



## RHODODENDRON/AZALEA/KALMIA PLANTING AND CARE

**Choose the right location:** Rhododendrons, azaleas, and kalmias (mountain laurels) are considered “under story” plants meaning that they grow best with some protection from all day full sun. Plant in half to three quarters of a day’s sunlight with emphasis on morning and/or later afternoon exposure. Avoid lengthy midday sun exposure if possible.

### Steps for successful planting:

1. Prepare the planting hole approximately two times the pot diameter and one to two inches deeper than the height of the root ball.
2. Remove the plant from the pot. If the root ball is densely packed, gently loosen the roots with your hands to allow for better root growth.
3. Fill the hole with water and allow the water to percolate out.
4. Prepare a planting soil mixture using any loosened soil from the pot and soil from the hole to make a well-draining mixture. Add sand and/or topsoil if necessary to ensure good drainage.
5. After your shrub is planted, top-dress the planting with a protective layer of mulch to aid in soil water retention and weed suppression.
6. As a new planting keep it well watered.
7. Rhododendrons, azaleas, and kalmias are generally fertilized prior to being sold. **DO NOT** fertilize the plant when planting.
  - a. Do the first fertilizing beginning in the autumn using an organic fertilizer for acid loving plants **PER THE MANUFACTURER’S INSTRUCTIONS** to avoid over fertilizing. Over fertilizing can cause root damage through chemical burning.

For more information:

[American Rhododendron Society--Rhododendron & Azaleas Plant Care](#)

[Missouri Botanical Garden --Kalmias Plant Care](#)

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Scintillation

