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Beyond Belief Network Guides: Plant a Tree

Planting a tree is one of the most impactful actions an individual can take to fight climate change. A quantitative evaluation by the Swiss university ETH Zürich found that the [top solution](#) to climate change is reforestation. And there are many [other benefits](#) to planting trees.

Ideas and Tips

Find out if there is a tree-planting organization in your community. Many cities and towns have local nonprofits (like [Texas Trees Foundation](#)) that organize tree-planting campaigns that you can join or can work with to organize your own tree planting day.



What to ask a tree-planting organization

- Are the trees indigenous trees for your region? If not, do they have a very good reason for planting non-indigenous trees?
- How do they choose where the trees are planted? Is it in parts of your community that already have a lot of greenery and city beautification or is it in parts of your community that have more need for trees?
- Is there buy-in from the people in neighborhoods where they are planting? Many communities have [good reason](#) to resist tree-planting organizations working in their neighborhoods.
- Do they plant a variety of tree species or a single species? Planting a single species is generally cheaper, but a variety of species is better for the environment.
- Is there a plan to follow up with nursing the saplings as they grow?

Tree Planting Steps (adapted from [Texas A&M Forestry Service guide](#))

1. Select the right tree for your location.



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2. Dig the hole at least twice as wide as the root ball & no deeper than the root ball.
3. Fill the empty hole with water and check the drainage.
4. Prune the tree sparingly and only if necessary.
5. Set the tree in the hole with the root collar (area just above the roots) flush or slightly above natural grade.
6. Remove all foreign materials from the root ball.
7. Gently fill the hole with the same soil that came out of the hole.
8. Stake the tree only if necessary. (Consult a professional if staking is required. Stakes should not be left in place for more than one year.)
9. Mulch around the tree at least out to the drip line, two to three inches deep and up to but not touching the trunk.
10. Water the tree for at least the first two years, but don't overwater. (A newly planted tree requires six to eight gallons of water for every diameter inch of the trunk—per week. A thorough soaking is much better than light, frequent watering.)
11. Protect the tree from animals and humans.
12. Do not fertilize the tree during the first growing season.

What if there isn't a tree planting option in your community?

Plant a tree on a local campus. Ask public schools in your area if they'd welcome some new trees on their campus? Make sure to have permission and permits for any tree planting you do. See if a local nursery is willing to donate saplings.

Plant a tree on public property. Scope out a public location that could use trees. Make sure you have permission from your local government before you break ground. You may need a permit and you'll probably need to commit to nurturing the sapling until it can survive on it's own so that the city doesn't need to take on an extra task.

Plant a tree at your house. If you can't organize tree plantings in your larger community, you can plant trees on the properties of your members. No permits required!



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Host a fundraiser to support a tree-planting nonprofit that is working on long term reforestation.

Check out these organizations:

[Trees for the Future](#)

[One Tree Planted](#)

[American Forests](#)

Don't forget to [submit your event report!](#)

If you need help with planning your event or have additional questions, the best way to contact Foundation Beyond Belief is to use the [contact webform](#), which enables us to track the resolution of your question.