TreePhilly

A program of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

Yard Tree Planting and Care

THE CITY OF ARBORLY LOVE

LOVE

Resources

TREE MAINTENANCE & SERVICE

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR) Street Tree Contract Management
www.phillyparksandrec.com
www.treephilly.org
(215) 685-4363, (215) 685-4362

Contact PPR's Street Tree Management team for planting, pruning, and removal requests regarding street trees (trees planted in the sidewalk). You can also contact this office to request a current list of arborist contractors who are qualified to work on Philadelphia street trees.

International Society of Arboriculture
www.isa-arbor.com/findanarborist
(Penn-Del ISA Chapter)
(717) 412-7473

For tree maintenance, service, and removal on private property, please hire a professional arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Certified arborists may also receive a permit from Philadephia Parks and Recreation's Street Tree Management team to work on sidewalk trees in Philadelphia.

TREE FUN

Love Your Park
www.loveyourpark.org
(215) 998-9334

Love Your Park is an annual citywide celebration of Philadelphia's parks sponsored by the Fairmount Park Conservancy, including volunteer opportunities, fun events, and educational programs. This is a great opportunity to plant and care for trees in your neighborhood park!

Philly Tree Map
www.phillytreemap.org

Philly Tree Map is a fun way to count and track the indiviual trees that make up our urban forest. Using this interactive tool, you can calculate the benefits of your tree, including energy conserved and carbon dioxide removed.

Resources

TREE INFORMATION & MANUALS

International Society of Arboriculture, Tree Owner Information
www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/treeownerinformation.aspx

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) offers an collection of helpful tips for tree owners, including information on tree benefits, managing hazards and risks, and pruning.

Penn State Extension, Philadelphia County Office
http://extension.psu.edu/philadelphia
philadelphiaext@psu.edu
(215) 471-2200

The Penn State Extension offers both a county office in downtown Philadelphia as well as several experts on urban and community forestry who are available to answer questions, share resources, and provide information.

US Forest Service, Tree Owner's Manual
www.treeownersmanual.info

The US Forest Service's Northeastern Area offers an excellent manual on tree ownership specific to the Northeastern and Midwestern United States. It is available for free download at the web address listed above.

TREE CARE EDUCATION & TRAINING

Morris Arboretum
www.upenn.edu/arboretum
info@morrisarboretum.org
(215) 247-5777

The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania offers classes each spring and fall, including some on tree identification, maintenance, and care.

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), Tree Tenders Program
www.phsonline.org/greening/tree-tenders
mmaslin@pennhort.org
(215) 988-8844

PHS offers Tree Tenders training courses every spring and fall that teach the basics of tree planting and care. They also have an excellent collection of tree care videos, which you can access at the web address listed above.

Philadelphia Orchard Project
www.phillyorchards.org
phil@phillyorchards.org
(215) 724-1247

The Philadelphia Orchard Project (POP) partners with community groups to plant and maintain fruit orchards in the city of Philadelphia. They also offer educational workshops on planting and maintaining fruit and food trees.

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Ten Easy Steps To Properly Plant Your Tree

Fairmount Park Organic Recycling Center

Philadelphia residents can get up to 30 gallons of free mulch!

Fairmount Park Organic Recycling Center
3850 Ford Road
Philadelphia, PA 19131

Monday-Friday, 7:30am-3:00pm
Saturday, 7:30am-11:30am (April through October only)
www.phillyparksandrec.com | (215) 685-0108

City residents are welcome to take up to 30 gallons of compost, mulch, wood chips, or herbivore manure for free from the Fairmount Park Organic Recycling Center. The compost is certified for trees as well as shrubs, flower and vegetable gardens, and lawns by the US Composting Council. Materials must be used for residential purposes only.

For commercial purposes, or for residents who wish to take more than 30 gallons, there is a fee per ton of material. Please call ahead to confirm availability of products and hours of operation.

FIND YOUR PATH

PHILADELPHIA PARKS & RECREATION

Fruit Trees

FRUIT TREES NEED SPECIAL CARE!

Fruit trees require special care to thrive. Most fruit trees are cultivated varieties designed to produce an abundance of fruit. Keeping this growth under control will help to ensure plentiful yet manageable harvests.

PRUNE AND THIN BRANCHES.

Remove dead and damaged branches to prevent disease and infestation. More extensive pruning can improve both the quantity and quality of your harvest. A dense canopy will prevent air and light from reaching the interior, which prevents fruit from ripening and encourages rot. Thin the canopy by cutting small side branches back to their point of origin on the parent branch, as well as removing crossed, crowded, and inward-growing branches.

PRUNE IN WINTER. (EXCEPT FOR PEACHES!)

