

Rules for Transplanting Evergreens

By Archibald Mitchell

IN THE first place the time to transplant evergreens is important. You can move them in Spring and about the middle of August. The best time in the West is the last week of May and the first week in June, while in the East, earlier transplanting is generally possible. You will find Spruces easier to transplant than Pines, and the smaller the trees are, the better. You can move trees up to four feet or over, but they are safer at two to three feet. Select open grown trees with plenty of branches close to the ground; close grown trees have usually poor foliage and it is difficult getting them with good root systems.

The important thing in transplanting evergreens is to keep the roots from being exposed to the light or air and the logical way to accomplish this is to lift the dirt along with the roots in a solid ball. Your spade should be sharp (a shovel is best) so that it will cut through all the roots easily without jarring and loosening the ball. Sharpen with a file if necessary.

Your plant selected, tie the lower branches up out of your way and then with your shovel dig a circle round the tree, driving the blade down full depth and slanted so that the point will be a few inches from the axis underneath the tree. When your circular cut is complete, drive your shovel well down here and there in the circle to cut the tap root and at the same time gently ease up the ball and lift it right out. Two men working opposite do this much easier and better than one man alone. The circles vary in diameter with the

size of the tree, about 14 to 16 inches for trees 2 to 3 feet and about two feet for trees four feet, a good deal depending on the tenacity of the soil, for it is far more important to have small root with the ball of soil intact, than a larger root with the dirt falling to pieces. Lay the ball and tree on its side on the ground and cut off the end of the tap root with a sharp knife taking care not to jar the soil. It is better to cut the tap root up into the ball than to have it sticking out at the bottom. The ball should be wrapped tightly in a piece of burlap to keep it together in transit. Placing it loosely in a sack as is so often done will not do, the package must be tight so that the earth has no chance to fall off.

upright, fill in the soil carefully until the hole is about half full then tramp it firm. This done, fill in the balance of the hole and tramp firmly again leaving a depression two or three inches deep on the surface. So far, we have said nothing about watering, but now is the time to water. Fill this depression or basin with water, leave it to soak away, fill it again, and after it has soaked away the second time, fill in the basin with loose soil and the job is done. Leave this soil loose.

A tree planted in this way needs no staking and no branches should be taken from it, and above all, do not cut off the top of the tree, the poor thing has enough trouble without your compelling it to make a new leader.

For Summer watering, a good soaking once a week will be plenty unless in very dry weather when it may

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be done twice. In these cases, water in the evening, raking back the surface soil two or three inches deep to form a basin. Fill this twice with water as before, allowing it to soak away, and leaving the loose mulch on the surface again by throwing the rim of the basin back on to the surface.

If you can drive a good force of water through the foliage several times during the Summer your trees will benefit greatly.

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