

## GENERAL PLANT CARE

### GNOME PLANT CARE INSTRUCTIONS

---

[Download PDF](#) | [Print Page](#)

Gnome trees, shrubs, and perennials are planted using the best techniques available. A bit of extra attention following installation will give them the best possible start and promote on-going plant health and well being.

### WATERING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO.

---

We recommend a method called **deep-watering**. Start by turning your hose on to a trickle so that the water just rolls out of its end. The idea is to water the plant deeply because the ground can only absorb water slowly. For a tree, the hose should be left in one spot for 15 to 20 minutes, twice per week. For a shrub, it should be left for 10 to 15 minutes, twice per week. Remember, the root ball of your plant is anywhere from one foot to three feet deep, so just watering the surface will not thoroughly water your plant.

This procedure should be repeated for at least two weeks, and after three weeks, water on an as needed basis. The plant should not be allowed to dry out for an extended period of time, so if we do not have an inch or more of rain for 5 to 6 days, the plant should be watered thoroughly on the 6th or 7th day. We recommend plants receive an inch of water above the ground per week.

Signs that indicate your plant is suffering from moisture fatigue are wilting leaves, yellowing margins on the leaves, browning tips, premature leaf or needle drop, and poor overall color.

Perennial and annual flowers generally have smaller root systems than trees or shrubs especially when they are first planted. A good rule of thumb for watering is the “one inch per week” for establishing plants. If your plant has a shallow root system then more frequent watering will be required for establishment. A Gnome recommended tool for watering is the “soft-head” watering wand. As always, watch your plants—if they are wilted they need water. We recommend that you water in the morning up until ten o’clock. If you must water during the middle of the day; it is best to water at the root base only and avoid wetting the leaves as this may lead to leaf disease. After a month of shallow watering you will want to start a more deep water regime much as we have instructed for the shrubs and trees.

A common myth is that when a plant goes dormant in the fall, dropping its leaves or needles, it no longer needs to be watered. This couldn’t be further from the truth. **YOU MUST CONTINUE WATERING UNTIL THE GROUND FREEZES!** A plant that is not watered, or dries up before the ground freezes, will surely die.

***Please note:** If you have an automatic irrigation system it must be set up to water the plants differently than grass, please ask us or your irrigation firm about these special installations.*

### CARING FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF TREES AND PLANTS:

---

#### Flowering Trees:

## General Plant Care.

Prune out all dead or injured branches or branches that cross and rub against each other. When pruning, keep in mind the ultimate shape you are trying to achieve.

Always prune above the "collar" area of a branch. Any closer and you may injure the tree. Any further away and you will have unsightly stubs that will invite problems. The collar is the area that connects a branch to a trunk (or a smaller branch to a larger one), and will usually have a thickened swell or a bark pattern that is different from the trunk and the branch.

We recommend using an organic fertilizer or top dressing with manure or compost worked into the soil. Do not feed trees after July 15th until the ground has frozen.

If you have guyed your tree (supported with stakes and wire), you should remove the stakes during the spring following the planting as soon as the tree has leafed out.

To assist you in the care of your crabapples, we suggest that you consult a copy of [The Planting and Care of Shade Trees](#), printed by the Forest Service, or call us.

### **Evergreen Shrubs:**

Evergreen shrubs – Junipers, Yews, Arborvitae, Rhododendrons, etc. should have any dead branches pruned as necessary.

Fertilizing with an acid based fertilizer such as Miracid or Hollytone using manufacturer's directions is a good method for immediate results but for a lasting result that helps to build your soil try top dressing with bagged manure or compost. Again, DO NOT feed these plants after July 15th until the ground has frozen.

### **Perennials:**

Fertilize all perennials using recommended application rates: Miracle Grow applied through foliar feeding will give you quick results, but a couple of handfuls of manure and compost worked into the soil around the plants is the best for the plant's future and for soil health.

Winter protection may be of value to the newly planted perennials. Simply mulching with straw or evergreen boughs, after the ground is frozen, can help prevent heaving caused by alternating freeze/thaw cycles.

Deadheading or removing the spent flowers will help to neaten up the area, lessen the incidence of fungus and will contribute to the future vigor of the plants.

### **Roses:**

In order to keep roses such as Grandiflora and Tea Roses in Maine through the winter, do not cut blooms after September 1st. Sometime during mid to late October, just as the ground is freezing, you want to mulch heavily around the plant. The method we employ is to take a mixture of loam and peat and pile it a foot and a half high approximately six inches around the whole stem. Then, in order to hold it in place, put straw vertically around the mound and tie in place with twine. For added protection, put a burlap cap on the exposed branches. Remove the mulch in mid-March or when the danger of heavy killing frost (15 degrees F or below) has passed. A heavy May fertilizing with compost or aged manure is recommended.

### **Bulbs:**

Fertilize in early and late spring with manure or compost. Deadheading or removing the spent flowers will help to neaten the area and will contribute to the future vigor of the plants. Don't remove the leaves however until they have dried up naturally.

### **Mulch:**

No matter what type of plants you are working with you may want to add mulch on an annual basis. However, never exceed two inches around perennials and four inches around trees and shrubs in total (from ground to top of mulch). It is also recommended that the mulch never touch the plant stem.

*If you desire, we can provide you with a proposal to maintain your plantings and yard, please give us a call at 207-781-2955 and ask for Chace Campbell.*

Edit this entry.

General Plant Care.

[contact@gnomeldm.com](mailto:contact@gnomeldm.com)

actofdesign