

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

The planting season in West Virginia for bare root seedlings occurs in the late fall and again in the early spring. Shipping and planting of bare root trees should only occur when the seedlings are dormant. Planting seedlings after bud break, caused by exposure to warm temperatures, will result in decreased survival rates.

To optimize survival plant seedlings immediately upon their arrival from the nursery. If this is not possible, the bundles can be stored for several days in a cool, dark place. Do not unpack the bundles! Water the bundles periodically to ensure the roots are well moistened. It is critical that the roots never be allowed to dry out; exposure to the air for even a few minutes can kill your seedlings. Trees that are not planted within several days of delivery should be heeled-in. Heeling –in is the temporary planting of seedlings by covering the roots and lower portions of the stems with moist soil.

Select the Right Tree for the Right Place

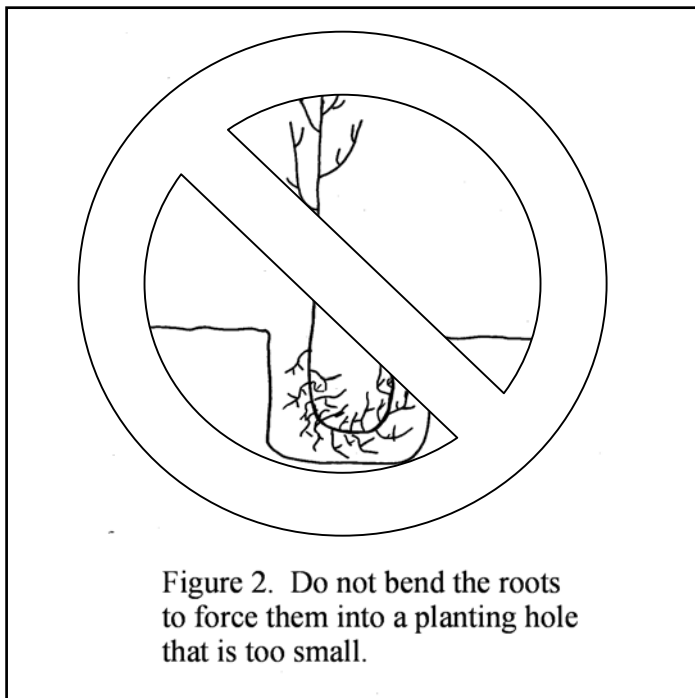
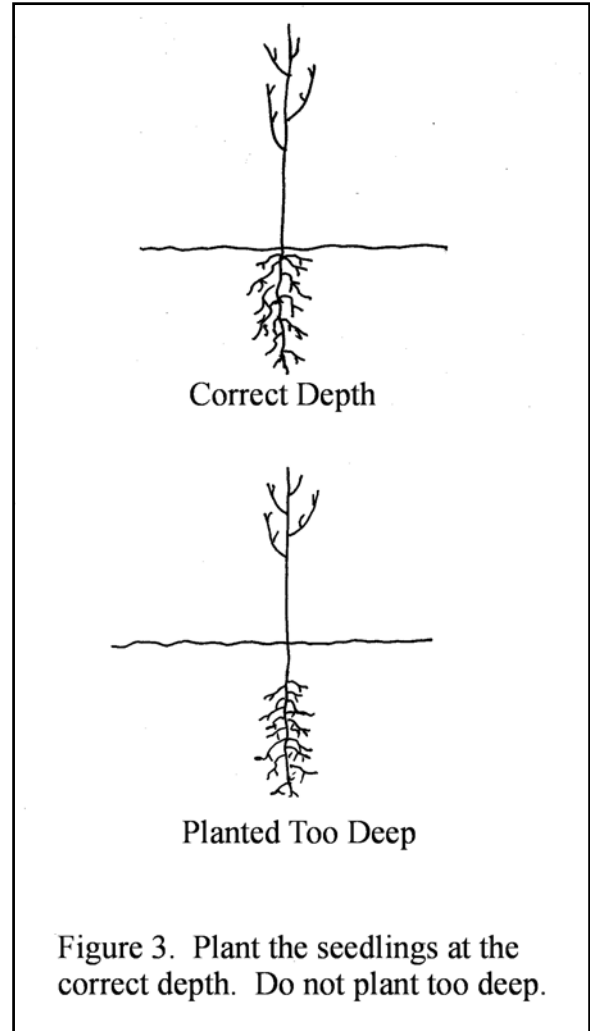
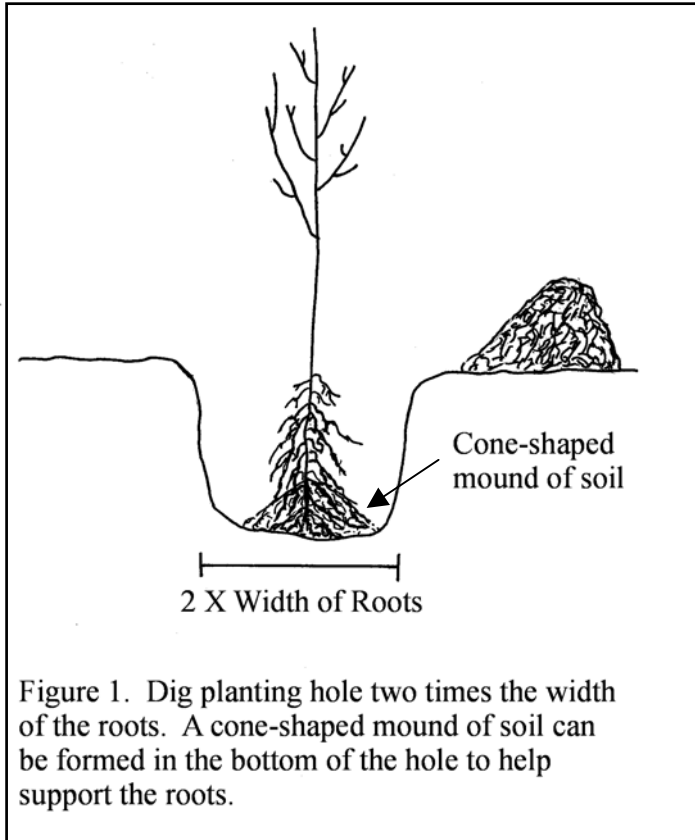
Find out the mature height and width of your trees and make sure the planting site is large enough to accommodate future growth. Do not plant large maturing trees (>30' high) under or near overhead utility lines, near buildings or roadways, or in areas of restricted soil space. A healthy root system will spread farther than the branches. Large tree species need large areas to grow.

