

We've put together some information and guidelines you can use to successfully take care of your newly planted shrubs and trees as they begin to get established in their new surroundings. This plant care advice is a baseline with you being the essential part.

Watering:

- During the first year, you'll probably need to water twice a week, except during extreme heat, when you may need to water every other day. It can't be stressed enough how vital watering is, especially during the first year.
- Check the plants in your landscaping each week and water thoroughly if there hasn't been sufficient moisture. Water when the soil, at a depth of 1 to 2 inches around the plant, feels dry to the touch.
- Water each plant, placing a hose at the base, allowing the water to run slow and long enough to saturate the entire root ball. If the water runs off, go to another plant, and then come back in a few minutes.
- After the first year established plants may need to be watered every three to four weeks - generally June through September. The required frequency will vary according to soil types. Heavy clay soils, for example, tend to hold water and therefore, need less water.
- Be sure to water the plants that are close to the house or beneath the overhangs where they receive little or no water.

Signs to watch for:

- Some shrubs and trees do not tolerate wet conditions. Those in the evergreen family are probably the more natural plants to kill by overwatering. They include:
 - Yews, Pines, Junipers, and broadleaf plants such as Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Boxwood and Holly, in addition to euonymus varieties and most flowering ornamental trees. It is not to say that these plants necessarily prefer dry conditions, but they seem to be severely affected by "water-logging."
- If a plant is showing signs of weakening (yellowing of leaves or needles), and you know it's not due to lack of water then dig into the soil around the ball and check to see if the root system's saturated with excess water. If it is, discontinue watering and allow the ground to dry out to allow oxygen to the roots.

Fertilization:

- Fertilize plants in the spring (March through April) and the fall (Oct. through Nov.) with a complete fertilizer that contains at least three significant elements: Nitrogen (N), Phosphorous (P), and Potassium (K).
- Some fertilizers contain micronutrients that can be deficient in some soils. Proper fertilization will promote vigorous, healthy plants. Vigorously growing plantings are less susceptible to an attack by insects and disease.
- Plant groups within your overall landscape will have different nutrient requirements. Supply these nourishment demands to the plants through a wide array of fertilizer materials. You should start your fertilizing program after your plants have been growing for one year.

Pruning:

- Shrubs, like most plants, come in many shapes and sizes. Depending on a shrub's individual growth habit, and the tastes of the individual gardener, pruning will be approached in a variety of ways.
- Understanding the natural shape of a shrub will help to determine how to prune them. All shoots grow outward from their tips. Whenever a tip is removed, lower buds are stimulated to grow. Buds are located at nodes, where leaves are attached to twigs and branches. Each node produces from one to three buds, depending on shrub species.
- There are two basic types of pruning cuts, heading cuts, and thinning cuts. Heading cuts stimulate growth of buds closest to the cut. The direction in which the top remaining bud is pointing will determine the direction of new growth. Make heading cuts selectively to reduce shrub height and retain natural form. Prune 1/4 inch above the bud, sloping down and away from it. Avoid cutting too close, or steep, or the bud may die. When pruning above a node with two or more buds, remove the inward-facing ones. Non-selective heading cuts made indiscriminately will stimulate new growth rapidly from buds below the cut. These vigorous shoots are unattractive and make shrubs bushier, but not smaller. A non-selective heading cut is done when using hedge clippers on a hedge or topiary shrub.
- Thinning cuts remove branches at their points of attachment. Used in moderation, thinning cuts reduce shrub density without stimulating new growth. Make thinning cuts just above parent or side branches and roughly parallel to them.
- Pruning at different seasons triggers different responses. Late winter or early spring, before buds' break, is usually the best time to prune many species because new tissue forms rapidly. However, pruning should be delayed for most spring-blooming shrubs until immediately after flowering to avoid reducing the floral display.
- Summer pruning tends to suppress growth of both suckers and foliage. Summer-blooming shrubs should be pruned in early spring prior to bud set, or in summer immediately following flowering.
- Late summer or early fall pruning causes vigorous new growth, which in some cases may not harden off by winter, which could lead to possible cold damage. Whenever unexpected damage from vandalism or bad weather occurs, prune at once.

- The information that has been provided is not meant to be all inclusive and should be considered as a starting point. Each plant may have different care needs and it is recommended that the care for each plant be thoroughly researched.

Top Care:

- The control of unwanted weeds or grass is essential to healthy plants in the landscape. The homeowner is the most effective line of defense. Using landscape fabric as an underlay to rock or mulch is not a 100% guarantee that there will not be unwanted growth from weeds or grass. Landscape fabric will not eliminate growth on top of the fabric.
- Unwanted growth competes for light, nutrients, and water. They should be removed by hand or by applying herbicides. Either which can help keep their growth to a minimum.

Please contact us with any questions, comments, or concerns.

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