Planting Your Tree

1. Select the right tree for the right place. Refer to the chart below for the space and light requirements for your selection.

2. Dig a hole 2-5 times the diameter of the rootball and no deeper than the rootball. The bottom of the rootball should rest on solid, undisturbed ground. When finished, you want the soil at the base of the tree to be at the same level as it was in the container.

3. Make sure the sides of the hole are rough and uneven. A rough edge to the hole may help force roots to grow out into the surrounding soil.

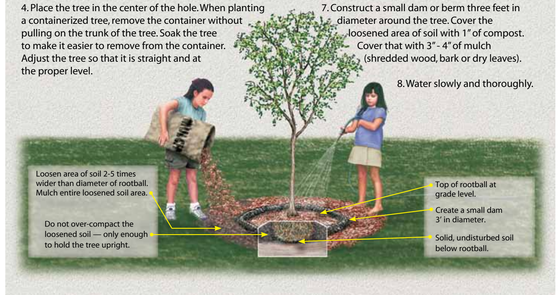
4. Place the tree in the center of the hole. When planting a containerized tree, remove the container without pulling on the trunk of the tree. Soak the tree to make it easier to remove from the container. Adjust the tree so that it is straight and at the proper level.

5. When planting a bare-root tree, form a cone of loosened soil in the center of the hole. The top of the cone should be about one inch below the level of the surrounding soil. For trees with a tap root (pears, apples, nuts) gently stab into the center of the cone. Arrange all of the smaller roots in a single layer over the surface of the cone.

6. Backfill with the original soil, breaking up clods and removing any large stones. Fill the hole half full and flood with a slow hose or tamp gently with your foot to firm the soil. Repeat until the hole is full. Do not press too firmly.

7. Construct a small dam or berm three feet in diameter around the tree. Cover the loosened area of soil with 1" of compost. Cover that with 3" - 4" of mulch (shredded wood, bark or dry leaves).

8. Water slowly and thoroughly.



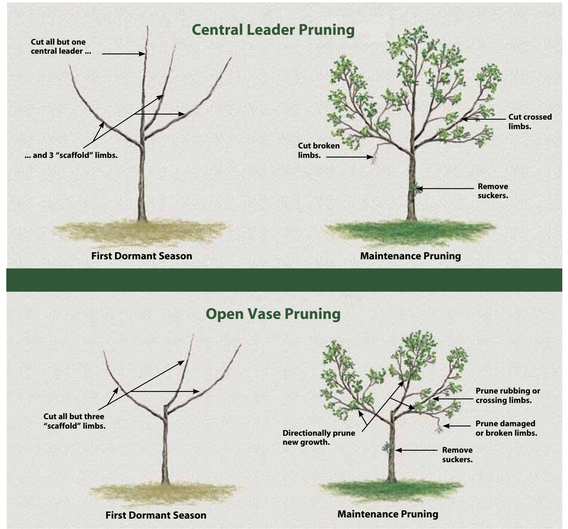
Companion Plants

When you plant your trees, remember that many attractive and useful plants can grow in the shade of a fruit tree. Herbs in the mint family will grow in dappled shade and supply seasoning, tea, beautiful foliage and flowers and may help deter pests. Blackberries will grow very well in an understory. Pawpaws or persimmons can both thrive in the edge of a large tree's canopy. Check your local nursery for other shade-tolerant plants.

Pruning

Proper pruning is necessary for optimal fruit and nut production. The improved species of fruit tree that you purchase is actually a tiny piece of stem from the top of one tree grafted onto the roots of another. You have to train it to grow like a tree.

