

Tree Care Information

Planting

TEP's Trees for You program recommends planting on the west or south side of your home to increase shade and lower electricity use. When selecting a planting location, pick a large enough space to allow your tree to grow and mature. Avoid planting too close to structures or utility lines that may interfere with tree growth.

- The diameter of the planting hole should be at least twice the size of the container, but no deeper than the height of the root ball. For easier digging, presoak the area with water to loosen the soil.
- Break through any hard soil or caliche to promote good drainage. To test drainage, fill the planting hole with water. The hole should drain within 24 hours.
- When removing the tree from its container, do not lift the tree by its trunk. Carefully cut the bottom of the container and place it in the planting hole. Then cut the sides to remove the container carefully to not damage the root ball.
- Backfill the planting hole with native soil, water and then gently tamp as you go. The top of root ball should sit slightly higher than the existing soil grade. Apply a generous amount of mulch away from the trunk to help keep the soil cool, retain water, and prohibit weed growth.
- Gently remove the nursery stake (if present) and use the staking guidelines below if applicable.

Watering

Watering trees during establishment is vital for their long term success. Inadequate watering is the top reason for tree loss. Watering schedules vary based on tree variety, soil type, and season. Use these tips to properly water your tree:

- Keep the root ball of your newly planted tree moist until roots grow out into the native soil.
- If an irrigation system is present, drippers should be placed below the canopy line. As the tree grows, move the drippers out and add drippers, if necessary. Tip: A 1 gallon-per-minute emitter delivers the tree one gallon of water for every hour the system runs. Get to know your irrigation system to ensure proper watering.
- If no irrigation system exists, use a garden or soaker hose to slowly and thoroughly saturate the root ball.

- Watering harvesting tip: Build a berm and swale around the tree's dripline to passively capture rainwater.

Staking

- Gently remove the nursery stake (if present).
- Trees that cannot stand on their own or that are located in a windy area should be staked.
- Install two stakes vertically and 12" away from the trunk. Stakes should be installed perpendicularly to prevailing winds.
- Stakes should reach 18" depth in soil.
- Use rubber or coated wire tree ties to stabilize the trunk between the stakes.
- Place the tree ties as low on the trunk as possible to keep the tree supported.
- Tree ties should allow for slight movement of the tree.

Pruning

- Pruning is not necessary during the first year of establishment.
- Seasonal pruning depends on the tree species and should only be performed on dead, dying, decayed, or crossing branches.

Fertilization

- Fertilization type and frequency depends on the tree species. Consult a plant specialist at your local garden center for specific fertilization requirements for your tree.

Additional Resources:

[AZ Dept. of Forestry Tree Guide](#)

[PCCE Planting Guidelines](#)