Prune your fruit trees during the dormant season, generally between January and early March, but preferably when the temperature is above freezing. Peach trees should be pruned when they are flowering or just after, and up to 50% of the foliage/crown can be removed each year.

THIN THE HARVEST IN SUMMER.

Thinning will allow your tree to put energy into ripening several full-size fruits rather than growing hundreds of small fruits that don't ripen. Thinning also prevents branches from breaking under the weight of ripe fruit and allows air to circulate in the crown, which helps to prevent rot. To thin, remove fruits so that there is 2"-5" of space between each piece of fruit you want to ripen.

2"-5" Between Fruit

WATCH FOR PESTS AND DISEASE.

Fruit trees are especially susceptible to infestation and certain diseases. Apple and crabapple trees are susceptible to Cedar Apple Rust, a fungal disease that is spread by apple trees (*Malus*) in close proximity to eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). Peach and nectarine trees are also susceptible to the Peachtree Borer, an insect that feeds on the sapwood of stone fruit trees. If you suspect your tree may have an issue, please contact the Penn State Extension office in Philadelphia at philadelphiaext@psu.edu or (215) 471-2200, or call a certified arborist.

1. DECIDE WHERE TO PLANT.

This is a big decision! Consider how much sunlight your tree will need to thrive, as well as how big your tree will be in 20-30 years. Plant your tree at least 3' from pavement or fencing, 15' from buildings, and 25' from overhead electrical wires if it will grow taller than 30'. And remember: Your tree must be planted in the ground, and it must be planted in a yard space on private property.

Still not sure where to plant? Check out www.arborday.org/trees/righttreeandplace or www.treeownersmanual.info.

2. PRUNE ONLY DEAD AND DAMAGED BRANCHES.

Using hand pruners, carefully remove all dead and damaged branches by cutting just above the branch collar. (See the pruning section for more detailed instructions.) Not sure if a branch is dead? Use your thumbnail to gently scrape the bark; if you see green, the branch is still alive.

3. REMOVE THE TREE FROM ITS CONTAINER.

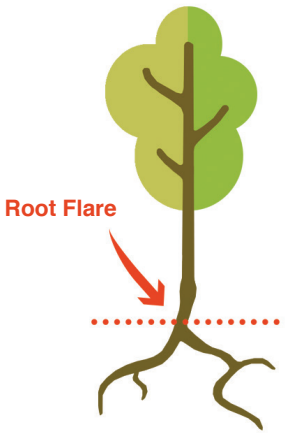
Carefully lay your tree down on its side and, pressing down gently, roll the container back and forth to loosen the root ball. Stand your tree up, hold it at the base of the trunk, and gently pull up. If it does not lift out easily, use scissors to cut the pot.

4. TRIM THE ROOTS.

It's likely that your tree's roots are growing in a circle around the inside of the container. Use a serrated knife or a soil knife to make shallow cuts around the sides of the root ball and an X across the bottom. Then use your hands to loosen and/or remove 1-2 inches of the outer roots and soil.

5. FIND THE ROOT FLARE.

Look for your tree's root flare – the point where the trunk widens and flares out into roots – at the base of the trunk. On young trees, the root flare can be very subtle, and you may need to remove a bit of soil to find it.



6. DIG A HOLE.

Using a shovel, dig a hole for your tree that is twice the width of the root ball and just deep enough to position the root flare above the level of the soil. Remember: Dig wide, not deep. Your hole should be shaped like a saucer with gently sloping sides.

7. TEST THE DEPTH.

Carefully place the tree in the hole. To help determine if the root flare is at the proper depth, lay the handle of your shovel across the hole. If the root flare is above the shovel handle, dig a bit deeper. If it is below, remove the tree and back fill the hole (remembering to tamp it down) until the root flare is flush with the soil surface. Remember: Buried root flares kill trees!

