

NHBC Guidance

Planting trees near your home

Please remember:

- ☑ Check your soil type - is it clay?
- ☑ check the mature height of your chosen trees to ensure you plant them suitable distance away from your home
- ☑ in most cases you should plant the tree at least 3/4 of the mature tree height away from the house
- ☑ for high water demand trees at least one and a quarter times the height of the mature tree - as per table
- ☑ before cutting down or pruning a mature tree, check with your local authority - it may be protected
- ☑ be careful not to plant trees near your neighbour's house - you could be liable for any damage caused.



Also consider...

Planting trees and shrubs can enhance a garden, provide privacy and block out noise from next door. However roots and branches can also cause expensive damage to homes. This guide offers practical advice when planting new trees and shrubs or cutting back existing ones.

In areas where there is clay soil, new planting may remove the water from the clay producing shrinkage. This shrinkage may result in movement of foundations and the walls which they support. Removing existing trees and shrubs may make it swell. Excessive swelling could damage foundations. Much will depend on the type, size and location of the trees and shrubs and the type of clay. If in doubt obtain advice from an expert before planting new trees and shrubs or if a large tree dies or has been severely pruned.

- On clay soils, it is best to plant shrubs such as pyracantha, cotoneaster, ivy, Virginia creeper and wisteria more than 3m from your home.
- On all soils, allow enough room for trunks and large roots to grow safely and be particularly careful when planting near walls or drains.
- Regular pruning of fast growing, thirsty trees will help to reduce the amount of water taken from the soil.

And remember to make sure trees and shrubs are watered sufficiently to give them a good start in life...

WATER DEMAND AND MATURE HEIGHT OF COMMON TREES

| WATER DEMAND | SPECIES | MATURE HEIGHT (M) |
|--------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| HIGH | Elm | 18-24 (depending on type) |
| | Hawthorne | 10 |
| | Oak | 16-24 (depending on type) |
| | Poplar | 15-28 (depending on type) |
| | Willow | 16-24 (depending on type) |
| MODERATE | Apple | 10 |
| | Ash | 23 |
| | Beech | 20 |
| | Cherry | 8-17 (depending on type) |
| | Chestnut | 20-24 (depending on type) |
| | Maple | 8-18 (depending on type) |
| | Pear | 12 |
| | Plum | 10 |
| | Sycamore | 22 |
| LOW | Birch | 14 |
| | Elder | 10 |
| | Hazel | 8 |
| | Holly | 12 |
| | Laburnum | 12 |
| | Magnolia | 9 |



Source: NHBC Standards 2013.

Note: 1. Further information regarding trees may be obtained from the Arboricultural Association.