Steps for Successful Planting:

- ✓ Unpack seedlings and keep roots in a bucket of water until placed in the planting hole.
- ✓ Dig a hole at least twice as wide and only as deep as the root system. See Figure 1.
- ✓ You may need to prune off dead or excessively long root tips. Always use clean, sharp pruning shears.
- ✓ Spread the roots out so they are evenly distributed in the planting hole. A cone shaped mound of soil can be formed in the hole to help support the roots. See Figure 1.
- ✓ **Do not** bend the roots to force them into a planting hole that is too small. See Figure 2.
- ✓ It is very important to plant the seedlings at the correct depth. The upper roots should be just under the surface of the soil. **Do not** plant too deep. See Figure 3.
- ✓ Place the soil back in the hole and gently tamp to remove any air spaces. Roots should not be exposed above ground.
- ✓ You will need to provide a deep soaking watering for each seedling at the time of planting and once each week for the first two growing seasons. Lack of water is the number one killer of newly planted trees!
- ✓ Mulch seedlings to a depth of 2" to 3" in an 18" diameter circle around each trunk. Maintaining adequate mulch increases growth and vigor while reducing damage from mowers and string trimmers.
- ✓ **Do not** make mulch deeper than 3". Excessive mulch leads to root problems.
- ✓ **Do not** allow mulch to be in direct contact with the trunk. This can promote the growth of decay causing agents.
- ✓ Seedlings will need very little pruning, if any, at the time of planting. Only dead, damaged or diseased branches should be removed.
- ✓ **Do not** "shape" or attempt to balance the branches to the root system. Reducing the leaf area will only further stress the trees and reduce the capacity for growth.
- ✓ **Do not** add fertilizer or other soil amendments. Fertilizer is not tree food! Fertilizer can often do more harm than good.
- ✓ Your seedlings will probably not need to be staked. If support is needed, place wooden stakes on opposite sides of the tree and support with wide, flexible material. **Do not** use wire or other rigid material. The seedling must be able to flex to promote strong trunk development.

Items You Will Need:

- Ω Shovel
- Ω Bucket of water for holding seedlings
- Ω Pruning Shears
- Ω Gloves
- Ω Plenty of water for each new tree (about 3 gallons)
- Ω Mulch
- Ω Wooden stakes
- Ω Hammer or mallet (for driving stakes)



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