



## PLANT ESTABLISHMENT

---

A bit of help to get the best from your plants.

In most instances trees and shrubs will establish well after planting provided that they are suitably watered. The main factors that will impair establishment or even cause plants to fail, are improper location, poor root health, weather and unfavorable soil conditions. The first two seasons after planting are the most critical to the establishment of all plants.

The plants we supply are of the highest possible quality. If you experience any difficulties with your plant establishment please contact us immediately. We are always happy to help and give advice but please note that failure to notify us may invalidate our plant guarantee (see full details overleaf).

### Watering is the key to success

After initial heavy watering at the time of planting, the soil around the newly installed plant should be kept moist (but not overly wet). In the winter months where the soil is naturally moist and cool, deciduous plants become dormant and won't need to be watered. Evergreens however will continue to take up water and it is essential that these receive sufficient water.

Frozen soil prevents the uptake of moisture so deep mulching around the plant(s) can be vital (especially with root-balled plants (see last page)).

When planting in the spring and summer it is critical that the soil around establishing plants does not dry out.

In hot weather this could mean as much as watering twice a day for larger plants (for the first month or so). Drip irrigation will be a massive time saver but additional watering may also be needed during the establishment phase.

As a general rule always water the soil rather than the foliage of the plant. This is best done in the early morning or evening when it is cooler and the sun is not as strong.

**Tel** 0118 9341500  
**Fax** 0118 9346768  
**Email** [info@creative-landscape.co.uk](mailto:info@creative-landscape.co.uk)



ISO 9001  
ISO 14001

Creative Landscape Co Ltd, the Big Plant Nursery, Wargrave Rd, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9PN.  
Registered No 06346163 Vat No 491 7674 05 [www.creative-landscape.co.uk](http://www.creative-landscape.co.uk)



## Typical problems

After initial signs of growth, plants that are struggling to establish will often see their foliage begin to deteriorate. This is most prominent in early summer, with leaves wilting, turning yellow or brown, shriveling and falling. It can take place over several months or sometimes happen quite quickly.

If dealt with early this will only be a temporary setback and is rarely fatal. It should not be confused with evergreen plants that grow new leaves and shed the old ones around the same time. For more detailed guidance please see below.

## Insufficient water

- 1. Insufficient watering in the first two years after planting is the main cause of poor establishment.**  
Nearby trees, shrubs and hedges can cast a rain shadow with thirsty, wide-ranging roots, leading to greater watering requirements than expected.  
Remedy: Check moisture levels around roots with a trowel. Watering to soak the root zone requires at least the equivalent of four watering cans per square meter.
- 2. Weeds, lawns and other vegetation intercept water before it reaches the roots.**  
Remedy: Ideally keep a circle at least 1m in diameter around the plant that is vegetation free for three years after planting, using hoeing, weed killers or a thick mulch of fine composted bark.
- 3. In hot, dry weather, plants lose moisture very quickly.**  
Remedy: Cover the bare area around the base of the plant with a mulch of fine composted bark to help keep the soil cool, retain moisture and suppress weeds. This will also help to improve the soil structure over time.

## Excessive water

- 1. Poorly drained or waterlogged soil will kill many plants and trees.**  
Remedy: Improve drainage where possible by aerating the soil around the plant or tree with a fork or try planting on a slightly raised mound and improving soil structure.
- 2. Overwatering is as detrimental to tree establishment as under watering.**  
Remedy: After the initial watering in, check soil moisture frequently (once or twice a week) but only water again when the soil is starting to dry. If you are unsure a soil moisture meter can be used. Less water is needed in still, dull weather conditions than in hot, windy ones.

## Poor root systems

- 1. Damage - Frosting, water logging or desiccation of the roots reduces the chances of success.**  
Remedy: Keep newly purchased plants in a cool, but frost-free place, with their roots covered, until you can plant them.
- 2. Poor container grown trees and shrubs can lead to congested, curled roots** which may fail to grow out into the surrounding soil.  
Remedy: Try to avoid buying pot-bound plants, which are recognisable by congested roots when tipped out of the pot. If there are signs of root curling they can be teased out at the point of planting to encourage the roots to spread out.

Tel 0118 9341500  
Fax 0118 9346768  
Email [info@creative-landscape.co.uk](mailto:info@creative-landscape.co.uk)



ISO 9001  
ISO 14001



Creative Landscape Co Ltd, the Big Plant Nursery, Wargrave Rd, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9PN.  
Registered No 06346163 Vat No 491 7674 05 [www.creative-landscape.co.uk](http://www.creative-landscape.co.uk)

## Deep planting

1. **Positioning the plant too deep in the soil can lead to stem rotting and failure.**

**Remedy:** Scrape away surplus mulch and/or soil from the base of the trunk. In severe cases of deep planting, the tree may need to be lifted in the autumn and repositioned higher in the soil. When replanting, ensure the first flare of roots sits just below the soil surface, avoiding burying any of the bare stem. Keep mulches clear from the immediate base of all trees and shrubs – apply these from the edge of the root-ball outwards.

