



NORTH VALLEY TREE SERVICE

Certified Arborists and Tree Workers

3882 Esplanade Chico, CA 95973 • Phone: 530-893-9649 • e-Mail: NVTree@NVTree.com

Planting With a Purpose: Tree Tips for Homeowners

Knowing when, what, where, and how to plant is essential to a tree's life span. And if you want trees in your yard to be assets that continually appreciate in value, keep these important tips from the International Society of Arboriculture in mind before, during, and after planting a tree.

- **Time of year** -the best time to plant trees is during the dormant season, in the fall after leafdrop or early spring before bud-break. Weather conditions are cool and allow plants to establish roots in the new location before spring rains and summer heat stimulate new top growth.
- **Tree selection** - Think **right tree, right place**. Believe it or not, many people don't take tree growth into consideration when choosing what species to plant. Think about how the tree will look 50 years from now as well as this planting season. Consider its mature height, width, and overall shape before making your final choice.
- **Site selection** - choose a location with the right soil, space, and light conditions for your tree. Will your tree need shade or sun? Wet soil or dry? What insects, pollutants, drought conditions, or other environmental factors might affect its long-term viability? Avoid planting large trees under or near power lines. Also remember that tree roots spread well beyond their branches; so pick a planting spot with plenty of room for underground development, too.

Let the planting begin!

Proper planting techniques are critical to the life of a tree. All too often, people make their first and biggest planting mistake when they dig the hole that will be their tree's home. "Most of a tree's roots grow horizontally, so the hole needs to be wide," said ISA's Jim Skiera, Executive Director of the organization.

A good rule of thumb is to dig the hole about three times the **width** of the root ball. The **depth** of the hole is just as crucial; dig the hole no deeper than the height of the root ball. "It's better to put a \$100 tree in a \$200 hole than to put a \$200 tree in a \$100 hole," Skiera said, because a properly prepared planting hole will help the tree's root system establish more quickly. "Healthy roots make healthy trees."

Other ISA tips are: loosen the soil around the planting hole to give tree roots ample room to grow; straighten the tree in the hole before refilling with soil; fill the hole gently but firmly; and mulch the base of the tree. After planting, keep the soil moist but not soaked; check soil moisture once a week (more often in hot weather); and prune sparingly and only when necessary. If in doubt about your tree's health, contact a Certified Arborist in your area for help.

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) is a nonprofit organization supporting tree care research around the world. Headquartered in Champaign, Ill., ISA is dedicated to the care and preservation of shade and ornamental trees. For more information, contact a local ISA Certified Arborist or visit www.isa-arbor.com.

Information courtesy of The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) at www.treesaregood.com.