

# MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

## Watering\*

An important factor in tree survival is providing water at the correct frequency. The first 3 years are most critical, but pay attention to watering needs throughout the tree's life. In arid environments most trees will have to be watered throughout the growing season and during dry winters for life unless they are native to that area.

### How often and how much?

Frequency depends on water uptake by plants, surface evaporation, and soil drainage. Soils that drain quickly will require more frequent watering than those that drain slowly. To determine your soil's drainage rate, see p. 34. The best way to know how often and how much to water is to check the soil moisture at 6 inches below the surface. Water when dry.

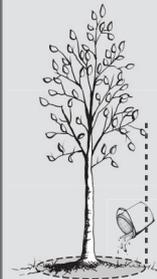
**First 3 years after planting:** If the soil is dry, provide about 2 gallons of water per diameter inch of the trunk.

**All other years:** Because soil type and weather conditions influence the demand for water, irrigation schedules and amounts vary.

### Tree roots need oxygen.

Soil saturated with water for more than 24 hours can prevent roots from getting oxygen. Therefore, watering too much is as dangerous as watering too little (and is harder to correct).

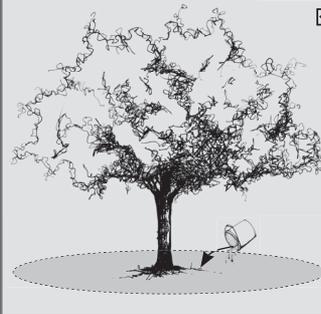
### First 3 years after planting:



- Check every other day in fast-draining soils, weekly in slow-draining soils

Water the root ball and just beyond

### All other years:



- Check weekly

Water within the dripline or, for large trees, at the base and at the dripline

**Where?** Water the root ball and just beyond. For large trees, focus watering on the area within 6 feet of the trunk and at the dripline.

**When?** Start checking soil moisture and watering when necessary in early spring, and continue until the soil freezes. For mild climates, water as needed during dry winters. For winter watering, choose warm days above freezing to ensure water soaks into the ground.

\*Gilman, E. 1997. Trees for urban and suburban landscapes. Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers. 662 p.

## Installing a Trunk Guard

### Trunk Protection

Young broad-leaved trees have thin bark that can easily be damaged by animals and equipment (most commonly string trimmers and lawn mowers). Mulch does a great job of keeping grass (and therefore grass-cutting equipment) away from trunks, but rodents such as rabbits and mice like to chew on young bark (usually low on the trunk). Deer also scrape tree trunks with their antlers.

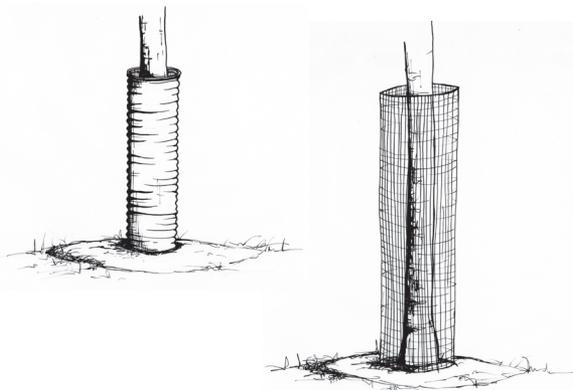
To prevent long-term damage associated with trunk wounding, install plastic tubing or hardware cloth (stiff wire fencing with 1/4-1/2 inch mesh squares) around the trunk. The tube should be big enough around to allow 1-4 inches of space between it and the trunk. It should be 1-3 feet tall (extending above the anticipated snow depth) for small rodents and as tall as possible for deer.

**How?** Wrap the tube around the trunk, taking care not to scratch the bark. Use a few pieces of wire to keep the tube closed. Push the tube into the ground or mulch less than an inch. Attach it to one or two stakes if necessary.

**When?** At a minimum, the trunk should be protected during the winter months (apply early in the autumn to prevent deer scraping). Protection can be applied anytime and left on all year round, as long as it does not touch the bark.

**⚠** **Your tree will grow.**

As the tree grows, the tube will need to be enlarged and eventually removed.



**For more information on tree care visit [www.treeownersmanual.info](http://www.treeownersmanual.info) and download the entire manual. Its full of great information that is easy to understand.**