

Why Trees?

The right tree in the right place will ...

- increase property value
- add beauty
- lower temperature (by providing shade and releasing water vapor into the air)
- reduce air conditioning costs
- produce oxygen and remove carbon dioxide from the air
- offer privacy and/or screen objectionable views

What kind of tree?

Choose trees that are native or adapted to Texas. They require less water and lower maintenance and are more resistant to disease and pests.

Recommended Trees for Texas:

Large Trees (>30' Crown)	Medium Trees (20'-30' Crown)	Small Trees (<20' Crown)
Pecan	Desert Willow	Carolina Buckthorn
Bur Oak	Saucer Magnolia	Eve's Necklace
Chinkapin Oak	Eastern Redbud	Vitex/Chaste Tree
Caddo Maple	Crapemyrtle	Mexican Redbud

Where to plant?

Always call DIG TESS to mark your underground utilities (gas, power, cable, irrigation pipes, etc.) before you establish a location for your tree. (1-800-344-8377)

Large, deciduous trees (those that lose their leaves in the fall) planted on the south or west side of the house will shade the house in summer; the bare branches will let in warm sun during the winter. Plant large trees at least 20 feet from the house. Plant small trees at least 10 feet from the house. Plant trees where they will not interfere with power lines at maturity.

How to plant?

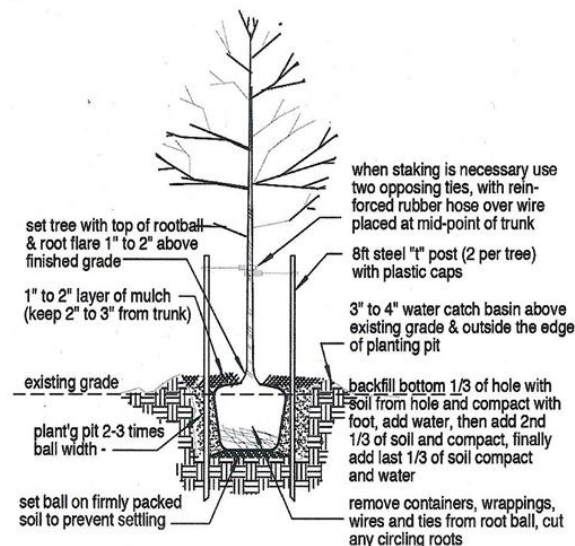
Your tree may be in a container or wrapped in burlap with a wire cage around it. Either way, remove excess mulch to expose the root flare (point at which the roots spread outward from the trunk) then measure the height of the root ball to determine how

deep to dig the hole. Dig the hole no deeper than the depth of the root ball and 2-3 times the width of the container or root ball. If it is too deep, add soil and stomp on it to compact it. The root flare should be at the same level as the existing soil or slightly higher (up to one inch).

If the tree is a container grown tree, lay it on its side and carefully remove the container. If there are many roots visible on the outside, prune down the sides of the root ball on four sides with hand pruners to cut the circling roots. Gently roll the root ball into the hole and remove any burlap or wire down to the bottom of the hole. The tree should not be in a "well" after planting. Most of the air breathing and nutrient absorbing roots in a balled and burlapped (B & B) tree are within 12 inches of the top of the root ball.

Never carry a tree by its trunk!! Carry it by the root ball or tilt the tree to horizontal and roll the root ball or container to the edge of the hole while being careful not to damage the limbs of the tree.

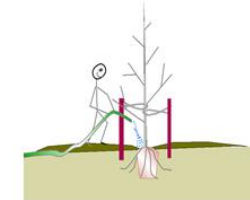
After your new tree is safely in its planting hole, you should make sure your tree is vertical. If the trunk is leaning one way or another, tilt the tree in the opposite direction and push some soil underneath the lower side with your foot to bring the tree to a perfectly upright position. You should be aware that as your tree grows, limbs must be kept 8 feet over the sidewalk and 15 feet over the street and alley, per city code.



