

TREE PLANTING GUIDE

It is crucial to plant a tree correctly, to ensure that it will grow well for years to come. In the past, we have seen too many trees planted out incorrectly. In many instances the trees were planted too deep. This will cause most trees to slowly shut down and die because of the lack of warmth and air. Also, the phloem and cambium layers of the trunk (which are the layers of cells that transport the food supply up the tree) will slowly die, and effectively starve the whole tree of nutrients. Only a few trees like Poplars and Willows will survive this sort of treatment.

Over 80% of customers tree failures are due to the tree being planted too deep.

We at Leafland recommend the following steps for planting out trees:

1. Planting: Dig the hole a little larger than the bag. If in heavy wet soils it may be best to mound up the site so water doesn't pond around the trunk. Place the tree in the hole, teasing the roots out and firming up the soil around the root ball. In an avenue or street tree situation, we recommend burying a short section of nova-flow pipe in the ground beside the root ball, leaving the top protruding so you can water the root zone directly in the future. Ensure that the tree is planted with the top of the root ball at the same level as the surrounding soil.
2. Staking: For larger trees we recommend three stakes positioned beyond the root ball. Use something soft and non-abrasive to hold the tree (old tyre tubing is very good). Ties should be positioned about 1m high and the top of the tree left to sway in the wind which will strengthen it. I believe staking is very important for at least the first year, as it is necessary to hold the root ball from movement to allow new roots to establish themselves in the surrounding soil.
3. Watering: After planting, water in with a good bucket of water. In summer we recommend a good bucket every third day or so - more or less depending on the weather. In winter a deciduous tree hardly requires any water, so don't drown it! A simple watering system with an automatic timer and drippers is a very cheap and worthwhile investment.
4. Mulching: It has been recorded that a square metre of bare soil will lose around 2L of water on a hot day. Cover the root zone with 3-4 inches of bark/mulch (not lawn clippings). If you have your own chipper, this would be a very good way to use it. Also, mulching will suppress weeds around the tree and save weed spray in the long run.
5. Fertilizer: We sell long term fertilizer tablets which can be placed in the root zone of the tree at planting, and will feed the tree for around 15 months. We also recommend Easy Green, Lawn and Garden as an all-purpose top feed fertilizer. Sprinkle a handful round the base of the tree at six week intervals between October and mid-January.