



Watering your newly planted trees & shrubs

Proper watering is the single most important maintenance factor in the care of transplanted trees. Too much or too little water can result in tree injury. More trees are killed by too much water than by too little.

Newly planted trees or shrubs require more frequent watering than established trees and shrubs. They should be watered at planting time and at these intervals:

- 1-2 weeks after planting, water every other day.
- 3-12 weeks after planting, water 2 to 3 times a week.
- After 12 weeks, water weekly until roots are established - 2-3 years or longer for larger trees

- Check new plants and trees often. Newly-planted trees, shrubs, and perennials are still establishing their root systems. Check the soil around their roots often to see if it has dried out. The tree draws most of its moisture from the root ball. The root ball can dry out in only a day or two, even while surrounding soil remains moist.

- Check the soil. There is no way to look at the soil from above and tell how much moisture is in it. Dry soils can cause the death of small roots and reduce a plant's capacity to absorb water, even after the soil is re-moistened. To check the soil's moisture, use either a hand trowel, a soil probe, or place your finger into the soil.

- Water the roots. There is no reason to water the leaves of a plant. Water the soil, where the roots are - within the drip line of a tree, from the trunk out to the end of the branches.

- Avoid frequent, light watering. Instead, water deeply at wider intervals such as once a week.

- Check on sensitive trees and shrubs. Drought-sensitive trees and plants that are likely to show the effects of reduced moisture include magnolias, Japanese maples, dogwoods, beeches, larches, tulip trees, and birches. Hydrangeas also suffer during dry weather because they're shallow-rooted and therefore drought-sensitive.

- Keep checking in the fall. Trees and shrubs, especially evergreens and newly planted trees, need ample water in their root systems as they go into winter. So continue to water as long as you can.

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