

Skill Level: BEGINNER These how-to's are suitable for people who are new to DIY and who have a basic knowledge of tools. If you've painted a room or re-potted a plant, you can probably complete one of these projects by yourself in a few hours or less.

✓ MATERIALS

- Trees
- Special Blend Topsoil—if needed
- Fertilizer
- Shovel
- Pickaxe—for hard ground
- Utility Knife
- Wheelbarrow
- Fertilizer
- Mulch
- Stakes and String—if needed
- Broad Straps—if using stakes
- Hammer—if using stakes
- Garden or Soaker Hose
- Work Gloves
- Safety Glasses

Whether you're planting for shade—or simply enhancing your landscape—trees can add beauty and value to your home. You want to give your new tree a great start—so let us take you through the steps to choose and plant a tree that'll flourish in your area.

SELECTING A TREE

01 Select the location for your tree.

- Examine the site over a few days to see how much sun it typically gets. Some trees prefer full sun, partial sun, or shade.
- Make sure that the location is on your property and the tree won't interfere with your neighbor's landscape.
- **Before digging call 811 to be connected with your local utility companies. They will mark any underground service lines to avoid.**

02 Select the tree type.

- Deciduous trees lose foliage seasonally. Evergreen trees lose foliage throughout the year.
- Also consider whether the tree will drop leaves, needles, seed pods, cones, or fruit.

03 Select the size.

- Most trees at the Lowe's garden center are labeled with the size of a typical mature plant.
- Make sure this size won't interfere with overhead wires, your home's roofline, or other landscaping.



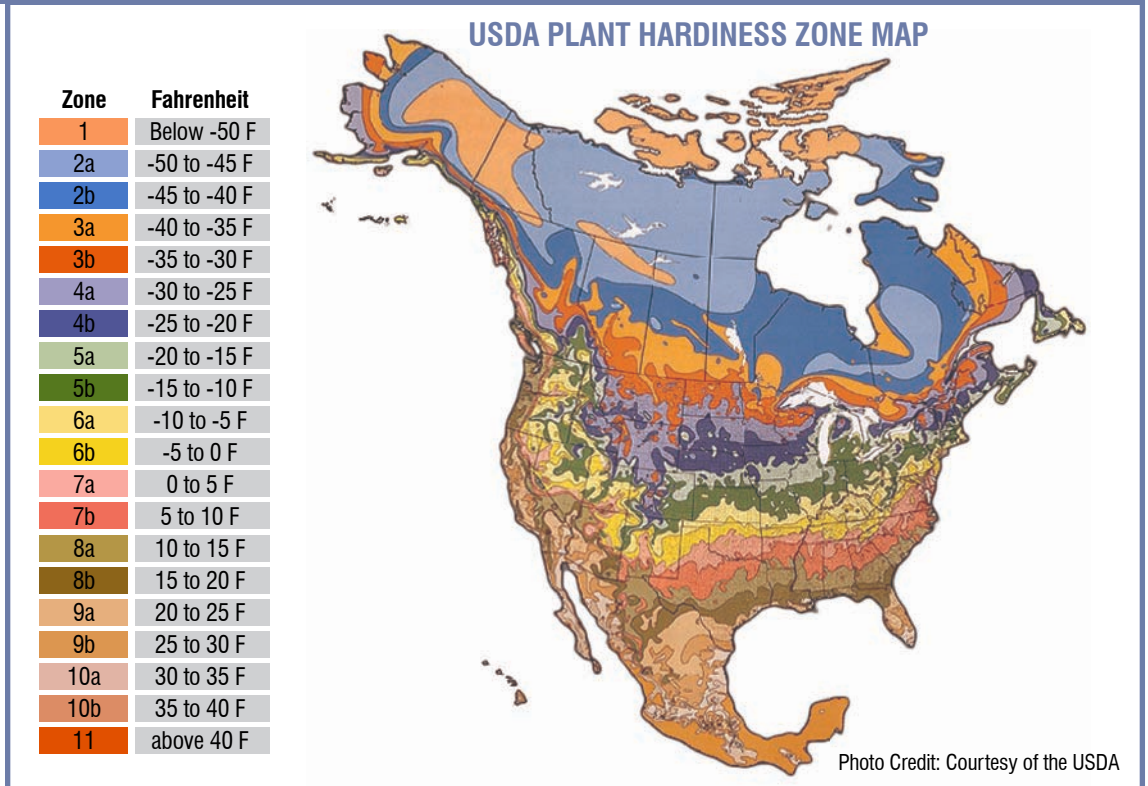
IMPORTANT

Before you dig to plant your tree, call 811. They will connect you to your local utility companies who will mark where essential service lines, such as gas and water, run through your yard. Avoid digging near service lines. In addition, some zoning laws regulate where you're permitted to plant trees. If you need assistance, discuss the job with a Lowe's associate or call a professional for help.

SELECTING A TREE (cont.)

04 Consider the climate.

- There are 11 hardiness zones in North America. Visit [Lowe's.com/Plants](https://www.lowes.com/plants) or ask a Lowe's associate to help identify the zone in which you live and to review your tree options.



- The best time to plant trees is during their dormant season—in the fall after the leaves drop or in early spring before buds open. This allows the roots a chance to establish before the hard freeze of winter or the dry heat of summer. In the southern United States, planting often can be done in the winter.
- TIP:** Palm trees are an exception to the above planting guidelines. Palm trees should be planted in the warmer, summer months. Also, make sure that the local climate and conditions are appropriate for the type of palm tree you select.

