



ADAM'S APPLES

FRUIT TREE NURSERY

PLANTING & PRUNING GUIDE



A Little Bit About Us...

Adam's Apples is a nursery growing fruit trees with love and care in the heart of East Devon. Our fruit trees are supplied bare-rooted in the winter months when the trees are dormant, from late-November to mid-March.

Most of our trees are supplied as feathered maidens. These take us two years to produce; planting out rootstocks in the spring, bud grafting the selected varieties onto the rootstocks in the summer months and then training and caring for them throughout the second summer, before digging them up for customers in the late autumn.

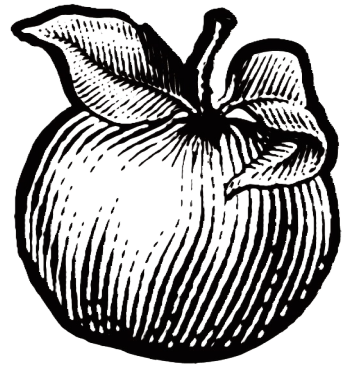
Our website opens in the summer before the upcoming bare root season, but we are happy to take enquiries for orders all year, so please get in touch.

Every year we offer courses in fruit tree grafting, pruning and cider making, as well as a consultancy and advisory service across the south west for all things orchard related.

We are a certified organic nursery with the Soil Association, Licence number: AB31160 and a Plant Healthy certified nursery, registration number PHCS-0089-UK



PLANTING & PRUNING GUIDE



Tips & Recommendations

We suggest using 'Root Grow Mycorrhizal Fungi' and Bonemeal when planting your trees, but we **do not** recommend adding compost or manure to your planting hole (see **Mulching**).

Before planting, inspect the tree roots, if they seem dry, soak them in a bucket of water for 10 minutes before planting. Whilst planting, keep the trees in the polythene bag we supply, so the roots stay damp and are out of the wind.

We advise planting our trees with a wooden stake (120cm long x 32mm x 32mm) and securing them with a rubber tree tie. This keeps the tree well anchored at the base and prevents wind-rock.

We always recommend using a rabbit guard on your trees, which will also help to prevent vole damage to the lower trunk. Biodegradable spiral rabbit guards or flex-guards are a cost effective and practical way to protect your trees. (see **Staking & Guarding**).

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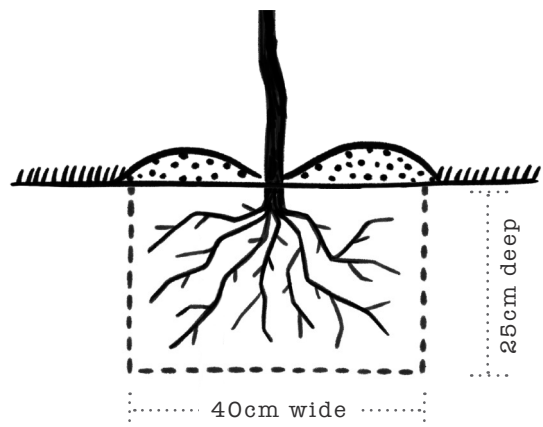
Dig Your Hole

Firstly remove the turf from an area 40cm x 40cm - the turf can either be chopped up with a spade and added to the bottom of the planting hole, or you can put it on the compost.

Then dig a square hole wide enough so the roots of the tree can fan out. Usually 40cm x 40cm by around 25cm deep is adequate. Be careful that the hole is not too deep - place the tree in the hole to see where the soil level will be once back-filled.

The finished soil level should be about 5cm above the topmost root. Depending on the individual tree, you may have to dig a slightly deeper hole, or add some soil back in the hole so the tree is not too deep. If you are using 'Root Grow', sprinkle this onto the *roots of the tree* just before backfilling with soil. If you are using Bonemeal, sprinkle this onto the *heap of soil* you have dug out, rather than directly onto the tree roots.

Scan QR code to watch our full guide on planting your tree.



Video Guide - Planting &
Pruning your Fruit Tree

Stake Your Tree

Before backfilling, bang in a 120cm wooden stake on the windward side of the hole so that prevailing winds will blow your tree away from the stake. The stake should be driven in vertically and at least 40cm in the ground.

Place your tree a few cm from the stake and backfill your hole with the soil you have dug out.

