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Tree Planting Instructions

The majority of the trees that are shipped from the nursery have their root system wrapped with burlap and protected by a wire cage (wire basket) to aid in the transportation and planting of the tree. The burlap keeps the soil in place around the delicate root hairs and keeps the root structure moist.

We recommend that the wire and burlap stay on the tree! The wire won't harm the tree and the burlap will rot quickly and won't restrict root growth.

The following steps should be taken to properly plant a wire basket tree:

- Dig the hole the same depth as the root ball. For example, if the distance of the root ball is 20" from the bottom of the basket to the top of the basket, then the hole should be approximately that deep. It is better to have the root ball slightly above the existing grade than below, this helps to prevent future girdling roots.
- The width of the hole should be wider than the width of the wire basket. For example, if the wire basket is 32" wide, dig the hole at least 40" wide. This allows for easy straightening of the tree when planting and the allowance of good topsoil to be backfilled around the root ball.
- The hole, that now contains a tree that has been partially backfilled, should be watered thoroughly. This will eliminate any air pockets.
- The tree should be staked to offer support while the new roots are growing. We like using 6' T- Rail steel stakes. These should be pounded on the outside of the root ball area. Use wire and garden hose to wrap around trunk of tree snugly.
- Once the tree is staked, the white string on top of the root ball must be cut and removed from the trunk of the tree. The wire loops that the string is tied to can be bent into the hole or cut off.
- Finish backfilling the hole with good topsoil. Creating a slight saucer around the edge of the hole with topsoil will help water retention around the root area.
- Once fully planted water again.
- Mulch may be added a few inches deep to aid moisture retention, deter weed growth and improve appearance.



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A few things to remember:

- * When moving the tree with a machine or cart, make extra care to be gentle with the tree. For example, don't drop the tree off of the truck or roll it into place! Also make sure the trunk does not get scraped with a chain or loader.
- * If the tree is hoisted with a tractor or machine, make sure there is no one underneath the tree. If the wire breaks and the tree falls it could easily hurt or kill someone!
- * The tree should not be planted in a wet area or an area with a high-water table. The roots need oxygen to function.
- * It is critical to water the new tree regularly for the first year, approximately 2x / week. At the same time it is important to not over water~ e.g. watering every day all day. For a wire basket tree, we recommend placing a hose on the root ball on a slow trickle for 20-30 mins. This should provide a deep watering. You could set up a soaker hose or other irrigation system on a timer if required.
- * It's advisable to check the soil after watering the first few times to ensure the soil is adequately wet around the whole root ball. This is especially important if using an overhead sprinkler system as this may not be sufficient. You may need to adjust your watering depending on your findings.
- * The stakes and wire should be removed after the first year.
- * After the first year it is a good idea to fertilize the tree annually with a general-purpose granular fertilizer (not lawn fertilizer). Application rates and frequency will depend on the product you are using. We usually fertilize once a year in Spring using our specially formulated controlled-release granular 16-6-12 fertilizer (which is available to purchase). Amounts depend on tree size but at least a couple of handfuls per tree evenly cast on the soil around the root area is usually sufficient.
- * Keep weed whackers, trimmers and mowers away from the trunk of the trees!
- * If fertilizing with animal manure, make sure it is well rotted. If it is fresh, the nitrogen will burn the roots.

Remember that once the tree is initially dug at the nursery and placed in the wire basket, that tree can be planted at any time throughout the year. Trees are not restricted to Spring or Fall only plantings.