

How to plant and care for trees in your garden



1 Do your preparation

If you're thinking of planting trees in your garden it's important to consider:

The ground conditions – What is beneath the ground surface? Rock, rubble, compacted or heavy clay soil may restrict tree growth.

Where to plant your trees – Check first for underground services such as drains and overhead wires. Then make sure you consider how close it is to your house and neighbours and how large it will become. Plant the right tree for your space.

To give your trees the best chance of survival you should make sure the ground is dug over and the area is free from existing plants or weeds.

2 Plant your trees

It is best to plant trees between November and March while the tree is dormant. As tree roots are delicate it is important to plant your tree as soon as possible after getting it. If you can't, then store your tree in a bag in a cool, damp location to prevent the roots from drying out.

When planting, dig a hole deep enough for the roots, replace the soil and gently firm in the plant. Give it a good drink of water.

If your tree is a conifer, with needles, you may want to plant in a pot. Make sure you do not overwater the soil in the pot.



3 Protect your tree from weeds



It is best to try and maintain a weed-free area of at least one metre diameter around your tree until it is successfully established.

4 Maintain your tree – water it!

All trees like a good supply of water, particularly in the first couple of years after planting. Water the tree regularly and slowly in dry weather, allowing the water to soak in. During the first year, regularly check that the tree is still firm in the ground.

You may want to trim your tree if it is to be used as a Christmas tree to create a cone shape as it grows. This pruning is best done between January and March.



5 Tell us where you planted your tree

We would love to see where you have planted your tree. Upload a picture of your planted tree on Facebook or Twitter and tag @merseyforest in your post.

Find out more about The Mersey Forest

For more free guides or info about tree planting initiatives in your area:

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This is guidance only. The Mersey Forest accepts no responsibility for the failure of trees to thrive.

