

# BEFORE PLANTING

# RESOURCES

- Pick The Planting Location**  
Plant away from other infrastructure (fences, side walk, roads, buildings, etc.)
- Check for Utilities**  
Identify where power and utility lines are located and plan accordingly.  
Tip: most municipalities (call 8-1-1) have a free service to mark where your lines are.
- Choose Tree Species**  
Select tree species for your purposes (shade, flowers, fall colors, etc.) and the right size for the location. Trees under power lines should be shorter. Larger trees should be placed farther from pavement.
- Decide When to Plant**  
The PNW planting season is November to March. Deciduous trees should be planted while dormant without leaves on the tree.

## TREES TO AVOID AS STREET TREES

These trees are **not** recommended for planting as street trees according to the City of Tacoma

- Ash (*Fraxinus* spp.)
- Cottonwood / Poplar (*Populus* spp.)
- Maple (*Acer platanoides*)
- Cherry and Plum (*Prunus* spp.)
- Ornamental Pear (*Pyrus* spp.)
- Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
- Russian olive (*Eleagnus angustifolia*)
- Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)
- European mountain ash (*Sorbus acuparia*)

### Tree Research

WSU Urban Forest Health Lab  
<https://treehealth.wsu.edu/>

### Community Science

Forest Health Watch  
<https://foresthealth.org/>

### Tree Care Guides

Tacoma Tree Foundation  
<https://tacomatreefoundation.org/tree-care>

### Utility Marking

Washington 811  
<https://www.washington811.com/>

### Need Trees?

- Tacoma Tree Foundation
- Grit City Trees
- Tree Coupon Program
- Tahoma bird alliance
- WSU Ravenholt Urban Forest Health Lab

## Get in Touch



<https://treehealth.wsu.edu/>

[foresthealthwatch@gmail.com](mailto:foresthealthwatch@gmail.com)

Funding for this project provided by the Inflation Reduction Act and the USDA Forest Service, Urban and Community Forestry Program.



Right Tree  
Right Place  
**PLANTING  
YOUR TREE**



WASHINGTON STATE  
UNIVERSITY



# PLANTING YOUR TREE

## Dig Your Hole



Dig a hole twice the width of the tree rootball or container. The depth should be deep enough to cover the roots but still see the root flare on trunk. You want a wide hole to allow roots to spread out.

## Remove Packaging



Remove all packaging on the tree such as burlap, twine, ties, plastic, cages, containers. **Tip!** Remove but keep the plastic tag with the name of the tree

## Prepare the Roots



Straighten roots so they grow out from the tree and do not overlap. Overlapping roots, or roots that circle back, can choke out other roots as they grow.

## Placing the Tree



Place the tree in the hole with the root flare above ground. Backfill the hole. Additional soil may be necessary, but amendments are not needed.

## Mulch Around Your Tree



Add mulch 3 to 4 inches deep but keep it at least 1 inch away from the trunk of the tree. Mulch will help retain soil moisture, insulate the soil, suppress weeds, and provide a barrier to lawn care equipment.

## Stake Your Tree



Drive two posts along the side of the hole and use a flexible material to tie the tree to the posts. Remove after one year! This will help the tree grow straight and avoid falling over.

## Water Your Tree



Deeply water the tree immediately after planting and periodically throughout the summer.



# WATERING YOUR TREE

## Water Regularly for 3 Years

- It takes 3 years for a tree to establish
- Water the tree during the dry season for these first years
  - Dry season is typically June through October
- Water 5-15 gallons a week

## Watering Methods

- Water Bags:
  - Place waterbag around the tree, fill the bag, and allow to drain into the soil.
- Drip Hose:
  - Wrap the drip line around the roots multiple times to ensure the tree is thoroughly watered.
  - Allow the drip line to run for a few hours.
- 5-gallon bucket:
  - Make sure the bucket is clean.
  - Drill small holes in the bottom of the bucket, place near the tree trunk, and fill with water.
  - May need to fill a few times throughout the week.

# PRUNING YOUR TREE

## When to Prune



- Prune 2 to 3 Years After Planting
- Prune when the tree is dormant.

## What You Should Prune



- Prune broken, diseased, or damaged branches.
- Prune to get more clearance for sidewalks, signs, and infrastructure.
- Pruning limbs that are interfering with sidewalks or traffic signs reduces possible injuries to people, property, and your tree
- Prune to improve the structure of the tree.

## How to Prune



- Cut just above the collar of the branch. Don't leave stubs.
- Use proper cutting techniques to avoid causing damage to your tree.
- Use sharp and clean tools.
- Clean tools between trees with soapy water to avoid spreading disease



**Tip!** Attend a local pruning workshop to learn best pruning practices!