

Plant Care Basics

Plant Lifecycles

- Annual: Germinate from seed, flower, produce seed, and die in a single season (ex: Alyssum, Marigolds)
- Biennial: 2 year life cycle. Produce leaves in the first year. Flower and die in the second year (ex: Hollyhocks).
- Perennial: Grows every year. New leaves and flowers are produced each year (ex: Lupins, Rockcress, Peonies).
- Shrub: Multi-stem woody plant. Height can range from 1-20'.
- Tree: Single stem woody plant. Height can range from 5' and up.

Inspecting Plant Health

Inspect the root ball for bound or overgrown roots. Check for damaged root balls or branches. Avoid forked leaders in trees. Inspect leaves and stems for dead, yellowing, or spotted growth.

First Steps for Planting

Consider hardiness zone when selecting plants. The St. John's area is Zone 5b. Plants listed as 5b or lower will be able to tolerate most growing conditions here, but every site may have factors that affect what should be planted (exposed sites, etc.). Make sure your site has good drainage. Remove weeds from planting area. Loosen soil. Add organic matter, compost, or soil conditioners is required.

How to Plant

1. Dig hole larger than the pot or root ball. At least 1.5 – 2' for shrubs and more for trees.
2. Water thoroughly.
3. Slip plant out of pot, don't lift.
4. Place potted plant at same depth as in pot.
5. Place top of root ball level with ground.
6. Unwrap burlap and pull back to bury, or cut it away.
7. Add fertilizer to encourage root development (ex: 6-12-12).
8. Fill in hole with soil.
9. Add 3-4" of mulch.
10. Water well until established, weeks for small plants several months for large trees. Drench during dry spells.

Deadheading

Deadhead flowering plants by pinching off the blooms once they lose color and begin to wilt. Removing dead blooms encourages new blooms and a longer flowering period.

