

## **[Sample Article - 400 words]**

### **Planting and Growing an Apple Tree**

First of all make sure you select a variety that grows where you live. There are so many different apples nowadays but, you need to know you can grow it in your region. Best to ask the nursery for the most likely prolific variety for you.

Next you need to provide the tree with the right conditions to grow, think place, space and availability of sunshine. Apple trees can grow in extreme cold and certain varieties are more suitable for warm areas. Full sun is the best, however they will also cope in part sun, part shade. Protect your tree from winds and make sure it has enough space to grow in, check the label for your trees potential growth.

Apple trees tend to adapt to the soil they are planted in, rich well drained loam will always be preferable. They will also grow in other soil types but you must avoid waterlogged soil or soil that is too dry.

Once the tree is planted you need to take care of it until it is established. Apple trees need very little feeding when established, except for the provision of a suitable control release fertiliser every spring.

Like any fruit tree, apples need little water during the autumn and winter months. As the fruit grows during spring and summer, water them between rainy periods. Add some mulch and water well during our hot summers.

### **Pruning Your Apple Tree**

Pruning creates a healthier tree, it also stimulates growth, and produces more and high quality fruit over time. Don't neglect your tree and let it grow in all directions.

Apples trees produce fruit from short side branches called spurs. Spurs will grow on 2-year-old wood on most trees, although late in summer. The long growths on the end of branches are called the laterals; they do not fruit for at least two years.

Prune the laterals only by about 50%, this will allow the plant to grow and continue to fruit well. If the tree is getting too large, prune the laterals back so that only one to two buds are left.

Water shoots are a great problem. These shoots start towards the centre of the tree and grow a few metres each season. Cut water shoots back to the

base during winter, however, you may find new shoots may grow in the same place the following spring. Remove them immediately.