



CARING FOR A CUT CHRISTMAS TREE

By Iain Eaton

When we were kids our parents worked for the Forestry in Tumut. They were given a cut Christmas tree every year.

Nothing beats the look of a real tree with decorations sitting in the corner of the room. Oh and the smell!

Over the years we became quite good at keeping them alive and looking good for a long time.

Here are some tips...

1. When picking the tree up take a plastic bag and rubber band to place over the trunk. This helps the trunk to stay moist on the drive home.

2. When you get the tree home cut about 2cm off the base of the trunk and place straight in water. This is not crucial, but it will improve water uptake and keep the tree fresh for longer. Place the tree in a stand that can hold at least 5 litres of water. You should expect the tree to take up additional water.

3. Always keep the water topped up. If the base dries out, resin will form over the cut end and the tree will not be able to absorb water and will dry out quickly. If the base seals over, you will need to re-cut the trunk, not good if it is fully decorated. You don't need anything other than regular tap water.

Commercially prepared mixes like aspirin, sugar and other additives introduced into



the water are not necessary. Research has shown that plain water will keep a tree fresh.

4. Check for worn Christmas tree light electrical cords and always unplug at night. Use Aus standard electrical decorations and cords. Using miniature lights produce less heat and reduce the drying effect on the tree or any chance of fire. Never leave the lights on when you go out.

5. Air conditioning can quickly dry out your tree. If possible place the tree out of the direct air flow.

6. Take down the tree before it dries out. Many fresh cut trees if properly cared for (using the first five steps) should last at least five weeks before drying out. Some species keep their moisture longer than others.

So there you have it. Follow these tips and you will enjoy your freshly cut Christmas tree right up until boxing day.