

# CONVERTING LANDSCAPES UNDER MATURE TREES

Mature trees are the most valuable part of many landscapes. If you're considering removing grass under mature trees, consider these points first:

## WATER REGULARLY

- Mature trees growing in lawn areas are accustomed to regular watering. If you remove grass in order to maintain the tree's health, you must continue water regularly, though it can be less frequently.
- Most trees need about 15 gallons per inch of trunk diameter twice per month.
- Apply water at the dripline (area of soil directly underneath the tips of the branches) where roots can absorb it, rather than next to the trunk. This can be accomplished by converting an automatic spray irrigation system to a drip irrigation system.

## USING MULCH

- Installing rock around the base of a tree will reflect a significant amount of heat, making warmer, drier soil. This can cause trees to slowly decline or die.
- Instead, install a 4-inch depth of wood or bark mulch under the tree. Mulches keep the soil cooler, allowing the tree to adapt to less frequent watering. Keep mulch at least 6 inches away from the base of the trunk, to avoid disease.



## LANDSCAPING

- Tree roots are extensive. Widespread rototilling and trenching can disturb roots and damage the tree. Instead, carefully remove unwanted grass under trees by hand digging or spraying with a herbicide that contains the active ingredient "glyphosate." Since glyphosate is absorbed only through leaves it will not damage the tree's health.
- Avoid planting densely under trees. This can be great for seating, garden art or potted shade-tolerant plants.

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