Watsonville

TREE GUIDE

A guide to planting and caring for your tree

Watsonville
CALIFORNIA

Yard looking a little bare?

You've come to the right place!

This tree planting guide was designed with your yard in mind!

This guide includes tips for choosing and caring for trees on your property, including:

- A list of recommended trees for Watsonville and the characteristics that make each tree unique.
- The seven deadly sins of tree care.
- A scavenger hunt map of notable trees in Watsonville for the whole family to find!

For the complete species list, scan

Note: Tree species have unique characteristics. You might want to consult a local nursery or an arborist to help pick the perfect tree for your space.

The seven deadly sins of tree care

Throughout the guide, you will find tips for avoiding the seven deadly sins, or mistakes, that tree owners most commonly make, including:

1. Right tree, wrong place
2. Structural defects
3. Planting too deep
4. Over and under watering
5. Poor or neglected staking
6. Premature removal of juvenile branches
7. Poor pruning or topping

Learning about how trees grow and what they need will help you avoid these deadly sins and give your tree a better chance at survival!

To learn more, scan

Tree size color key

S — Small Trees
30 feet tall or less

M — Medium Trees
30–50 feet tall

L — Large Trees
>50 feet tall

Navigating tree characteristics

Below are icons that represent the different characteristics common for each tree in this guide. “Planting Site Icons” reveal a tree’s versatility in certain environments. “Tree Characteristics” describe the attributes to keep in mind when choosing a species. The more an icon appears, the more that characteristic applies. For example, a maple with three Water Use icons will use more water than a a California Buckeye with only one. The same rule applies to Sidewalk Damage Rating. Understanding these characteristics can help make sure that the tree you plant is the right tree in the right place.

S *Street Tree*

L *Landscape*

Sidewalk Damage Rating

Develops Fall Colors

Edible Fruit

Allergen Potential

Water Use Rating

Very Low

Low

Medium

High

American Elderberry
(Sambucus canadensis)

Blue Elderberry
(Sambucus mexicana)

Commom Manzanita
(Arctostaphylos spp.)

Sweet Hakea
(Hakea drupacea)

Crabapple 'Red Jade'
(Malus 'Red Jade')

Chickasaw Plum
(Prunus angustifolia)

Coolidge pineapple guava
(Acca sellowiana 'Coolidge')

Trident Maple
(Acer buergeranum)

Redosier Dogwood
(Cornus sericea)

Red Elderberry
(Sambucus racemosa)

Spanish Dagger Yucca
(Yucca gloriosa)

Kumquat
(Fortunella margarita)

Hollywood juniper
(Juniperus chinensis 'Torulosa')

Arnold Crabapple
(Malus arnoldiana)

Carmine crabapple
(Malus atrosanguinea)

Chinese Hawthorn
(Photinia serrulata 'Aculeata')

Autumn Blaze
(Acer x freemanii 'Autumn Blaze')

Tuscarora Crapemyrtle
(Lagerstroemia indica 'Tuscarora')

Saucer Magnolia
(Magnolia soulangiana 'Speciosa')

Crabapple 'Dolgo'
(Malus x 'Dolgo')

Crabapple 'Hopa'
(Malus x 'Hopa')

Aurea American Elderberry
(Sambucus canadensis 'Aurea')

'Frontier' Elm
(Ulmus x 'Frontier')

Torrey's Hybrid Oak
(Quercus acutidens)

California Buckeye
(Aesculus californica)

Pindo Palm
(Butia odorata)

Lemon Bottlebrush
(Callistemon citrinus)

Gold Medallion Tree
(Cassia leptophyllum)

Bronze Loquat
(Eriobotrya deflexa)

'Davis Gold' Toyon
(Heteromeles arbutifolia 'Davis Gold')

Crapemyrtle 'Biloxy'
(Lagerstroemia indica 'biloxi')

Crapemyrtle 'Muskogee'
(Lagerstroemia indica 'Muskogee')

Deadly Sin I:

Right Tree, Wrong Place

Location, location, location!

