

# Wisconsin Rotary: Tree stock guide



## Balled and Burlapped (B&B)

**Cost**  
\$125 - \$300\*

**Size**  
1.5" - 2.0" DBH;  
6' - 12' height

### Pros

- can be planted anytime
- creates instant visual impact
- large size reduces vandalism
- easy to find at most nurseries
- freshly dug

### Cons

- equipment needed to move
- most expensive
- can easily be planted too deeply
- may need staking
- more time consuming to plant



## Containerized (pots or bags)

**Cost**  
\$50 - \$150\*

**Size**  
1" - 2" DBH;  
height varies

### Pros

- can be planted anytime
- creates instant visual impact
- easy to find at most nurseries
- typically easier to handle than B&B

### Cons

- circling roots if left in container too long
- may need staking
- heavy depending on container size
- can easily be planted too deeply



## Bareroot

**Cost**  
\$50 - \$100\*

**Size**  
1" - 2" DBH;  
6' -10' height

### Pros

- can see quality of root system
- lightweight, easy for volunteers
- can create instant visual impact
- increased survivability
- easiest to plant properly
- best long term success of large trees

### Cons

- may need staking
- shorter planting window
- need to keep roots cool and moist prior to planting



## Whips (pots or bareroot)

**Cost**  
\$25 - \$35\*

**Size**  
<1" DBH;  
5' -8' height

### Pros

- most economical option
- lightweight
- easier to plant properly
- less root issues than most containerized trees

### Cons

- may need staking
- smaller than typical stock
- more prone to damage, lower survival rate
- communities may not accept, due to size
- prone to vandalism
- may be difficult to find



## Seedlings

**Cost**  
\$2 - \$10\*

**Size**  
6" - 8" height

### Pros

- least expensive option
- easy for volunteers
- can be planted anytime

### Cons

- communities may not accept, due to size
- survival requires more after planting care
- lowest survival rate
- takes years to reach landscape size

\* costs are industry estimates and may vary

# Additional considerations

## Diversity

Remember species diversity when choosing trees, to provide varied sizes, shapes, colors and, more importantly, a buffer to current and future pests. Contact your municipal tree manager to find trees that increase diversity in your community.

## Tree planting and after planting care resources

**Tree Owner's Manual** – covers all aspects of tree care from site selection, planting, maintenance, protection and eventual removal. [https://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/uf/tom/090202\\_tom\\_lr.pdf](https://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/uf/tom/090202_tom_lr.pdf)

**New Tree Planting** – Wisconsin plant hardiness zones, site selection considerations and seven steps to properly plant, mulch and stake trees.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestmanagement/documents/pub/FR-184.pdf>

**Proper Tree Pruning** – Why, When, What and How to prune trees and appropriate tools to use.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestmanagement/documents/pub/FR-256.pdf>

**Proper Mulching Techniques** – benefits, types, proper amounts and potential problems with mulching. <http://www.treesaregood.org/treecare/resources/ProperMulching.pdf>

## Tree planting and after planting care checklist

- Understand site parameters (distance from utilities, signs, roads, structures) and mature tree form and size.
- Check plant hardiness zone (lowest average winter temperature trees can tolerate).
- Create the installation site: find the root collar and dig to that depth. Hole width = twice size of root ball. A stump grinder or rototiller is a good choice to dig hole and loosen soil.
- Rough up sides of hole for best root growth. Avoid shiny (clay) soils.
- Remove tree from container and place in hole (carry by root ball vs. trunk). If B&B, remove top half of wire basket and burlap when tree is in the hole.
- Spread roots laterally; don't let roots curve or circle within the hole. Cleanly cut roots at edge of hole to avoid circling roots.
- Backfill with soil from the dug hole to one half filled. Hand compact the soil, then finish backfilling. If need to use grass sod from hole digging, turn it soil side up.
- Add 2" – 4" mulch (older wood chips, compost, leaves/needles). Keep this 6" from the trunk. Slowly water over mulch layer allowing water to soak in.
- If you must stake the trunk, use 2-3 stakes and wide band material (seat belt width), allowing trunk some sway. Stakes should be put in ground at edge of hole.
- Do not remove any limbs at time of planting unless dead or broken. Wait 2 years to begin pruning. At that time may remove up to 1/3 of live canopy. Limbs to remove: multiple leaders, crossing, competing/parallel and lower limbs; no flush cuts. Prune every other year to about 10 years after planting, then every 5-7 years.
- Remove straps from tree after one year. May keep stakes to deter lawnmowers from damaging trunks (leading cause of young tree death).
- Watering properly the first couple of years is essential. Feel the soil at 6" depth under mulch; if moist, don't water.

## Contacts

If you have questions <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/UrbanForests/contact.html>



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