



10 Top Tips for Tip Top Trees

Follow these 10 steps to a thriving tree.

1. Water regularly in dry weather and when trees are in active growth – this usually means when the tree is in leaf and transpiring (losing moisture through its respiration process).
2. It's better to water lots and infrequently than little and often. This encourages trees to send out water finding roots deeper into the soil, rather than on the surface. A tree needs around 60 litres per watering which is about 6 watering cans!
3. Don't forget: you can OVER water young trees by drowning their roots and preventing oxygen reaching them. Check to make sure that you coordinate your watering schedule with others, including the tree team at the council.
4. Help prevent evaporation of moisture from the surrounding ground by keeping weed free and putting down a thick layer (or mulch) of organic matter, such as compost, woodchip, manure. Make sure that this kept separate from the soil and not mixed in, otherwise mulches can 'steal' nutrients from the immediate soil and compete with the tree. Additionally, trees sometime get stressed if the soil level is raised too high, so be careful not to add too much mulch in one go.
5. For street trees it's tempting to want to protect the tree by building up the base, but it's best not to use raised edging or landscaping materials such as gravel or pebbles as this can cause a trip hazard, or wash off into drains and cause blockages.
6. Underplanting of trees can be really beautiful and healthy for the soil, but large plants can compete with young trees for nutrients and water, so make sure there's enough for both, especially in the first 3 years.
7. For street trees if you do decide to underplant with bulbs and/ or annuals, keep in mind that there are lots of operatives working around trees (street cleaning, highways, tree team) and plants could be at risk of accidental damage. Let us know if you are planting under a tree.
8. Look out for physical damage to the tree – mechanical damage to the trunk and branches can allow disease to enter the plant. Trees can invite incidental vandalism with people pulling on limbs and snapping small twigs. A timely prune of the damaged part can help the wound heal. Let us know if you see any signs of damage: info@cpresussex.org.uk
9. Trees can suffer systemically from all sorts of pests and diseases, especially in early years after planting. Keep a keen eye out for caterpillars, ants, aphids (including woolly aphid which looks like white fur) and fungal infections. If the tree looks poorly then get in touch to let us know.
10. Street trees in particular have a challenging environment and can show sign of stress, which can lead to further attack by pests and diseases. If a tree is looking sickly, even if there are no signs of damage or disease, let us know so the experts can make the right diagnosis.