



Project List: Trees & Shrubs

A stately shade tree and structural evergreen shrubs can be the primary keys to a beautiful landscape, and provide much of the property's value. Getting these plants properly established is critical to your investment and enjoyment of them.

- Root Stimulator**—Water new plantings thoroughly with organic root stimulator such as **Nature's Guide Organic Root Stimulator** and reapply twice per month for the first 6 months.
- Espoma Bio-tone Starter Plus** - An organic soil bacteria and fungi jump-starter, food, and bio-stimulant for new soils. Excellent to reduce transplant shock and speed root growth in all new plantings, beds, or containers, ensuring success. *Must contact roots.*
- Liquid Seaweed**—An organic extract that strengthens plants for better resistance to temperature fluctuations, stress, and disease. Good as a drench or foliar spray. Ideally, soak plants in the solution before planting.
- Superthrive**—Not a plant food, **Superthrive** contains 50 vitamins and hormones essential for plant growth. Adding this solution to transplants can ease stress and reduce shock.
- Mulch**—Mulch retains moisture in the soil, suppresses weeds, moderates temperature, provides a finished look, and will break down slowly to provide additional organic matter. Maintain a year-round level of a shredded mulch such as **Vital Earth Hardwood**.
- Soaker Hose**—These specialty hoses provide slow, deep watering at the root zone. Water is delivered slowly without evaporation over a much longer period than typical watering methods.

It is not recommended to introduce amendments into the soil for trees.

Amendments for SHRUBS:

- Compost**—Organic compost such as **Vital Earth Organic Compost** loosens heavy clay soils and helps make nutrients more available. Amend existing soil prior to planting shrubs.
- Expanded Shale**—This porous, lightweight gravel increases drainage and aeration when blended with existing soil, and is highly recommended for breaking up native clay soils. It can also be used as inorganic mulch material for dry-loving plants such as lavender in containers.

See a Garden Advisor for help in choosing the right amendments for your shrubs, or consult with a Garden Coach to evaluate amendments & a planting plan.

(continued on reverse)

TIMING: The time of year you plant will greatly affect how quickly your new plants become established. Spring and fall are the easiest times, with winter being an ideal window for deciduous trees and larger shrubs. However, note that there may be only certain times of year that your choice of plants will actually be available for purchase.

PREP: Turn in the recommended amendments when shrubs are to be planted as below. See a Garden Advisor for help with the right ones, or get with a Garden Coach. In heavy clay soils, it can be helpful to water the area a few days prior to planting to make cultivation easier.

PLANT:

- First, make sure the root ball of the tree or shrub to be planted is thoroughly wet. This can be done with a **Root Stimulator** solution ideally, or soaked with a hose.
- Dig the hole 2-3 times the width of the existing root ball. The depth, however, should be the same or slightly less. You can measure with a yardstick to be sure. Do not disturb the soil past the point necessary. The plant will rest slightly higher than the surrounding soil.
- To further minimize transplant shock and encourage growth, add **Bio-tone Starter Plus**.

FOR TREES: Backfill the hole with *only* the soil that was removed; do not add any amendments.

FOR SHRUBS: Use the soil that was amendment for the specific needs of the shrub being planted. Plants that prefer acidic soil, such as azaleas and Japanese maples, should also receive an application of a soil acidifier such as **Liquid Seaweed with Iron** or **pelletized sulfur** at planting time.

- Settle the soil by thoroughly watering the entire surface of the soil area that was dug.
- Apply the chosen mulch, making sure to leave about a 3" circle of space around the trunk or lowest branches of the plant to keep them dry and allow for air exchange.

CULTURE: During this acclimation period, plants will put much more energy into developing a root system than in producing top growth. For large trees and shrubs, you should not expect to see much new growth or blooms the first year (depending on the variety). Larger specimens can take up to three years to begin producing new growth. Unless a tree is in very windy conditions, it is best *not* to stake the trunk.

MAINTENANCE: *Note that nitrogen fertilizers that encourage green growth are not recommended at planting time.* After the first year, use the appropriate fertilizer such as **Texas Tee** or **Espoma's Tree-tone** for general use, or **Espoma's Holly-tone** for acid loving plants. All new trees and shrubs will require supplemental hand watering after planting for up to a year especially in summer months. It is best to water plants early in the morning (around 6-7 am). Apply an ample sized puddle around the root ball. Let the water absorb, and then repeat.

Consult our *First Year Care for New Plantings* handout for additional information.

Speak with a Garden Advisor for questions and additional help in successfully growing trees and shrubs.

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