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EXTREME BENDING IS FOR HEALTHY TREES ONLY!

PREPARATION --- 7-10 days prior to bending date

Goal To infuse max amount of moisture into the branch at the bend area.

Supplies

- white cotton cloth strips (1" wide)
- "Saran Wrap" or Glad--"Press'n Seal" (Griptex)
- Electrical tape

Procedure

- Keep tree well watered...do not allow dry out
- Wrap cloth strips around branch @ bend area...overlap 50%
- Wet cloth
- Apply "Press'n Seal/Saran Wrap" around cloth & beyond end of cloth.
- Seal ends of wrapped area with electric tape...keep tape on P'nS; do not get on bare part of branch.
- Fertilize with balanced mixture, 3-4 days before bending date
- do not prune branch to be bent

Day Before Bending

Supplies---raffia

Procedure: Wet raffia, completely submerge in water and let it soak (put plate on top of raffia to keep it submerged)

BENDING DAY

Supplies

- wet Raffia
- copper wire
- steel wire (20-22 gauge)
- branch bender; pliers & wire cutter

- plastic aquarium or rubber tubing

Procedure

- tie raffia strands into bundles of 3-6 strands, depending on raffia width
- remove heartwood if necessary...see Addendum "A"
- determine anchor points for guide wires
- wrap raffia on branch in bend area...50% overlap, no open spaces
- wrap copper wire around branch in bend area (alternate: see Bonsai Focus; July/Aug. 2011 edition; page 45)
- attach guide wire(s) to anchor points... steel or copper wire

BENDING EXECUTION

- Using branch bender tool, bend branch "slowly" to desired position...listen for breaking sounds from branch, stop at that point.
- Twisting branch as you bend can make bending easier.
- Tighten guide wire(s) until it holds branch in desired position...tighten as you are bending.

AFTER CARE

GOAL Provide environment that enhances healing/repair of damaged wood cells.

- Keep tree well watered, no dry out
- Keep out of direct sun & windy area for 2-3 weeks
- Fertilize regularly, balanced mix...tree needs to have nutrients to repair damaged areas.
- No winter freeze 1st year after bending...continue to fertilize conifers at half strength in winter months
- Do not prune bent branch, keep as many branches and as much foliage as possible

ADDENDUM HEARTWOOD REMOVAL

Supplies

- Skill Knife
- Dremel Drill
- Dremel “circular saw” bit + “round/ball head” bit
- copper wire
- cut paste (tub not tube)
- safety glasses & face mask

Procedure

- using skill/sharp knife...remove ¼” wide strip of bark along length of bend area...bottom or back of branch if possible
- drill slot, using “saw” bit, in area bark removed; drill wood out until wood color darkens
- drill out heartwood, using ball headed bit
- drill cavity at each end of slot and fill with cut past
- cut copper wires to length of slot plus cavities’ depth
- insert copper wire into slot plus cavities
- put small amount cut paste in slot after each wire is inserted
- after all wires in slot cover with cut paste

After Care

- when bend is set/holding on its own, remove wires and cut paste
- create shari where slot is to disguise it