

MLG nursery and planting guide

Step 3 – Planting:

How to plant and care for your plants

We ask you to look after the plants you receive and set them in the landscape where they will have the best chance of both surviving and regenerating. The nursery is staffed by volunteers, so we want to make sure that our efforts and resources are resulting in healthy plants growing in areas where they will thrive and benefit the environment.

This planting guide provide step-by-step information on caring for your plants.

When you receive your tubestock

Plant them out as soon as possible. To keep your plants healthy until they can be planted out:

- keep the plants outside, ideally in shade or cool sunlight to allow hardening off without heat stress
- water them daily, unless they get rain.

Where to plant

Before requesting plants, you should have assessed where you will be planting, and requested plants accordingly.

Avoid areas that have a recent or long history of fertilisation. Thick, dense, tall non-native grasses are an indicator of this. Such areas need to be grazed and not fertilised for at least a decade for them to be suitable for establishment of healthy native vegetation.

Planting in groups is a good idea. The ideal is that your plants will form a small population that can cross-pollinate, regenerate and provide genetic diversity for future generations. Create habitat corridors with patches of reasonably dense vegetation, where wildlife can travel a short distance to another patch. In general, 100 metres is the maximum gap that wildlife will cross to reach trees and bushes.

However:

- if you already have high-quality native dominated grassland, do not plant dense trees and shrubs – scattered individual trees (10–30 m apart) and small clumps of shrubs will create bird habitat without obliterating the grassland
- eucalypts planted too closely together can slow down their maturation process – consider the size of an adult tree and the room it needs to mature; mortality rates of eucalypts tend to be low.

Be kind to the landscape – avoid the ‘hair-transplant’ look by choosing irregular spacings for plants.

Preparing and planting

To give your plants the best start:

- fencing will be needed if there are stock
- prepare the ground; ripping hard or compacted ground before planting can improve plant survival rates
- dig a hole or loosen soil if it has been ripped; consider adding wetting agents or surfactants to the soil to help ensure it holds moisture
- consider using a weed mat or mulch – these cut down on weed competition and help to keep in moisture
- use a tree guard if planting in paddocks; these can be purchased at cost price from the nursery and can be ordered when you request plants
- the plants may need additional watering until established, depending on the position and rainfall.

When planting:

- gently squeeze the tube and tap on the base to loosen the plant.
- tip the plant out and place it in the hole. fill in with soil and press down to remove air pockets, thus ensuring good contact between the roots and soil.
- create a small dip or ‘dam’ around the plant to collect rainfall.
- make sure you water your plants in – at least 2 litres per plant is recommended on planting day.

Further detailed information about planting can be found in the Greening Australia guides: [Revegetation techniques](#) and [Plant trees and shrubs](#).

For riparian plantings, please consult the Rivers of Carbon [Riparian Restoration Management Tubestock Guide](#), which includes information on how to plant, maintain and care for your tubestock.

Returning tubes and boxes

All tubes, trays and boxes should be returned to the nursery as soon as possible after planting. We really need them back!

Please:

- hose out boxes, trays and tubes
- restack the tubes in the trays and boxes(tightly) and
- return to the nursery.

They can be left outside the nursery – please send an email to mlg_nursery@yan.org.au to let us know you have left them.