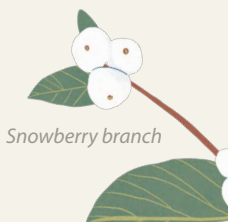




Douglas fir



Red alder



Snowberry branch

Keeping Your Bareroot Plants Happy & Healthy

Step-by-Step Planting Guide

**Poster
inside!**



Snowberry shrub

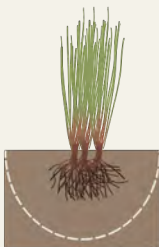
Bareroot Basics

What is a bareroot plant?

A young tree, shrub or perennial sold without soil around its roots, and in season from late fall through early spring. They're hardy and self-sustaining, but not at first. Given the right conditions and a little TLC, they will take root and reward your patience with healthy growth in the seasons to come.

Some common examples of bareroot plants include:

Herbaceous bareroots and rhizomes –
such as ferns, wildflowers and grasses (pictured here)



Woody bareroot plants –
including native trees like Douglas fir (pictured here), Pacific ninebark, snowberry shrub and vine maple



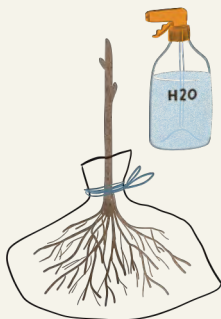
Live stakes –
best suited for willows (pictured here) and red osier dogwood, used for streambank restoration and erosion control

Live stakes are unique in that they develop their own root systems once they're in the ground. They require the same care as other bareroots, but they're usually planted in a deeper hole to allow for root growth.



Prepping Your Plants

Plant your seedlings as soon as possible – ideally within a couple days of getting them. Before planting, keep roots moist in a sealed bag or container, and do not expose roots to air. If they must be stored, put them in a cool, shady place. If roots dry out, you can soak them in water for a short time to rehydrate. Trim extra-long roots if needed.



Plant in the right conditions.

Plant on a cloudy, cool or humid day.

Plant in soil that isn't too wet.

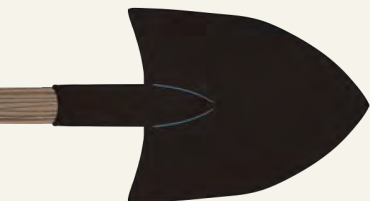
Loosen the soil before planting, as soil pressure on the roots can hinder growth.

Give your plants room to grow.

Remember that their roots grow down and out, so give them space and don't overcrowd them.



Make sure your plant is well-suited to your location. Contact your local conservation district for information about which bareroots are best suited for your planting conditions.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Watch Out!

What to avoid before you plant

Improper planting. If planted in a hole either too deep or too shallow, bareroots won't develop properly. Keep the root flare at soil level. Make sure roots are spread out, not twisted or bunched. When filling the hole, compact lightly to eliminate air pockets around the roots.

Overcrowding. Provide room for roots to spread. Planting too many in the same space can result in plants competing for nutrients and can increase disease risk. Follow spacing recommendations for each species to avoid these issues.

Wrong type of soil. Well-draining soil is a must. Heavy clay or compacted soils can suffocate roots, while sandy soils may drain too quickly. Avoid planting in areas that have either standing water or dry soil. Adding compost or mulch can improve plant health.

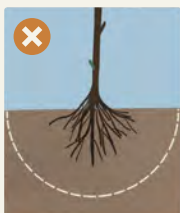
Watering. Too little water can dry out roots, while too much water causes rot. Keep soil consistently moist during the first growing season and check moisture levels regularly.

Wrong climate. Plant between late fall and early spring. Choose a planting location that matches the plant's sunlight needs and avoid spots prone to frost and wind.

Common Planting Errors



J-Roots



Exposed Roots



Buried Stem



Mounded Soil

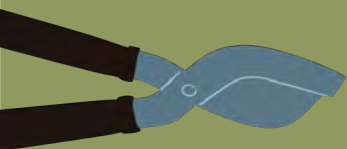
Happy Plant Care

Manage weeds. Pull weeds or apply mulch regularly. Weed barriers can enhance seedling survival.

Monitor for disease. Look for signs of wilting, unusual growth or spots on your bareroot plants.

Protect from pests and wildlife. Ventilated tree tubes and mesh fencing or screens can deter animals and pests.

Prune for healthy growth. Prune only to remove damaged or crossing branches in the first year, then shape the plant gradually in future seasons.



