

Caring For Your Trees

Your responsibility is just beginning when you plant a new tree. There are a number of important steps for caring and maintaining your trees.

Watering

Watering your tree is the most important thing you can do. Your new tree will need to be watered independently from your lawn or other ground cover. For the first year, it is recommended that you provide a minimum of 15 gallons a week. To do this, fill the basin around the tree to the top then let the water soak in, then fill it a second time. Be careful not to wash away soil around the roots.

Mulching

Maintain a 2-4 inch base of mulch inside the dirt basin around the base of your tree to reduce moisture evaporation from the soil and help control weeds. Mulch should be kept 3-4 inches away from the trunk.

Caring of City Trees

It is both the responsibility of the property owner and the City of Riverside to care for city trees. A city tree is any tree that is located in the city right-of-way. This is generally the area between the sidewalk and the curb (or between 12 and 15 feet from the face of the curb or edge of roadway). trees planted in that right-of-way must be planted by permit only.

Weeding

Keep weeds and grass at least 36 inches from the tree trunk.

Staking

Periodically check the stakes and ties to make sure they are not harming the trunk or branches. The stakes and ties can be removed when your tree can stand securely by itself in an upright position.

Pruning

Generally, your tree will not need pruning during its first two years. The more foliage that remains on the tree, the faster it will grow.

What is my responsibility for a city tree?

Watering city trees are your responsibility. The City of Riverside is responsible for all other maintenance of City Trees.

How often is my city tree trimmed?

Currently, city trees are trimmed approximately every seven years.

Can I trim my city tree?

Property owners may raise the clearance of a city tree up to eight feet. Anything over eight feet requires a permit. For information on permits and trimming options contact the City of Riverside's Urban Forest Section.

Can I get a city tree removed?

The City discourages the removal of trees because of their benefits to our community. However, there are some circumstances where removal is warranted. For information on tree removal policy and procedures, visit www.riversideca.gov/trees or contact Park and Recreation's Urban Forest Section at (951) 351-6126.

Why doesn't the Utility trim my tree?

The City of Riverside Utilities Department trims trees to clear high power lines on a two-year cycle or in an emergency. However, It is the property owner's responsibility to keep trees planted on his/her property clear of all overhead and underground power lines. Make sure to hire a trained arborist to do this for you. For more information on Utilities line clearance services, call (951) 351-6126.

Tree information resources

City of Riverside Tree Policy: www.riversideca.gov/trees
Riverside Public Utilities Tree Power Program:
riversidepublicutilities.com
Keep Riverside Clean & Beautiful: krcb.com
UCCE Master Gardeners
and Local Nurseries



Riverside- City of Trees

Riverside is known as the City of Trees. Thanks to our founders and continued generations of committed citizens and government officials, a lush "Urban Forest" has been created in our community. Trees provide many aesthetic, environmental, and economic values, including clean air and increased property values. However, in order to maintain this Urban Forest correctly we've got to plant the right tree, at the right time, in the right location.

Choose your tree carefully!

When choosing a tree to plant, you want to make sure it is one that will thrive in your community. Some trees that thrive in the city of Riverside include: Maidenhair (*Ginkgo*), Goldenrain, Jacaranda Silk, Chinese Pistache, Redbud (*Eastern or Oklahoma*), London Plane (*Sycamore*), Pink Trumpet, and Southern Magnolia.

Remember that there are pros and cons to each tree you select. Some trees need more water, cleanup, and maintenance than others do. To find out more about the tree species above, as well as other suggested trees to plant in Riverside, visit www.riverside-ca.org/trees.

Plant it right!

Before you select the type of tree you want to plant, the most important thing you can do for the healthy life of that tree is to plant the right tree in the right place.

- * Make sure trees have plenty of space to grow. Avoid conflicts with solar panels, satellite dishes, and roof structures.
- * Do not plant trees underneath power lines, near water and sewer lines, sidewalks, walkways, driveways, and foundations. If you are unaware of underground utility locations, it is always a good idea to call Underground Service Alert at 1-800-227-2600 before you dig.

- * Planting shade trees in the right locations around your home can help lower summer cooling costs.
- * Plant your trees in natural soil. Poor soil may need conditioners to ensure your tree will continue to thrive and help avoid root problems.

Other Things To Consider..

Prepare the planting hole and soil

Dig a hole that is 2-3 times as wide as the diameter of the container. Find the trunk flare zone (the area where the stem merges with its root system). Measure from the bottom of the container up to the trunk flare zone, and dig the depth of your hole accordingly.

If you dig too deep, backfill with enough soil to hold the tree slightly higher than the measurement. Firmly tamp the backfill before setting the tree on it. Remove any rocks, grass, or debris from the dug-up soil. *Note: In general, soil conditioners are only necessary for soils with major limitations. If soil conditioners are needed, follow the instructions that are given.*

Planting & Filling

Carefully remove the tree from its container, supporting the root ball. Place the largest branches toward the prevailing winds in your area. Center the tree in the hole and check the hole depth. Cut any circled or kinked roots.

With the tree in place, add some soil and firmly pack it around the lower roots by hand. Continue filling and firming the soil 4-6 inches at a time. When the hole is about 2/3 full, add water again and wait for settling. Tamp gently with the top end of the shovel handle. Soil should be firmly, but not tightly packed. Finish off by creating a basin to hold water by building a ring of extra soil around the planting hole (about 36 inches in diameter and 6 inches high). Fill the basin with water.

Mulch

If the soil has settled lower than the base of the tree (trunk flare zone) after watering, add soil. Spread a 2-4 inch layer of mulch on the top of the soil in the basin a few inches away from the trunk.

Stake

Unless a tree bends over, it will not need support from staking. If stakes are needed, place them on opposite sides of the tree, perpendicular to the direction of the prevailing wind. In Riverside, it is usually a good idea to place stakes on the east and west sides of the tree.

Stakes should be positioned outside the root ball area, but no further than the tree ties can reach. Drive stakes into the soil with a driving or pounding tool. If possible, the top of the stakes should be a couple of inches below the lowest main branch.

Place tree ties about 6 inches above the spot where the tree bends. This point is generally half to two thirds of the way up the tree. Loop rubber tree ties around the tree and attach one to each stake. Ties should be loose, so that the tree can sway, and the trunk can grow stronger.

