



national  
tree day

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# Organising a Site

## Planning Your Tree Day Planting Site

This guide is aimed at assisting in planning public or community Tree Day sites. For a guide to planning a Schools Tree Day site download our Schools Step by Step Guide.

The success of your National Tree Day site will depend on good organisation, good communication and planning.

Here are some easy steps to making your site a success!

1. Who's organising your site?
2. Choose a tree planting site
3. Where to get local native plants and advice
4. Who else can help you?
5. Register your site!
6. Think about what your site needs
7. On the Day
8. At the End of the Day...
9. Aftercare and Maintenance
10. Accidents and Incidents

### 1. Who's organising your site?

Nominate a site coordinator and deputy to oversee preparation for the day and assistants to help run the planting activities on the day, including a qualified first-aid. Also think about how volunteers will be able to identify these people (eg wear a badge or hat).

### 2. Choose a tree planting site and date

Who owns your site? Do you need to seek permission from the local council or from the private landholder to plant there? Is there a plan to follow for the site? eg an Open Space Plan of Management.

Think about the environmental outcomes of your planting, and get advice to determine what types of plants or other activities will achieve the best results. Where there is a healthy community of native plants already in existence at or near the site you should find out whether other ways of encouraging these native plants and seeds to spread and grow would be better than introducing new plants (for example bush regeneration, brush-matting or fencing to keep off grazing stock). You can download a Planting Guide produced by the [Australian Association of Bush Regenerators](#). Download our other factsheets for more information.

Decide on a date. If National Tree Day, or Schools Tree Day are not an ideal time to plant trees in your area, you could consider the option of (Your Town) Tree Day or (Your Region) Tree Day.

Planet Ark has arranged insurance all year round so now you have the freedom to choose a planting date that suits you.

### 3. Where to get local native plants and advice

Find out what kind of plants are native to your area, which ones would be suitable for your site and where to get them. Here are some leads to follow:

- **Your local council.** Usually your local Bushcare or Environmental Officer has the most up-to-date information on local suppliers of indigenous plants, and many councils have their own native nursery and may give seedlings away to schools and community groups for Tree Day plantings. They can also advise about where would be a good place to plant trees and they may know of local nurseries and environmental



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groups who can help you. **Please get in touch with councils early to avoid disappointment.** Call our **National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000** or email us to find out who to talk to at your local council.

- **Local environmental groups** can offer advice and assistance in sourcing plants eg [Landcare](#), [Coastcare](#), [Bushcare](#) (click on “Bushcare Volunteering”) and [Greening Australia](#).
- **Local community or native nurseries.** Many councils support community nurseries who specialize in propagating local native species from seed. Call our **National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000** for assistance with finding a nursery that specializes in native plants local to you.
- To learn more about native flora and find groups in your area, visit the national website of the [Australian Native Plants Society](#).

**Please make sure you make enquiries early to source your plants in time.**

## 4. Who else can help you?

Many of the trees planted on Tree Day are donated by councils and environmental groups. Plants, equipment and refreshments may also be paid for or donated by local businesses. **Check out our Sharing Resources page to search for offers of assistance from local businesses.**

Network within your local community and contact:

- Local community groups - eg Lions Clubs, Rotary, Apex, Guides, Scouts, Keep Australia Beautiful etc.
- Lions Clubs are key supporters of Tree Day. Call 02 4940 8033 to get in touch with your nearest Lions Club, or contact the Lions National Tree Day Coordinator via email on [lions@planetark.org](mailto:lions@planetark.org). Please note: Any requests for Lions BBQs need to be made by mid-June for National Tree Day plantings.
- Involve your local sports club. Maybe there’s a local game being played and you could ask the players and spectators to lend a hand?

- Involve your local church, synagogue or mosque. Thousands of people will be attending services over the National Tree Day weekend. Why not gather a group of friends or fellow worshippers and go out and do your bit?
- Get help from local businesses. Try and get support for your sites from local businesses. They may be able to help you pay for your seedlings, or other supplies for the day such as gloves and trowels or food and drinks.
- Talk to your nearest Toyota Dealer to see if they can help at your site.

## 5. Register your site

There are 3 easy ways to register:

- **Register online** and save paper! or
- Register over the phone - call the **National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000** or
- Send us a Site Registration Form

If you need promotional brochures and posters, [download them here](#).

