

Millier *Top 10 Tips*

PLANTING A CONTAINER GROWN TREE OR SHRUB

Container grown plants can be planted at any time of year, except when the soil is frozen or waterlogged. Follow these simple steps to ensure success in your garden

- 1) Dig a hole at least twice as wide, and twice as deep than the plant's container. Break up the soil at the bottom and sides thoroughly, using a fork. Mix the soil you have removed with organic matter – well rotted horse manure compost, or good garden compost.
- 2) Soak the container thoroughly – the best method is to stand the plant in a bucket of water until all air bubbles stop rising from the rootball. Once soaked, ease the plant out of its pot gently.
- 3) Add some fertilizer to the backfill mixture – 3-4 handfuls of Vitax Q4 or Blood, Fish and Bone, and mix thoroughly
- 4) Add some of the back fill mixture to the planting hole and position the plant in the hole so that the soil level of the container is the same level as the ground around it. Gradually fill around the plant, firming the soil against the roots
- 5) Pile some of the remaining soil around the plant to create a 'saucer', this will direct water into the rootball of the plant.
- 6) If you are planting a tree or large shrub it may require staking – the best method is to use two short stakes, one either side of the rootball, with a cross member (goal post construction). This avoids damage to the roots and enables you to tie the tree to the cross member, using a tree tie, with a spacer. Position the stake on the upwind side of the tree, so that the prevailing wind pushes the tree away from the stake.
- 7) Tree stakes and ties must be checked regularly until they are eventually removed (after three years or so). Ties that are too tight restrict the movement of sap up the tree and can slow growth and cause damage. Ties that are too loose will mean the tree can move in the wind, which can cause it to rub against the stake, causing damage.
- 8) Regular watering after planting is essential, to establish the plant, whilst the root hairs develop and take up water from the surrounding soil. Aim to water every day for the first few weeks and then reduce accordingly.

For large specimen trees the table below gives a guide to the amount of water required

Size of Tree	Volume of Water per week
12-14CM Girth	25 Litres: 6 Gallons
14-16CM Girth	35 Litres: 9 Gallons
16-18CM Girth	80 Litres : 20 Gallons
18-20 CM Girth	80 Litres : 20 Gallons
18-20 CM Girth	100 Litres : 25 Gallons

- 9) If your tree or shrub is planted in grass, an area about 1m in diameter around the shrub should be kept clear of grass and weeds to allow rainfall to penetrate and to reduce competition
- 10) Some animals, especially deer and rabbits can cause severe damage to newly planted trees and shrubs. Tree guards are essential if animals are a problem; spiral guards are suitable for smaller specimens – a higher mesh guard may be appropriate if deer are a threat.