

HILL COUNTRY
**WATER
GARDENS**
& NURSERY

"Your Complete Water Gardening Resource"

Tree Planting Instructions

Site testing: Here in Central Texas, it is very important to test the soil for drainage. Extremely rocky soils may not drain properly and will doom the planting from the start. To test the soil: dig a test hole in the spot you want to plant your new tree. The hole should roughly measure 1 foot deep and 1 foot wide. Fill the test hole with water and allow it to drain. After draining, fill the test hole a second time and begin timing the experiment. The hole should drain within 24 hrs. If the hole does not drain, pick a new spot or a berm will need to be made. Jackhammers should NOT be needed to plant your new tree!

Planting your tree:

1. Dig hole up to twice as wide as the root ball. The sides of the hole should be left rough and jagged (ugly), not smooth.
2. The depth of the hole should allow the root ball to be a little higher (2-3 inches). **NEVER BELOW GROUND LEVEL.** Deep holes kill trees!
3. Gently remove the tree from the container by laying the tree on its side and sliding the tree out. If your tree is in a wooden box rather than a plastic container, please ask one of our nursery specialists on specific planting instructions.
4. Examine the roots of the tree. Make at least four cuts, ½ inch deep, from top to bottom of the root ball. This will cause the roots to redirect growth outward into the soil and helps prevent girdling roots.
5. Gently set the tree into the hole. Make sure the tree is straight level before you begin to backfill the hole.
6. Backfill around the root ball with the native soil. If additional soil is needed, use screened topsoil.
7. Thoroughly water in the soil around the root ball to make sure there are no air pockets.
8. Cover the soil and root ball with a high-quality compost to a depth of 2-3 inches and add MicroLife 6-2-4 fertilizer at this time. Add mulch to a depth of up to three inches. Make sure to pull the soil, compost and mulch 2 to 4 inches away from the tree trunk. Adding mulch will help reduce transplant shock by helping to retain moisture in the soil and reducing soil temperature. **NEVER cover the trunk with any material.**

Notes:

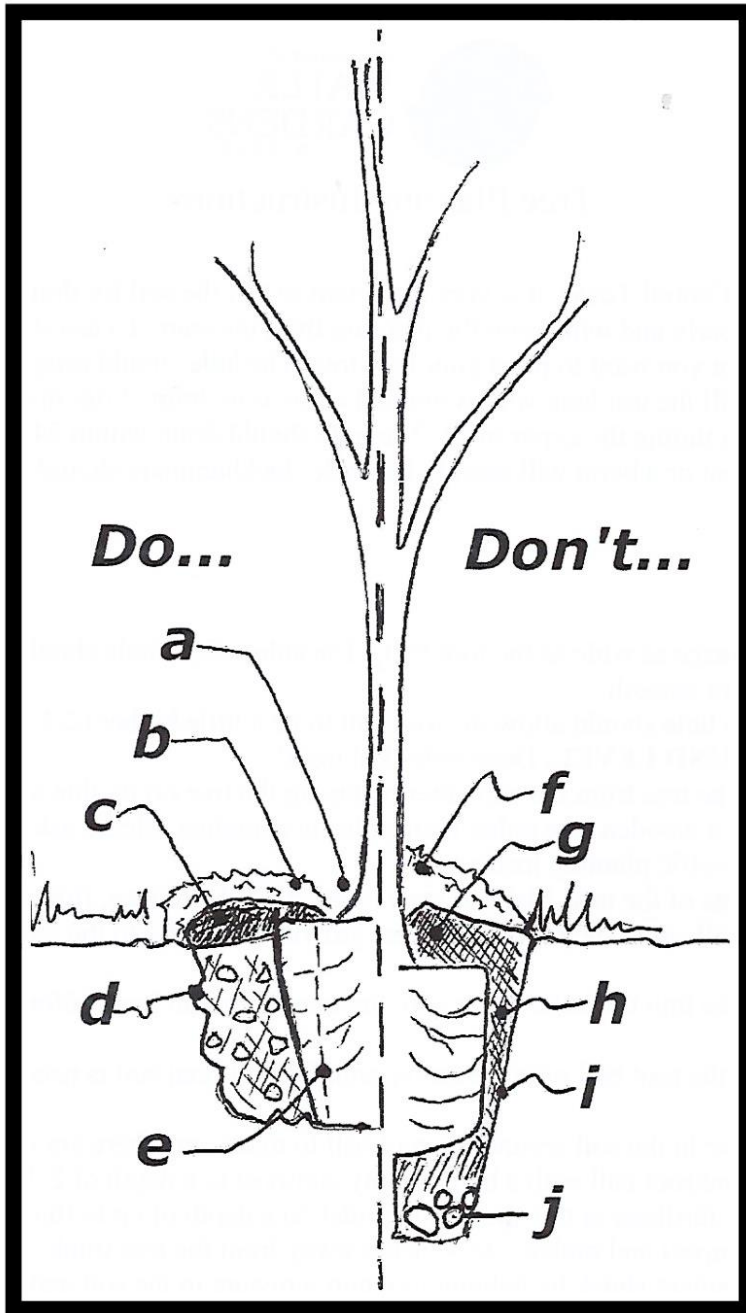
-If the tree has a large canopy, then we recommend staking the tree to prevent shifting from strong winds. These supports should be removed after the first year.

-Water deeply but infrequently. We need to thoroughly soak the soil and allow the soil to dry. In most circumstances, watering for 30 minutes twice a week works well.

-Always check soil moisture levels **at a depth of 6-8 inches**. The top 2-3 inches can dry quickly.

Our Soil Moisture Meters work great for this task!

-Always call us for advice! We are here to help you!



Do

- Plant the tree a little high to expose the root flare.
- Spread mulch and soil away from the trunk to prevent rotting.
- Spread compost over the entire planting hole.
- Dig a rough, ugly planting hole to allow roots to spread rather than circle.
- Cut out any existing circling roots.

Don't

- Don't pile mulch or soil against the trunk.
- Don't plant too deep. Roots need air too!
- Don't amend soil or use potting soil.
- Don't smooth the hole you dig or have too narrow of a hole. This causes circling roots.
- Don't dig too deep of a hole. This promotes sinking and gravel doesn't promote drainage.