How to plant a tree for successful growth

More sunlight and warm temperatures frequently inspire homeowners to spend more time in the great outdoors during spring and summer.

Outdoor projects often top homeowners' to-do lists in spring and summer, with gardens and landscapes taking center stage. Planting more trees around the yard is one popular project that can improve property value and benefit the environment.

Why plant trees?

There are plenty of reasons to plant trees. Trees provide a natural form of shade, reducing air temperature by blocking the sun's rays. This can reduce reliance on air conditioning systems and make it more comfortable to spend time outdoors during the summer.

North Carolina State University College of Agriculture & Life Sciences says trees absorb and block noise and reduce glare. They also can trap dust, pollen and smoke. tree can supply a day's worth Getting started Trees also absorb carbon dioxide and potentially harmful gasses from the air. One large pounds of carbon per year.



Learn the right way to plant a tree to improve the landscape and the environment.

of oxygen for as many as four people, while also storing 13

Visit a garden center or nursery and select a tree that

zone. Choosing native trees the existing root ball and alcan increases the likelihood low for roots to grow and exthat the new tree will adapt to pand. Better Homes and Garits surroundings. Also, inspect dens experts say to prepare a healthy before taking them as wide as the root ball of the home. Look for evidence of tree. Treat the root ball genroot girdling, which occurs tly. If the roots are wrapped when the roots circle around in burlap, remove the burlap and surround the trunk. Trees hole. should not have any dead or dormant branches.

spot that can make it easier for the tree to grow tall and wide. Avoid planting near the house, where roots can crack concrete or asphalt, and always plant away from underground pipes.

Planting the tree

Now it is time to amend the soil. It's not enough to enrich only the soil in the hole where the tree will be placed. Move out into a circular area beyond where the roots will start so that roots can expand and properly anchor the tree. The next method of success is to ensure that the tree has will be hardy in your planting a large enough hole to contain

trees to determine if they're hole that is two to three times effectively. A layer of mulch the perimeter of the container or push it to the bottom of the have fanned out.

Backfill the hole with soil and check that the tree is The DIY Network suggests straight. Stake the tree to help limbs. Resist pruning and locating the tree where it can it stay upright and straight shaping until the tree has surthrive. This means selecting a until the roots anchor it more vived its first growing season.



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around the base of the tree can prevent weeds and reduce water loss. Water daily for several weeks until the roots

It's best to leave trees be for the first growing season, only removing broken or diseased



Tools of the home renovator's trade



Home renovation projects get your hands dirty with can be both exciting and some demolition. Crowbars tricky. Do-it-yourselfers are inspired by designs showcased in magazines, websites and their own communities. When DIY enthusiasts see a design they like, it's understandable that they may want to emulate these looks at home.

Remodeling is one of the added storage capacity. larger DIY undertakings, and it goes beyond simple more fool-proof method of carpentry. Considering de- locating studs behind drymolition. reconstruction, wall then knocking on the electrical, plumbing, and wall. Stud finders can promasonry work may be part vide a picture of studs, pipes of the DIY package, home- and other hidden items inowners who are thinking side an entire length of wall. about renovations must first This is essential to driving stock up on the tools and nails where they belong and other supplies of the trade. can also prevent sending fas-Having the right tools can teners into wires or nearby mean the difference between plumbing. a job well done and a job that needs to be redone. fore you can put in new con- more involved renovators. struction, you might have to Whether hanging pictures or

ensuring molding is parallel, levels are must-have tools for DIYers.

• Safety glasses: Invest in a pair of safety glasses so no one working on a project deals with obstructed vision. Safety glasses also provide ample eye protection.

• Extension cords: If power tools are part of the renovation picture, extension cords can safely extend power where it is needed. Be sure to invest in a gauge that is large enough to handle the amperage of your most powerful tool.

• Measuring tape: The "measure twice, cut once" mantra is key to home improvements. To measure accurately each and every time, no tool chest is complete without a sturdy measuring tape.

• Ladder varieties: Home improvements aren't always at ground level. Purchase ladders of various heights so you can safely reach various areas of the home and avoid injury. Step stools, a step ladder and an extension lad-





or prybars can be used to pry

up wood slats, remove nails

• Tool pouch: A tool and

fastener pouch gives DI-

Yers a place other than their

pockets to store fasteners

and hand tools. Pouches can

be attached to tool belts for

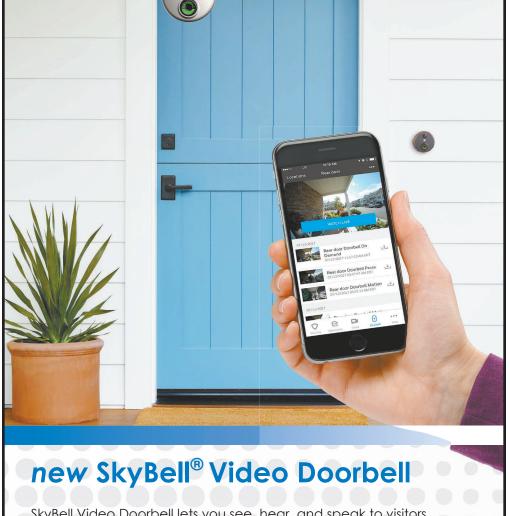
• Stud finder: Invest in a

or remove old decking.

• Level: A level is an essential tool for everyone • Crowbar or prybar: Be- from casual decorators to

der all have their purposes on the job.

• Digital inspection scope: A scope lets you see inside walls, floors and ceilings to find the exact location of pipes, wires and joists. It also can be used to seek out the source of clogged drains or anywhere you desire sight into hard-to-maneuver areas.



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