## Compacted soil

1. **Roots fail to grow outwards into the surrounding soil if the soil is compacted.**

**Remedy:** Most new root development is out laterally into the surface layers of soil rather than straight down. It is therefore important that the soil in this zone is sufficiently loose and aerated with a fork to encourage root development. When preparing the planting pit dig the hole twice as wide as the root-ball.

## Wind rock

1. **Wind rock of unsecured trees and shrubs can damage roots** and lead to water collecting in the 'socket' caused by the stem moving at soil level. This can lead to fatal rotting or the roots never establishing in the surrounding soil.

**Remedy:** Staking avoids this, but stakes should be no taller than one-third of the stem height and must be secure. Avoid excessively tight tree ties when securing stems to stakes, prevent rubbing of stems against stakes and ties, and remember to progressively slacken the ties as the stems grow. Windbreaks may be required in very exposed sites.

## Plant nutrition

1. Although a lack of nutrients is seldom involved in establishment problems, it is worth applying a nutrient or fertiliser to the leaves (foliar feeding) in order to get some nutrients into the plant, even if roots are not fully functional. Fertiliser top dressings in late winter or early spring are also worth trying where other factors are clearly not to blame for poor growth. It is important that you do not over fertilise however as this can lead to problems for plants with under-developed root systems.

## Larger specimens

Although larger sized specimen trees and shrubs can be perfect for making instant impact or screening, the root system is invariably undersized compared to the amount of top growth. They will require greater aftercare than smaller plants, especially with attention to watering. With proper aftercare however there is no reason why these should not establish any less successfully than smaller specimens.

Expect it to take two or even three seasons for large specimen trees and shrubs to be fully established.

Tel 0118 9341500  
Fax 0118 9346768  
Email [info@creative-landscape.co.uk](mailto:info@creative-landscape.co.uk)



ISO 9001  
ISO 14001

Creative Landscape Co Ltd, the Big Plant Nursery, Wargrave Rd, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9PN.  
Registered No 06346163 Vat No 491 7674 05 [www.creative-landscape.co.uk](http://www.creative-landscape.co.uk)



## Establishing root-ball plants

As the name suggests these are plants that are supplied in a 'root-ball' rather than a container.

These are often hedging plants, trees and larger specimens.

Root-ball plants are generally much more economical than container plants as they are lifted from the ground to order rather than grown in a container.

These plants need particular care to help them establish a new root system in their new location.

Root-ball plants are normally only available for planting in the winter months between November and March.

Aftercare is much the same as described previously however take care to follow these few additional points when planting root-ball plants:

## Protect your plants from frost

If you are unable to plant your new root-balled plants immediately just keep them in a sheltered location with their roots protected from the worst of the winter weather. Use some hessian or an old blanket until you get a chance to plant them.

## Water is still key

If you are planting in the spring (late February/March), then it is important that the root balls are watered most days (for the first month) - twice a day for larger plants on warmer days. This will help the plant establish a root system whilst the ground is warming up.

## Pruning

It is common in the first few seasons after planting for root ball plants to suffer minor 'die back'. This is due to damage to the root system when the plants were lifted from the ground. This is often seen on the growing tips of the plant and should be pruned out to promote new growth in spring.

With hedge plants pruning the leading stem or branches at the top of the plant will encourage new growth lower down and as a result increase the density.

**Tel** 0118 9341500  
**Fax** 0118 9346768  
**Email** [info@creative-landscape.co.uk](mailto:info@creative-landscape.co.uk)



ISO 9001  
ISO 14001



Creative Landscape Co Ltd, the Big Plant Nursery, Wargrave Rd, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9PN.  
Registered No 06346163 Vat No 491 7674 05 [www.creative-landscape.co.uk](http://www.creative-landscape.co.uk)

# Guarantee- Plants and planting



## 1. General

- 1.1 In these conditions of sale:
  - (a) The company means Creative Landscape Company Ltd.
  - (b) The nursery means The Big Plant Nursery
  - (c) The customer means any person contracting with the company for the supply of products or services.
  - (d) These conditions may only be modified by a variation in writing signed on behalf of the company by a Director.
  - (e) Making a purchase will be taken as agreement to these conditions of sale.

## 2. Hardy Plant Guarantee

- 2.1 All hardy plants purchased (excluding sale goods) are guaranteed for the first three months from purchase against failure due to unidentifiable causes subject to:
  - (a) The company being advised at the first sign of any problems and as a result inspecting the plant if necessary.
  - (b) Plants and Trees must be suitably sited, planted, staked and irrigated in order to be covered by the guarantee.
- 2.2 In the case of unidentifiable failure, we will replace the plant free of charge, or refund the purchase price, on evidence of the original purchase (receipt) being provided.

