

### Carefully set the tree in the hole.

Place the tree in the hole by lifting and supporting the root ball and trunk. Do not lift the tree solely by its trunk since this motion can cause roots to break. Position the topmost root slightly above (about 2 inches above) the top of the landscape soil in well-drained soil. Plant even higher in soil that drains poorly or remain wet most of the year.



### Straighten the tree in the hole.

Before you begin filling the hole with soil have someone view the tree from two directions perpendicular to each other to confirm the tree is straight. Fill the hole with enough soil to secure the tree in the upright position.

### Add and firm the soil added to the hole.

Slice a shovel down into the backfilled soil numerous times all around the tree. Do not pack the added soil, instead fill the hole with water and allow it to drain, allowing the soil to settle. Finish filling the hole with soil, refill with water and allow to settle. Fill in any holes or depressions with additional soil.



### Cover around the sides of the root ball with mulch.

Provide a 3-inch-deep layer of mulch around the tree's root ball. Mulch

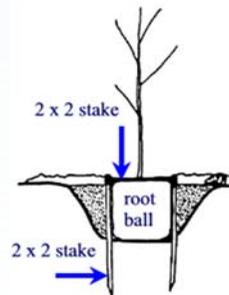
reduces soil temperature fluctuations, prevent packing and crusting, conserve moisture, help control weeds, add organic matter to the soil, and improves the appearance of the landscape. Generally, a 2 to 3 foot diameter circle of mulch per inch of tree trunk caliper will give adequate mulch area for newly planted trees. Do not place mulch over the root ball or touching the tree's tender trunk.



### Stake and prune if needed.

A simple system for supporting newly planted trees comprised of untreated two-by-two inch wooden stakes. Two or three (2 shown) wood dowels driven through edge of root ball hold 3 gallon trees but not larger trees.

Broken branches should be pruned at this time. Do not prune to compensate for root loss.



## Why Your New Tree Is Important

Each tree in Tampa's urban forest plays a significant role in maintaining the vitality of urban life. The urban forest provides a wealth of benefits to neighborhoods and communities through the reduction of energy consumption, reduction in noise pollution, the removal of pollutants from the air and water, reduction in stormwater flows, increased valuation of private property, increased worker productivity, reduction in stress and violent crime, as well as providing recreational opportunities and aesthetic diversity.

## How to Plant Your New Tree





## Why Careful Planning, Planting and Irrigation of Your New Tree Matters

Following these 10 steps to planting will increase any new tree's ability to develop the root system needed to support its growth and vigor.

Remember, when first choosing which tree to plant consider its mature size and how it fits around your home or garden. Be sure to plant your tree where it will not grow into utility lines or damage underground services.

In west central Florida irrigating your new tree is a must. Follow these simple guidelines:

Irrigate daily for 2 weeks; every other day for 2 months; and then weekly until established.

Each irrigation should be 2 to 3 gallons of water per inch diameter of your new tree. Apply water slowly over the root ball. Water not placed directly on the root ball will not support tree growth and is wasted.

For more information on irrigation and pruning of young trees visit the [University of Florida's 'Landscape Plants'](http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/index.shtml) web site at:

<http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/index.shtml>

## Step by Step Directions for Successfully Planting Your New Tree

### Pre-water the tree's root ball.

At least an hour before planting time, water the root ball thoroughly in a bucket or other large container to catch the excess water. Once the root ball is thoroughly watered, remove it from the bucket and allow it to drain.

### Remove the tree from its container.

Lay the tree and container on its side. Slice through the container and gently remove it from the tree ball.



### Locate the trunk flare at the base of the tree.

The trunk flare or top most root should be at the soil surface. If it is not immediately visible, remove soil in the container until it is located. The upper side of the trunk flare/top most root will be visible after planting.



### Estimate the depth of the planting hole.

Measure the distance between the point where the topmost root emerges from the trunk and the bottom of the root ball. Then dig the hole 1 to 2 inches shallower than this distance. The top of the root ball should be 1 to 2 inches above the surface when you are finished planting. Make the hole at least 2 times the width of the root ball. In wet or compacted soils a wider hole is desirable.



### Inspect the tree ball for circling and kinked roots.

Cut all circling and kinked roots above the root flare.

Prune larger circling roots just beyond the point where they first begin to circle, and trim away restrictive circling outer roots.

