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Instructions For Spring and Fall Planting

The most important step in planting is to examine the planting site for environmental conditions: sunlight, soil type, wind exposure and drainage. From this information, we can help you select the appropriate plant material for your location.

In general, the planting hole should be dug 1 ½ times as wide but no deeper than the size of the root ball or container to be planted. Poor soils need to be amended with a rich organic mix like *Monrovia Organics Planting Compost* for trees and shrubs or *Master Nursery's Bumper Crop* for perennials and roses. In poor soils, mix 2/3 native soil with 1/3 *Monrovia Organics Planting Compost* or *Master Nursery's Bumper Crop* and back fill around the sides of the root ball. In heavy clay soils, very coarse sand may be added to the back fill in the following proportions: 1/3 *Monrovia Organics Planting Compost* or *Master Nursery's Bumper Crop*, 1/3 very coarse sand, and 1/3 native soil. All amendments should be blended thoroughly with your native soil. Care should be taken not to dig the planting hole too deep or excess settling may occur. For container grown plants, gently remove the container from the root ball (cutting the container may be necessary with pot bound plants). Place the root ball in the planting hole so that **the top of the root ball is slightly higher** than surrounding soil to allow for natural settling and an additional 1-2" of mulch top dress. A broadcast application of *Master Start Fertilizer* may be applied to the surface before mulching. Water your plant in with *Root Master B-1 with Hormone* solution once a week for the next 4 to 6 weeks to help your new planting generate white root hairs and help to guarantee its survival.



In the case of root balls wrapped in burlap, cut all strings and burlap away from the stem after the root ball is placed in the planting hole. Most burlap is biodegradable and need not be removed from the lower root ball. Synthetic burlap however **MUST** be cut or removed. **DO NOT** try to cut or remove wire baskets while the plant is out of the planting hole, as the root ball may break apart. The top of the wire basket may be cut away with heavy wire shears only after root ball is partially backfilled.

Before the hole is entirely filled with backfill mix, water the soil thoroughly to help eliminate air pockets around the root ball. Finish backfilling after all of the visible water has drained. Add a 1-2" layer of bark mulch around the base of the plant to help keep the root zone from drying out. Do not pile the mulch around the stem or crown of the plant, as it can attract rodents as well as encourage the growth of disease organisms on the stem. Create a saucer around the stem to help capture and conserve water.

The #1 cause of plant failure in the first year is improper watering. Generally young plants need the equivalent of one inch of water per week. Deep, less frequent watering is better than frequent, superficial watering. Visually check new plantings often. Do not assume sprinkler systems are doing the proper job. In addition, be careful not to over water. Note: Container plantings will dry out faster and may require more water than plants planted in the ground. Check out our Plant Aftercare sheet for additional information on watering.

Heavy fertilization is not recommended for new transplants. The *Master Start Fertilizer* will take care of the initial feeding of your new plant for the first 6 weeks. After that, a bi-monthly feeding thru mid-August of *Master Nursery All Purpose 18-18-18* water soluble fertilizer will provide the nutrients your new plant needs to establish itself during that critical first year. A late fall granular feeding (at ½ strength) around mid-November is also recommended. **Holly-tone** is recommended for acid loving plants and **Plant-tone** or **Tree-tone** for all others.