

# Living Christmas Trees

Many people are discovering that they can have both a Christmas tree in their home and a beautiful, permanent addition to their landscape. Living Christmas trees are the answer!

*For enjoyment throughout the holiday season, please observe the following guidelines:*

- ◆ **Keep the tree inside for only three to five days, or an absolute maximum of one week.**
- ◆ **Keep the room temperature as cool as possible.** Avoid placing the tree near sources of heat. Use only “cool” lights (small twinkle types) on the tree. Using a spray called Wilt Stop® , which is a natural nontoxic product derived from pine tree resin, protects your tree from drying out and transplant shock.
- ◆ **Keep the soil in the root ball damp or moist.** Do not allow it to dry out or sit in standing water. Place a tray or double plastic bag arrangement under the tree to protect your floor.
- ◆ **Keep temperature changes minimal.** When moving the tree in or out of your home, place it in an unheated garage or comparable location for a day or two if the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures exceeds 30 degrees or so.
- ◆ **Plant your tree as soon as possible after the holiday season.** Delay in planting may increase the chance of problems. Damage to the roots could occur if they are above ground during a cold snap or dry spell. Please refer to the planting instructions on the other side of this page.

If you have questions about how to best care for your tree, we're happy to help!  
Start a family tradition with a living Christmas tree.

**Because home conditions vary (*indoor temperatures, humidity, etc.*), Valley Nursery is unable to warranty living Christmas trees that have been in the home.**



Poulsbo, WA 98370  
360-779-3806  
www.valleynurseryinc.com

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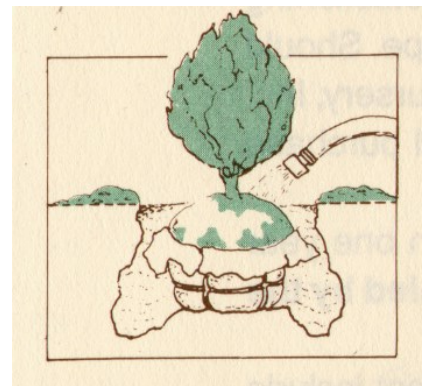
## Soil Preparation

- Percolation test: confirm that the selected planting location has excellent drainage. Dig a test hole and fill with water to determine the rate of drainage.
- Do NOT amend the soil before planting your tree. Plant directly into native soil and water well as you backfill to create maximum root to soil contact.
- Only if your soil is very sandy should you add organic matter to the native soil, which will aid in moisture retention.
- If you choose to use fertilizer, either granular or liquid, mix it into the soil that will be used to backfill the planting hole. Follow the instructions on the label.
- Dig the planting hole at least twice the diameter of the root ball and only to the depth from the root flair to bottom of container.
- In areas of very heavy and poorly drained soil, it will be necessary to build a berm to elevate the roots higher than the native soil. Construct a gently sloping mound so the plant roots will not be in standing water during the Winter.

## PLANTING BALLED AND BURLAPPED PLANTS

Field grown plants are dug up with a ball of clay soil around the roots, which is then wrapped with burlap and secured with twine. It is best practice to remove the twine completely and as much of the burlap as possible. Do this just before you are ready to plant, so the root ball doesn't dry out.

1. Place plant in prepared hole.
2. Cut & completely remove the twine.
3. Peel back the burlap from the top of the root ball and from the sides if possible. If not possible to remove, slash the burlap vertically as you would a fiber pot.
4. Backfill with native soil that has been enriched with transplant fertilizer (opt). Water as you proceed to settle soil around the roots. Do not pile soil higher than the root flair.
5. Construct a ridge of soil or berm around the plant with the leftover soil. This will create a basin to hold water.
6. Water slowly and deeply. Put the hose on a slow drip for several hours so the water can properly penetrate the soil. Check for dryness and repeat every couple of weeks as the weather and soil dictate.
7. Top with 1/2 inch of compost and 2 inches of arborist chips as mulch staying approximately 4" from base of the trunk.



Additional reading:

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/planting/balled-burlapped.cfm>