

# Installation & establishment guide

Follow this step by step guide to ensure your new hedge establishes well into its setting



## Species choice and ground conditions

An important part of choosing the right hedge is understanding the limitations of your chosen location. These can include:

- Restricted access
- Soil nutrients
- Soil moisture
- Shading
- Exposure



All these restrictions can be overcome either by choosing the right species or mix of species in your hedge or by some initial preparation and subsequent inputs during planting and aftercare. As each site and situation will be unique we suggest you speak with your landscaper or our nursery manager before making that final decision.

## Preparing your planting position

Good soil preparation beforehand will give your hedge the best start in life.

Prepare the ground by digging out a continuous trench which should be a minimum of 60cm wide and no more than 40cm deep and 50cm longer than your finished hedge length ideally.

When digging out the trench keep the top soil and subsoil separate as you do not want to backfill the plants with the subsoil.

Remove all weeds and old roots from the trench to allow for good root growth.

Loosen the bottom and sides of the trench to make it less compact for the roots to penetrate and easier to get established, this is particularly important in heavy soils.

Add in a good quality compost to the soil you are backfilling the hedge with.





### Taking delivery

Your hedge will usually be delivered in 2.4 metre lengths each of which will be sequentially labelled. Your delivery charge includes a waiting time of one hour whilst you unload which in most cases should be more than adequate to complete.

We strongly suggest that you have a telehandler or similar available as each section weighs at least 240kg and should never be lifted by hand.

Each hedge section should be lifted using 3 soft stops. Stop both ends of the section with the third stop in the middle just above root level. The hedge has been grown in such a way as to ensure the roots do not come apart if they are lifted in this way. Some bowing of the rooting section is normal however.

Storing delivered hedge sections should be avoided. We strongly recommend that the hedge is planted immediately on delivery. This minimises handling and therefore risk of damage or further stress to the hedge.

In dry weather and following long delivery journeys we suggest the hedge roots are well watered before planting.

### Planting

The Hedge sections should be manoeuvred into place following the sequential numbering on the label. The labelled end goes against the previously planted section of hedge. This will ensure the hedge 'knits' back together (see later).

Remove the growing membrane if it is still present.

It is always best to have the depth of the trench just slightly shallower than the depth of the root ball, as this will allow for natural drainage and settling in the soil.

Lower the hedge's roots into the planting trench, so the top of the root is approximately 5cm above the existing ground level.

If you are adding a rooting compound do so now. If you are using an underground irrigation system or anchoring system, this should be installed now.

Once all sections of hedge are in place backfill them lightly to allow straightening up of the hedge.

Check that the hedge is straight and symmetrical and that the ends of each section are 'knitted' back





*Before and after installation.*

together and then firm down the soil around the root to ensure it is secure and no air pockets exist around the root. Remember to use the clean top soil and compost, not the subsoil.

We suggest that a layer of mulch is added now. This will help keep the hedge free from competing weeds and will help retain moisture around the roots. A mulch layer should be 5–8cm deep to retain the moisture, but leave a small ring around the stems.

Give your hedge a good watering now.

With hedging, it is good practice to very lightly clip them after planting, as long as extreme weather conditions, such as frost/snow or hot/direct sun are not forecast. This will give them an even line for growth and will encourage the hedge to bud out well in the spring.

### **Aftercare**

Aftercare is extremely important; follow these steps to ensure good establishment;

- Ensure plants are well-watered during dry spells for at least the next two years.
- Top-dress annually with a general slow release fertilizer and re-apply mulch as required.
- If you are not using mulch then control weed growth immediately under and adjacent to your hedge. We suggest a weed free buffer of 1m along the hedge to avoid competition for water from weeds, lawns and other plants.
- In some areas it is necessary to protect hedges from damage caused by rabbits or other animals. Surround the hedge with a barrier of wire netting secured to stakes.
- If pruning your hedge this should be done at the end of each growing season.

