

Plant with Confidence

Now you are ready to Install plants!

It's almost as easy as digging a hole, but a little extra love will help. By following these simple steps, you will get your plants' roots growing properly, quickly spreading into the living soil and making friends with the other drought tolerant plants. Strong roots make strong plants, and this is especially important in dry environments.

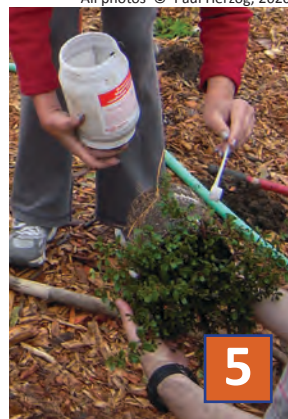
You Will Need:

- Tools: shovel, hand trowel, hose
- Plants
- Compost
- Mulch

Add these to your list for more advanced planting:

- Mycorrhizae
- Fish Emulsion or Water Soluble Humates

"Hey, where's the fertilizer?" you may ask. **California friendly plants don't want nutrient rich (i.e. fertilized) soil, so don't use it!**



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What's with all the Water?

Drainage. If the water does not drain within an hour or so, it's probably not a good place to plant a climate-appropriate plant until you fix the compaction.

Awaken Microbes. By watering so thoroughly, you are waking up any microbes that might be in the surrounding soil.

Plant Shock. The major reason plants suffer from planting shock is that the dry soil around the new plants wicks water away from their rootball, sending the plant into shock from which they never recover. By watering the surrounding soil, you reduce the probability of plant shock.

Successful Planting in Ten Easy Steps

1. **Dig A Hole!** Don't dig it any deeper than the rootball of the plant. Do dig at least a little bit wider than the plant to loosen the surrounding soil. If you accidentally dig too deep, be sure to put the soil back in and tamp it down firmly before moving on, to give your plant a solid base.

2. **Throw In Some Compost** or worm castings no more than 1" deep - along the bottom of the hole. Never put mulch in a hole! And don't bother with fertilizers either.

3. **Fill The Hole With Water TWICE**, and allow it to drain completely each time. This will take a long time, unless your soil is really sandy. Start digging the next hole, or take a break.

4. **Submerge The Rootball** in a bucket of water until air bubbles stop bubbling up. Keep the plant in its container but it's ok if you take it out - just be careful with the delicate roots.

5. **Consider Adding Fish Emulsion** or soluble humate to the water (follow label directions). Dust the rootball with a mycorrhizae inoculant (only if the plants are woody, so don't bother with the ornamental grasses).

6. **Place Plant In Hole**, make sure the root collar (that's where the roots join the stem or trunk) is a bit (1/2" - 1") higher than the surrounding soil/ existing grade. This is super important because we don't want the plant to get choked by the surrounding soil.

7. **Fill The Hole With Water** one more time (this time with the plant in it) and let it drain completely.

8. **Now Fill The Hole With The Soil** you dug out (not with fancy potting soil!), making sure the soil slopes away from the root collar. Tamp the soil down (use your feet, but be gentle) so the plant doesn't move around.

9. **Don't Create A Bowl** around the plant. Really! Your plant doesn't need it and it might make a moat that would drown your climate-appropriate plant.

10. **Water The Soil All Around The Plant** one more time, and deeply. And have a drink yourself!