Plant A Tree

Balled and Burlapped - Planting and Care

Balled and burlapped specimens are grown in a field and excavated upon order. They are often the largest plants available, but can lose up to 75% of their roots when dug. They require multiple seasons to establish new roots before vegetative growth emerges. The labor and time associated with this type of plant increases the cost.

Planting

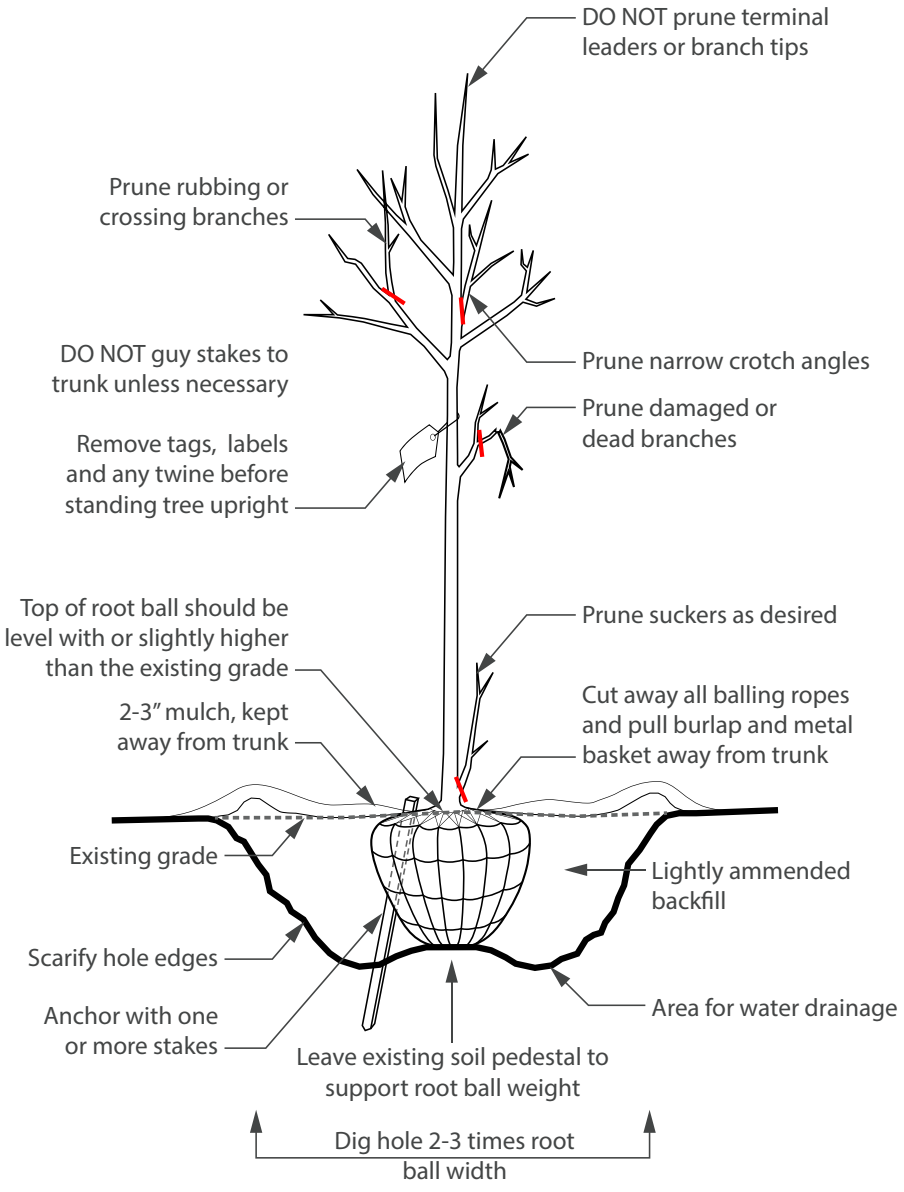
1. Mark and excavate a hole two to three times the diameter of the root ball. The depth of the hole should be equal to the height of the root ball.

2. Cut and unwrap any tags or twine wrapping the branches, as these may be hard to reach once the plant is placed in the hole.

3. Place the root ball into the hole verifying the depth is correct and that the plant is standing straight from all directions.

4. Lightly amend the excavated soil by mixing in aged pine bark fines or soil conditioner. Backfill the hole halfway with amended native soil and compact lightly to hold the plant in place.

5. Cut and remove any twine that is holding the top of the metal basket together. Pull back the burlap exposing the trunk of the tree and cut away all excess material.



6. Verify that the plant is still standing straight and continue backfilling soil to the top of the root ball. Tamp soil lightly to ensure good soil contact with the root ball and to prevent settling around the plant.

7. Create a water-holding ring around the base of the plant by mounding soil 1-2” tall at about the diameter of the root ball. Spread 2-3” of mulch over any exposed soil preserving a 2” diameter open area around the trunk of the plant.

8. Prune damaged or dead branches as necessary.

9. Provide slow and deep watering to help eliminate air pockets and ensure even moisture.

10. Continue to water, monitor and fertilize as described below.

Ongoing Care

Watering needs for a balled and burlapped plant are unique since most of its water-absorbent, fibrous roots have been lost during transplanting. Soil should be monitored and kept moist throughout the first growing season and given additional attention during periods of dry and hot weather. Extended periods of monitoring and watering may be necessary for larger plants.

Monitor New Plants

Determining when to water a new plant requires checking for soil moisture and assessing plant appearance on a weekly basis. Assess the overall condition of the plant and look for signs of stress such as wilting, dry, or yellowing leaves. Determine whether the surrounding soil is too dry, adequately moist, or too wet by digging down 2-3” and feeling for soil moisture. Keep a schedule of monitoring and track watering frequency and amount.

Encourage Deep Roots

Slow and deep watering is necessary to ensure even and adequate moisture is delivered to all roots and soil surrounding the plant. Over time, the frequency of monitoring and watering should decrease, but the duration of watering should increase. This process provides moisture when root systems are still tender and encourages deeper root growth as the plant begins to establish itself. The end result is deep-rooted plants that only require watering on an as-needed basis.

Protect from Frost

Young plants with unestablished shallow root systems are more susceptible to frost damage during the winter. Water plants and ensure even soil moisture prior to hard frosts to help protect plants from frost and root damage.