

Tips for safe planting

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Tree planting is fantastic fun! But you need to be careful when handling tools and working outdoors. Here are some tips to help you have a safe planting day.

- Wash hands thoroughly after handling soil.
- You don't need to wear gloves if good hygiene routines are taught, but they might be needed by people that have skin allergies such as eczema.
- Wear appropriate footwear – spades are sharp, and the ground may be wet and muddy.
- Wear suitable outdoor clothing for wet and cold weather.
- Complete a risk assessment if required by your school.

Using tools

Tools should be used with respect. They might be sharp or heavy, and could cause injury if not used correctly. Always be aware of other people close by.

- Spades and forks should never be swung over your shoulder as you could injure someone. Carry them with the points and blades pointing towards the ground.
- When using a fork or a spade, place the prongs or blade on the ground and use your foot to push it into the soil. Never throw the prongs or blade into the ground.
- Make sure you have enough room to lift out the spade or fork without hitting another person.
- Be careful to not flick soil into people's faces.
- Keep tools clean and sharp.
- When using a wheelbarrow, load the weight evenly and lift with your legs, not your back.
- Avoid using a wheelbarrow on wet, slippery or icy surfaces.
- Store tools safely with prongs and blades pointing to the ground or a wall. Make sure store areas are free from trip hazards.
- Use child-sized tools whenever possible when planting with children.



Images: WTML/Terry Morris, Phil Formby

Planting trees

- Make sure your planting area has been checked for rubbish, glass and animal droppings before you start planting.
- If young children are planting, prepare the ground before the event, especially if you're planting through grass.
- Make bamboo canes more visible by placing 'toppers' on them. Make your own with coloured tape, shiny foil or even tennis balls. This will help prevent people getting poked in the eye accidentally.

Manual handling

- Place your feet evenly either side of the load, with your body as close as possible to the load.
- Bend at the knees.
- Use your leg muscles to push upward into a standing position.
- Keep your back straight.
- Pull the load as close as possible to your body.



Images: WTML/Phil Formby