

PROPER PLANTING PROCEDURE AND MAINTENANCE:

1. Your responsibility starts on the trip home from the nursery. Drive straight home because plants left in the car will cook in the sun! Drive 25 mph or slower to avoid scorching or windburn on the leaves if they are hanging out of the trunk or back of a truck.
2. Unload plants immediately in the shade or garage until you are ready to plant. Carry by the pot or ball not by the stem or branches. Many varieties are brittle by nature (especially weeping varieties) so **HANDLE WITH CARE**.
3. If you do not plant immediately, keep root-ball **SOAKED**. It will keep for several days this way. If it is hot, dry or windy, plant in early morning or late afternoon.
4. All plants grow in topsoil – not sub-soil, solid rock or clay. Your container plant needs a minimum of 6-8 inches of good topsoil and trees need 12 – 14 inches. If you encounter clay while digging the hole, stop digging and set the plant at that depth. Use topsoil to build up the bed to the height of the ball. This creates a raised bed so the roots won't drown. Wet feet will kill your plant – sometimes within one week! **DO NOT PLANT IN CLAY**. When digging your hole, make it wide enough to accommodate your foot when backfilling and tramping the soil. ***DIG THE HOLE NO DEEPER THAN THE DEPTH OF THE ROOTBALL (OR THE PLANT WILL SETTLE CROOKED LATER)***. ***Back fill only to the height of the rootball (ground level)***.
5. Plastic or nylon burlap wrapping and twine must be removed from the top and sides of root-ball. Use a sharp knife to cut the burlap away from the trunk and slit the sides of the burlap. Cut around bottom and remove upper piece leaving the plant sitting on the excess. Do not attempt to remove the bottom piece!! **DO NOT REMOVE REGULAR BURLAP – JUST THE TWINE AROUND THE TRUNK**.
6. Fertilize balled and burlapped trees and shrubs as they are planted. Any all-purpose fertilizer should keep your plant happy. Never fertilize after July 15th because this will push late growth that won't harden-off in time for winter. This growth will burn, the plant will look unsightly and weakening its resistance to insects and disease.
7. Trees or shrubs over 6 ft must be staked and guyed to keep from swaying and breaking off fine feeder roots. Large trees require 3 stakes. Staking kits are available at Plumline.

8. Prune out any dead or broken branches on your new tree and mulch with 3-4 inches of bark mulch. Mulch keeps roots cool and moist and reduces weed and grass competition for water and nutrients.
9. **A HOSE DRIPPING** at the base of your plant for at least 2 hours is an efficient way to give your plant a drink. Pull the mulch back every 2-3 days to check moisture in the soil, especially noting root-ball for it will dry out much faster than the surrounding soil. Some container plants may need watered one or two times per day while larger shade trees may only need watering once per week. **CLOSE ATTENTION TO WATERING IS NECESSARY UNTIL ROOTS MOVE OUT INTO SURROUNDING SOIL (approx. 3 weeks).....then watering may be reduced**
10. Regular visual inspection for insects and disease will spot problems while they can be easily solved. Most “bugs” can be picked off by hand and disposed of or hosed off the plant with a strong stream of water. However, some may need an insecticidal spray. **BRING A PIECE OF THE AFFECTED PLANT AND “A BUG” TO US - in a baggie w/your name and phone #. If we can’t identify the problem, we will find out for you and call with necessary information.**
11. Remember.....plants need to drink regularly, even if they have been successfully growing in your landscape for ten years or more. When summer dry spells occur, give the landscape a good deep watering once every week. Dripping the hose at the base of your plant will conserve water by avoiding run-off. This encourages deep rooting which helps plants survive drought and enhances winter hardiness and resistance to winter burn on leaves.
12. Corrective pruning is not difficult. Plants can be pruned or trimmed any time of the year without affecting it’s health. Commercial wound paints are unnecessary as the plant “walls-off” the wound w/modified cells within hours of the cut. Try to keep an even scaffold of branches in the case of trees with the “head” limbed up to about a 6 ft. height. Do this gradually over the years not allowing any branches to be removed to grow over a 3-4 inch diameter. The smaller the branch to be removed, the less time it takes the tree to heal over. Prune flowering plants and trees immediately after blooming so as not to cut off next year’s flowers.
13. Animal damage has become more and more of a problem over the past decade here in the Pittsburgh area. As more ground is developed for homes and commercial lots, the deer and rabbit population is pushed into even smaller areas, reducing winter grazing areas. Unfortunately, most landscape plants are viewed as a delicacy and Bambi and Thumper have a heyday grazing on your favorite and often expensive plants. There are a couple of good repellants on the market that we have used here at the nursery with much success. These products taste terrible and after one bite, that plant is usually not bothered again for at least a month. We recommend spraying Liquid Fence or Deer Away, once each month for the first year. After that, spray as needed.

14. The drying winds of winter can take a toll on evergreens, especially in the first two years after planting. Some sort of burlap windscreen must be erected around broadleaf evergreens from mid December to late March. Burlap is stapled to wooden stakes driven into the ground around the plant to keep the full force of wind from drying out leaves when roots are frozen. Broadleaf evergreens are rhododendrons, azaleas, japonicas, mt laurel, hollies,- etc. Other evergreens are needle leaved, which may be burlapped too. If your location is unusually windy, or if salt spray from roadways is likely, anti-dessicant sprays such as Moisturin will reducing winter burn.

Thank you for taking time to read through this information. Please feel free to call with any questions and we will do our best to solve your problem. We do KNOW OUR PLANTS and grow a good percentage of what we sell. You can be sure of top quality, “hardy – for-this-area plant material”.....the best that money can buy.

Thank you again for your patronage.

Bill Tribou and the staff at ***PLUMLINE NURSERY on the Ridge***