



GUAM DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FORESTRY
& SOIL RESOURCES DIVISION
Hålom Tåno' yan Odda' na Guinaha Siha

Urban and Community Forestry

Guam's UCF program tackles diverse topics like tree benefits, shoreline protection, and other conservation practices.

Success lies in partnership, planning, leadership, and community involvement. By engaging in urban forestry projects, we enhance our communities and promote a deeper understanding of trees in urban settings.

Guam Department of Agriculture
Forestry and Soil Resources Division
163 Dairy Rd. Mangilao GU 96932
(671) 300-7977
doag.forestry



This publication is a product of the Guam Department of Agriculture Forestry and Soil Resources Division and the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program. USDA is an equal-opportunity provider, employer, and lender. This publication is funded by a grant from the State and Private Forestry branch of the USDA Forest Service, Region 5.

The Right Tree



The Right Place

A GUIDE TO SELECTING, PLACING
AND CARING FOR YOUR TREE

Trees are more than just beautiful additions to your yard - they play a vital role in our environment! Not only do they provide us with fresh oxygen and filter out pollutants and noise, but they also add value to your property. That's why it's important to choose the right tree for your space.

One wonderful thing about having trees on your property is the money you can save on your monthly utility bills! Studies have proven that strategically placed trees can decrease air conditioning expenses in both homes and office spaces by as much as 30%.

When planning to plant a new tree, take some time to research and choose the perfect one for your home. Consider the tree's height and shape when it's fully grown. Will it provide the desired look and benefits for your landscape? If so, then it's time to plant!

Selecting the Right Tree for the Right Place will help you get the long-term benefits, beauty and satisfaction from the trees you plant.

For best results, consult a certified arborist or forester for tree-specific recommendations for fertilizing and conditions. Generally, a slow-release fertilizer, applied at rates according to label directions during times when moisture levels are high, is the most effective.

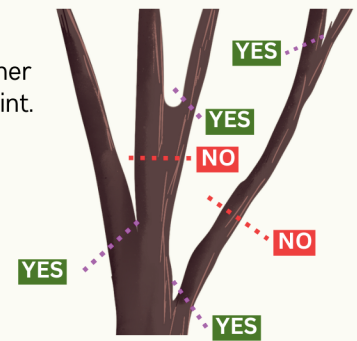
PRUNING

Pruning should be performed to remove dead, damaged, diseased and crossing limbs, to reduce crowding of branches and to eliminate hazards. Pruning can also be performed to slow growth by removing leaves, reduce wind resistance, increase light penetration, shape trees and prevent or enhance flowering and fruiting. The key to pruning is to select the correct limbs for removal and make the proper pruning cut, called "natural target pruning".

Always cut at nodes. Nodes are where branches are formed from the trunk or other branches; the connecting point.

Do not remove more than 1/3 of the foliage at any single pruning.

Always make proper cuts. Proper pruning cuts use the branch bark ridge as a guide. Start the cut next to the top and beside the bark branch ridge. The final cut should be at an opposite and equal angle to the branch bark ridge. This will remove the target limb without damaging the branch collar, which will enable the tree to effectively heal the wound and protect itself from rot and disease.



MAKE 3 CUTS TO REMOVE LARGE BRANCHES



Do not paint cuts. Wound dressings do not help the tree and can actually cause harm by inhibiting wound closure and providing a warm, moist site for decay fungus and organisms.

CARING FOR THE TREE

Mulch

Help your newly planted tree thrive by adding a layer of organic mulch around its base. You can buy mulch at a garden supply store or make your own from compost. Mulch helps keep soil moist, protects the tree from lawn tools, moderates soil temperature, and reduces weed growth. It also provides nutrients and eliminates competition from grass. Spread the mulch in a zone around the trunk that extends at least 3 feet.

For larger trees, the mulch zone should extend from the trunk to a distance of about 1 foot per inch of trunk diameter. If this is not possible, create a mulch zone as large as possible, but at least 12 feet in radius from the trunk.

Water

When it comes to watering your newly planted tree, it's important to consider factors like the size and type of the plant, air temperature, humidity, sunlight, wind, and soil type. It's best to choose a tree that is suited to the natural water levels in your area. However, during dry or hot weather, especially with sandy or clay soils, you may need to water the tree more frequently.

When watering, do it in the early morning to minimize water loss from evaporation and prevent fungal problems. Water slowly and infrequently, allowing it to soak deeply into the soil to encourage healthy root growth. Try to distribute the water evenly to as much of the root system as possible.

