



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Trees for Tribes

Guide to Planting Your Trees and Shrubs



Thank you for volunteering to plant native trees and shrubs with the Trees for Tribes program. This guide will explain what to do with your plants and other materials to give them the best start in their new location.

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Planting Bareroot Trees or Shrubs



1. Before carrying bareroot plants (seedlings) to your site, place them in a bucket lined with wet paper towels to keep roots moist.



Dig a hole deep enough for the seedling's entire root system.

Planting Bareroot Trees or Shrubs



3. Using your hands, cover the seedling with soil. All roots should be buried, with the seedling standing upright.

4. Check the seedling's soil line to make sure it is even with the ground. Firmly pack the soil around the entire seedling.

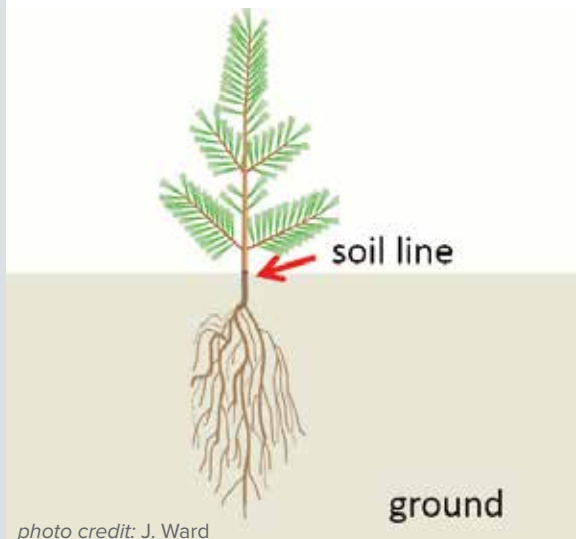


photo credit: J. Ward

Planting Potted Trees or Shrubs



1. Dig a hole as deep as the soil height in the pot and twice as wide as the pot, making sure the soil from the pot reaches the top edge of the dug hole.

2. Tap all sides of the pot gently to loosen the plant, and then ease it out of the pot. Avoid yanking the stem.

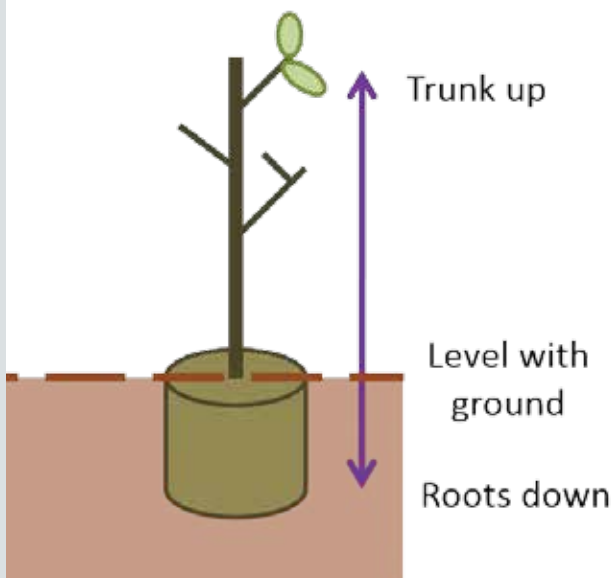


Planting Potted Trees or Shrubs



3. Loosen any “root-bound” plants by gently pulling the roots away from the packed soil.

4. Place the plant straight up in the hole with the leaved area pointing toward the sky and roots in the hole, making sure the tree is straight.



Planting Potted Trees or Shrubs



5. Check that the soil from the pot is level with the ground.



6. Fill the remaining space around the plant with soil, and bury all roots. Firmly pack the soil around the plant to ensure there are no air pockets below the surface.

What Do Weed Mats Do?

Weed mats keep other plants from growing too close to your newly planted trees and shrubs. Fast-growing weedy plants can consume water and nutrients in the soil before a tree or shrub becomes established. Weed mats work by blocking sunlight from plants that try to grow underneath them, and mats, like mulch, keep the soil moist.

Weed mats are designed to break down over time. In a few years, they will disappear, and grasses and herbs can be allowed to grow in the space between your trees and shrubs.



Installing Weed Mats over All Plants



1. Weed mats have a “shiny” side and a “rough” side.

★ The shiny side of the mat should always face up. ★



2. Gently guide the plant through the slit in the center of the mat.

Installing Weed Mats over All Plants



3. Fold under each corner of the mat and hammer a staple into each corner.



4. When you are finished, the mat should be stretched tight and flat against the ground.

Why Use Tree Tubes?

Tree tubes protect trees, giving young trees a chance to grow by preventing deer from browsing on their bark and leaves. Tubes installed flush to the ground can also prevent mouse damage.

Tree seedlings in tubes often grow faster than seedlings without tubes. When tree tubes are regularly checked and maintained, they can significantly improve the survival of young trees.



Installing Tree Tubes



1. Hammer a wooden stake one foot into the ground and about three inches from the base of the tree.

2. With a partner, carefully slide a tube over the tree. The tube should be oriented with the vent holes at the top. Tubes should not have stakes inside, but should be zip tied to a single stake outside the tube.



Installing Tree Tubes

3. Push the tube down until it is flush with the ground. Pull the weed mat up around the bottom of the tube.



4. Fasten zip ties around the stake loose enough to fit two fingers between the ties and the stake.

Watering Plants

After you have finished planting your trees and shrubs, water them until the surrounding soil is moist but not soggy.

If you expect very dry weather, plan to water your plants every two weeks.

To determine whether you need to water, dig a hole three or four inches deep near one of your plants. If the soil in the hole is dry, you should water.



Displaying Your Sign

Attach your sign to a wooden stake or metal post and display it near the front of your plantings where it can be seen by passersby.

Now your trees and shrubs are ready to grow into a stream buffer! Over the next few years, it is important that someone visit the site to maintain the tree tubes and check on the health of the plants. With proper care, these trees and shrubs will help protect your stream's water quality for many years.

Please see our Maintenance Guide for tips to ensure the long-term care and success of your plants.



Hudson Estuary Trees for Tribes

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