Check to make sure your tree is still perfectly straight. Water the soil and the root ball. Repeat this process for the 2nd 1/3 of the soil. Then add the last 1/3 of the soil you removed back into the hole, compact it and water it again. This helps the soil to settle and removes large air pockets and also establishes a very stable position for the tree. Staking may not be required but it depends on a number of variables. The root flare should be visible above the soil. Excess soil should be used to create a berm of soil on the outer edges of the root ball. This allows rainfall or irrigation to be condensed around the root ball of the tree. A thin layer of native chip mulch should be applied to this area, 1 to 2 inches, but keep it off the trunk. Mulch helps to prevent evaporation and hold soil moisture, plus it benefits the soil in many ways. Then water the tree thoroughly to help settle the backfill and soak the root ball.

How much to water?

New trees will require watering for 3-5 years to get them established. With the great variance in weather conditions, soil types, as well as tree species, it is not possible to project the exact amount of water a tree will need nor the frequency in which it will need water. Assuming adequate rainfall during the fall through early spring, a tree may need weekly watering from March through May. A tree may need watering twice a week from June through September depending on current rainfall and site conditions.



Water with around 3-5 gallons of water per inch in trunk diameter. Check on our website or with the Master Gardener desk (214-904-3053) at the Extension office for information about watering methods. With any method, avoid runoff. You want the water to soak into the ground.

Light but frequent watering does not encourage root development and can leave the tree at risk for wind damage and summer heat stress. Over-watering pushes oxygen out of the soil and can cause roots to die.

It is very important to check the soil moisture frequently during the first few months after planting your tree. You can stick your finger into the soil to check for moisture. If the soil is dry to the tip of your finger, it is time to water your newly planted tree.

Planting and Caring for Trees In Your Yard

What about fertilizer?

Native tree species grown in local soils, which are B & B then transplanted into local soils, may not need fertilizer to survive. However, most B & B trees purchased today are not grown in local soils and the tree must adapt to different soil conditions. As a result, non-native species or those grown in other soil types may require supplemental fertilizer. Containerized trees are typically grown in a light-weight soil mix that often includes slow release fertilizer. As a result, containerized trees may not need fertilizer for the first few years. All trees benefit greatly from fertilizer, mulch and/or compost added to the soil surface. Due to the variance in tree species, soil types, and other factors, visit our website for more details on fertilization.

When to prune?

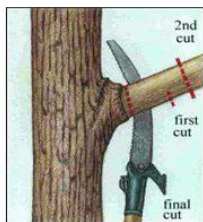
Trees can be pruned after the first 2-3 years. Prune only for a specific purpose, such as removing dead, damaged, or crossing branches or branches hanging too low. Remember—the longer the lower limbs are left on the tree, the more leaf surface is available for photosynthesis (food for the tree). Also, never prune more than 25% of the leaf surface from your tree. It creates growth of unwanted and weak interior sprouts.



Small Limb

Proper pruning cuts, outside the branch "collar".

Large Limb



Proper pruning method for a larger limb: This procedure will prevent the weight of the limb from tearing the bark down the trunk and creating a very large wound on your tree. Remember—wood is very heavy. This "3-cut method" should be used when pruning any limb larger than 2" in diameter.

It is highly recommended that you have a professional in tree care prune your tree. Trees can be harmed by improper pruning.

Never try to prune your tree from a ladder.

Dead limbs can be removed at any time of year. Avoid pruning maples, walnuts or birch in the dormant season. Avoid pruning paint except when pruning green (live) limbs on oaks in the spring. In the case of oaks, pruning paint should be applied immediately after each cut over 1 inch in diameter. Never top a tree! It is harmful to the tree and will reduce its life span. Purchase a tree that will mature to the appropriate height for its location.

Enjoy your tree for many years!

For more information about trees, please visit our website: www.dallastrees.org

Tree related questions can be sent to:

info@dallastrees.org

Questions regarding city codes should be directed to:

City of Dallas Arborist

Building Inspection Division

Sustainable Development & Construction

Chief Arborist's Office: 214-948-4117

www.dallascityhall.com/arborist



City of Dallas

Urban Forest Advisory Committee



United States

Environmental Protection Agency



Courtesy of:

The Dallas Urban Forest

Advisory Committee and

The Environmental Protection

Agency