8. BACKFILL THE SOIL.

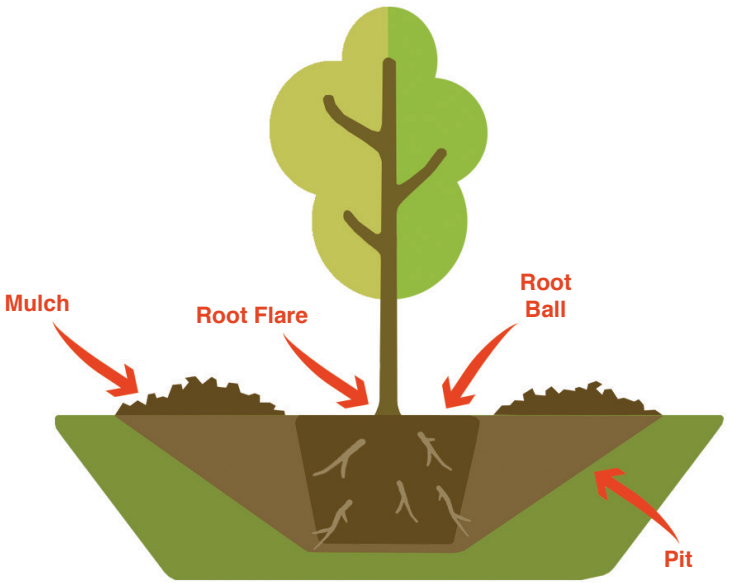
Gently place your tree in the center of the hole, making sure the trunk is straight and the root ball is stable. Return the soil to the hole, packing it down as you go. Make sure the soil fills in any air pockets and is securely holding the tree in place. And stop when you reach the root flare!

9. MULCH USING THE 3-3-3 METHOD.

Using fresh organic composted mulch, make a ring of mulch around your tree that is 3' wide and 3'' deep. Make sure to keep the mulch 3'' inches away from the trunk so the root flare is still exposed. When finished, the mulch should look like a donut rather than a volcano.

10. WATER!

Water your new tree 15-20 gallons a week from the time it buds out in the spring until it loses its leaves in the fall or until the ground freezes for the first two years.



Five Steps to Properly Remove a Branch

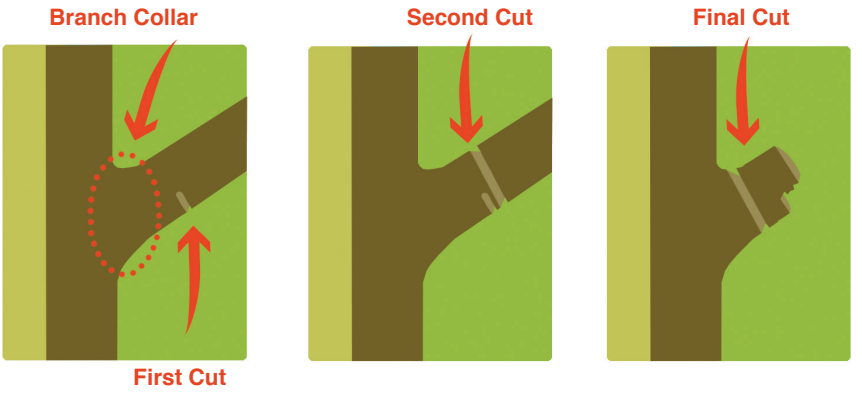
1. ASSESS THE TREE'S PRUNING NEEDS.
Stand several feet away from your tree and assess the tree's shape from several angles, identifying which branches should be prioritized for removal. Focus on dead and damaged branches. Determine which branches are dead by making a small scrape in the bark with your thumbnail. If you see green, the branch is still alive.

2. IDENTIFY THE BRANCH COLLAR.
Identify the collar (the swollen area at the base of the branch where it connects to trunk) on the branch you wish to remove.

3. MAKE AN UNDERCUT.
Using a handsaw, make a shallow undercut (cut upwards from the underside of the branch) 12-18" from the point where the branch attaches to the trunk, but do not cut the entire way through the branch. This cut will help to prevent ripping or tearing the bark.

4. MAKE A SECOND CUT TO REMOVE THE WEIGHT OF THE BRANCH.
Next, place your handsaw a few inches beyond your undercut and cut downwards through the branch from top to bottom. This will remove the weight of the branch, leaving just a stub and making it easier to make your final cut.

5. MAKE A FINAL CUT JUST ABOVE THE BRANCH COLLAR.
Finally, remove the stub by cutting the branch just above the collar. Cut slowly and evenly using long strokes, making sure the surface of your cut is smooth and flat.



PRUNE IN LATE FALL AND WINTER.

Prune your trees in late fall or winter when the temperature is above freezing. Trees (and their diseases!) are dormant during this time, and you can see the entire structure of the tree without the obstruction of foliage. If a limb or branch breaks, cracks, or is otherwise damaged during the spring or summer, remove the effected branches immediately to prevent further damage.

USE THE PROPER TOOLS!

Bypass Pruners

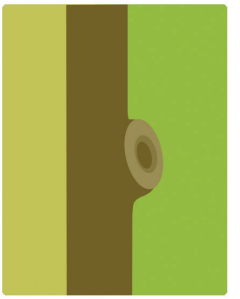
For smaller branches, use hand pruners. Use bypass pruners (which make a clean cut) rather than anvil pruners (which tend to crush the branch, preventing the tree from properly sealing the wound).

Handsaw

If the branch you are removing is wider than your thumb, use a handsaw.

