

When to plant...

You may install desert-adapted plants all year round, but the best time is from September to early December. Planting during the summer will require extra care and watering. Be sure to ask about or research the specific requirements and sensitivities of the plants that you select.

Before you select and plant the tree...



Find out how your tree will grow. How tall and wide will your tree be in 5-15 years? Be sure to select a space that will accommodate the full, mature size of your tree. Be sure to take into consideration potential landscape or home changes as well as the full size of any existing plants.



Look at the shade. Place your tree to make most use of its shade to cool your living spaces, both indoors and outdoors. Keep in mind seasonal changes in sunrise and sunset, so you can ensure that the shade cast by the tree will cover your desired areas at the right times of the year.



Consider all the benefits of trees and select and locate your tree to take advantage of multiple benefits, such as providing natural fencing, sound and wind barrier, nectar for butterflies and hummingbirds, and color and character.



Call 8-1-1. AZ Blue Stake is a FREE service to get your underground utilities marked. Schedule at www.azbluestake.com.



Check with Your HOA. Make sure you are aware of any rules you must follow.

Questions? Call 480-350-2668 or visit www.tempe.gov/conservation

Digging a Proper Hole...

Digging a proper hole is key to the long-term health and survival of your plant. The hole should be about three times wider and the same depth as the top of the root ball. To make the hard work of digging easier, you could moisten the soil a few days before digging. After the hole is dug, fill it with water twice to see if there are any issues with drainage. If the water does not soak through within 24 hours after the second time you fill the hole with water, there may be a layer of caliche or hard clay that you must break through and pierce with chimney holes before planting.

Dig soil 3 to 5 times the width of the root ball. But, no deeper than the height of the root ball.

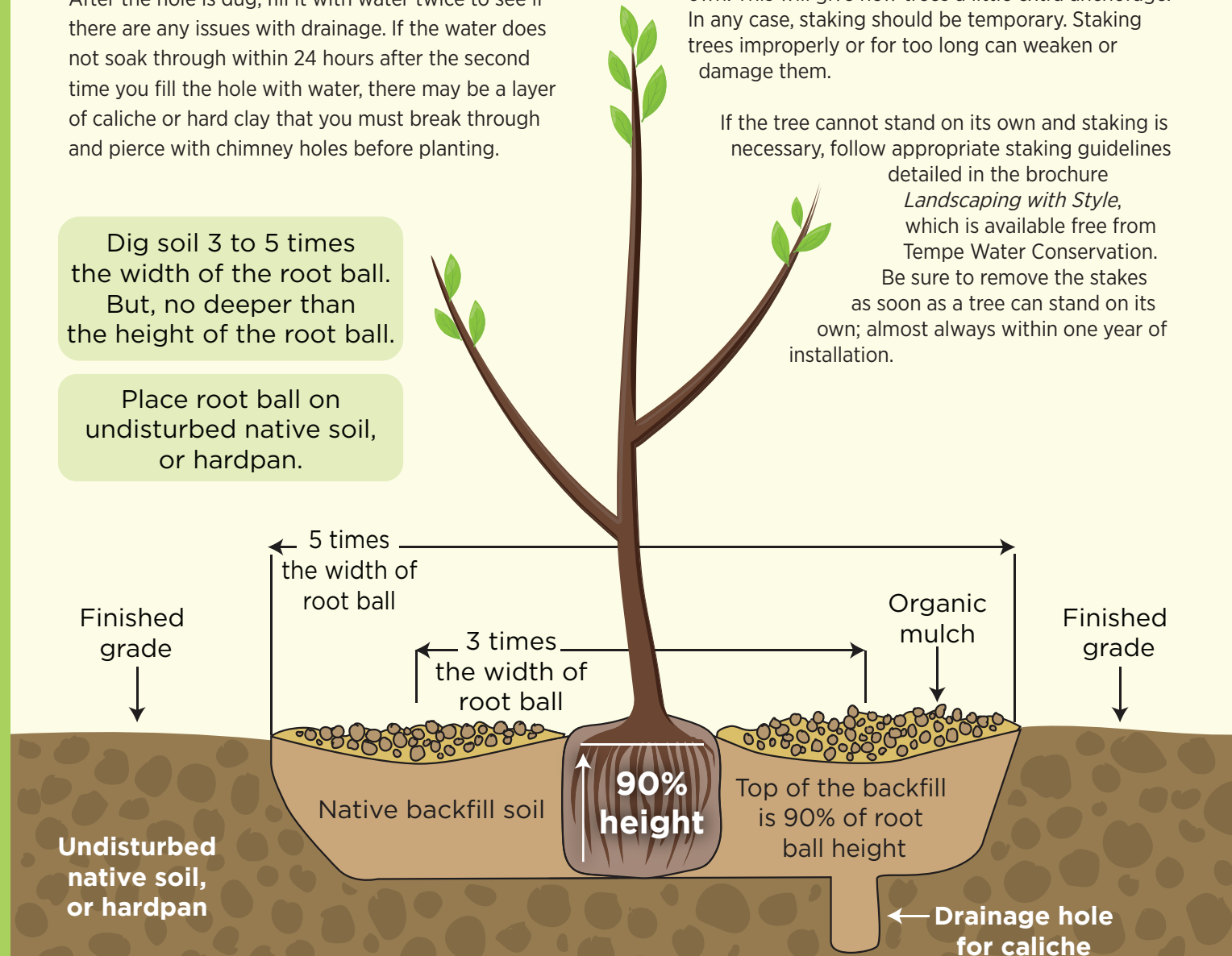
Place root ball on undisturbed native soil, or hardpan.

Staking Tips ...

Under normal conditions it is not necessary to stake trees after planting if they can stay upright on their own after the nursery stakes are removed.

