

Seedling Planting Guide

What is a Bare Root Seedling?

Bare root seedlings are seedlings where the roots are not surrounded by soil, they are simply bare. They are dormant seedlings, meaning they are not at a stage where they can germinate. This allows them to focus their energy into growing and stabilizing their roots in their new location, rather than reproducing.



Important Things to Note

- **The seedlings are fragile:** Do not move them hastily and handle them with care. They are still small and can break and bend easily.
- **Try to plant on a cloudy day:** It is important to plant on a cloudy day, because immediate direct sunlight can harm the seedling.

When Should the Seedlings be Planted?

In the spring, they should be planted between mid-May and mid-June, preferably after the last frost. The seedlings should not be planted on a day that is super windy or hot. You should also avoid planting them when there is standing water in the site, they are to be planted in. Although they should be planted as soon as possible, they can be stored for up to a week. The seedlings need to be stored in a dark cool place, 2-4°C. DO NOT FREEZE. Check on them often to make sure the roots stay moist.

In the fall, the seedlings can be planted from the end of August until the middle of October, as long as the ground is not frozen, and the temperature is not reaching freezing point at night. Although they should be planted as soon as possible, they can be stored for up to a week. The seedlings should be stored in a shady spot. Make sure the roots stay moist until they are planted.

Where Should the Seedlings be Planted?

- **Space:** The seedlings should be planted where there is enough space for them to grow, both above ground and underground. Avoid crowded areas close to buildings, service lines, pipelines, and powerlines.
- **Soil:** Try to ensure the soil quality lines up with the quality that the species survives best in.
- **Light exposure:** Not all plants require the same amount of sunlight. Before starting to plant, make sure the planned spot is in a place that lines up with the species need for light (full sun, partial, or shade).

How Should the Seedlings be Planted?

1. Clear the area of unneeded plant coverage that could act as competition; this includes thick grasses that would act as competition against the seedling. A radius of 30cm (1 foot) is standard. It can be helpful to till the area to loosen the soil and mix the nutrients in the soil.
2. Dig a hole that is deep enough and wide enough for the roots to fit without curling under or bending upwards.
3. Place the seedling in the hole, allowing the roots to fall naturally. Make sure the seedling is placed vertically and not falling over.
4. Refill the hole back up with soil and gently pat it down. Fill it enough to cover all the roots but leaving the lowest branches of the plant exposed and uncovered. It can be helpful to check to see if the seedling is tight enough in the ground, so it won't be uprooted by winds. Just give it a light tug at the top.
5. Finally, water the area thoroughly so the soil is moist. Be careful not to drown the seedling.

Caring for the Seedling After Planting

- Make sure the soil stays close to the moisture condition the plant prefers.
 - For the first two weeks, water the tree once a day. It is important to take note of rainfall. You do not need to water them if it rains that day.
 - For the next 8 weeks, the tree should be watered every 2-3 days.
 - After the first ten weeks, the tree only needs to be watered once a week until the roots are established. If it was planted in the fall, stop watering when the ground freezes.
- You may need to add certain barriers to protect from different pests that may be in the area.