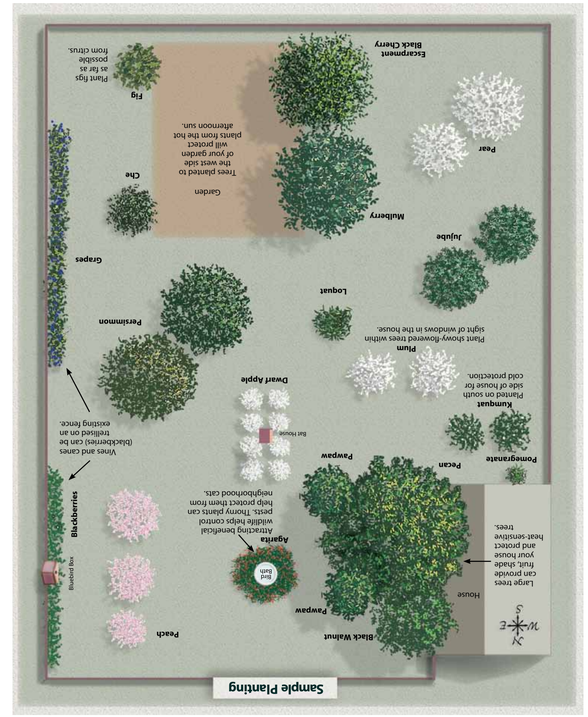
There are two basic methods of fruit tree pruning, *Central Leader* and *Open Vase*. Refer to the chart below to see which one applies to your selection. The goal of both methods is to allow plenty of sunlight and air flow to keep the foliage dry to help prevent disease.



Always start by removing any growth from the base of the tree. This is growth from the rootstock and will never produce good fruit. Also remove branches that cross other branches. Prune any dead or diseased plant parts. If you prune diseased wood be sure to clean your tools before continuing. Minor pruning can be done at any time of year. Major shaping should be done in the dormant period.

Resources

California Rare Fruit Grower's Association, www.crfg.org
Native and Naturalized Woody Plants of Austin and the Hill Country, Daniel Lynch
Native Texas Plants: Landscaping Region by Region, Sally Wasowski with Andy Wasowski
Organic Orcharding: A Grove of Trees to Live In, Gene Logsdon
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu
Tree Growing Guide for Austin and the Hill Country, TreeFolks
TreeFolks' Urban Orchard Project, www.treefolks.org



Tree Height	Minimum Spacing From Wall	Minimum Spacing From Building Corner
Up to 25'	10'	10'
25'-50'	15'	15'
50'+	20'	15'

This guide was created to encourage you to plant trees for their beauty, environmental benefits and to produce fresh, healthy food. It suggests native and well-adapted trees and describes organic methods to care for them successfully.

Tree Care

Organics

The basis of organic growing is living soil which is free of toxic chemicials (for at least three years) and is enriched by compost and other organic matter. The concept is simple: vigorous plants resist insects, weeds and diseases better than those under stress due to repeated chemical applications. By working with nature to create a diverse ecosystem, you produce optimal growing conditions.

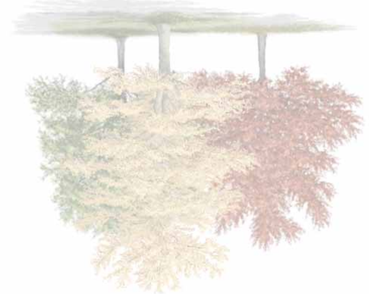
Fruit Tree Care

Proper pruning is vital to fruit tree health. It helps ensure health by removing diseased parts and exposing healthy foliage to light and air to help prevent diseases and discourage pests.

Sanitation is also very important to tree health. Diseases and pests can breed on fallen fruit, plant parts and tall weeds left around the tree. Removing weeds and debris (to your compost pile) will help prevent many problems. Spreading 1" of compost around the drip line of your trees will help clean up any debris that you miss. Give your trees the equivalent of 1" of rain every week. One deep soaking is better than multiplie light waterings.

Do not fertilize your tree the first year. Threefeter apply one pound of complete organic fertilizer per inch of trunk diameter in the early spring and again after fruit have set. You can purchase fertilizer or make your own using equal parts of cottonseed meal, rock phosphate and greensand or kelp meal.

If you want fruit and don't want the trouble of improved varieties, try planting Texas native fruit-bearing trees. The fruit is usually smaller but the trees are much easier to care for.



