

How to plant your trees

Our tree-planting advice will help you give your trees the best possible start!

When your trees arrive

- When your trees are delivered they are ready to go straight into the ground. Don't plant them in pots or containers.
- Store the trees upright, sheltered from frost and wind. If the roots look like they're drying out, lightly spray them with water to keep them moist.

Prepare your site

- Before you start planting, mark out where each tree will go using stones, spray paint or canes.
- If the soil is hard, you might want to dig holes or prep the ground before bringing your pupils to plant.
- If your planting area is overgrown then cutting the grass short and weeding will make planting far easier and reduce competition for water, helping your saplings to thrive!

Get planting!

Aim to plant between one to three trees per child, depending on the age of your pupils and the condition of the ground. It may be helpful for children to work in pairs or small groups.

Pit planting

We recommend pit planting because it's more thorough and ensures your trees have better contact with the soil. It is suitable for all ground types, especially areas prone to drought, but it can be difficult if you have stony soil.



1. Use a spade to take some turf out of the ground, turn it over and split it almost in half.



2. Dig a hole slightly wider and deeper than the roots of your tree. Loosen the soil around the edges.



3. Put the tree in the hole and check the depth. Look for the collar – the mark on the tree where it originally started to grow above the ground. This should be level with the top of the soil. If your tree is planted too deep, the stem may rot; too shallow and the roots above the ground will die.

Pit planting continued overleaf

Pit planting continued



4. Hold your tree upright and gently push back the soil, pressing it down onto the roots. Don't compact the soil as this will stop water and air circulation, but make sure your tree is steady.



5. Put the turf back over the hole with the split either side of the young tree, grass side down.



6. Cover your tree with the spiral and cane provided to give extra support and protection. If you're planting with younger children, we'd recommend an adult adds the protection to ensure it's firmly in place.

Slit planting

This is a simple method that is suitable for bare soil and grass. It can be easier than pit planting if you've got stony soil.



1. Press your spade all the way into the ground, then push it forwards to create a slit. Make sure it's deep enough for the tree roots.



2. Keep the slit open with your spade and place your tree inside with the root plug about 2cm below ground level.



3. Remove the spade and push the soil back around the tree.

4. Fit the protective spiral and cane as with pit planting.

T-notch planting

T-notch planting is another quick method suitable for grass-covered ground but not bare soil. This method is an alternative to pit planting in areas susceptible to drought, but again not recommended for sites with clay soils.



1. Push the spade fully into the ground.



2. At a right angle to the first cut, repeat step 1 to create an inverted T-shape.



3. Take the spade to the original cut and lever it upwards, parting the turf.



4. Place the tree carefully between the sections of turf.



5. Lever the spade back out and the turf will fall into place.



6. Ensure the root plug is approx. 2cms below ground level, then firm down the soil around the tree. Fit the guard as with pit planting.

How much space do the trees need?

We recommend trees are planted about two metres apart, but you can plant them between one to five metres apart depending on your space and plan. Wavy lines look more natural than regimented rows of trees.

If you're planting a single hedge, place your trees 30cm apart.

For a thick hedge, plant a double row of trees in a zig zag pattern. Space your rows 50cm apart, with 40-45cm between each tree.

You do not need to water your trees once you've planted them. They'll get all the moisture they need from the soil.