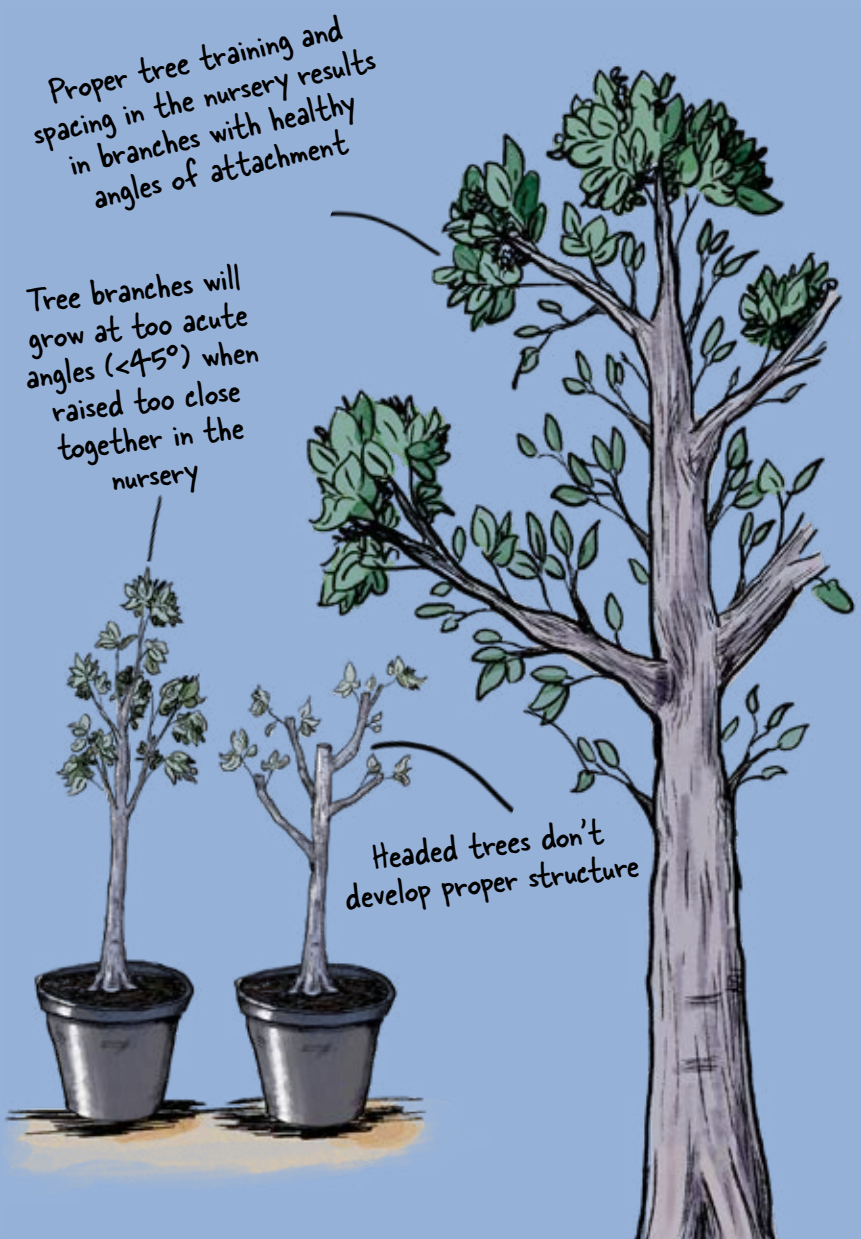
Usually, the first deadly sin occurs when the right tree is selected for the wrong location.

Trees are stationary and, therefore, subject to the conditions where they are planted. Some species may be appropriate for the local climate, but if planted in the wrong place they can outgrow their planting space, clash with infrastructure or design, and require additional maintenance to control size or form.

These scenarios can be avoided altogether if the planting site and intended use are considered when selecting a tree species, including:

- Planting site (e.g., street tree or landscape)
- Height and canopy width at full maturity
- Root growth
- Rate of growth
- Evergreen or deciduous
- Water needs (e.g., drought tolerant)
- Individual species characteristics (e.g., berries, thorns, seed pods or shedding bark)
- Environmental factors (e.g., soil type, pH level, and climate)
- Natives and other species

Deadly Sin II:
Structural Defects



Help trees grow properly

The second tree care tip is to select a tree that is healthy and properly structured. Commercially grown trees often develop structural defects due to poor nursery management practices, including heading, crowding, limbing up juvenile branches, and undersized containers.

When selecting a tree at the nursery, choose trees with the following characteristics:

- Uniform and full canopy
- Good structure
- A strong central leader and intact terminal shoot (e.g., no codominant branches)
- Juvenile branches spaced throughout the trunk
- Branches evenly distributed
- Branches with healthy angles of attachment (≥45° and no included bark)
- Not topped, headed, or shaped
- Appear in good health (e.g., no mechanical damage, signs of pests/disease, and foliage is normal size and healthy color)
- Appropriate sized containers and no visible signs of girdling roots

To avoid this deadly sin, simply be a knowledgeable, discerning consumer and support reputable growers by refusing to purchase unhealthy, structurally defective trees.

Maple Leaf

Shangtung Maple
(Acer truncatum)

Grapefruit
(Citrus paradisi)

Orange
(Citrus sinensis)

Japanese Persimmon
(Diospyros kaki)

Japanese Loquat
(Eriobotrya japonica)

Pink Trumpet Tree
(Handroanthus heptaphyllus)

Japanese Crapemyrtle
(Lagerstroemia fauriei)

'Swan Hill' Olive
(Olea 'Swan Hill')

Buddhist Pine
(Podocarpus macrophyllus)

Almond
(Prunus amygdalus)

Apricot
(Prunus armeniaca)

Hollyleaf Cherry
(Prunus ilicifolia)

Japanese Evergreen Oak
(Quercus acuta)

Sandbar Willow
(Salix exigua var. hindsiana)

Queen Elizabeth' Field Maple
(Acer campestre 'Queen Elizabeth')

