

Keep Christmas Trees Fresh Through Proper Care

Christmas trees should be cared for as carefully as cut flowers or any other plant that is brought into the home. These suggestions will help this year's tree stay fresh and safe throughout the holiday season:

1. Any tree that is purchased several days before it will be set up should be kept outdoors or on a cool porch or patio until it is time to be decorated. An area that protects the tree from wind and direct sunlight is recommended to help the tree retain its moisture.
2. If storing a tree for several days, make a straight cut across the butt of the tree about an inch from the end. This opens the tree stem so it can take up water. Store the tree upright and place the butt end in a container of water.
3. Before decorating make another straight cut across the trunk about one-half inch from the original cut. Use a tree stand that holds plenty of water.
4. Trees are thirsty and may drink a gallon or more of water per day. Check daily and supply fresh water as needed. A stand that holds at least a gallon of water is recommended. The water level should not be allowed to drop below the level of the trunk. If the water level drops too low, a seal may form on the bottom of the trunk and it may be necessary to make a new cut.
5. Trees should not be set up or stored next to heat sources, such as fireplaces, radiators and televisions. Decorative lights should be turned off when leaving the room and before going to bed at night.
6. Avoid use of combustible decorations. Check all electric lights and connections. Do not use lights with worn or frayed cords and never use lighted candles.