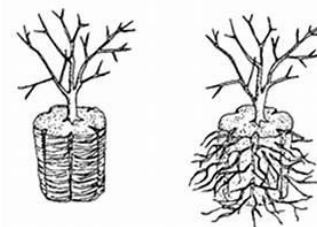


Planting Instructions

1. Prepare a hole two to three times as wide as the root ball of your tree. Dig down to about the depth of the root ball so when it's resting on the bottom of the hole, the tree is at the same level with the ground as it was in its container. Handle the root ball carefully to keep it intact while you place it in the hole. Once it's in, turn it so the best side of the tree is facing the direction you want.



2. Loosen the sidewalls of the root ball
This can be done by just slashing the side of the hole with a spade or shovel, or sticking the garden fork into the sides. Loosening the sidewalls allows the roots to easily penetrate the soil surrounding the hole as the tree grows. Remove any labels. Take them off to prevent trunk girdling as it grows larger.

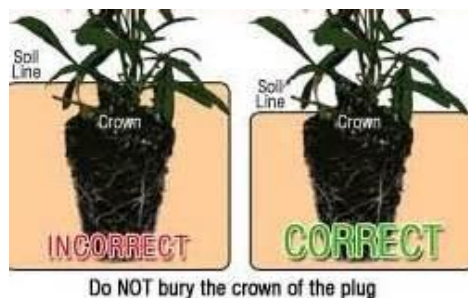
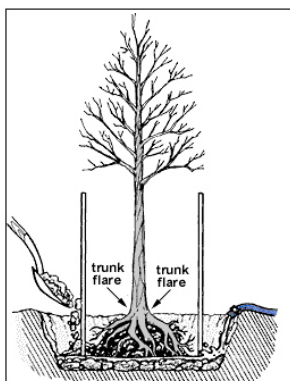


Here are helpful links for root bound trees:

<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/putnamco/2021/12/06/root-pruning-for-a-healthier-tree/>

<https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/containers.shtml>

3. Place the tree in the hole at the correct depth
The depth at which you plant your new fruit tree is critical! Many people plant their trees too deeply, and it severely hinders proper growth. The root ball should be flush with the ground. Never bury the trunk.



Do NOT bury the crown of the plug

4. Fill in the hole
Gently tamp the soil down with your foot as you fill the hole in, trying to remove all air pockets, without compacting the soil around the roots. Create a slight bowl or depression as you reach the top of the hole to allow water to naturally settle around the tree. Make sure you do not mound soil up around the trunk.

5. Provide support
A newly planted tree needs staking for the first two to four years after planting until the trunk is strong enough to support itself, especially if the tree is planted in a site prone to heavy winds. Using your hammer, drive the tree support into the edge of the hole (trying to avoid as much of the roots as possible) either perpendicular to the ground, or angled slightly away from the



Planting Instructions

tree trunk. Secure the tree to the support along the bottom 3 feet of the trunk. Use ties made from a soft material.

6. Water the newly planted tree

Even if you soaked your bare-root tree prior to planting, all trees need water immediately. Give it 2-5 gallons of water. Go slowly; let the water absorb before adding more. The water helps settle the soil around the roots, getting rid of any air pockets that may have formed when you were filling the hole in. You may need to add more soil or firm it down again after watering.



7. Mulch around the base of the tree (Optional)

Mulching retains soil moisture in the root zone and minimizes weeds, reducing competition that can slow a new tree's growth. Don't let mulch touch the bark on the tree trunk.

8. Prune your newly planted fruit tree

Pruning encourages root growth and also side-branching the following spring. A good rule of thumb is to prune the tree to a height of 30- to 36-inches; Most trees are pruned to create a single, central leader as they grow. The top bud will grow over time to form the central leader or main trunk of the tree. Remove any branches from the bottom 18-inches of the tree.



9. Water it well again the following day

The next day water it well again, giving it another 2-5 gallons. After this point, basic tree care takes over. Then begin a schedule where the tree is watered weekly if you are in an area that doesn't receive at least 1 inch of water weekly through rainfall. Strike a balance where the roots always remain moist, but do not over saturate.

