

# HOW TO *plant a tree*

**P**lanning a tree. How hard can it be? Extra care at planting time may not be a matter of life and death. It is often, however, the difference between rapid establishment and a slow, lackluster start - or a robust, fruiting success story compared to a sickly struggling specimen.

Always read the plant label to ensure you are choosing a suitable site and soil conditions - 'the right plant for the right place' is a key factor in shrub survival and performance. Check for frost tenderness and follow the correct planting technique below to ensure prosperous results! Follow up with the correct planting technique to ensure prosperous results!

- 1 **Water** thoroughly to ensure the plant's root ball is completely saturated before planting.
- 2 **Dig a hole** at least twice as wide and one and a half times deeper than plant container or root ball.
- 3 **Mix compost** and controlled-release fertiliser into the soil extracted from hole.
- 4 **Backfill** the hole with the compost and fertiliser enriched soil, to the depth of the plant container or root ball.
- 5 **Remove** the plant from its container. Gently loosen any tightly packed roots, removing damaged ones with sharp secateurs.
- 6 **Place** the plant in the hole with the top of the root ball at ground level, adjusting the soil level in the base of the hole to accommodate the plant at the correct level.
- 7 **Position stakes**, if required, taking care not to damage roots as you hammer them in place. Staking is important for most young trees to anchor the plant against wind while the roots get established. The best way is to have two stakes, one each side of the tree. A single stake can result in damage via the tree rubbing against the stake. Tie firmly with flexible ties. On exposed sites, windbreak or frost protection cloth may be necessary for the first few years.
- 8 **Replace the soil**, enriched with compost and fertiliser, packing it firmly around the roots with your foot or hands.
- 9 **Water** to settle the plant into the planting hole and ensure the soil around the roots is moist.
- 10 **Mulch** around the plant with fine bark or compost. This helps retain moisture and protects roots from drying out. Do not pile mulch up against the plants stem, as this can cause the bark to rot.



## Notes:

- In poorly drained soil, plant on built up mounds to provide extra drainage
- When planting grafted plants (roses, fruit trees etc), don't bury the graft (the knobby part above roots). Plant only as deep as the top of the root ball.