Fruit and nut trees are a special and often undervalued and underappreciated part of the urban food pantry. Unlike vegetables, they continue to produce for many years and are a great snack for kids and adults. They are an excellent source of vitamins, minerals, protein, fats and oils. Some of the larger variety of trees, like pecans, provide shade for yards and houses. All trees cool the air around them through the process of evapotranspiration (this is the combined process of transpiration and evaporation).

Growing fruit and nut trees and plants contributes to food security, fresher, more nutritious food and lower food miles. Eating locally reduces people's dependence on the large national system of food production and distribution that fills grocery store shelves. Natural and man-made disasters can affect this system of distribution. In the U.S., produce travels an average of 1,500 miles to reach grocery store shelves. These food miles can drastically affect your impact on climate change and your carbon footprint. Also, produce transported over long distances loses many of its nutrients and flavor when compared to being picked fresh from a tree or vine. Grow your own food and support other local urban farmers by buying local to help reduce your carbon footprint.

In this Fruit & Nut Tree Guide you'll find:

- Beautiful illustrations of recommended fruit and nut bearing trees for Central Texas
- Detailed information about each tree to help you choose the appropriate tree(s) for your site and needs
- Tree planting instructions
- Tree pruning and care information

Tree Type	Size	Pruning	Soil	Climate Conditions and Plant Location	Pests	Diseases	Self-Pollinating	Special Care	Variety	Comments	Fruit
Pomegranate	10'-15' x 10'	Train as hedge, container plant or train to one trunk.	Grows in most soils.	Full-sun plant grows well in hot and dry climates. Drought tolerant but sensitive to long periods of low temps.	Few	Few	Yes	Drought tolerant, but irrigate for better fruit production and size.	Wonderful	Showy red-orange blossoms attract hummingbirds all season. Fruit used for syrup, jelly, or eaten fresh.	3" to 5" with purple to red skin. Small seeds inside, covered with juicy red pulp.
Apple	Up to 30'	Semi-dwarf or dwarf trained to a central leader.	Well-drained, mildly acid soil.	Maximize sunlight. Watch for disease in extended warm, moist periods.	Mites	Fire blight, cotton root rot, apple scab, bitter rot	No	Usually requires thinning as trees bear too much fruit. Lowering soil pH will prevent many disease problems.	Anna, Dorsette Golden, Ein Shemer, Stark Royal Gala, Mollies Delicious	Dwarf trees are most suited to southern gardening.	3" to 5" with yellow or greenish yellow with some red blush.
Blackberry[1]	4' x 3'	Plant in rows. Plants do better with some support.	Moist, well-drained, sandy soils are best but blackberries are very tolerant.	Tolerates part shade very well. Needs irrigation for best production.	Strawberry weevils, redneck cane borers, spiderwebs, stink bugs, spittlebugs. Watch for snakes in rural areas!	Anthracnose, Rosette	No	Prune fruiting canes to the ground and remove immediately after harvest to avoid disease.	Brazos, Brison, Rosborough, Womack, Cheyenne, Navaho (thornless)	Produces a lot of fruit. Easy to grow in Texas. Native dewberries are very similar but canes trail close to the ground.	Purple-black berries with many small seeds around a soft, edible core; 3/4" to 2" in length.
Fig	10'-15'	Train as bush or tree. Bush training is best to prevent frost damage.	Well-drained soil.	Grows well in Texas, though freeze damage can be a problem. Maximize sunlight.	Nematodes, gophers, beetles, fire ants, and euryphid mites	Mosaic virus, botrytis, fig canker	Yes	Irrigate but reduce irrigation in fall to force dormancy. Prune dead wood.	Alma, Celeste, Texas Everbearing	Large attractive leaves and fragrant wood. Plant only closed-eye figs to prevent pest damage and spoilage problems. Do not grow near citrus.	Brownish 2" to 3" fruit with some purple blush. Edible skin over sweet, exotic tasting flesh.
