getting established. We recommend protecting young plants with physical guards, such as tree wraps, cages, or hardware cloth around the base. Animal repellents can also be very helpful when used regularly—products like **Rabbit Scram** and **Bobbex** are effective options for discouraging feeding. Using both physical protection and repellents together provides the best defense while your plants become established.

### Establishment Watering

85% of plants that fail do so because of improper watering. Watering is not an exact science and your plants' needs will depend on many factors including soil conditions, rainfall, elevation, slope, and plant species.

Generally speaking, **it takes at least two years for a newly planted tree to become established.** During that time much of the plant's energy is devoted to developing the root system, which requires consistent and deep watering, particularly in the first year. Slow, deep, deliberate supplemental hand watering is needed to establish a new tree or shrub.

**IMPORTANT:** *An in-ground irrigation system used to water the lawn or an oscillating sprinkler is **not** sufficient to water a newly planted tree or shrub.*

If you are using an in-ground sprinkler system, you will need to supplement with hand watering until your plants are established.

### RECOMMENDED WATERING TECHNIQUES:

- Place a trickling hose at the base of the plant for 30-60 minutes
- Use a hose with nozzle set to "shower" mode and water until you see pooling at the base of the plant

**Tip:** *a TreeGator (watering bag) or similar could also be used for establishing new trees. Use the manufacturer's instructions for water volume and refilling frequency as a guide and supplement with hand watering as needed.*

### YEAR ONE WATERING GUIDELINES

Weeks 1-2	Water Daily
Spring / Summer	Every other day
Fall	Weekly until ground freezes

Be sure to keep up with watering until the ground freezes. Plants will weather winter best if they are well-hydrated.

**The best time of day to water is morning,** this gives the plant plenty of time to absorb the water and allows foliage to dry during the day. *Never let your plants go to bed with wet leaves.*

Come spring, be sure to wake up your garden with thorough, deep watering when the ground thaws.