

How to Plant Nursery Stock

Planting depth and a knowledge of soil texture (size of soil particles), soil structure (arrangement of soil particles), and the capacity of the soil to drain are critical. The depth of planting is dependent on soil type or texture (size of soil particles, e.g., sand [largest], silt [next largest] and clay [smallest]). In sandy loam soils that drain well, plants should be positioned in the planting hole at the level they were originally grown in the nursery. The original depth can be identified by a soil line on the stem or trunk of plants or by the top of the soil of B & B or container-grown plants. Most Ohio soils, however, are not well drained. They usually consist of silt and clay particles, and drainage is often less than desirable. In soils that drain poorly, plants should be planted somewhat higher than they were in the nursery (Figure 1). More air needs to reach the root system when soils drain poorly. In these soil conditions, plants can be placed from 2 to 4 inches higher than they were during their growth in the nursery.

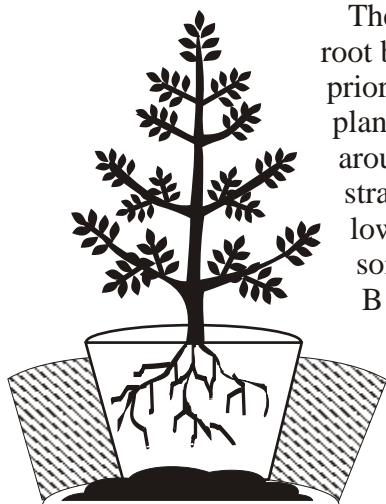


Figure 1

The width of the planting hole should be at least 2 or 3 times the diameter of the root ball. Water all container and B & B plants to thoroughly wet the root ball area prior to planting. Remove any dead, diseased, broken, or twisted roots before planting by pruning to healthy tissue. Roots matted at the bottom or circling around the root ball of container-grown plants should be cut and removed or straightened. Disturb the root ball of B & B plants as little as possible. Slowly lower the root ball into the planting hole to prevent breaking or cracking of the soil around the roots of B & B plants. After placing in the hole, the burlap of B & B plants should be loosened and rolled down the sides of the soil ball. No burlap should be exposed above the soil surface in order to prevent wicking and drying which interferes with proper moisture flow between the soil ball and the backfill. Cut and remove all twine, cords, wire, or strapping material, especially around the trunk or stems. Also, remove all labels attached with wire or nylon twine that can eventually girdle stem tissue. Position the soil ball in the hole with the lowest branches of the plant facing areas of least people and pet activity, and higher branches facing areas requiring greater clearance. This reduces subsequent pruning. Orient the side of the plant with the most branches in such a way they are away from the afternoon sun. In so doing, the less developed side of the plant will be favored with more light.

New root growth can be enhanced by adding some form of organic matter such as peat moss, Garden Magic Composted Manure or Premier Pro Mix ® Landscape Mix (approximately one-third, by volume) to the soil being used to fill the planting hole. All subsoil from digging a planting hole should be discarded, especially if blue, gray, or yellow in color. Mix the soil amendments thoroughly with the top soil. Work the mixture gently around the root system and firm lightly. Heavy packing is not necessary and may be harmful. Water thoroughly, at least 2 to 3 times in a 60-minute period to make certain the entire growing mix is well moistened. Leave a saucer-shaped depression around the plant inside the edge of the soil ball to facilitate subsequent watering (Figure 2). At each watering, wet the soil thoroughly to the base of the root system. Apply a minimum of one inch of water per square foot per week between rainfall and irrigation. If the temperature is high or the soil is very dry, apply more than one inch per week. Be cautious not to over water or the amount of oxygen in the soil will be lowered to a level that will damage roots. Apply a mulch around newly planted landscape plants to conserve moisture in summer, reduce weed growth, stabilize soil temperature, and improve the overall appearance of the site. Never allow the mulch to exceed 3 inches in depth.

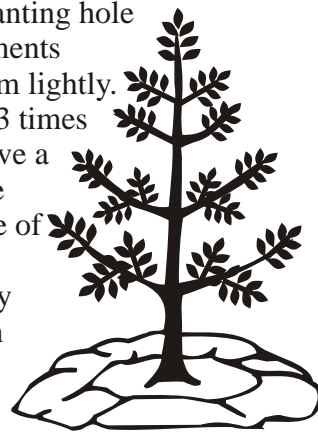


Figure 2



How to Plant Nursery Stock

1. Dig the planting hole.

Dig a hole 2 to 3 times the width of the root ball. Same depth as root ball or one inch shallower if planting in poor draining area.

2. Amend the backfill soil.

Add approximately 1/3 organic matter such as Garden Magic Composted Manure, Posy Power, peat moss or Premier Pro Mix® Landscape Mix and Plant Starter fertilizer.

3. Prepare the shrub.

Water plants thoroughly.

If potted, remove from pot. If plant doesn't come out easily, carefully cut away pot. Prune or untangle roots if necessary. Disturb root ball of balled & burlapped plant as little as possible.

Set shrub upright in hole checking that planting depth is correct.

For balled & burlapped, remove any wire or nylon binding.

Roll burlap down so that none is showing above soil surface.

4. Fill hole and build a basin.

Fill hole with amended soil and firm lightly.

Build a basin around plant so that water drains away from stem and concentrates near the edge of root ball.

Water thoroughly.

