



How to plant trees

Did you know that planting native trees (those that grow naturally, not introduced by man) is one of the easiest ways to help our planet? This is because trees are perfect for providing food and shelter for wildlife. They're also the earth's lungs – making vital oxygen for humans and animals. Here's how you can perform a small act like planting trees, yet make a huge difference.

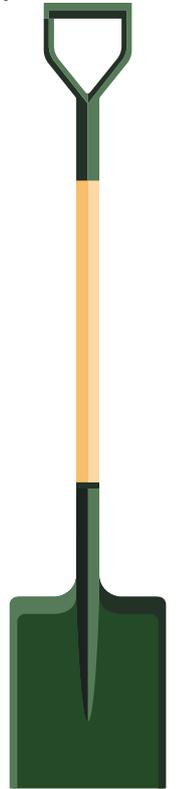
You will need

- + Trees – different trees (e.g. oak, ash, birch, rowan, hazel) have different purposes and needs. You should pick your tree species based on where you want to plant it and what you want from it
- + Tree stakes/supports
- + Tree guard, tree tie or tree Velcro – dependent on the size of your tree
- + Spade
- + Mallet or lump hammer
- + Protective gardening gloves



Remember

Before you get going on planting your trees, make sure you have the landowner's permission if it's not your land. [The Land Registry website](#) can help you with this.



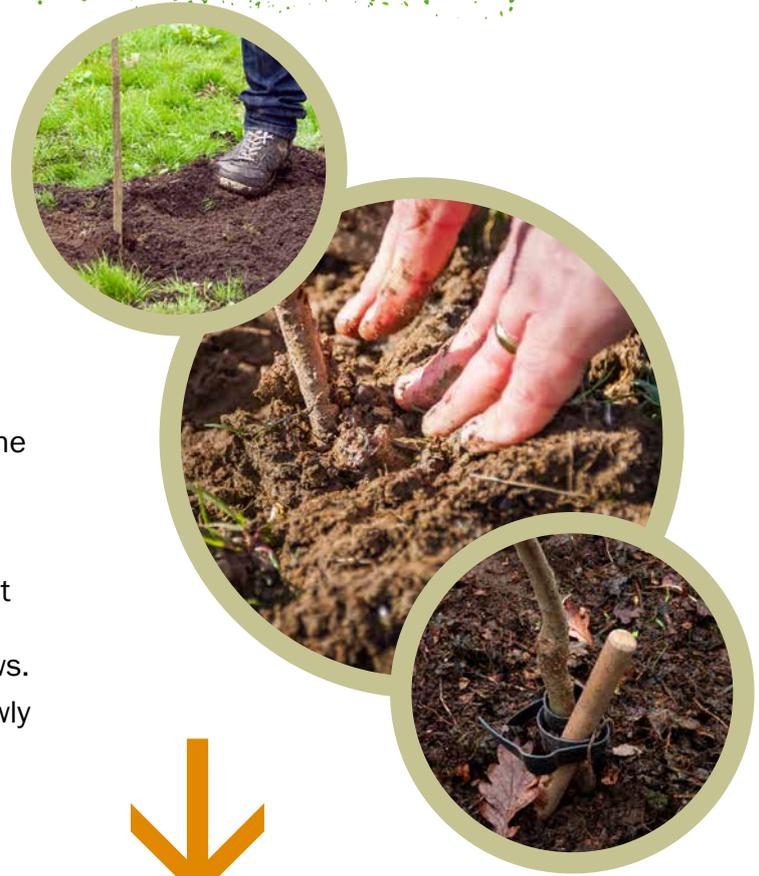
What to do

- 1 Mark out where you want to plant your trees, 2m – 5m apart depending on space, in a wavy line to make for a more natural look. If you want to make a hedge, the spacing of the trees is different:
 - plant 30cms apart for a single hedge
 - for a double thickness hedge plant in a zig-zag pattern, each row 50cms apart, 40cms-50cms between each tree
- 2 Place your stake/support in the ground before planting your tree. This will help protect your tree from wind damage and avoid damaging roots of the tree when you plant. Hammer in.
- 3 Dig a hole next to your tree support – not too wide, but deep enough to fit in all the tree's roots.



What to do continued

- 4 Put the tree in the hole making sure all the roots are below the surface.
- 5 Fill the hole back up with the soil you've dug out. Make the soil firm by pressing down with the heel of your boot, to get rid of air gaps and protect the tree.
- 6 Tug the tree gently once you have firmed the soil. If it moves, firm up until the tree stays put.
- 7 Place your tree guard (if you are using one) over the tree and attach it to the supporting stake. If your tree is big enough, you won't need to use a tree guard. Use tree Velcro instead to attach it to the tree stake close to the bottom of the tree so that it can flex in the wind and become more adapted to its conditions. Loosen the Velcro as your tree grows.
- 8 Make sure you maintain the area around your newly planted tree, keeping it weed-free and cutting any grass short with care. Also make sure the guards and stakes aren't damaging the tree.



Top tips for planting trees

It is worth knowing when is the best time to plant, and how to store your trees so you are sure of success.

When to plant your trees

- + Plant trees when they are dormant (when the leaves have fallen off) so they are less likely to get damaged.
- + In Wales, the tree planting season runs through autumn/winter between November and March.
- + You can plant trees out of season but they are less likely to survive as the ground can be too dry.

How to store your trees

- + If you are doing a large-scale planting project, your trees are likely to be supplied bare root. This means the plants will not have any soil around the roots. It is important to store bare root trees out of the wind and to keep the roots moist until you are ready to plant.
- + If you buy trees from a garden centre or similar, they are likely to come in a pot with soil around them. Keep the soil moist until you are ready to plant.

Fast fact

Although it's really important to plant new trees, dead trees are also a really important part of our forests and gardens. This is because dead wood provides food and shelter for numerous animals, plants and fungi.

Visit the Woodland Trust's website for more information and advice on planting trees

