

Basic Planting Methods for Public and Private Trees

- Before digging in the city right-of-way, the person responsible for planting the tree shall obtain a permit from the city. Contact the “Call Before You Dig” utility number 1-800-428-4950 before digging anywhere.
- If trees cannot be planted immediately, place them in a shady, protected spot and keep the root ball moist through frequent, light watering.

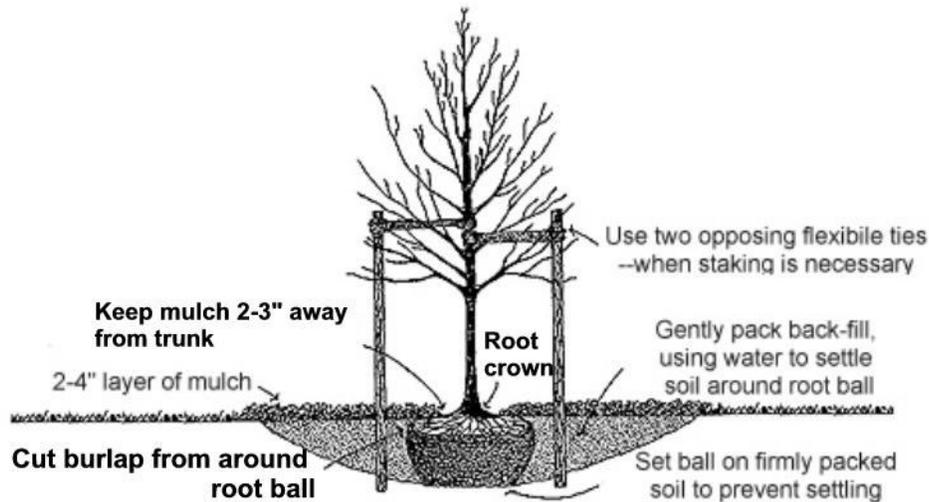


Figure 10 - Planting

1. Before digging the hole, loosen any wrapping, and remove soil to expose the root crown. Check for, and remove, circling and girdling roots.
2. Measure the height and width of the root ball and dig the hole about 10% shallower than this depth and as wide as possible (at least 2X times the width of the ball - up to 5X wider in compacted soils).
3. Remove all wire baskets, burlap, and/or twine to the maximum extent possible, exposing a minimum of the one-half of the root ball. Remove all plastic containers. Remove all trunk wrap, wire, twine, and tags.
4. Lift the tree by the root ball (NOT by the trunk), center the tree in the hole, making sure the root crown will be above grade level when the hole is filled. Wire baskets and burlap may be removed after setting the tree.
5. Straighten the tree in the hole. Before you begin backfilling have someone view the tree from several directions to confirm the tree is straight. Once you begin backfilling it is difficult to reposition.
6. Backfill one-half of the hole with soil. Gently but firmly pack the soil around the base of the root ball. Then saturate with 5 gallons or more of water to fill all holes and cavities around the roots. Finish backfilling the hole, and water again with another 5 gallons, or more. More soil may need to be added after the water has drained and the fill has settled. Make certain the root crown remains exposed.



Figure 11 - Planting

7. Create a three-foot diameter vegetation free ring for each tree. Cover the tree ring area of the newly planted tree with 3-4 inches of organic mulch material. The mulch should be pulled 2 to 3 inches back from the trunk of the tree. Recycled composted and screened yard debris, or wood chips are recommended mulch materials. Rock is not an acceptable mulch (refer to fig. 11)
8. Stake trees only if it is necessary for adequate stability. Ties should be only tight enough to support the tree but not enough to prevent swaying. Tie material should be flexible and at least 1" wide where it touches the tree. All ties, stakes should be removed within a year. If the tree still requires support, adjust the tie system.
9. New trees need to be watered to a depth of 12 to 18 inches at least once a week during the first two growing seasons if they are to become well established. During hot and dry periods, new trees will need more frequent watering. At least five gallons of water per application, usually more, will be needed. Proper mulching helps conserve soil moisture.
10. Maintain tree rings or install adequate edging material to keep turf and weeds out of the ring.

