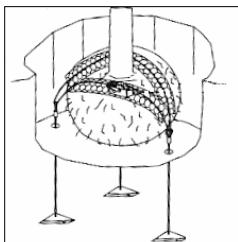


Platipus Method

This method is often used on large trees. For underground anchoring (see pic left), a larger hole is dug and the root ball placed squarely into the middle of the hole.



Platipus anchorage

Three Platipus anchors with cables are then driven in using a special tool. An additional cable with a ratchet is then threaded through eyelets at the tops of the three cables and over the top of the rootball, then ratcheted down to secure. The planting is completed in the conventional way as described in 'Backfilling' below.

Overhead Platipus are primarily used on larger trees, in cases where a tree is a bit loose at the rootball, or could roll due to its large crown and compact rootball. Above-ground guy wiring is effective as long as there is not a risk of tripping. Platipus installation usually requires professional assistance.

Backfilling

Once positioned, you can begin to backfill the hole with a mix of 50% native top soil, 50% compost, and a generous sprinkling of fertiliser or bonemeal. Make sure you pack (heel in) the soil as you go.

We highly recommend that you install an appropriate length of land drain and an inspection pipe as you backfill. Both of flexible perforated pipe, the land drain is created by wrapping the pipe around the rootball at half depth with one end up above the surface. This enables you to get water to the roots even during drought conditions when surface soil may become very hard. The inspection pipe is created by installing an additional straight piece from the surface to the bottom of the hole. It will enable you to check waterlevels if you are concerned about drainage.



Once you have completed backfilling it's a good idea to leave a crown (ring) of soil at the edge of the root ball if feasible for the first few months. This will retain water to let it soak directly into the root ball each time you water.

Watering In

Once the backfill has been firmed into the existing soil level, water the newly dug circle to help settle the backfill and soak the soil around the rootball. The soil around the rootball needs to be kept damp but not waterlogged. One hour after watering, the soil should feel moist, but should not drizzle water if squeezed gently in the hand.

Maintenance Watering & Aftercare

Over the next few months your tree will root out into the surrounding soil, eventually enabling it to thrive without any hand watering. During this establishment phase, however, the tree will be relying on you for support. It is important the tender new roots do not dry out, so check the tree every day or so for the first three months, especially when hot or windy. Water it as above if the soil appears dry, or the tree shows signs of drought stress (wilting, followed by dessicating leaves and leaf drop in severe cases). Remember: the soil needs to be kept just moist. It can be advantageous to 'tease' the roots out by creating a moisture gradient. You can do this by watering lightly near the stem, gradually becoming more generous over the rootball and backfill zone and out into the adjoining soil. This will encourage the roots to extend towards the moister soil.

If planted in the summer with rising temperatures, your tree is likely to need a considerable amount of water. A very large mature tree can soak up about 40 gallons a day - nearly 200 litres! Our smaller ones can use 4-5 gallons. If you installed a piece of land drain pipe to surround the roots, you can put your hose pipe down it and let it trickle for a few minutes. Tree gators (a bladder that surrounds the tree base and allows water to slowly seep into the root ball) are an excellent way of taking the worry out of watering during the summer months.

With good care in the first growing season, it is unlikely you will need to water at all in the second, unless we have a prolonged period of drought. Just keep an eye on the tree for any signs of dryness or stress. Continue to weed around the base of the stem and check the stakes and guards periodically for the next 2-3 years.

Fertilising trees should never be done after mid - July, unless using a slow release fertilizer, as it will encourage soft sappy growth which may not have time to mature before autumn. Whatever sort of fertiliser you use, granular, liquid or compost, apply to the ground beneath the canopy edge. Compost mulches are often used as a top dressing to suppress weeds and retain water. If using proprietary products, follow instructions carefully.



Planting Guide for Your New Majestic Tree



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This planting guide is for those wishing to plant their trees themselves. We do of course offer a complete planting service which includes an establishment guarantee (regretfully, we are unable to guarantee stock we have not planted). Quotes for planting are available upon request.

Traditionally tree planting is done from late autumn to early spring. With adequate watering, however, our 'Airpot' container-grown trees can be planted year-round, and will, in fact capitalise on spring and summer sunshine for rapid establishment.