Fertilization

Taking care of your new tree doesn't just involve watering and mulching, it also involves fertilization. But don't overdo it! A good mulching routine can help keep your tree's nutrient levels in check, reducing the need for extra fertilization. However, in some cases, like when your soil lacks certain nutrients or your tree is under stress from construction damage, a little extra fertilizer can be beneficial.

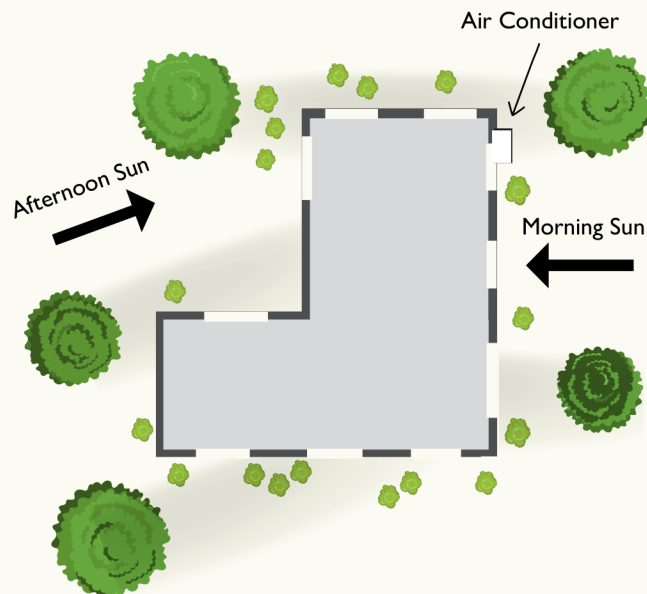
SELECTING THE RIGHT TREE

Planting a new tree is an exciting and rewarding endeavor for any homeowner, but it's important to plan ahead to ensure your investment of time and money is well spent. Choosing the right tree for your space is crucial for successful landscaping.

What will the tree look like when it's mature?

The first step is to figure out how tall and what shape your tree will be when it's fully grown. This ensures that it will fit your needs and purpose for the tree. After all, your tree should be a perfect match for your landscape!

To make selecting the right tree easier, we've put together a helpful checklist. Along with a great resource like your friendly local nursery or plant book, you'll be able to prepare a list of the best trees that meet your unique needs. Follow this guide carefully and you'll have the perfect tree for your landscape in no time!



MAKING YOUR HOME COMFORTABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT DOESN'T HAVE TO BREAK THE BANK! BY PLANTING A TREE TO SHADE YOUR AIR CONDITIONER OR STRATEGICALLY PLACING TREES TO BLOCK THE SUN, YOU CAN SAVE MONEY ON YOUR UTILITY BILLS WHILE ADDING SOME CURB APPEAL TO YOUR HOME. SHRUBS CAN ALSO HELP REDUCE THE TEMPERATURE OF YOUR SOIL AND WALLS. JUST BE SURE TO PRUNE ANY SHRUBS NEAR WINDOWS TO LET THE BREEZE IN.

THE CHECKLIST

1. What do you want the tree to do? Can select one or more

- Shade?
- Focal point of your landscape?
- Wind screen?
- Grow fast?
- Visual screen?
- Grow slow?
- Accent?
- Grow tall?
- Colorful fruit?
- Stay small?
- Flowers?
- Other? _____

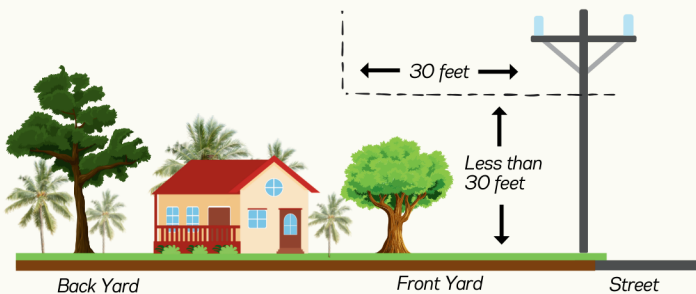
2. How much space does the tree have to grow? Are there any obstacles overhead, to the side or at ground level?

- Overhead power lines?

If you are planting near power distribution lines that run through residential areas, the most important thing to remember is the 30-FOOT RULE: Trees and plants within 30 feet power lines should not be higher than 30 feet tall when fully grown. Consult your nursery or landscape professional for trees whose mature height does not exceed 30 feet.

