

HOW TO PLANT FOR SUCCESS

FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

Planting is a bit like painting – taking time to prepare is the key to success.

Think ahead and consider why, where and what you want to plant. Then consider the 'how'.

WHY PLANT?

Reasons you want to plant may include to:

- replace another plant or lawn
- create a barrier for noise or privacy
- beautify an area
- attract native bush birds
- fill a 'gap'
- provide shade and/or
- reduce erosion.

WHERE TO PLANT

Whether thinking about planting in your own garden, at your local school or with a local Bushcare group, the nature of the area will determine the type and size of plants you should choose.



Kingswood South PS students

WHAT TO PLANT

If planting in bushland areas, only plants that come from the local area should be planted.

In any location, look to see if there's anything, for example overhead powerlines, that will limit the final height of the plant.

Consider native shrubs that will encourage small bush birds rather than plants with large, showy flowers which will attract larger dominant birds such as currawongs, noisy mynahs or parrots.

PREPARE FIRST

It's best to treat any weeds in advance. For large areas, spray the weeds (using an appropriate herbicide) at least 3-4 weeks before planting. Smaller areas may need hand weeding. If the ground is compacted you might need to turn it over to aerate the soil.

MULCH

Spread a 10cm layer of natural mulch over the area to help 'soften' the soil, retain moisture and encourage invertebrates such as worms which help form healthy soil.

DIG

Check for underground services - dial before you dig: 1100).

Clear an area of mulch from around the planned planting hole to prevent mulch and soil mixing together. The plant hole should be deeper than the plant pot to allow roots to spread.

PLANT

Fill the plant hole with water and let the water drain away, to help saturate the surrounding soil. Add 2-3 grains of water-saving crystals to each plant hole (preferably pre-soaked), to slowly release moisture to the plant roots. Tap the plant pot to loosen the plant, squeeze the pot gently, tip it upside down and slide the plant out, holding it at the lower stem. You may need to loosen the roots if they're bound together.

Place the plant in the hole and return the original soil, leaving the plant soil level slightly lower than the original ground level to create a saucer to collect water.

If the soil is clay and in hard lumps, break it up into fine grains to allow close contact between soil particles and plant roots rather than large air /water pockets. (Tip: leave the pot next to the plant until it is watered).

JUTE SQUARES

Jute squares help keep soil moist and reduce weeds.

If possible, pre-soak each square in a bucket of water. Carefully slide the square over the plant (put your hand through the centre hole, gently hold the top of the plant and with your other hand slide the mat down to the soil surface). Put the original mulch back around the plant or to the edge of the jute.

TREE GUARDS

A tree guard is placed around a plant to protect it from the weather, animals and future maintenance.



James Erskine PS students

WATER

Now give the plant a good watering (about 1 bucket full, gently tipped). Give a thorough soaking once a week for one month to encourage deep root growth.

HANDY HINTS

*Consult your local Council for recommended landscape plants suitable to your area.

Plant in cooler weather.

You might want to try:

- keeping a record of what, where and when you plant.
- taking regular photos to show progress.

For more information phone our Bushland Management Officer on 4732 8088.

