

# Resources

## Seattle is losing trees every day.

Seattle has lost more than half of its tree canopy since the early 1970s. Look around your neighborhood; you will likely find fewer trees than when you moved in, and fewer trees than many large cities. For example, New York City has about 24 percent tree cover and Portland has 26 percent, compared with about 18 percent here.

## Would you like to live in a neighborhood with fewer trees?

Without trees, our neighborhoods would be harder and hotter, the din of traffic would be harsher, and pollution would be worse.

## You can help reverse the decline.

Each tree you plant and care for makes your neighborhood healthier and more liveable.

### Get involved

Rally your neighbors and get **free trees** from the City for planting strips. Neighbors share the work of planting and caring for the new trees: [www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/treefund.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/treefund.htm) or 206-684-0464.

Help restore Seattle's forested parklands with the **Green Seattle Partnership**. Join friends and neighbors to plant trees and pull ivy in your favorite park: [www.greenseattle.org](http://www.greenseattle.org) or 206-905-6913.

### Choose the right tree for the right place

Choose from lists of small, medium and large **trees appropriate for planting strips and yards**: [www.seattle.gov/transportation/treeplanting.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/treeplanting.htm) or 206-684-TREE (8733).

**The Right Tree Book** will help you choose trees that will be successful in our urban environment. Call Seattle City Light for a free copy at 206-684-3000, or download it at [www.seattle.gov/light/neighborhoods/treetrim/tt3\\_replace.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/light/neighborhoods/treetrim/tt3_replace.htm).

**Great Plant Picks** lists almost 500 plants that are easy to grow, hardy, and resistant to insects and diseases. The list includes 139 trees and conifers. Visit [www.greatplantpicks.org](http://www.greatplantpicks.org) or pick up the latest list at your local nursery.

### Plant your tree properly

Find **tree planting instructions** at [www.seattle.gov/transportation/newtreeplanting.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/newtreeplanting.htm) or 206-684-TREE (8733).

Get a **permit to plant a tree** in your planting strip: [www.seattle.gov/transportation/treeplantapp.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/treeplantapp.htm) or 206-684-TREE (8733).

### Learn how to prune trees effectively

The City provides a **basic tree pruning guide** in seven languages: [www.seattle.gov/transportation/pruning/guides.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pruning/guides.htm).

**Plant Amnesty** provides pruning tips for several types of trees and shrubs, including what to do instead of topping your tree: [www.plantamnesty.org](http://www.plantamnesty.org) or 206-783-9813.

**There are a number of good books on pruning.** Cass Turnbull's *Guide to Pruning* contains pruning tips for a wide variety of trees.

### Other resources

**Learn how to avoid damaging trees during construction** and how to care for trees that have been damaged by construction: [www.treesaregood.com/treecare/avoiding\\_construction.aspx](http://www.treesaregood.com/treecare/avoiding_construction.aspx).

**Find out about tree trimming done to protect electrical lines**: [www.seattle.gov/light/neighborhoods/nh4\\_trtr.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/light/neighborhoods/nh4_trtr.htm) or 206-386-1733.

**Find out what regulations affect trees**: [www.seattle.gov/dpd/codes/Tree\\_Landscaping\\_Regulations/Overview/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/codes/Tree_Landscaping_Regulations/Overview/default.asp) or 206-684-8600.

**Find out how to plant, nurture and celebrate trees** at the Arbor Day Foundation web site, [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org).

**Help Global ReLeaf** plant millions of trees around the globe. Visit [www.americanforests.org/global\\_releaf](http://www.americanforests.org/global_releaf).

The **International Society of Arboriculture** provides a wide range of helpful tree planting and care information: [www.treesaregood.org/treecare/treecareinfo.aspx](http://www.treesaregood.org/treecare/treecareinfo.aspx).



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## Seattle's Valuable Trees Are Disappearing

### Why It Matters and What You Can Do



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The trees in your yard matter — Our parks and streets offer many opportunities to increase the number of trees in Seattle and the City is committed to planting more trees every year. The trees in your yard are also a critical part of the “urban forest.” In fact, about two-thirds of our city is residential. So spruce up your yard (literally!) and plant a tree.



