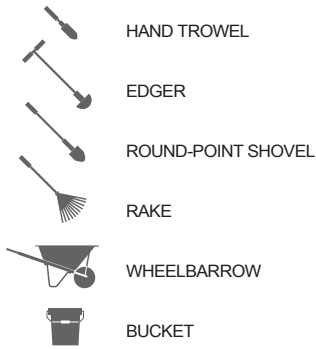


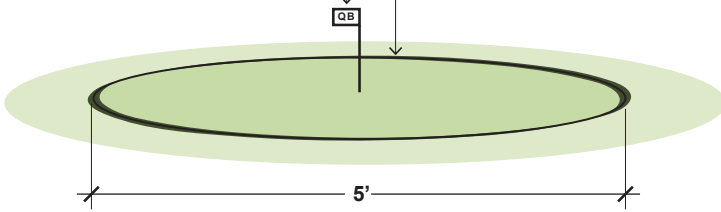
## 1 SUPPLIES & EXISTING CONDITIONS

### TOOLS



CHECK FLAG FOR TREE SPECIES CODE  
QB = *Quercus bicolor* (Swamp White Oak)

PLANTING/GRASS REMOVAL AREA  
MARKED WITH SPRAY PAINT.



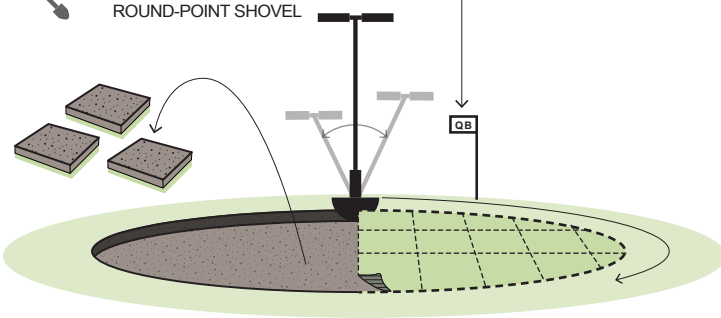
- 1 Check to make sure the planting area has necessary tools and has been properly marked out as shown above.
- 2 If a tree is not already at the planting area, refer to the species code on the flag and bring the proper tree to the planting area. Be sure to handle the tree by the container, do not carry by trunk or branches. Leave the tree in container until step 4.

## 2 PREPARING THE PLANTING AREA

### TOOLS



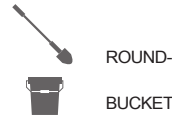
CAREFUL NOT TO LOSE  
THE TREE FLAG!



- 1 Use the edger to cut a grid pattern across the planting area to make ~1-foot squares as shown above. As you cut the grid, move edger back-and-forth and front-and-back to help loosen the sod sections.
- 2 Use the edger and/or a round-point shovel to pry beneath the sod and lift to remove the pre-cut sections. Avoid digging too deep, try to only remove the top layer of sod and leave as much soil in place as possible.
- 3 Work your way across the planting circle to remove the pre-cut sod squares. Place them outside the planting area but keep them close by, we will be re-using this material in later steps.

## 3 DIGGING THE HOLE

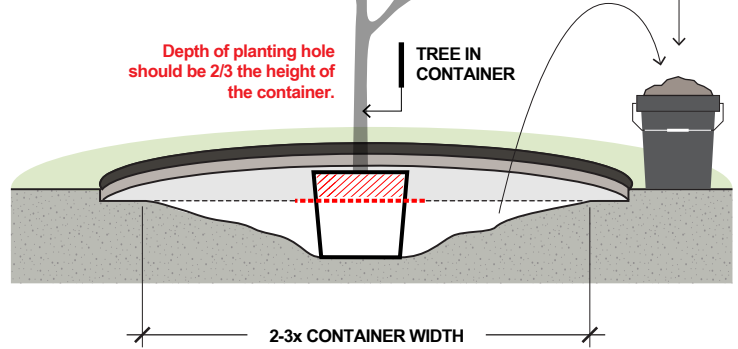
### TOOLS



PLACING EXCAVATED SOIL IN  
A BUCKET WILL MAKE IT  
EASIER TO BACKFILL LATER.

Depth of planting hole  
should be 2/3 the height of  
the container.

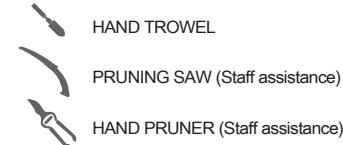
TREE IN  
CONTAINER



- 1 Using a round-point shovel, dig a shallow saucer-shaped hole (dig wide, not deep) at least twice the width of the tree container. The depth of the hole should be approximately 2/3 the height of the container.
- 2 To check for correct planting depth, temporarily place the tree (with container still on) into the hole. Be sure to handle the tree by the container, not the trunk when checking the depth of the hole.
- 3 If adjustments are required, carefully set the tree aside prior to making adjustments. If the hole is too deep, use some of the sod squares from step 2 and place them sod-side-down in the bottom of the hole. Make sure to **FIRMLY** pack down any additional soil at the bottom of the hole to prevent the tree from settling over time.

