Tree planter's GUIDE

HOW TO PLANT TREES IN OLYMPIA

A city's trees say a lot about the character of the community. Trees foster a sense of pride in a city and promote both physical and mental well-being in its citizens. This guide is intended to encourage you to plant trees. It provides information on native trees and other trees that are well suited for our area so that you can plant the right tree in the right place. It also describes how to plant and care for your trees so you will be able to enjoy them for many years to come.

Why plant trees?

Trees save energy, and reduce noise pollution.
-they shade buildings,
-cool the air,
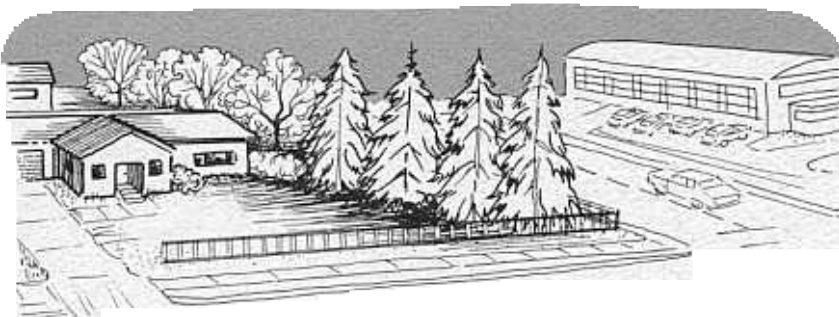-provide protection from the wind and absorb unwanted noise.

Trees improve water and air quality.
-They reduce erosion and filter pollutants out of the air, water, and soil.

Trees beautify our community, enhance property values and provide wildlife habitat.
-They enhance and frame scenic views
-Screen unwanted views
-Provide fall color, and spring flowers
-Increase property values 10-20%
-Provide both shelter and food for wildlife.

Where to plant

Before picking out your tree you should first evaluate your planting site and your reasons for wanting to plant a tree.

Evaluate:

Look up
- -utility wires,
- -buildings
- -other trees

Look down
- -underground utilities
- -soils
- -sidewalks, driveways, etc.

Look around
- -other trees
- -buildings
- -utility wires
- -view (yours and your neighbors)
- -safety (site clearance)
- -shade, sun?

Think about:

Beauty
- -fall color
- -spring flowers
- -evergreen

Wildlife Habitat
- -food
- -shelter

Shade
- -South and South-west only

Screen/Buffer
- -how tall?
- -how thick?

Site evaluation worksheet

How close am I to:
Other trees_____ft.
Buildings_____ft.
Utility wires_____ft.
Sidewalks, Driveways, etc._____ft.

When this tree is mature will it:
be larger than I really want? **(NO / YES)**
block my view? **(NO / YES)**
block my neighbors view? **(NO / YES)**
shade my house in the summer (good!)? **(NO / YES)**
shade my house in the winter (bad!)? **(NO / YES)**

Is my soil type:
Well drained? **(NO / YES)**
Poorly Drained? **(NO / YES)**

What are my reasons for planting this tree:
Do I want fall color? **(NO / YES)**
Do I want an evergreen tree? **(NO / YES)**
Do I want spring flowers? **(NO / YES)**
Am I interested in wildlife? **(NO / YES)**
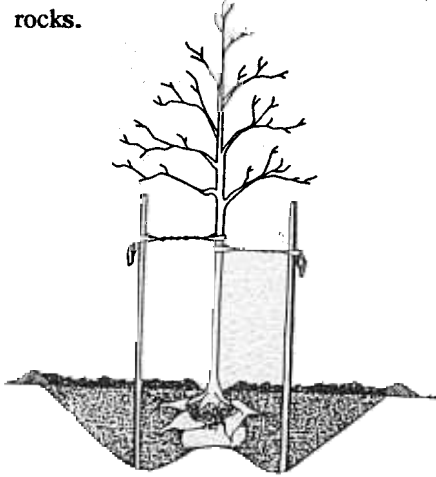Do I want to create a screen? **(NO / YES)**

Did I have the underground utilties located? (NO / YES)
(Call 1-800-424-5555)

After answering these questions, use the tree selection charts on the next pages to help you select the right tree for your site.

