

How To Plant An Avocado Tree, By Julie Frink

1. Place the potted tree where you are planning to plant it.
2. Build up the soil around the pot, up to the level where the stem comes out of the dirt. Tamp the dirt down so it is somewhat firm around the pot. If it is a large pot you can put it into the ground half the depth of the pot.
3. Take the pot out of the dirt mound.
4. Remove the tree from the pot.
5. Put the little tree in the hole in the dirt mound left by the pot.

Little digging is necessary but nice rich dirt for a mound is. When a hole is dug there is a problem of water draining into it (and the root system of the new plant) like a well, or draining out of that area into the surrounding soil, leaching it dry depending on the soil content of the surrounding soil. If you feel better about the process by spading up the ground and making it loose or amending it that would be ok. Many of the new commercial plantings are on berms or raised areas. This has alleviated some of the root rot problems. After planting, all trees settle somewhat so that in several years the trunk area will be lower than when you planted it.

Avocado trees like lots of water but good drainage. They don't like clean hard dirt under their outstretched branches. They like lots of leaf and wood chip litter to keep their surface roots cool and well nourished. They do not like soil under the tree to be cultivated because it disturbs their surface roots. Most of the avocado feeder roots are in the top few inches of the soil. Avocados do not do well in pots. Very large pots can be used for a few years but that is all. Transplanting from a large pot (like a whisky barrel) is very difficult. Often the root ball falls apart and the tree dies. It is very rare to get good fruit production from a potted avocado tree. It is best to plant from your 1 to 5 gallon potted tree into the ground that the avocado tree will occupy for its entire life.

Don't fertilize heavily. Too much fertilizer will kill an avocado tree because it has all the delicate feeder roots that are so close to the surface. No fertilizer will not kill a tree. Just the right amount of a very dilute solution of fertilizer will help a tree to be healthy and to grow faster.

If the tree is quite small you might consider protecting it with a tomato cage to keep soccer balls, large birds, children and large dogs from destroying it. Baby trees like shade. Nature has them growing under the limbs of the mother tree. Larger more mature trees like lots of sunshine.

As Julie has stated in the above article. A tomato cage is good protection from soccer balls, dogs etal but if you place an old pillowcase over the tomato cage you also protect your baby tree from sun, wind, or a near sprinkler head. As your tree acclimates to your yard you start cutting holes in the pillowcase.

Most young avocado trees are purchased in the spring at a gardening store, plant show like the La Habra Heights Avocado Festival, or Fullerton Arboretum Green Scene. These trees have been transported in cars and trucks and have had their roots disrupted and now you are going to take them home again in a car or truck. This is why you need to protect them from the sun until the disrupted roots reestablish themselves and start new roots. Plant them in the place you want them at soon as possible. Trees do not like pots.

Avocado trees have shallow roots 60% is in the top 3 inches 90% in the top 6 inches. Keeping that in mind and you can usually figure out how to care for it. Avocados do not have invasive roots nor do they have roots that will lift up sidewalks or crack foundation. If an avocado tree is planted to close to a house or garage the trunk when gets big may push the wall. Avocados like sun. The more sun the more fruit. Avocados like water. The more water the bigger the fruit.

New avocado trees frequently have plastic tape at the graft union. When the graft is a year old this tape must be removed. Do it carefully. This is the weakest part of the tree. This document can be found at **BasicAvocadoInformation.com**