





















Neighborhood Tree Scavenger Hunt Checklist

As you look for trees to identify in your neighborhood, check off the Scavenger Hunt items below. You may not find all of them, depending on the types of trees in your neighborhood. Some of the items may help you identify a tree. For instance, if you find a tree with rough bark and with simple leaves that have toothed edges, it could be an elm. Use the information and images in Trees, a Folding Pocket Guide to North American Plants Trees to guide you.

 <input type="checkbox"/> Tree with flowers	 <input type="checkbox"/> Pinecone on the tree or on the ground	 <input type="checkbox"/> Simple leaf	 <input type="checkbox"/> Compound leaf
 <input type="checkbox"/> Acorn on the tree or on the ground	 <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit on a tree or on the ground	 <input type="checkbox"/> Rough bark	 <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth bark
 <input type="checkbox"/> Moss on a tree	 <input type="checkbox"/> Roots above ground	 <input type="checkbox"/> Animal or insect in or on tree	 <input type="checkbox"/> Needle-shaped leaves in cluster
 <input type="checkbox"/> Samaras (helicopter seeds) on tree or ground	 <input type="checkbox"/> Oval leaf with smooth edges	 <input type="checkbox"/> Lobed leaf	 <input type="checkbox"/> Toothed leaf
 <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf with palmate veins	 <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf with pinnate veins	 <input type="checkbox"/> Needle-shaped leaves attached individually to branch	 <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf with an unusual shape like a heart or fan

Become a  
**Tree Scientist**  
**Neighborhood Naturalist Activity**

Level: Cadette • Portfolio: Badge • Badge Category: Naturalist • Badge: Tree

- Materials:**
- Trees: A Folding Pocket Guide to North American Plants (Waterford Press)
  - Scavenger Hunt Checklist (Waterford Press)
  - Notebook and pencil/pen or digital tablet
  - Posterboard or drawing paper
  - Pencils or markers to draw a map
- Project Objective: Become a Neighborhood Naturalist!**
- ✓ Learn about trees and complete the scavenger hunt to find clues to help you identify trees.
  - ✓ Draw a map of your neighborhood and sketch an outline of each tree's silhouette to discover the important roles trees play in our daily lives.

**Why are trees important?**

Trees play many roles in our lives. They help purify water through their roots; help stabilize the temperature, especially in urban environments; stabilize the soil; balance the air's oxygen and carbon dioxide levels, which improve our air quality; and provide food and shelter for wildlife. They are also important for their many uses in construction and manufacturing. We couldn't live without trees.





**WATERFORD PRESS**  
Putting the World in Your Pocket®

Waterford Press is the foremost publisher of simplified folding guides to nature observation and outdoor recreation & survival skills.

Visit our website  
[www.waterfordpress.com](http://www.waterfordpress.com)  
for a full title list and FREE downloadable educator guides.

## Glossary

**Trees** - A tree is a tall plant that lives a long time. It usually has a single stem, or trunk, with branches that have leaves on them. The tree gathers light for photosynthesis through its leaves. The tree's underground roots secure it in place and provide nutrients for the tree. But there are some exceptions - not all trees can produce wood. Palms are classified as trees, for instance, but they do not have a woody trunk. Trees are the tallest form of plant.

**Dendrologist** - Someone who studies trees is called a dendrologist.

**Perennial** - A perennial is a plant has a long lifespan.

**Conifer (or Evergreen)** - A type of tree that keeps its leaves year-round is called a conifer or evergreen. Its leaves or needles are generally small. Evergreen trees grow mostly in colder climates, but some species do occur in warmer parts of the country.

**Deciduous (or Broadleaf)** - A tree that loses its leaves annually/seasonally is deciduous. Its leaves are generally broader than evergreen needles. The tree drops its leaves during winter months as a way to reduce its water and nutrient needs in harsh conditions. When deciduous trees drop their leaves, the rotting foliage nourishes the soil and provides food for other plants and animal life.

**Trunk** - A tree's trunk is composed of many layers and is one of its primary organs. It helps the tree reach the height it needs to be in order to gather sunlight, and it carries nutrients from the roots to the branches, twigs and leaves. The rings in the trunk help dendrologists determine the age of the tree.

**Bark** - The outer layer of the tree's trunk helps to protect the tree from disease. The bark can be smooth or rough and comes in different textures that help to identify the tree species.

**Roots** - The part of most trees that we cannot see are the roots. They usually grow beneath the soil and can often reach a width that is up to twice as wide as the tree's crown. Most of the tree's root system can be only 18 inches below the ground's surface. Some trees, like the banyan tree, have aerial roots that grow down from the branches to the ground. And some cypresses seen in swamps have root "knees" that show above the water.

## Learn about Leaves

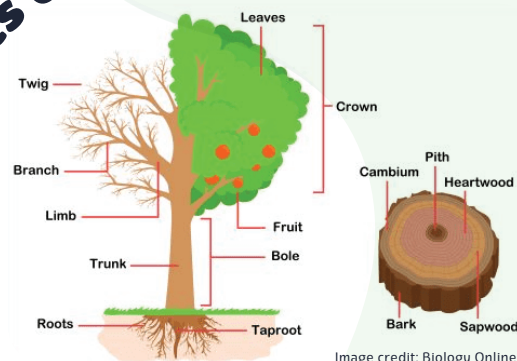
A leaf's shape can be single or compound. A single leaf is one blade attached to a main stem. A compound leaf has many leaflets joined to one main stem.

Decide if the leaves are opposite (across from each other on the stem or twig) or alternate (each has a space across from it on the stem or twig).

Does the leaf have smooth edges, or does it have sharp points or "teeth"? Does it have lobes, or is it rounded or oval with no indentations?

Examine the veins of the leaf. Do they run in straight lines parallel to one another, or do they branch out and form a different pattern? A pinnate leaf has a central vein running from the bottom to the top, with smaller veins extending from it. A palmate leaf has several large veins that all originate at the bottom (base) of the leaf, the way our fingers all originate from the palm of our hand.

## Parts of a tree



## What are the clues you can use to identify tree species?

- **Tree type** - Is it deciduous or coniferous?
- **Leaf type** - Are they leaves or needles? Are the leaves opposite or alternate? Are the leaves single or compound?
- **Bark** - Is the bark smooth or shredding?
- **Fruit** - Is it a fleshy fruit or a nut?
- **Form/silhouette** - Is the tree's crown round and wide or tall and slender?

## Draw a Tree Map

### Materials:

Posterboard or drawing paper, pencils or markers

### Instructions:

Using the notes you took during your walk, design a "tree map" on a piece of drawing paper or posterboard. Draw the streets or sidewalks on the route you took through your neighborhood. Sketch an outline of the silhouette of each tree you identified in its location on your map. You may wish to add houses or other buildings to help show where the trees are located.

## Neighborhood Tree Scavenger Hunt

### Materials:

Trees: A Folding Pocket Guide to North American Plants (Waterford Press), Scavenger Hunt Checklist (Waterford Press), notebook and pencil/pen or digital tablet

### Instructions:

Take a walk through your neighborhood and observe the trees you see. Check off items on your Neighborhood Tree Scavenger Hunt checklist as you observe them during your walk. Use your observations, as well as the information and illustrations in Trees: A Folding Pocket Guide to North American Plants, to help you identify at least five distinct types of trees.

In your notebook or tablet, name the five different trees you identify. Describe or sketch each tree's appearance and indicate where it is located in your neighborhood.

Flip to back for Scavenger Hunt list

