

Tree and shrub seed planting instructions



Filling the seed trays

1. Empty several bags of planting media into large tub and break apart any clumps.
2. Load the black tray with yellow cells.
3. Place the green tray template on top of the yellow cells. This template prevents planting media from falling in between your yellow cells. It conserves planting media and prevents weeds from growing in between the yellow cells. *NOTE: The green tray template is very helpful, expensive (~\$30), and very fragile. Be careful!*
4. Fill yellow cones all the way to the top with media.

Planting your seeds

1. You will need to presoak your seeds to soften their seed coat and to enable them to germinate more rapidly. Cover your seeds with water and allow them to soak 6-12 hours prior to planting them.
2. Check the chart below to determine how many seeds to plant in each yellow cell and how deep to plant the seeds.
3. Using the tip of your finger, push a hole the appropriate depth (as indicated in the chart below) into the planting media. Put the proper number of seeds in each hole. Cover with media.
4. When all 98 yellow cells are planted, put the tray into the center of your nursery yard. All trays should be placed in the middle of your yard so that they get maximum irrigation.
5. Turn on the irrigation system (you can do this using the manual “on” on your irrigation timer) and make sure that the trays are thoroughly watered. You will know when they are thoroughly watered when you see water dripping out of the bottom of the yellow cells.
6. Label each tray with seed type and date planted. You can use popsicle sticks or masking tape.
7. It is critical that your irrigation system keeps the soil wet during the germination process. Check on the system to make sure everything is working properly.

Seed type	Seeds per cell	Planting depth
baldcypress, hackberry, longleaf pine, swamp red maple, tupelo gum, common persimmon, pawpaw	3 seeds per cell	½”
waxmyrtle, red mulberry	3 seeds per cell	¼”
live oak, water oak, cherrybark oak	2 seeds per cell	½”
nuttall oak	1 seed per cell	1”
black mangrove	1 seed per cell	surface

Caring for your seedlings

1. Your seeds will generally germinate within two weeks of being planted.
3. **SORTING.** Once your seedlings are germinated, you need to begin sorting the cells. Group sprouted seeds and “empty” cells.
2. **FERTILIZING.** Once your seedlings are 2” tall, you can begin to fertilize them. We recommend using a time-released fertilizer (put 6-8 prills, or beads, of Osmocote). You can also water your trays of seedlings using a soluble fertilizer (follow the package labeling).
4. **RESEEDING.** Extra seeds left over from your initial planting can be used to “reseed” empty cells.
5. **THINNING.** If you have more than one seedling growing in a cell, you need to thin the seedlings. Using sharp scissors cut the smaller seedlings. Do **not** try to pull the extra seedlings out of the cell because this will disturb the root system of the bigger seedling.
6. **PREVENTING ROOTING THROUGH THE GROUND CLOTH.** Large seedlings will send their roots down through the hole in the bottom of the yellow cell and through the black ground cloth. This is not good. To prevent this, shift your trays around in your can yard once a month. Also, holes in a ground cloth allow weeds to grow inside your yard, and small holes in the cloth become larger over time, causing bigger problems each year.
7. **LEFTOVER SOIL.** Please store leftover soil in a covered plastic tub. It can be used in reseeded.

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YOUR GOAL: Have around 500 very healthy seedlings.
The keys are water, nutrition, and weed prevention.