

Why Hire an Arborist?

Learn about services that arborists provide, criteria for selecting an arborist, and the benefits of hiring an ISA Certified Arborist®.



Healthy trees serve many purposes in your local community. A way to ensure your trees stay healthy is by hiring an arborist. Professional, trained arborists know how to properly maintain trees for the safety of the public and the health of the tree.

What Is an ISA Certified Arborist?

An ISA arborist certification is a nongovernmental, voluntary process by which individuals can document their base of knowledge. Certification provides a measurable assessment of an individual's knowledge in the competencies needed for proper tree care.

When a professional becomes an ISA Certified Arborist, they should be recognized by their peers and the public as a tree care professional who has attained a generally-accepted level of knowledge in areas such as tree biology, diagnosis, maintenance practices, safety, and other subject and practice areas within the tree care profession as identified through periodic job task analyses.

They must also continue their education to maintain their certification. Therefore, they are more likely to be up to date on the latest techniques in arboriculture.



Selecting the Right Arborist for the Job

- Check for an ISA arborist credential. ISA Certified Arborists and ISA Board Certified Master Arborists® are experienced professionals who have passed comprehensive exams covering all aspects of tree care.
- Check for membership in professional organizations such as the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), or the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA).
- Ask for proof of insurance and call the insurance company.
- Check for local permits and licenses.
- Get more than one estimate and ask for references.
- Don't always accept the lowest bid. Examine the credentials and the written specifications of the firms that submitted the bids and determine the best combination of price, work to be done, skills and professionalism.
- Be wary of people who go door to door and offer bargains.
- ISA certification holders must follow a Code of Ethics and use industry-accepted practices and standards.
- Get it in writing. Most reputable arborists have their clients sign a contract. Read it carefully and ask questions.

Finding an Arborist

Visit [TreesAreGood.org](https://www.treesaregood.org) for free tools:

- The "Find an Arborist" tool can help you locate an arborist in your area.
- The "Verify a Credential" tool enables you to confirm whether an arborist has an ISA credential.
- ISA credential holders have access to a digital certificate of their credentials to shared online.

Be an Informed Consumer

One of the best methods to use in choosing an arborist is to learn some of the basic principles of tree care. Visit [TreesAreGood.org](https://www.treesaregood.org) to read and download all brochures in this series.

Your local garden center, extension agent, or city arborists are also excellent sources of information if you should have further questions. They may also be able to refer you to an ISA Certified Arborist or ISA Board Certified Master Arborist in your area.

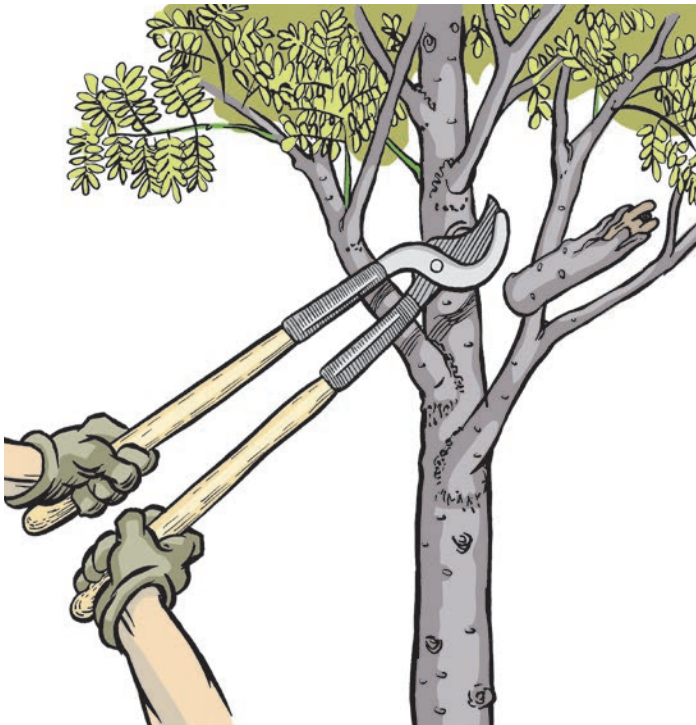
Services That Arborists Provide:

Pruning

Arborists can determine the type of pruning necessary to improve the health, appearance, and safety of trees. Pruning may include removing limbs that:

- Interfere with utilities or structures.
- Obstruct streets or sidewalks.
- Are dead, damaged by storms, weak, or decayed, and pose unacceptable risk.
- Are diseased or insect-infested.

Other pruning strategies improve tree structure, and reduce the likelihood of future damage during storm events.



Planting

Some arborists plant trees, and most recommend species that are appropriate for certain locations. Selecting the wrong tree can lead to future problems with growing space, insects, diseases, or poor growth.

Emergency Tree Care

Removing or pruning storm-damaged trees can be dangerous, but an arborist can perform the job safely while reducing further risk of damage to people and property.

Tree Removal

Arborists can help decide if a tree should be removed. Hiring an arborist is recommended when the tree is:

- Dead, dying, or considered an unacceptable risk.
- Causing an obstruction that is impossible to correct through pruning.
- Crowding and causing harm to other more desirable trees.
- Located in where new construction requires removal.

Other Services

Arborists may also provide other services, including:

- Plant health care or preventive maintenance.
- Cabling and bracing for added support to branches with weak attachments.
- Soil aeration to improve root growth.
- Installation of lightning protection systems.
- Consulting and legal services relating to trees.
- Tree risk assessment.
- Tree protection during construction.



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Through research, technology, and education, the International Society of Arboriculture promotes the professional practice of arboriculture and fosters a greater worldwide awareness of the benefits of trees.