A healthy forest community begins with careful planning. With a little research and a simple layout you can produce a landscape that will cool your home in summer and tame the winter winds. Strategically placed trees can avoid collisions with power lines and buildings, and the aesthetics will increase your property value. A well-planned yard includes trees that flourish in the soil and moisture of your neighborhood.

A proper landscape plan takes each tree into consideration:

1. **Environmental Impact.** Unless it is patently cultivated as sterile, we must always anticipate inadvertent seed dispersal. Is this tree a known or potential impediment to productive plant communities beyond my yard?
2. **Distinction.** Hawai‘i is the endangered species capital of the world [dlnr.hawaii.gov/ecosystems/rare-plants 2017]. Can a native tree fulfill my landscape needs and likes?
3. **Height.** A columnar tree will grow in less space. Round and V-Shaped species provide the most shade. Will the tree bump into anything when it is fully grown?
4. **Canopy spread.** How wide will the tree grow?
5. **Deciduous or coniferous.** Will it lose its leaves annually or keep them year-round?
6. **Growth rate.** Slow growing species typically live longer than fast growing species. Too fast growing can be too aggressive. How long will it take for your tree to reach its full height?
7. **Soil, sun, and moisture.** Are all requirements met?
8. **Products.** Sticky pods, slippery nuts, or splattered fruit are seldom appreciated on sidewalks or in yards. What type of and how much tree debris is anticipated?
9. **Hardiness zone.** Hardiness zones (0-12) indicate specific categories of plants capable of growing in defined geographical areas based on climatic conditions. Hawai‘i is in the warmest, hardiness zone 12.

**TREE TIPS**

manoa.hawaii.edu/bgm/trees/
How to Plant a Tree

1. Dig a hole 3 to 4 times wider than the container. The hole should have sloping sides like a saucer to allow for proper root growth.

2. Carefully remove the tree from the container keeping the soil around the roots intact. It helps to tap the outside of the container to loosen the edge. Carefully slide the tree from the container. Don’t yank the tree out of the container as this can separate the roots from the tree.

3. Sometimes containerized trees become root-bound or the roots look like they’re about to circle the root ball. If your tree is like this, cut an X across the bottom of the root ball and four vertical slices along the sides of the root ball with a sharp knife.

4. Set the tree in the middle of the hole. Avoid planting the tree too deep. If the root collar sits below the top of the hole, compact some soil under the tree so that the root flare at the base of the trunk is slightly above ground level. Using some soil, secure the tree in a straight position, then fill and firmly pack the hole with the original soil, making sure there aren’t any air pockets. Keep backfilling until the soil is just below the root collar.

5. Create a water-holding basin around the hole and give the tree a good watering. After the water has soaked in, spread protective mulch 2–4 inches deep in a 3-foot diameter area around the base of the tree, but not touching the trunk.

6. The soil and mulch around your trees should be kept moist but not soggy. During dry weather, generously water the tree every 7 to 10 days during the first year. Water slowly at the dripline.

7. Remove any tags and labels from the tree as these will affect the tree as it grows. You may need to prune any broken or dead branches.

Fertilizer? Do not use fertilizer, potting soil, or chemicals on your newly planted trees. Such products will kill your young trees.

Watering: Keeping your trees watered is important during their first year. Keep the soil and mulch moist but not soggy. In dry weather, you should water generously every 7–10 days. The water should soak into the soil and mulch. Avoid watering so much that you see standing water.