Grape[3]	8' x 8'	Grow on trellises or fences.	Well-drained, sandy soil.	Subject to freeze damage.	Aphids, leafhoppers, mites, rasp-thrips, grape phylloxeras	Pierce's disease, black rot, cotton root rot	Yes	Weed regularly. Cut back watering in fall to avoid freeze damage. Do not plant near trees.	Seeded: Champanel, Black Spanish, Siebel 9110, Fredonia Seedless: Mars, Reliance, Suffolk Red	Very prolific with good care. Native Mustang and Winter grapes are usually used for jelly or wine (as opposed to eating fresh).	Clusters of 3/4" to 1 1/4" berries with thin skins and sweet, succulent flesh.
Jujube	30'	Train to a central leader.	Tolerates most soils, but prefers sandy, well-drained soils.	Drought resistant. Maximize sunlight and heat received.	Pest tolerant	None	Yes	Prune in winter for healthier tree.	Lang, Li	An attractive yard tree as well as a source of very interesting fruit.	1 1/2" to 3 1/2" yellow fruit with some brown blotches. Flesh is suggestive of apple with a distinct spiciness.
Loquat	10'-20'	Prune for aesthetic appeal only.	Moist, well-drained soils preferred, but not picky.	An attractive yard tree tolerant of some shade.	Fruit flies, birds	Fire blight	Ask, because some are and some are not self-pollinating.	Possible frost damage to blossoms in cold winters.	Early Red, Oliver, Advance, Champagne	Always good as an ornamental. Frost might impair fruit production.	Fuzzy pale yellow-orange 2" fruit with large seeds and complex tropical flavor.
Peach	8'-10'	Train to an open vase shape.	Sandy, deep, well-drained soil.	Blooms early, subjecting blossoms to freeze damage in spring. Needs sunlight most of day.	San Jose scales, borers, catfacing insects	Scab, brown rot, bacterial spot, post oak root rot, cotton root rot, bacterial canker	Yes	Pruning and thinning necessary because of high fruit production. Difficult but not impossible to grow organically.	Sentinel, Harvester, Redglobe, Redskin, Dixieland, Springold, Bicentennial, June Gold	Attractive pink blooms in early spring are a big bonus to planting peaches.	Fuzzy 2 1/2" to 4" fruit with single large pits. Arguably the definitive taste of summer.
Pear	20'	Train as hedge, container plant or train to one trunk.	Extremely tolerant of most soils.	Full sunlight.	Pest tolerant	Fire blight, leaf spot	No, plant two types.	Pruning should occur in summer.	Moonglow, Magness, Seckel, Orient, Kieffer, Garber, LeConte, Warren	Fruiting pears are very prolific and easy to grow. Not used as an ornamental.	Large (up to one pound) pears have rougher texture, sweet juicy flesh and perfumey aroma.
Pecan	50'-80'	Train to a central leader.	Needs moderate soil moisture, and deep, well-drained soil.	Full sunlight.	Weevils, aphids, borers, webworms, tent caterpillars, casebearers	Pecan scab, stick-tights	No, plant two varieties, unless others exist nearby.	Foliar sprays of nitrogen-zinc fertilizer every ten days after bud break greatly increase production and growth.	Cheyenne, Choctaw, Sioux, Caddo, Desirable, Kiowa, Podsednik, Western, Wichita	Texas state tree. Very large at maturity, so plant at least 35 feet apart and 20 feet from buildings.	Thin 1" to 2 1/2" shells cover rich, buttery, slightly sweet nut meats.
Persimmon	10'-25'	Train to a central leader.	Well-drained soil.	Drought tolerant. Maximize sunlight.	Pest tolerant, but ants may cause problems	Disease resistant	Yes	Little pruning is necessary. Fertilize in February and June. Irrigate if fruit drops prematurely. Be careful not to overwater or fertilize.	Eureka, Fuyu, Hachiya, Tamopan, Tanenashi	Pretty specimen trees with large glossy leaves and colorful fall foliage. Fruits remain after leaves drop creating a very decorative fall display.	Orange to orange-red 3" to 5" fruit with thin skins over thick, sweet succulent flesh with few large seeds. Most cannot be eaten until soft-ripe.
Plum[2]	15'-20'	Train to an open vase shape.	Tolerates most well-drained soils.	Full sunlight.	Plum curculio, catfacing insects, borers	Brown rot, scab, leaf curl, bacterial canker	No, plant two varieties.	Prune, thin and irrigate for better production.	Allred, Bruce, Methley, Morris, Ozark Premier, Santa Rosa	Fruit is good fresh and as jelly. Fragrant white blossoms in spring.	2" to 3" fruits with red or dark purple tart skins over sweet, juicy and slightly stringy flesh and a single small pit.
Kumquat	15'	Train to a central leader or as a hedge.	Well-drained soil.	Tolerates low temps to 18 degrees. Full sun.	Rust mites, whiteflies, summer scales	Canker, melanose fungus	Yes		Meiwa	Bear tiny orange-like fruit. Good fresh or in marmalade.	1 1/2" to 2" waxy orange fruit with sweet edible skin and tiny edible seeds. Best eaten whole.
