

SELECTING THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREE

Presented by the North Carolina Christmas Tree Association



CHOOSING YOUR TREE:

- * Determine where in your home you will display your tree. This will help you to determine the height of your tree and if all four sides must be suitable for display. When choosing your display location, be sure to avoid direct sunlight and heat sources as these factors can quickly cause the tree to dry out.
- * Measure and measure again. Be sure you know the dimensions that will fit into that perfect location you have chosen in your home. Don't forget to allow room for the treetop decoration! Also, Keep in mind that trees look smaller when they are outdoors, so be sure to measure the tree that you choose before bringing it home. Most farms have poles that are pre-marked to measure with or they mark the trees with different colored tags to distinguish the height.
- * Choose a stand that is sturdy and holds AT LEAST one gallon of water.
- * For ornaments to hang straight, you'll want a tree with some space between the branches. Many trees today are groomed to be lush and full, so be aware that ornaments may hang at an angle on these sheered trees. Fraser fir Christmas trees (our top recommendation) have strong, sturdy branches that can hold the heaviest of ornaments. The tree should have a good fragrant aroma and dark, green color.
- * Freshness is extremely important when selecting a Christmas tree. If you are going to a farm to choose and cut your Christmas tree, then it will obviously be fresh, but if you are purchasing your tree from a retail lot or a store, you want to make sure it is fresh. Take hold of a branch about six inches from the tip, between your thumb and forefinger, then pull your hand toward you allowing the branch to slip through your fingers. The needles should adhere to the branch and not fall off in your hand. The needles should be flexible, not brittle. Bump the base end of the tree lightly against the ground to verify that the needles are firmly attached and to see if any outside needles fall off. If only a few drop off, the tree is fresh.
- * Take a tarp or an old blanket to wrap the tree in and rope to secure it to the top of your car. If going to a farm, they will most likely have someone that will help secure it to the top of your car.
- * It is best to store your tree outside until you are ready to set up and decorate the tree. Store the tree in a cool place protected from the sun and wind and be sure that the base of the trunk is submerged in water until you are ready to bring it inside.

CARING FOR YOUR TREE:

- * When you are ready to bring your tree inside and decorate it, make a fresh, straight cut across the trunk about a 1/2 inch or so above the original cut. Place the trunk in fresh water. The tree may require from 2 quarts to a gallon of water per day. If the water level drops below the trunk, a seal will form and the tree will not absorb water. A new cut will be required in order for the tree to absorb water. As long as the tree keeps absorbing water, it will not support flame.
- * Always keep your fresh tree in a stand that holds lots of water. Check the water level daily. After about a week the water intake will slow down and daily refills should be fine. As a general rule, a tree can use up to a quart of water per day for each inch of stem diameter. The warmer the temperature and the lower the relative humidity where the tree is displayed, the greater the amount of water required by the tree.
- * Be sure the base of the tree is well supported and the tree is away from open flame or other heat sources such as electric heaters.

Following these care and precaution measures should insure an attractive tree that remains fresh and safe throughout the Christmas season.