

Our City Forest

guide to

Deep Root Watering



Before Planting

Completely saturate the rootball each day. It is also best to keep the tree in the shade.



Immediately After Planting

Completely saturate the rootball with **10-15 gallons of water immediately after planting**. Waiting even one hour can make a difference in your tree's survival.



Every 3-4 Days For The First Year

To encourage roots to grow deep into the soil, completely saturate the rootball with **5 gallons every 3-4 days**, or a total of 10 to 15 gallons weekly, at a slow flow rate over a long period of time. If possible, irrigate in the evening or early morning. It is important to be diligent about regular watering, especially in the first year.



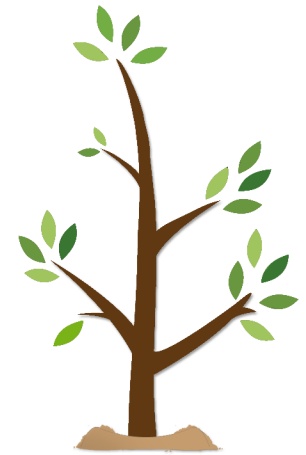
2nd Year

Gradually reduce the frequency of watering during the second year to a weekly basis. Begin in late spring and continue through early winter as needed.



3rd Year

By the third year, deep watering every other week should suffice, but remember to check your tree often. Watering during the rainy season may not be necessary. Remove the soil berm that forms the watering basin. Do not pile soil/mulch up against the tree trunk or change the grade of the soil under the canopy.



4th & 5th Years

Most established trees will benefit from periodic but infrequent deep watering, particularly during the dry season. Irrigate the soil under the tree canopy. Many trees thrive with 2 or 3 deep soakings during the summer of the fourth or fifth year. Monitor your tree carefully!

Check the Rootball Before You Water.

To determine if your tree is ready for its next watering, check the soil moisture of the rootball with your finger about 4 inches down. If the soil is still wet, wait a day or 2 and check the soil moisture again. If the soil is dry, it's time to water. If the soil is very dry, check the soil moisture sooner next time.



Notes & Instructions



Overwatering. It is important that the rootball dries out between watering so that it is not constantly moist. Too much water can suffocate the roots and kill the tree.

Watering basin. Ensure that the watering basin around the trunk of the tree holds water. If water drains out of the basin, the tree's roots are not getting watered. Keep the soil inside the watering basin free of grass, weeds, rocks, and other plants.

Each site is unique. It may be necessary to make adjustments in the frequency and duration of watering depending on soil type, drainage, weather, and tree species.



How long should the hose be on a slow trickle?

To find out how long it takes your hose to output 5 gallons, turn your hose on to a slow trickle and time how long it takes to fill up a 5-gallon bucket. Then, when you're ready to water your tree, set the end of the hose by the base of the trunk right on top of the rootball and turn on the hose to that same slow flow rate for the same amount of time.



Wet Season (winter & rainy months)

Less water is needed during rainy months. Continue to check the soil moisture of the rootball every 3-4 days before watering. If the soil is still wet, wait 1-2 days and check the soil moisture again. If the soil is dry, your tree needs water.



Dry Season (summer & warmer months)

You will likely need to water more frequently during warmer months. Check the soil moisture of the rootball more frequently, every 2-3 days before watering. If the soil is still wet, wait 1-2 days and check the soil moisture again. If the soil is dry, your tree needs water. If the soil is very dry, check the soil moisture sooner next time.

DEEP ROOT WATERING	VS	SPRINKLER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ infrequent (every 3-4 days)▶ slow trickle▶ long duration▶ saturates entire rootball		<ul style="list-style-type: none">◀ frequent (multiple times a day)◀ large volume of spray◀ short duration◀ water top of rootball

WINNER!

Water percolates down and encourages the roots to grow strong and deep.	Roots remain shallow on the surface. Can cause sidewalk damage.
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OCF highly discourages the use of sprinklers as the main source of water for your tree. Young trees need deep root watering to develop healthy roots.

CAUTION: Certain mature trees can suffer from regular irrigation. Minimize irrigation for the following trees once established in the landscape:

- CA native oaks (*Quercus* spp.)
- Chinese Pistache (*Pistachia chinensis*)
- Marina Madrone (*Arbutus 'Marina'*)
- Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstromia x fauriei*)



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