



Topic: Right Palm, Right Place is Best

Question: I was wondering if it is possible to have a cabbage palm, growing under power lines, tilted away from the lines while it is in the ground. I would like the least disturbance to plants already established around the palm. Meaning, I do not want to dig it up and move it five feet away. The palm was planted on a tilt originally. However, I did not have it tilted far enough and now it is getting closer to the power line. I like to alter its growth and really do not want to cut it down.

- Martin, email

Answer: The trunks of most palms are unbending except in a couple of cases. Firstly, a palm tilted by wind or soil movement will retain the tilt while directing its new growth upwards thus creating a crook in its trunk. Secondly, if the growing point is devoid of sufficient light, the leaves will seek any available light directing the trunk over time in the same direction thus creating a bent trunk. In this particular case, the only option would be a strenuous one. That is to remove all the leaves, extensively root prune the palm, and tilt it further away from the power lines. This procedure will still ruin your established shrubbery. If this is not possible, replanting with a new palm in the right spot may be your best option.



Newly planted cabbage palms.

Useful Links

[Cabbage Palm Fact Sheet](#)
[Transplanting Sabal Palms](#)
[Stephen's Webpage](#)

Stephen Brown is a horticulture agent with the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the horticulture desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by e-mailing brownsh@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/hort/GardenHome.shtml>. For native plants click on Publications A-Z.

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