How To Choose the Right Tree for the Right Place

TreePeople

- Choosing the right tree for the right place is important to ensure the long term health of the tree and prevent site hazards.
- Answer the following questions to complete the chart on page 3. Then, use any of the TreePeople Recommended Trees lists to choose the right tree for each location.

Let's get started

1. **Conduct a soil drainage test to see if the site is appropriate for trees.**
   - Use TreePeople's How to Test Soil Drainage.

2. **Using the chart on page 3, and the questions that follow, fill in the answers for EACH tree location.**

3. **What is your soil type?**
   - Use TreePeople's How to Determine Soil Type.

4. **What is the climate zone of your area?**
   - Climate zones are areas defined by seasonal temperature, rainfall, humidity, altitude and coastal influence.
   - Los Angeles Sunset climate zones vary from 11-24. Because of this broad range, it is important to know the climate zone of your area to provide the best conditions for the tree(s).
   - To find the climate zone, either consult a Sunset Western Garden book or go online at http://www.sunset.com/garden/climate-zones/.

5. **Is the area irrigated or not?**
   - Some trees do better in lawn areas and places that are irrigated (receive water from sprinklers or bubblers) than others. Some trees do better in areas that have no irrigation, and some are fine in either.
   - Is the location for your tree(s) in a lawn or irrigated area?
   - Is the location for your tree(s) in a concrete cut-out, empty tree well, or other non-irrigated location?

6. **Are there any water use needs?**
   - Are there trees that will be planted in the same location?
     - When choosing trees that will be planted near each other, they should have the same water use needs.
   - Do you want to plant climate-appropriate trees?
     - Choose trees that are California native or low water use.

7. **Evergreen or Deciduous?**
   - Consider the following when choosing whether you want an evergreen, deciduous/semi-deciduous tree, or either:
     - Evergreen: Evergreen trees keep leaves all year. Good for privacy, wind breaks and hot areas. Plant on the north side of a building.
     - Deciduous/Semi Deciduous: Deciduous trees lose their leaves in fall or winter. Semi deciduous only drop part of their leaves for a short period of time. Plant on the south, east and west sides of a building to provide shade in the summer and warmth in the winter.

8. **What size or shape of tree?**
   - Different types of trees vary in their height and width. Looking at the site, consider the following:
     - Plant the tree at least 10-15 feet away from the foundation of a building.
     - Plant the tree at least 5 feet away from patios and driveways.
     - Are there utility lines above the planting location?
     - Are there other trees growing in the area? Are they fully grown mature trees or young trees that will need space to grow?
     - Do you want to shade a building?
     - Is there a fence?

   - Based on this information choose the sizes that will work for the location and add it to the chart:
     - Short and wide trees (S/W): Grow up to 25 feet tall and 40 feet wide.
       - Can be planted under overhead wires.
       - Needs lots of room.
     - Short and skinny trees (S/S): Grow up to 25 feet tall and about 20 feet wide.
       - Great for small areas
       - Can be planted under overhead utility wires.
     - Medium and wide trees (M/W): Grow 25 to 45 feet tall and 40 feet wide.
       - Provide shade for the entire roof area of a single-story building and walls and windows of a two-story building.
       - Needs lots of room.
     - Medium and skinny trees (M/S): Grow 25 to 45 feet tall and about 20 feet wide.
       - Great for areas near fences
       - Great for smaller places.
     - Tall and wide trees (T/W): Grow higher than 45 feet tall and 40 feet wide.
       - Provides the most shade for buildings, driveways and other large, hot areas.
     - Tall and skinny trees (T/S): Grow higher than 45 feet tall and about 20 feet wide.
       - Provides shade in areas that do not have a lot of room.

RESULTS CHART

Circle all that apply:

1. **Tree Location (if determining for trees in multiple locations)**

   #1   #2   #3   #4   #5

2. **Soil Type**

   Clay   (Soil texture results were: clay, clay loam, sandy clay loam; sandy clay; silty clay loam; or silty clay)

   Sand (Soil texture results were: sand; loamy sand; sandy loam; sandy clay loam; or sandy clay)

   Loam (Soil texture results were: loam, loamy sand; sandy loam; sandy clay loam; sandy clay; silt loam; clay loam; silty clay; or silty clay loam)

3. **Climate Zone**

   11   18   19   20   21   22   23   24

4. **Irrigated or Not irrigated**

   Irrigated   Not Irrigated

5. **Water Use Needs**

   Trees require the same water use needs   CA Native/Low water use

6. **Evergreen or Deciduous/Semi Deciduous**

   Evergreen   Deciduous/Semi Deciduous   No preference

7. **Tree Size/Shape**

   Short and Wide   Medium and Wide   Tall and Wide

   Short and Skinny   Medium and Skinny   Tall and Skinny