

# Tree Planting Tips

*The success of a new tree depends a great deal on how it is planted.*

Assumption: The soil at the planting site is of good tilth and structure. In extremely clay or sandy soils consult the nursery for additional planting tips.

## Step 1

- Dig hole at least 2X wider, but no deeper than root ball. Roughen sides & bottom of hole with shovel tip. Do NOT add gravel to base of hole as water will collect here instead of draining away.
- Remove tree from container. Cut off all broken or damaged roots. Cut off or straighten "circling" roots.
- Slightly loosen root ball.

Soil line of tree

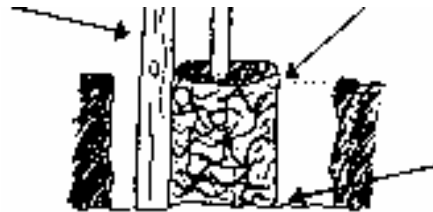


## Step 2

- Set tree in hole.
- Spread periphery roots outward.
- Avoid planting tree too deep. Be sure soil line of tree is higher than the surface of surrounding soil.
- Remove nursery stake. See back for staking tips.

If stakes are needed  
Place them now

Plant slightly higher  
than grown in a nursery



Tree root ball  
resting on  
firm soil to  
avoid settling

## Step 3

- Shovel some soil into hole. Firm it. Repeat.
- Avoid burying root ball top.
- Recheck planting depth and adjust, if needed.

Fill with original soil.  
(If amendments are  
used, mix them  
thoroughly with original  
soil prior to  
backfilling.)



## Step 4

- Build basin so water drains away from trunk. Basin should be at least 30 inches in diameter.
- Fill basin with water

Water basin



(Newly planted trees should have a mulched area at least 1 ft from the trunk (with 2 ft preferred). Mulch should be organic materials such as wood chips, bark, etc.)



Tree planting tips courtesy of:

University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Tulare-Kings Co.

Have a gardening question? The UC Master Gardeners offer free information  
On gardening. Call anytime and we will return your call.

Tulare: (559) 685-3309 ext. 225

Hanford: (559) 582-3211 ext. 2736



# Staking Tips for Young Trees

Staking trees is UNDESIRABLE, but sometimes necessary.

Staking is used to *protect, anchor, or support* young trees.

MOST young trees can stand on their own.

Some need support to stand against the wind.

Some need support to allow for root anchorage.

MANY need protection from mowing equipment, weed whackers, vehicles, and vandalism.

Staking trees is done at planting (not after), so have materials handy.

## Protective Staking

*Suggested for trees that can stand without support but need protection at their base.*

- Place 2 or 3 short stakes around the tree about 1 foot away from tree trunk. Stakes should be easily visible, so that people will not walk into them.

## Anchor Staking

*Needed when a trunk can hold the top upright, but the root ball is too small to support them both.*

- Set stakes for protective staking, then tie tree trunks to stakes. Place one loop or figure-eight tie between each stake and the tree trunk. Tie material should contact the trunk with a broad smooth surface and have some elasticity to minimize trunk abrasion and girdling.

## Support Staking

*Required for trees unable to stand by themselves or unable to return to an upright position after wind. (Try pruning tops of trees to reduce wind resistance and weight prior to staking).*

- Use at least two support stakes with one flexible tie near the top of each.
- Stakes should be no taller than needed to hold the tree upright. Do not allow any branches to touch the stakes.
- Find the correct height to place the ties. Starting low on the trunk, grasp it with one hand and bend the top over with the other hand. Find the height where the top returns to an upright position when released.
- Tie the trunk to each stake at the same height. Be sure tie holds the trunk, yet allows it to flex and the top to move without rubbing against a stake. The trunk should be able to bend in the opposite direction from the top during a wind. Tie material should contact the trunk with a broad smooth surface and have some elasticity to minimize trunk abrasion and girdling.

The sooner a tree can stand alone, the sooner it will become strong.

REMOVE support and anchor stakes soon after the tree can stand on its own (usually by the end of the first growing season).

