

Iowa City Landscaping & Garden Center Plant Guarantee

The success of plants depends upon their care. All plants purchased at Iowa City Landscaping & Garden Center are true to name and in healthy growing condition when they leave the nursery.

- * Woody plant material (trees, shrubs, and vines) purchased at, or installed by Iowa City Landscaping & Garden Center carries a **one year** "purchase price" guarantee. *Garden Club* members receive a **2 year guarantee**
- * Replacement will be given in the form of a comparably priced plant, or in the form of store credit for the purchase amount.
- * Dead plants **must** be accompanied by the receipt to validate the warranty
- * Warranty applies to the original purchaser, and is not transferable.
- * This is a one time warranty – replacement plants are not guaranteed.
- * Iowa City Landscaping & Garden Center does not warranty the following: annuals, perennials, grasses, living Christmas trees, or houseplants. The guarantee also does not apply to trees, shrubs or vines *not planted in the ground*.
- * Exclusions: Purchases for resale; plants discounted 50% or more; plants destroyed by acts of nature, animals, pests, vandalism, or obvious neglect.

Consult with a sales person for further details.



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Planting Guide and Warranty Information



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Tree and Shrub Planting Guidelines

General site preparation:

Ideally the planting hole should be 2-3 times the width of the rootball or container, with sloped sides. Wide planting holes provide a beneficial zone of well aerated and well drained soil that roots will readily exploit during the establishment period. Hole depth should allow trees to be positioned so that the root collar or trunk flare is level with, or slightly higher than the surrounding grade, and shrubs are positioned so that the top of the root ball is at ground level. Never dig the hole deeper than the height of the root ball to avoid settling. Planting too deeply can result in plant death, or lead to other chronic problems such as girdling roots, crown and root rots, etc. (Fig. 1)

When planting in new housing developments where the "growing medium" is compacted clay soil, it is best to only use species that are tolerant of these conditions. Alternatively, expensive, elaborate subsurface drainage systems may be used. Another method is to excavate a wide, shallow hole that leaves as much as 1/3 of the rootball above the surrounding grade. Backfilling is then done to create a "mound" around the base of the tree. This raises the zone of active root growth above potentially saturated, oxygen deficient conditions. (Fig. 2)

Soil amendments:

Contrary to popular belief, soil removed from the planting hole is the most appropriate backfill

material. Soil amendments like peat moss, compost, or composted manure should be used sparingly, comprising only about 25% of the backfill soil. When overused, these amendments can create an environment that confines root growth to the planting hole, and discourage root development into the surrounding soils. Soil amendments are better used when incorporated uniformly into planting beds and gardens.

Planting container grown plants & balled and burlapped plants:

Make sure the tree/shrub to be planted is watered adequately. NEVER plant a dry plant. Trees and shrubs must be handled carefully. Always handle trees by the pot or root ball, never by the stem or trunk (this is especially true for balled and burlapped trees).

Trees can easily be planted too deeply when the planter as-

sumes that the top of the rootball is the original or the proper ground level. On balled and burlapped trees, peel back the top of the burlap and look for the flared trunk base. Also look for roots. If these features are not immediately apparent, scrape away the soil until fibrous roots are discovered. This should also be done with container grown trees.

Balled and burlapped trees and shrubs should be gently lowered, not dropped, into the prepared hole. If plastic or poly-burlap has been used to encase the rootball, it should be removed before backfilling begins.

Once the tree has been lowered in the hole, and proper depth has been determined, backfill soil until 1/3 to 1/2 of the hole is filled. Then remove all of the twine around the stem, and the remaining visible wire and burlap. Now you can backfill the hole completely and water

thoroughly to settle the soil and eliminate air pockets. To make watering easier, a temporary well can be formed which will prevent water from running away.

Container trees and shrubs are planted in a similar manner. Before backfilling begins, all containers must be removed. Do so by laying the tree on its side, and carefully pulling the container from the rootball. It may be necessary to cut the container away using a sharp blade or shears.

If the tree has become pot-bound, or has dense circling roots, a series of vertical cuts about 1" deep must be made over the length of the root mass. This will disrupt the circling roots, and lessen the chance for girdling roots later in the life of the plant.

Watering:

Proper watering is key to the survival of your new plants, and presents one of the greatest chances for disaster. Initially,

plants should be watered thoroughly to settle the soil, and moisten the root mass. Watering should then be repeated every 2-5 days during the growing season, if adequate rainfall (1" or so) has not occurred.

Small leafy shrubs such as spirea, or pot bound plants should be inspected more frequently, and may need a light watering as often as every day for a period of several weeks.

Water should be applied with a watering can or hose that provides a gentle rain of water, never use a high pressure nozzle. You should also avoid letting the hose "trickle" for a long period of time, as this often results in over-watering, especially in poorly drained soils. Also avoid using overhead sprinklers, as this usually results in insufficient watering. For large shrubs and trees, 3-5 gallons per watering should be sufficient. For small shrubs, 1-2 gallons will suffice.

Fertilizer:

Fertilizer is not always necessary at planting time. However, for high stress locations, a slow release starter fertilizer such as Osmocote®, or Fertilome® Root Stimulator can ease the transition to the new planting location.

Mulching:

Individually planted trees and shrubs should be provided with an adequate maintained mulch ring, to prevent mechanical damage caused by mowers and trimmers. For trees, a minimum of 3 feet is recommended. Apply 2-3 inches of organic mulch (Shredded bark, wood chips, etc.) around the base of the tree, being careful to avoid piling mulch against the base of the stem.

Pruning:

Pruning of newly planted trees and shrubs is not usually necessary. It should only be done to remove damaged or crossing stems, or to correct growth patterns such as multiple leaders. Consult the Garden Center staff or reputable publication for tips on continued care.

We want you and your plants to be successful, so don't hesitate to ask our staff questions!

Enjoy your new plants, and thanks for choosing **Iowa City Landscaping & Garden Center!**

Adapted from *Successful Tree Planting Techniques* by Jeff Iles, ISU Dept. of Horticulture