Bigtooth Maple
(Acer grandidentatum)

Evergreen Maple
(Acer paxii)

Peppermint Tree
(Agonis flexuosa)

Strawberry Tree
(Arbutus unedo)

Orchid Tree
(Bauhinia variegata)

Chitalpa
(Chitalpa x tashkentensis)

New Zealand Christmas Tree
(Metrosideros excelsa)

Chinese Pistache
(Pastacia chinensis)

Catalina Cherry
(Prunus lyonii)

Arroyo Willow
(Salix lasiolepis)

Strawberry Tree 'Marina'
(Arbutus unedo)

Carob
(Ceratonia siliqua)

Texas Persimmon
(Diospyros texana)

Catalina ironwood
(Lyonothamnus floribundus)

Paperbark/Cajeput Tree
(Melaleuca quinquenervia)

Avocado
(Persea americana)

Water Gum
(Tristaniopsis laurina)

Red Flowering Gum
(Corymbia ficifolia)

Soapbark Tree
(Quillaja saponaria)

Chinese Elm 'Drake'
(Ulmus parvifolia 'Drake')

Boxelder
(Acer negundo)

Red Horsechestnut 'Briottii'
(Aesculus carnea 'Briotii')

Kurrajong
(Brachychiton populneus)

Ghost Gum
(Corymbia aparrerinja)

Rusty-Leaf Fig
(Ficus rubiginosa)

Flamegold
(Koelreuteria elegans)

Brisbane box
(Lophostemon confertus)

Fruitless Mulberry
(Morus alba)

Chinese Tupelo
(Nyssa sinensis)

Sour Gum
(Nyssa sylvatica)

Torrey Pine
(Pinus torreyana)

Pear
(Pyrus communis)

Pear 'New Bradford'
(Pyrus 'New Bradford')

Escarpment Oak
(Quercus fusiformis)

Shreve Oak
(Quercus parvula var. shrevei)

Island Oak
(Quercus tomentella)

Scouler's Willow
(Salix scouleriana)

Japanese Pagoda 'Regent'
(Sophora japonica 'Regent')

Queen Palm
(Syagrus romanzoffiana)

Tipu Tree
(Tipuana tipu)

Southern Red Ceder
(Juniperus silicicola)

Indian Laurel Fig
(Ficus microcarpa)

Sweet Michelia
(Michelia doltsopa)

Australian Willow
(Geijera parviflora)

Victorian Box
(Pittosporum undulatum)

Sweet Bay
(Laurus nobilis)

linden 'Redmond'
(Tilia americana 'Redmond')

A mixure of drought tollerant tree species can help reduce the water use in your landscape. Trees that use less water are also more likely to survive drought and water restrictions.

Deadly Sin III:

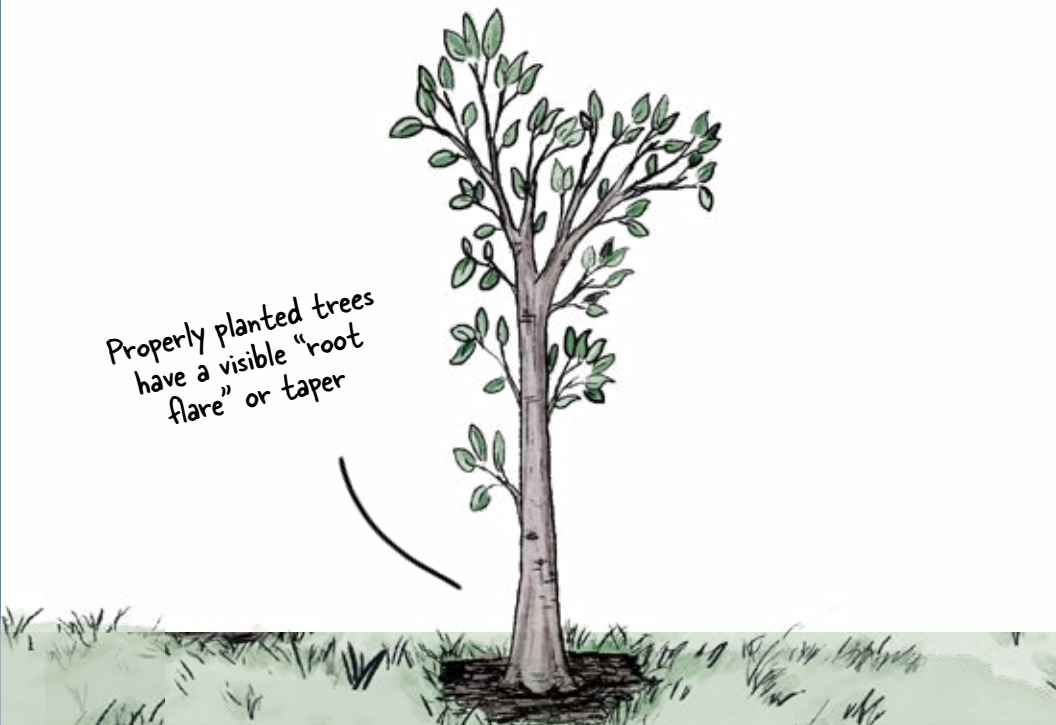
Planting too deep!

