



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources
UC Master Gardeners of Napa County

Healthy Garden Tips

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TRANSPLANTING SHRUBS AND TREES

By Dean Donaldson, Farm Advisor

After selecting a suitable location for your plant, here are key points to review before you set the plant into the ground.

GROUND PREPARATION

- ✓ Remove weeds and competing roots.
- ✓ Digging the soil introduces air, mixes layers and loosens for root growth.
- ✓ Dig at least one shovel deep, more for trees – 3x wide.
- ✓ Fertilizers and Minerals are normally added three weeks prior to planting, based on soil tests, and only add enough to prevent deficiencies.
- ✓ If amending soil with organic matter, do it with the fertilizer 3 weeks prior.
- ✓ Do not walk on freshly dug soil.
- ✓ Make planting hole on top of freshly dug soil – only to depth needed.

PUTTING THE PLANT IN THE GROUND

- ✓ Select plants and water containers well 24 hours prior to planting.
- ✓ Check the roots for size and healthy growth.
- ✓ Don't let roots 'see the sun' – protect them from drying out.
- ✓ Most dormant plant roots may be gently straightened as you plant.
- ✓ Don't disturb growing (white) roots.
- ✓ Set in new hole to same depth (or slightly higher) as in container.
- ✓ Backfill with fine soil (amendments are not beneficial).
- ✓ Gently settle soil around roots with water drench.
- ✓ Add mulch to soil surface after planting (3 inches deep is good).

CARE – FIRST SEASON AFTER PLANTING

- ✓ Mulch soil surface for weed control, keep mulch away from trunk.
- ✓ Water to root depth to encourage growth, dry-off in the fall.
- ✓ Fertilize only after plant is established (at least 6 months after planting).
- ✓ Reapply mulch in the spring and in the fall.