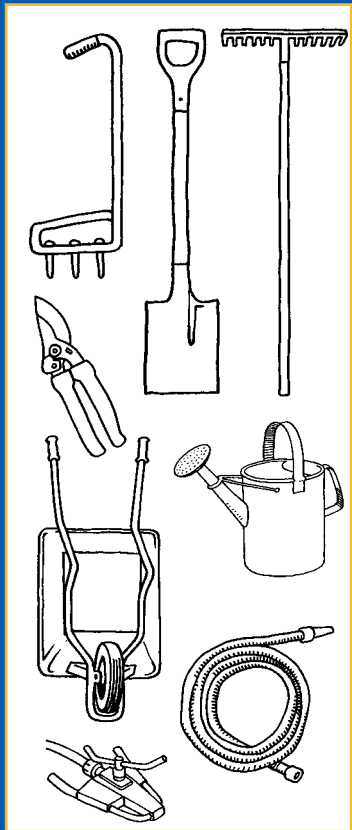


# Tools for the job



- Spade or Shovel
- Metal Rake
- Secateurs
- Hollow-Tined Corer
- Watering Can
- Garden Hose & Fittings
- Sprinkler or Fixed Watering System
- Wheelbarrow

All the help you need

✓ Your Materials Checklist		
		PRICE
Selected Citrus Tree(s)		
Mulch or Compost		
Complete Citrus Food (fertiliser)		
Insecticides/Pesticides (as requested)		

Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.

INSECT PEST OR DISEASE	SYMPTOMS	CONTROL
Collar Rot	Bark of main stem at soil level rots, dries out and splits. Gumming of this area may occur.	Avoid placing mulch against trunk. Cut away any dead tissue with sharp knife. Seal over with thick bordeaux paste.
Septoria Spot & Anthracnose	Small to large dark brown spots on skin of fruit.	Spray tree thoroughly with bordeaux fungicide in Autumn.
Brown Rot (lemons)	Soft rot of fruit mainly in lower part of tree.	Prune off any low growing branches and spray tree with bordeaux.
Aphids (general)	Small insects clustered on the ends of new growth.	Pyrethrum or Maldison (insecticide), Garlic spray or Clensel.
Citrus Scale (Red)	Tiny reddish-brown specks on foliage and fruit.	All seasons oil, Roger (r) or Malascale (r).
Leaf Eating Caterpillars	Assortment of body colourings of caterpillars and tattered leaves.	Spray with Pyrethrum, Maldison (r) or Dipel.
Slugs and Snails	Damaged leaves and fruit skins.	Snail and Slug baits beneath tree.



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**Pest and Disease Control**

Like most plants, citrus trees and fruit have some natural enemies. And except for brown rot which affects only lemons, the common citrus pests, diseases and remedies listed here apply to all citrus trees. Refer to MitrePlan 49, "Controlling Common Garden Pests" for further assistance.

**IMPORTANT:**  
Not all Mitre 10 stores stock greenlife.

Mitre 10 gratefully acknowledges the assistance of  
**Mr Robert McMillan, SDH, Cert Public Parks Hort (Scotland), Dip TT, and Mr Ronald Barrow, Dip Hort Sci, Cert Sprinkler Design, DTT, MAIH** in the preparation of this MitrePlan.

# MITREPLAN



Grow healthy citrus trees

**IMPORTANT:** This project planner has been produced to provide basic information and our experienced staff are available to answer any questions you may have. However, this information is provided for use on the understanding that Mitre 10 is not liable for any claim, cost, expense, loss or damage which is suffered or incurred (including but not limited to indirect or consequential loss), for any personal injury or damage to property suffered or sustained as a result of or arising out of or in any way connected with using the information contained in this MitrePlan Project Planner. Mitre 10 advises you to call in a qualified tradesperson, such as an electrician or plumber, where expert services are required, and to independently assess any safety precautions that will need to be followed prior to using the information in this MitrePlan Project Planner.

**WARNING:** There may be by laws or regulations of councils or other statutory bodies that you must comply with when following this MitrePlan Project Planner.



Your local MITRE 10 Store is:

**MITRE 10**  
All the help you need

# MITREPLAN

Grow healthy citrus trees



**MITRE 10** All the help you need

# GARDEN PLANNER

An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a 10/10 result.

Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.

Including materials checklist.

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is well worth your time to read through all steps first to be sure you understand what is required.

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No. 53

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For fruit and beauty add a citrus tree or three – with a little help from Mitre 10.