Planting depth matters

Many things can, and often do, go wrong during the tree planting process. One common mistake is to plant a new tree too deep. It is always best to plant a tree so that the root flare is level or slightly above the finished grade. Planting too deep allows moisture and soil particles to soften and abrade buried bark tissue. This promotes infection and decay and often leads to premature death. While a tree planted too deep may fail to thrive from the beginning, more often than not, the tree will appear healthy until damage to the trunk tissue is excessive, leading to sudden decline.

Some trees are deliberately planted deeper, based on the misguided belief that doing so will discourage surface roots. However, the opposite is true. The roots of a deeply buried tree are more likely to turn and grow upward in search of higher oxygen levels and surface moisture.

When a tree has been planted too deep, the best course of action is to remove the soil and lower the grade to the root crown, revealing a visible root flare.



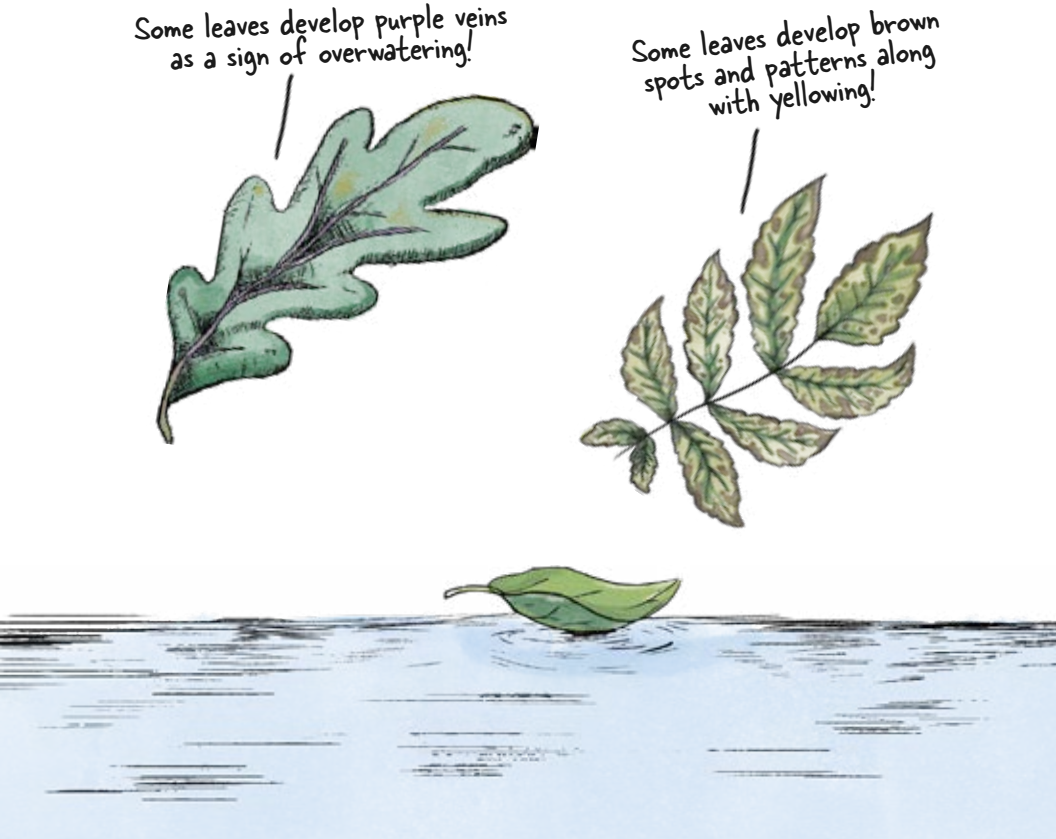
Deadly Sin IV:

Over & Under Watering

Getting it just right

It is not always easy to know how much water a tree needs. Generally, giving a tree a good soak and then allowing the soil to become somewhat dry before the next good soaking is good practice. This allows the tree to absorb the water and also allows for the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide as the soil goes from saturated to almost dry. If possible, apply water over the entire root zone and beyond the canopy. Use a soil moisture probe, a screw driver, or something similar to monitor soil moisture below the surface between waterings.

Over and underwatering may be the most difficult deadly sin to avoid. However, with careful consideration of the needs of the species, soil characteristics, local climate, and evapotranspiration rate, you can be sure to give your tree the right amount of water to grow and flourish.



