

LIVING CHRISTMAS TREE CARE

Celebrate the Holiday Season by decorating a beautiful living tree in your home; then enjoy it for years to come as a permanent landscape plant.

It's environmentally friendly, cost effective and easy to do if you follow a few simple but important instructions to ensure that your tree stays in good health throughout the transition.

WE RECOMMEND KEEPING THE TREE INDOORS 5 to 7 DAYS

The less time indoors, the better. Remember - your tree is dormant. If it remains indoors or too warm for more than a week, it may break dormancy and suffer damage when placed back outdoors in the cold. You might also consider placing the tree pot on a rolling cart or dolly and moving it outside overnight or whenever you leave your home.

Before bringing your tree indoors

Place the tree in a protected area (carport, garage etc.) for 2 - 3 days, allowing it to slowly adjust to the warmer temperatures.

Water the tree well by thoroughly soaking the entire root ball, not just the outer surface.

We also recommend the use of an antitranspirant such as Wilt Stop™. This helps protect the tree from the dry, warm air of the house.

Inside the house

Your room should be kept as cool as possible; avoid placing tree near heating vents, fireplaces, appliances, etc.

Use only 'cool' lights (or no lights) on the tree; 'hot' lights may burn the foliage.

Check moisture daily, making sure root ball is moist, not just the soil surface or burlap. It helps to water slowly, allowing a little at a time to soak into the root ball. Ice cubes work great for this, as well as keeping the roots cool. Protect the floor or carpet from pot seepage or spills.

Avoid using spray flocking, which may harm the tree.

Moving your tree outdoors

Transition the tree slowly to the cold by placing it back in a protected area for 3 - 4 days.

Once moved back outdoors the tree should either be properly planted in its permanent location, or temporarily placed where the root ball will be sheltered from harsh freezes. 'Heeling in' the tree into the ground, mulch, or a compost pile is helpful. Keep it watered if the winter is dry.

Good luck! We hope you enjoy your living Christmas tree this season and outside for many years to come. Please contact us with any questions.

For more information, visit <http://gardening.wsu.edu/> (keyword search for "living christmas tree")