



Red Cloud Bamboo

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BAMBOO PLANT CARE

Congratulations on purchasing a wondrous plant!

Bamboo is a versatile garden species that can be used to create a dense privacy hedge or security barrier, or to screen an unwanted view. The inherently graceful form of a stand of bamboo means it can also be used as a focal point in an Asian or tropical style garden. As well as its many landscaping uses, bamboo has also recently been found to be one of the best ways to lock up (sequester) carbon at an astonishing rate.

Container-grown bamboo plants do need some extra care after being planted out. The main element is **water**. The plant that you have purchased has been grown in a relatively small container that has been watered frequently.

To ensure that your bamboo is a success in your garden, there are a few simple rules to follow:

- If the bamboo is not planted out on the day of purchase, place the pot in a sheltered position and water it **twice daily**.
- Digging compost and/or aged manure into the ground before planting will give the plant a good start.
- When you are ready to plant the bamboo, dig the hole as deep as the pot depth, and twice as wide. (In particularly dry, sandy sites, it can be helpful to dig a slightly deeper hole than the pot size, so that the plant's rootball ends up being buried 20-40mm deeper than it was originally. This will ensure that the fragile roots will not be exposed.)
- Carefully remove the plant from its container without disturbing the roots, and place the rootball into the hole. Then back-fill the hole, pressing the soil firmly around the rootball to eliminate any air pockets.
- Immediately after planting, flood the planting area to marry the new back-filled soil with the rootball and existing soil. Give each plant the equivalent of one bucket (9L) of water at planting time.
- Add a thick layer (75mm deep) of organic mulch (composted bark or similar) on top of the soil. The mulch will retain the moisture in the soil, keep the plant's roots cool, add organic matter to the soil as it breaks down, and suppress weeds, which compete for moisture and nutrients.
- Bamboo can be planted out in any season, but during the hottest months of the year you will need to take more care. Frequent watering is needed for the first few months after planting until the plant is well established, and certainly should be continued throughout the plant's first summer. **N.B. Drip-line irrigation will not deliver enough water during the establishment period and supplementary hand-watering will be required.** The amount of water and frequency will depend on a number of factors, such as the plant's position (exposed sunny and/or windy sites will dry out more quickly), the condition of the soil (how moisture-retentive it is), the size of the plant (larger plants take longer to establish), and the weather conditions. Bamboo is tolerant of grey water.
- Bamboo grows at an astonishing rate for the first two years once it is established, provided it is given adequate food and water. It is a gross feeder and will be happy with any type of manure, as well as slow-release fertiliser and even lawn fertiliser (bamboo is, after all, a grass). The best time to fertilise is during the plant's peak growing time which, for most bamboo species, is from spring to summer.
- Bamboo can be thinned out as desired, or cut to a required height to form a hedge. Thinning out is as easy as cutting off a culm (stem) preferably at or near ground level using sharp secateurs, loppers or a small pruning saw. Removing old culms in this way will encourage fresh new shoots.