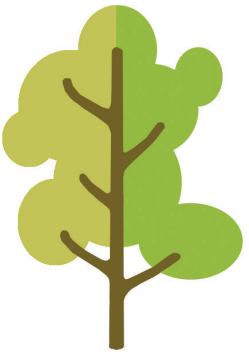
Pole Saw

For higher branches, use a pole saw. But remember: Safety first! If you cannot reach the branches with a pole saw without both feet on the ground, please contact a certified arborist instead of pruning the tree yourself.

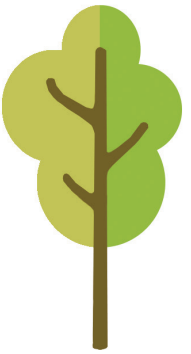


Properly Sealed

Improperly Sealed



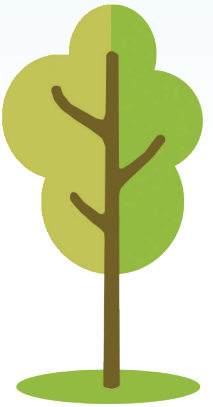
Before Pruning



Properly Pruned

Improperly Pruned

How to Care for Your New Tree



WATER!

For the first two years after planting, water your new tree 15-20 gallons a week from March through December.

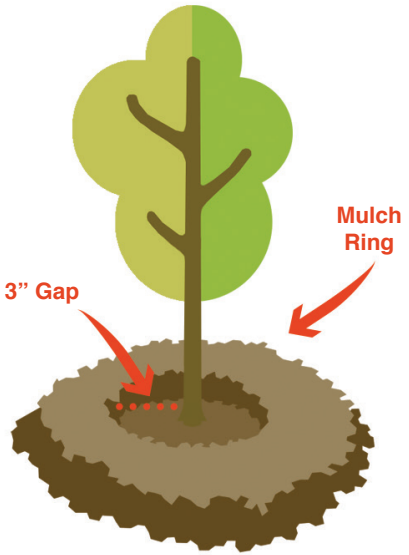
Water slowly and in the center of the mulch ring so the water can soak deep into the soil and the roots can absorb it gradually. Use a hose on slow drip, a tree watering bag, or a 5-gallon bucket with holes punched through the bottom. If you use a watering bag, check it for debris and remove it in winter.

Water Your Tree

MULCH.

Use organic composted mulch, wood chips, or pine needles to make a ring of mulch around your tree that is 3' wide and 3" deep. Make sure to keep the mulch 3" inches away from the trunk so the root flare is still exposed to the air. When finished, the mulch should look like a donut (a wide, flat circle) rather than a volcano (piled up around the trunk).

Apply fresh mulch to your tree as needed in the spring and fall, making sure to remove mulch that has been contaminated by de-icing salts or dog waste. Avoid using non-organic materials like rocks/gravel, bricks, or rubber.



WEED AND KEEP CLEAN.

Make sure to protect your tree from toxic substances like pet waste, litter and garbage, cigarette butts, and rock salt or other chemical ice melting products. Keep your tree's root zone free of grass, weeds, and other plants so the roots don't have to compete for water and nutrients.

PROTECT.
Make sure to protect your tree from lawnmowers and other machines – including vehicles and bicycles – which can easily damage the bark and trunk.

LOOSEN SOIL.
Using a hand trowel or small shovel, loosen the top 2-3" of soil around the base of your tree, which will help air and water penetrate the soil and reach the roots. Just be careful not to damage the roots!

DON'T FERTILIZE.
Trees do not need fertilizer, chemicals, or potting soil to thrive. In fact, applying these materials to newly planted trees often results in shock, which can easily kill your tree. Also avoid using weed killers and herbicides near your tree, especially those that kill broadleaved weeds.

Pruning Your Newly Planted Tree: *The Basics*

KEEP BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND!
Safety first! The first rule of pruning is to keep yourself safe. If a tree is so tall that you cannot prune it with both feet on the ground, call a certified arborist. (For street/sidewalk trees, please call the Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Street Tree team at (215) 685-4363 or (215) 685-4362).

MAINTAIN THE BRANCH COLLAR.
The branch collar is the swollen area at the base of the branch where it connects to the trunk. The collar is part of your tree's trunk and contains the cells and genetic material necessary to seal a wound. If you remove the collar or cut too far out on the branch, the tree will not be able to properly seal the wound.

NEVER REMOVE MORE THAN 25% OF THE CANOPY AT ONCE.
Never remove more than 25% of the tree's foliage in one season. If the branch is less than 1" thick, it is ok to remove it. If it is 1-2" thick, think twice before removing it. If it is more than 2" thick, only remove it if it is dead, damaged, or diseased.

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