Mulberry	Up to 45'	Large tree requiring minimal pruning.	Deep, warm, well-drained soil prefered. Does okay in poor soils.	Drought and pollution tolerant. Full sun. Give it a lot of space.	Birds	Disease tolerant, Popcorn disease can occur	Yes	When fruit is ripe, spread an old sheet on the ground and shake branches.	Improved varieties: Shangri La Native/Naturalized Species: Texas, Paper, White, Red	Birds love them. Plant 25 feet apart. Do not plant near sidewalks.	Purple berries 1" to 2" in length with very small seeds and sweet, mild flavor.
Che	25'	Train as hedge, container plant or train to one trunk.	Most warm, well-drained soils.	Plant in a warm, sunny location.	Birds	Disease tolerant	No, a separate male plant is required.		No named varieties.	A popular fruit in Asian markets.	Red berries from grape to plum size with small seeds and fresh flavor that resembles melon
Pawpaw	15'-20'	Train to central leader.	Deep, fertile, well-drained, moist, and slightly acid soils.	Not drought tolerant. Needs filtered sun in very hot climates.	Pest resistant, though squirrels love the fruit	Disease resistant	No, cross-pollinate with an unrelated tree.	Irrigate	Mitchell, Overleese, Prolific, Taytoo	Attractive, pyramidal-shaped tree with large tropical leaves. Fruit is pale green with black markings and white flesh of vanilla taste.	Clusters of 3" to 6" fruit best eaten when skin begins to blacken.
Black Walnut[4]	Up to 50'	Train to a central leader.	Deep "pecan soil" is best.	Drought tolerant after it is established.	Aphids, weevils, borers	Disease resistant	No	Foliar sprays of nitrogen-zinc fertilizer every ten days after bud break greatly increase production and growth.	Thomas	Walnuts have similar growth habits and appearance to pecans but they emit a chemical that discourages most other plants from growing under them.	1" to 1 3/4" nuts with rough, hard, blackish shells covering delicious nut meats with very high oil content.
Escarpment Black Cherry (native)	30'	No special pruning is necessary.	Tolerant of very alkaline soil if it drains well.	Very drought tolerant.	Birds	No known serious diseases	No, plant at least two.	Do not plant near driveways. When fruit is ripe, spread an old sheet on the ground and shake branches.	No named varieties.	A beautiful and easy-to-grow tree. The fruit is small but makes superb jelly.	3/8" to 5/8" fruit ripens to very dark purple in clusters. Sweet, wild and sometimes slightly bitter flavor.
Agarita (native)	3' x 4'	No pruning necessary.	An extremely tolerant native plant.	Grows well in dappled shade.	No known pests	Disease resistant	Yes	Watch for spines when harvesting or pruning.	No named varieties.	Intensely fragrant flowers are followed by clusters of tender grape-like fruits.	Red, oval shaped, 1/2" to 5/8" fruit. Seeds are small and soft.
Prickly Pear Cactus (native)	3' x 4'	No pruning or training is necessary.	Any well-drained soil will work.	Extremely drought tolerant once established.	Cochineal insects	Downy mildew	Yes	Handle spined specimens very carefully.	Plant spineless varieties for ease of handling.	Young pads are prepared as a vegetable. Fruit is delicious chilled or as jelly. Seeds can be ground as flour.	2" to 4" maroon to purple fruit is sweet and beautiful but benefit from chilling and a squeeze of lime for "character" when eaten fresh.
Mexican Plum (native)	8'-25'	Little special care is required.	Any well-drained soil will work.	Drought tolerant once established.	Birds, deer	No known serious diseases	No, plant at least two (any other wild plum).	This is a very easy-care small tree. It will tolerate some shade but may be slightly cold sensitive.	No named varieties.	Fragrant white blossoms are followed by attractive edible fruits about 1" across.	3/4" to 1 3/4" fruit is purple to gold with purple blush. Delicious when picked soft-ripe.
Strawberry (not illustrated)	–	Best grown as annual plant, because of extreme Texas heat.	Light well-drained soil a must.	Needs full sunlight and no weed competition.	Few insects when grown as an annual. Birds are a problem.		Yes	Plant in fall for spring harvest.	Sequoia, Tioga, Cardinal	Fast producer in Texas, though hard to grow.	1" to 2" deep red berries with thin skin covered with tiny, edible seeds covering sweet/tart flesh.

