



## **Top Ten Steps for Successful Tree Planting**

1. Select the right tree for the right location – this avoids serious problems in the future when an adaptable plant is planted in the ideal spot. [Recommended Trees for Kansas](#).
2. Move and store properly – Keep the tree well-watered and in a shady location until planting. When move the tree, lift it by the root ball or pot – not by the trunk.
3. Before planting, remove all labels, wires, cords or anything else attached to the plant. Items left on the tree can later girdle a branch or root. Plant the tree on solid ground, not in fill dirt.
4. Dig a hole deep enough to that the tree sits slightly above nursery level. The width should be three times the width of the root ball.
5. Remove all containers from the root-ball – cut away plastic or peat pots. Roll burlap and wire baskets back into the hole, cutting as much of the excess away as possible. This helps develop a healthy root system.
6. Backfill the hole with the same soil that was removed. Make sure the soil is loosened, without clods or clumps.
7. Don't cut back the branches of the tree after planting with the exception of those that are damaged or rubbing. Leaf buds release a hormone that encourages root growth. If the tree is cut back, the reduced number of leaf buds results in less hormone release and fewer roots being formed.
8. Water the tree thoroughly – and then once a week for the first season if there is insufficient rainfall.
9. Mulch around the tree – supply a 2 to 4-inch deep layer, about 2 to 3 times the diameter of the root ball. Keep the mulch away from the base of the trunk. Mulching conserves moisture and encourages root development.
10. Stake only when necessary – trees establish more quickly and grow faster when not staked. Staking should only limit root-ball movement rather than immobilize the trunk.

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