

# Live Stakes



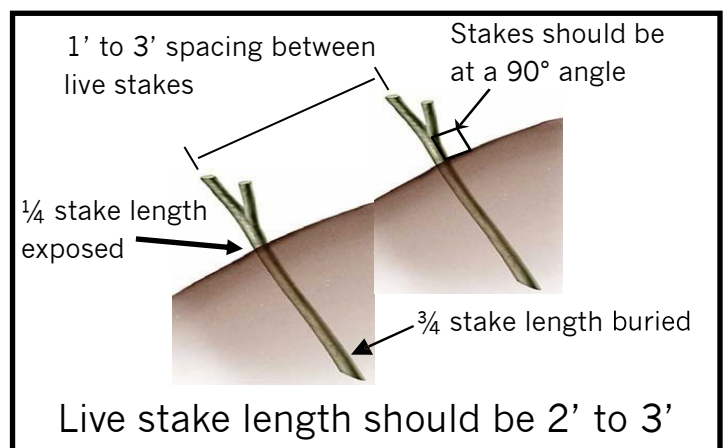
## What are live stakes?

Live stakes are woody shrub cuttings planted in moist soils. This technique is effective for creating living fences and as bank stabilization along streams, lakes, and wetlands at a low cost. Live staking is most suitable for areas with low to moderate slopes. Not all woody shrubs will grow using this method.



## Installation

1. **Contact code enforcement and Maine DEP** to determine if you need permitting.
2. **Remove invasive and competing vegetation.**
3. **Cover bare soil with erosion control mix** or annual grasses and straw to hold the soil in place and prevent weeds until the stakes are established.
4. **Carefully push the pointed end** of each live stake at a **90° angle** into the soil. The side branches that were snipped off will grow well planted at the edges of streams, lakes, and wetlands.
5. **Keep ¼ of the stake above ground**, including a few buds. If the stake will be shaded, use longer stakes and leave one foot sticking above the ground.
6. **Leave 1' to 3' of space** between the individual stakes.



## Collecting

Live stakes can be collected from established native plants but make sure you have landowner permission before gathering cuttings off a healthy parent plant.

- Live stakes should be harvested and planted between late October and the ground freezing or in the spring prior to leaf-out.
- Cut branches between ½" and 1" in diameter, 2' to 3' in length.
- At the thicker end of the branches, make an angled cut to drive stakes into the ground.
- Remove all side branches and leaves from stake to encourage root growth.
- Plant within 24 hours of cutting or keep in a cool, dark, and moist location.

## Bank Slope

If a bank is severely eroded or steep, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District or the Maine DEP for guidance before planting.



## Maintenance

**Year One:** Water live stakes during their first growing season. If live stakes are planted while dormant, shoots should emerge in spring. If planted during the growing season, it may take a year or two to see shoots.

**After Year One:** If two to three growing seasons pass without signs of growth, remove the dead stakes and replace with live stakes. Be prepared to replant if the area is affected by high water, drought, or ice damage before the stakes are fully established.



Cuyahoga SWCD

## Did You Know?

Cane fruits, like raspberries, blackberries, and elderberries, can also be grown from live stakes. You can also use live stakes to grow vegetative fences, hedges, and other structures.

## Recommended Live Stake Plants



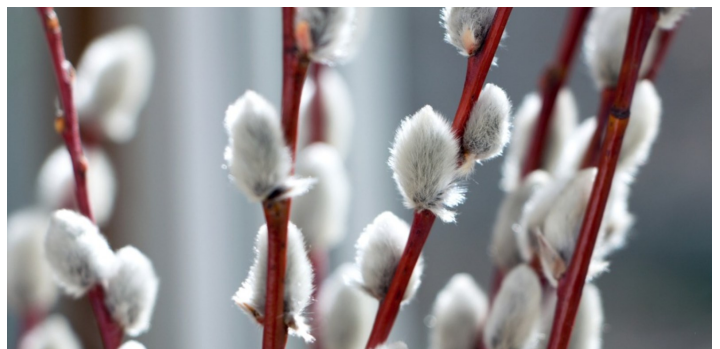
**Red-twig Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)**

Grows 9' tall with similar spread. Young branches are red. Late spring small white flowers with fall fruit. Flood tolerant. Zones 2-7. ○●●



**Grey Dogwood (*Cornus racemose*)**

Grows 10' tall with 10'-15' spread. Can form thickets. Tolerant of city air pollution. Small white clusters of flowers bloom in late spring. Zones 3-8. ○●●



**Pussy Willow (*Salix discolor*)**

Grows 15'-25' tall with similar spread. Produces soft purple-white catkins February through March. Important for early-emergent insects. Flood tolerant. Zones 4-6. ○●●