

Landscaping Around Tree Roots

Safely plant a beautiful groundcover bed without harming delicate root systems.

Transform the bare dirt under your mature trees into a thriving garden. This weekend sequence protects the tree while establishing resilient plants in dry shade.

● Crucial Root Zone Measurements

6 inches

Minimum distance to pull mulch back

15 inches

Spacing for bright Coral Bells

18 inches

Spacing for tall Autumn Ferns

Hand-width

Bare bark ring above soil line

2 inches

Depth to check for soil moisture

Twice a week

Deep watering frequency the first season



Watering Under A Canopy

Dense canopies act like giant umbrellas, blocking natural rainfall. Always target individual root zones deeply rather than just lightly spraying the surrounding leaves.

● The Root-Bed Planting Plan

- 1 Saturday Morning** Clear old debris, expose the flare, and spread the 1-inch compost top-dress evenly.
- 2 Saturday Afternoon** Map natural soil pockets and plant 4-inch pots, maintaining strict 12-inch spacing.
- 3 Sunday Morning** Apply the 3-inch chip-mulch layer sourced directly from a local tree crew.
- 4 Sunday Afternoon** Hand-water each new plug deeply to settle soil and eliminate air pockets.

● Find Your Planting Style

Find your row: Your Site Conditions

Your Site Conditions	Your pick	Why
Evergreens in acidic soil	Pacific NW Woodland Ferns	Thrives in deep shade beneath the canopy
Modern courtyard design	Contemporary Minimalist	Alternates just two contrasting plant varieties
Soft transition to lawn	English Cottage Oak Bed	Layers varying heights of blooming shade plants
Pines in dry sandy soil	Arid Xeriscape Rock Garden	Rugged succulents require zero supplemental watering

● Dry-Shade Shopping List

10-Sq-Ft Zones	Texas Sedge (Carex)	Coral Bells (Heuchera)	Autumn Fern	Liriope (Monkey Grass)
1	10 pots	6 pots	4 pots	10 pots
3	30 pots	18 pots	12 pots	30 pots
5	50 pots	30 pots	20 pots	50 pots

Calculate your total square footage before heading to the nursery to prevent overbuying.

● Before You Dig Or Plant

- ☐ Align the gently curved outer border with the natural leafy drip line.
- ☐ Gently probe loose soil with your fingers to map the deepest voids.
- ☐ Verify the woody tops of structural surface roots remain clearly visible.
- ☐ Ensure the widened root flare is completely exposed to the open air.

● Garden Planning Notes

Adopt a strict no-dig policy to preserve the delicate underground balance you have created.