

# How To Care For Trees



- Young trees need care for up to 5 years to ensure their long-term survival and health.
- Use the following to care for trees.

## Let's get started

### 1. Weed.

- Remove all the grass and weeds growing around the tree.
  - At a minimum, remove weeds and grass within a 3 - 4 feet wide circle around the tree.
- Use small hand tools when weeding so you are only removing the weeds.
- After the area is cleared, and only the soil remains, use a cultivator to loosen the top soil to allow for better infiltration of water.

### 2. Check planting depth.

- If the tree is planted too shallow.
  - Roots will be appearing around the base of the tree.
  - Roots that are living, but exposed to sun and air, can develop a bark like the trunk of the tree. If this has occurred put soil around any small exposed roots, but not on the larger roots with bark.
  - If they have not developed bark, cover them with enough soil to keep them from becoming exposed again
- If the tree is planted too deep.
  - Follow the trunk down to the soil. If the trunk diameter remains the same size into the soil and the trunk flare is not exposed, it is planted too deeply.

### You'll need the following:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves           | <input type="checkbox"/> Hose            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trowel           | <input type="checkbox"/> Stakes and ties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivators      | <input type="checkbox"/> Stake Pounder   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pruners          | <input type="checkbox"/> Hammer          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watering buckets | <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel          |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mulch           |

### How-to Videos

Watch the following videos together to see a visual of how to care for trees.

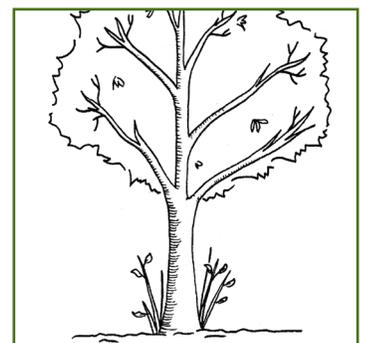
[www.youtube.com/user/TreePeople1](http://www.youtube.com/user/TreePeople1)

Scroll to Tree Care Videos and click Play All.

- Use a small hand tool to carefully remove the soil around the trunk of the tree until reaching the trunk flare. Remove enough dirt from around the base of the tree so the trunk flare will not become covered again.
- If the trunk flare is buried more than 6-8 inches, remove 4-5 inches of soil from the base of the tree out to the berm.

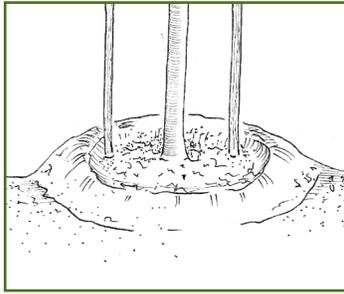
### 3. Remove suckers.

- Prune suckers back to the point at which they begin growing.
- If growing directly off the roots, remove the soil, then remove the growth.

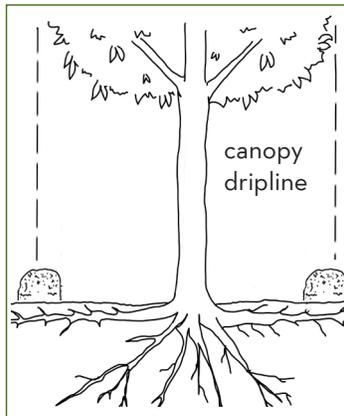


#### 4. Build or repair berms.

- A berm on a newly planted tree should be created just outside the root ball, about 4-6 inches high.



- For a tree older than a year, the berm should be extended to the drip line of the tree.

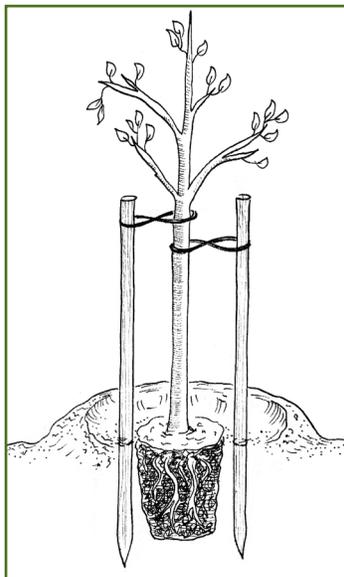


- The drip line is an imaginary line on the ground around the tree marking the edge of the branch canopy.
- Firmly compress the soil so no water will escape.

#### 5. Adjust or Remove Stakes and Ties.

##### *Adjust:*

- If the stakes have become loose and are not supporting the tree properly they need to be re-installed.
- It is best to have two people work together. One person is responsible for pounding in the stake and the other for holding the stake into a vertical position.



- Place the stake in the desired position, at a distance of 8"-12" from the base of the tree, and lean back so it is lowered to the person driving the stake.
- Load the stake pounder onto the stake and with a partner stand the stake up with the stake pounder positioned on top.
- The person holding the stake should kneel down and move out of the way of the downward pounding to avoid being struck.
- When pounding the stake there is no need to lift the stake pounder more than a few inches upward to generate enough downward force to pound the stake into the ground. Lifting the stake pounder too high and with vigorous force may cause it to come off of the stake and fall back toward, and cause an injury to the head. Stake pounders are 25lbs of metal, and will leave quite a bump.
- When finished installing the stake have a partner help to lift the stake pounder off of the stake.
- Ties can be loosened or tightened to make sure the tree is allowed to move 2-3 inches in either direction.
- To install a tie, wrap the tie around a spot that supports the tree and back towards the stake crossing the ties to create a figure eight.
- Pull the tie through to the desired tightness.
- Nail the tie to the stake. Place the nail through the loop where the two ends are joined together. This will ensure both ends of the tie are nailed to the stake.

### Remove:

- o To remove a stake, rock it back and forth in a circular motion until it is loose enough to be pulled out of the ground.
  - Be careful to not break the stake so it can be reused.
  - If portions of the stake brake off above the ground, use a saw to to cut it down as close as possible to the soil.
- To remove a tie, place the claw end of a hammer behind the nail and wedge the nail off the stake.
  - Push the nail back against the stake to loosen it from the tie.

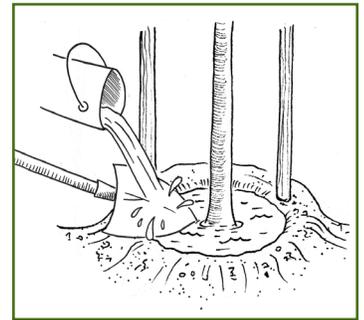
### Metal Stakes

To remove metal stakes, use a special tool called a Sawzall (recipricating saw).

- Dig down about 1/2 inch below grade level around the metal stake.
- Use the Sawzall to saw the metal stake below grade.
- Have someone hold the stake in place while sawing.
- Remove the stake and cover the remaining hole with dirt.

## 6. Water

- Check to make sure the tree needs water before giving it water.
  - Using fingers, dig down 3-4 inches into the soil.
  - Pull up some soil and try to squeeze the soil into a ball.
  - After a squeeze, if the soil can't stay together it is dry and ready for water.
  - If it stays lumped in a ball, there is still moisture in the soil and it can wait to be watered.
- Slowly, give the tree 15-20 gallons (three 5 gallon buckets) of water.
- For best results, research the needs of your specific tree(s) species.



## 7. Mulch

- Place a 3 - 4 inch layer of mulch over the exposed soil around the berm and base of the tree.
- Pull the mulch 2 inches away from the trunk of the tree.