



**Howard County**  
RECREATION & PARKS  
**STREAM RELEASE**



## TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING GUIDELINES

1. Locate a site for your tree or shrub that allows for an appropriate amount of sunlight and moisture for that species.
2. Dig a hole two times larger than the root system being planted. Plant the tree or shrub at the same level as it grew in the nursery.
3. Neatly cut away any broken or damaged roots and branches with sharp pruning tools. Loosen the root system gently.
4. In the hole, make a mound of soil and spread the plant's roots out and down over it.
5. Place soil from the hole around the roots. Water the plant when the hole is half full. Add soil and topsoil if needed to fill the hole and completely cover the roots. Pat the soil gently, it is important not to eliminate vital air spaces by stamping it down. Water the plant again.
6. Spread mulch over the planting area to a depth of two to three inches, but do not place mulch against the trunk of the tree or shrub.
7. Do not stake unless the tree has a large, top-heavy, crown, or if the planting is on a site where wind or people may push the tree over. Stake the tree for a maximum of one year unless using a tree shelter (please see [Tree Shelter Guidelines](#)).
8. Water the plant as needed, being vigilant in times of drought.
9. At the one year anniversary of planting, apply fertilizer to the tree.