

As the weather gets warmer and the rains start to fall, spring time becomes a great time to plant. Even though I would love to plant every plant for every customer, I encourage as much customer involvement as I can. So I thought I would talk about what to keep in mind when planting something new whether its a perennial, shrub or tree.

Labels, Labels, Labels!! Always look at the plant's label or tag. They're are four things to look for: the mature height and spread, sun or shade tolerance, preferred soil conditions and blooming time of the plant.

1. The height and spread of a plant listed on the tag is always at the plants maturity without pruning. I see a lot of customers letting plants get too big for the area, perennials not being thinned, or planting a tree on the corner of their home that twice the height of their roof. When planting new shrubs, they're about 30 inches tall. Why not let them grow a little bigger then trim them and keep them the size you want to where you can manage them.
2. When deciding on a perennial or shrub, sun or shade is an important choosing point. When a plant requires full sun it means at least 6 hours of direct sunlight. These will be most shrubs and perennials with all summer color. When a tag says partial sun/shade it generally refers to 3-5 hours of indirect sun or early morning thru early afternoon. Then there's shade, my favorite place to plant. Shade plants require at least up 3 hours of filtered sun. These plants are usually your low maintenance plants and emphasize color through the plant's foliage.
3. This next one is a tough because every house can have different soil. Older homes will most likely have top soil on top before getting to the clay but newer homes typically have nothing but clay. Most plants like well drained soil and like to be watered more frequently. No matter what your soil, I would suggest digging the hole about twice the size of the root ball and add soil amenities (peat moss, compost, fertilizer) to the existing soil. In clay conditions expect longer wait times for plants to root and take off.
4. Finally the best part, the reward for all your hard work, the blooming time. When deciding on a plant think about what else is close by and when it blooms and what color is it. I always try to have plants blooming through each season with different colors to keep the landscape looking appealing. Don't forget to consider the plant's foliage (leaves). Most leaves change color in the fall and add interest while other are different shades of green and even purples. Evergreens can be incorporated into your landscape for a splash of green during the long winter months.

When picking out the right plant for the right place, think of height; what obstructions could the tree face, is it too close to the house? Think about the sunlight and how much it gets, think about soil preparation to get the plant off to the right start and the plants bloom times and color interests to keep your landscape exciting all year round.



Always read the label!



Think about plant size at maturity. This landscape appears to be swallowing up the house.



Dig a hole at least twice the size of the root ball and add amenities to the soil.



For color, consider blooms, foliage and winter appearance.

ASK ADVANTAGE

Post your questions to Facebook or Twitter!



Q: The grass keeps encroaching on my beds. What type of edging do you like the best?

A: *If you have rock in your beds, I like the larger pavers or natural flagstone. Yes, it's a little more expensive but the edge holds back the grass while keeping the rock/mulch in place AND the look is hard to beat. Plus its much easier to mow along.*



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SPRING: 2016

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SPRING SERVICES

... BRING YOUR LANDSCAPE BACK TO LIFE!

The Advantage "Spring Clean-up" includes the spring maintenance that is vital for a healthy and attractive lawn and landscape. A thorough cleanup prepares your lawn and landscape for summer, but it can accomplish more than just that. It can save your lawn and landscape from pests and disease.

Our spring clean-up service includes removing all leaves, branches and other debris that have accumulated over the winter season from your lawn and landscape beds and hauling away the debris. We also take care of tree and shrub pruning, lawn edging and repairing any winter damage. Additional services we provide can include lawn seeding, fertilization, aeration and gutter cleaning.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR SEASONAL COLOR PROGRAM ...

Seasonal displays are a great way to give your landscape a burst of color. Let us design, plant and maintain your annual flower beds, window boxes and/or planters to showcase your residence or business. We can offer color presentations for year-round seasonal interest!

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE

... WE OFFER A PRE-PAY DISCOUNT!

Let Advantage take care of your lawn & landscape maintenance on a monthly basis and you'll receive the satisfaction of your lawn looking it's best all year round. Our monthly maintenance program includes the Spring Clean-up Services listed above as well as: mowing, lawn applications, summer landscaping maintenance and fall clean-up.

MULCH

... KEEPS ITS COLOR ALL SEASON LONG!

Mulch is a terrific way to help maintain the health and beauty of your planting beds. Advantage uses Premium Brown Hardwood Mulch - dyed with natural products, our mulch will keep its color all season long. Mulch can protect a plant's root system, add nutrients to the soil and slow the erosion of topsoil. We provide delivery and installation or, if you prefer, pick-up and loading to your vehicle.

CALL (309) 275-9641 TO SCHEDULE A CUSTOM LAWN MAINTENANCE PROGRAM