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**Caring for a Living Christmas Tree**

**By Sherri Allen**

**Caring for a Living Christmas Tree by Sherri Allen**

The Christmas season brings with it many decisions to be made. Among them is, "What type of Christmas tree should I put up?" This year, consider a living Christmas tree. Not only will you enjoy it through the holidays, but a living tree can be planted in the garden to enhance your landscape and spark wonderful memories for years to come.

To allow your living tree to thrive in your garden, you must provide it with a small amount of special care. The following tips from the National Christmas Tree Association will help ensure your living tree's success:

- The adaptability of the species should be considered. Many species are shipped outside of their natural area and may not be adaptable to other areas. Check with a reliable nursery or extension forester.
- Keep in mind that living trees are VERY heavy and bulky. A six foot tall balled and burlapped tree will weigh as much as 250 pounds.
- Protect the tree from the elements. The tree should be stored in an unheated, sheltered area such as a garage or porch, out of the wind and sun. Do not expose the tree to freezing temperatures at any time.
- The tree will need adequate water. The root ball or soil should be kept slightly damp but not flooded. Wrap the root ball of a balled tree in plastic or place in a tub while it is in the house.
- Living trees may be decorated, but with care. If lights are used, they must not give off any heat.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes. Do not remove the tree directly from a warm house out into freezing temperatures. Instead, move to a sheltered area first for several days.

## Caring for a Living Christmas Tree

- Plant the tree as soon as possible. If the ground is not frozen, the tree may be replanted. The spot to be dug should be mulched to prevent freezing.
- Do not remove the burlap and strapping (unless it is plastic). This keeps the root ball solid and secure. In the instance of a plastic cover, cut the cord and roll down the plastic at least half way prior to planting. Tap the tree container of a potted tree and remove prior to planting. Do not attempt to remove soil from the root system. Earth removed from the original hole should be backfilled around the root ball. Mulch heavily over the top of the planted root ball to prevent it from freezing. Water only as needed: a flooded tree may not survive.
- Provide support for the tree. Stake the tree to prevent wind tipping or damage during the first growing season.

Try a living Christmas tree. With proper care, it will keep bringing you enjoyment throughout the years.

Sherri Allen is the editor of an award-winning website devoted to topics such as family, food, garden, house&home and money. For free articles, information, tips, recipes, reviews and coloring pages, visit <http://www.SherriAllen.com/>

## Christmas Tree Ornament Tips

**By Rosie Fletcher**

When it comes to decorating, we are all perfectionists about our Christmas tree. After all, it happens only once a year and the decorations are a treasure to behold. The finishing touch, for any Christmas tree, is the ornaments. Perhaps you have memories of a personalized ornament given to you as a child or maybe it's the tradition of hanging them with your family – making sure that each is perfectly spaced from its neighbor for that added touch of beauty. The Christmas ornaments for Christmas trees, which we choose, should be a reflection of ourselves and our family.

There are all types of Christmas ornaments for Christmas trees. >From glass to unbreakable, there is something for everyone. Glass ornaments are among the most expensive, in part, because they require such intricate detail and add a touch of elegance to any Christmas tree. Glass ornaments pick up the reflection of lights and beam them across the room with, perhaps, even a twinkle or two. These ornaments are often hand-painted, which adds to their uniqueness.

There are a variety of unbreakable ornaments, also available, in a multitude of colors. If you have a child who loves to be near the Christmas tree, glass ornaments may not be the best option. Or, if you have a pet that enjoys the mystique of the tree a little too much, you may opt for something unbreakable. This is why there are plastic ornaments, which are much safer for your inquiring family members whether they be small or furry.

If you have children, there are plenty of ways to make beautiful Christmas ornaments for Christmas trees at home.

## Caring for a Living Christmas Tree

Using gold ribbon, tie a bow and place it on the tree. Repeat these steps until your tree is filled with golden memories of your child's imagination. You can also purchase plain white ceramic ornaments and, together with your children, paint them into beautiful Christmas ornaments for Christmas trees.

What's good enough to eat and also looks beautiful on a Christmas tree? Give up? It's a candy cane, of course. These pretty little symbols of Christmas are everywhere during the holiday season. If you can resist the temptation of eating them, candy canes make terrific Christmas ornaments for Christmas trees. Leave them as they are or tie little red bows around them for an added touch of Christmas.

If your child would like a personalized letter from Santa, contact one of Santa's helper services and inquire about Santa also sending your child a personalized ornament with his/her name engraved. This will truly be one of the most special ornaments on the tree and your child will treasure it forever.

Christmas ornaments for Christmas trees truly are the icing on the cake. Let them reflect you, your family, your home and your love for the holidays. The most precious ornaments are those we decorate with love. Not so surprisingly, these are also the most beautiful.

For more great Christmas ornament related resources check out



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