

Blueberry Care

CHOOSING AND PREPARING A PLANTING SITE

- Select a sunny, sheltered spot. While blueberries are tolerant of shade, better crops are obtained in the sun. At the same time, they should not be exposed to harsh, drying winds.
- Don't plant blueberries too close to trees, as the trees will not only block out sunlight, but will also suck up any moisture in the soil.
- If planting multiple bushes, it's best to plant them in a patch, rather than scattered throughout your garden. This will bolster berry production and quality.
- The blueberry is a shallow-rooted plant. Therefore, it requires a soil that holds moisture, but also drains well and doesn't stay wet. Don't plant blueberries in sites that have heavy, clayey soils that stay wet.
- Blueberries thrive in soil that is acidic. The [soil pH](#) should ideally be between 4.0 and 5.0; soil that isn't acidic enough will stunt growth. Soil can be acidified by mixing a small amount of granulated sulfur into the soil several months before planting. Peat moss, as well as pine bark or needles, are also good additions that will help acidify your soil.
- Mix organic matter into the soil before you set your blueberry bushes.

HOW TO PLANT BLUEBERRY BUSHES

- Tip: Be careful not to plant them too deeply. The root ball should be just below the surface (one-quarter to one-half inch).
- Dig holes twice as wide and twice as deep as the roots of the plant).
- Space bushes 4–5 feet apart in a row, with at least 8 feet between rows.
- Set the bush in the hole with the root ball just below the surface and its roots spread out. Pack the hole tightly with soil.
- Apply fertilizer one month after planting, not at the time of planting. Apply ½ ounce of a 10-10-10 fertilizer in a band around the plant 6 to 12 inches from the crown.