

Tree Staking

In most home landscape settings, no staking is necessary if the tree is set on undisturbed soil (where it can't sink and tilt). Firm soil around the base of the root ball before backfilling.



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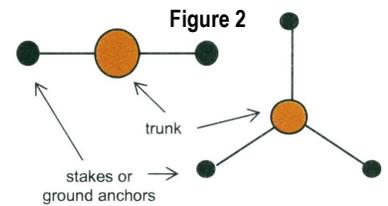
The Consequences of Staking

- Tree grows taller faster.
- Staking (the lack of tree movement) slows root spread.
- Tree has less growth in trunk size near the ground but more near the top support ties. Staking often produces a reverse trunk taper that increases the potential for storm damage.
- Staked trees experience more wind damage than un-staked trees of equal height (top of tree is not free to bend in wind).
- Bark is often damaged by the ties.
- If the stake is close to the trunk, it can develop uneven growth (where the stake shades the trunk) making the trunk tilt to the side. Keep stakes at least 6 inches away from the trunk.

Anchor staking

The purpose of staking is to prevent movement of the lower trunk & root system. Movement of the top is desirable & will strengthen the tree.

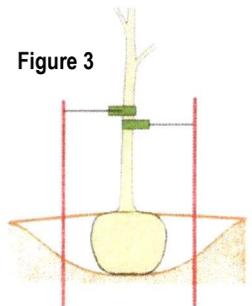
In areas of high winds, anchor staking may be needed. When anchor staking small trees, use 2 or 3 straps along the trunk about 18 inches above the ground; see Figure 2.



Staking Procedures

In any staking system, it is best if the tree trunk has a little flexibility. Some movement in wind encourages root growth and trunk taper development. Staking typically stays on for 1 season.

When staking, use flat straps with grommets at each end for tying into the rope because they spread the pressure over a wider area, reducing the potential for bark damage. (See Figure 3.) Straps should lay flat against the trunk and should not be bunched up or twisted. Straps may be spaced a few inches apart along the trunk. Two or three straps are routinely used in tree staking. Never use rope or material that would damage the tree bark. Rope can be threaded through sections of garden hose to prevent bark damage, as in Figure 5, if you do not wish to use straps.

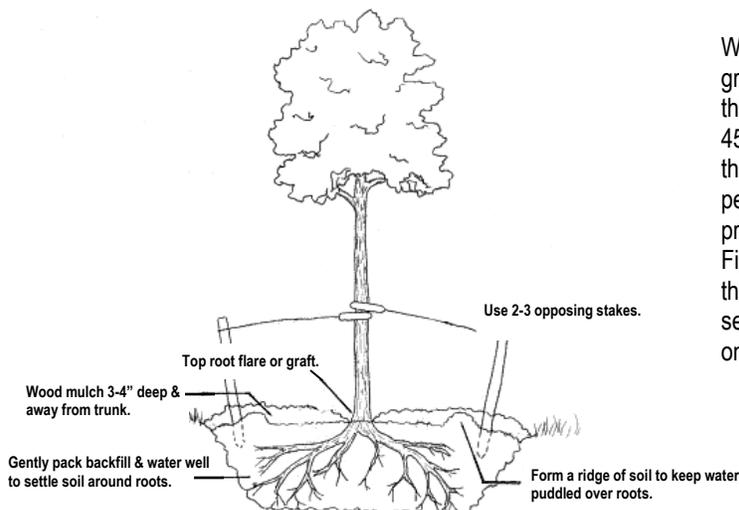


Routine staking includes 2-3 posts, 15-18" out from the trunk. Use flat straps to spread pressure over a wider area, reducing bark damage.

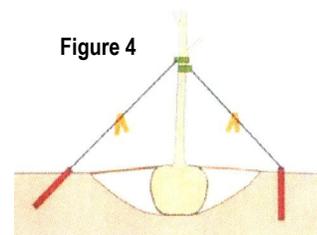
Straps may tie back to wood or metal posts or to anchors in the ground. Place posts 15 to 18 inches from the trunk. Never tie a post to the trunk, as the shading will cause the trunk to curve.



Figure 5



With guy-lines and ground anchors, place the guy-line at a 45-degree angle. Flag the guy-lines to help people see them and prevent injury. As in Figure 4, the anchor on the left may be more secure than the anchor on the right.



When staking with guy-lines, place guy-lines at a 45-degree angle. Ground anchor on left is more secure than anchor style on the right.

The finished product: A properly planted & mulched tree that has been staked.