



Planting your orchard

Your trees are bare rooted, so will need to be planted as early in the year as possible whilst they are still dormant. This will depend on how cold and late the winter is, but it's recommended to plant them before mid-April. Trees can be kept in pots for the first year, if you don't have time or space to plant them immediately. Alternatively they can be roughly planted straight away and then moved to their final place the following winter. If you plan to do this, here a bit of advice:

- Make sure all the route are covered and the tree is loosely supported by a stake and tie – you need to be able to move these with the tree, but they still need to give the young tree some support
- Remove buds and fruitlets as they become visible so energy is put into the tree rather than growing fruit. This will make it more likely to survive later translocation.

When planting out properly:

- Mark out the location of each tree to make sure you have the design you want.
- Dig a hole with an 80-100cm diameter, deep enough to contain all the trees roots without damaging or crushing them. Remove any weeds or large stones
- Break up the soil at the base of the hole to allow the roots to easily spread out
- Hammer in the stake vertically towards the middle of the hole, but not right in the centre (that's where the tree's going!), leaving around 75cm above ground
- Place the tree in the centre of the hole, about 8cm from the stake. Make sure all the roost are below the surface, bit the graft join is well above the surface (this is easily seen on the tree stems)
- Back fill the hole with the soil, gently firming with your foot. Water well.
- Finally, secure the tree to the stake (near the top) using the tie.
- If you have problems with rabbits, deer, or voles, or the trees maybe damaged during grass cutting, use the tree guards supplied in the pack. Alternatively, mark out the boundary of the orchard clearly using a feature (fence, hedge, flower bed etc) making it difficult to get to by ride on mowers or strimmers.

See fruitful schools growing tips: planting, growing in containers guidance notes

