

Plant at Home

A GUIDE TO PLANNING YOUR
NATIONAL TREE DAY

National
Tree Day
PLANET ARK

30
YEARS





About National Tree Day

GETTING OUR HANDS DIRTY SINCE 1996

National Tree Day started in 1996 and has grown into Australia's largest community tree planting and nature care event. Over the past 30 years, over **28 million** trees, shrubs and grasses have been planted by more than **5 million** people, a number that continues to grow with the help of dedicated people around the country, like you!

WHY GET INVOLVED

Whilst protecting and revegetating large patches of native habitat is vital, there's also lots of smaller actions we can take in our own backyards (or balconies) to ensure our wonderful plants and native wildlife are supported and can be enjoyed within our urban areas and beyond for generations to come.



MAKE YOUR HOME PLANTING COUNT

Remember to add your home planting to the [National Tree Day tally](#) so that your impact will be included.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- **Plant!** The rest of this guide will take you through some handy planting tips and some local plant inspiration.
- Get the kids involved in nature activities - check out our [free activity books/sheets](#) for children.
- Find your local experts - the [Australian Native Plants Society](#) is a good place to start.



Planting guide

To ensure the best chance of survival, choose the right plant for the right place! Consider plants endemic to your area, how much sun and shade your garden gets, and the soil type.

GENERAL SOIL TIPS

You don't need to be a soil expert, just know:

- Heavy clay soil holds water and drains slowly
- Sandy soil doesn't hold water and drains quickly

To find out if your soil is clay, wet a little and roll between your fingers. If the soil easily sticks together in a cylindrical shape, it's clay. If it crumbles, it's sandy. If it's somewhere in between, it's somewhere in between!

If your soil is heavily disturbed or has lain bare for a while, you can improve the quality by adding compost and mulch a few months before you plant.

WHY CHOOSE ENDEMIC PLANTS?

Endemic plants (plants native to your local area) are not only more adapted to local soil, climate and rainfall conditions, they are also more resistant to pests and diseases. Another great reason to choose endemic species is because they generally require less maintenance, since they are so well-suited to their local environment! They generally require less fertiliser and water, sometimes being able to survive on rainfall alone.



←
Clay soil



→
Sandy soil



GENERAL PLANTING TIPS

- Water the plant before you start, to ensure the plant is hydrated before it's stressed by the transplant process.
- Dig a hole a little wider and deeper than the pot.
- Remove the plant by holding the stem gently and then turning the whole pot (with the plant still in it) upside down, then tapping gently on the base of the pot. If this doesn't work, gently squeeze the pot until it gives.
- You do not need to trim or shave the roots of the plant; loosening the roots and soil with your gloved hands is enough. As the hole you've made is slightly bigger than the pot was, the soil around the roots will be easy for growth.
- The base of the stem should be just below ground level, about 2cm. When filling in, you should have a little well around the plant so when you water, it has time to soak into the ground instead of running off.
- Cover the surrounding soil with a thin layer of mulch, leaving a few centimetres of bare soil around the stem.
- If adding a guard or support stakes, do this now.
- Water the plant again to allow the soil to begin to settle in around the roots.



GENERAL CARE TIPS

- Your new plant will need regular watering while it establishes itself. The amount depends on your local climate, the species you've planted, rainfall and shade around the plant. Check a couple of times a week in hot areas, and once a week in cold climates.
- Mulch is your friend! It not only keeps in moisture, but keeps the temperature more stable, delivers and encourages life under the soil. You'll need to re-mulch every 12-18 months in most gardens.



NATIVE PLANT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUR REGION

For region-specific native planting recommendations, check out our [Native Species Guide](#). It provides a snapshot of the many wonderful native plants available for planting in your backyard or balcony. We have selected some widespread native plants, which should be easy to source and able to grow in a range of environmental conditions. For more targeted guidance, we suggest contacting your local native nursery or council.