How to plant -

Planting:
Dig the hole 2 to 3 times the width, and the same depth as the ball or container. Leave the bottom of the hole solid. Roughen the sides and remove any large rocks.
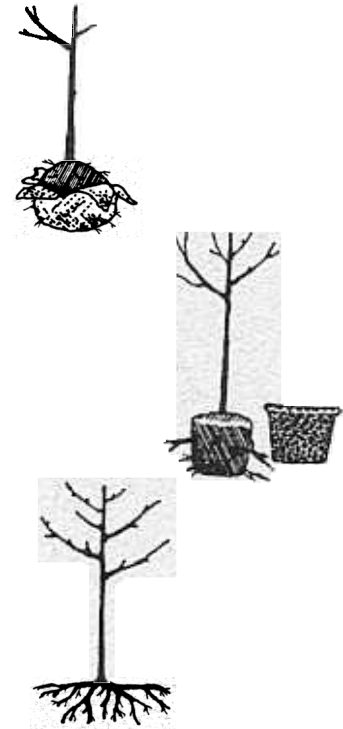
Balled and Burlapped
Support the root ball and place it in the hole, checking the depth and spacing. Remove all wire or twine. Cut the burlap, and remove as much of it as possible.

Container
Remove the tree from the container and straighten any coiled roots. With the shovel or a knife scour the sides of the root ball to cut any circling roots. Lower the tree into the hole by supporting the rootball.

Bareroot
Place the tree in the hole, spread the roots and cover with soil. Make sure no roots are curled up, or tucked under.

Backfill the hole with the original soil, gently firming it to hold the tree upright. When you are finished, the top of the root ball should be even with or slightly above the surrounding ground. Build a low berm around the edge of the planting area and slowly fill it with water.
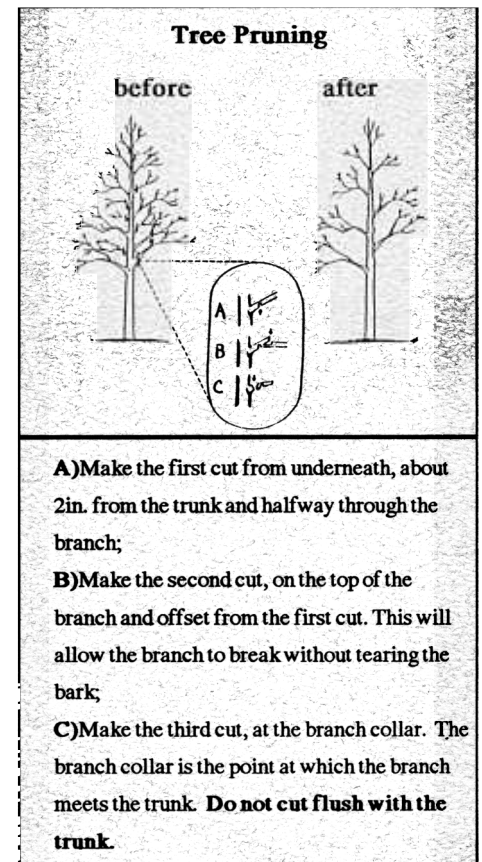
Care after planting -

Pruning: First year, prune only dead or broken branches, for the next couple of years prune to establish a good basic branch structure and height clearance. See diagram to the right.

Watering: First year, water once a week with about 5 gallons, for the next couple of years water as necessary during the dry part of summer and fall. Most of the species in this guide are drought tolerant if properly planted and mulched.

Staking: Only stake if absolutely necessary. Use strips of fabric, or burlap, not wire ties, and remove the staking after the first year.

Mulching: Cover the planting area with 2-4 inches of bark mulch. Keep the mulch away from the stem of the tree. It can cause the stem to rot. Mulching is recommended throughout the life of the tree. Increase the width of the mulch as the tree continues to grow. Mulch will reduce watering, prevent damage to the trunk from mowers and trimmers, and reduce the time required to mow your lawn.

Tree Pruning

before   after

A)Make the first cut from underneath, about 2in. from the trunk and halfway through the branch;
B)Make the second cut, on the top of the branch and offset from the first cut. This will allow the branch to break without tearing the bark;
C)Make the third cut, at the branch collar. The branch collar is the point at which the branch meets the trunk. **Do not cut flush with the trunk.**

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City of Olympia, c/o Urban Forester,
Community Planning and Development Dept.
P.O. Box 1967, Olympia, WA 98507

Washington Department of Natural Resources,
Urban and Community Forestry Program,
P.O. Box 47046, Olympia, WA 98504-7046

WSU Co-Op Extention Service,
Master Gardeners Program
6128 Capitol Boulevard,
Olympia, WA 98501

University of Washington,
College of Forest Resources,
Center for Urban Horticulture,
Seattle, WA 98195.

Washington State Nurserymen's Association, Inc.
1202 25th Avenue Court, NE
Puyallup, WA 98371

Acknowledgments-

City of
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