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CARE OF LIVE CHRISTMAS TREES

Container grown or balled, and burlaped live Christmas trees are available at nurseries, garden stores, and other places where Christmas trees are sold. Proper care is very important to the survival of live trees.

Before You Buy

Determine whether the tree has been stored away from the sun and wind. Also, live trees must be properly watered, and the roots protected from temperatures below freezing. Ask the salesperson if the tree has been treated with an anti-desiccant.

After Purchase

Place the tree in a garage, shed, or sheltered place where the temperature is about 45° to 50°F A couple of days before moving the tree indoors for the holidays. This acclimation period is necessary to prepare the tree for its final move indoors.

During the holidays, keep the tree in a cool 60° to 65° room. Plan to use the live tree only a few days indoors. Exposure to prolonged warm temperatures may force live trees into active growth. Trees that break dormancy can be seriously damaged after they are put outdoors. Keep the root mass constantly moist. After the holidays, acclimate live trees to colder outdoor temperatures. Put trees in a sheltered place where the temperature is 40° to 45°F. for a couple of days. If soil is not frozen, plan to plant the tree. Plant on a day when the outdoor temperature is above freezing. Be sure to water the soil after planting. Stake trees more than two feet tall. Heavily mulch the soil with wood chips, sawdust, or pine needles at least 6" deep.

Winter Storage

If weather during January is too cold for tree planting, plan to properly store the tree. Put the live tree next to the house, garage, or shed on the east or north side. Stake the tree and protect the root mass with a 12" to 18" layer of leaves, straw, or spoiled hay. Water trees during prolonged thaws. Plan to plant live trees during mid to late April.

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