



# OUR GUIDE TO PLANTING TREES & SHRUBS

## PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

The plants you've purchased are high quality, healthy and well cared for. By following these planting and watering instructions, you can keep them beautiful and thriving in your landscape.

### SUPPLIES:

- Shovel
- Tarp
- Merrifield Planting Mix
- Pruners or a knife
- Merrifield Starter Plant Food
- Mulch
- Garden hose
- Watering wand

## 1. DIG A HOLE

Dig a hole that is slightly shallower and at least 6" wider than the root ball on all sides. The goal is to plant the shoulder of the root ball slightly above ground level. Place the removed soil on a tarp to keep it from going into your lawn and garden beds.



## 2. AMEND THE SOIL

Mix your existing soil with Merrifield Planting Mix or another soil conditioner. The ratio should be about 1/3 Merrifield Planting Mix to 2/3 existing soil.



## 3. PREPARE THE ROOT BALL

For container grown plants, loosen and pull the outer, circling roots away from the root ball. You may need to cut thick, vigorous roots with pruners or a knife. Cut about 1" deep from top to bottom, spacing the cuts 3 to 7" apart. This will help the roots grow out into the soil.

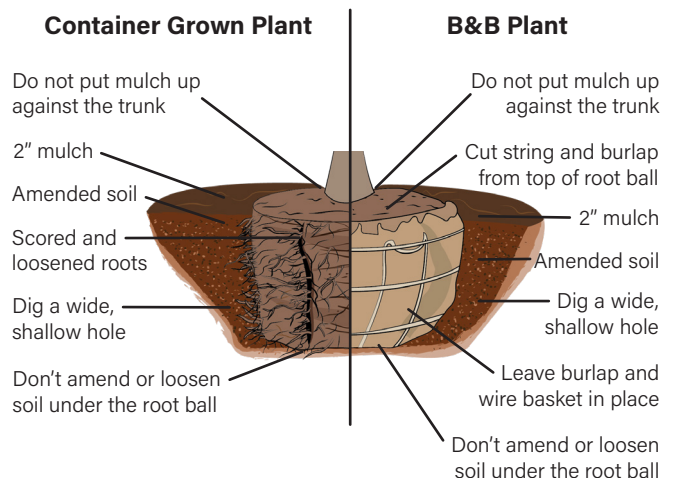
For balled and burlapped (B&B) plants, keep the burlap and metal cage in place.



## 4. BEGIN PLANTING

Place the tree or shrub in the planting hole and confirm the top of the root ball is slightly higher than ground level (1 to 2" high for smaller plants and 2 to 4" high for larger plants and trees). Backfill around the root ball with the amended soil until the hole is about 3/4 full, gently tamping the soil as you go. For B&B plants, this is the time to remove the string and burlap from the top of the root ball.

Add Merrifield Starter Plant Food or another starter fertilizer and continue backfilling the soil up to the shoulder of the root ball. Be careful not to put soil on top of the root ball. Top it off with a 2" layer of mulch, but do not put the mulch up against the trunk of the plant.



## 5. WATER IMMEDIATELY

Right after you plant, water each plant slowly, deeply and thoroughly. This will ensure that the water gets down deep into the root zone where the plant can effectively utilize it. It is best to use a watering wand to gently shower the root ball and the surrounding soil until it is fully saturated.



### Watering Container Grown Plants

Container grown plants will absorb moisture faster than B&B plants as they're grown in a light, porous potting medium. Therefore, they may dry out faster and require more frequent watering. As a general guide, you will need to water a 10" diameter container plant for 3 to 5 minutes to saturate the root zone and surrounding soil. Check the plant for moisture every 2 to 3 days.

### Watering B&B Plants

B&B plants will absorb water slower than container plants as they are grown in the ground and then dug, making their soil very dense. Water B&B plants slowly by only opening the watering wand one-quarter of the way. Applying the water slowly will help it soak into the dense root ball. As a general guide, you will need to water a B&B plant with a root ball that is 18" in diameter for about 15 to 20 minutes to saturate the root ball and surrounding soil. Check the plant for moisture every 4 to 5 days.

### Watering a Group of Plants

If you are watering a group of plants in a garden bed and don't have time to water each one by hand, sprinklers and soaker hoses can be effective, if used properly. Sprinklers and soaker hoses are designed to disperse water slowly. Therefore, they will need to run for a longer period of time to thoroughly soak all of the plants in the bed and the surrounding soil. For guidance on how long you should run your sprinkler or soaker hose, please see one of our plant specialists.

## ONGOING WATERING

Until the root system of your plant is well established—usually a period of one year—you should check the soil for moisture to accurately determine how wet or dry it is. Dig down 4 to 5" and feel the soil at the edge of the root ball with your fingers. If it's moist, you do not need to water. If the soil feels slightly dry, water thoroughly until the root ball and surrounding soil are fully saturated. Don't allow your plants to completely dry out!



A few days after watering, check the root ball of your plant for moisture to see if it's time to water. Check container grown plants every 2 to 3 days and balled and burlapped (B&B) plants every 4 to 5 days.

## Our Promise

We stand behind the quality of our plants, but we can't replace plants that die because they were not planted or watered according to these instructions. If your new plants get the attention they need from you, but still fail to survive we will be happy to replace them at 100% of the purchase price for the first six months from the date of purchase, and 50% of the purchase price during the second six months from the date of purchase.

To inquire about a replacement, please bring the plant(s) into one of our Plant Clinics with a copy of your sales receipt. Our replacement policy only applies to trees and shrubs that are planted in the ground and does not cover sale or discounted plants, roses, houseplants, annuals, perennials or plants that are in containers. There is no warranty for replacement plants.

[SEE OUR FULL REPLACEMENT POLICY >](#)

[www.merrifieldgardencenter.com/replacement](http://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com/replacement)

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<b>Merrifield</b> 8132 Route 29 Merrifield, VA 22116 703-560-6222	<b>Fair Oaks</b> 12101 Route 29 Fairfax, VA 22030 703-968-9600	<b>Gainesville</b> 6895 Wellington Road Gainesville, VA 20156 703-368-1919
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