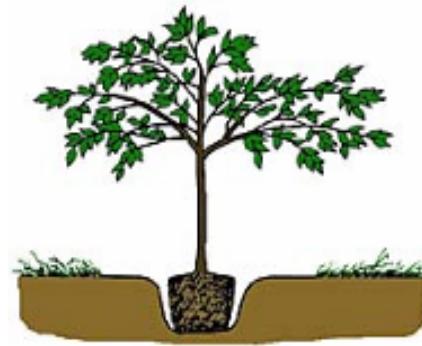




Planting Apricot Trees

Timing of planting: Plant when the ground is not frozen, but before trees start to 'leaf out' in the winter, to allow for root development before spring growth.

Prepare planting hole: Dig a hole only as large as necessary to accommodate the root system. Prune any damaged roots back beyond the damaged area. Separate and trim the roots of container trees that may be root-bound. Be sure the root ball or container soil rests on solid ground in the hole to prevent settling. Do not add any other soil amendments to the hole, such as fertilizer or compost.



Position the tree: Container trees should have the top of the soil ball flush with the top of the hole. Bare-rooted trees should have soil placed underneath them in a manner to allow the spreading of the roots in a natural position. Loose roots should be positioned facing down in the hole. The graft union should be no less than 5 to 10 cm above the soil surface when the roots are completely covered with soil.

Fill the hole: Back-fill with the same soil that was removed from the hole and not with an amended soil mix of a lighter texture. Such a practice will create drainage problems. Firm the soil around the lower roots by hand. Soil should be firmly, but not tightly, packed.

Water: Before completion of back-filling, add water to settle the soil. After watering, fill the hole to completion and, if necessary, construct a basin (ridges of soil around the complete circumference of the tree) to hold water during subsequent irrigations. Water thoroughly.



Stake: Unless the tree bends over, it will not need staking. If stakes are needed, place them on opposite sides of the tree, perpendicular to the direction of the prevailing wind. Stakes should be positioned outside the root ball area, but no further than the tree ties can reach. Drive stakes into soil so that the top of the stakes is a couple of centimeters below the lowest main branch. Place tree ties about 15 cm above the spot where the tree bends. In order to prevent ties from rubbing the tree's bark use rubber loops cut from automotive tires between the ties and the tree. Ties should be loose, so that the tree can sway, and the trunk can grow stronger.

Sunburn protection: The bark of newly-planted trees is very easily damaged by too much sun; when injured, the bark is easily infested by borer insects. Protect the bark of the tree from sunburn immediately after planting by painting with white interior latex paint diluted to half strength with water. Apply the paint mixture from the soil surface up the entire trunk, including the dormant buds.

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