Shake the tree up and down slightly as you backfill to get rid of any air gaps. Once half the soil is back in the hole you can lightly tamp it down with your heel. Now backfill with the remaining soil, firm again with your heel.

Using a tree-tie, attach your tree tightly at the top of the stake. The tree-tie should create a figure of 8 so the tree can't rub against the stake.

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Mulch Your Tree

Mulch should be used around fruit trees to act as a physical barrier to weeds and to help retain moisture in the soil.

Organic mulches include compost/well rotted farmyard manure/fresh or decomposed woodchip. We recommend woodchip over everything else. Put down a thick layer – approx. 10cm with a 50cm diameter.

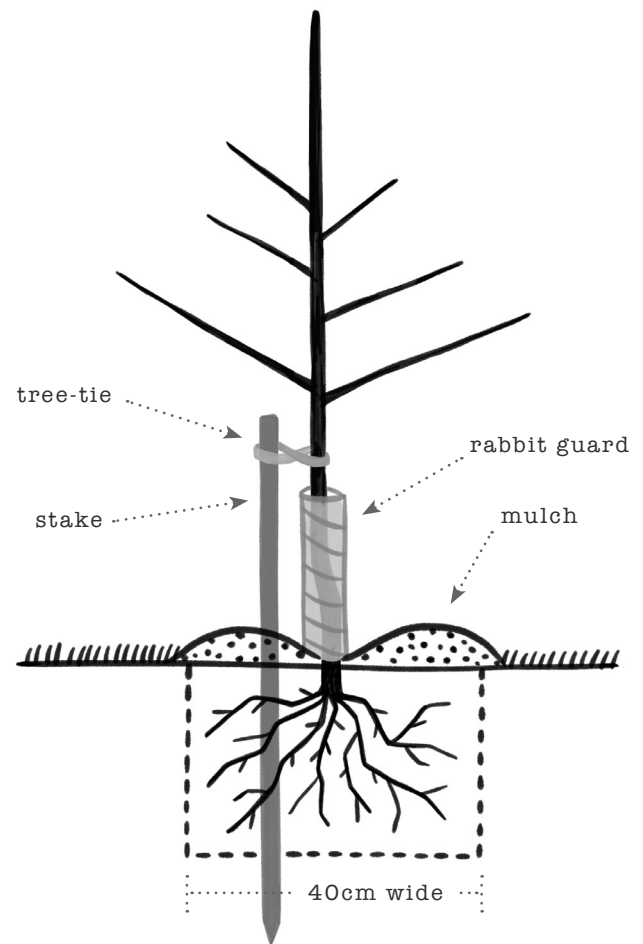
Don't place organic material right up against the tree trunk, leave a gap around the base (see diagram).

Keep the area at the base of your tree weed/grass free for the first 3 years after planting. This will make a huge difference in how well the tree establishes. You will still need to hand weed some perennial weeds that grow through the mulch.

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Watering Your Tree

You do not need to water bare rooted trees planted between Dec – mid-March. If we have drought conditions during June/July/Aug then you can water around each tree with 4x watering cans (36L) of water every 7-10 days. Stop when normal rainfall returns.



Guarding Against Deer and Livestock

To protect your trees from deer, sheep or cattle, you will need to construct a more substantial guard. There are several options, but the cheapest method we advise is to use one or two fencing stakes and steel weld mesh, which can be bought pre-cut or on a roll. Scan the QR code to watch our guide showing you the best method of construction.



Video Guide -
Building a Deer
Guard

When To Prune Your Tree

Prune Apple, Pear, Quince & Medlar trees as pictured during the months Dec – March.

Prune Plum, Gage, Damson & Cherry trees as pictured during the months May – July.

Make cuts about 6mm above an outward-facing bud at an angle so that water will run away from the bud.

