How to Plant a Bare-Root Seedling Tree

Type of tree: _____.

Please plant today!



1. Plant your tree today if possible. If you can't, keep the roots moist for up to one more day, then plant. Don't have room in your yard? Please check with a neighbor!





2. Dig a hole at least a foot wide and deep enough for your tree's roots to stretch to the bottom without being balled up. A large hole will help your tree's root growth.

Thank you for planting a tree!

Trees help slow climate change, filter our air and water, foster biodiversity, and strengthen our communities.



3. Hold the tree in the center of the hole with roots stretched out to the bottom. Fill around the lower roots with the soil you dug up, breaking up the clods as you go. Gently firm the soil around the roots. Do not add fertilizer, potting soil or chemicals.



4. Shovel the remaining soil into the hole, breaking up any clods. Pack it down firmly but not too tightly. Carve out a shallow moat around the edge of the hole and fill with water. Then water the entire area you dug up.

Did you know?

Trees are essential for baby birds. They provide habitat for up to hundreds of caterpillars and native insects that baby birds eat.



5. After the water has soaked in, cover the soil with a protective layer of mulch or dry leaves, leaving a clear space around the trunk. (Can you borrow mulch from nearby beds?)



5. Water twice each week during warm weather (no need to water when trees are dormant in winter), and weekly in the second year. Skip watering if there has been an inch of rain since the last watering. One year after it's planted, stake your tree to keep it growing straight.

Be patient.

Saplings are dormant (sleeping) for the winter. Bare-root trees can take a few weeks to wake up.

TIPS - Consider putting a fence (such as chicken wire) around your tree if your yard is a feeding ground for rabbits, deer, or other wildlife. Remember that tree seedlings are vulnerable and may not survive. Regular watering is important - and the next planting season is always just around the corner!

Thank you for planting a tree! Learn more at arborday.org.