

Planting & Pruning Guide

Preparation before Planting

To give your plant the best chance to thrive the soil should be very well prepared before planting. If possible, get the preparation done before the winter planting season while the weather and soil are still warm. Irrigate dry soils copiously before any cultivation is carried out.

To prepare the soil for hedges dig a trench at least 30cm (1ft) wide and 30cm (1ft) deep along the length of the proposed hedge, taking care to remove all large stones, weeds and weed roots, especially perennial weeds. Then infill with improved soil as necessary. For individual trees or shrubs clear a circle of approximately 1 metre (1yd) diameter of grass and weeds. Dig the area to at least 30cm (1ft) deep and improve the soil structure as necessary.

Improving the Soil



To improve the structure of the soil, incorporate generous quantities of compost, such as well-rotted garden compost, well-rotted farmyard manure, mushroom compost or composted bark. If you do not have any of these readily available we recommend using Rose, Tree and Shrub Compost which is in the range of composts available at the Garden Centre.

If the soil has poor drainage add sharp sand or coarse grit (make sure it is lime-free such as Horticultural Coarse Grit). If the soil is heavy clay, take care not to create a solid basin at the base of the trench or planting hole that will stop the water from draining freely.

If this preparation is done in advance of planting, the soil can then settle and will be workable when you come to put the plants in during the winter.

Rootgrow™

Rootgrow contains mycorrhizal fungi that is widespread throughout nature and a fundamental reason for normal plant growth and development. It enhances the plant's root system so a newly planted plant finds more food and water, needs less fertilisers, establishes faster, therefore reduces failure rates. The plant will have an increased tolerance to drought and adverse soil conditions so the use of Rootgrow is very beneficial to newly planted stock.

These mycorrhizal fungi are completely natural, organic and native to UK soils. While a plant will gradually develop its own mycorrhizal root system, planting them with Rootgrow will speed this process up. It typically takes one month for a mycorrhizal root system to develop with Rootgrow rather than up to 3 years for it to develop naturally.



Broadleaf P4™

Broadleaf P4 is the ideal product to use with Rootgrow as it is a water retaining gel which the young roots can grow through and will last for up to 5 years by which time the plants will be well established. Rain or irrigated water will be held around the roots absorbing nutrients as well and these can be used by the plants when needed.

Planting Pot Grown or Ball Rooted Plants

Dig a hole larger than the root size, improve the soil if heavy or sandy by adding some compost, composted bark or similar product, then when the soil has been well broken up put the plant in the hole having removed the pot or hessian. Disturb the roots as little as possible unless some of the roots have spiralled around, in which case these should be carefully teased out. Adjust the plant level so that the plant will be in to the same depth as before with the exception of clematis and blackcurrants where the crown of the plant should be just below soil level. Replace the soil around the plant then firm in well.

Planting Bare Rooted Plants

Dig a hole, or a trench in the case of a hedge, slightly larger than the root size, and if conditions are dry, water the hole or trench. Then place the roots into the hole or trench spreading them out to their natural position. Plant to the depth of the old soil mark on the stem, never deeper, except for blackcurrants where the crown of the plant should be just below soil level. Be particularly careful not to bury the graft of fruit trees (i.e. the knob near the base of the stem).

It is advisable to stake all standard and half standard trees, and bush trees if the site is exposed. Mark the position in the hole where the stake can be driven in without damaging the roots, remove the tree and drive the stake in firmly. Treat roots with Rootgrow, replace the tree and re-arrange the roots, then fill the hole with a mixture of soil, a quantity of moist compost, composted bark or a similar product and bonemeal.

The quantity will vary depending on the quality of your soil: if it is a heavy or sandy soil use a 50/50 mixture, but if your soil is a good loam then there is less need to add soil improvers. Firm the soil down well around the roots, cut the stake to size if necessary, and tie the tree to

the stake, preferably with a proprietary tree tie, to prevent any chafing. If heavy frost occurs after planting the plants may need firming in again.



Mulching

After planting, mulch well with at least 5-10cm (2-4in) of bark chips or other mulching material around the plants. You can also lay landscape fabric and plant through this, mulching on top. The mulch is very important as it suppresses weed growth and helps retain valuable moisture in the surrounding soil.

Pruning

Hedging. As a general rule, plants grown for hedging need pruning to encourage side branching. Usually the harder a plant is pruned the bushier it will be. If they are not pruned there is a danger that the hedges will be thin and bare at the base and that the tips of the plants will die back. If the plant is naturally bushy, less or sometimes no pruning will be needed to achieve a dense hedge.

Fruit. The object of pruning is to achieve an open, well balanced and easily managed shape.

Trees, Ornamental Trees, Ground Cover Plants, Grasses, Ferns, Herbs and Conifers. Only straggly or untidy shoots should be pruned.

Climbers

Self-clinging varieties Hydrangea, Ivies and Virginia Creeper will not need pruning but should be planted as near to the wall as possible and the branches pinned to the wall to encourage self-clinging.

