1 Start with a quality grade tree as specified in the Florida Grades & Standards for Nursery Stock.

- Select trees with a quality trunk form, branch arrangement and canopy uniformity.

2 Check for root system quality.

- Field-grown (B&B) trees should be hardened-off or pre-dug at the nursery until new roots are visible through the burlap.
- Trees should be solid in the rootball.
- Check for kinked and/or circling roots and cut them if present.

3 Tree shipping and unloading.

- Trees should be protected during shipping by a tarp or shipped in an enclosed truck.
- Trees should never be lifted by the trunk. Lift using rootball straps or container handles.
- On the job site, store trees upright, in the shade, and irrigate twice daily with 5 gallons per caliper inch applied directly to the rootball until planting.
- Do not store trees on asphalt.

4 Planting hole preparation.

- Prepare the planting hole twice as wide as the rootball and slightly less than the depth of the rootball.
- Dig the planting hole shallower in areas with wet soil conditions and backfill up to the edge of the rootball.
- In no case should the first root emerging from the trunk be below the soil level.
5 Tree preparation.
- Remove the black weed cloth liner, plastic wrap, or container.
- Remove any string, strapping, or wire wrapped around the trunk.
- Cut any circling roots prior to planting.

6 Tree planting.
- Place the tree in the center of the hole with the top most root in the rootball at or slightly higher than the finished landscape grade.
- Check to ensure the tree is straight in the hole, and begin filling in with native field soil.
- Water in the backfill as you fill the planting hole, working the soil to ensure that no air pockets remain.

7 Finishing planting.
- At the edge of the rootball, make a soil berm 2-3" high to form a shallow water holding area. Water immediately after planting with 5 gallons of water per caliper inch.
- Apply a 3" inch layer of mulch to an area 2 feet in diameter per trunk caliper inch.
- Do not pile mulch directly against the tree trunk.

8 Irrigation requirements for establishment.
- Use low volume drip irrigation for optimum growth & survival.
- If an automatic system is not used, a strict irrigation schedule is necessary for survival.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tree Size: 2-4” caliper</th>
<th>Irrigation for vigor - Daily for 1 month; every other day for 3 months; weekly until established.</th>
<th>Irrigation for survival - Twice weekly for 3-4 months.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree Size: &gt;4” caliper</td>
<td>Irrigation for vigor - Daily for 6 weeks; every other day for 5 months; weekly until established.</td>
<td>Irrigation for survival - Twice weekly for 4-5 months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- At each irrigation, apply 3 gallons per inch trunk caliper to the rootball. For example, apply 9 gallons on a 3” caliper tree. Apply in a manner so all water soaks into the rootball.
- Establishment takes 3 to 4 months per inch trunk caliper. In drought conditions irrigate the following summer.

Important Planting Notes
- The best soil amendment for successful planting is water.
- Research has shown no benefit to using other soil amendments.
- Do not pile mulch directly against the tree trunk.

This tree planting cue card was provided to you courtesy of the Roots Plus Field Growers Association of Florida
Growing Quality Field-Grown Trees

www.rootsplusgrowers.org