

## About This Plant

Know primarily for their blossoms, these trees bring a strong visual appeal to the landscape. Flowering trees can be used in group plantings for a dramatic show of color or plant them as a focal point in the yard. Flowering evergreen trees maintain their leaves year round while deciduous varieties lose their leaves in the fall and re-leaf in the spring. Consider a trees' mature size when making your selection; leaving plenty of room between the tree and house. Do not plant tall trees under power lines. Properly placed around your home, trees can reduce air conditioning needs in the summer and energy used for heating in the winter.

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## How to Plant

- Dig a hole 2 times the width of the root ball and a depth slightly less than the height of the root ball. Allow the top surface of the root ball to rest 1/2 inch higher than the soil line.
  - Amend native soil dug from hole by mixing with organic soil conditioner according to directions.
  - For container grown plants, carefully remove plant by squeezing container and slowly removing the root ball. Never pull on the plant trunk. Instead let the root ball slide out by tipping the container. If the plant is heavily rooted, loosen roots by gently pulling a few away from the root ball. This encourages stronger root growth. Set root ball in hole making sure the top of the root ball is slightly higher (1/2 inch) than ground level. Place soil mix under root ball if too low. Backfill soil mix around plant to ground level and tamp lightly removing all air pockets.
  - For balled and burlaped plants (B&B), do not remove any materials surrounding the root ball yet. This includes any string, wiring, nails, cages or burlap. Set root ball in hole making sure the top of the root ball is slightly higher (1/2 inch) than ground level. Place soil mix under root ball if too low. Remove any ties around the root ball. Backfill soil mix around plant to ground level and tamp lightly removing all air pockets. Cut the burlap away from the trunk and be sure all edges are buried well below the soil surface. This helps prevent the root ball from drying out.
  - For bare root plants, trim any broken, twisted or discolored tips. Determine the original soil line by the change in color on the plant trunk. Set the plant in the hole so the soil line is above the surrounding soil. Space the roots evenly. Backfill soil mix around and between the roots and tamp lightly removing all air.
  - Water thoroughly to settle the soil around the plant. Add more soil mix around plant if necessary after watering. Apply a root stimulator to encourage new root growth and fast establishment.
  - Build a soil ring around the plant, 6" beyond the edge of the hole, to use as a water reservoir to assist in watering until established.
  - Add a 2-3" layer of mulch around plant to conserve soil moisture and eliminate future weeds.
  - For trees, it may be necessary to secure the trunk by using three stakes placed at equal distances around the tree.
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## How to Water

- New plants require more frequent watering than established plants. After planting check for water regularly until fully rooted and established.

- For large plants; build a soil ring around the plant to use as a water reservoir. This will assist in watering until the plant is established.
  - Always water slowly and deeply making sure the root ball is completely saturated.
  - Don't water at night if possible. Watering in the morning helps prevent disease.
  - If new plant wilts between watering, increase the frequency of watering.
  - Plants in hot, humid or sunny areas need more frequent watering than plants in cool climates.
  - Plants in containers may require more frequent watering than plants in the ground. This will depend on plant variety, pot size and soil.
  - Add a 2-3" layer of organic mulch around plant to maintain and conserve soil moisture. Mulch will reduce watering frequency and speed root establishment.
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## How to Fertilize

- Fertilize just before and during the plants active growing cycle. Fertilization should begin just prior to new growth and end three or four weeks before the first frost.
  - Choose a fertilizer recommended for trees or shrubs. Frequency will depend on the type of fertilizer. Liquid (water soluble) and granular quick release fertilizer require more frequent application; slow release granular types require less.
  - When using granular fertilizer be sure to sprinkle fertilizer pellets away from the plant stems or trunk to prevent possible burning. Also, make sure the fertilizer application extends to the drip line of the tree. Water thoroughly after application. This dissolves or releases the fertilizer into the soil. Apply water soluble fertilizer by thoroughly drenching the leaves and soil.
  - Always follow fertilizer package directions.
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## How to Prune

- Prune before new growth begins to encourage flower production. Remove internal shoots and unwanted branches.
- Crape Myrtles can also be pruned immediately after the first flowering. This will produce another flush of blooms. Prune the stem directly below the spent flower cluster.
- When pruning, make angled cuts just above the bud.
- Remove damaged or dead limbs back to live wood.
- Reduce disease and pests by pruning crossing or rubbing branches. This will help to increase air flow through the plant canopy.
- Use proper tools such as shears, hand pruners, pole pruners and pruning saws. Make sure all equipment is clean and sharp.
- Fertilize after pruning to help speed new growth.