

Alex's Nursery, Inc.

Fall 2012



WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO PLANT TREES?

FALL PLANTING OF TREES

By Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor University of Vermont

Fall is the ideal time to plant a tree--both for the gardener and the tree! The weather is cooler, so it is more enjoyable working outdoors. The tree also benefits because the soil is better able to retain moisture now than during the hot days of summer, so it becomes established easily. Here are some tips from the American Association of Nurserymen for fall planting of trees. When selecting a tree, consider your lawn's soil, sun, moisture, and temperature conditions, as well as your personal preferences regarding color, size, and leaf shape. Make sure the site you pick to plant the tree will accommodate the tree after it has matured. If planting close to your house, choose a smaller or slower-growing tree, unless, of course, you are trying to block out an undesirable view. The experts at your local garden center will be able to help you decide what to plant. Before you plant the tree, test your soil for drainage. Dig a hole, fill it with water, and check it twice--once after 24 hours have elapsed, again after 48 hours. If the hole drains well in this time frame, the soil should adequately support a tree. Dig the planting hole two to three times wider than, and about as deep as, the tree's rootball. The hole should be deep enough to

plant the tree at the same depth, or slightly above the depth, it was in the nursery field. If you dig the hole too deep, the tree will settle as you water it. This places stress on the root system. If you selected a bare root tree, gently place the roots in the hole, taking care not to tangle or twist them. For a container-grown or balled and burlapped tree, mound up a small amount of soil in the bottom of the hole, and place the tree on top of the mound. After placing the tree in the hole, refill it with the soil you initially removed. There are many different views on what to mix--or not to mix--into this soil. For example, it's probably not a good idea to add too much organic matter, especially if the native soil is very different or poor. But you do need to make sure the soil pH is right before planting. It may need amending, usually with lime. It's also good to add phosphorus at planting. A soil test will tell you how much rock phosphate (organic) or superphosphate to add as phosphorus doesn't move in the soil and won't reach roots otherwise.

As you refill the hole, gently tamp the soil to remove air pockets and establish good contact between it and the roots. This will help prevent the roots from drying out. Water deeply. It's probably best to wait until early spring to fertilize although you could after leaves turn and start to fall. Again, apply according to soil tests.



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Alex's Nursery is owned and operated by Wallace Alexander. We have been proudly serving landscapers, garden centers and wholesalers in the Greater Columbia, S.C. area since 1974. The nursery was originally founded by the Alexander family in the early 1970's on less than 2 acres in Gaston, SC and has since grown to become one of the largest nurseries in the Midlands serving customers throughout the state of South Carolina. We have over 400,000 trees and shrubs in over 500 sizes and varieties available and are confident that we have everything you will need for a residential or commercial application. To be able to truly appreciate our inventory we invite you to come out to Alex's Nursery for a tour of our 20-acre facility.

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