

Bob's Tree Planting Method

1. The top roots of the planted tree must at or no more than 2" above ground level. They must never be below ground level
2. The root ball hole must be 4" wider on each side and 4" deeper than the root ball
3. A tap root hole 18" deep and 6" diameter must be excavated below the root ball hole, most easily done with an electric jackhammer and post hole digger. The tap root hole may not be necessary if a solution hole in the oolitic lime rock has been discovered by digging the root ball hole.
4. A 20" X 3/4" diameter hole must be drilled below the tap root hole, this is done with a percussion drill
5. The tap root hole is filled with 70 % sand/ 30% organic and compacted, usually with a 2X4. 50/50 may be used but it should be light in color. Very dark 50/50 indicates that it has too much organic and not enough sand
6. 3" of loose 70/30 is placed in the bottom of the root ball hole and compacted down to 2", usually by stomping on it
7. A gently sloping mound of 70/30 3" high in the center is placed in the root ball hole
8. The tree is placed in the hole. One person holds the tree vertical while another person crawls around the tree and pushes dirt under the rootball, feeling with his fingers where voids and air pockets are and pushing the dirt into them. It is best if the person has extra long gloves. The person holding the tree little by little adds dirt around the tree while the other person pushes that dirt under the rootball. No water shall be used to move the dirt under the rootball, as this softens dirt. It is better for stabilizing the tree if the dirt under and on the side of the root ball has been packed solid.
9. After the dirt has filled the air pockets under the rootball load up the sides around the rootball with 70/30 halfway high, and then pack it with a 2X4. Repeat: add dirt around the tree and pack it. Pack as much dirt as possible with the heel of your boot (tennis shoes won't pack the dirt tight enough).
10. Finish filling and packing the hole and then build a watering crater around the tree. Pack that, too with the back of a shovel.
11. Fill the crater with mulch. Place mulch around the crater.
12. Water the tree