

**1**

## Site preparation

Eliminate weeds and loosen the soil to improve drainage and compaction. Dig a hole to a depth to allow planting at the same level as the nursery line and up to 3 times the diameter. Break up the soil with a fork at the bottom and sides of the hole before planting. Remove any debris, stones and clods of earth etc. Improve fertility by incorporating organic matter and a suitable fertiliser into the soil. If waterlogged over winter consider planting on a slight mound as excess moisture can kill finer roots causing disease and root rot.

**2**

## Guide to planting

Remove plants from the container tease out and carefully spread the roots. Soak thoroughly in a bucket of water prior to planting. Place in the planting hole and back fill carefully placing the improved soil all around the roots firming up as you go eliminating air pockets. If possible apply a layer of mulch of bark, well rotted manure or compost around the base of the plant leaving a collar around the trunk to prevent the bark rotting.

**3**

## Watering and aftercare

Water in well and regularly for the first growing season. Drought stress is common with newly planted trees and shrubs. Even in a cool damp summer the rain rarely replenishes soil moisture fully. The soil may be dry around the roots even when the surface appears moist. Windy conditions are especially likely to lead to water shortages with dull lifeless foliage an indication of drought stress. Irrigate regularly to prevent damage. Keep the diameter around the plant free from weeds as they will intercept the water before it gets to the newly planted roots.

### Common problems:

**Planting too deep** is a common cause of tree death. Take care to plant at the same depth that it was growing in the nursery pot.

**Poor establishment** can occur if there is unfavourable weather, poor soil conditions and aftercare with leaves turning yellow or brown.

**Wind rock** of unsecured trees and large shrubs will damage roots and leave a space for rain water to collect leading to fatal root rotting. Always stake large plants to avoid this happening.

**Insufficient water** in the first year after planting is the main cause of poor establishment.

**Excessive water** in poorly drained waterlogged soil is just as likely to cause damage.

**Larger specimens** require greater aftercare with special attention paid to watering and can take two or three seasons to fully establish.

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