

Nurture a Tree Today

Let each of us make a solemn promise to plant a tree today and play a part in protecting our environment.

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TREES: A BOON TO MANKIND

Do we take out time to notice how, in every single moment of our life, our nostrils take in life-sustaining oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide? This is possible because, in our environment, during the day, the green plants and trees give out this valuable gas — oxygen — and take in all the carbon dioxide. This process is called photosynthesis, wherein green plants prepare their own food in the presence of light and water. Apart from providing the right amount of oxygen for all the living beings of the world, trees also help decrease air and noise pollution. The roots of the trees hold the soil together and aid in reducing soil erosion. Trees also provide adequate shade during the summer, which helps in keeping the environment cool.

From time immemorial, trees have served human beings and animals in numerous ways. In fact, we would not have existed without them. We get all our food — be it fruits, vegetables, pulses or nuts —

from trees and plants. We also obtain wood for timber, furniture and other items from trees. Raw materials for industries, too, are largely sourced from forests, which also provide the habitat for animal life to flourish in. All animals get their food, directly as well as indirectly, from trees and plants. Even the paper in our notebooks is made from the wood pulp of trees.

The forests are also a storehouse of the useful medicinal plants. Some well-known species among them are neem, tulsi and aloe vera. Trees such as banyan have great spiritual and ecological value and are worshipped in our country for centuries.

The majestic look of a fully grown tree has a beauty of its own. Its aesthetic value goes beyond its commercial value, as its lush, green appearance provides mental and emotional peace and calm.

However, with rising industrialisation and urbanisation, our valuable trees are being increasingly cut down. Population explosion is putting immense pressure on the existing forest resources. If the present trend of deforestation continues, we and our planet would be in peril. Saving trees, therefore, is equivalent to saving ourselves.

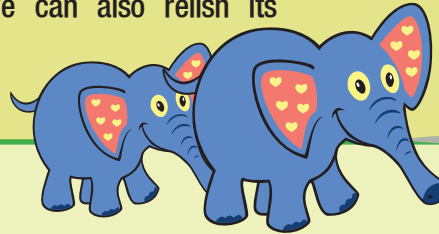


THE ROLE OUR TREES PLAY



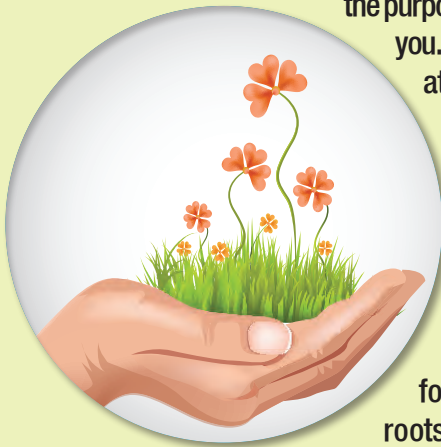
All of us know that unity is strength. If each one of us takes a step to protect our environment, we can surely make up for the loss of forest cover, which is endangering our ecosystem. Even one tree planted every year can make a lot of difference to our environment in the following ways:

- 🌿 During the summer, a fully grown tree can provide us with the much-needed shade.
- 🌿 Trees give shelter to many small animals and birds.
- 🌿 The leaves provide us with life-supporting oxygen.
- 🌿 Trees beautify our gardens and aid in controlling air pollution.
- 🌿 Trees protect the soil from erosion.
- 🌿 If it happens to be a fruit tree, we can also relish its delicious fruit.



PLANT A TREE AND MAKE A LITTLE CONTRIBUTION TO SAVE OUR ENVIRONMENT

- 🌿 Early spring or autumn would be the best time to plant a tree. Select an area in your school compound or garden for the purpose and ask a grown-up to help you. The spot you select should be at least 15 feet away from any obstruction such as a building or another tree. Make sure the selected area is not frequented by stray animals and that it also receives adequate sunlight.



- 🌿 Make the sapling ready for planting by soaking its roots in water for a few hours.

- 🌿 Start digging a hole in the selected spot with a shovel. The hole should be as deep as the length of the sapling's roots.

- 🌿 After the hole is dug, place the sapling gently in the hole, ensuring that at least one inch of the roots is covered with soil.
- 🌿 See that the sapling fits in the soil.
- 🌿 Partially fill up the hole with soil. Check that the lower roots are packed firmly with soil. However, do not pack the soil around the sapling too tightly.
- 🌿 After planting the sapling, surround it with plenty of straw and leaves in order to protect it. If possible, a wooden fence can also be built around it.
- 🌿 After following the aforementioned steps, make sure you water the little sapling every day and see it grow day after day!

Let each of us nurture a plant today and reap the many wonderful benefits of trees in the years to come.

QUICK FUN FACT

An average-sized tree produces enough oxygen in a year to keep a family of four breathing!