- Buildings?

Don't plant trees that can grow large enough to contact buildings or blocks signs. Trees that grow over roofs and rain gutters can create maintenance problems and damage buildings.



SELECT TREES AND PLANTS WITHIN 30 FEET OF POWER LINES THAT GROW TO LESS THAN 30 FEET. YOU DON'T WANT YOUR SHADE TREES TO INTERFERE WITH SAFE, RELIABLE ELECTRICAL SERVICE.



Setting the Tree

When it comes to setting your new tree in its hole, a little care goes a long way. You want to make sure that you handle the tree with care to avoid damaging the tiny, fibrous root system and stem. So, be sure to handle the tree by the root ball, not by grabbing the trunk or branches.

Once the tree is in the hole, take a moment to check the height of the root ball to make sure it's not too low. And, here's a tip: be sure to remove all tags from the tree to prevent them from girdling the tree down the line. With a little love and attention, your new tree will be thriving in no time!

Backfilling the Hole

When it comes to backfilling the hole for your new tree, we recommend using the soil on the site rather than adding any amendments. Research has shown that soil amendments don't really help with tree establishment and growth. Plus, it's important not to fertilize the tree until at least one growing season after planting.

As you backfill the hole, make sure to work with the soil around the ball and firmly pack it in to avoid any air pockets. But don't pack it too tightly - that's really important! As you go, be sure to water thoroughly to help eliminate any air pockets that may be present. And remember, the top of the root ball should be slightly above the final filled grade to avoid planting the tree too deep.

If you want to retain water around the perimeter of the hole, you may find it helpful to create a small berm. Just keep in mind that if the soil is really dense, it's a good idea to leave some breaks in the berm so that excess water can drain away. With a little care and attention, your new tree will be off to a great start in its new home!

Staking

Only stake the tree if absolutely necessary to protect it from danger. If you do need to stake, use soft and flexible materials like rubber inner tube strips that won't damage the tree. If wire is used, cushion it with rubber hose to protect the bark.

Attach the supports high enough to prevent bending and allow for flexibility to encourage root development. Check regularly to make sure the supports aren't damaging the tree, and remove them after one growing season.

Property boundaries?

It's important to be a good neighbor, even when it comes to planting trees. You want to make sure your beautiful new tree doesn't cause any damage to your neighbors' properties. So, when choosing a location to plant your tree, be sure to consider the potential for the tree's roots to invade and cause damage. With a little care and attention, you can keep your tree thriving and your relationships with your neighbors strong!

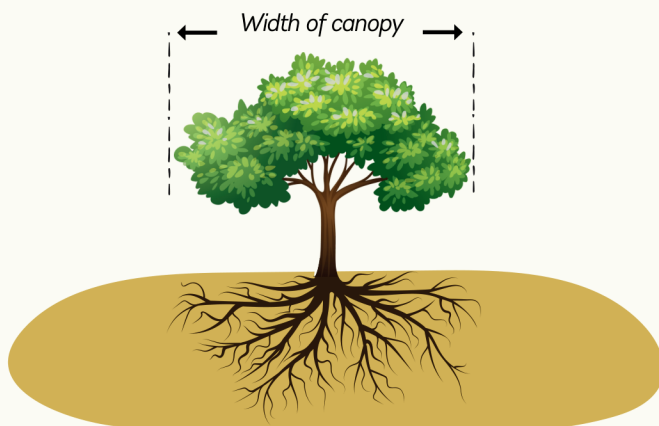
Others?

Before you start planting, it's important to identify any obstacles that may get in the way of your tree's growth or become a safety hazard. Make sure to give your tree enough space to grow, and avoid planting near anything that may be damaged by its roots or branches. Remember that roots can extend 2 - 3 times beyond the canopy, so be sure to plan accordingly.

3. How are the planting conditions at the site?

Sunlight

- ✱ Direct all day?
- ✱ Filtered through overhead obstacles?
- ✱ Shade?



ROOTS CAN EXTEND 2 - 3 TIMES BEYOND THE CANOPY, ALTHOUGH, WITH MOST TREES, THE MAJOR POTENTIALLY DAMAGING ROOTS ARE GENERALLY FOUND WITHIN THE AREA UNDER THE CANOPY.

Natural water:

- ✱ Dry?
- ✱ Wet?
- ✱ Moderate?

