

Trees for Rapid City

Recommended by
Rapid City Urban Forestry Board



Rapid City Parks Division
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Introduction

The purpose of this brochure is to help you select the right tree for the right place on your property.

If you have additional questions after reading this brochure, contact the Urban Forester at your Rapid City Parks Division (see front cover), or a local nursery.

For more complete information on these trees, you may purchase a copy of "Trees for South Dakota" from the Pennington County Cooperative Extension Office. Please call 394-2188 and ask for Extension Circular #903.

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I. Selecting the Right Place for Your Tree

1. Planting in the boulevard (the area between the sidewalk and street) is permitted with permission from the Urban Forester.
2. If the boulevard in front of your house is less than five feet across, it is recommended that you plant behind the sidewalk in your front yard. City Ordinance requires that you maintain clearances above the sidewalk and street as follows:

Street Clearance: 11' above street from curb to center of street
Sidewalk Clearance: 7' above entire sidewalk

The location of utilities is an important consideration when planting trees. Planting under power lines is not recommended. If utility lines are present on your property line, do not plant within ten feet of the property line. Select only trees from the list of recommended small trees. Give buried utilities the same consideration as the utilities you can see.

Large deciduous trees on the southeast, southwest, and west provide cooling shade in summer and don't obstruct the low winter sun. An evergreen windbreak on the north blocks cold winter winds. Large evergreens close to the house on the south block warming winter sunlight.

Remember, your new tree will grow! Give it room to do just that. Do not plant shade trees within 20 feet of your house.

II. Categories of Trees

In the following listings, trees have been divided into three categories:

- Boulevard Trees (for the area between the street curb and sidewalk)
- Small Trees
- Evergreen Trees (not to be planted in boulevard)

III. Explanation of Ratings

In the following listings, trees have been rated from 1 to 5 (5 being the most desirable). Factors considered when rating trees were:

- Hardiness
- Shape
- Disease and insect problems
- Getting tree established
- Amount of pruning or maintenance required
- How well other trees of its species are presently growing in Rapid City

IV. Recommended Trees

1. Evergreens

(Do not plant near power lines)

Species	Rating	Height (feet)	Spacing (feet)	Comments
Ponderosa Pine	5	60	25	Native to the Black Hills. Prefers well-drained soils. Do not overwater.
Austrian Pine	5	50	25	A fibrous root system makes this a more desirable tree for the residential or commercial landscape.
Black Hills Spruce	3	60	40	Native to the Black Hills. Very large tree. Very hardy. Needs lots of water in sandy soils. Do not plant within 20 feet of sidewalks, building, driveways, fences, or property lines. Give it room to grow.
Colorado Blue Spruce	4	60	40	Similar to Black Hills Spruce. Blue color and slightly longer needle make it a nicer ornamental.
Scotch Pine	5	40	40	Does well on poor, dry soils. Excellent specimens in Meadowbrook Golf Course.

NOTE: There are numerous junipers and other evergreens that do well in this area under most conditions. Because of the large number of varieties, contact your local nursery for information.

2. Boulevard Trees

(Do not plant near power lines).

Species	Rating	Height (feet)	Spacing (feet)	Comments
Black Walnut	4	50	40	Tall open tree which grows more rapidly than commonly believed. Produces messy edible fruit, which attracts wildlife. Slow to establish. Produces "juglone," which can cause turf to decline under large trees.
Bur Oak	4	45	40	Native to Black Hills. Very hardy. Slow to establish and grow.
American Sycamore	2	60	40	Several nice specimen trees in Rapid City. May not be readily available in Nursery. Should be planted more.
Maples Silver	2	75	40	Very large tree. Prefers sandy soil. Problems: Chlorosis, brittle wood, surface roots.
Norway "Emerald Lustre"	3	45	25	Better choice for Rapid City than Silver Maple. Much stronger. Smaller tree. Prefers sandy soils.
Norway "Crystal"	3	45	25	
Norway "Deborah"	3	45	25	Red leaves in spring that turn green in summer
Autumn Blaze	4	50	25	Cross between Red Maple & Silver Maple
Ash Green "Patmore"	5	40	25	All varieties listed do well in most parts of town. These tend to be more resistant to borers than "Summit" or "Marshall's" which were planted 10 to 15 years ago.
Green "Kindred"	5	40	25	
Green "Prairie Spire"	5	40	25	
White "Autumn Blaze"	4	40	25	
Canada Red Cherry	5	35	20	Excellent tree where space is limited. Very hardy. Requires considerable pruning to maintain good growth habit.

Species	Rating	Height (feet)	Spacing (feet)	Comments
Kentucky Coffee Tree	4	50	40	A large tree, which tolerates most soils and has few known pests. Very few in town, but desire a large tree.
Honeylocust (Thornless)	4	45	25	Very hardy tree which does well in most soils. Fine-textured leaves provide filtered shade, making it an excellent tree for the front yard. Grows rapidly.
"Imperial"	4	45	25	
"Skyline"	4	45	25	
"Shademaster"	4	45	25	
Linden American "Sentry"	5	60	25	Large tree with pyramidal growth and showy, fragrant flowers. Slow to establish, but does well in most soils. Lindens are probably the perfect boulevard tree because of the growth habit.
Crimean "Redmonds"	4	45	25	More pyramidal than American Linden. Seldom needs pruning. Excellent choice for boulevard planting.
Little Leaf "Greenspire"	5	35	20	Very pyramidal growth make it an excellent tree for front yard or boulevard plantings. Smaller leaf makes it a very formal-looking tree. Requires virtually no pruning
Hackberry	4	60	40	Native to South Dakota. Very hardy, drought-resistant tree with few serious disease or insect problems. Difficult to establish and slow growing, but should be planted more. Prefers sandy soils.
Ohio Buckeye	4	60	40	Hardy tree with rather large leaf. Produces fruit. Beautiful red fall color. Open branch habit. Showy white flowers. No known disease problems.
Northern Catalpa	2	60	25	A number of excellent specimens grow in the Lakeview Drive area. Leaves are very large. Fruit is rather messy, but still a good tree to consider because of the pyramidal growth.

