

GARDEN BASICS

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Plant a Tree

Get your tree off to a healthy start with these five simple steps.



- 1. Measure and dig.** Use a spade to measure the height of your tree's root ball to know how deep to dig your hole. Make the hole's diameter 1 foot greater than the root ball's. The top of the root ball should sit 1-2 inches above the ground to prevent standing water from damaging the roots.
- 2. Place the tree.** Unwrap the root ball or unpot the tree and tease out the roots. Gently place the root ball in the hole.
- 3. Backfill.** Using the soil you have taken from the hole, start filling around the root ball. Tamp the soil as you go with your fist or the spade handle to prevent air pockets.
- 4. Water and mulch.** Give the tree a thorough soaking to settle it into the ground. Top-dress around the base of the tree with shredded-bark mulch to help retain moisture and prevent weeds. Keep the mulch 1-2 inches away from the trunk of the tree.
- 5. Water more.** For the next several weeks, make sure the tree does not dry out. If less than an inch of rain falls in a week, water well. Water slowly and deeply for best results.

For more information, see
Resources on page 104.