

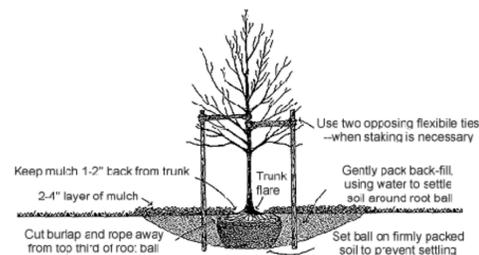
## Planting

Fall is the time to choose planting locations, treat competing vegetation, and contact vendors to schedule tree and supply orders. An old saying in the tree-planting world is "You don't want a \$100 tree in a \$5 hole." Proper site preparation will give your trees the best chance for healthy, long, and productive lives. Planting in groups will increase safety and limit care.

The first step in site preparation is matching the location to the tree. Look up, down, and all around. Overhead utility lines, underground obstructions, surrounding buildings and vegetation on site are just a few of the variables that should be considered. The right tree species should fit the space when mature, enhance the surroundings, and provide maximum benefits with minimum liabilities. Plant no closer than one tree length from your house.

Treating competing vegetation will enhance growing conditions for the tree. Grass and other vegetation may be removed by chemical or mechanical means. Often a combination of chemical application with mechanical cultivation is optimal. Do not add fertilizer or soil amendments as this may cause a potting effect and restrict future root growth.

Plant the tree at a depth where the root collar is level with the ground. Be sure to remove burlap, wire baskets, temporary stakes, and wrap or string. The hole should be three to four times as wide as it is deep. After planting the tree, refill with the original soil, lightly pack, and water. When the soil has settled to the original ground level, add mulch in a two-inch to four-inch deep layer to a diameter of four to six feet or more around the tree. Do not pile mulch directly against the trunk, as this may cause rotting. The best time for planting in Mississippi is from mid-December through the end of March.



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Mississippi Forestry Commission – [www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us)

Mississippi State Extension Service – [www.msucare.com](http://www.msucare.com)

USDA Forest Service – [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

or [www.urbanforestrysouth.org](http://www.urbanforestrysouth.org)

Mississippi Forestry Association – [www.msforestry.net](http://www.msforestry.net)

International Society of Arboriculture – [www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com)

The Mississippi Forestry Commission looks forward to serving you as we rebuild our lives and our forests. Please contact us with suggestions, comments, and questions.



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# Mississippi Homeowner's Guide



Working with  
Trees Affected by  
Hurricane Katrina

## Disposing of Debris

Downed trees and woody debris should be transported to the public road right-of-way if possible. Logs should be left in the longest length that can be transported to the road and separated for salvage operations. Woody debris should be kept separate from construction materials and food products.

Do not burn debris. Hazardous fuels conditions exist due to extensive storm damage. Burning may ignite wildfires.

## Hiring a Tree Service

- Try to find a local licensed tree surgeon from the phone directory. One who is also a certified arborist brings more credentials.
- Beware of unsolicited offers, bargain deals, and out-of state companies
- Never pay in advance. Pay only after the vendor has completed work to your full satisfaction. Sign a written agreement prior to work occurring.
- Ask for certificates, proof of liability insurance, and workmen's compensation. Phone the insurance company to confirm currency.
- Ask for references from other jobs and check them.
- Get more than one estimate for the work.
- Do not hire a company that recommends topping.
- Beware of an arborist who wants to do extensive work on, or remove living trees that appear to have limited damage.

## Hazard Trees

Many trees have been weakened and could present a hazard to public safety, infrastructure, or power delivery. Every tree that has a potential target within a distance equal to its height should be assessed. Signs that your tree could be a danger include:

- Broken limbs over 3 inches in diameter that are lodged or hanging in the crown;
- Broken top or broken fork that has impacted more than 25% of the original crown;
- New cracks in the main trunk;
- Raised soil or exposed root crown.

If one or more of these signs are present consult a professional forester, arborist, or tree surgeon immediately. Until the tree is removed or fixed, stay clear and move assets that may be a target.

## Compensation for Loss

Insurance, tax credits, and other assistance may be available depending on your circumstances, location, and eligibility. To maintain the best chance of qualifying for assistance you should:

- Keep copies of newspapers or other written evidence that the disaster affected your area;
- Photograph damage;
- Document estimates, descriptions, and pertinent information;
- Stay in touch with local, State, and Federal agency representatives, as well as insurance companies and relief organizations.