Note: Some of the trees listed under "Small Trees" are also suitable for boulevard use. See the comments on Page 6.

3. Small Trees

(Proper trees near power lines)

Species	Rating	Height (feet)	Spacing (feet)	Comments
Amur Chokecherry	4	30	25	A small ornamental tree with colorful bark. Very hardy. Good tree to consider rather than some crabapples
Showy Mountainash	3	15	20	Beautiful small tree which appears to be more resistant to fireblight than European Mountainash. Prefers sandy soil. Do not overwater.
Quaking Aspen	4	30	25	Native to the Black Hills. Should be used more in residential plantings. Rather short-lived, but still an excellent choice. Probably not the best choice for a boulevard tree, but a good tree for the front yard.
Paper Birch	2	20	20	Seems to be hardy. More resistant to borers than white birch. Not the best choice as a boulevard tree.
River Birch	3	20	20	Probably the best choice if you want to plant a birch tree. Resistant to borers. Usually grown as a clump.
Spring Snow Crabapple	5	15	20	The only crab recommended for a boulevard planting. Plant in boulevard only if boulevard is 15 feet or more wide; otherwise street and sidewalk clearances will become a problem. White flowers. Does not set fruit.
Crabapple Cultivars "Radiant" "Red Splendor" "Royalty" "Snow Drift" "Sparkler" "Dolgo"	5	15	20	Crabapples are generally very hardy and an excellent accent plant for back yards, borders, and corners of your lot. Contact your local nursery for descriptions of these and numerous other cultivars. All crabapples listed produce fruit and are not recommended as boulevard trees.
Russian Olive	3	25	25	Not to be planted as a boulevard tree. Silver foliage. With annual pruning, can be a nice tree for back yards or corners. Has small thorns.
Japanese Tree Lilac	3	15	20	Small tree. Rare in Rapid City. Should grow well. White flowers.

V. Planting and Care Instructions

Dig a hole that is three times the diameter of the pot or root ball, and only as deep as the container is tall. Planting your tree too deep will cause it to die.

Set tree in hole and carefully remove pot by cutting sides with a very sharp utility knife. On balled and burlap trees, carefully cut wires and burlap away from tree and push down into hole. Do not attempt to remove wire completely; removal will damage root system.

Fill hole with loose soil and pack firmly around roots.

Stake tree only if recommended by nursery. Use only canvas tree ties. Do not tie with wire through a piece of garden hose. Remove stakes after one complete growing season.

Water tree to settle soil.

Mulch entire planting area with two to four inches of wood mulch.

Place 12-inch-long by six-inch-diameter tree square around trunk to protect tree from lawn mowers and string trimmers. **String Trimmers Kill Trees.**

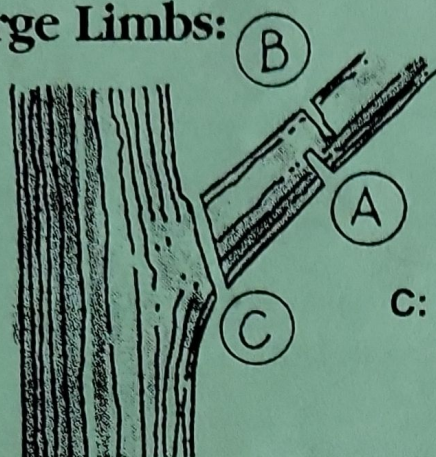
Water tree until soil is completely wet, about every seven to ten days during the first season and every two to three weeks during the following years. Watering intervals will vary depending on soil conditions.

What about the wrapping material?

Research has not yet provided a definite answer about the potential harm of leaving wire baskets in place after planting. However, the most prudent action is to cut and remove the top two tiers of wire after the ball is set in the hole. Problems more serious than wire baskets are treated burlap (feels like plastic) and nylon rope. Both should be completely removed. Other kinds of burlap and twine, even if biodegradable, should be cut away from the upper 1/3 of the ball. Never let remaining pieces protrude above the soil or they can act as wicks, drying the soil. Trees in pots or cans should be gently removed before planting. Cut away the plastic or metal if the root ball does not slide out easily. Paper or plastic trunk wrappers should also be removed. This material was put on the tree to protect it during shipment and will generally do more harm than good if allowed to remain on the tree.

How to Make a Pruning Cut

Large Limbs:



A: Make a partial cut from beneath.

B: Make a second cut from above several inches out and allow the limb to fall.

C: Complete the job with a final cut just outside the branch collar.

Small Branches:

Make a sharp, clean cut, just beyond a lateral bud or other branch.



Correct Cut



Too Close



Too Long



Too Slanted

How to Plant a Containerized Tree

In transplanting, be sure to keep soil around the roots. Always handle your tree by the ball, not by the trunk or branches. Don't let the root ball dry out. Help prevent root girdling by vertically cutting any roots that show tendencies to circle the root ball.



If a tree is planted correctly, it will grow twice as fast and live at least twice as long as one that is incorrectly planted. Ideally, dig or rototill an area one foot deep and approximately 5 times the diameter of the root ball. The prepared soil will encourage root growth beyond the root ball and results in a healthier tree.

After placing the tree, pack soil firmly but not tightly around the root ball. Water the soil and place protective 3-foot circle of mulch around the tree.

Firm subsoil to prevent settling