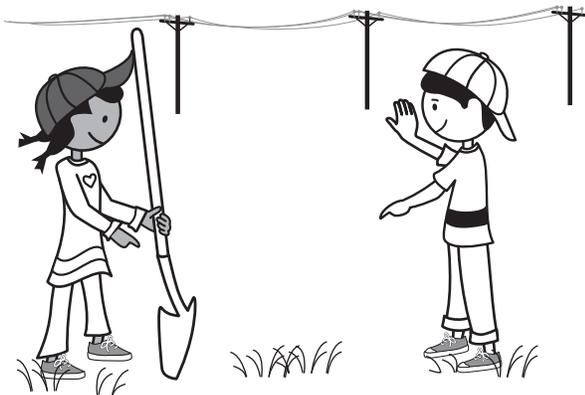


How to Plant a Tree Seedling



Directions for Families

Copy the following handout back-to-back and give one to each child. When copying, remember to cover the answers on the reverse side. Have children cut out the six panels and study the images on the front, along with the accompanying text on the back. Based on what they read, children should place the panels in an order that matches the steps you take to properly plant a tree. Once the children are finished, they can color and staple or bind their tree planting booklet for future use when they plant their own tree seedlings.



Add soil to fill in around the tree. When the hole is about $\frac{3}{4}$ filled, straighten and level the tree. Gently tamp the soil with the toe of your shoe to remove extra air pockets. Then be sure to give your tree a good soaking of water.

Continue to care for your tree by watering when needed. You may want to place mulch (wood chips, rotting tree leaves or pine needles) around the base of your tree to help hold in moisture. Just be sure the mulch doesn't touch the tree's trunk. Also, be sure to protect your seedling from damage caused by feet, lawnmowers and pets.

Enjoy your tree!

- ❧ Watch how the trunk, bark, branches and leaves change as the tree grows.
- ❧ Visit your tree during each season and draw a picture of what it looks like.
- ❧ Collect fallen leaves or needles for craft projects.
- ❧ Observe animals and insects that use your tree for food or shelter.
- ❧ Write a poem about your tree and share it with family and friends.

Dig a hole as deep as the root system and twice as wide. Do not dig too deep. Once the plant is placed in the hole, the *root collar* (the place where the stem meets the root system) should be level with the surface of the ground.

Shape a small mound of soil in the center of the planting hole. Spread the tree roots evenly over the mound of soil without bending or breaking them. The roots are like the tree's blood vessels, and they will not work if they are twisted, bent or broken

Plant tree seedlings in early spring or late fall so they have time to settle in the ground before the heat of summer or frozen temperatures of winter. Choose a planting site with enough room for roots and branches to stretch out and reach their full size. Don't forget to look up, down and all around! Pay attention to utility wires, both above and below ground, as well as buildings, sidewalks and other trees.

