



Watering newly planted trees

Watering is one of the prime keys to successful establishment after planting a tree and sadly there seems to be many conflicting arguments as to how much, how often and even how to water a tree. We suggest that you follow the guide below:

- Use organic mulch at the base of the tree to help retain water, prevent weed growth and also give you an indication of where you need to water! Bark mulch is an easily available natural choice
- To ensure that watering can penetrate the rootball, ensure that the top compacted compost is loosened, or if solid penetrated with several dibber holes about 2 cm deep and 5 cm apart. Avoid damaging any near surface roots.
- Use a watering can with a rose attachment on the end to water or a sprinkler or other such method that will administer water *slowly* and at a low pressure, mimicking rainfall.
- Water should be applied to the base of the tree, evenly distributed over the entirety of the root-ball to encourage even root development.
- A newly planted tree should be watered in when planted, and at the point of bud burst in the spring and should be continued throughout the spring and summer until the leaves have fallen in autumn (for deciduous trees).
- Watering is advised for the first 2 summers after planting, further to this the tree should be able to access water from the surrounding soil.
- You may need to water evergreens a little during the winter months if it is particularly dry, this does not need to be done routinely, and can be a response to a period of dry weather.
- During the height of summer, water should be applied at a rate of 2 domestic bucket fulls (or 20 litres of water) every other day. This figure is the aim to reach during the height of summer and can be gradually increased to this in the spring and decreased before ceasing watering in the autumn.

Tips to help make the most of your watering

- If you are using an automated system to water your tree(s), *check it* regularly! Sadly, often by the time you notice a change in your trees, there may already be some damage done. Leaky pipes and drip irrigation systems can get clogged up over time.
- Further to this, make sure that you are able to quantify the amount of water that you are applying to your tree and how often. This is true for automated irrigation systems and manual systems. If there is a problem, it is much easier to diagnose for you if you are able to provide this information.
- Be mindful that newly planted trees do need watering, even if it has been raining! Rain is useful in slowing up the volume of water needed by a newly planted tree, as it is often cooler during such periods, however it is the root-ball of the tree that needs watering and often rainfall will not fall this close to the base of the tree, due to the width of the canopy.
- Ensure that water is draining well away after 10 minutes of application of water.
- Ultimately be vigilant and use some common sense!