

Wrap young tree trunks with special paper from a nursery, burlap strips, or aluminum foil. This extra step reduces damage from borers, exposure to the sun, the nibbling of rabbits or rodents, and lawn mowers. Hard maples and oaks are particularly sensitive to sunscald.

Staking and tying a tree also protect the trunk, but are most important to keep movement caused by wind from disturbing new roots needed to establish the tree. Support the newly planted tree with a 2x2-inch stake, five or six feet long. Drive it between the roots four to six inches from the trunk and 20 inches into the ground. Attach it to the tree with wire run through pieces of old garden hose (so the wire won't cut into the trunk). Keep the tree staked and wires taut until the tree has become established--one to three years.

Support a balled-and-burlapped or container tree with guy wires. Pound three short, sturdy stakes into the ground at equal distances around the tree and run hose-protected wires from the trunk to each stake. Place guy wires high enough so that leverage from the top does not loosen them. Wires with turnbuckles let you adjust the pull of the wires.