

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW TREE

The care you provide in the first three years after planting is critical for the tree's long-term health. During this establishment period, the tree has less ability to absorb the water and nutrients it needs and is more vulnerable to physical damage.

This brief guide will give you the information you need to keep your tree healthy during its most formative years. With proper care, your tree will provide you with many years of benefits and enjoyment.



WATERING

The single most important factor for young tree survival is water. Continue watering through the first two to three years after planting.



WHERE

Use a watering bag that wraps around the base of the tree, a bucket with holes drilled in the bottom, or a soaker hose to provide a long, slow watering directed at the roots.

WHEN

Water weekly from early spring until soil freezes in winter. Water twice weekly during times of drought.

HOW MUCH

Twenty-five gallons a week. Allow soil to dry out completely between waterings.

MULCHING

Proper mulching is one of the best things you can do for your tree. Mulch fertilizes the soil, insulates the roots, holds moisture, and cuts down on competition from turfgrass or weeds.

Mulch should be applied in a **wide** and **shallow** ring around the tree. Mulch should not touch the trunk.

Follow the 3-3-3 guideline when applying mulch:

- In a **3 foot** radius (six feet wide total) around the trunk of the tree
- At a depth no greater than **3 inches**
- Keep **3 inches** around the trunk clear

Re-apply mulch annually in spring or fall.



PROPER MULCHING



NOT PROPER MULCHING

TREE PROTECTION

Young trees in urban areas are subject to many hazards; deer, mowers, weedwackers, and vandalism are leading causes of damage and death.



DEER

Protect trees from deer browse by encircling them with wire fencing. Secure with a stake. Plastic sleeves can protect against damage from bucks rubbing their antlers against the trunk.

MOWERS AND WEEDWACKERS

A plastic trunk guard can be installed at the base of the trunk. Tree stakes and a wide mulch ring discourage mowers from getting too close to the trunk.

VANDALISM PROTECTION

A sturdy tree installation can help reduce human interference. To minimize vandalism and damage, especially in high foot-traffic areas, use three stakes in a triangle and a wider mulch ring.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON
PLANTING, PRUNING, AND MAINTENANCE:
caseytrees.org/care

DOWNLOADABLE U.S. FOREST SERVICE PUBLICATION
WITH IN-DEPTH TREE CARE INFORMATION:
caseytrees.org/treemanual

BEGINNER TREE CARE CLASSES AND
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:
caseytrees.org/events

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YOUNG TREE CARE