



Planting Instructions for Potted Perennials and Shrubs

Step 1: Prepare the planting hole

Dig a hole using a shovel or soil auger. For plugs, a bulb planter, trowel, or spade also works well. The hole should be dug at a depth so that approximately 1/8 of the top of root ball or top of the plug will sit ABOVE the surrounding soil level. For shrubs, dig the hole approximately one foot wider than the diameter of the root ball.

Step 2: Prepare the plant

Carefully remove the plant from its plastic container either by turning it on its side and tapping the bottom or by cutting the pot. For plugs, gently push the bottom of the plug container to loosen the plant. If the plant is root bound (roots circling around the soil ball and appearing tightly matted), use a knife or hand trowel to loosen the roots on the edge of the root ball and gently pull the roots down to straighten them. For plants in large pots, use a knife to make 4 slices from top to bottom of the root ball before you loosen the roots. Cuts should be 1/2" deep and equal distance apart.

Step 3: Planting

Gently place plant into hole, making sure the plant is standing straight. Backfill the space around the root ball with amended soil. Lightly tamp the soil around the root ball by hand to eliminate large air pockets. DO NOT PLANT TOO DEEPLY (remember, approximately 1/8 of the root ball or top of the plug should be above the surrounding soil level). Do not put soil on top of the root ball or plug.

Step 4: Mulch

Cover with a 2 to 3 inch deep layer of mulch. Be sure to pull the mulch away from the trunk or stem of the plant. Mulch helps to control weeds and retain soil moisture.

Step 5: Water thoroughly after planting

Water the plant slowly and thoroughly after planting and continue to water for the first few weeks after planting. DO NOT OVER WATER. Check the soil moisture before watering; supplemental water is not necessary if the soil just under the surface is moist.

Plant Care

Site Selection

Select a site that is appropriate for the needs of your plant: How much sun does it need? What are its moisture requirements? Our [native plant catalog](#) lists the sun and moisture requirements for each species.

Supplemental Water

For new native plantings: See step 5 above.

For established native plantings: If the site was carefully selected based on the need of your plants, supplemental watering should not be necessary except during very dry or hot periods.

Fertilizing

Not usually necessary.

Weed Control

Newly planted natives will not be able to out compete with aggressive weeds. Even with established plantings, weeds can crowd out native plants and prevent maximum growth.