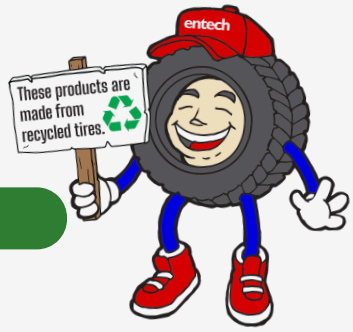
TREE RING

TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE



EcoBorder Tree Rings are durable, no-dig landscape borders made from recycled rubber (each 36" kit repurposes about 1.25 tires). They consist of three L-shaped (in cross-section) pre-formed sections that assemble into a 36-inch inner diameter circle, plus 9 included stakes. The open-bottom design lets roots breathe and mulch nourish the tree while the low-profile, mower- and trimmer-safe edge protects the trunk. They are weather-resistant and easy to rearrange.

This guide covers the most common issues reported by users with practical fixes. Always start with the official installation guide.

INSTALLATION PROBLEMS

Pieces won't align or form a tight circle

- The three L-profile sections must overlap at the flaps to create structure.
- **Fix**: Lay them out flat first to warm in the sun if stiff (rubber is more pliable when warm). Position around the tree trunk, ensuring the inner diameter clears the base by 2–3 inches. Gently flex and snap the overlapping flaps together. For trunks with flare or low branches, install sections one at a time and connect last.

Stakes won't penetrate the ground or break

- Common in root-heavy soil, clay, or frozen ground.
- **Fix**: Clear grass, sod, weeds, and debris first for a flat surface. Soak soil. Pre-drill pilot holes with a long ¼–⅜" drill bit where you hit resistance. Drive stakes straight with a rubber mallet or hammer (avoid metal hammers).

STABILITY & SHIFTING ISSUES

Ring lifts, shifts, or comes loose

- Most commonly caused by frost heave (especially in northern-area freeze-thaw cycles), heavy rain, expanding roots, foot traffic, or insufficient initial staking.
- **Fix**:
  - Install every stake provided (and add more on curves or longer runs for extra hold).

- Raise pieces slightly on ground that may settle; rake soil or material underneath for better support.
- In soft soil, place a thin layer of gravel or soil around the stake area for better grip before final staking.
- In winter-prone zones, inspect and re-pound stakes every spring after thaw.

Mulch spills over the edge

- **Fix**: Keep mulch level 1–2" below the vertical lip. Use coarser wood chips or rubber mulch that stays put better. Avoid piling against the outer edge.

DURABILITY & MATERIAL WEAR

Rubber becomes brittle, cracks, or chunks break off

- Usually appears after 5+ years of exposure, heavy stepping, or mower impact (though designed to be mower-safe).
- **Fix**:
  - Avoid walking or driving over the edging during freezing conditions.
  - Reach out to EcoBorder support via ecoborder.com/contact for advice or possible replacement.

Stakes break during install

- **Fix**:
  - Make sure to use a rubber mallet for installation. Metal hammers can and will damage the stakes.
  - Pre-drill as noted above. The included stakes are lightweight for easy driving but can snap on roots—switch to heavier-duty metal pins if needed.
  - Reach out to EcoBorder directly if you are having issues with excessive breakage.

WEED, MAINTENANCE, & APPEARANCE ISSUES

Weeds growing inside the ring

- The open design is a feature (no root-smothering mat), but unprepared ground leads to weeds.
- **Fix**: Before installing, remove all vegetation, lay cardboard or landscape fabric cut to fit inside the circle, then add 2–3" of mulch. Top-dress with fresh mulch annually.

Ring looks dirty or has a tire smell

- **Fix**: Hose off regularly. Clean with mild dish soap and water as needed. Initial rubber odor fades within weeks.

Tree trunk grows into the ring

- **Fix:** These rings are fully movable. Loosen stakes, reposition outward, or remove as the tree matures. Avoid permanent tight rings around growing trunks.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE & PREVENTION TIPS

Seasonal checks (key for northern winters): After the last snow has melted, walk the yard and re-secure any loose sections (takes 5 minutes).

Replenish mulch yearly to maintain the clean look and moisture retention.

The rubber withstands elements well but performs best on level, well-drained soil—not steep slopes.

Weight per assembled ring is light, making seasonal adjustments easy.

Store extra pieces flat to avoid warping.

WHEN TO CONTACT ECOBORDER SUPPORT?

If you have missing parts, manufacturing defects, or persistent issues not covered here:

- Visit ecoborder.com/contact and submit photos + order details.

Most users report high satisfaction with the easy no-dig install, natural mulch compatibility, and mower safety once properly staked. Proper site prep and occasional stake checks prevent 90% of problems.

For the official step-by-step install (highly recommended first read): Download the PDF from ecoborder.com/installation-guides. It covers preparing the area, assembling the three sections, staking, and adding mulch.