PLANTING THE TREE

01 Dig a hole for the tree.

- The hole should be about twice as wide and the same depth as the root ball or tree container.
- Remember to call 811 before digging.**

02 Prepare the soil. (If the soil is rich in nutrients, you can skip this step.)

- In a wheelbarrow, mix the removed soil with a special soil blend. Special soil blends are available for trees and shrubs that can help ensure the proper balance of nutrients for your new tree. Visit Lowe's or go online to [Lowe's.com/Plants](https://www.lowes.com/plants) for more information.

PLANTING THE TREE (cont.)

- **TIP:** If you have a compost pile, mix in a few scoops. Making compost is easy and can be done with ordinary household scraps. For more information, visit [Lowe's.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos) for instructions on how to compost. You can also buy compost.
- **TIP:** You can also add special fertilizers.
 - Manufactured organic fertilizers include compost, blood meal, bone meal, and fish meal. Many tree and flower fertilizers available are manufactured. The most popular are tree spikes that slowly dissolve in the soil.
 - Naturally-occurring organic fertilizers include cow manure, worm casings, peat, and sewage.
 - Chemical fertilizers are identified by an N-P-K code (such as 8-2-12) indicating the percentage of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium respectively. Many lawn fertilizers are chemical. Some also include micronutrients such as iron, magnesium, and manganese.

03 Loosen soil at the sides and bottom of the hole with a shovel.

- Temporarily place the tree in the hole to verify that the hole is deep enough for the root ball.

04 Remove the root ball from the plastic container using a utility knife.

- Work from top to bottom on two sides.



05 Carefully lift the tree out of the container, holding it by the thickest part of the trunk.

06 Place the tree base in the hole and use your hands to gently loosen the roots so they have room to grow.

- **TIP:** If the root ball is wrapped in burlap, you don't have to remove it. Burlap is a natural material that will decay over time. Once in the hole, untie the burlap, then simply cut and remove any strings or wires.
- Also, unlike trees in containers, the roots in burlap should already be loosened.



07 Make sure that the tree trunk is as straight as possible and that the top of the root crown is level with the ground.

- Rotate and tilt the tree in the hole until you are satisfied with its placement.
- Stand back from the tree to visually verify placement and adjust as needed.

PLANTING THE TREE (cont.)

08 Use the original or prepared soil to fill the hole around the tree roots. Gently tamp the soil down to remove any air pockets.

- **TIP:** If you are also planting bulbs around the perimeter of the tree, place them away from the delicate root ball. Plant them, nose side up, two or three times deeper than the bulb is tall. Check the bulb package for specific instructions.

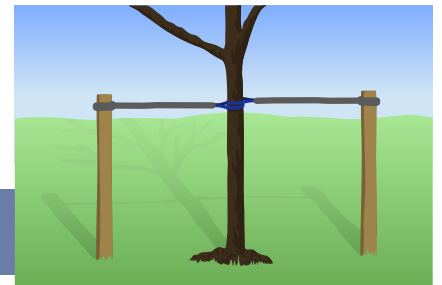


09 Cover the area around the tree base with about 2" of mulch.

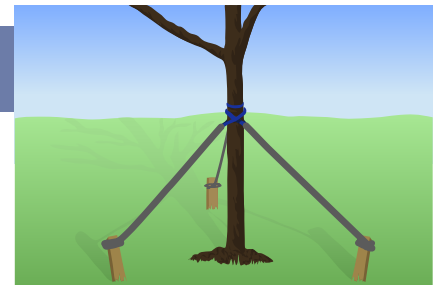
- This is especially important for fall plantings in cold-weather climates because the mulch helps protect the roots from frost during winter.

10 Install support stakes if needed.

- Trees with large tops in windy areas may require support.
- There are several ways to stake a tree. You can use long stakes, string and broad straps such as garden hose or cloth.

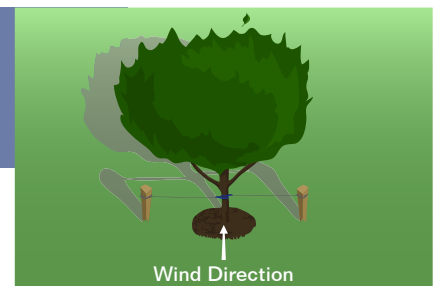


- Or you can use the guyline method, which requires smaller stakes, string and broad straps.



- Do not use wire directly in contact with the tree. Wire is too thin and will damage the bark.

- The number of stakes you use depends on the size of the tree and the prevailing wind direction(s). A tree with a trunk 3" or less in diameter typically needs one or two stakes. If the wind is from the west, place the stakes on the north and south sides of the tree. Use more if needed.



- Stake larger trees in two or three directions.
- If the tree is planted in a high-traffic area, place the tops of the stakes high enough so no one will trip over the strings.

PLANTING THE TREE (cont.)

11 Water your new tree.

- Directly water the tree base with 2" to 3" of water (about 20 minutes) immediately after planting.
- Manually or automatically water the tree two or three times a week for the first year—more in dry weather.
 - **TIP:** Position a soaker hose or drip line with a timer around the perimeter of the tree to make the job easier.
 - **TIP:** Water bags are another helpful tool. Just place the bag around the trunk and fill with water. The bag will slowly release the water to hydrate the roots.



By following the correct planting steps, your tree will be healthy, strong and beautiful. Be sure to check out the videos and printable instructions for other landscaping projects at [Lowe.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos).

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