

Planting Shrubs, What Not to Do

One of the garden projects I have been working on lately reminded me of what not to do when planting shrubs.

What Not to Do

These shrubs were not planted deep enough so the root balls heaved out of the soil this past winter. As a result, the row of shrubs was all dead, and very unsightly. When I dug them up (didn't even require a shovel, they came out quite easily) the root balls were still in the shape of the pots. So were the holes.





The Correct Way of Planting Shrubs

The correct way of planting most plants, shrubs or other, is to:

- dig a hole twice as wide as the pot the shrub came in and the same depth

- remove the shrub from the pot and loosen the root ball
- if the shrub is very root bound, use a sharp knife or trowel to scarify (gently scrape/loosen) the roots
- add water to the hole before and after planting the shrub
- add a handful of bonemeal or other suitable granular fertilizer to the hole
- water daily until shrub is established, (one week) preferably in the morning
- ensure plant crown is neither too deep or too far above ground. Roses do prefer their crown just below soil level

Needless to say, the shrubs pictured above were all replaced with properly planted ones.