

## B & B Tree Planting

Larger landscape sized trees are usually balled and burlapped, or "B&B" as they are referred to in the landscaping business.

Moving and planting a large B&B tree can be a intimidating task due to the weight of soil root balls. This task is usually best left to professionals with experience and the proper equipment.

( Note: Average soil weight is approximately 100 lbs. per cubic foot. )

### Tree Placement

Please see our "Proper Tree Selection" guide.

### Proper moving & handling

Caution should be exercised whenever handling B&B trees. They are heavy and can be awkward. Eye protection should always be worn as smaller branches can easily poke when moving a tree.

B&B trees should only be moved by lifting the root ball, never by lifting or pulling on the trunk, which can easily do damage to the small roots on a B&B tree.

When transporting a tree with leaves on it, wrap the leafed branches with burlap or a mesh tarp to protect the tree from the drying effects of the wind and the physical damage wind can do.

It is strongly suggested that the use of make-shift ramps (planks or other such items) be avoided. They can easily slip and the weight of a heavy root ball can cause serious injury.

### Digging the tree hole

Dig a hole 30% to 50% wider than the tree ball. The hole should be only as deep as the tree's ball.

- hole depth - do not excavate any deeper than the root ball itself. B&B trees need a solid footing to sit on. Loose soil under the ball will settle, placing the root ball below grade. And tilting might also occur. Planting a tree too deeply is a common problem that results in stagnated growth.

- hole width - as a general rule, planting holes should be twice as wide as the root ball, if feasible. When planting in poorly drained soil or if the surrounding ground isn't sloped, plant the tree with the root ball elevated approximately one-third of its height above the existing soil. Use the back fill to slope-up around the elevated root ball.

### Placing the tree in the hole

- Check to ensure the root ball is at least slightly above grade, more in poorly drained soil.
- When placing the tree in the hole use care to not lift or pull the tree by it's trunk. Always handle it by the root ball.
- **Do not** remove the burlap or the wire basket that holds the ball together. (both will deteriorate in a reasonable amount of time - neither will affect the trees ability to root properly)
- If the tree root ball is in a fiber root control bag, it must be removed before backfilling. This is a heavy fabric that is usually black in color. Do not mistake the root control bag for burlap. **Root control bags must be removed** where as **burlap must not be removed.**
- **Do** remove any nylon twine on the root ball (nylon will not deteriorate).
- **Do** remove any twine from the stem or trunk to prevent girdling.

### Backfill

- Research indicates that backfilling the planting hole with native soil will allow the tree to establish itself better. Improving backfill soil by using peat moss, topsoil, or other such soils is not recommended. (Improved soil may cause roots to stay in the planting hole instead of spreading as they normally would.)
- Make sure the tree is straight as backfill is added. Work carefully to avoid air pockets, making sure to firm the soil from time to time so as to remove any air pockets and ensure the tree stays straight.
- Do not bury the graft or bud union below grade.

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### Staking

- Due to our normally windy conditions it is recommended all trees be staked for the first growing season. This allows the roots to establish so that the tree will stay straight.
- Do allow some slight movement. A tree that can sway somewhat in the wind will develop a stronger trunk.
- Do protect the tree's bark from the ties / wires. Short sections of old garden hose works well.
- Smaller trees can be staked with either the one stake or two stake methods. When using the one stake method it is recommended if planting in the fall or winter, the point of the stake should be South of the tree. If planting in the spring or summer, the point of the stake should be North of the tree. ( see picture 1 )
- It is recommended that medium size trees should be staked with the two stake method. ( see picture 2 )
- It is recommended that larger size trees should be staked with the three stake method. ( see picture 3 )



- All staking should be removed within one year after planting. Growth can actually be reduced if the supports are left in place for longer than a year. Trees can become girdled by the attaching wires as the trunk increases in diameter.

### 2 stake method

2 parallel stakes driven at least 18 inches into firm soil (approximately a foot beyond the planting hole) on opposite sides of the tree. Stake height after being driven into the ground should be approximately half to two-thirds that of the tree. Support the tree by 2 12-gauge wires attached to both stakes and looped loosely around the trunk. A piece of rubber hose should be used to protect the trunk.

### 3 stake method

3 parallel stakes driven 18 to 36 inches into firm soil (approximately a foot beyond the planting hole) equally spaced around the tree. Support the tree by 3 12-gauge wires ran from each stake up to the first heavy branches of the tree. The wires should be loose enough to allow slight movement of the tree. A piece of rubber hose should be used to protect the trunk.

### Tree / trunk wrap

- The bark on a young tree should be protected with tree trunk wrap, or a plastic spiral wrap, during its first year of growth.
- These wraps should be placed around the trunk of the tree, between the first set of branches and the ground. ( see pictures 4 & 5 )

### Mulch

- Apply 3 to 4 inches of organic mulch around the base of the tree to conserve moisture and reduce weeds.
- Keep mulch at least 6 inches away from the trunk.

### Water

- Create a watering basin at least 4 to 6 inches high just outside the root-ball. Fill it with water, let it drain, and repeat.

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### Pruning

- It is recommended on newly transplanted trees to prune only crossing branches or damaged limbs.

check the soil moisture at a depth of 3 to 4 inches and proceed accordingly.

- If there is a lack of moisture during the winter it is necessary to water once per month (but only when the ground is not frozen).

### After planting

- Watering - B&B trees need regular watering until their roots grow into surrounding soil. During hot weather the tree may need to be watered every two to three days to keep the root-ball moist.
- Wetting the soil area outside the planting hole occasionally will ensure that roots develop into the surrounding soil.
- Do not use any commercial fertilizer the first growing season.
- Do not damage or prune the leader of the tree until it is well established.

### Typical spring / summer planting watering schedule

- 1st week: water the day after planting and the following day
- 2nd week: one watering
- 3rd week thru summer: once every two weeks
- Fall thru winter: once per month

### Typical fall planting watering schedule

- 1st week: water the day after planting
- 2nd thru 4th week: one watering
- Fall thru winter: once per month

### Important notes

- 20 minutes of a slow flowing hose constitutes a watering
- 1 inch of rain water constitutes a watering (equals one watering)
- Water less with adequate rainfall and / or cool weather. Mulching reduces the need for water after the first 4 week period. If the soil is a "heavy" type, it will require less frequent watering than if it is a soil type that drains well (well drained soils dry out quicker).
- After the first four weeks after planting, the only sure way to determine water needs is to physically

