Planting Ballasted and Burlap and Containerized Trees

1) Digging the Planting Hole

TOOLS

1. Call Gopher State One-Call at 1-800-252-1166 before digging. Dig planting hole no deeper than the root ball height. Excavate hole 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball.

2. Roughen the sides of the planting hole.

3. Before placing the tree in the planting hole, prune dead or broken branches. Remove any tree wrap, tape, string, and tags from tree trunk and branches.

4. Gently lower the tree into the hole by holding onto the root ball so that the trunk flare is at or slightly above the original grade.

2) Planting the Tree

TOOLS

1. Backfill 1/3 of the planting hole with original soil to stabilize root ball and keep tree upright.

2. Cut and remove top 2/3 of the wire basket.

3. Cut and remove top 2/3 of the burlap from the root ball.

4. Completely backfill the hole with original soil.

3) Mulching and Watering

TOOLS

1. Create a mulch ring around the tree and a 3-6" high soil-and-mulch berm at the edge of the hole. Keep mulch away from the trunk.

2. Water the tree thoroughly at planting and 15-25 gallons per week after the planting.

See opposite side for staking tools and directions
Adapted with permission from Casey Tree, Washington, DC
Planting and Staking a Containerized Tree

1) Planting the Containerized Tree

1. Contact Gopher State One-Call at 800-252-1166 before digging.
2. Dig tree planting hole to depth of root ball so that trunk flare is level with original grade. Excavate hole 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball.
3. Roughen the edges of the hole.
4. Carefully remove the tree's root ball from the container, and untangle and prune any circuling roots.
5. Gently lower the tree into center of the hole so that the trunk flare is at or slightly above the original grade. Back fill 1/3 of the hole with original soil to stabilize root ball and keep tree upright.
6. Completely backfill hole with original soil. Add soil to the downhill side to help level the soil area around the tree.
7. Remove any tree wrap, tape, string, and tags from tree trunk and branches.
8. Create a mulch ring around the tree and a 3-6" high soil-and-mulch berm at the edge of the hole. Keep mulch away from the trunk.
9. Water the tree thoroughly at planting and 15-25 gallons per week after the planting.

2) Mulching and Staking the Tree - for trees on flat or sloped ground

1. Create a mulch ring around the tree and a 3-6" high soil-and-mulch berm at the edge of the planting hole, particularly on the downhill side. Keep mulch away from the trunk.
2. Decide if stakes are necessary to help the tree remain upright. If so, drive stakes two feet deep into the soil at the edge of the hole.
3. Secure tree trunk with tree tie using at least a 6" wide loop that fits snugly around the tree trunk - tied with a non-slip knot.
4. Remove stakes after one year.
Planting a Tree Seedling with Shovel or Planting Bar

**Planting with a Shovel**

1. Contact Gopher State One-Call at 800-252-1166 before digging.
2. Brush aside loose organic material such as leaves and grass to expose soil.
3. Dig a hole twice as wide as the size of the roots and slightly deeper.
4. Place seedling in the hole. Make sure the first main root is slightly below the soil surface. Distribute the roots evenly, making sure the taproot is straight down. Avoid making a "J" root.
5. Pack the soil firmly around the roots. Make sure there are no air pockets.

**NOTE:** Keep seedlings in a cool, shaded, and protected place and keep roots damp until planting.

**Planting with a Planting Bar**

1. Follow steps one and two from above.
2. Drive blade into soil; move it back and forth to form a V-shaped hole. Make sure hole is deep enough for the roots to be fully extended. Avoid making a "J" root. (See "J" root image above.)
3. Insert the bar into the soil 2 inches away from the planting hole. Pull the handle toward you, firming the soil at the bottom of the planting hole. This is important to prevent air pockets at the bottom of the hole.
4. Push handle toward seedling to firm soil at the top of planting hole.
5. Insert seedling into hole. Set seedling vertically with first main root slightly below soil surface.
6. Remove the bar and firmly pack the soil around seedling with your heel.

**Mulching and Watering**

1. Water seedling well after planting and then a good soaking once a week.
2. Mulch around the seedling, keeping mulch 2-3" away from trunk.
3. Protect your seedling from lawn mowers and deer browsing by adding a cage or netting.

**Note:** Watering, mulching, and protecting trees may not be feasible for a large scale planting project.

**Note:** Check periodically to make sure that brush, grass and other vegetation is kept under control by mowing, mulching, spraying or a combination of these treatments.