



**GARDEN SUPPLIES OF ALL KINDS
DESIGN • PLANTING • CONSTRUCTION**

Quality Products & Services Since 1978

**S39 W27833 Genesee Road
Waukesha, WI 53189
(262) 547-2677
www.pialasnursery.com**

Landscape Care Part 1 – Greengoods

Planting Instructions

Handling Plants

Plants are living and *do* require hands-on attention! Once you purchase your plants, be sure to get them home as soon as possible. If the plants need to be in your car for a while be sure to open a window, especially on warm days. If the plants have not been recently watered at the nursery, water them as soon as you get them home. If you are not planting them right away, keep them in a shady place and check them daily for watering. Water thoroughly until water comes out of the bottom of the pot. Check soil for moisture before watering again (a general rule of thumb is if you stick your pointer finger in the soil and it is dry to a 1" depth, the plant needs to be watered). When purchasing or planting your plants, do not pick plants up by the stem (whether in or out of a pot) as this may damage the plant and/or root structure.

Soil Amendments

We recommend using peat moss and Nutripack fertilizer when planting your plants. Depending on the size of your plant, it may require more than one Nutripack fertilizer (see Fertilization below for quantities). A nursery employee can guide you as to the quantity of packs needed per plant. When you dig the hole, fill 1/3 to 2/3 of the hole with peat moss and mix with the native soil. This is the soil you will use to fill the void space of the hole once the new plant is in place. Once the plant is out of the pot, loosen plant roots by massaging them gently with your fingers. If a pot happens to be root-bound, some of the roots may need to be cut in order to make sure the roots are not in a spiral following the pot.

Digging Proper Holes

Potted plants require a hole to be dug the same depth as the plant in the pot and twice as wide as the pot. If possible, it is preferable to dig the hole when the ground is dry and not soaking wet. If you dig holes when the ground is too wet, you will create a 'barrier' in the soil wall of the hole. The soil should be damp or dry, not saturated.

Removing Pots

To remove a plant from its pot, tip the plant on its side on the ground and slide the pot off. If the pot does not easily loosen, do not pull the plant by the stem(s), and use a knife or box cutter to cut down the side of the pot to slide the plant out. Once the plant is out of the pot, put the plant into the dug hole and use amended soil to fill the void. Gently push down or pat on the soil of the new plant to ensure it is in place and to help with any slight settling. The crown of the plant should be either at ground level adjacent to the hole or slightly higher. Never plant a crown of a plant below the adjacent ground level as this will drown the plant and it will not survive.

Fertilization

Once the plant is in place in the hole, set the Nutripack(s) to the side of the plant. Space them evenly around the plant if more than one is required. Use 1 Nutripack for all potted perennials, small shrubs and vines. Use 2-3 Nutripacks for all large potted shrubs and trees. Please ask the nursery staff for recommendations on Nutripack quantities for all B&B trees and evergreens.



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Mulching

Spread your mulch around the plant after it is planted and the hole is filled with amended soil. Be sure to keep the mulch from touching the stems of the plant, generally keep it pulled away from the stems by about 1" to avoid suffocating the crown of the plant. Spread your mulch to a maximum 3" depth for all trees and shrubs. The benefit of using mulch is to retain soil moisture and, to an extent, mulch helps to control weeds.

Staking or When Not To

If you are planting in a very windy area, you should consider staking. We recommend to use the duckbill system which consists of cables with underground anchors. A nursery staff member can help explain how these work and how they should be installed. The roots of your plant will develop more strength with movement due to wind if you do not stake.

Watering

When watering shrubs or trees, turn the hose to slow trickle so the water is approximately the width of a finger. Place the open end of the hose at the base of the plant and let it soak. Plants should be soaked/watered according to the following:

- Perennials: 2-5 minutes;
- Shrubs : 15-20 minutes;
- Potted Trees: 30-45 minutes;
- B&B Trees & Evergreens: soak until root ball is saturated.

Slow release watering technology (ex: GatorBags) are a proven successful method for helping monitor and establish water at a desirable, soaking rate. This is not a "hands-off" approach, but will reduce time and is an environmentally friendly approach, as it typically wastes less water due to runoff like a running hose.

