

Tree Maintenance

Planting a tree is a simple and meaningful action for the environment and future generations.

Once well-established, a tree requires little maintenance. However, a newly planted young tree needs some care to survive its first two years in the ground and establish itself properly.



For the first two weeks after planting, water the tree daily. Watering should be deep and abundant, covering the entire area under the tree's canopy. If your soil does not drain well, irrigate gradually to prevent runoff. However, be careful not to overwater. If water pools around the tree or the soil becomes extremely saturated, reduce watering frequency.

After these first few weeks, and for about two years, it is better to water a large quantity less often (every 2–3 days) rather than a small amount daily. When we talk about deep watering, it means several minutes of irrigation!

Watering frequency must be increased during dry periods. The best time to water is in the morning or evening to allow the roots to absorb most of the water.

In autumn, pay special attention to conifers and evergreen plants, as they need to store water for winter. Water them regularly and abundantly before the first frost.

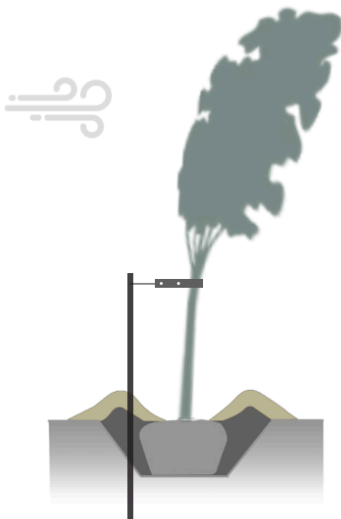


Staking

Adding a stake is recommended when the tree is planted in a very windy location, on a steep slope, if the tree is poorly rooted, or in an area with heavy foot traffic (risk of being bumped).

If using a stake, make sure to:

- Place it outside the root ball (to avoid damaging the roots and to ensure proper anchoring in the soil);
- Position it against the prevailing winds;
- Use a tie that does not squeeze the trunk too tightly;
- Remove it after one year.





Weeding

For small trees, removing weeds around the trunk is essential to allow young trees full sunlight and enough space to grow properly. Manual weed removal also reduces competition for soil nutrients.



Mulching

Mulch serves several purposes:

- Retains soil moisture;
- Reduces weed growth;
- Moderates soil temperature fluctuations;
- Provides nutrients and organic matter as it decomposes;
- Protects tree trunks from mower damage;
- Protects roots when snow cover is insufficient;
- Hosts beneficial organisms and stimulates soil biological activity.

Prefer organic mulches (shredded bark such as cedar or hemlock mulch, wood chips, forest mulch, etc.).

Apply about 10–15 cm of mulch at the base of the tree, making sure to keep it away from the trunk.



Fertilizing

Generally, using planting soil (purchased at a garden center), adding compost, mycorrhizae, or other soil amendments at planting is sufficient to meet a tree's needs. The tree should be able to find all necessary nutrients in the existing soil. Fertilizer is not recommended if the tree is already healthy.



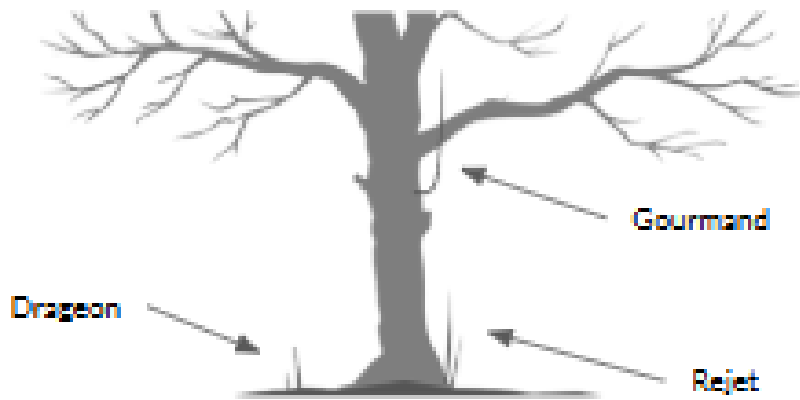
Pruning

Trees sold at nurseries have already received initial pruning to ensure a strong central trunk and well-spaced branches.

If it is necessary to remove broken or poorly positioned branches, it is best to do so before planting, as it is easier to access the top of the tree.

For complex pruning, consult an expert to make cuts that do not harm the tree and promote healthy growth.

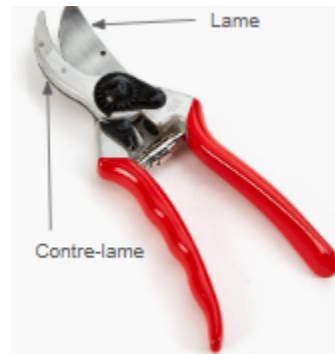
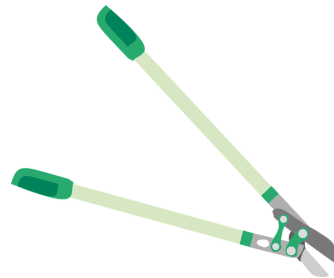
In the years following planting, you can prune as needed to remove dead, diseased, or damaged branches that may pose a risk to the tree. Suckers, sprouts, and water shoots can also be trimmed.



It is important to follow proper cutting techniques to avoid damaging the tree. More detailed explanations can be found on the "Espace pour la vie" website.

When cutting a branch, position the pruning shears so that the blade is on the side of the part you want to keep (toward the trunk).

Use long-handled pruning shears for high branches or those requiring more force, and a saw for thicker branches (more than 1 inch) to ensure a clean cut that heals well.



Winter Protection

To protect your tree's roots in winter, ensure that the base is covered with snow. Additionally, for the first 3 to 5 years, it is recommended to install a rodent guard in the fall and remove it in the spring.



Observation

To avoid any surprises, regularly inspect your tree up close. Do you notice any changes in leaf color? Larvae or insects? Damaged leaves? These could be signs of disease or insect infestation.

Don't panic! Like us, trees can get sick. With proper care and treatment, your tree can recover quickly.

If in doubt, consult the "Disease and Pests" section, a garden center advisor, or visit the "Espace pour la vie" website.



Additional Tips

Clear the tree collar of any organic matter accumulation to prevent suffocation.

Straighten trees if they lean due to poor root anchoring, strong winds, physical impact, or freeze-thaw cycles. If needed, recompact the soil and add or adjust the stake.

Reshape watering basins so they effectively retain water. These should be sturdy and well-compacted.