In very windy areas it may be helpful to stake trees for a while even if they are able to stand on their own. This will give new trees a little extra anchorage. In any case, staking should be temporary. Staking trees improperly or for too long can weaken or damage them.

If the tree cannot stand on its own and staking is necessary, follow appropriate staking guidelines detailed in the brochure *Landscaping with Style*, which is available free from Tempe Water Conservation. Be sure to remove the stakes as soon as a tree can stand on its own; almost always within one year of installation.



Planting Tips...

1. Tap the side of the container with a hammer or trowel to loosen it from the root ball.
2. Remove the plant from its container by the root ball rather than the branches or foliage.
3. Examine the root ball and untangle any matted roots. If any roots are circling the container, take a knife and score or slice the root ball around the circumference of the plant.
4. Place the plant in the hole with the top of the root ball even with the top of the soil. Backfill as needed to get the right height.
5. Fill in the hole with soil, pressing firmly and gently with your hands around the root ball to minimize soil settling.
6. Remove nursery stakes (from trees) and trim off any dead or broken branches.
7. Water each plant thoroughly, wetting the soil to the bottom of the root ball. Forming an irrigation well around the edge of the plant canopy can help sink the water, especially if you're watering with a hose.
8. Make any necessary irrigation system adjustments to ensure that water is going to the root ball of each plant for the first eight weeks after a new planting.
9. Do not fertilize new plants.

Mulch Power

Place mulch over your plants' root zones and reap the benefits. Both organic mulches, such as wood chips and compost, and inorganic mulches, such as decomposed granite, can help water penetrate the soil more effectively, reduce evaporation, and prevent weed growth.

How Long to Water?

How long you should water your plants depends on the size of the plant and your method of watering.

A good rule of thumb is to water approximately 3 feet deep for trees, 2 feet deep for bushes, and 1 foot deep for groundcover.

Test your watering depth after a watering session by sinking a sharpened piece of rebar or a long screw driver into the soil and measuring how deeply the tool sank. Adjust watering to get to the appropriate depth.

Watering Schedule for Newly Planted Desert Adapted Plants

Weeks 1 & 2	Water every 1-2 days in summer, every 3-4 days fall through spring
Weeks 3 & 4	Water every 3-4 days in summer, every 6-7 days fall through spring
Weeks 5 & 6	Water every 4-6 days in summer, every 7-10 days fall through spring
Weeks 7 & 8	Water every 7 days in summer, every 10-14 days fall through spring
After Week 8	Gradually Extend the time between irrigations until plants are established

Note: After the eighth week, move the drip emitters to the outer edge of the root ball.

Landscaping Watering Guidelines

How Much & How Often <small>Water to the outer edge of the plants canopy and to the depth indicated. Watering frequency will vary depending on season, plant type, weather and soil.</small>		Seasonal Frequency - Days Between Waterings				Water This Deeply <small>(Typical root depth)</small>
		Spring Mar-May	Summer May-Oct	Fall Oct-Dec	Winter Dec-Mar	
Trees	Desert adapted	14-30 days	7-21 days	14-30 days	30-60 days	24-36 inches
	High water use	7-12 days	7-10 days	7-12 days	14-30 days	24-36 inches
Shrubs	Desert adapted	14-30 days	7-21 days	14-30 days	30-45 days	18-24 inches
	High water use	7-10 days	5-7 days	7-10 days	10-14 days	18-24 inches
Groundcovers & Vines	Desert adapted	14-30 days	7-21 days	14-30 days	21-45 days	8-12 inches
	High water use	7-10 days	2-5 days	7-10 days	10-14 days	8-12 inches
Cacti & Succulents		21-45 days	14-30 days	21-45 days	if needed	8-12 inches
Annuals		3-7 days	2-5 days	3-7 days	5-10 days	8-12 inches
Warm Season Grass		4-14 days	3-6 days	6-21 days	15-30 days	6-10 inches
Cool Season Grass		3-7 days	none	3-10 days	7-14 days	6-10 inches

These guidelines are for established plants (1 year for shrubs, 3 years for plants). Additional water is needed for new plantings or unusually hot or dry weather. Less water is needed during cool or rainy weather. Drip run times are typically 2 hours or more for watering.

Sources:

- *Xeriscape: Landscaping With Style in the Arizona Desert* by the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association
- *Native Plants for Southwestern Landscapes* by Judy Mielke
- *Landscape Watering by the Numbers: A Guide for the Arizona Desert by Water – Use It Wisely*
- SRP's Tree Workshop Presentation by SRP and Trees Matter

Watering Tips ...

Tempe gets its water from reservoirs on the Salt, Verde, and Colorado rivers and deep aquifers that store our groundwater. Drought is a natural part of life in Arizona, and our water must continue to be managed carefully to ensure that water is available for future generations. Desert-friendly plants have adapted to drought conditions and require much less water to thrive, especially after they have been fully established in your landscape. Use the following best practices to ensure the health of your plants as well as to do your part to save water.

1. Water deeply and infrequently to encourage deep rooting.

2. After new plants have been in the ground about eight weeks, begin watering at the outer edge of the plant's canopy.

3. If you're watering with a hose, consider creating a depression in the soil near the edge of the canopy of your plant to allow time for the water to sink into the soil.

4. Use rainwater harvesting practices, such as creating basins and berms to slow, sink, and spread the water in the landscape and support your plants.

5. Follow the Landscape Watering Guidelines to reduce your landscape watering by 30-50% while increasing plant beauty and health.

6. Install a rain gauge and skip watering if you receive at least ½" of rain.

7. As your landscape plants grow, water needs will change. Reevaluate your landscape each year to determine if water placement should change and if more water should be applied.

New Tree Care Guidelines: Right Tree, Right Place