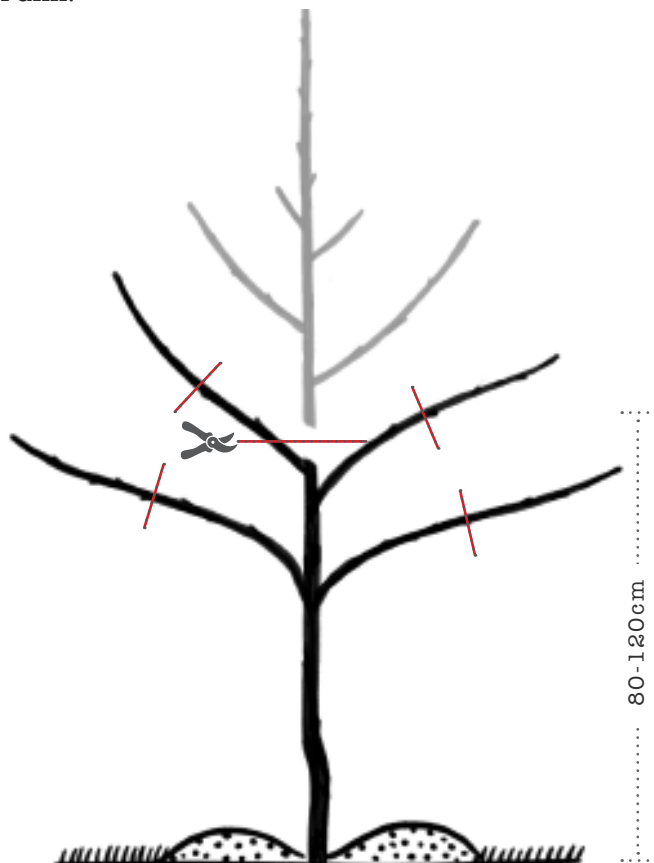


How To Prune Your Fruit Tree

Goblet Shaped or Open-centred Tree

To grow a low-branching ‘bush’ tree, for picking fruit from the ground without using a ladder, we recommend pruning it into a goblet shaped/ open-centred tree. Select 3-4 branches that radiate from the main trunk to form a balanced structure, cutting the main stem back to the highest of these branches (about 80-120cm from the ground).

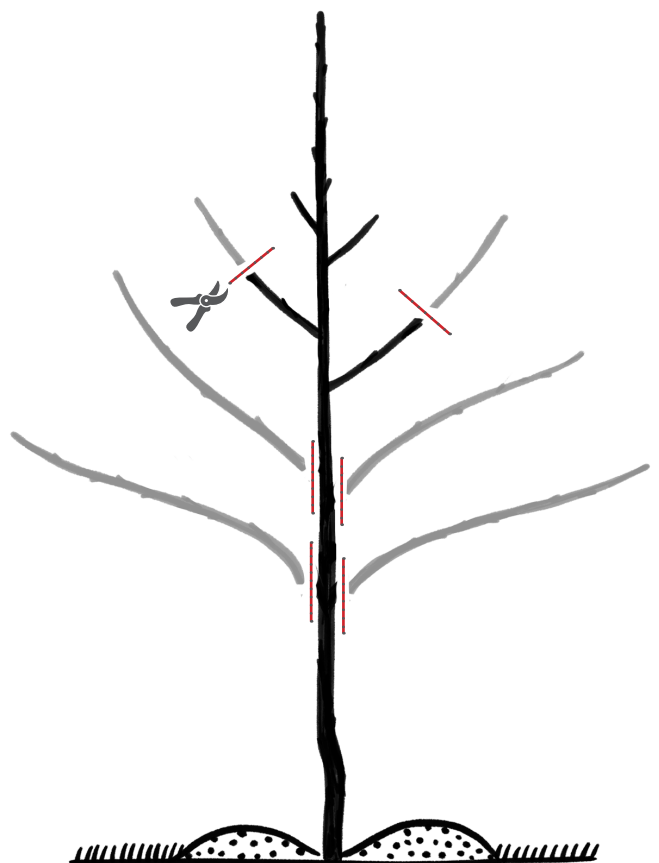
Then, prune each of the selected branches back by half, **to a bud**. For example, a 50cm branch would be cut back to 25cm; branches shorter than 5cm can be left unpruned. If there are branches that are too low at their current height, prune them clean back to the main trunk.



Central Leader Tree

If you’d prefer to grow a tall ‘full standard’ tree with a clear trunk and a raised canopy for grazing animals underneath, **do not** prune the main stem. Allow the tree to continue to grow from its highest point (the terminal bud). This will encourage a center-leader tree.

If there are well-placed side-branches at the correct height, prune them back by half their length, **to a bud**. Leave small branches that are under 5cm. If there are branches that are too low at their current height or poorly placed, prune them clean back to the main trunk.