Tree Tube



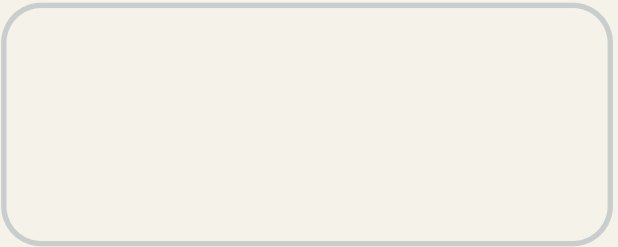
Keep plants where they are. Bareroots thrive when planted directly in their forever home.



Step-by-step
planting video



Reach out to your
local conservation
district for more
information and tips.



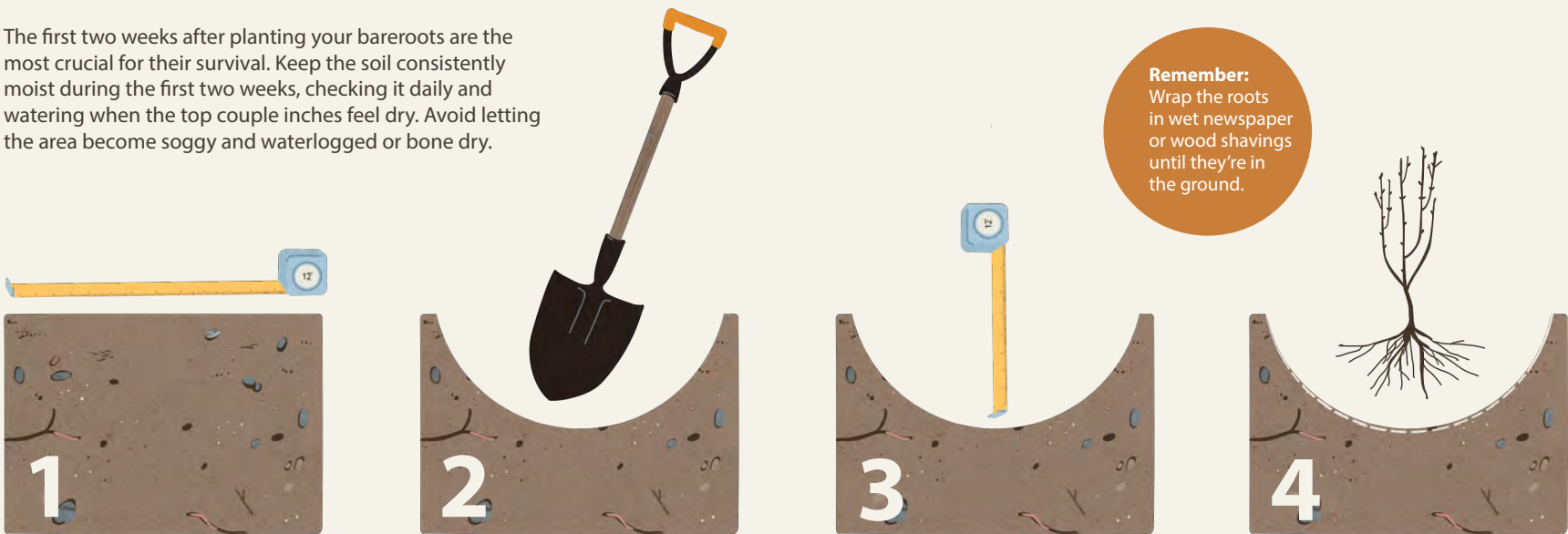
Find more resources at
conserve.wa.gov

**Ripple
Effect**



8 Simple Steps for Planting Your Bareroots

The first two weeks after planting your bareroots are the most crucial for their survival. Keep the soil consistently moist during the first two weeks, checking it daily and watering when the top couple inches feel dry. Avoid letting the area become soggy and waterlogged or bone dry.



Clear Your Planting Area

Pick your planting spot, and mark a 2-3 foot circle on the ground. Clear other vegetation from this circle, using a mower or weedwhacker if necessary.