## 4 PREPARING THE TREE

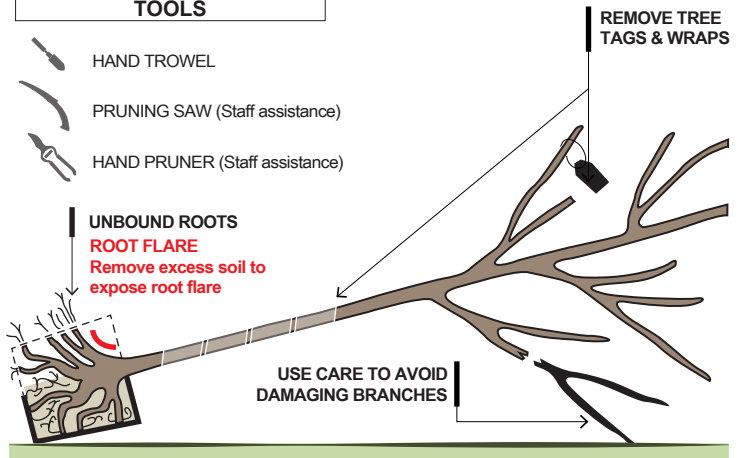
### TOOLS



REMOVE TREE  
TAGS & WRAPS

UNBOUND ROOTS  
ROOT FLARE  
Remove excess soil to  
expose root flare

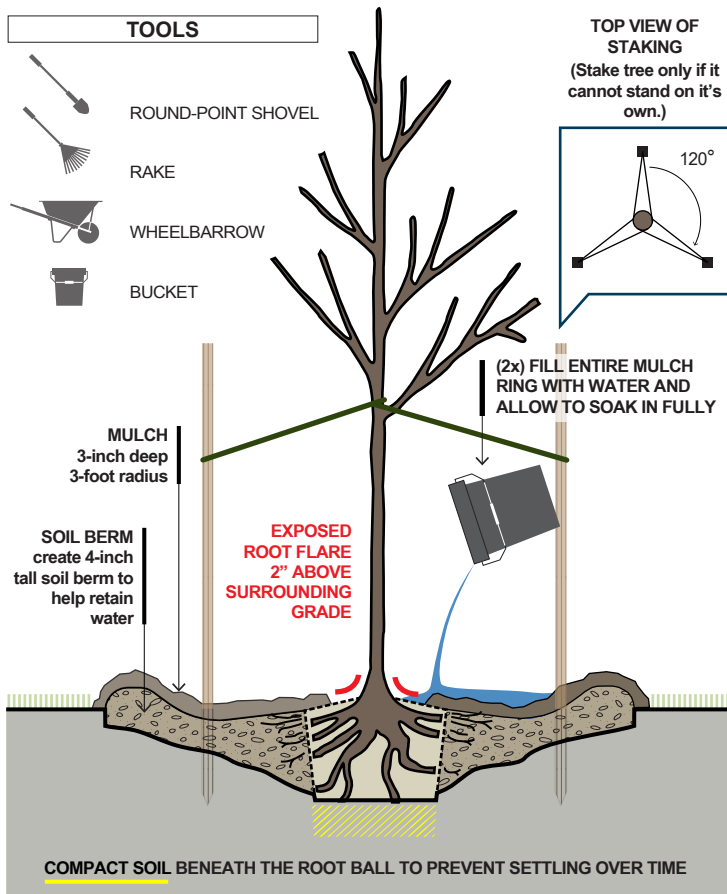
USE CARE TO AVOID  
DAMAGING BRANCHES



- 1 Carefully lay the tree on its side so as to not break branches. Hold the base of the trunk while a teammate firmly but gently pulls off the container.
- 2 **IMPORTANT STEP:** Locate and expose the top of the root flare (area where the trunk widens and the roots begin). This may require gently removing soil from the top of the root ball.
- 3 It is common for container grown trees to be "root bound". To fix this, rough-up the root ball with your hands and/or garden trowel to untangle and expose as many fibrous roots as possible. If done correctly, the root ball should look like it's having a 'bad hair day' and the outline of the container should no longer be apparent. Call a staff member over to inspect the root conditions before proceeding to the next step.

FLIP PAGE >>

## 5 | PLANTING THE TREE



- 1 Set tree in center of the hole and spread roots out evenly. Place shovel across the hole to ensure the root flare rests approximately 2" above the surrounding soil level. If more soil is needed to raise the planting height, use the sod squares from step 2 and place them in the bottom of the hole. Make sure to **FIRMLY** pack down any additional soil at the bottom of the hole to prevent the tree from settling over time.
- 2 After final adjustments have been made to the planting depth, have a planting partner hold the tree straight at the proper level and backfill with loose soil from the bucket. Use care to firmly pack soil around the roots to eliminate any air pockets. This may take a some patience as tree root systems can have many nooks and crannies. **LIGHTLY** tamp down soil after backfilling to ensure tree is supported and no air pockets remain.
- 3 After the tree has been planted, utilized any surplus soil and the sod squares from step 2 to construct a 4-inch tall berm around the outer perimeter of the planting area. Make sure to place the sod squares sod-side-down when building the small berm. This berm will improve water percolation to the roots during watering as described in step 5.
- 4 Mulch the entire planting area following the 3-3-3 rule. Mulch ring should have a 3-foot radius, be 3-inches deep, and kept 3-inches away from the trunk to keep the root flare exposed (approximately 2 full wheelbarrows).
- 5 Water thoroughly until the entire planting area is saturated (approximately 2-4 buckets of water). After watering, **GENTLY** tamp soil again with hand or foot to eliminate any remaining air pockets.
- 6 Check with a staff member to see if tree shelters or staking is required. Staff will instruct group in using approved materials and procedure for installing tree staking and/or tree shelters.
- 7 After a staff member approves the finished planting, place the small marking flag back in the ground near the tree trunk and rake up any dirt or mulch outside your planting area.



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# TREE PLANTING FIELD GUIDE

## CONTAINER TREES



[bnwaterkeeper.org/programs/restorecorps/](http://bnwaterkeeper.org/programs/restorecorps/)