

## How To Grow Citrus Trees

To grow citrus trees successfully, there are a few basic requirements.

### Drainage

Citrus trees prefer light sandy or sandy/loam soils that are well drained. If your soil is badly drained then plant your tree on a mound of soil instead.

### Sun

The site chosen should ideally be in full sun and frost free. If you do not have such a position, you can still have success with a spot that receives half-day sun in the afternoon. You will, however, have a little less fruit and they will take longer to ripen.

### Wind

Citrus trees do not like cold winds. Protect them from cold south-westerly winds. As the tree matures, it will become more tolerant. A temporary shelter can be made with a hessian screen (not plastic) around 3 or 4 sides of the tree.

### Planting

**If your soil is shallow, do not dig into the clay beneath.**

Plant your tree on a mound of soil above the clay line. If your soil is deep, dig a hole the same depth as the potting mix in the container but wider. It is important to keep the bud union well clear of the soil level. Once your plant is in the hole, fill in two-thirds of the hole. Press the soil down firmly and then fill in to the level of the surrounding soil. Make a small 'moat' around the tree to hold water and water the tree in well with Plant Starter. If the tree was not pruned at the time of purchase, remove any soft, new growth by about 15-30cms. Do not feed the tree at all for about 6-8 weeks.

### First Year Care

Water regularly, especially in Summer. Citrus have shallow roots compared to other trees. Protect your tree from frosts. If it does get 'burnt' by frost do not prune it until Spring. Keep the soil around the trunk of the tree free from grass and weeds. Do not dig or cultivate around the 'drip line' of the tree as the shallow roots are easily damaged.

Feed your tree with **All Purpose Plant Food** every four weeks in Spring Summer and Autumn. Apply small doses (eg. 150gms) often. Remove flower buds and any fruit that form. This will ensure that all the energy goes into establishing a strong tree.

### Subsequent Years

Increase feeding to older, mature trees. Eventually you can give four kilograms each year – half in Spring and half in Summer. Always water well before and after feeding.

In Summer, mulch around the tree but keep mulch away from direct contact with the trunk.

Pruning should only be done to keep the tree in good shape or to remove damaged branches and water shoots. You can prune anytime except late Autumn or Winter.

Meyer Lemons, Kumquats and Mandarins are best for tub culture.

### Varieties

Ask your local Garden Centre for advice on the best varieties for your area.

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