

## Trees and Shrubs for Fall Color

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Fall is an excellent time to plant trees and shrubs in the Northwest. There are a wide range of deciduous trees and shrubs that have good fall color. The mild temperatures and gentle rains allow them to get good roots established. This is a particularly good time to check the stock that has arrived in local nurseries and see the wonderful color changes the leaves go through.

Shrubs to look for are: Barberry, Cotinus, Enkianthus, Euonymus, Hydranga, Ninebark, and Viburnums. Garden trees are: Dogwood, Flowering Cherry, Fothergilla, Gingko, Katsura, Redbud, Stewartia and Witch Hazel.

Everyone is familiar with Japanese Maples. They can range from crimson, red, orange, yellow and gold. They come in all sizes, 2 feet to 25 feet. Another excellent choice is the native Vine Maple. Natives are always a good choice and perform best after established with little or no summer water.

Planting takes a few simple guidelines. When the shrub or tree is ball & burlap, dig a hole the same depth as the ball but 2-3 times as wide. Have the ball slightly above the soil line. After checking the hole depth, remove the burlap. Mix in 1/3 compost with the soil you removed, refilling. Water when the hole is half full and again when done. Mulch, but do not smother the trunk or build soil up above the original soil line. Prepare the planting hole for container plants the same as above. After removing the container, loosen and cut slits in the root ball from top to bottom about 1 inch deep around the soil. Refill the hole and water in as above.

Fertilizing is not necessary but will give your plant a boost to start growing. Different plants have different needs so be sure to read labels. Granular fertilizers are easy to work with and especially slow release ones. Staking is thought to provide support to a plant while its roots get established. It is no longer recommended unless absolutely necessary. If you do stake, don't wrap rope or cable directly around the trunk. Thread it through old hose and make sure to check it. It is suggested you remove it after one year.