One of the most familiar sights in Australian gardens must be the lemon tree. The fruit provides the home cook with a big range of culinary uses. But why stop at just a lemon tree? There is a variety of citrus trees that grow well in home gardens, even in temperate zones. Oranges are rich in Vitamin C and popular for eating, juicing and making marmalade. Grapefruit are a breakfast favourite. Or how about a cumquat, whose fruit can be pickled, brandied or made into marmalade. There’s another good reason to have two or three citrus trees in your garden, citrus is ornamental as well as useful. Their blossoms add colour and fragrance, while their glossy green foliage looks attractive all year round. Citrus trees are not difficult to grow, and this MitrePlan aims to show you how to do it, step-by-step.



Step 1: Selecting

The range of citrus trees that can be successfully home grown extends beyond the popular lemon.

Here are some other popular varieties for you to try:

FRUIT	VARIETY	MATURITY	COMMENTS
Oranges	Washington Navel	Late Winter	Seedless
	Valencia (Seedless)	Spring/Summer	Juicy
	Valencia	Spring	Juicy
	Laneslate Navel	Spring/Summer	Thin Rind
Mandarins	Imperial	April/May	Small/Medium size
	Emperor	Early Spring	Large/Loose Skin
	Ellendale	Early Spring	Beautiful Flavour
Lemons	Meyer	Late Spring	Smooth Skin – Hardy Tree
	Lisbon	Early	Thorny
	Eureka	June (may fruit 3 times yearly)	Less Thorns
	Lemonade	As Above	Juice/Drinks
Limes	Tahitian	Summer	Large Fruit
	Mexican	Summer	Small Fruit
Grape-fruits	Wheeneey	Summer	Lemon Flavour
	Marsh	April/May	Seedless
Cumquats	Nagami		Both ornamental qualities
	Calamondin		for conserves or liqueurs

Step 2: Purchasing

Citrus trees with glossy, deep green foliage indicate a strong, healthy plant (Fig. 1). So avoid buying any young tree with leaves that show any signs of paling or yellowing (Fig. 5) – they may be suffering from a lack of nitrogen. Check for rotting or decaying of the stems bark where the stem meets the potting mix within the container. This is called “collar rot” and these trees should be ignored. Look also for any sign of insect or pest attack (Fig. 3), or discolouration that may be caused by fungal disease (Fig. 4).



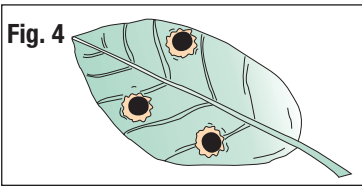
Healthy green growth like this indicates a good plant in peak condition.



Try not to use anything too harsh or you will kill your beneficial insects in the garden like these predatory ladybirds. When beneficial insects are about let them do their job first. If the problem gets too bad then spray.



Scale is a major problem with citrus, but natural predators will help as well as a spray for scale.



Yellow leaves showing nutrient deficiency. This plant needs a general Citrus fertiliser, applied in early spring.

Step 3: Garden position

Citrus trees love heat. They do best in a warm, sunny position protected from frost and in well-drained soil. If the patio is your only sunny area, why not grow a citrus tree in a big tub? Wine barrels cut in half are perfect, or choose from the wide range of large plastic and terracotta pots available. Generally, the country’s warmer northern areas will produce better quality fruit than in southern regions, provided the trees are well watered during hot, dry summer periods. But this does not mean that citrus do not grow well in temperate regions. Lemons and grapefruit, for example, thrive in cooler areas but oranges and mandarins, while they can be grown, may not ripen so well. Most citrus trees are frost tender, especially lemons and mandarins. In very severe frosts, the bark on lower limbs as well as the main trunk may even split, allowing infection of wood rotting fungi. Drainage must be good. Citrus are susceptible to waterlogging and root rot can occur if the plant is subjected to long wet periods. Choose a deep, sandy-loam type well-drained soil if possible, although a loamy soil that is well-drained is sufficient.

