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## Planting guidelines

This straight-forward advice will give your new trees, plants and shrubs the best possible start.

1. Dig a hole 2-3 times the width of the root ball. The hole should be almost as deep as the root ball, but no deeper.
2. When the plant is in the hole, the root ball should be about 2" above the existing ground level.
  - a. If the root ball is in a container, remove the container and cut 4 or 5 shallow vertical slashes into the root ball to break the pattern of the circular root growth.
  - b. If the root ball is in natural burlap, put the plant with its burlap into the hole so the top of the root ball is about 2" above the existing ground level. Remove any ropes and the top 1/3 of the burlap.
  - c. If the root ball is in a wire basket or cage, put the plant with its basket/cage into the hole so the top of the root ball is about 2" above the existing ground level. Cut away or bend down the top section of the wire basket/cage when the plant is in the hole.
  - d. **DO NOT try to remove the all of the burlap or the entire wire basket/cage.**
3. Back fill  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way to the top of the root ball using the existing soil dug from the hole enriched with compost (like Coast of Maine Quoddy) or planting mix (like Coast of Maine Penobscot). We recommend a ratio of about 25% compost/mix to 75% existing soil. We also recommend using mycorrhizae or root stimulator as instructed on the packet.
4. Fill the remainder of the hole with water **twice**, then back fill to the top of the hole with soil (NOT the top of the root ball, which should remain 2" clear above the soil) and water again.
5. Tamp soil lightly around the root ball and leave a ridge of soil around the edge of the hole, forming a basin to hold future waterings.

6. In windy sites, larger plants should be staked, but they should be able to sway with the wind to stimulate root growth.
7. Apply mulch about 2" deep or level with the top of the root ball. **Keep mulch 2-3" away from the main trunk/stem.**

