

Select Trees For Quality

Steve Jones - Valley Crest Tree Co.

Trees are a significant resource in a golf course setting, providing both aesthetic and strategic value. Proper selection, including quality and variety, ensures enjoyment for the lifespan of the tree.

Selection for quality begins with an understanding of how the tree has been cared for in the nursery. In general, trees that have been topped should always be avoided. Topping is a random severe cut of the dominant leaders of a tree. Topped trees will send out a spray of new branches from the same location on the trunk. These new branches will have a very weak attachment and may break off in the future. Also, topping removes a large portion of the foliage which deprives the tree of crucial nutrients and shade.

Selective pruning, in contrast, is a well thought out cut, made to the dominant leaders of a tree, promoting side branching increasing the potential for a healthy and strong tree. The cut is made at an angle and performed at the ideal time of year in order to prevent pests from entering the fresh wound. Young trees, which require their leaders to be selectively pruned will have good trunk taper and will not have the negative effects found in trees that have been topped. Common trees that are selectively pruned in the nursery are Raywood Ash, Chinese Tallow, and Chinese Pistache.

Simply because a tree was cut in a nursery is no reason in itself to reject it. Trees should be selected for their well spaced branches, potential for future structure, tapered trunks, and young radiating root systems. Work closely with your sales representative to ensure that the trees you buy have the potential to develop into strong healthy trees. Selecting trees with quality in mind, allows one to avoid unnecessary replacement costs and future maintenance problems. ♦

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