

Give your new tree the best start in life with our tree planting guide

Properly planting a tree can take a little time but if you invest some care and nurture it at the beginning, it will reward you for years to come.

The most important things to think about when planting your little tree are root health, weather, soil conditions and aftercare.

Tree planting is best done between October and April. You should avoid planting in waterlogged or frozen soil.

To plant your bare root whip you will need a spade and some mulch plus a cane and rabbit guard if preferred.

Make sure that the roots of the tree do not dry out. If the tree needs to be stored for a couple of days it can be left in a plastic bag in a cool place. If you need to store it for longer you should heel it in by covering the roots with soil.

Selecting the correct location in your garden is very important. Think about what the tree will look like in ten years' time. Do not plant too close to buildings and think about the spread of the roots and branches. Think about any overhead services and how the tree may affect the light in the garden. Try to select a site that is not too dry or too waterlogged.

Dig a hole or slit in the ground large enough for the roots to spread out evenly. Make sure the hole is big enough so the roots are not bent or broken. Find the point where the roots meet the trunk (look for a previous soil line) and make this point level with the surface of the soil.

Back fill with soil and gently shake the tree up and down to work the soil around the roots. Gently firm the soil down around the tree. Avoid compacting the soil.

Push in the cane and fit the rabbit guard if you are using one. Young trees are vulnerable to damage. Tree guards can help protect the tree from damage from people and animals.



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Water the tree well and finish off with some mulch such as compost, well-rotted manure or bark chippings. The mulch will help to lock in soil moisture and limit weed growth at the base of the tree and aid its general development. Make a little space around the base of the tree though so that the mulch does not touch the tree.

Tree after-care involves ensuring the tree does not dry out so water well throughout hot, dry and windy spells. Also remove weeds at its base. Grass and other vegetation will intercept water before it reaches the roots of newly planted trees and hedging.

In the season after planting consider using a fertiliser if the soil is very poor to help boost growth.

As the tree grows, corrective pruning can be carried out to remove dead or damaged branches.

Why plant trees?

Planting trees is a powerful weapon in the fight against both climate change and nature loss.

Trees capture carbon and provide habitats where biodiversity can flourish. They can help to cool urban areas, improve air quality, reduce the risk of flooding and they are known to make people happier.

Newark and Sherwood District Council is helping to make the district greener by supporting tree planting in gardens, parks, schools and other publically accessible places.

Our free tree give-away is proudly sponsored by Crowders Nurseries in Lincolnshire.

Crowders have been growing plants for over 200 years and ensure that their native trees are certified sourced and grown in the UK.

Thank you for planting and caring for your trees!

Crowders 
Growing since 1798