Step 4: Planting times

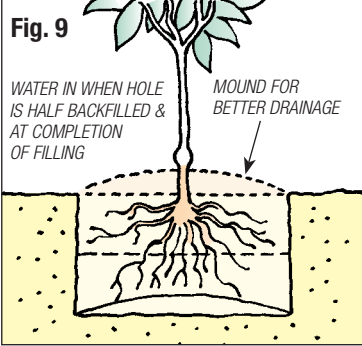
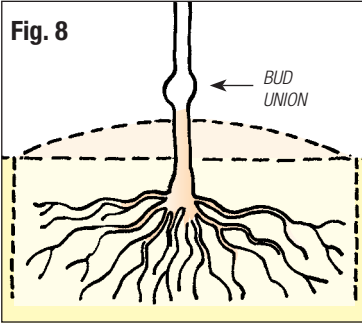
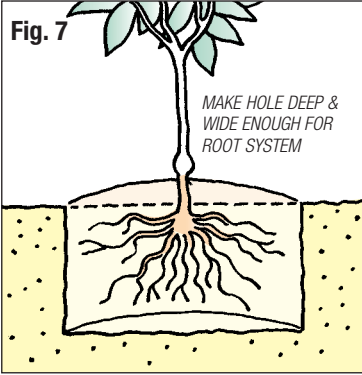
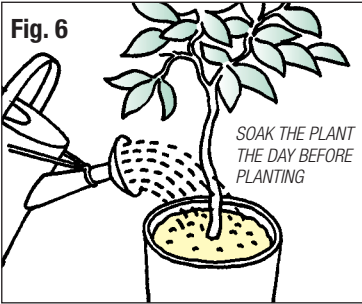
Citrus are available most of the year. In tropical and subtropical areas they can be planted anytime. In the southern states they are best planted September to May after the danger of frost has passed.

Step 5: Planting

Young citrus trees from most Mitre 10 stores are usually sold in plastic grow bags or plastic pots. When you get your tree home and if you do not plan to plant it immediately, prevent the soil or potting mix around the roots from drying out. Give it a good soaking the day before planting, so that the soil does not fall away from the roots as you place it in the hole (Fig. 6).

To plant your tree, dig a hole wide and deep enough to accommodate the whole root system (Fig. 7). If the subsoil is heavy clay, be careful when digging that a saucer, or hollow, is not formed in the bottom which can fill with water and possibly drown the root system. To prevent this problem occurring, plant the tree onto a slight mound built up above the surrounding soil level (Fig. 7), or install some type of underground drainage before planting.

Place the tree in the hole, making sure the bud union is well above soil level. (The bud union (Fig. 8) is the slightly swollen area on the lower main stem where the variety of citrus is budded onto the rootstock below). Do not place any fertiliser below the root system at the planting stage – fertilising comes later when the new growth appears. Then cover the root system with soil, ensuring that the tree is upright and straight as you backfill. Firm the soil in around the roots as you go to get rid of any air pockets and water thoroughly when the hole is around half full (Fig. 9). Then continue in the same way until the hole is filled and water in thoroughly again.



Step 6: Care and maintenance.

Watering

All citrus trees need plenty of water during their main growing periods of Spring and Summer. Moderate watering occasionally in Autumn and Winter may also be needed. But it is during the dry, hot summer months that it is important to keep the soil moist at all times with deep soakings. Light waterings only result in fine surface feeder roots dying when the soil dries out. The best way to keep your tree always well watered is to install a drip watering system. These are easy to install yourself, low-cost and highly efficient. Mulching will also help to prevent drying out. Simply spread organic mulch of composted poultry or animal manure, straw litter or the like over the surface directly under the drip line of the tree (Fig. 10). It will help to suppress weeds and improve soil structure as well (refer MitrePlan 48, “Making Garden Compost”). Take care to keep mulch away from the base of the tree.

Fertilising

Citrus need fairly large quantities of fertiliser. Use a complete citrus fertiliser, there are several brands available. Feed twice a year in early Spring and late Summer. Before applying citrus fertiliser, water the soil well under the canopy. Apply at the rate of 60gms per square metre of soil surface. For young trees, fertilise within the drip line area and water in thoroughly. As your tree matures, increase the rate annually by 500gms. Trees around six years and older should receive approximately three kilograms of citrus food each year. Do not cultivate under the tree as their fine feeder roots are just under the surface and they will be damaged.

Pruning

A light pruning of your young citrus tree before planting will help encourage growth. Remove about half the top growth by cutting straight across the top. You may find that your Mitre 10 store has already done this job for you. Citrus as a general rule tend to be self shaping and do not require much pruning. However some varieties may benefit from some thinning out. Lemon trees once too large can be cut back to make them more compact. Remove any sucker growth and shots that emerge from below the graft (bud union). These are easily identified as they generally have a different foliage and often have large thorns.

