

A GUIDE FOR HAND PLANTING: 10 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL TREE PLANTING

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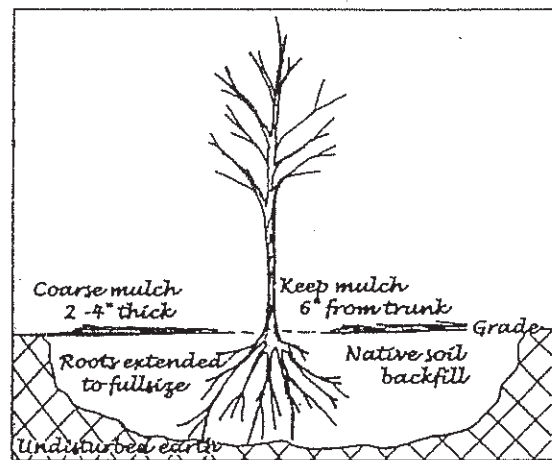
When you bait your hook with your heart the fish always bite....when you plant a tree with love it always lives, you do it with such care and thoroughness.

..John Burroughs

1. Begin with a healthy tree that has no signs of insects or disease, has a strong trunk, and has roots that are not pot-bound. Choose a site that is large enough for the tree to grow to maturity. Soils that are compacted or have had heavy machinery on them need to be ripped or aerated over the entire area to a minimum depth of 18 inches. Water must be available for the planting and thereafter, on a regular watering schedule for plantings in the arid west.

2. Dig a hole that is no deeper than the rootball and at least 3 times as wide. Five times as wide as the rootball is even better. This size increases aeration and decreases the chance of "root suffocation" from over watering. Place the soil removed in digging aside and use it to backfill the hole. Soil amendments have not been shown to offer any consistent advantage.

3. Test the hole for adequate drainage by filling the hole with water. The water should drain out overnight or at least ½-inch per hour. If not, find another place, with better drainage, or install a designed drain. Plant only where soils drain and water does not stand during the wet season.



4. Carefully remove the container, plastic, paper maché, burlap, or wire basket. Place the tree on undisturbed soil. The top of the rootball should be at grade. Planting at grade keeps water, disease, and rot away from the root crown. If the tree has been grafted, face the graft scar away from the direct sun.

5. Tease the roots out from the rootball surface. Spread them out into the wide hole that has been prepared. Take care to keep the roots moist during planting. Prune any roots that are wrapped around the rootball, are mushy, or are dry and brittle with sharp shears. If the majority of the roots are rotten, dried-up or pot-bound, return the tree to the nursery for a replacement.



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