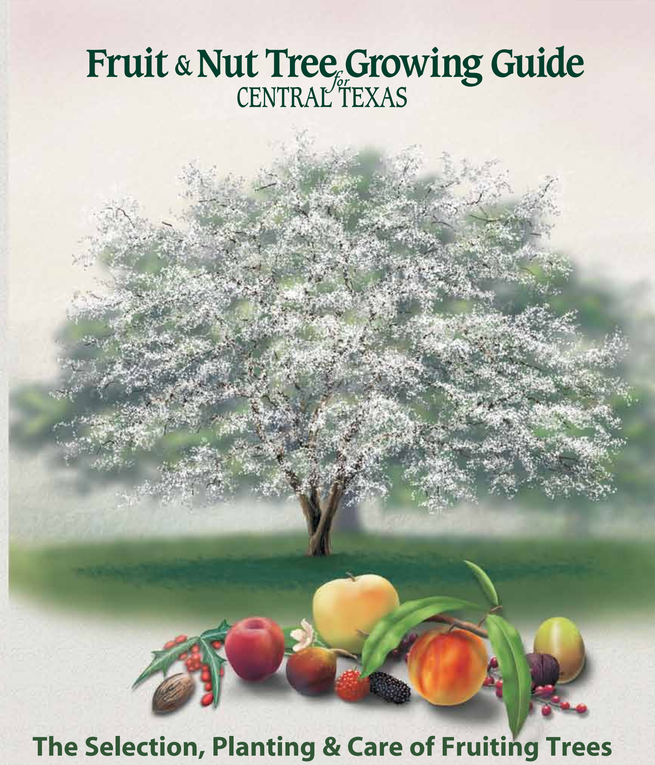
[1] Try Dewberries for an easy-to-care-for alternative.
[2] Try Hog or Creek Plums for an easy-to-care-for alternative.
[3] Try Mustang Grapes for disease resistance and easy care. Start your plants from wild plants that you have seen fruiting. 4 out of 5 wild plants are male and so will never bear fruit.
[4] Try Arizona Walnut or Little Walnut (River Walnut) for an easier-to-care-for alternative for the Hill Country.

Illustration: Robert O'Brien Design

To order additional copies of this guide call TreeFolks at 512-443-5323, or visit the Web site at www.treefolks.org.

This tree poster is printed on 30% post-consumer recycled paper which is manufactured in the U.S.A. Please recycle or pass on to a friend.

Fruit & Nut Tree Growing Guide for CENTRAL TEXAS



The Selection, Planting & Care of Fruiting Trees