



Evergreen Shrub and Tree Care

Evergreen trees and shrubs are simply those that maintain their leaves at the end of each growing season, as opposed to deciduous plants that lose their foliage in the fall of every year. Although there are some varieties that will have a seasonal needle drop, most are pines, read about those upon purchase.

Growth Rates

After a year getting acclimated to a new location, a healthy evergreen will add 8" to 16" of new growth per year. It is worth noting that when you are buying a tree, you should pay more attention to the root system, not the pretty top growth.

Soil Types and Conditions

Evergreens like higher acidic soils with less nitrogen. Types of evergreens differ from sun and shade requirements and most specifically the amount of water, few tolerate wet conditions. Another way to see what works is to drive through your neighborhood and see what types of evergreens seem to be growing well. Local nurseries are a great guide to identify plants that do well in our climate.

Pruning

As with all plants, you should have a plan before doing any pruning. Other than removing any damaged branches, do not prune a plant until it has been in the ground a full growing season. We feel all plants need all their buds to provide leaves for gathering energy to grow. Therefore, the first year trim for health, the second year trim for aesthetics and the third year maintain shape, growth habit and aesthetics by focusing on the plant as a composition with the surrounding environment. Pruning with electric or gas powered shears is frowned upon except to keep clean hedges. Excessive shearing can stunt natural growth habit and be detrimental to health. We don't recommend using any wound sealant as in most cases; clean, unsealed wounds heal more quickly and with less disease than those covered with pruning paint.

General Planting Tips

Spring planting is best done just after frost leaves the ground, the weather is still cool, and lots of spring rain is expected. Planting during hot, dry weather may cause "transplant shock", so either avoid planting in hot, dry weather or make sure the trees get adequate water. Fall is a great time to plant and our favorite! When planting evergreen trees in the fall, the trees experience less stress during the digging and shipping process because they've gone dormant in preparation for winter. Fall planting also gives the trees plenty of time to become acclimated to their new environment and for the dirt to properly settle around the roots. And finally, fall gives the plants a head start when the ground begins to thaw. Spring is obviously a fine and popular time to plant, but fall certainly has its advantages.

Plant all new evergreens slightly higher than existing soil to allow for good drainage and cover rootball with 2" of double ground organic mulch.