YOU PLANTED A TREE!
Now What?



Planting day is just the beginning. The first year or two are the most critical time in a young tree's life. A little care now can help it thrive for decades.

GOOD AFTERCARE TODAY
strong trees tomorrow.

1 WATER IS EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY IN YEAR ONE



Newly planted trees have limited root systems and depend on consistent moisture.

- Water deeply and regularly during dry stretches in the first growing season.
- Slow and steady is best, trickle a hose around the base until water soaks down to the roots.

For shelterbelts or larger plantings, contact your local conservation district for watering tips and resources.



2 MULCH IS YOUR BEST FRIEND



A 2–4 inch layer of wood chips or shredded bark around the base of the tree holds moisture, controls weeds, and moderates soil temperature.

- Keep mulch at least 6 inches away from the trunk
- Keep the trunk base clear, buried bark can rot and disease can set in
- Think donut, not volcano

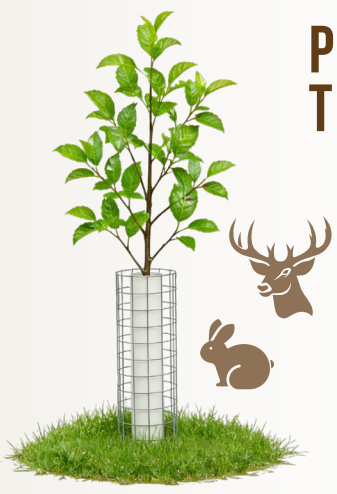
DO THIS



NOT THIS



3 PROTECT IT FROM THE THINGS THAT WANT TO EAT IT



- Use a tree tube or wire cage to protect from deer and rabbits. These can also help protect against harsh weather and other hungry wildlife.
- Keep lawn equipment away. Mowers and string trimmers can wound bark and cause lasting damage.

Let the mulch ring remind you where the no-mow zone begins.



4 HOLD OFF ON PRUNING (FOR NOW)



Remove any dead, broken, or crossing branches, but otherwise let your tree focus its energy on getting established. There's plenty of time to shape it once it's settled in.



Save the shaping for later.

5 KEEP AN EYE ON IT



Check your tree every week or two during growing season, especially in the summer heat.

- Look for signs of stress - wilting, yellowing, or very little new growth.
- Catching a problem early makes it much easier to fix.



Not sure what you're seeing? Your local conservation district is always a good first call.

6 THE PAYOFF IS WORTH IT



A little attention in the first few years sets your tree up for a long, healthy life. The trees planted across South Dakota today can leave a legacy for generations.



Strong roots today. A legacy for generations.

South Dakota's Conservation Districts

sdconservation.org

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR TREES OR A RECENT PLANTING?
Contact your local conservation district.
They're here to help.