Twining climbers Chocolate Vine, Clematis, Everlasting Sweet Pea, Honeysuckles, Russian Vine and Wisteria will not need pruning but should be planted as near to the supporting frame as possible and if the branches are long enough they should be twined into the frame tying loosely. If not long enough they should be fixed to a cane until tall enough to reach the frame.

Shrubby climbers Cotoneaster, Jasmines, Pyracanthas, Roses, Star Jasmine and some fruit. These should be planted against the wall or fence after cleanly pruning any branches which face backwards. Growth coming forward should either be removed or gently bent and tied to the wall.

Pruning Guide for Hedging Plants, Shrubs & Fruit

Always prune to just above a bud facing in the direction growth is required using sharp, clean secateurs. The plants are listed alphabetically and followed by a number which refers to the applicable pruning categories listed below. Unless otherwise indicated plants should normally be pruned immediately after planting, but not in periods of heavy frost. If pruning in spring, mist spray over the cuts with a solution of Maxicrop Seaweed Extract using a dilution rate of 45ml in 9 litres of water. This will stimulate plant growth and assist development from latent buds.

1	Cut back by about one half or more, and again during the second winter.
2	Cut back by about one third the leading and long side shoots and repeat during second winter.
3	Nip back growing points and prune only straggly or untidy shoots.
4	Prune any straggly or untidy shoots, otherwise no immediate pruning is required. (Rhubarb - no pruning needed.)
5	Cut back to one inch (2.5cm) from the ground just above an outward facing bud.
6	Cut back to three inches (7.5cm) above the ground in spring.
7	Cut back to nine inches (22cm) from the ground just above a bud.
8	Cut back to twelve inches (30cm) from the ground just above an outward facing bud.
9	Cut back by about one third to just above an outward facing bud.
10	Cut back by about one half to just above an outward facing bud.
11	Cut back by about one half, to an upward facing bud for weeping branches, or an outward facing bud for upright branches.
12	When buds swell, cut main stem to about 2ft (60cm) and strong side branches to 4ins (10cm), in both cases just beyond a bud. Remove any weak side branches.
13	Cut back one third of new growth in November and December. Vines sent out after the beginning of November will have been pruned before despatch.

Alder - 2	Griselinia - 4	Physocarpus - 3
Amelanchier - 2	Guelder Rose - 2	Photinia - 4
Amelanchier Obelisk - 4	Hazel - 2	Plum, Myrobalan*** - 2
Beech - 2	Hedge Germander - 1	Plum, Purple-Leafed*** - 2
Berberis, deciduous - 2	Hemlock, Western - 4	Potentilla - 4
Berberis, evergreen - 4	Holly - 4	Privet - 1
Blackthorn - 1	Holly, Box-Leaved - 3	Pyracantha - 2
Box, Common & Faulkner - 3	Honeysuckle Hedging - 1	Quickthorn - 1
Box, Dwarf & Variegated - 4	Hornbeam - 2	Robinia Pseudoacacia - 1
Box, Green Balloon - 4	Hydrangea - 4	Rose hedging - 1
Buckthorn, Alder & Sea - 2	Hypericum Hidcote - 2	Roses, Root-wrapped - 4
Buckthorn, Common - 3	Japanese Maples - 4	Rosemary - 4
Buddleja - 6	Japanese Quince - 3	Rubus Cockburnianus - 1
Corkscrew Hazel - 4	Laurel, Dwarf and Spotted - 4	Santolina - 4
Cornelian Cherry - 2	Laurel, Etna & Marbled - 4	Smoke Bush - 4
Cotoneaster Franchetii - 4	Laurel (Rotundifolia) - 3	Snowberry - 1
Cotoneaster Lacteus - 4	Laurel, Portugal - 3	Spindle - 2
Cotoneaster Simonsii - 2	Lavender - 2 (Prune in April)	Spruce, Norway - 4
Deutzia - 2	Leyland Cypress - 4	Sweet Box - 4
Dogwood - 2	Mahonia - 4	Thuja - 4
Elaeagnus - 4	Maple, Field - 2	Viburnum Fragrans - 4
Elder - 2	Maple, Japanese - 4	Viburnum Tinus - 3
Elm, English - 2	Mexican Orange Blossom - 4	Wayfaring Tree - 2
Escallonia - 2	Nepeta Six Hills Giant - 4	Willow - 2
Euonymus - 4	Oak, Holm - 4	Winter Honeysuckle - 9
Flowering Currant - 1	Osmanthus - 4	Yew - 4
Gorse* - 4	Philadelphus (Mock Orange) - 3	

Almonds*** - 9	Gages (not maidens)*** - 4	Peaches*** - 12
Apricots*** - 12	Goji Berries - 2	Pears (not maidens)** - 9
Apples (not maidens)** - 9	Gooseberries - 11	Pears, Family - 9
Apples, Family - 9	Grapevines - 13	Plums (not maidens)*** - 4
Blackberries - 7	Hazelnuts - 8	Quinces - 9
Black Chokeberries - 9	Honeyberry - 10	Raspberries - 7
Blackcurrants - 5	Jostaberries - 5	Redcurrants - 10
Blueberries - 4	Kiwi Fruits - 4	Rhubarb - 4
Boysenberries - 7	Lingonberry - 4	Strawberries - 4
Cherries*** - 4	Loganberries - 7	Tayberries - 7
Cranberries - 4	Medlars - 9	Walnuts - 4
Damsons (not maidens)*** - 4	Mulberries - 4	Whitecurrants - 10
Figs - 4	Nectarines*** - 12	

* Be careful not to disturb the roots as Gorse will resent this.

