



## Water Weekly

Watering is the most important thing you can do for your newly adopted tree, but it can also pose the greatest challenge. This section can help you find the most efficient watering method for your tree.

**WHAT:** Your tree needs 10 gallons (one full treegator) each week and twice as much in hot months like July and August.

**WHEN:** Newly planted trees need to be watered from late May to early October.

**TOOLS:** Hose or water bucket

**HOW:** City of Boston street trees are planted with a treegator around the trunk, which slowly releases water. For non-treegator watering methods see the link below.

**Hose** - If you have a hose handy simply fill the tree gator by placing the hose in the treegator opening.

**Water bucket** - A 6 gallon water container that fits with the treegator opening can be purchased from any TrueValue ([see link](#)).

### TIPS:

- Avoid watering in small frequent amounts. This encourages shallow root growth.
- Water in the morning or evening to avoid evaporation.

### Watering Container:

<http://www.truevalue.com/product/Water-Container-Blue-6-Gal/40925.uts#activeTab1>

### Tree Watering Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Uds0ff0c88>

# Tree Care Guide

## Clean & Cultivate

In a concrete jungle, street trees have to fight to get the resources they need. The tree pit is the only opening trees have to get their basic needs met. Trash and debris covering the tree pit prevents water and air from flowing freely. Weeds with strong root structures and compacted soil can make root growth a challenge. By cleaning and cultivating the tree pit, you can help your tree get what it needs to grow.

**WHAT:** Clear the tree pit of trash and weeds. Loosen the top three inches of soil.

**WHEN:** Start with a spring tree pit 'clean and soil cultivation' in May. Then clean as needed through the year.

**TOOLS:** Gloves and hand cultivator (see image below)

### HOW:

**Clean** - Wearing gloves, pick up any litter or debris in the tree pit and properly dispose of it. Pull out any weeds that are in the tree pit.

**Cultivate** - Press the hand cultivator into the soil. Lift the handle to break up and loosen soil. Repeat this across the tree pit until the top 2-3 inches of soil is loose.

### TIPS:

- Placing a border around the tree pit will help keep it clean and protected.

## Mulch Madness

Mulch plays an important role in the health of your new tree. Mulch helps prevent weed growth. It also keeps the soil moist and cool in the summer and warm in the winter. It even becomes a great source of nutrients when it breaks down.

**WHAT:** Remove all mulch from the previous season and add 3-4 inches of new mulch.

**WHEN:** Build a fresh mulch layer in the spring.

**TOOLS:** Mulch and shovel

**HOW:** After you have cleaned and cultivated the soil, use a shovel to spread 3-4 inches of mulch around the tree in a donut shape.

**Donut of mulch** - Keep the root flare (area close to trunk) clear of mulch. For simple measuring, start the mulch two fists away from the trunk. Spread mulch around the tree creating a donut shape.

**Mulch out, not up** - Spread the mulch evenly so it is relatively flat and spreads out from the tree trunk, not up like a hill.

### TIPS:

- Make sure to remove mulch from previous years. Too much mulch can lead to root rot or unwanted pests.

### More Mulching Info:

[http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/other/compust\\_mulch/hgic1604.html](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/other/compust_mulch/hgic1604.html)



## Protect

You won't be able to protect your new tree from all the dangers in the city, but there are some simple things you can do to give your tree a better chance at establishing its city roots. Your tree's bark is its natural protection and keeping it safe can help your tree survive. Two concrete things you can do to protect your tree are installing a tree guard and patrolling for pests.

### *Installing a Tree Guard*

**WHAT:** Place a protective barrier around the edge of the tree pit to prevent unwanted foot or animal traffic.

**HOW:** Tree guards can get very expensive, but here are two low cost options.

- Buy a small garden border/ fence from a local hardware store. These fences are easy on the wallet and easy to install.
- Create your own using sticks, rope, chain or other materials you have. Check out this DIY tree guard: [http://milliontreesnyc.org/downloads/pdf/Low\\_Cost\\_Tree\\_Guard.pdf](http://milliontreesnyc.org/downloads/pdf/Low_Cost_Tree_Guard.pdf)

### *Patrol for Pests*

**WHAT:** Check the tree bark periodically to keep out unwanted invaders.

**HOW:** Using sources, such as the links below, look for evidence of pest problems.

#### **Resources for Pest Detection:**

<http://massnrc.org/pests/blog/>  
<http://masswoods.net/outsmart>

## Beautify

Beautifying the tree bed is a fun way to encourage pedestrians to stay out of the tree pit and prevent people from throwing litter. Flowers can also help keep the soil aerated, allowing oxygen and water easy access to the trees roots.

**WHAT:** Plant small annuals and bulbs around the tree.

**WHEN:** Spring is the best time for planting annuals. Some bulbs are best planted in the fall. See instructions on flower tags for specific planting season.

**TOOLS:** Gloves and hand trowel (shovel)

**HOW:** Choose small plants and flowers that you enjoy. Bulbs and small annuals will not crowd out the trees roots while making the tree pit lovely for passers by.

#### **TIPS:**

- Plants labeled as part-sun (needing 4-6 hours of sun) are more likely to flourish even when partly shaded by the tree.
- Avoid shrubs and larger plants that will compete with the trees roots for space.



#### **Flower suggestions:**

<http://www.nycgovparks.org/trees/tree-care/planting>

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