



LANDSCAPE CARE GUIDELINES

Please follow the basic seasonal care guidelines below to keep your plants looking their best year after year. Detailed plant care follows:

Mulch Care:

Regular mulching helps control plant disease and weeds, improving soil structure and organic matter content, retains moisture and regulates soil temperatures - all of which are important to healthy planting. **Maintaining a 2-3" layer of mulch is critical to the health of your landscape.** During the installation of your landscape several steps have been taken to remove existing weeds and growth, however some new weed growth will eventually occur. When this happens hand-pulling is the safest and easiest method. If herbicide is used, extreme care must be taken to prevent overspray on desirable plants.

Pruning Expectations:

Pruning can stimulate new, tender growth so timing is critical. Never do a heavy prune in mid-summer or fall as it can cause permanent damage. Only prune plants after 3+ years installed. For best appearance and health of the plant, prune to maintain the natural shape. Pruning individual branches with hand pruners is recommended for a natural look and is a healthier option for the plant compared to hedge shears. **See more details on pruning plant types below.**

Fertilizing:

Newly installed plants arrive with fertilizer, so no additional fertilizer is needed during the first season. Fertilize as noted below starting the second season.

Pests:

Rabbit damage and deer grazing can be common pest problems. There are granular pellets that can work, wrapping the plants in wire mesh or covering with a wire cloche is another effective effort. Dogs urinating on shrubs can also be a problem - hosing down the foliage immediately after can help minimize stress to the plant.

Tree Stakes:

Newly planted trees will frequently settle, and winds can blow them crooked a few months after planting. Often stakes can be used to straighten trees. It is recommended to remove tree stakes 1 year after installation to minimize any damage to the tree. You must also periodically check the stake and adjust/tighten when needed.

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Deciduous Trees:

- Fertilize in late fall with a slow-release balanced fertilizer, for best results. Follow the label for recommended rate of application
- It is best to prune trees during dormancy - after the cold winter months and before the buds break in spring (February/early March)
- Look for and remove cross-branching (branches that physically rub against each other), suckers and any diseased branches
- Always step back and assess the shape of the tree canopy prior to pruning to help make an informed decision on what branches need removed
- Great care should be taken to keep mulch from building up around tree trunks. The root flare of the tree (the enlarging of the trunk at the soil line) should be visible at the soil line. Only 2" of mulch should cover the root flare

Evergreen Trees:

- Fertilize in late fall with a slow-release balanced fertilizer, for best results. Follow the label for recommended rate of application
- Prune all evergreens, except pine, before new growth starts in the spring or during the semi-dormant period in mid-summer
- When pruning, follow the general branching pattern to maintain the natural shape
- Remove dead, diseased, or broken branches anytime

Deciduous Shrubs:

- Fertilize in spring with a slow-release balanced fertilizer, for best results. Follow the label for recommended rate of application
- Certain shrubs may require specialized fertilizer (ex. rhododendrons, roses, etc.)
- Prune to shape after flowering for most spring/summer blooming shrubs (ex. lilacs, oakleaf/mophead hydrangea, weigela, etc.) as these bear flowers on previous year's growth
- Shrubs that bloom on the current year's wood should be pruned in early spring before bud break (ex. butterfly bush, shrub roses, etc.)
- Rejuvenation pruning should occur in late winter or early spring

Evergreen Shrubs:

- Fertilize in spring with a slow-release balanced fertilizer, for best results. Follow the label for recommended rate of application
- Prune before new growth starts in the spring or during the semi-dormant period in mid-summer
- When pruning, follow the general branching pattern to maintain the natural shape. We only recommend shearing when a formal hedge is desired
- Remove dead, diseased, or broken branches anytime

Ornamental Grasses and Perennials:

- Fertilize perennials with a balanced granular fertilizer in spring (such as 14-14-14 or 10-10-10) for best results. Do not fertilize after August so winter hardiness isn't compromised. Follow the label for recommended rate of application
- Ornamental grasses don't need fertilization; however, a spring application would be applicable
- Some perennials benefit from deadheading through the growing season to encourage reblooming (ex. salvia, catmint, coreopsis, veronica, etc.)
- Prune back to mulch for clean look through the winter months
- If desired, leave ornamental grasses through the winter for added landscape interest. Prune in late winter approximately 3-5" above mulch
- Most perennials can be divided after 3 years to help rejuvenate the plant

Groundcovers:

- Fertilize in spring with a balanced, slow-release fertilizer for best results (such as 14-14-14 or 10-10-10). Follow the label for recommended rate of application
- Most are evergreen, so once established they require little attention other than keeping them within their location in the landscape
- Deciduous groundcover (ex. liriope) performs best if trimmed back in early spring once new growth has emerged