

Planting Tips: “My Tree, Our Tree”

Thank you for participating in Cary’s long-standing history of championing trees with “My Tree, Your Tree.” The “My Tree, Our Tree” program connects your individual tree planting efforts with broader benefits to the community’s environmental health. Every tree you plant in Cary brings shade, beauty, and wildlife habitats to your yard; sequesters carbon; and helps clean our water and air. Thank you for planting a tree to support our environment and ensuring trees continue to have a special place in Cary’s future.

How to Grow Your Tree

1. Pick your place

- Find a place that has the right amount of light and space for the tree you want to plant. Check the My Tree, Our Tree webpage or other online resources to see if your tree likes light or shade and grows larger or smaller.
- Plant your tree at least five feet from sidewalks and 10 feet from other trees and buildings. If you have a bigger growing tree, give it twice as much space!
- Look up! Avoid planting trees under powerlines.

2. Prepare, then plant your tree

- Take everything off the tree, including tape and the bamboo stake. The bamboo stake needs to come off the tree because as the tree grows the bamboo stake can damage its trunk. You can leave the tree name tag on if you want to refer to it later.
- Brush the soil and mulch off the root flare of the trunk. The root flare is the place where the trunk gets wider right before the first large root emerges. Oftentimes it is buried in the pot, so remove the potting soil from around the trunk until you uncover it.
- Dig a hole that is only as deep as the pot, but about three times as wide. New trees like wide, shallow holes. Loosen soil within the hole and on the sides of the hole.
- Place your tree in the hole, making sure the root flare is above ground and the tree trunk is straight. You may have to add more soil to the bottom of the hole if the hole is too deep.
- Fill the hole with a mix of topsoil and the soil you dug out of the ground. Make sure no soil covers the root flare of the tree.
- Spread mulch two inches thick in a two-foot radius circle around your new tree. Make sure there is no mulch touching the trunk.
- Put a tree guard at the base of the tree to protect it from string trimmers (also called weed whackers!).
- Water your tree well right after planting.
- Show off your tree! Upload a picture of your newly planted tree on social media using #MyTreeOurTree

3. Continuing care for your tree

- Be sure your tree is sufficiently watered for the first two years it is in the ground! When it has leaves on it, water your tree about once a week for about two minutes.
- As your tree grows, make the mulch ring around it wider so the roots have more room to grow.
- Register for our free, virtual Tree Talk series via myCary for seasonal tree care tips.

TREE PLANTING DIAGRAM

