

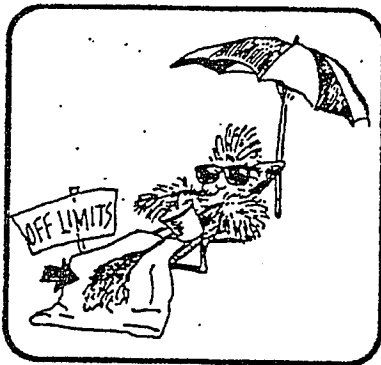
# Selecting and Planting Trees

Selecting and planting a tree doesn't require a forestry degree, just some basic knowledge. Follow these guidelines.

## Choose your planting site carefully.

**Look up. Look around. Look down.** The tree you plant today could eventually reach 40 feet to 100 feet in height depending on the type. Give your tree plenty of room to grow. Plant your tree well away from buildings and powerlines so that it won't cause damage and need harmful pruning later. Plant the tree where the roots won't grow into sewers and pipelines, or under driveways and sidewalks.

**Look at the tree.** Make sure your tree is suited to the environment you are planting it in. A well-suited tree has the best chance of surviving.



## Take care before and during planting.

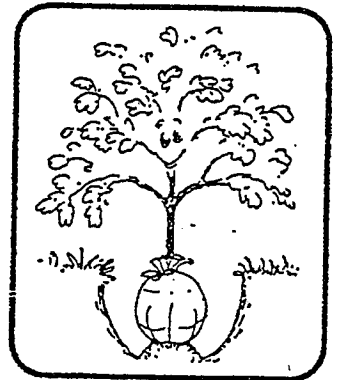
Keep the tree cool and shaded, and keep the roots moist until planting.

During planting, try not to handle the tree's roots. Tap the dirt firmly, but don't pack it too tightly. View the video tape "Young People Caring About Trees" to see the best way to take care of your tree. These videos are available in all school and public libraries

**If you are planting a sapling,** inspect the sapling at the nursery first. Look at the form of the sapling for excessive broken branches. Check to see if the bark, buds, branches, and leaves are healthy. They should not be shriveled, or discolored. Look at the trunk of the sapling for discoloration, swollen areas or

serious cuts and scrapes. Check the roots. The rootball should not be either excessively wet or dry and should be wrapped in burlap. The trunk should not move independent of the rootball. If not wrapped, check to see that roots are moist and flexible.

**Once you have chosen a healthy sapling,** choose your sight and dig a hole at least twice the width of the rootball (if in poorly drained areas make it 3X the size of the rootball). Dig the hole deep enough to allow the roots to sit on level with or slightly higher than the surrounding area. This allows the roots to receive the oxygen necessary for survival. Cut off the top third of the burlap from the rootball to allow for better absorption of water. Use the excess soil to refill the hole. Tamp down the soil, but make sure not to pack it too tightly. Water thoroughly.



**If you are planting a seedling,** dig a hole a little deeper than the length of the roots. Place the seedling in the hole, and fill around it with soil. Then gently pull the trunk of the seedling up slightly to straighten out the roots. Tamp the soil firmly, but don't pack it too tightly. If the roots are packed too tightly, they won't be able to reach out for water and nutrients or anchor the tree. Soak the soil around the tree with water to encourage deep rooting.



**Give special care to your tree during the early years.** A tree is most vulnerable during the first years of its life. Using mulches like wood chips or pine needles around new saplings helps to conserve moisture, reduce weed competition, and eliminate the potential danger from lawn mowers and trimming equipment. Do not use grass clippings.

As the tree grows, prune off broken, crossed, crowded, rubbing, or diseased branches. Make sure to keep at least two-thirds of the tree height as crown (branches and leaves). If saplings are in high

wind areas, staking is a good idea to help support the trunk. Take care to protect your tree against pest and animals. Always remember to water your sapling as it is needed, between 5 to 15 gallons every 10 days.

**Then sit back and enjoy!** If cared for properly, the trees you plant on Earth Day will grow and flourish, providing you - and all of us - with their benefits and beauty for generations.

