



LIVE PLANTS

CARE INSTRUCTIONS- please read carefully

It is vital that the contents of this parcel be attended to immediately

- **Open box and remove plants**
- **Place in light airy position and water if dry**
- **Check off plants against the invoice**
- **If you have concerns about the quality of any plant, please read this brochure thoroughly, as these instructions will cover most issues.**

These plants have been in the parcel for a number of days and have been denied light and water. Some plants (*herbaceous perennials*) have perennial roots and annual stems that go dormant. If you are uncertain check the plant label. Herbaceous perennials are likely to look brown or completely leafless during winter but will regenerate new stems in spring so don't worry. While others, (evergreens such as lavender or rosemary), will hold their foliage and new leaves will appear along live stems as plants establish. (Sub-tropicals like *Solanum wendlandii* don't resprout until soil temperatures reach 20°C in late spring.)



All plants leave our nursery in excellent health, carefully packed to arrive in good condition. All have passed a 14 day packing test. Should you lose any plants we will replace them, as soon as practically possible.
(We cannot guarantee plants that have remained in unopened parcels for more than 14 days after posting.)

How to grow healthy plants

Planting instructions

Keep tender plants protected from frost until planting.

Soil preparation is the key to successful planting; dig to at least a spade depth, breaking up clods, incorporating well-rotted animal manure or blood and bone. It is best to establish your new plants away from more mature plants, to avoid competition for light, nutrients, and water.

When planting, tap the top of the pot upside down until the plant loosens. Don't ever pull the plant by the stem. Tease plant roots gently (except poppies, Romneya and echiums which don't like root disturbance), and plant to the original soil depth, watering in well. Adding water crystals to the hole before planting also helps to retain moisture.

Mulching after planting will prevent weed growth, and produce a more vigorous plant. *Healthy plants, like people, have better immunity to pest and diseases.*

Placement of plants

Plant labels provide an estimated mature height and width under ideal growing conditions. Labels will also provide suggested light requirements. Digger's catalogues contain further details on best climatic conditions, water requirements, and flowering times.

Frequently asked questions:

My plant looks dead, will it survive?

We get many phone calls during winter when people receive their plants to say that it 'died' in the post. We take special care to ensure that all the plants we post will survive the trip. We post them during winter when plant growth is the slowest. Many perennials die down in winter to survive the coolest winter climates, but will thrive in spring.

On the right is an example of the growth habit of a dormant perennial. If the pot looks empty you can check the roots underneath and you will see that they are healthy and white, awaiting a burst of spring to get them growing again.



Dormant in winter

DORMANT PLANTS

Following is a list of plants which are dormant in winter and may have no leaves or stems, but will reshoot from the roots in spring:

Achillea, Agastache, Anemone, Artichoke, Asparagus, Blood Grass, Columbines, Coneflower, Dahlia (tuberous), Delphinium, Eryngium, French Tarragon, Galtonia, Gunnera, Helleborus hybrids, Licorice, Liliium, Marjoram, Penstemon, Perovskia(Russian Sage), Physostegia, Poppy(Blue Himalayan & orientale), Primula, Rhubarb, Russell Lupin, Salvia, Scabiosa, Sedum, Trachelium, Tulbaghia, Valerian, Wormwood Valerie Finnis, Yacon, and other bulbs and fruit trees.

General Notes on Planting Trees grown in large fruit tree pots.

The roots of these trees are ready to go direct into the soil or a pot. In order to thoroughly wet the potting mix, place the whole pot (containing the tree's root system) into a bucket of water for 10 minutes before placing in planting hole. Turn plant upside-down and tap pot off. Place plant into hole and backfill the hole so that the top of the potting mix is level with the soil surface. Once firmed down, give the plant a water so that the soil around the roots is moist. A mounded ring of soil around the plant will hold applied water around the tree and allow better penetration to the roots.

Citrus

Avoid planting young citrus trees into cold soil! This means gardeners in the south of Australia may have to look after the trees in its pot for a couple of months before planting. If so, place it where it gets ample sunlight, stays moist and the pot can drain freely. Once the soil has warmed a little in late spring, dig a hole that is twice the width of the container it comes in, and half as deep again. Mix some well-rotted manure and compost into the soil in the hole and plant as per the notes for large fruit tree pots above. In exposed situations, wind protection will improve establishment. As the tree grows, remove any growth from beneath the bud-union if it occurs (this will stop occurring once the top gets moving well).

Grafted deciduous trees (Apples, Pears, Plums,



Remove plant from pot



Hole no deeper than pot

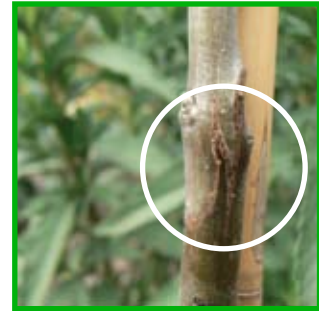


Water in, note soil 'dam'

Peaches, Almond etc.)

Follow the notes for planting fruit tree pots. Avoid planting on very hot days to reduce planting shock.

You will notice that these trees have been grafted where the top section is knitted to a rootstock. With apples, pears, quinces and medlars this graft will usually be a grafted piece that is securely attached to the bottom stick. With stone fruits (including plums, peaches, apricots and nectarines) the top will be a newly grown bud. Be careful not to knock or pull apart these unions as young trees are still solidifying these grafts for a few years. Any growth beneath the union should be stripped off to force the plant to grow the top bit with the variety you want on it, you may need to do this a couple of times through their first growing season.



Look for the graft

Once your tree is planted, keep the soil moist to allow for maximum growth so it can get established quickly (mulching will help keep the soil moist), occasional liquid feeding will help here. Staking is not necessary as the young plants are not large enough to be blown about by the wind. If planting in an exposed situation, erect a guard to buffer the wind.

If you are espalier or fan training, you will find a concise description of the technique at:

<http://diggers.com.au/articleMiniPlotFruitEspalier.shtml>

Avocado

In order to guarantee good establishment it is important to give young avocado trees some extra care in their first couple of seasons. Prepare the ground and plant as per the notes for fruit tree pots. In areas where night temperatures fall to near zero in the cooler months, you will need to plant your avocado in a warm spot (say near a north-facing wall where daytime heat is trapped) and put some shade cloth or plastic barrier around the newly planted tree to protect it from the cold until it is well established. Avocados also resent hot winds so this protection can double as wind protection in the summer. After the second growing season, the tree should have established enough to withstand the cooler night temperatures.

Still worried?

If you have checked that your plant is not a dormant perennial which is on the list over the page or on our website, and you have watered it and it still looks unwell, contact us and one of our staff will assist you. If by spring your plant is not growing as it should, we will happily replace it.

The Diggers Club

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