Soil:

- ✱ Heavy clay?
- ✱ Sand?
- ✱ Nice topsoil?

How thick is the soil?

Make sure there is enough soil to support the tree's root system. Most of the tree's roots are confined to the top two feet of the soil layer.

Salt air?

If near the ocean, are the trees salt tolerant?

Are strong winds common?

If the site is windy, are the trees sensitive to or damaged by strong winds?

4. Will the tree grow well in your neighborhood?

Making sure the tree will thrive in your neighborhood is easy - just look around and see what kinds of trees are already flourishing nearby. You can also get expert advice from certified arborists, tree workers or urban foresters who specialize in your local climate and soil.

5. How much maintenance does the tree require?

Low maintenance?

Debris?

Does the tree drop lots of leaves and/or fruit? If cleanup is a concern, avoid planting trees that are deciduous or messy.

HOW TO PLANT A TREE

Digging the Hole

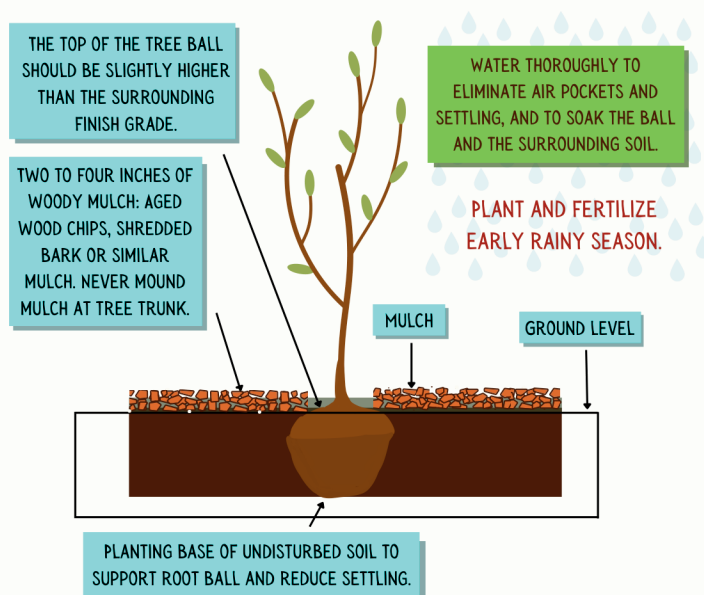
When it comes to digging the hole, there are a few things to keep in mind. You'll want to make the hole as large as possible, but at the very least, it should be twice the width of the root ball. If the soil is particularly dense or hard, aim for a hole that's 3 to 5 times the width of the root ball.

But be careful not to dig too deep! The hole should be shallow enough so that the top of the root ball sits 1 to 2 inches above the final grade. And here's a tip: avoid filling the bottom of the hole with soft soil or gravel to prop up the tree.

Removing the Tree from the Container

It's an exciting moment when you're ready to take your new tree out of its container and watch it grow into a beautiful addition to your yard. But, take it from us, it's important to be patient and take your time when removing the tree from its container.

Carefully remove the tree from its container, ensuring healthy root connections to the soil. Slice the root mass vertically in 3 to 4 places with a sharp knife to encourage root growth. Avoid roots growing across or around the ball, which can hinder tree support and lead to damage.



Underground Utilities?

To ensure safety and prevent potential damage to underground utilities, it's crucial to identify their location before planting any trees. This includes cable, sewer, and power lines. Avoid planting trees with invasive roots near underground utilities to prevent damage to the facilities.

Pools?

If trees will be near a pool, select trees that do not drop leaves that will fall or blow into the pool.

Other Plants?

Ensure that large trees will not grow over and shade out smaller trees, shrubs and groundcovers.

Views?

Check that your new tree won't eventually block a favorite view or scenery that you love.

Driveways/roadways/sidewalks?

Choose trees with a tall, clear trunk or ones that can be pruned safely to avoid blocking pathways.

Walls?

Avoid planting large trees near walls to prevent root damage.



USING TREES FOR SHADING IS A GREAT WAY TO COOL YOUR HOME ON HOT DAYS, AND IT'S MORE EFFECTIVE THAN OTHER METHODS LIKE BLINDS OR REFLECTIVE SURFACES. BY SHADING YOUR WALLS AND WINDOWS, YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR AIR CONDITIONING ENERGY COSTS BY AT LEAST 30 PERCENT.

