

Planting and Care Instructions for Bare-root Hemlock Seedlings/Saplings

What You'll Need

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small 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 • Espoma HollyTone (or any slow-release, acid-based fertilizer labeled for azaleas, rhododendrons, blueberries, etc.) • 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 • Shredded hardwood mulch • Bamboo stake • Roll of velcro tape & scissors
<p>Sources: You can get most of these items at stores such as Home Depot, Lowe's, Walmart, hardware stores and garden centers. In Georgia, you can usually find Mr. Natural Woodland Soil Mix, Worm Castings, and Hen Manure at Leilani's Gardens in Dawsonville 706-265-3510, Anderson Feed and Supply in Dahlonega 706-864-3364, Ash Brothers Feed & Farm Supply in Cleveland, 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 water and potting soil or peat moss just covering its roots.
2. Choose a semi-shady, well-drained site to plant your hemlock.
3. Dig the planting hole no more than 2-3 inches deeper than the root ball but 3 times as wide.
4. Mix the soil you 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 2-3 inches of this dirt mix back into the hole.
6. Carefully place the root ball in the hole and spread its roots out. While you can see the roots, insert a bamboo stake into the planting hole right next to the trunk without damaging the roots.
7. Refill the hole half-way with dirt mix. 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. Then fill the hole the rest of the way up with your soil mix so it just covers the root ball.
8. 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.
9. 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 stem. Leave enough space in this loop of tape to insert your finger.
10. Apply 3 inches of shredded hardwood mulch from the trunk out to the drip line. Then pull it back a few inches so it's not touching the trunk.
11. Immediately after planting, water thoroughly and slowly. For each gallon of pot size or root ball size, give 1 gallon of water, 1 capful of MiracleGro Root Stimulator, and 2 ounces of Bayer Advanced Tree & Shrub for 1 year of protection against the hemlock woolly adelgid.
12. 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.