Pruning

General Recommendations

Always feel free to ask a nursery staff member if you have any questions regarding pruning of your plants. Pruning can be stressful, but the long term benefits outweigh the temporary stress. Pruning is a natural and healthy process for your plants to go through and will help you plants health and appearance in the years to come. Always be sure to use clean, sharp tools when pruning your plants to avoid any harmful transfer of chemicals, etc. "Clean" in this case means to use bleach to disinfect your pruners.

Annuals

PINCHING. If you are starting your plants from seed or very young cuttings, pinching the plants back in early season will create more branches and more flowers. If you are pinching because the plant is taking over your container, never take more than 1/3 of the plant off, making sure to leave viable leaves so that plant can get its nutrients.



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DEADHEADING. When flowers are past their prime, deadhead (cutting or pinching off the dead flowers) and take the stem or seed pod with it. Why? The plant will continue to bloom if you deadhead and cosmetically, your plant will look nicer without the wilted/dead flower heads. If you don't deadhead, depending on the plant, some varieties will continue to bloom while some varieties will stop blooming if they go to seed (life cycle is complete). Seed development drains the plant's resources which may not allow it to flush out new growth.

Perennial Pruning (Fall & Spring)

GENERAL. There are some exceptions to cutting back plants depending on personal preference or winter interest. These include but are not limited to: Heucheras, Bergenia, Dianthus, Christmas Fern. A reason to not cut back these plants in the fall is that they can get injured. On Heucheras specifically, the crown of the plant can be injured if cut too far down to the ground and it may not survive the winter.

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES. Generally, we recommend leaving grasses standing over winter. Prune them back in spring before you see new growth emerging from the bottom to about 3-6" above the ground. If you prefer, you can cut the plant back in the winter, but will lose winter interest. If you do not cut back in the spring or forget, leave the dead growth standing as this won't hurt the plant.

HARDY HIBISCUS (NOT rose of Sharon). We recommend cutting the sticks down to approximately 6-12" in height in the fall, especially if it's a new plant. This Hibiscus is a late season emerger. Disturbing the roots will KILL the plant. If you forget to prune in the fall, it can be done in the spring.

PEONIES & IRIS. We strongly recommend cutting these down in the fall. Prune them back to about 3-6" above the ground. Remove the dead leaves and debris to prevent mildew and borer issues in the following seasons.

OTHER PERENNIALS. All other perennials should be pruned back in late fall. Cut them back to about 3" above the ground and remove all debris. If you forget to prune in late fall, it will not harm the plant. Do it instead in early spring and remove the debris to help prevent disease and insect problems.

Shrub Pruning

SPRING VS. FALL. Spring pruning is preferred for shrubs that flower in spring. These should be pruned immediately after flowering and include: Forsythia, Lilac, Spirea, Potentilla. If you are pruning more than 25% of plant, this should be done while plant is dormant and this may result in reduced blooms for one season. Fall pruning is preferred for most other shrubs. Late fall is the ideal time to prune and can be done before the leaves drop off

SHAPING. When cutting back in March, you can do a thorough shaping of shrubs at that time. When shrubs are actively growing, one stray/rogue stem can be removed and it will not hurt the plant. Some plants can tolerate pruning again when they are done blooming, such as: Spireas, Potentilla, Willows.



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THINNING, RENEWAL PRUNING. Renewal pruning is done on overgrown, top heavy, woody shrubs. It consists of selectively pruning (over time, typically 3 years) some of the thicker growth down to the ground. Renewal pruning increases younger growth and bottom growth from the base of the plant. Renewal pruning may not be successful for all plants, depending on their variety, age, and growing situation. Varieties that do well with renewal pruning are Lilac, Dogwood, Forsythia (non-dwarf), and Mockorange.

DEADHEADING. Deadheading or cutback for improved flowering can be completed on some shrubs. Shrub Roses can have an individual flower pruned out from the clump of flowers, if you want to remove a brown flower ("deadheading"). Spireas can be pruned 1/3 to 1/2 off when they are done flowering.

