



Rockin E Gardening Handouts

Tips and Suggestions for 'Year-Round' Gardening

1201 West 500 South Woods Cross, UT

www.RockinEcountrystores.com

801-299-9990

Fresh-cut Christmas Trees

Fresh-cut Christmas trees need special care if they are to remain fresh until Christmas Day. I am sure you have had the experience, just like myself and many other people, that your tree dries out and falls apart just before Christmas. Not only is this experience a hassle, but it is also a fire hazard!



Ideally, **Fresh-cut Christmas trees** should only be kept inside the house for two or three weeks. Many people want to have their tree decorated from Thanksgiving Day until New Years Day. Unfortunately fresh-cut Christmas trees just can't always last that long inside a warm house. However, with the proper care, you can extend the life of your tree, enjoy your tree the entire Christmas season, and decrease the fire hazard of your fresh-cut Christmas tree. **Always keep fire safety in mind when purchasing and displaying any kind of Christmas trees - artificial Christmas trees included.**

1. Test for freshness when you buy your tree. Lift your tree a few inches off the ground and drop it. It is natural for inside needles to fall, but the outside needles should remain on the tree. Also, bend a few of the outside needles. Fresh needles should bend, rather than break.



2. Cut one inch off the base of your tree, and put your tree in a bucket of warm water immediately. If you wait more than fifteen minutes, you should make a new cut before setting your tree in water. **There are many additives you can add to water to help the tree continue to absorb water:** both homemade and commercially prepared. Some people add Karo Syrup or Iron Chelate to help the tree stay green longer. Still other people use Aspirin, Chlorox, or Sprite to help their trees stay fresh. If your system works, use it.



3. Use a water stand. Never leave your tree on a wooden stand. Always put your tree in a water stand. Wash your water stand with a good disinfectant before using it each year. Dirt or bacteria left in the water stand can make the water bad, and prevent the tree from absorbing as much water as it could have. Keep water in the stand at all times. A tree absorbs a lot of water when it is first brought into the house, and can use up to a gallon or two of water every day! If your tree stand runs out of water, you must make a new "one inch cut" before the tree will absorb water again. This is also true for flocked trees. **Remember; 'Cut 1" off the base of your tree'.**



4. Do not cut bark off the tree to make it fit into your tree stand. Removing the bark prevents the tree from absorbing water as readily. Use a larger tree stand if the trunk is too large to fit in the stand properly.



5. Always use miniature lights. Miniature lights do not produce as much heat as other lights. **Do not leave the tree lights on when you are not at home, or when you are in another room.** More Christmas Trees catch on fire because of the lights than for any other reason. Regular Christmas lights (C9 and C7 type) produce too much heat and may dry out your tree in a matter of a week or two. Treat your tree just like you would take care of a fresh-cut flower arrangement.



6. Never, never have a fire in the same room as a Christmas Tree. You would be amazed to find out how much moisture is absorbed from the air by a fire. This is true both from a fireplace, and from a wood burning stove. Also, keep your tree out of the draft from your furnace. A furnace draft can dry out a tree in a matter of just a few days.



7. Spray your tree with 'Wilt Pruf'. Wilt Pruf seals moisture inside the tree's needles, so water cannot evaporate from them as fast. You can help your tree stay fresher -up to one full week longer- just by using this material.



You can also spray fresh wreaths, garlands and boughs to help them stay fresher - longer.

Potted Christmas Trees

Potted Christmas trees are a great winter holiday idea because they keep giving and giving, year after year. You can enjoy the memories of Christmases past. You can watch your 'Tree' grow, just like the one you had when you were a child.

You can enjoy a potted tree inside for Christmas and then plant it outside after Christmas: instead of just throwing your tree away. Colorado Spruce seems to be the favorite tree for this purpose, however, Austrian Pine and Scotch Pine are just as nice as a potted Christmas tree. There are also many other varieties of pine and spruce trees that would make a great potted Christmas tree, and then fit perfectly into a small yard.

Before purchasing one, decide where the tree will be planted after Christmas. Consider the mature size of the tree, and the size and weight of your potted tree. A potted Christmas tree can weigh 100 to 200 pounds. Can you take it inside your house? Will it fit in your room?



For the best results follow these simple guidelines.

1. Keep your tree inside the house 10 to 14 days.

After 10 to 14 days, the tree may start to grow, making it less hardy when you put it back outside for the winter. You can keep the potted tree in the garage for a few days before bringing it indoors. Check the rootball often to ensure that it stays moist - but not soggy wet.



2. Keep your tree as cool as possible while inside the house.

Use miniature lights to decorate your tree. Regular Christmas lights (c9 and c7 type) produce too much heat. Do not have the tree near a heat vent, or a fireplace.

3. Water your tree thoroughly every two or three days.

Don't be surprised if the tree uses 1 or 2 gallons of water each time you water. The longer your tree is in the house, the more water it will need each time you water. Keep the root-ball moist, but do not let it constantly sit in water.

4. Water your tree thoroughly when you put it back outside.

Water your tree occasionally all winter to keep it from drying out, especially if you cannot plant it. Putting snow on the root ball is an excellent way to water a tree during the winter.

5. Spray your tree with Wilt Pruf just before you bring the tree inside - and - repeat the spray when you take the tree back outside.

Wilt Pruf seals moisture inside the tree's needles. Make sure the Wilt Pruf spray has time to dry before the temperature drops below freezing.

6. Protect your tree.

After Christmas, the tree can be placed in the garage, in a shed, or next to the house for a week or two before planting it. Remember, the tree started to think it was spring with the nice 70 degree weather. Don't just put your tree back out into the extreme cold without some protection. After a week or



two of protection, you can go ahead and plant your tree in the yard.

7. It can be helpful to pre-dig the planting hole,

as the ground can be frozen in late December and early January. Store the soil in the garage, in a shed, or next to the house in a black plastic bag, so it is less likely to freeze.



8. After planting, water the rootball thoroughly.

You need to remove all the air pockets in the soil before the ground freezes solid for the winter.



Wilt Pruf

Wilt Pruf is an excellent spray to help prevent all trees and shrubs in your yard from dehydrating during the winter. All Christmas Trees, both potted and fresh-cut, benefit from this spray. Wilt Pruf helps seal moisture inside the plant, so it doesn't dry out as fast. But remember, **Wilt Pruf is definitely not a fire retardant, and it does not stop trees from drying out. It only helps slow down the process.**

To get the best results from using Wilt Pruf, make sure the tree's needles are moist (both inside and outside the plant) before spraying them. Water the tree a day in advance, and mist the needles an hour before spraying. Make sure the temperature is above 40 degrees, and will stay above freezing until the spray dries, approximately one to two hours.

We recommend that you spray Wilt Pruf just before you take your tree inside.

Wilt Pruf is available in Ready-to-use trigger sprayers for easy home use. Wilt pruf is also available in a concentrate, perfect for larger areas.