Bottle Flame Tree
(Brachychiton acerifolius)

Northern Catalpa
(Catalpa speciosa)

Fastigate Blue Atlas Cedar
(Cedrus atlantica 'Glauca Fastigata')

Deodar Cedar
(Cedrus deodara)

Sugar Hackberry
(Celtis laevigata 'All Seasons')

American Persimmon
(Diospyros virginiana)

Mexican Blue Oak
(Quercus oblongifolia)

Netleaf Oak
(Quercus rugosa)

'Accolade' Elm
(Ulmus x 'Accolade')

African Fern Pine
(Afrocarpus falcatus)

Rusty Gum
(Angophora costata)

Pacific Madrone
(Arbutus menziesii)

Atlas Cedar
(Cedrus atlantica)

Monterey Cypress
(Cupressus macrocarpa)

Gingko 'Autumn Gold'
(Gingko biloba 'Autumn Gold')

Aleppo Oak
(Quercus boissieri)

Engelman Oak
(Quercus engelmannii)

King Palm
(Archontophoenix cunninghamiana)

European Hackberry
(Celtis australis)

Jelecote Pine
(Pinus patula)

Sweet Cherry
(Prunus avium)

Coast Live Oak
(Quercus agrifolia)

Valley Oak
(Quercus lobata)

Cork Oak
(Quercus suber)

Giant Arborvitae
(Thuja plicata)

Linden 'Redmond'
(Tilia americana 'Redmond')

California Fan Palm
(Washingtonia filifera)

Big Leaf Maple
(Acer macrophyllum)

Red Alder
(Alnus rubra)

Common Hackberry
(Celtis occidentalis)

Southern Magnolia
(Magnolia grandiflora)

Canary Island pine
(Pinus canariensis)

Italian Stone Pine
(Pinus pinea)

London Planetree 'Columbia'
(Platanus acerifolia 'Columbia')

California Sycamore
(Platanus racemosa)

Fremont Cottonwood
(Populus fremontii)

Southern Red Oak
(Quercus falcata)

Burr Oak
(Quercus macrocarpa)

Southern Live Oak
(Quercus virginiana)

London Planetree
(Platanus acerifolia)

White Alder
(Alnus rhombifolia)

Giant Chinquapin
(Chrysolepis chrysophylla)

Chestnut Leaf Oak
(Quercus castaneifolia)

Bunya-Bunya Tree
(Araucaria bidwillii)

Norfolk Island Pine
(Araucaria heterophylla)

Weeping Fig
(Ficus benjamina)

Black Walnut
(Juglans nigra)

Monterey Pine
(Pinus radiata)

Black Cottonwood
(Populus trichocarpa)

Hungarian Oak
(Quercus frainetto)

English Oak
(Quercus robur)

Lemon-Scented Gum
(Corymbia citriodora)

Moreton Bay Fig
(Ficus macrophylla)

Coast Redwood
(Sequoia sempervirens)

Spathodea campanulata
(African Tulip Tree)

Pine Cone

DO NOT
ENTER

Can You Find Them All?

