

A close-up photograph of a person's hands gently holding a small green seedling with several leaves. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a white shirt. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark green rectangle.

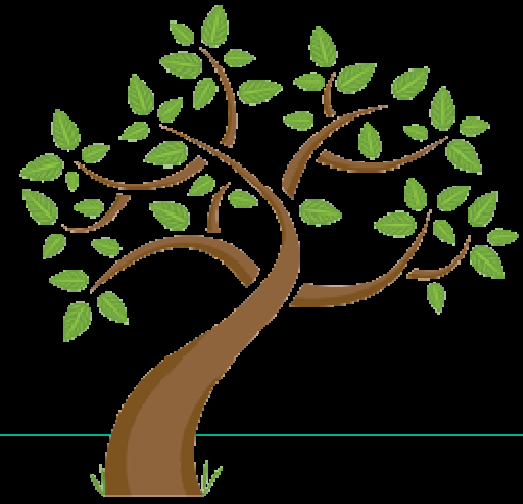
## Maintenance; The First Few Years

- Once new trees are planted, there is maintenance involved.
- Watering, mulching and weed control are the most important tasks for the first two to three years until the plants get established.



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# Watering



- A newly planted tree needs frequent watering
- Water daily for 1-2 weeks and every other day for 1-3 months
- Each time you water, give the tree at least a gallon of water for each inch of caliper
- Let it run slow enough that if you stuck it in your mouth you could drink it as fast as water runs out.



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# Mulching

- Apply four inches of wood chips or other degradable mulch over the root zone of the plant.
- This helps to improve soil structure and aeration, keep roots cool and moist, control weeds, and keeps lawnmowers and weed whips away from the base of the plant.
- Keep mulch several inches away from the trunk of the tree. This helps prevent bark rotting and rodent feeding.



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# Weed Control

- The mulch you added will prevent most weeds
- *Always: Pull weeds out by hand*
- Use care not to mix soil with the mulch as you pull or you'll find that weeds multiply there
- Weed whips injure bark and kill new trees -- *don't use them!*
- Avoid use of weed-killers (herbicide)



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# Pruning



- At planting time, prune only branches which are dead, diseased, broken or rubbing
- Most pruning is best done **during the winter** when trees are dormant
- If you must prune during the summer, choose a dry day to reduce the spread of canker diseases
- Most wounds are best left open to the air



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# Fertilization...



- Generally, trees do not need fertilization at the time of planting
- Fertilize your new tree **the second autumn after planting as the leaves change color**. Apply *nitrogen alone*, or a complete fertilizer containing nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium
- Do not apply fertilizer more than *once* each year.
- Fertilize in *spring* (before or while leaves emerge) or in *autumn* (after leaves change color)



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# Staking



- Trees rarely need staking...
- If yours has a small root ball, spindly growth, is in very wet soil, exposed to very high winds, or at risk of vandalism, you may need to stake



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## Tree Wrap

- Most trees *don't need wrapping*
- Young trees with smooth, thin bark, such as fruit trees, maples and lindens do need wrapping each winter until they grow thicker bark
- Use tree wrap that is lighter in color than the tree bark
- Wrap the tree in fall, remove wrap in March



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## Rodent Protection

To protect the trunks of flowering and fruit-bearing trees from rodents gnawing during the winter, place a cage of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch mesh hardware cloth around the trunk from just below the soil line up to the lowest branches.



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# Insect and Disease Control

- Check your new trees each week
- Look for problems. If you find a one that you don't recognize, consult a professional for a diagnosis
- **Avoid wounding new trees**, especially during the growing season. Wounds invite insect and disease problems



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# Preventing Mechanical Injury

- Trees in lawn areas are particularly prone to human damage
- **Lawnmowers** and **weed whippers** are at the top of the list
- If you cannot keep these away, protect them with a guard
- Plastic drain tile (slit down the side) or an ice cream pail (without it's bottom)



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# Transplant Stress or 'Shock' and How to Reduce It

- During transplanting, trees lose a significant part of their root system
- When the balance of growth is restored, plants are able to grow and reproduce without maintenance and are considered established
- During the period of establishment much of the tree's energy reserves are being used to produce new roots, so help out the tree as much as you can by following all these steps



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# Great River Greening

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