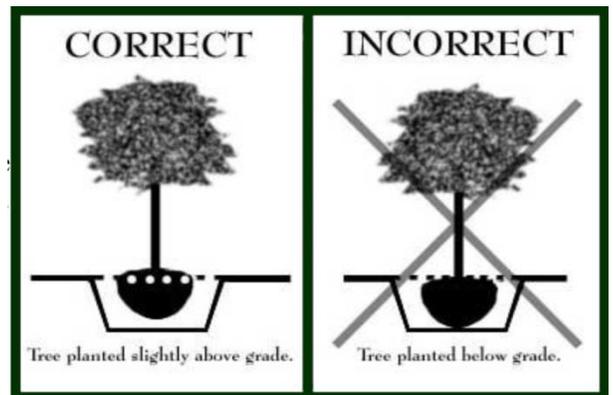


Plant a Tree or Shrub:

Think of the tree you purchased as a lifetime investment. How well your tree and investment grows depends on the type of tree and location you select for planting, the care you provide when the tree is planted and follow-up care.

Dig the hole

Don't skimp on this job. "it's better to put a \$100.00 tree in a \$200.00 hole than it is to put a \$200.00 tree in a \$100.00 hole." Make the whole wide, as much as three times the diameter of the root ball, but only as deep as the root ball. It is important to make the hole wide because the tree roots on a newly established tree must push through surrounding soil to establish. Breaking up the soil in a large area around the tree provides the newly emerging roots room to expand into loose soil to hasten establishment.



Place the tree in the hole

Before placing the tree in the hole, check to make sure the hole has been dug to the proper depth and no more. The majority of the roots on a newly planted tree will develop in the top 12" of soil. If the tree is planted too deep, new roots will have difficulty developing due to a lack of oxygen. It is better to plant the tree a little high, 1-2" above the trunk flare, than to plant it at or below the original growing level. This will allow for some settling. To avoid damage when setting the tree in the hole, always lift the tree by the root ball and never by the trunk.

Straighten the tree Before you begin backfilling, have someone view the tree from several directions to confirm that the tree is straight. Once you begin backfilling, it is difficult to reposition.

Fill in the Hole

Fill the hole about 1/3 full with a mixture of compost, fertilizer (Holly Tone or Plant Tone), and existing soil then gently but firmly pack the soil around the base of the root ball. Water the soil around the ball to help remove any air pockets. If the tree is balled and burlapped, cut and remove the string from around the trunk. Now you can fill the rest of the hole with the same compost/fertilizer/soil mix. Be careful not to damage the trunk or roots in the process. Finally, water everything thoroughly.

Stakes

It is not necessary to stake the plant unless it is very loose in the soil. Studies have shown that trees will establish more quickly and develop stronger trunk and root systems if they are not staked at the time of planting. However, protective staking may be required where windy conditions are a concern. If staking is necessary for support, two stakes used in conjunction with a wide flexible tie material will hold the tree upright and minimize injury to the trunk. Remove support staking and ties after the first year of growth.

Mulch

Mulch acts as a blanket to hold moisture, protect against harsh soil temperatures (hot and cold), and reduces competition from grass and weeds. A 2-4" layer is ideal. When placing mulch, care should be taken so that the actual trunk of the tree is not covered.