Evergreen Pruning

SHEARING. Shearing should only be done when the plant is actively growing (typically this is early July, but depends on weather). Only certain evergreens should be sheared. A nursery staff member can tell you if your evergreens are ones that can be sheared. How far you should shear an evergreen depends on how patient you are willing to be. Extreme shearing takes time to recover and can take up to 2-3 years to recover. We recommend the maximum shearing to be 1/2 of the new growth, no more.

GENERAL. Pines and Junipers are evergreens that are hard to cut back. Once these plants are too large for a given area, it is difficult to get back to a reasonable size and may need to be replaced. To slow the growth of these evergreens, you can pinch back new candles (buds), in June or when growth begins.

Tree Pruning (Non-Structural)

SPRING VS. FALL. Anything tree with dead, broken, damaged or crossing can be pruned at any time of year, except oaks. Fruit trees prefer to be pruned in early spring or late winter before the buds swell. Oak trees should be pruned in winter only when the tree is completely dormant. Some trees are seasonally sensitive to pruning due to the increased risk of diseases or pests when pruning at inappropriate times of the year. The open flesh wounds made at the wrong time of year can attract pests or diseases that may harm or kill the tree.

Lawn Care

Installation of Seed

Grass seed coverage is based on the per square foot or square yard depending on the mix being used. We recommend using our lawn seed blends only as these are what we have had most success with for germination and coverage. Please refer to the bag or blend for specifics for application rates.



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Once the seed has been spread, you will need to install straw mat or penn mulch over the seed. Lawn fertilizer should be applied and straw mat staples installed if necessary. Once the grass seed has germinated and has a 25% coverage growing, the straw mat and staples can be pulled and removed. Please see our lawn care recommendations for additional information.

Installation of Sod

One roll of sod will cover between 9-10 square feet. This is based on our standard sod roll only which we keep in stock. Be sure to install starter fertilizer first under the sod and use staples, when necessary, to secure sod in place.

- Lawn Establishment & Watering (already written)
- Lawn Fertilization Program (already written)
- Aeration and Thatching (already written)

If you find problems with your lawn and are unsure how to address the issue, please ask a nursery staff member or refer to the UW-Extension for detailed information. It may help to bring in pictures or a sample to help with identifying the issue, whether it be bugs, fungus or a disease. We will do our best to help identify the problem and come up with a solution to treat.

Annual Fertilization

SLOW RELEASE. Typically a slow release fertilizer is granular. This product will maintain its slow release for the duration of the product (check label). Slow release fertilizers are good for leaves, blooms and roots. Mix the product into your soil where roots are growing, as directed on the label. Vitamins are not necessary to apply to your lawn as sod can live without it.

LIQUID. Liquid fertilizers give a strong dose of "instant" fertilization. Many flower varieties demand high inputs of fertilizer and it is the primary food source for flowering annuals. Bloom Booster (ex: Blooming & Rooting) has nutrients which are geared specifically for flower formation, as opposed to a general fertilizer. Some plants need this extra input to continue blooming.

NOTE: Always refer to the manufacturer's recommendation, or our nursery horticultural staff, regarding combining different types of fertilizer.

If you use neither a slow release or liquid fertilizer, by midsummer you may not have any flowers. When the roots have exhausted the nutrients in the soil, the plant will stop growing and blooming. If flowering on annuals has stopped, generally you can encourage new flower formation by use of appropriate fertilizer. Typically this would be a liquid fertilizer. Please note this is for non-edible, flowering varieties only, not for edible vegetables or herbs. Edible plants require special consideration depending on the variety and your growing conditions and food preference.

Hanging Baskets And Containers

Special considerations should be made for hanging baskets and containers since there is limited soil. These baskets and containers require fertilizer often. Regular applications of liquid fertilizer is



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generally required to sustain blooming and growth. Our hanging baskets available for purchase are already fertilized with slow release/granular.

Hanging baskets and containers dry out quickly and most require water daily. Check basket twice daily and water if dry. Feel the soil with your finger and if the top half inch of the soil is dry, the plants need water. Soak the basket until water comes out the bottom. Ask our horticulture staff for options regarding slow release watering options for your basket or container.