## Trees bring life to Seattle

**Cleaner air.** Trees are dust mops, clearing tons of pollution from our air each year. Children living in neighborhoods with more trees may be less prone to asthma.

**Reduced global warming pollution.** An average city tree will absorb about a ton of harmful carbon dioxide over its lifetime.

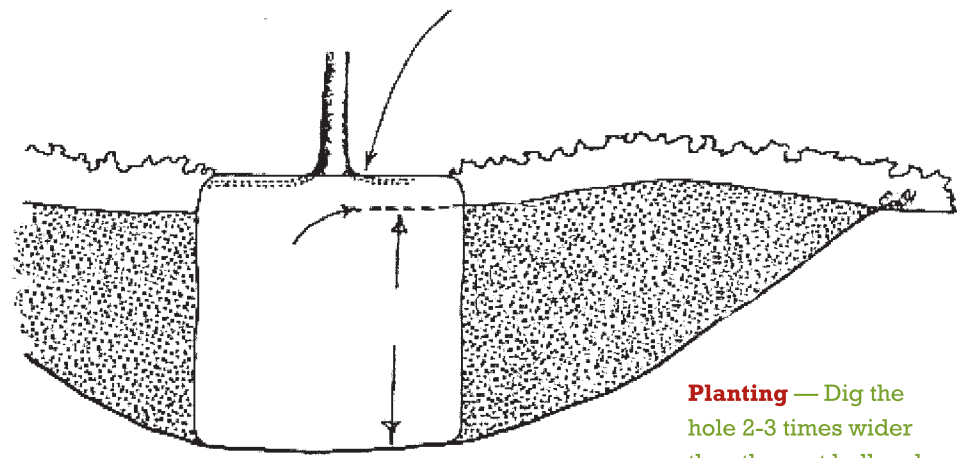
**Increased home values.** Trees can increase your home’s selling price by 5, 10 or even 20 percent.

**Beauty and grandeur.** Stately tree-lined streets, colorful fall leaves, and evergreens in our gray winters are offerings from trees.

**Cleaner water in our streams.** Trees hold and filter large amounts of water, reducing flooding and saving stormwater rate payers millions of dollars each year.

**Healthier birds and other wildlife.** The trees in your yard, your neighbors’ yards and local parks together provide valuable habitat and help protect salmon streams.

**Watering —** Newly planted trees need to be watered in the summer — about 5 gallons per week for every inch of trunk diameter. Water should always be applied slowly.



**Planting —** Dig the hole 2-3 times wider than the root ball and plant the root flare at soil height or 1” higher.

## Young trees need extra care

The first three years of a tree’s life are critical and can mean the difference between life and death of the tree. Here are a few tips:

**Choose the right tree for your landscape.** Consider how large the tree will grow and whether your yard provides the right sunlight, space, soil and moisture conditions. Ask your local nursery staff for advice.

**Give your tree a good start.** The best time to plant is in the fall. Dig a hole 2-3 times wider but not deeper than the root ball, and backfill with native soil. Mulch, leaving a hand-width area around the trunk open, and water thoroughly.

**Prune young trees** to create a strong structure and to remove dead, damaged, diseased, crossing, and rubbing branches. This will reduce pruning needs when they mature. Poor pruning techniques can seriously damage your tree so consider hiring a certified arborist, or if you are going to do it yourself, check out the Resources to learn how to prune properly.

**Trees need water in summer** to help them grow strong roots. For the first three years, water is crucial for the tree to survive.



