

Avocado Trees

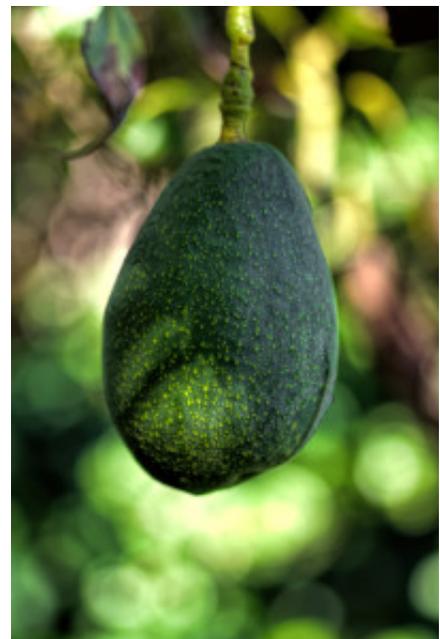
Avocado Trees are low maintenance and can easily be grown in the ground or in a container. They're often used as beautiful accent trees on porches and patios, as well as for growing fruit. If planted in the ground they thrive in warmer climates. Follow these simple instructions listed below for growing success in your home or garden.

Location: When planting your Avocado trees in the ground, place them in an area that receives full to partial sunlight. Avocado trees can tolerate partial shade, but full sun is ideal. Plant your trees about 10 feet apart.

Planting Instructions: It's ideal to plant your tree when temperatures are warm, either in the early fall or early spring. This way the tree has a chance to set its roots in before winter cold or extreme summer heat arrives. Dig a hole as deep as your tree's container and twice as wide. Loosen the soil on the sides of the hole with a pitch fork or shovel. Next remove any rocks, dirt clumps, or grass. Place your tree in the hole and make sure that it's level to the ground before back filling it. Mixing in citrus tree potting mix with your natural soil will give avocado trees a boost as their starting out. Once you've filled in the hole give your tree a good drink of water.

<http://www.plantingdirections.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Hass.jpg>**Container**

Planting: If planting your avocado tree in a container, choose a container that's slightly larger than the plastic container on your tree. Over time move your tree up into a container that's three times the width of the plastic container. Then line the bottom of the container with gravel to promote proper drainage. Place your Avocado Tree in the container and fill it in with citrus tree potting mix. Then give your tree water until you see it draining out the bottom of the pot. During the warmer months keep your tree outdoors. Once the weather starts turning cold bring your tree indoors and place it by a large sunny window.



Watering: Do not over water avocado trees! They

Watering: DO NOT over water avocado trees. They don't like wet feet. Allow the soil to dry out in between watering sessions. Make sure the soil is dry to the touch two inches below the surface of soil before watering your tree again. Most Avocado trees need water about once a week. Over watering is actually the number one cause of death for home grown avocado trees. It can lead to serious problems like root rot.

While keeping the roots dry is best, avocado leaves actually benefit from moisture. When your tree is kept indoors mist the leaves daily with a spray bottle, especially during the colder months when you have the heat running. Placing a humidifier by your tree may also be beneficial.

Fertilizer: Wait until your tree has experienced two to three months of growth before fertilizing it. Once it's old enough give it a fertilizer that specifically says it's for a citrus tree four times a year, once every season. Container trees need fertilizer every two months. Pay attention to the leaves, yellowing leaves can indicate nitrogen or iron deficiencies.



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[content/uploads/2015/07/iStock_00020247917XSmall.jpg](http://www.plantingdirections.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/iStock_00020247917XSmall.jpg)) **Pruning:** Prune your trees in the early spring. While your tree is young maintain its health by removing broken, damaged, or dead branches. As it matures remove any crisscrossing branches. After a few years of growth you may need to lightly prune your tree to maintain its shape. Remove new growth towards the top, not the lower branches. However, keep in mind that avocado trees rarely need to be pruned.

Pests: Avocado trees have the chance to face pests like spider mites. Mites leave webs and spots on the leaves and branches. There are a variety of organic insecticidal soaps and sprays to rid your tree of pests.

BONUS TIPS:

- Placing a three inch layer of mulch around the base of your tree can help the soil retain moisture. It also keeps grass and weeds away, so they won't be able to compete with your tree for nutrients.
 - Don't be alarmed by leaf drop. Avocado trees have sensitive leaves that they'll drop at the first sign of any trouble. Sudden temperature changes, or even just a cold draft can cause an avocado tree to drop its leaves. Leaves often take one to three months to regenerate.
 - Avocados ripen off of the tree. They can actually be left on the tree for months until you're ready to harvest them. Once picked, they take about three weeks to ripen.
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