Delivery & Preparation

To plant your tree you will need:

- Garden spade and mattock if ground is hard
- Wheelbarrow to remove excess soil
- High content peat compost or equivalent
- Land drain pipe or equivalent (recommended)
- Fertilizer and / or bonemeal
- Scissors or sharp knife
- Hose pipe or watering cans
- Stake(s), rubber strapping, nails, hammer & post-hole driver or equivalent **OR:**
- Platipus above or underground fixing apparatus

Giving your trees the right care from day one is essential for long life and health. This means taking the time and care to plant a tree correctly.

If grown in an airpot your trees will be delivered to you with the airpot removed and its rootball wrapped in hessian and a wire net. The Hessian and wire are biodegradable and should be left on when planting to avoid damaging the roots.

If you do not plant the tree immediately it is important to keep the rootball very moist and to untie the foliage. It is also important not to leave it lying on the ground because animals can eat the foliage and the growth will quickly turn skyward. The rootball will dry out quickly, so keep it covered with a blanket or sacking and check it daily. At the first sign of dryness, leave a hose trickling onto it for a few minutes to give it a really good soaking. The rootball needs to be checked even on overcast or damp days, as any



wind will quickly dry out the rootball. Don't delay planting unnecessarily, especially in hot weather.

Before digging, you need to decide what type of anchorage you are going to use. With the exception of 'bottom-heavy' multi-stem trees and some hedging, we strongly recommend all of our trees be anchored. Mature crowns can act like sails in the wind, and even imperceptible movement can cause the rootball to rock below the soil, breaking the new roots as they attempt to grow out into the garden soil. Staking is the simplest method but can look unsightly, be difficult to install, or impractical on larger trees. Underground or aboveground cable anchorage is a sturdier option, but does require installation apparatus the amateur is unlikely to possess. You can read more about these two methods in the 'Staking' & 'Platipus Method' sections below. Should you decide platipus anchorage is for you, please contact us for additional information before proceeding.

Preparing the Hole

Dig the hole at least 50% wider than the root ball and slightly deeper. If the soil is poor, you should dig a much larger area, at least double the diameter, to give the tree every chance of success. Pour at least a bucket full of water into the hole to check drainage. If it doesn't drain away within 2 hours, you will have to provide drainage by digging an adjacent soak away or providing drainage by some other means (unless your tree likes waterlogged conditions e.g. Alders or Willows).

Setting In

Remember: do not remove the hessian & wire These trees were grown in 'airpots' so there will be no bound up, spiralled rootball to break up, as might be expected with plants grown in conventional plastic containers.

Once the tree is dropped into its planting hole, it will become very awkward to manoeuvre. Therefore, it is crucial to measure depths and widths of the hole and rootball before trying to place the tree in the hole. In its final position, the point where the stem joins the rootball should lie just at soil level, so build up the bottom as required with 50% compost and 50% native soil, pressing in with your heel and measuring as you go. Then untie the tree and find the best face to position in the required direction. Mark this face on the Hessian bag

with spray paint or tie a piece of coloured tape to the wire to denote the face.

Now roll the tree into the hole, calculating the movement to end up with the face correctly orientated once the tree is in the hole.

Once in the hole, make your final adjustments. Check the tree is straight with a spirit level, or else stand back away from the tree while someone else holds it in place, comparing it to vertical planes on adjacent houses, telephone poles, etc. Soil or small rocks can be placed under the rootball to prop it in the correct position. If the tree is too low, you can tip the tree and put some soil down one side and underneath, rocking the tree back and forth and adding soil until you get to the point where the base of the stem is just level with the soil surface.

Staking & Tying

Most trees will need to be staked. Single stakes should only be used on smaller trees up to 08/10 cm girth. When using a single stake, put the stake on the windward side of the tree and never drive it through the root ball. A single stake is usually driven in at an angle so the stem can be fixed against the stake with rubber strapping, cushioning the junction with a pad to prevent abrasion of the stem.

Larger trees should get two stakes, which should not be driven through the root ball. There are two methods for securing the tree to the stakes.

- 1) The tree is pulled taught between the two stakes using strapping and preferably a length of pad (about 200-300 mm) to act as a buffer between tree and strapping. OR
- 2) A cross bar is fixed between the stakes. The tree is fixed to the cross bar using strapping, with a rubber cushion or block positioned between the tree and the cross bar.

