

Reasons to plant a longleaf pine

- Help bring back this iconic species by planting one or more on your property.
- The longleaf pine is the longest-lived of the southern pine species. Currently, the oldest documented longleaf pine is over 470 years old.
- When the Jamestown settlement was established in 1607, there were over one million acres of longleaf pine trees in Virginia.
- In 1893 they were considered commercially extinct in Virginia.
- In 1938 several remnant stands of these original trees were discovered in Isle of Wight County.
- Seeds from these few remaining trees have produced young pines ready for planting.
- Have a living Christmas tree that everyone can enjoy. The tree may live for 400 or more years.



A short video demonstrating how to plant a potted longleaf pine can be found on the Windsor Castle Park website here:

www.windsorcastlepark.com/wcpf.html

The Virginia Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the following state agencies:



The Nature Conservancy provided instructions and assisted with the preparation of the demonstration video.



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TIPS FOR PLANTING POTTED LONGLEAF PINES



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Historic Southside Chapter



Step One – Prepare the planting site

1. Select a spot that receives full sun and stays relatively dry.
2. Clear the surface of all vegetation, especially grasses.
3. Prepare the planting site by digging a hole at least three times the size of the pot the tree came in. If in doubt, the bigger the hole the better.



4. Loosen heavy or clayey soils by mixing some organic matter in with the site soil.



Step Two – Prepare the tree

1. Press on the sides of the pot all around to loosen the potted tree, invert, and remove your tree.



2. Note that the roots have grown in a circular pattern around the pot bottom. Unwrap the roots so that when planted, the roots can develop normally.



3. Identify the tap root. It is the largest and longest root coming from the bottom of the root mass. It must be pointed down when the tree is planted.



4. If the tap root is too long to plant in a downward direction, simply CUT IT OFF to shorten it. It will grow back.

Step Three – Plant the tree

1. Center the tree in your prepared hole, ensuring the top of the root mass is just level with the surrounding soil.
2. Fill the hole completely but do not stomp down or compact the soil.



3. To keep grass and weeds away, apply a light layer of mulch around the tree, but not touching the tree.
4. Water generously and you are done.



The one year old longleaf pine shown above is an example of a healthy longleaf pine transitioning into the bottlebrush stage.