



Landscape Design

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## **Let the Planting Begin!**

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Although we are blessed with year-round wonderful weather in the Bay Area, fall through spring is the optimum time to plant. In fact, most woody plants should be planted as early in fall as possible to insure good root establishment. Winter rains, moderate temperatures, natural soil moisture and the plant growth cycle all contribute to fall planting success.

Where to begin? In preparation for your new plants, make sure you know your soil. Is it sandy? Clay? Acidic? If you know what you have, you can either plant plants that work well in it or bring in new soil, replacing what you have or building raised planting beds.

And great news on the budget front: studies have shown that planting both a one- and a five-gallon size of the same species at the same site at the same time can produce surprising results: in three to five years, both plants will be the same size! Even better, in seven to ten years, the one-gallon plant will be more drought-tolerant than its larger companion.

If your landscape looks a bit bare using one-gallon plants, use ground covers, perennials or annuals to fill in the gaps. Avoid the temptation to plant your shrubs closer together, since that will make for higher maintenance down the line when they grow up.