Blueberries into the ground

- **The Plant:** A **"Sunshine Blue"** or **"Biloxi"** blueberry tube stock or small pot (these "Low Chill" varieties thrive in Perth's warm climate). [1]
- **The Soil Base:** 1 bag of **Scotts Osmocote Camellia & Azalea Premium Potting Mix** (blueberries require highly acidic soil to survive, and this is the cheapest way to get it). [1, 2]
- **The Acid & Moisture Booster:** 1 bag of **Brunnings Sphagnum Peat Moss**.
- **The Root Protector:** 1 bag of **Pine Bark Mulch** (keeps shallow roots cool in Perth's scorching summers).

🌱 **Step-by-Step Planting Instructions**

Step 1: Pick the Right Location

Choose a spot that gets **6 to 8 hours of morning sun** but is protected from the harsh, burning afternoon sun and strong winds.

Blueberries have shallow, fibrous roots that spread out like a mat rather than going deep. Dig a hole about **twice as wide** as your plant's pot, but only about 30cm deep. Throw away the native Perth sand you dug out—you won't be using it.

Step 3: Mix Your Budget Soil Pocket

In a wheelbarrow or right next to the hole, mix:

- **50%** Camellia & Azalea potting mix
- **50%** Peat moss (make sure to wet the peat moss thoroughly with a bucket of water first, as it starts very dry)

Fill your dug hole with this blended mix. This mimics a perfect, water-holding acidic bog.

Step 4: Plant the Blueberry

Gently remove the blueberry from its store pot. Make a small well in your new soil mix and place the plant in it. **Crucial tip:** Ensure the top of the plant's root ball sits exactly level with (or slightly higher than) the surrounding ground. Burying the stem too deep causes collar rot. Firm the mix down gently.

Step 5: Mulch Generously

Spread a **5cm to 10cm layer of Pine Bark Mulch** over the top of the soil. Keep the mulch a couple of centimetres away from the actual woody stem of the plant to prevent rot. Pine bark naturally breaks down over time to keep the soil acidic.

Step 6: Water Deeply

Give the new plant a thorough soak with a watering can settle the roots and eliminate air pockets.

💧 **Budget Care Tips for Perth Weather**

- **Watering:** Because Perth summers are brutal, water your blueberry **every 2 days**. Never let the acidic soil pocket completely dry out, but don't leave it soggy.
- **Fertilizing:** Do not use cheap lawn or all-purpose fertilizers and avoid chicken manure (it is too alkaline). Only use fertilizers labelled for Camellias and Azaleas.