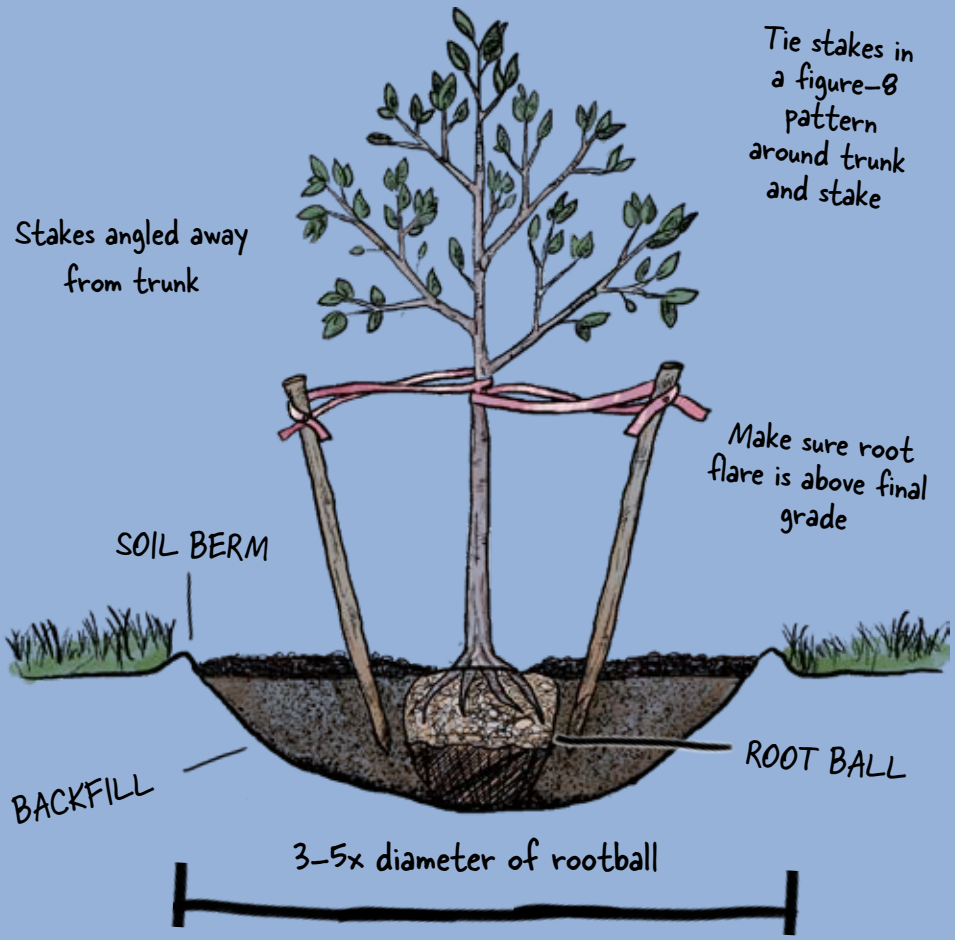
Search by Site ID for More Details

Download PDF Map

#	SPECIES	SITE ID	DBH (IN.)	FOUND
1	Red Ironbark	818	28	☐
2	American Holly	3966	22	☐
3	European White Birch	3992	16	☐
4	Strawberry Tree	714	18	☐
5	California Privet	2046	23	☐
6	Red Bottlebrush	2026	12	☐
7	Japanese Flowering Cherry	1644	24	☐
8	Common Sweetgum	693	28	☐
9	Spineless Yucca	738	22	☐
10	Port Orford Cedar	1661	97	☐
11	White Alder	1477	54	☐
12	Bald Cypress	1533	38	☐
13	Blue Spruce	1601	32	☐
14	Gum Lemon-Scented	1577	26	☐
15	New Zealand Christmas Tree	1464	17	☐
16	Northern Red Oak	1543	19	☐
17	Black Walnut	1631	21	☐
18	Southern Magnolia	929	14	☐
19	Christmas Berry	1605	24	☐
20	London Planetree	1662	37	☐
21	Honeylocust	1656	26	☐
22	Redwood, Coast	1611	75	☐
23	Paradise Apple	1549	14	☐
24	Lemon	1564	15	☐
25	Olive	1580	24	☐
26	Avocado	1647	51	☐
27	Redflower Gum	890	55	☐
28	Chinese Juniper	3849	15	☐
29	European Hackberry	3825	25	☐
30	Kohuhu	4617	27	☐
31	California Live Oak	4597	27	☐
32	Camphor Tree	4570	15	☐
33	Laurel de Olor	4631	11	☐
34	Ginkgo	4552	13	☐
35	Kanooka Water Gum	492	14	☐

Deadly Sin V:

Poor or Neglected Staking



Staking a young tree

Staking can help stabilize and support a new tree while its roots become established, generally within about one year. However, if neglected or used improperly, staking can cause serious harm, including damage to the cambium (plant tissue under the bark), an underdeveloped trunk, permanent scarring, or girdling.

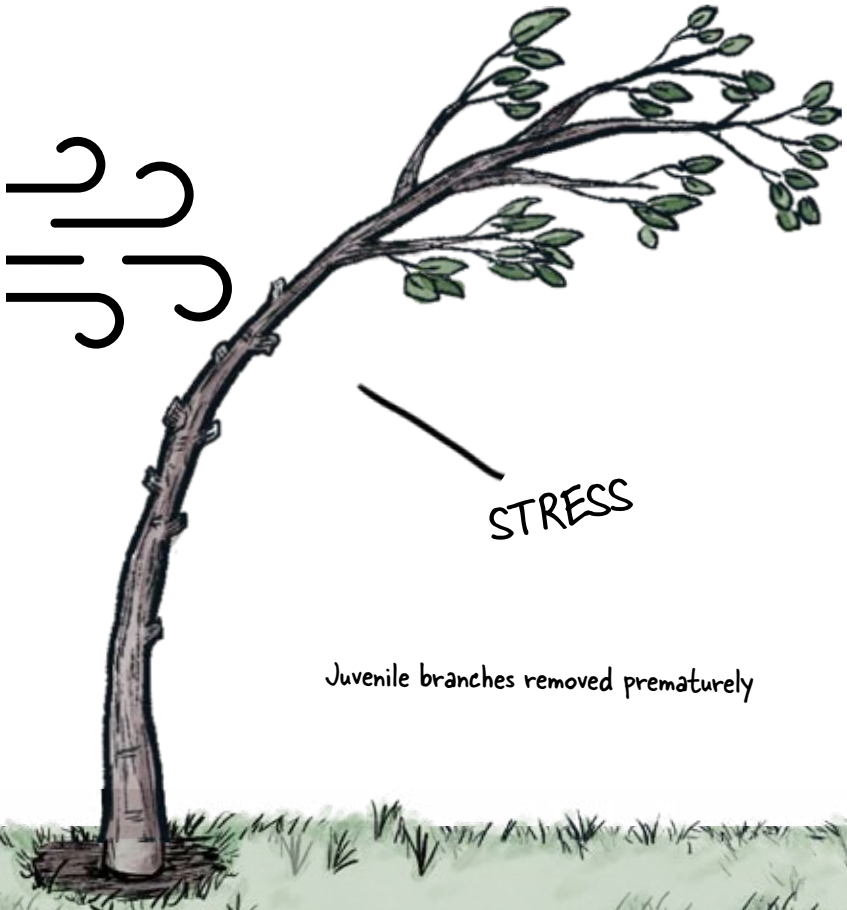
When planting, use support stakes and ties only if your tree is unable to stand on its own.