Quality of Plant Materials

High quality plant materials are desired for plantings. The minimum acceptable standard for plant materials shall conform to the American Association of Nurserymen's American Standard for Nursery Stock, (ANSI Z60.1-1996) and will be true to name and type. Broken, damaged, diseased and substandard tree stock will not be allowed to be planted in the right-of-way. Trees must be free from bark damage, decay, sunscald, insect pests or other objectionable disfigurements (refer to fig. 12 and fig. 13).

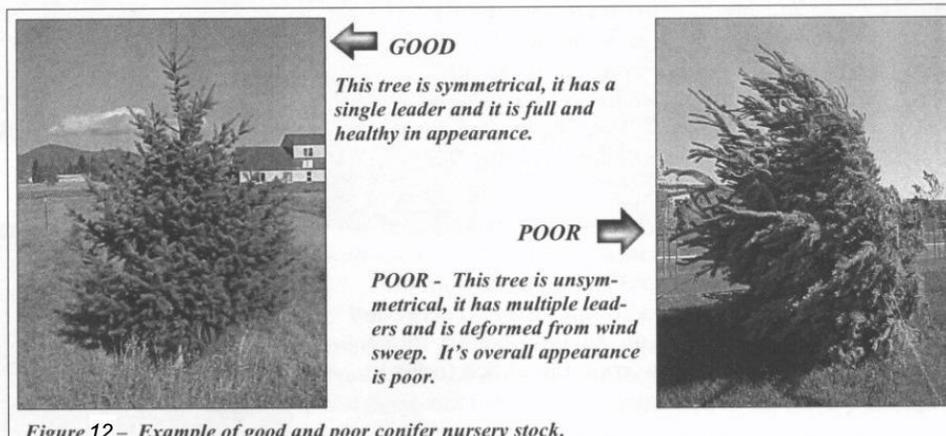


Figure 12 – Example of good and poor conifer nursery stock.

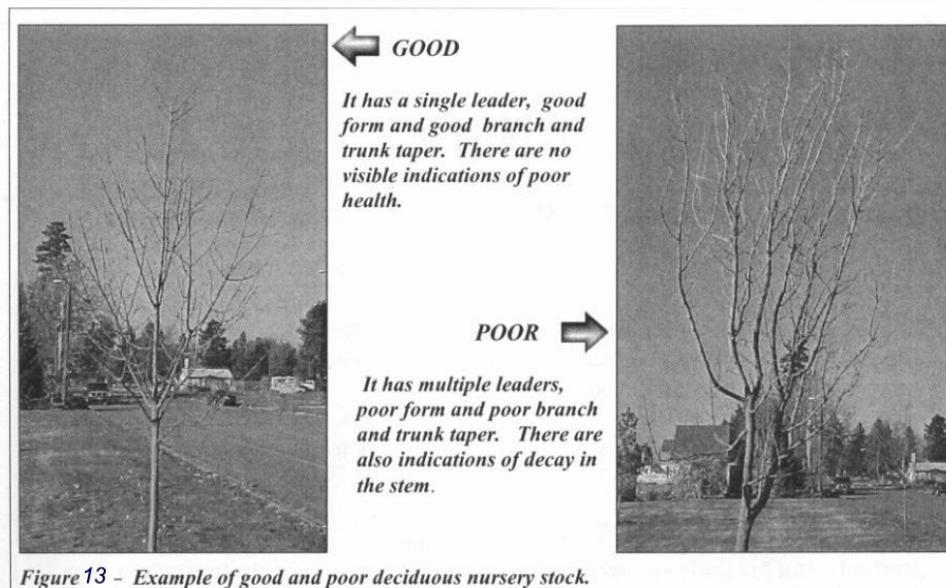


Figure 13 – Example of good and poor deciduous nursery stock.

Quality of Work

- The best time to plant trees is spring or late fall when the trees are dormant. Ball and burlap or containerized stock may be planted successfully most of the year except during very hot and dry periods of the summer.
- Handle tree stock carefully to avoid causing damage during planting.
- If any bark is damaged or branches broken during planting, the damage should be properly treated immediately. Trees that are so badly damaged that it is doubtful they will survive or grow properly must be replaced.

Do not cause a public hazard while planting a street tree, including the following:

1. Leaving open planting holes unattended or without barricades.
2. Failing to clean up debris promptly.
3. Blocking any access.