

How to: plant a tree

Broad leaved trees can provide shelter and nesting places for many species of wildlife. In the summer these trees create shaded areas that increase the amount of plants you can grow and also attract more wildlife to your garden.

What to plant?

Choose a native tree, such as bird cherry, crab apple, alder, birch, oak, hawthorn, holly, hazel, yew and silver birch, as they're more likely to benefit British wildlife. If you want nonnative trees, choose species that give food and shelter to British wildlife. Aim for variety if you have space for more than one tree to encourage a wider range of wildlife. See www.right-tree.org.uk for more guidance.

What to think about?

Take account of the size of your garden, its aspect and soil type. Think about how high you want the tree to grow and how it might affect buildings, drains, walls, fences and lawns.

What size?

Smaller plants are cheaper than larger ones and establish faster. A 1m bare root whip, which costs £1-2, will experience less stress (if planted properly) and within two years will have probably overtaken a 2m container grown tree that cost £50.

When to plant?

The best time to plant bare-rooted and container-grown trees is November-March (but never plant when the soil is frozen).



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Digging the hole

- Dig a hole a little deeper than the roots and at least three times wider than the diameter of the root ball or the spread of the roots.
- Loosen the sides and bottom of the hole to help the roots establish.
- Add about 5cm of peat-free organic matter in the bottom of the hole.
- Remove surrounding weeds and grass to reduce competition for water.

Planting bare-rooted trees

1. Build a mound of earth in the centre of the hole.
2. Use the mound to position the tree and splay the roots around it.
3. Gently back-fill with soil, carefully filling the spaces around the roots.
4. Gently but firmly press the tree into position.
5. Water immediately with enough water to reach just beyond the spread and depth of the roots.

Planting container grown trees

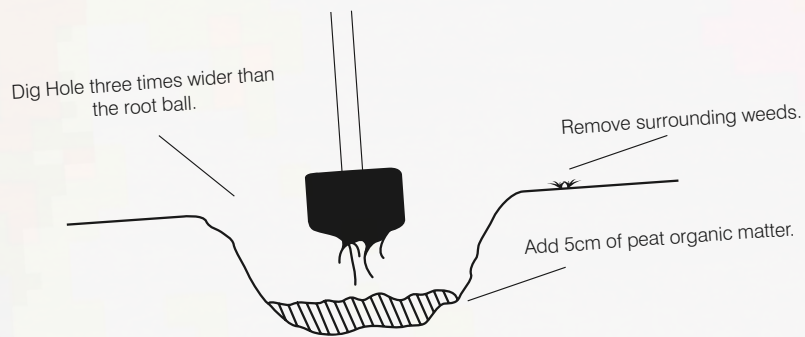
1. Slowly remove from the container, taking care not to damage the crown or stem.
2. Gently loosen the roots if they are compacted and place the root mass carefully into the hole.
3. Back-fill with soil and position with gentle but firm force.
4. Water well.

Looking after your tree

- Keep well watered for at least 18 months. Adding a layer of organic matter will retain moisture.
- Tall or rapid growing trees may benefit from staking a third of the way up the trunk.
- Be careful not to damage your tree whilst mowing or using a strimmer.

Tools/Materials

- Shovel
- Peat free organic matter
- Water



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