

Tips for tree-planting success

If you are planning some fall landscaping that includes trees, OPPD forester Mike Norris recommends the tree types listed below.

These species and more can be seen at the OPPD Arboretum, 108th and Blondo streets in Omaha. You can also learn how to plant trees to avoid power lines.

RED OAK

This medium to large shade tree with a spreading canopy is known for its hardiness and adaptability, as well as its brilliant fall foliage.

Size: 60-70 feet at maturity, with a spread of around 45 feet.

Growth rate: This is a relatively fast-growing tree, gaining more than 24 inches per year.

Location: Full sun is ideal.

GINGKO

This tree is known for its uniquely shaped leaves that turn a bright yellow in fall. It also has high tolerance for urban soils and pollution.

Size: 25-50 feet at maturity, spread of up to 35 feet.

Growth rate: Medium, adding 13-24 inches per year.

Location: Full sun and partial shade are best, with a minimum of four hours of direct sunlight.



CONCOLOR (WHITE) FIR

This hardy evergreen thrives in an urban setting, has good foliage color, good needle retention and a pleasing shape and aroma.

Size: 30-50 feet at maturity, with a spread of about 20 feet.

Growth rate: Slow to medium, with gains of less than 12 inches to 24 inches per year.

Location: Full sun and partial shade, with a minimum of four hours of direct sunlight daily.

But planting a new tree goes beyond digging a hole and shoveling dirt around the trunk. The process depends on how the roots appear when you buy the tree.

Trees can come with bare roots, in containers, or with the root system balled and wrapped in burlap. Below right, we share the proper techniques for all three.

BARE ROOT

1. Untangle the roots, soak in water for 3-6 hours.
2. Dig a hole wider than the tree so the roots can grow outward.
3. Plant at the same depth as it was planted at the nursery.
4. Shovel in remaining soil, packing firmly.

CONTAINER

1. Dig a hole 3-4 times wider than container, with sloped sides.
2. If tree is root-bound, cut an "X" on bottom of the root ball and four vertical slices around the sides.
3. Place in hole, with root collar just below top.
4. Fill, firmly pack soil until just below root collar.

BALLED, BURLAPPED

1. Dig saucer-shaped hole 2-3 times wider, deeper than root ball.
2. Set tree in the hole so root ball is slightly above ground level.
3. Cut and peel away the wire basket, rope and twine from the ball. Regular burlap can remain under the ball.
4. Firmly pack original soil around the tree until soil is just below the root collar.

WATERING

In all cases, create a basin around the hole and give the tree a good watering.

More information: Visit arborday.org/trees for more details on planting trees.

IT'S THE LAW: In Nebraska, call 811 or visit ne1call.com before digging. In Iowa, call 811.

OCTOBER BOARD MEETINGS

All-committee meeting: Tuesday, Oct. 19 (see oppd.com/BoardMeeting for details). **Regular board meeting:** Thursday, Oct. 21, 5 p.m., (see oppd.com/BoardMeeting for details) Hearing-impaired call 531-226-3208, 72 hours prior to request an interpreter. Agendas posted and meetings viewable on oppd.com/BoardMeeting.

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