A tree’s requirements to thrive, its form or shape, its size at maturity, and its function in your landscape help determine the best tree to plant. Here are some keys to proper tree selection:

### The Tree’s Purpose
- **Shade** Trees provide a greater cooling effect than man-made structures because not only are the rays of the sun blocked, but water is added to the air through transpiration. Plant where you want the shadow during the hottest time of the year and the time of day you desire the shade. High, wide-crowned trees with deciduous leaves are the best providers of shade.

- **Aesthetics** For visual accent, select a tree that contrasts with the landscape in one or more of the design elements — form, size, color or texture. The more contrasts, the stronger the accent.

### Environmental Factors
- **Minimum Temperature** Low temperatures can freeze and kill the living cells in trees. Select a tree species suitable to the hardiness zone where you live.

- **Moisture** Special attention must be given to your selection if the site periodically is flooded, subjected to very dry conditions or is continually exposed to the drying effect of wind.

- **Soil** Soil factors are probably the most overlooked element when selecting a tree. Soil depth, structure and pH, in addition to soil moisture, can make the difference between success or failure after planting. Each tree species has a tolerance range related to acidity and alkalinity just as it does for shade. Compaction of any soil due to heavy pedestrian or vehicle use often reduces a tree’s growth and size potential.

- **Air Pollution** The ability of a species to tolerate air pollution is becoming more important. The best course of action is to ask a local professional if there are problems in your town and what species are affected.

- **Light** Each tree species has a requirement for light. Match the tree’s need for light to the planting site.

- **Pests** Every locality has its problems with particular insects or diseases. The best way to avoid trouble is to avoid the species that host these pests. Ask a professional for recommendations.

### Size and Location
Available space is probably the consideration most often overlooked or misunderstood when deciding what tree to plant. Before planting, know what the tree will look like as it nears maturity. Consider its height, crown spread and root space. Think about walkways and drainage pipes below the planting. Take into account electrical wires, other trees, and structures above. Also think about the change to your scenic views and how the planting will affect your neighbors.

For more information, please write
North Carolina Urban Forest Council
PO Box 25852, Winston-Salem, NC 27114-5852
919-733-2162 x248 www.NCUFC.org

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