It is generally not recommended or successful to bring hanging baskets or containers indoors during the winter. Some exceptions to this may be: succulents, begonias, geraniums, chenille plant, ivy, asparagus fern. Always be sure to treat plants for insects before bringing them inside.

Animal Protection

Identifying Damage

DEER DAMAGE. When deer eat shrubs, their teeth gnaw twigs/branches which can result in a smashed appearance. Deer may also rub on the trunks of trees during the winter months if you are in a migration zone, though this is a rare occurrence.

RABBIT DAMAGE. When rabbits eat plants, it looks like someone took a clipper and cut the plant at a diagonal angle.

VOLE & MOUSE DAMAGE. Voles and mice cause damage at the base of the plant. The damage looks like someone scraped bark all the way around the stem or trunk.

If the animal has girdled (removed bark completely around trunk or stem) the plant, that part of the plant (or entire plant) will likely die. The flow of nutrients has been cut off. It is more difficult to identify which animal is the culprit on perennials/annuals since they have soft tissue/stems.

Caging/Wrapping

It is best to cage or wrap plant BEFORE damage occurs. If you live in an area with known animal traffic, prevention is worth the investment. Wrap tree trunks up to a 6' height (standard for deer) in the fall using a tree wrap or hardware cloth (i.e. chicken wire, rabbit wire, deer fencing). Be sure to remove the wrap or hardware cloth in late spring/early summer.

For diagnosis or repellent recommendation, talk to a nursery horticulture staff member.

Identifying Stress in Landscape Plants

If you are able, bring a photo and/or sample(s) of the stressed plant to our nursery horticulture staff. We will help to identify the issue and provide recommendations on how to remedy the problem.



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Transplant Shock: What's Normal, What 's Not

LEAF/NEEDLE DROP. If you are watering correctly, there will be some yellowing of the foliage. Depending on the plant variety and time of transplant, some leaves/needles will drop. Continue watering even if the plant loses some or all of its foliage, for the first season. Root development continues even after leaves or needles have dropped.

GROWTH OVER FIRST FEW YEARS.

- Perennials: Sleep / Creep / Leap! There may be three years before substantial spreading or growth on transplanted perennials. This is very typical. It takes the root system years to establish and acclimate to the soil.
- Shrubs/Most Evergreens: It may take 2-3 years to see substantial growth on transplanted shrubs or evergreens, depending on the variety.
- Trees: Transplant shock will be observed in all trees and B&B evergreens. Hard transplant shock will be seen on honeylocust, oaks, birch (depending on season). Most other species take longer to establish in their new soil. In the first two years there may be little visible growth, foliage may be small or appear distorted, and foliage may not be as full as prior to transplanting. The root system is trying to grow out from the root ball and into your new soil. It can take up to 3-5 years for substantial growth to show after transplanting trees.

Overwatering

It is possible to water a plant too much! Symptoms of overwatering consist of droopy yellow leaves or fungus at the base of the plant. If you are unsure how much water to apply to a plant, please ask a nursery staff member. Every plant is different and requires its own personal attention. Drought tolerant plant will not require as much water as others.

Under Watering

It can be easy to forget to water your plants, especially in the busy summer days. Symptoms of under watering are droopy yellow leaves and dried or brown ("crunchy") foliage. If you have mulch around the base of your plant, pull the mulch away leaving 2" of soil clear. Check the soil for moisture. You may need to use a shovel to check 6" into the ground to see how wet the soil is. Be careful not to disturb root system of the plant. The soil should be wet within 6" of the top of the ground. If you are using a water or soil moisture meter, remove and recalibrate regularly.

Insect or Animal Damage

Insect or animal damage can, unfortunately, be a common problem in gardens. Some symptoms to look for are holes in leaves, spots on leaves, webbing or holes in bark.

Chemical or Herbicide Damage

Chemical damage will often show up on only one side of the plant (not evenly distributed), or only on new growth. This type of damage generally shows up suddenly rather than developing over time. Please refer to the UW-Extension for more information on how to address these issues.