## Trees require lifelong care to thrive

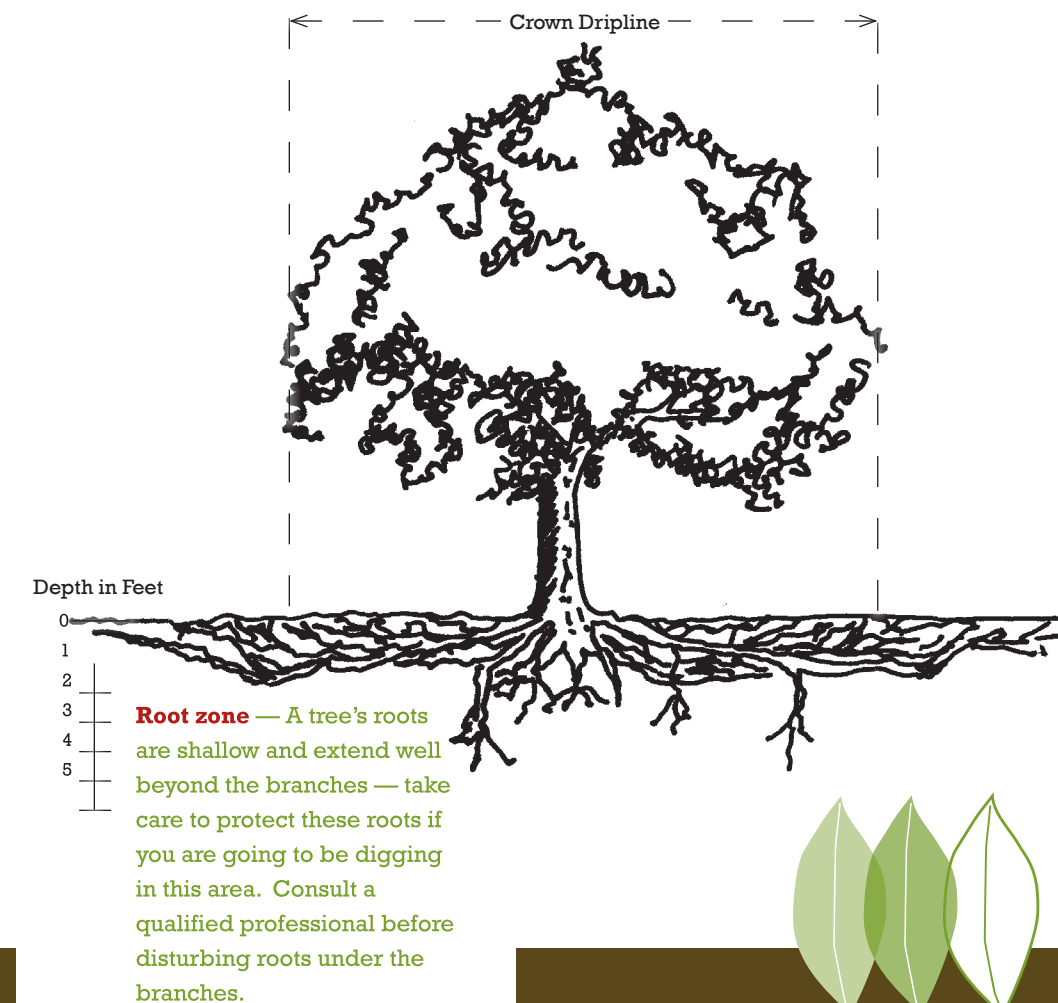
**Cutting the top off your tree starves it** and makes it prone to rot. This can turn it into a less stable or even hazardous tree. Topping will not work to keep your tree small and will create a maintenance headache.

**Trees can frame your view, adding to its beauty.** Removing just a few branches can add to your view. Drastic pruning will cause the tree to grow broader and faster, and could eventually kill the tree.

**Protect the critical root zone of trees.** Most tree roots are within the top two feet of soil, and they extend well beyond the ends of the branches. Building a patio or deck or replacing a sewer line can sever tree roots and eventually kill the tree.

**Remove invasive plants.** English ivy is a noxious weed. As it grows up your tree, it can kill it. Remove the ivy or cut an ivy-free ring around the base of the tree.

**Water is important for all trees when it is hot.** Even mature trees may need one or two good soakings a month during the hot, dry season. Water slowly and throughout the root zone — not at the trunk.



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