

MAGNOLIA CARE & PLANTING INFORMATION

Location: The best locations for Magnolias are full sun to partial shade. Protection from direct winter wind exposure is essential, due to its extreme drying effects. Avoid planting your magnolia in a site with southern exposure, due to extreme fluctuations in spring temperatures. In a southern site, early warm spring weather causes flower buds to open prematurely, only to be taken by surprise when cooler weather returns. Areas of southern exposure can also cause leaf burn during the growing season. If you do choose to plant in such a site, be sure there is adequate protection from these elements.

Soil Preparation: Good drainage is a must as magnolias have a shallow, fleshy root system. Amending existing soil is very important. We recommend incorporating a mixture of 1/3 sphagnum peat moss with a prepared top soil to 2/3rd's existing soil to use as backfill.

Planting: Before planting thoroughly soak the rootball and let it drain. Next, mix a solution of Fertilome Root Stimulator & water according to the directions on the label. Read the entire label thoroughly. Use this mixture when transplanting only. Dig the hole tree times as wide as the rootball. The depth of the hole should leave the rootball 2" higher than the surrounding grade.

With **Balled & burlapped** plants: remove and dispose of any plastic twine after the plant is in the hole. Next, pull back burlap to expose the top half of the rootball only. Be extra careful not to damage the rootball at this stage. If the plant is in a **plastic container**: lay it on it's side, hold the trunk or branches firmly at the base, gently slide the container away from the rootball and then set the plant in the hole. Never leave the root system exposed directly in the sun longer than it takes to backfill the hole.

Fill the hole halfway with the amended soil mixture. Avoid heavy tamping. Water thoroughly with the root stimulator/water mixture. Finish backfilling with the amended soil. Water with remaining root stimulator mixture to settle soil. Once this is done add a layer of mulch around the entire planted area to a depth of 3-4". This will help protect the roots, keep the weed population down, and retain more moisture.

Watering: After planting, the amount of water the plant receives during the first couple of seasons is very important. Water only when necessary. Over time, slowly decrease the frequency of watering while increasing the amount. Keep in mind, Magnolias will maintain a shallow root system. Before watering, test the soil moisture by gently probing several inches into the original rootball. Moist soil will feel cool and some will stick to your fingers and when squeezed will hold together like a ball. Avoid letting soil get 'cactus' dry.

Pruning: Pruning is rarely necessary. Remove any branches or stems that are damaged or dead by cutting them all the way back to a main branch or to the trunk. You may also prune to maintain shape, or to create a small tree by removing the lower branches. It is best to prune after the plant has finished flowering.

Fertilizer: Magnolia's require little, if any fertilization. Do not fertilize the first year. Subsequently, apply a light fertilizer before and after blooming. Any flowering shrub fertilizer will be adequate.

Winter Care & Protection: The first couple of winters are crucial for healthy plant establishment. Once established, Magnolias thrive quite well on their own. As previously stated, proper location is a significant means of protection. If you choose an alternate site, build a burlap windbreak. Construct a lumber or metal frame around the plant and stretch burlap across it. Secure the frame against high winds.

Mulch the base of the plant to a depth of 4-5". This protects the roots from freezing. During warm, dry periods through out winter, the soil may thaw and dry. It is important to water your plants during these periods.