



New Tree & Shrub Aftercare

Proper Watering

A new tree or shrub must be watered immediately after planting. Until your plant has developed sufficient roots after planting, it will be up to you to ensure it gets the water it needs. The soil around your new tree or shrub should always feel cool and moist, but not wet. Both over and under water can be fatal to a new planting.

The most effective watering method is to lay a drip or soaker hose on the ground circling the plant. If you don't have a drip or a soaker hose, remove the nozzle from your garden hose and place it 30 to 60cm from the base of the plant on a very slow trickle, moving the hose periodically for even coverage. Both methods ensure that the water penetrates deep into the soil, reaching all the plant's roots. Never use a sprinkler as most of the water will evaporate before soaking into the soil. It can also wet the leaves making them more prone to disease. It is always best to water early in the morning. For the first two years, water for 15 to 20 minutes twice a week during the growing season if there has been no rain.

Symptoms of over watering such as yellow, drooping leaves or leaf loss can look a lot like signs of underwater or other problems such as damage from salt use, pests, or disease. If you think you may be overwatering, feel your soil 5 to 8cm below the surface to see if it is wet. Do not water until it feels dry or just slightly damp.

Evergreens benefit from abundant watering in autumn. Fall is the most important time to water these plants. If they don't get enough moisture in the fall, they're much more likely to suffer winter damage.

Mulch, Fertilizing, Staking, & Pruning

Mulch – Apply 2 to 4 inches of mulch around the tree over the area of the root ball to reduce the growth of weeds and retain water in the soil. Be sure to keep mulch 2 to 3 inches away from the trunk of the tree.

Fertilizing – Avoid applying fertilizer, except for bone meal or high phosphorus fertilizer, in the first year after planting. A higher nitrogen fertilizer can be applied later for greening and top growth.

Staking – Staking trees is not necessary unless they are exposed to high winds or if the soil is shallow. Remove stakes after one year.

Pruning – Prune at planting to improve branch spacing and promote a strong structure by removing dead, damaged, or rubbing branches. Trees should be pruned while dormant in late fall or early spring.

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