

What is an Arborist?

An arborist is an individual who is trained in the art and science of planting and maintaining trees.

Certified Arborists are degreed professionals with years of education on tree biology. The International Society of Arboriculture, a non-profit organization, maintains a list of ISA Certified Arborists who have at least three years of hands-on experience and have passed a comprehensive examination developed by some of the nation's leading tree care experts. They must continue their education to maintain their certification. They are experts in **tree health and risk management**, with a strong understanding of proper growth patterns and ideal conditions for our individual local species. In addition, they know how to identify invasive insects and diseases, and provide ecologically responsible treatment and disposal of infected material.

Experience working safely and effectively in and around trees is essential. Due to concerns with project and worker safety, many more commercial property owners, industrial sites, and municipal properties now require that Certified Arborists handle their tree care services to reduce liability issues. Certified Arborists are specifically trained to minimize public risk and use various forms of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) to ensure their safety and reduce workplace accidents.

Arborists tend to specialize in one or more disciplines of arboriculture, such as diagnosis and treatment of pests, diseases and nutritional deficiencies in trees, climbing and pruning, cabling and lightning protection, or reporting and consultation. Each of these branches are related and some arborists are very well experienced in all areas of tree work, but not all arborists have the training or experience to properly practice every discipline.

There can be a vast difference between the techniques and practices of professional arborists and those of inadequately trained tree service workers. Some commonly offered services, such as tree "topping" and excessive crown reduction, are considered unacceptable by modern arboricultural standards and may seriously damage, disfigure, weaken, or even kill trees. Trees that manage to survive such treatment are left prone to a spectrum of detrimental effects, including vigorous but weakly attached regrowth, pest susceptibility, pathogen intrusion, and internal decay.

While some tree trimmers working for local tree service companies may have little to no formal training and are often responsible for unnecessary damage and furthered expense, many tree workers are highly skilled and experienced professionals that care deeply about our environment and well-being. Many tree service companies work in collaboration with an in-house or consulting arborist to ensure that you have the best information to decide on your tree's care.

<https://www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/whyhireanarborist>