

First Year Care for New Plantings

Newly planted trees and shrubs need extra care to establish a healthy root system. The size of the plant and environmental conditions will determine how long it takes for the plant to acclimate to its new home. For trees, the pot size can be used as a guide. For example: A #5 gallon tree will take approximately one year to become established, while a #15 gallon tree may take two years. The larger the plant material, the longer you will need to provide supplemental care.

During this acclimation period, plants will put much more energy into developing a root system than in producing top growth. A healthy root system is the key to your new plant's success. For large trees and shrubs, you should not expect to see much new growth the first year (depending on the variety). Larger specimens can take up to three years to begin producing new growth.

PLANTING TIME

The time of year you plant will greatly affect how quickly your new plants become established. Hardy container trees and shrubs can be planted anytime of the year, even winter; however, **spring & fall are the easiest times to establish new plantings**. If you plant new trees and shrubs during the heat of the summer, be prepared to pay keen attention to the water needs of your new plants.

WATERING

All new trees and shrubs will require supplemental hand watering after planting for up to a year.

You must NOT rely on your sprinkler system alone to provide adequate water to new plantings, especially in summer months.

Use a hose to directly apply an ample sized puddle around the root ball. Let the water absorb, and then repeat.

It is best to water plants early in the morning (around 6-7 am).

Do this approximately:

Winter: 1 time per week

Spring & Fall: 2 times per week

Summer: 3 times per week

You can also use Gator Bags or soaker hoses to provide a slow drip to individual plants.

Apply 2 inches of mulch around the root ball to conserve moisture and protect the soil.

Unsure? Ask a garden advisor for details.

FERTILIZATION

Nitrogen fertilizers that encourage green growth are not recommended at planting time. A liquid root stimulator, however, is very important. Water in your new plants with a root stimulator, such as Good Natured Root Stimulator and/or Liquid Seaweed with Superthrive, twice a month for the first 6 months. Plants that prefer acidic soil, such as Azaleas and Japanese maples, should also receive an application of a soil acidifier, such as Liquid Seaweed with Iron or pelletized sulfur at planting time. After the first year, use the appropriate fertilizer, such as Texas Tee for general use or Espoma Holly Tone for acid loving plants.

PREVENTATIVE CARE

We are here to answer your questions and provide solutions. Should you notice a problem with your newly planted tree or shrub, please let us know right away. Bring us a leaf and branch sample, along with close-up and further away photos if at all possible. Many problems can be diagnosed by answering a few questions about growing conditions. Properly chosen and planted, most stressed plants can make a full recovery if the problem is diagnosed early. We are always happy to assist with keeping your plants healthy.

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