**How to Plant Balled and Burlapped Trees**

**Dig** a saucer-shaped hole as deep and 2 or 3 times as wide as the root ball. Do not disturb the soil at the bottom of the hole. **Set** the tree in the center of the hole. Handle the tree by its root ball, NEVER by the trunk. Root collar should be slightly above ground level.

**Use wire cutters** to cut vertically up the side of the wire basket (if used) and peel it away. Remove all rope, twine and burlap nails from the ball. **Cut and remove** remaining burlap. Regular burlap can remain under the root ball, but vinyl or treated burlap should be removed completely.

**Pack** the original soil around the root ball, keeping the tree remain straight. Make sure there are no air pockets. **Backfill** until the soil is just below the root collar. **Build** up a slight ridge around the outer edges of the hole to create a basin.

**Water** the tree well. After it soaks in, **spread** mulch over the filled hole, but **not touching** the trunk. Water the tree slowly at the dripline every 7 to 10 days during the first year.

**Remove** any tags and labels as they will affect growth. **Prune** any dead branches. **DO NOT fertilize** or use chemicals on newly planted trees.

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How to Plant Containerized Trees

**Dig** a hole the same depth of the container with sloping sides that are three to four times the width of the container to allow for proper root growth.

**Lay** the tree on its side and carefully slide it from its container, keeping the soil around the roots intact. **Do not yank** the tree out by its trunk.

**Is** the plant root bound, ie, do the roots circle the root ball? If so, use a sharp knife to cut an X across the bottom of the root ball and four vertical slices along the sides of the root ball.

**Set** the tree in the middle of the hole. The root collar (where the trunk flares at its base) should not sit below the soil line. **Add** soil underneath the roots if it does.

**Hold** the tree in a straight upright manner and fill and firm the removed soil back into the hole until the soil is just below the root collar. **Build** up a slight ridge around the outer edges of the hole to create a basin.

**Water** the tree well. **Spread** mulch over the filled hole, but not touching the trunk.

**Water** the tree every 7 to 10 days during the first year. Water slowly at the dripline.

**Remove** any tags and labels from the tree as they will affect growth. Prune any dead branches.

**DO NOT fertilize** or use chemicals on newly planted trees.

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West Virginia Nursery & Landscape Assoc.
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