



Trees Need to Eat Too!

Like any living thing, trees need nutrients. Fertilizing trees provides the nutrients they need to fight off pests, disease, and environmental stresses. While fertilizer can't solve all of a tree's problems, it will go a long way toward giving it a fighting chance.

The objective of fertilization is to put the nutrients where they will best be taken up by the tree's roots, which extend well beyond the outer reach of a tree's branches.

Fall is a great time to fertilize your trees and shrubs. During the fall, your trees don't expend much energy creating top growth. Instead, tree's roots apply nutrients to important health-promoting functions such as root development and disease resistance. Giving your trees and shrubs a good feeding in the fall will help them expand their root systems, and will lead to healthier growth in the spring.

Popularity of Fire Pits Heating Up

Start a fire in your backyard, and watch what happens: this is where the party gathers. Fire mesmerizes us, warms us, and relaxes us. And today, there are more choices in outdoor hearth appliances than ever.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Whether an outdoor fireplace, built-in fire pit, or portable fire pit, your choice of fire pit design should reflect your personality and living style, and fit comfortably within your backyard, patio or deck.

Begin by asking the same question you'd ask if you were about to install a pool: in-ground or above ground? Many fire pit designs are flat and flush with the ground, while others have a raised profile. Some common fire pit designs incorporate decorative paving stones or fire-resistant bricks to line the exterior of the fire pit.

There are many options when it comes to the size, shape and style of a fire pit. You can have a built-in fire pit installed, or you can purchase a portable one that can be moved about your yard. If opting for a built-in fire pit, a variety of outdoor finishing materials, including concrete, stone and brick, are available. And fire pits don't have to be round – they can be square, L-shaped, triangular, or an entirely custom shape.

Because of the vast array of fire pit designs available, and the importance of choosing the appropriate size and location for your fire pit, a landscape professional can help you determine:

- The advantages of a fire pit vs. an outdoor fireplace
- The best size and location for your fire pit, considering factors such as convenience, space availability and safety
- How local building codes may impact where you can locate your fire pit as well as when you can use it and what types of wood you can burn
- The cost ranges for various types of fire pits and how to choose the right style for your budget
- The best facing material for your fire pit that ties in with your patio and the materials on the exterior of your home

Whatever your choice, as cooler temperatures prevail, many enjoyable hours await you around this popular outdoor design trend.

