



## Round Rock Garden Center

### Tree Planting Guide

You may have heard that fall is the best time to plant trees in Central Texas. There is some truth in that rule. Since our summers can be harsh, planting in the fall gives the tree some extra time to establish its roots before the challenging summer weather hits. Even though fall is the *best* season, you can plant a tree in Central Texas any time of year with a little TLC. Here are some tips for you:

#### Choosing a Spot

The spot you choose should meet the light and soil preferences of your tree. You will also want to keep a few other things in mind.

1. Consider the mature size of your tree when planting near a structure. You don't want to have to move your garage to make space for your tree. ;)
2. Check the location of underground utilities that might be disturbed by the root system as the tree grows.
3. Consider the root system of the tree tap roots will grow deep, fibrous roots will stay closer to the surface. Planting too close to a sidewalk, driveway, or foundation may eventually cause "heaving" of the cement.

#### Planting

In general, you want to create an environment where the tree can easily develop and spread its root system. Most likely, you will be planting a tree from a container. If so, follow these easy steps:

1. Dig a hole 2 times as wide and just as deep as the soil level in the container. Remove all grass and weeds from this area.

2. Gently slide the tree out of the container. Do your best not to disturb the root system (root ball). You will want to keep as much of the container soil around the roots as possible.
3. If the tree has been in the container for some time, the roots may have outgrown the container. If they look like they are taking the shape of the container, the tree may be root bound. If this is the case, you can take a sharp clean blade and slice an "X" on the bottom of the root ball and 4 vertical slices along the sides.
4. Place the tree in the center of the hole, making sure that the soil level from the container is level with the surrounding ground level. You want to be sure that the flare at the base of the trunk is just above the ground level.
5. Balance the tree by filling in the original soil around the root ball first. Then go back and fill in the rest of the hole.
6. Water well and then cover the bare soil around the tree with 2-4 inches of mulch. Avoid letting the mulch touch the trunk.

If your tree is not in a container, the planting instructions are a little different. Check out these guides from Arbor Day Foundation for more information.

[Balled & Burlapped](#)

[Bare Root](#)

## After Care

During the first year of growth, it is important to stay on top of watering. The amount you water will depend on the weather and amount of rain. The goal is to keep the soil and mulch "moist" but not "soggy". A deep slow watering every 7-10 days is a good rule of thumb for the first few years. Be ready to water more often when summer is in full swing. According to Arborist Don Gardner, your goal is for the soil to be moist down to 5 inches. Also, make sure to water "all around the tree" to the drip line.