The best practice to stake a tree is:

- Use two stakes on opposite sides just outside the root ball
- Make sure stakes are angled slightly outward to allow for movement of the tree in wind
- Tie a tree to the stakes at the lowest point that will support the tree
- Use soft and non-injurious materials (e.g., no wire)
- Support stakes and ties should be removed as soon as possible, usually about one year

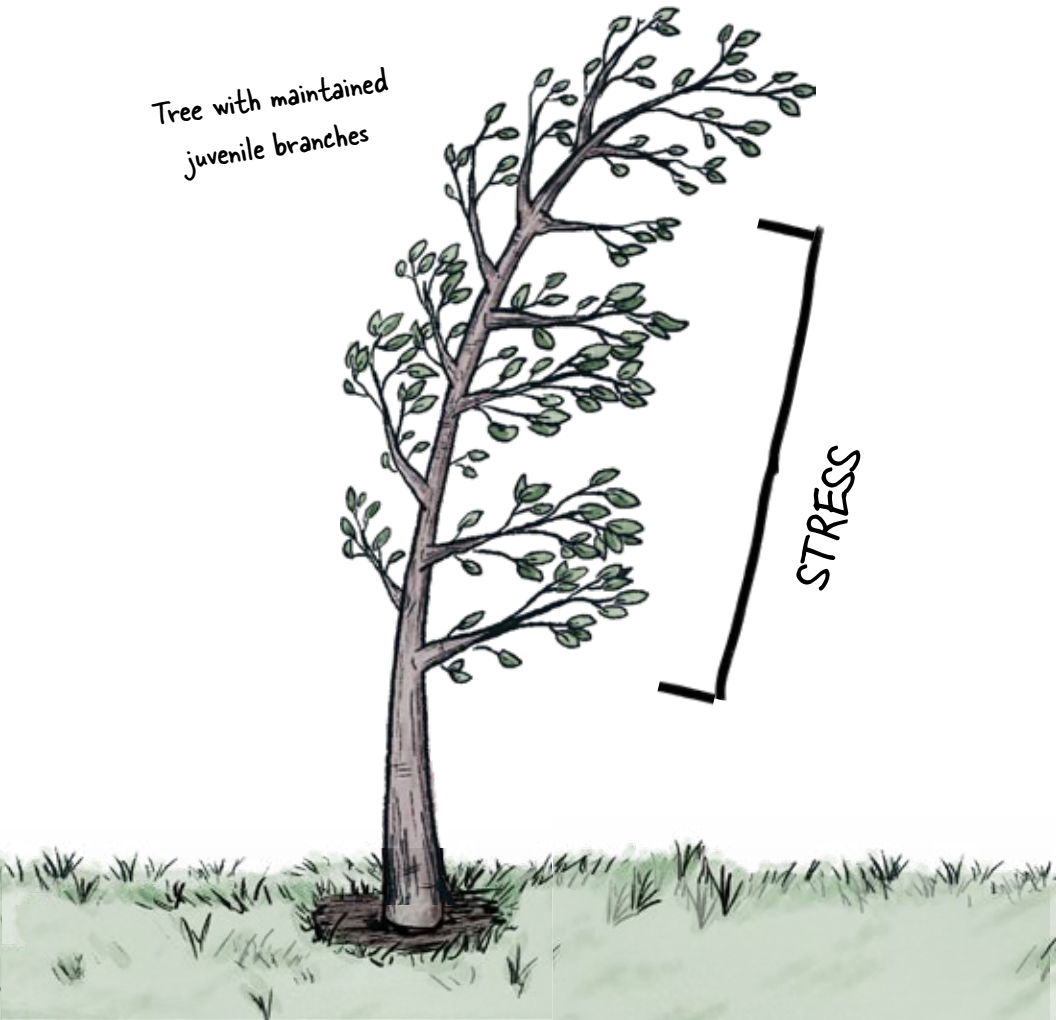
Deadly Sin VI:

Premature Removal of Juvenile Branches



Let young trees be young trees

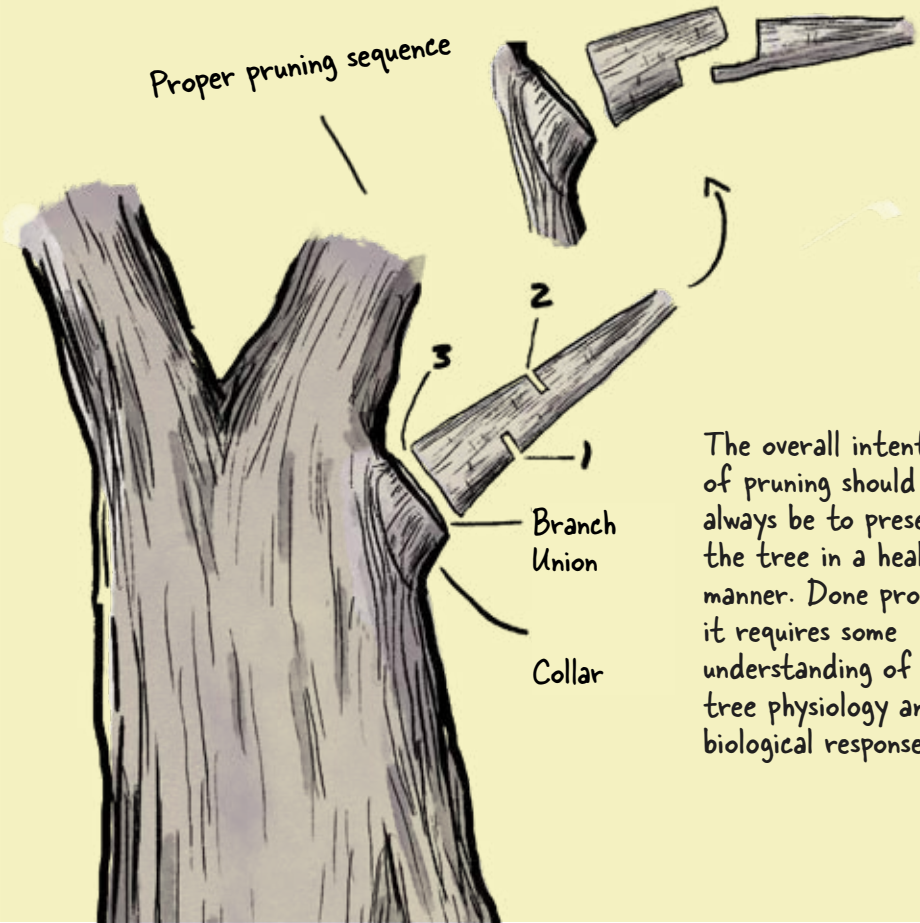
In nature, trees grow in a logical manner according to a genetic plan millions of years in the making. Part of that plan includes juvenile branches. These branches not only support the development of a strong, healthy trunk, they also aid in wind resistance and protect against sunburn. Premature removal can impede canopy growth, cause trunk failure through stress fractures, result in sunscald and peeling bark, and reduce vascular flow. Trees shed their juvenile branches naturally, but if you find an undesirable one, you can safely remove it once it grows to a diameter larger than your thumb—but no sooner.



Deadly Sin VII:

Poor Pruning or

Topping



The overall intent of pruning should always be to preserve the tree in a healthy manner. Done properly, it requires some understanding of tree physiology and biological response.

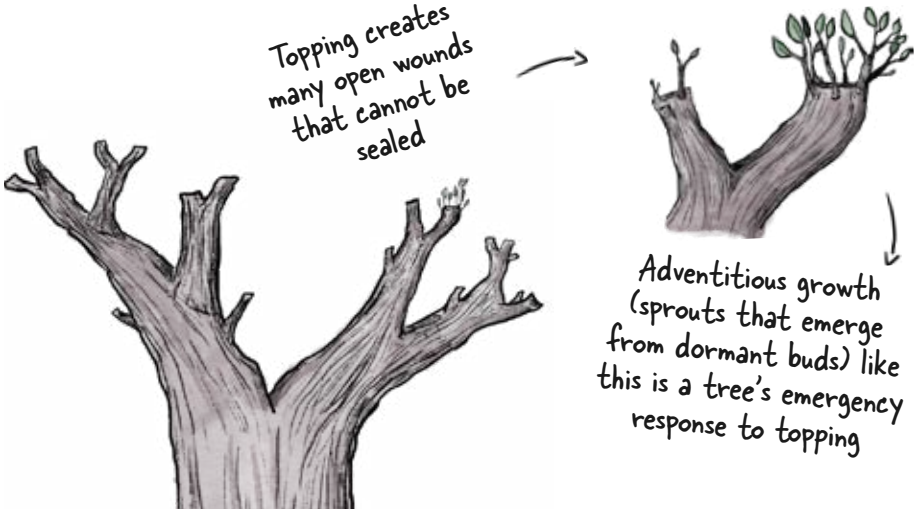
Stop the top!

When trees are pruned, they seal their injury through a compartmentalization process. Improper pruning can disrupt this process, leaving a tree vulnerable to insect invasion, decay organisms, and disease. However, armed with a basic appreciation of pruning response and a recognition of harmful practices, you can prune properly.

Best practices for pruning include:

- Prune when a tree is young and branches are small (preferably less than 4 inches in diameter)
- Prune at branch unions, rather than "flush cutting" or allowing branches to rip off the tree
- Never cut or tip the central leader, or main stem
- Never top a tree
- Avoid removing more than 25% of the living canopy

The objective of proper pruning should be the correction of structural defects, such as crossed branches and dead or diseased wood. But, since urban trees are destined to be part of a community, they also should be expected to conform to community standards. Keep in mind, however, that pruning creates wounds that shape growth and divert energy, so if you want to promote a healthy tree structure while preserving the tree's natural grace and character, prune wisely and sparingly.



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Burr Oak

DAVEY Resource Group

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Watsonville CALIFORNIA

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