

Helpful Tips

Proper Planting

Turfgrass

Proper preparation of a lawn prior to planting will ensure the establishment of a quality turf. Whether you are planting a new lawn or replanting an old one ideally you want to remove any old grass, debris and large roots. Once the turf is laid you must irrigate every day for 2 weeks or until sod has taken root. At that point water as needed.

You must also choose the correct turfgrass for your landscape environment. We recommend using a St. Augustine or Zoysia variety. For best results in full sun use Floratam St. Augustine or Empire Zoysia. For areas in shade we recommend Persley Seville St. Augustine. Zoysia typically does not do well in heavily shaded areas. We DO NOT recommend using Palmetto under any circumstances.

Woody Ornamentals

According to Larry Williams with the University of Florida the two most common causes for plant failure are Planting Too Deep and Pot-Bound Plants.

Planting Too Deep

Most trees and shrubs will not forgive you for planting them too deep. At best the plant will become stunted. At worst it will die. Planting trees and shrubs too deep is a slow but sure way to kill them and can sometimes take up to 18-24 months.

There are two main ways deep planting causes the death of landscape plants.

Suffocates the Roots: Tree and shrub roots need atmospheric oxygen which is available close to the soil surface. When these roots are covered with too much soil and mulch there's simply not enough oxygen to survive and they begin to decay.



Rots the Base of the Trunk: The trunk is supposed to be exposed to air, not covered by soil. As a result, the bark and wood begin to rot and the plants vascular system becomes compromised. It is no longer able to move water and nutrients from the roots to the leaves or manufactured food from the leaves to the roots.

You can never plant too high. Make sure the top of the root ball or root flares are 2-3 inches above the soil surface. This will compensate for mulch and natural settling.





Pot-Bound Plants

When plants have been left growing in a pot for an extended period of time the roots begin encircling the pot in tight masses and become pot bound. When these same plants are put into the soil the roots continue growing in the same pattern and never establish a healthy root system.

The plant in the image above was planted more than 12 months ago. It was never able to establish a healthy root system due to being pot bound and consequently died.

Plants will begin showing signs of desiccation or lack of water and dieback will slowly occur. It may take up to 18-24 months for the plant to completely die. At any time you can pull this plant out of the ground with little effort and the root will look very similar to the day it was removed from its pot.

You can increase the success rate of your plants by following these simple rules when planting.

- The planting hole should be twice as wide as the root mass.
- Break apart the root ball using a knife which will encourage the roots to discontinue the encircling pattern



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