## Salt & Wind Tolerant Trees

Hurricane winds can carry saltwater inland for a considerable distance. The leaves on trees saturated with saltwater turn brown and give the appearance of being burned. Most of these trees will not die and should not be cut. Check trees in the spring for signs of insects and disease, since defoliation may cause stress. Trees with bark beetles should be removed. The table below lists resistance ability of various tree species. Table is listed in descending order from most to least resistant.

Flood tolerant	Breakage	Uprooting	Salt
Baldcypress	Live Oak	Live Oak	Live Oak
Pondcypress	Palm	Palm	Palm
Tupelo-gum	Baldcypress	Baldcypress	Sweetgum
Sweetbay	Pondcypress	Pondcypress	Water Oak
Willow	Sweetgum	Tupelo-gum	Sycamore
Sweetgum	Tupelo-gum	Redcedar	Baldcypress
Sycamore	Dogwood	Sweetgum	Pondcypress
River Birch	Magnolia	Sycamore	Southern Red Oak
Cottonwood	Sweetbay	Longleaf Pine	Magnolia
Green Ash	Southern Red Oak	Southern Red Oak	Tupelo-gum
Red Maple	Water oak	Magnolia	Sweetbay
Pecan	Sycamore	Slash Pine	Hickory
Mulberry	Longleaf Pine	Loblolly Pine	Pecan
American Elm	Slash Pine	Sweetbay	Redcedar
Persimmon	Loblolly Pine	Water Oak	Red Maple
Silver Maple	Redcedar	Red Maple	Holly
Water Oak	Red Maple	Dogwood	Locust
Swamp Chestnut Oak	Dogwood	Hickory	Persimmon
Magnolia	Hickory	Pecan	Sugarberry

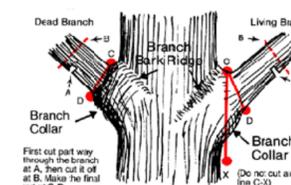
## Pruning

Why prune? Safety, form, function, clearance, and fruiting may be some of your reasons. Several objectives may be achieved in a single pruning, such as removing broken branches for safety and lower limbs for sight clearance.

## Pruning

The benefit of your reason must outweigh the damage of creating wounds where you prune limbs. Trees do not heal, but rather seal off wounds. Limbs pruned at the proper location and in the proper manner will allow the wound to seal more successfully. Do not paint or apply any covering to a wound, the tree will seal over with sap and new wood if you let it.

Where should we prune? Select appropriate limbs to remove that both satisfy the objective for pruning and retain the basic shape and balance of the tree. Do not remove any more than 25% of the canopy in any one year. To remove limbs, target pruning (removing the branch at a node just outside the collar) is recommended as shown in the diagram below.



**Using the three cut method to prune a limb, the third cut is always made just outside the branch collar.**

How should trees be pruned? Limbs less than three inches in diameter that are within reach of the ground may be pruned with loppers or a saw, larger and higher limbs should be removed by a professional with appropriate equipment and insurance.

## Chainsaw Safety

Only trained operators with proper safety equipment should attempt to use chainsaws during storm debris cleanup. Many hazards exist including overhead broken limbs and tops, power lines, limbs and trunks under pressure, stepping obstacles, construction debris, and much more. Trees on the ground present many hazards similar to standing trees. A thorough assessment of the tree should be made prior to cutting. Evaluate potential hazards before determining what and where to cut.

Follow all safety guidelines suggested by the manufacturer and wear protective clothing and equipment. At a minimum the operator should wear leather boots with non-slip soles and steel toes, long pants and long-sleeved shirt, saw-proof chaps, leather gloves, hardhat, and eye and hearing protection. Other protective equipment may be recommended by the manufacturer and should be worn. Never disable safety features or run a saw with safety features that are not in place or operational. Never run a saw when tired or impaired. Complacency can be deadly.

When cutting always be aware of the location of the tip of the bar. The tip is where kickbacks will occur. Be patient, take a second look, and use wedges. **If you are not sure of what will happen when you make a cut, stop!**

Manufacturers have contact numbers and websites with more detailed information. Check your operator's manual.