** The training of maidens depends on the shape of the tree required. *** Prune only May to July.

PLANT COLLECTIONS, MIXED NATIVE, HORSE FRIENDLY HEDGING and EDIBLE HEDGING

Please refer to the pruning instructions for the individual plants in the collections.

Subsequent pruning is beyond the scope of this leaflet. For further reading we recommend: Fruit and Vegetable Gardening by Michael Pollock, hardback, Pruning and Training by Christopher Brickell and David Joyce, and Hedges, American Horticultural Society Practical Guides by Michael Pollock, all published by the Royal Horticultural Society/Dorling Kindersley. The Fruit Expert by Dr. D. G. Hessayon.

Protection

It is essential that all evergreens are sheltered from drying winds during their first winter and growing season.

If the weather conditions are particularly severe or the site is subject to strong prevailing winds, a protective windbreak should be erected, for example windbreak netting. This will help to prevent the plants drying out and suffering from root-rot before their roots are established.

Watering & Irrigation

For all plants it is essential that they are kept well watered during their first year, even in winter when they are dormant. It is particularly important to keep them moist in March, April and May just before they break dormancy and consistently throughout the season.

As a guide, in dry weather at least 10 litres (2 gallons) of water per square metre (yard) should be applied twice a week, preferably in the evening. Also, it is advisable to spray over the foliage of evergreens in the evenings as well as watering.

General care

To ensure you get the best from your newly established plants we recommend:-

1. Ensure that all tree ties are kept secure but not too tight. A tree can be killed by allowing the tree tie to get too tight because of the girth of the tree expands considerable as it grows. If the tie is not loosened it will cut into the bark which will “strangle” the tree, and also leave the tree with a weak area which would be vulnerable in high winds.
2. Ensure that no grass or weeds are allowed to grow around the plants for at least a year. The roots of most weeds will be nearer the surface of the soil than the roots of the plant you have planted, so the rain will reach the weed roots first, thus robbing moisture from your tree or hedge.
3. Ensure your plants are well watered and given a suitable fertiliser for the time of year throughout the growing season*.
4. Feeding plants throughout the growing season* will encourage strong, healthy growth and help to prevent attacks from pests and diseases.
5. Regularly check plants for pests and diseases and treat as soon as discovered.
6. Plants that are more susceptible to disease (e.g. roses, honeysuckles and grapes) could be sprayed to help prevent attack.
7. Dead head flowers regularly to keep plants looking tidy and possibly encourage a second flush of flowers, except varieties which will go on to produce attractive fruits in autumn.
8. Prune annually to encourage healthy, new growth and to prevent overcrowding. This will increase the airflow through the plant.
9. Mulch shrubs and trees in the autumn to help retain moisture in the growing season and to help protect roots from frosts.

** The growing season is usually between March and October.*

GUARANTEE FOR HARDY* PLANTS

**IMPORTANT: This guarantee is only valid if it is accompanied by a till receipt.
Please retain your receipts within this leaflet and keep in a safe place.**

Bare Root and Ball Root Plants

The guarantee is valid for one growing season for bare root and ball rooted plants.

Newly transplanted plants are more susceptible to diseases and adverse conditions. A healthy plant can fail should it become dried out, be planted in unsuitable conditions, be affected by cold whilst not established, or many other like factors and we cannot accept responsibility for such failures.

Should any failures occur, we will consider claims if received BY THE END OF AUGUST with complete details of planting, aftercare and proof of failures. We would usually offer to replace the plants in the autumn at half price.

Pot grown and Cell grown Plants

The guarantee is valid for five years for hardy plants sold in pots one litre or larger and for one year for hardy plants sold in smaller pots or cells.

We are able to offer a free replacement plant or credit for any plant which dies, providing it has received reasonable care, bears our Garden Centre label, if applicable, and is presented for examination with a proof of purchase within the guarantee period.

If your plant is too big to bring back, please provide clear pictures (including close-up images of the leaves, stems and roots and the position it was grown in). We would like to try to determine the cause of any problems to avoid the same thing happening to your next plant.

Items that are reduced to clear and aquatic plants are not covered by this guarantee. This guarantee applies to the original purchase only. This guarantee does not affect your statutory rights. Extreme climatic conditions, pests, diseases and disorders may invalidate this guarantee.

Buckingham Garden Centre's liability will in no way exceed the original price paid.

** For the purpose of this guarantee, hardy means any plant that will withstand normal British temperatures and weather conditions. A list of plants that are excluded, due to their lack of hardiness, can be obtained from our plant team or found at our website:*

www.buckingham-nurseries.co.uk/guarantee

If you are in any doubt about any aspect of planting your new purchase, have any plant problems or require further advice please contact our plant information team by telephone on 01280 827912 or by e-mail at plants@buckingham-nurseries.co.uk

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