

Planting and Care of Bare-root Hemlock Sapling

What You'll Need

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp-bladed shovel • Soil amendment (such as Mr. Natural Woodland Soil Mix, Nature Care Potting Soil, or MiracleGro Garden Soil) • Extra nutrition (such as Mr. Natural Worm Castings, Hen Manure, or homemade compost) if available • Slow-release fertilizer (such as Espoma HollyTone or any acid-based fertilizer labeled for azaleas, rhododendrons, blueberries) • Ironite granules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Moist or other water-saver crystals • MiracleGro Quick Start liquid • Bayer Advanced Tree & Shrub for 1 year of HWA protection • Water & 1-gallon jug • Shredded hardwood / cypress mulch • Bamboo stake • Roll of Velcro tape & scissors
<p>Sources: See the Contacts page of our web site for sources of HWA Imidacloprid treatment products. You can get most of the other items at stores such as Home Depot, Lowe's, Walmart, hardware stores and garden centers. In north Georgia, you can usually find Mr. Natural products at Anderson Feed and Supply in Dahlonega 706-864-3364, Ash Brothers Feed & Farm Supply in Cleveland 706-865-2124, and Little G's Garden Center in Cherry Log 706-273-2012.</p> <p><i>Note: Stores/products mentioned above are provided as suggestions only and are not meant as endorsements.</i></p>	

1. Plan to plant a bare-root hemlock seedling/sapling within 1 or 2 days of bringing it home. In the meantime, keep it in a shady location in a bucket of moist potting soil or peat moss just covering its roots.
2. Choose a semi-shady, well-drained site to plant your hemlock.
3. Dig a **SHALLOW BOWL-SHAPED** hole no more than 2-3 inches deeper than the root ball but 3 times as wide.
4. Mix the soil removed from the hole with soil amendments in a ratio of 2/3 original soil to 1/3 soil amendment. If you can find it, also add 2 cups of worm castings, composted hen manure, or mushroom compost per gallon of dirt mix.
5. Put 5-6 inches of this soil mix back into the hole, forming a small hill.
6. Carefully place the root ball in the hole and spread its roots out on top of the soil mix hill. The root crown should be 2 inches above grade at this point. If it's not, add more soil mixture below the roots.
7. While you can see the roots, insert a bamboo stake into the planting hole right next to the trunk without damaging the roots.
8. Refill the hole **half-way** with soil mix. For a tree 3 feet tall or less, sprinkle 1 teaspoon of a soil-saver product, 1 teaspoon of Ironite, and 1 teaspoon of HollyTone fertilizer all around the roots of the tree. For a larger tree, use 1 tablespoon of each ingredient. Then fill the hole the rest of the way up with your soil mix so it just covers the root ball.
9. Firm the dirt with your foot to eliminate air pockets around the roots. Don't make a "watering saucer." The planted tree should now be sitting at grade.
10. Cut a 3-4 inch piece of Velcro tape and secure it **loosely** around the main stem and the stake about 2/3 of the way up the trunk. Leave enough space in this loop of tape to insert your finger.
11. Apply 3 inches of shredded hardwood / cypress mulch from the trunk out to the drip line. Then pull it back a few inches from the trunk so it's not touching.
12. Immediately after planting, water thoroughly and slowly. For each gallon of root ball size, give 1 gallon of water mixed with 1 capful of MiracleGro Root Stimulator, and 2 ounces of Bayer Advanced Tree & Shrub for 1 year of protection against the hemlock woolly adelgid.
13. During the first year give a quart of plain water per week if no rain.

Check your tree frequently for signs of adelgids (white cottony egg sacs on underside of branches just where the needles attach to the stem), and if you see any, call the Hemlock Help Line 706-429-8010 immediately.

