

HOW TO PLANT A SEEDLING



OAKLAND
COUNTY MICHIGAN
— BICENTENNIAL — **200**TM
1820-2020



ABOUT YOUR OAK SEEDLING

(check which species you have):

Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*) - Large shade tree (60-70 ft) with a narrow, rounded crown and lower branches. Naturally found in wet lowland areas, it grows just as well in an urban or suburban setting, with tolerance to compacted soil and (perhaps surprisingly) drought. Although not noted for its fall color, the swamp white oak is a great choice for a shade or street tree, with the ability to grow at a moderate pace and live more than 300 years.



White Oak (*Quercus alba*)

Large shade tree (80-100 ft.) with wide spreading branches and open crown. It can adapt to a variety of soil textures, but prefers deep, moist, well-drained sites that receive full sunlight. New transplants should receive plenty of water and mulch beneath the canopy to eliminate grass competition. Young leaves unfold to pink and grow into light green upper leaf. Deep red fall color.



Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)

Large shade tree (50-80 ft.) with broad, rounded, open crown and massively spreading branches if grown in open area. Shiny dark green upper leaf and green/gray lower leaf with fine hairs. Tolerant of a variety of moisture and soil conditions; adapts well to urban settings. A very long-lived tree. Prefers full sun.



STEPS TO PLANT YOUR SEEDLING:

- 1** | Select a planting site to fit the growth characteristics of the species being planted. Oaks will grow to be quite large, so be sure you don't plant under utility lines or too close to the house.
- 2** | Unpack your seedlings, remove all packing materials, and carefully untangle the roots.
- 3** | Keep roots moist at all times. Dry roots die, so soak the roots in water for 3 to 6 hours once unpacked.



(4) Cut only if needed

- 4** | The planting site should be cleared of surface vegetation first, well beyond the diameter of the hole. Dig the hole twice as wide and slightly deeper than the root length. If the hole cannot be dug deep enough to fit the entire root system, trim roots with scissors to same length as seedling's above ground height or 8 inches, whichever is longer.



- 5** | Make sure there is plenty of room for the roots in the hole. Place roots in the hole so the top of the first root is slightly below the surrounding ground level, distributing the roots evenly to make sure roots are fully extended and not doubled over into a "J" root.



(5) Make sure roots are fully extended and not a "J"

- 6** | Partially fill the hole with soil and add water to settle soil around roots. Do not add any fertilizer or additives to the soil. Continue adding soil until the level is slightly above the top of the first root, then lightly tamp with the palm of your hand or add more water to settle soil around roots. Do not over compact soil or pile soil up around the trunk.

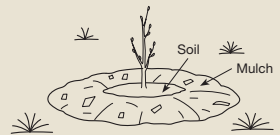
- 7** | Construct a water-holding basin around the tree, shaped like a bathtub, and add a little more water slowly so as to avoid run off or soil erosion.



(6) Don't create a mulch volcano

- 8** | After the water has soaked in, spread protective mulch 1 to 2 inches deep in a 3 foot diameter area around the base of the seedling without touching the trunk. The soil and mulch around your seedlings should be kept moist but not soggy.

- 9** | During dry weather, soak the area around the tree with 1-2 gallons of water every 7 to 10 days. Water should be applied slowly.



- 10** | By carefully following these instructions, you'll be giving these seedlings a great chance for survival, so each can become a beautiful tree to enjoy for a lifetime!

(7) Water-holding basin around the tree

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners thanks you for being a part of our Bicentennial Oak Tree Program.