

Tree planting guidance



Tree stock

Trees usually come as either bare root, celled or on a root ball.

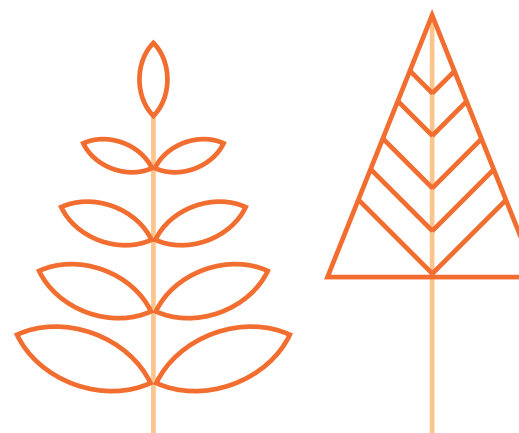
Bare root trees have no soil on the roots and are very prone to drying out quickly. They should be planted as soon as possible, and be kept in the bag protected from wind until they are planted. Bare root tree roots can completely dry out in as fast as 15 minutes, so it's important to keep them protected from the elements. When planting, they should be planted so the root collar is just below the soil.

Celled trees are grown in individual containers containing compost and come with a soil plug on the bottom. They usually arrive in bundles of around 10–20 trees with a bag containing several bundles. Whilst celled trees are less likely to dry out as quickly as bare root stock, they should still be kept in the bag until it is time to plant them. When planting they should be planted so the soil plug is just below the soil.

Standards usually come on a **large root ball** often contained within a 10l+ pot and arrive as individual trees. Because of the size of standards, they usually require a stake and tree tie to help give them stability until they settle into the planting location.

Tree storage and handling

When you receive your trees try to keep them stored up right and protected from wind and frost. If the trees are in bags leave them closed until you're ready to plant them to stop the roots drying out. Handle the trees gently and try to reduce the amount of times you move them as each time you move them you risk damage to the roots.



Planting position

Step one is to select your planting position and prepare the ground by removing any competing vegetation or grass. This can be done by strimming the area or digging up a sod of grass to expose bare soil.

If the ground at your planting position is frozen when you come to plant your trees, wait until it thaws or try again another day.

When choosing where to plant a tree, avoid planting too close to buildings, overhead utilities and other structures.

Planting techniques:

Planting feathers and whips

When planting bareroot/celled feathers or whips, the slit or t-notch method are usually used.

Slit: push your spade in to a depth that is at least as deep as the roots on the tree you are planting. Move your spade forward and backwards in order to widen the hole. Place the tree into the hole ensuring all roots are just below the surface. Close the slit by pressing with your toe and heel on either side of the slit until it is closed.

T-notch: push your spade in to a depth that is at least as deep as the roots on the tree you are planting. Push your spade in again at 90 degrees to your first slit to create a t-shape. Pull your spade back to open up the slit. Place the tree into the hole ensuring all roots are just below the surface. Close the slit by pressing with your toe and heel on either side of the slit until it is closed.

Planting standards: drive the stake in first if you are using one, just on the edge of the final planting position. Dig a hole approximately the same size as the root ball and place the root ball in the hole. Fill in any gaps around the root ball with soil and then firm it in using your foot to stabilise your tree. Attach the tree to the stake using the tree tie.

If you are planting more than one tree, position the trees a minimum of two metres apart and repeat the process.