Dig the Hole

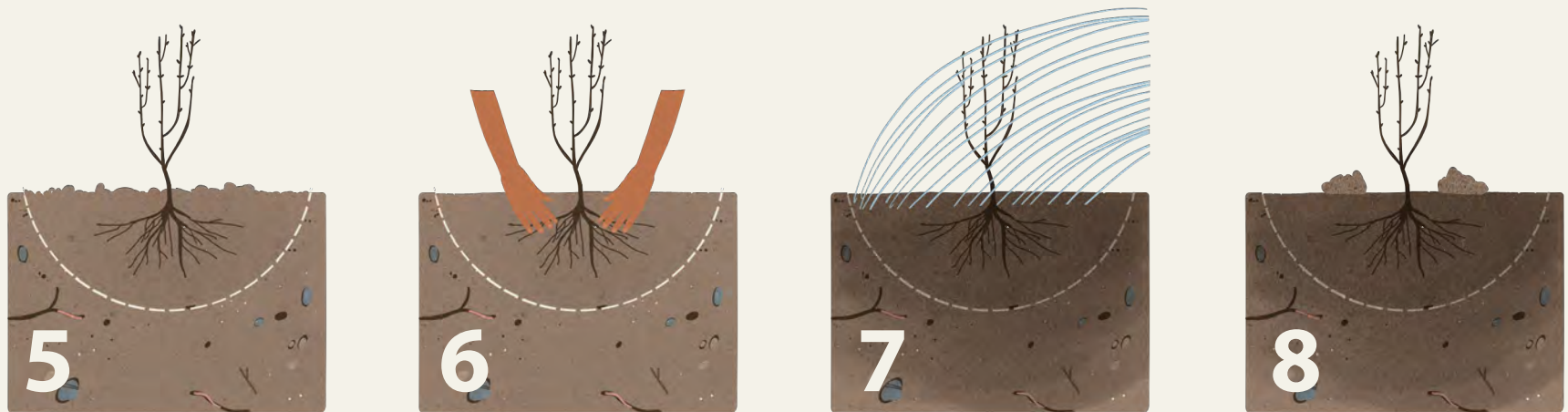
Dig a hole wide enough to allow the roots to spread comfortably. The hole should be 2-3 times as wide as the roots extend and as deep as the longest root.

Check the Depth

The hole should allow for the roots to just barely reach the bottom. The root flare, where the roots meet the stem, should be at ground level.

Place the Plant

Avoid curling, bunching or twisting the roots. Herbaceous plants may not have visible leaves or stems when planted. Mark the spot so they're not disturbed.



Backfill the Hole with Soil

Begin filling in the hole with loose soil, gently pressing as you go to remove air pockets. Make sure the root flare is level with the soil surface — NOT buried.

Pack the Soil

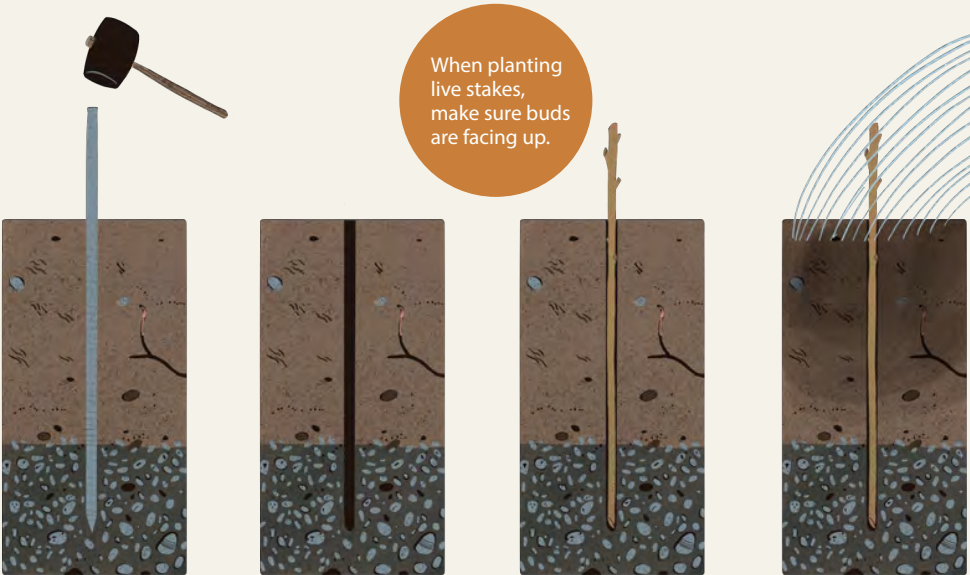
Gently pack down the soil with your hands, but don't compact it too tightly. You don't want to crush the roots.

Water Thoroughly

Water the seedling to settle the soil and eliminate any remaining air pockets.

Mulch the Base

Add a mulch ring of about 2-3 inches around the planting area. Keep it a few inches away from the stem to prevent rot. This will retain moisture and suppress weeds.



Live Stakes

Live stakes require deeper, narrower holes than seedlings that already have roots. Create a pilot hole with a ground probe or a piece of rebar with a mallet to get the proper depth. The hole should be deep enough so at least half the stake is in the ground. Be sure it reaches the water table. Once planted, gently press the soil to ensure soil contact with the live stake. After the hole is filled – water, mulch, and monitor live stakes.