3. **Our commitment-** We guarantee that all our stock is healthy and ready for planting at the time of supply. All information and advice provided is provided at no cost and to the best of our knowledge with the understanding that no site visit has been made.

## 4. Supply of Products

- 4.1 All products are sold on the understanding of the following:
  - (a) No warranty is given or implied by law as to the quality or suitability of products supplied by the company, except as stated in writing by the company.
  - (b) The customer fully understands that plants are a living material and therefore an ever changing product.
  - (c) The customer fully understands that plants are a perishable product and will deteriorate in quality if not provided with the appropriated aftercare.
  - (d) The customer will provide adequate levels of water from the point of delivery and/or planting as to maintain the quality of the plant(s) and promote healthy growth and establishment in line with guidance provided.

## 5. Refund and Exchange Policy

- 5.1. An exchange or credit note will be given to any customer if they change their mind for plants that have not left the Nursery premises within 7 days of purchase.
- 5.2. We are unable to exchange plants that have been removed from the Nursery premises.
- 5.3. The customer agrees that the quality of the plant is satisfactory at the point of purchase.
- 5.4. All sale items are sold 'as is' and there is no warranty implied. This includes sale items planted by us.

## 6. Delivery

- 6.1. Delivery is normally within 1-2 weeks.
- 6.2. Standard delivery is within a 20 mile radius of the nursery.
- 6.3. The customer understands that the Nursery can only guarantee delivery to the front of the property. Any other delivery location should be requested in advance and may incur additional cost.
- 6.4. If a customer wishes for any vehicle to leave the public highway and enter their property or premises of delivery then the customer accepts liability for any damages caused to the property, vehicle or other.
- 6.5. If the company cannot gain access to the delivery address at the pre-arranged delivery time then additional costs may be incurred and shall ultimately fall to the customer.
- 6.6. If there are any access problems it is the customer's responsibility to inform the nursery of this no later than 2.00pm the day prior to delivery.
- 6.7. It is essential that the customer, or somebody appointed by the customer, be at the delivery point to accept the delivery, check the goods and sign for the delivery. If there is no one to receive the delivery no liability for any loss or damage to the products following delivery will fall to the company.

## 7. Planting

- 7.1. We offer an establishment guarantee of 3 months on all stock we have supplied and planted. Deciduous items planted outside the growing season (from September through to March) have an extended guarantee to the end of the May.
- 7.2. Our guarantee policy:
  - (a) The above establishment guarantee is subject to certain conditions described below. In the rare occurrence of plant failure we will do our utmost to replace the plant with one of the same specification. Where exact replacements are not available an alternative choice will be offered. We will remove the original plant and replant the new one in its place at no extra charge.
  - (b) All trees must be secured using a stake and tie at the time of planting.
  - (c) This warranty does not cover malicious damage, vandalism and/or failure by the client, his employees/staff or subcontractors to provide adequate water to the plant(s) during the course of the warranty period. Acts of God such as storm, excessive wind, flooding, drought, earthquake and the like are not covered by the warranty.
  - (d) For plants that are selected by the customer or the customer's agent that are unsuitable for the soil, location or conditions in which they are planted, this guarantee does not apply. We will always try to advise as accurately as possible however all advice given is given to the best of our knowledge and without a site visit.
  - (e) Damage by pests and diseases is not covered.
  - (f) At no time will The Company be responsible for more than the value of the original plant(s) and delivery.
  - (g) All sale items are sold without this guarantee. This includes sale items planted by us.
- 7.3. We will do our best to plant where the customer instructs us to however if planting is attempted and deemed not possible due to, including but not limited to, underground obstructions, inappropriate planting conditions or roots, we will discuss this with the customer. Should we be unable to make contact then the customer will become liable for any re-delivery and/or re-planting charges.

## 8. Collections

- 8.1. At the Company's discretion Items may be purchased and collected at a later time.
- 8.2. All items left at the nursery are to be collected within three weeks of purchase unless otherwise agreed in advance.
- 8.3. The customer fully understands that the product may change in quality and condition in the period between purchase and collection and fully accepts any change.
- 8.4. Any items left for a period longer than six weeks from date of purchase will be returned to stock and a credit note issued for the full purchase value of the plants.

## 9. Contact Details

The Company can be contacted by email at [info@thebigplantnursery.com](mailto:info@thebigplantnursery.com) or [info@creative-landscape.co.uk](mailto:info@creative-landscape.co.uk) or by post to "The Big Plant Nursery" Wargrave Road, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9PN or by telephone on 0118 934 1757.

Tel 0118 9341500  
Fax 0118 9346768  
Email [info@creative-landscape.co.uk](mailto:info@creative-landscape.co.uk)



ISO 9001  
ISO14001

Creative Landscape Co Ltd, the Big Plant Nursery, Wargrave Rd, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9PN.  
Registered No 06346163 Vat No 491 7674 05 [www.creative-landscape.co.uk](http://www.creative-landscape.co.uk)

