



Rainbow Gardens Tree and Shrub Planting Guide

Carry your trees and shrubs home by the container or root ball (never the trunk) to avoid damage to the root ball!

Planting Trees and Shrubs:

1. Dig the hole at least twice as wide as the root ball (container) and only as deep as the height of the root ball.
2. Put the native soil in a wheelbarrow or on top of a piece of plastic adjacent to the hole.
 - Throw away the caliche (hardened natural cement) and rock. If a lot of rock is encountered consider building a large raised bed.
3. Mix 2/3 native soil from the hole with 1/3 soil conditioner or living mulch.
4. Gently tap the container and slide out the root ball, being careful not to break up the root system.
 - If the root ball will not come out easily, cut the pot with a knife or scissors.
5. Carefully set the tree or shrub in the hole, holding on to the root ball.
6. Make sure trunk is perpendicular to ground.
7. Top of root ball must be even with ground level.
8. Fill hole in around the sides of the root ball with the soil mixture, firming the soil as you fill.
9. Build a 4" tall berm (raised barrier) around the edge of the planting hole and drip line (where the tree canopy extends to) for efficient watering.
10. Push 3-5 Agriform fertilizer tablets around the perimeter of the root ball.
11. Water the tree/shrub thoroughly by filling up the berm.
 - Adding root stimulator afterwards will aid in root hair development.

12. Fill the berm with 2-3 inches of shredded mulch to conserve water and eliminate weed/grass competition.

-**Do not pile mulch adjacent to the tree trunk.**

-Wet mulch touching the tree's bark can cause the bark to rot and may injure or kill the tree.

-Mulch should not be touching the tree trunk

13. If needed, loosely stake new trees for 6-12 months to prevent damage from high winds.

-Shrubs should not need staking.

-Stake kits are available or you can make your own.

Watering Newly Planted Trees

The secret to watering is to water thoroughly each time.

1. Bring a hose to the berm and let it trickle soak very slowly for 30 minutes.

-The idea is to deep water, encouraging roots to grow deeper.

2. Do not water again until the root ball is fairly dry. It is better to slightly underwater than to overwater.

3. Start off with two deep soakings a week when the weather is warm or hot.

4. Increase the number of days between deep soakings as the tree becomes rooted in.

5. "Wean" your trees/shrubs off of depending on you for water.

-You want them to eventually rely on natural rainfall.

6. The advantage to fall planting is that very little supplemental watering is needed during the fall, winter, and early spring. Your tree or shrub should be well rooted by summer heat time.

Maintaining Newly Planted Trees

1. Remove stakes after one year.

2. In very hot locations, wrapping the trunk with "tree wrap" will prevent scalding and killing of the cambium layer on the South side of the trunk.

3. Your tree or shrub does not need to be fertilized the first 6 months if Agriform tablets are used.

4. Fertilize your trees and shrubs in early spring and early fall with a tree/shrub fertilizer.

Trees that are in the legume family like Mt. Laurels, Mesquites and Acacias, need minimal to no fertilizer after planting.