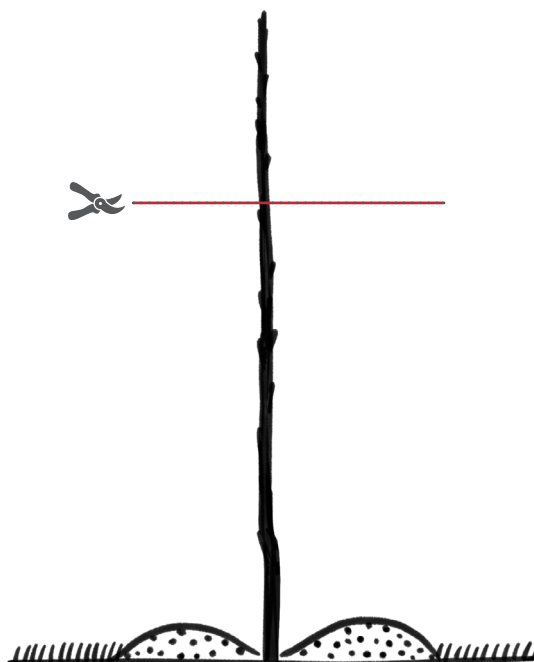


Maiden Whip Tree (tree with no branches)

Some young fruit trees do not form any side branches in the first year of growth, this is called a maiden whip. If you want side branches on this tree you will have to prune the main stem back to encourage side branches to grow in the following summer. Reduce the main stem to a height at which you would like side branches to form.

Cut to a bud.

However, if you want your maiden tree to continue to grow taller before it starts producing side branches, do not prune the main stem back, and let it continue to grow for another summer. The following winter you can carry out the pruning advice given in the '**Goblet Shaped/ Open-centred Tree**' or '**Central Leader Tree**' sections.



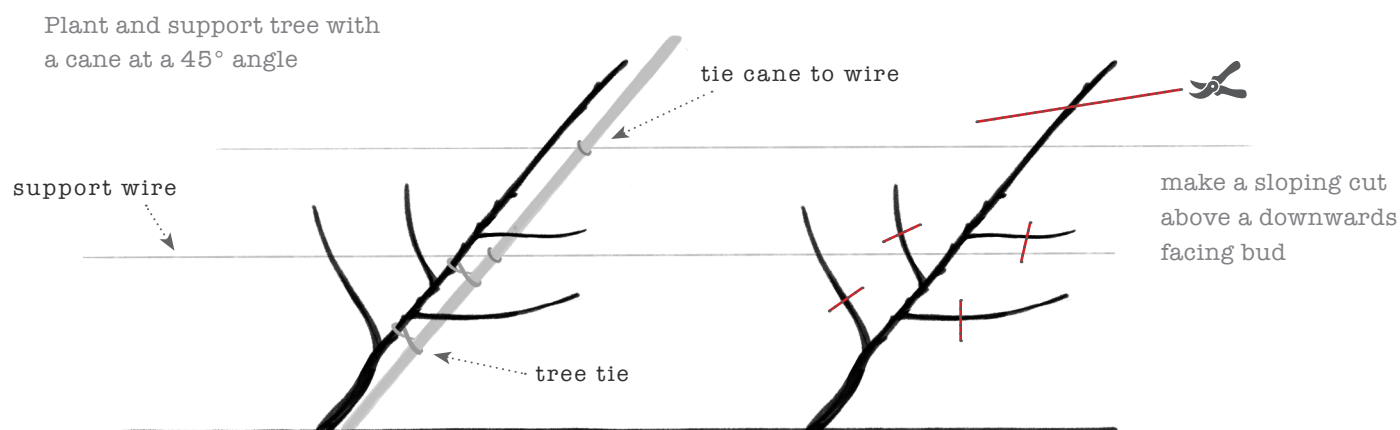
Pruning for Cordons

If starting with a feathered maiden, prune all side branches back to 10cm. Prune back the main stem to 15cm above a side branch. Any side branches that are less than 15cm can be left unpruned. If starting with a maiden, prune the main stem back by 1/3 of its length.

Scan QR code to watch our guide to pruning cordons.



Video Guide - Pruning Cordons



Pruning for Espaliers and Fans

Prune the tree down to around 35 – 45cm from the ground. Prune **to a bud**. See our website for details on how to train the new growth for these forms. (www.adamsappletrees.co.uk)

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