## 6. Think about what your site needs

**Planting and preparation:**

- What types of plants are native to the local area?
- Where will you plant the trees, shrubs and grasses?
- How many native trees, shrubs or grasses can you plant at your site? It’s a good idea to have a mix of different plant types to create a healthy, more balanced ecosystem.
- What about seedling pick up/delivery, and transportation to the site?
- Does the site need preparation? eg. weeding, rotary hoeing, fertilising, mulching? Council may be able to assist.



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- Think about any potential hazards and take steps to minimise the risk of an accident occurring.
- What follow-up activities will the plants need? Remember, young plants will need watering until their roots get established (at least 8-12 weeks, or longer if it doesn't rain). You could use the additional insured dates for follow-up visits to weed and mulch around your plants.

## Volunteers:

- How many will you need and for how long?
- Do you have enough 'Volunteer Registration Forms' and have you read the section on Volunteer Insurance?
- Is there car parking space for your volunteers?
- Perhaps your local Lions or Rotary Club will help you out with a sausage or vegeburger sizzle?
- Remember to tell your volunteers what they need to bring (eg clothing, gloves, sturdy footwear, equipment, drinks & snacks etc), whether they need to RSVP and what you will be providing.

**Equipment and Supplies** - You will need to source / bring:

- Signage to help volunteers find your planting site
- Native trees, shrubs, groundcovers or grass seedlings
- Mulch - very important! Mulch helps to reduce competition from weeds and prevents loss of moisture from the soil.
- Trowels or small shovels, picks and mallets to drive in stakes (you can also ask people to bring their own)
- Gardening gloves (you can also ask people to bring their own)
- Wheelbarrows for transporting seedlings, equipment and mulch
- Stakes and tree guards or used milk cartons to protect seedlings

- Access to a water source (or take your own water to the site)
- Garden hoses, watering cans or buckets for watering
- Rubbish bins or bags to keep the site clean
- A first aid kit and qualified first-aider
- Card or picnic tables for the volunteer registration desk
- Sufficient 'Volunteer Registration Forms' and pens
- Copies of the 'Accident/Incident Report Form'.
- You can download these forms [here](#)

Remember to tell your volunteers to wear sturdy footwear, long pants, gloves, a hat and bring sun protection. Make sure people know that they can just turn up on the day and that planting will proceed rain, hail or shine!

## 7. On the Day

**Allocate on-the-day tasks**, which will include:

**Someone to position the seedlings.** Do this early to ensure that plants go in the ground where you want them to!

- Make sure volunteers know where to go when they arrive.
- Allocate someone to coordinate volunteer registration.

**Organise** someone to demonstrate how to plant and to oversee the planting and Occupational Health and Safety on the site. See our [Planting for Survival](#) video for a demonstration of how to plant trees for the best chance of survival.

Someone to organise a team of volunteers for watering and other finishing-up tasks such as collecting empty pots and any equipment.

- For insurance purposes, please make sure everyone fills in the 'Volunteer Registration Form'.
- Someone (preferably qualified) to be responsible for first aid with access to a first aid kit.



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- Someone to take photos (maybe before and after shots and revisit the site a few months later).
- Someone to organise the refreshments
- Get someone to call the local media and check they're coming.

## Planting demonstrations for volunteers!

Show your volunteers how to plant trees, shrubs or grasses and make sure they are comfortable with this before you leave them to plant on their own. It is vital that you do this to make sure your plants get the best possible start in life! Common issues are digging holes too small and damaging roots when removing seedlings from their pots. See our How to Plant factsheet for more advice.

## 8. At the End of the Day...

Results and forms collating:

- How many trees, shrubs and groundcovers were planted at your site?
- How many volunteers helped out?
- Can any volunteers help out with watering and weeding over the coming weeks?
- Did everyone sign in on the 'Volunteer Registration Forms'?

Send these and your 'Results Registration Form' to Planet Ark via fax 02 4757 8980 or post to: National Tree Day, PO Box 4, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782. You can also register your results online or by phoning the **National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000.**

**Celebrate your achievements! But please don't forget to look after the plants beyond the day.**

## 9. Aftercare and Maintenance

Make sure some of your site volunteers (or perhaps a school, Scout, Guide or Lions group) can water the seedlings on a regular basis until they get established (8 weeks or longer if rains fail).

If you plant them, you need to look after them. It's a great opportunity to watch them grow!

You could also take pictures for a photo-diary to document the progress of your site. It's a good idea to take the photos from the same spot over a period of months or even years.

## 10. Accidents and Incidents

In case of an accident, act responsibly and logically. If the accident is serious, or you are in any doubt please call an ambulance or doctor.

For any incident, big or small, please fill out an 'Accident/ Incident Report Form' and notify the National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000.