

The first two years of a seedling's life largely determine the tree's growth rate and final height and shape.

A seedling protected from grass and weed competition, with soil broken up and composted, well-watered and tree guarded will thrive as well as it is able in the soil in which it is planted, and reach maturity in up to half the time of a wild sown tree.

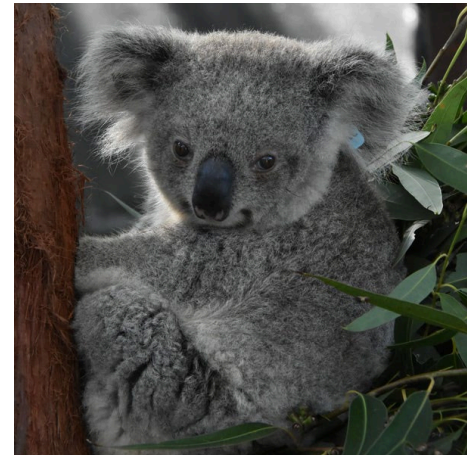


Image: Koala Conservation Australia Ltd

Suggested tree planting instructions.

At minimum do steps 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8.

1. Remove all grass and weed competition at the planting position in a 1 metre diameter circle or apply Aqua Safe Roundup and leave for five to ten days.
2. Dig or loosen the soil in a 300mm circle for each tree planting location. For larger plantings, rip a line with 6 metres between rows and plant trees in the rows 8 metres apart.
3. Dig in 2-3 litres of leaf-based compost if available.
4. Plant tube stock and press down the soil and water with at least 1-2 litres.
5. Mulch around the base at least 100mm in depth and about at a 250mm radius from the seedling.
6. If you have a tree guard place it over the seedling and stake it down (cable tie the guard to the stake if only 1 stake or use 2 or 3 stakes if you have them).
7. Water the seedlings 3 times each week with up to a litre of water for around 1 month. Then weekly, then fortnightly for another 3 to 6 months. Then whenever you feel they need it, especially in summer when water may be needed every few days.
8. Remove competing weeds, grass and other vegetation over the next 6 months.

Using a tree leaf litter-based compost changes the soil life from bacteria based to a more fungal based. This is significant to the trees and promotes their health and long-term viability.

Wet composted leaf litter is great, especially with a little cow manure.

Eucalyptus leaf litter should not be used unless it is at least five months old, or otherwise with well-established mycofloral (fungal) growth.

Trees for koalas for the Mid North Coast NSW

Tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*)

Medium to tall forest tree growing to 40 metres. Thick crowned tree that retains lower branches and bark. Good shade and windbreak tree for most areas with good rainfall, dislikes heavy frost. Prefers fertile, moist soils (not boggy) adaptable to most soils and conditions.



Grey Gum (*Eucalyptus propinqua*)

Medium to tall forest tree growing to 40 metres. Fast growing tree with attractive mottled bark which sheds in large plates or flakes. Prefers coastal to the lower slope areas of the mid-north coast. Grows well on ridges and slopes of low to medium fertility.

Swamp Mahogany (*Eucalyptus robusta*)

Spreading tree with a heavy crown growing to 16 metres. Grows best in moist or boggy soils but will tolerate drier soils (not sand). Fast growing with large leaves and creamy/white flowers. Grows along the coast and lower slopes, dislikes frost.

Forest Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*)

Tall forest tree to 40-60 metres, large spreading crown, good timber, shade and windbreak tree. Prefers fairly rich alluvial soils, sandy and clay loams or gravelly terraces, moist but not waterlogged. Grows in a range of habitats and soils from the coast to the tablelands up to 1000 metres.

