



Purdue University Forestry and Natural Resources

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An arborist is a specialist, trained, and equipped to deliver care for individual trees. Hiring an arborist is a decision that should be made wisely. Proper tree care is an investment that can lead to substantial returns. Well managed trees are attractive and can add considerable value to your property. Poorly maintained trees can be a significant liability.

Services that arborists can provide:

- * Pruning. Determine type of pruning to maintain or improve tree health, appearance, and safety.
 - Eliminate rubbing branches.
 - Remove limbs that interfere with wires, gutters, or roofs, or those that are obstructing streets or sidewalks.
 - Remove dead or weak limbs that pose a hazard or lead to decay.
 - Create better tree structure to reduce wind resistance and potential for storm damage.
 - Train young trees.
 - Remove storm damaged limbs.
 - Improve the shape of the tree.
- * Removal.
 - As a last resort, but when necessary, an



arborist can help decide whether or not the tree should be removed. Arborists have the skills and equipment to safely and efficiently remove trees.

- Removal is recommended when the tree is:
 - ◇ Dead or dying.
 - ◇ Considered irreparably hazardous.
 - ◇ Causing an obstruction that cannot be corrected through pruning.
 - ◇ Crowding and causing harm to other trees.
 - ◇ Unsuitable for the location and needs to be replaced.
 - ◇ To be removed for new construction.
- * Planting
 - An arborist makes proper species selection based on site conditions.
 - The wrong tree in the wrong location leads to future problems such as:
 - ◇ Limited growing space.
 - ◇ Insect and disease infestations.
 - ◇ Poor growth.
 - ◇ Utility obstructions leading to topping.



- * Emergency tree care.
 - Storms may cause limbs or entire trees to fail; limbs often land on homes, cars, other structures or trees. The weight of storm damaged trees is great and they can be very dangerous to remove or trim.
 - An arborist can assist in performing the job in a safe manner, and reduce further risk of damage to your property.

There are a variety of things to consider when selecting the right arborist.

- * Membership in the following professional organizations demonstrates a willingness to stay current with latest techniques and information.
 - International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
 - ◇ Local chapters – Indiana Arborist Association (IAA)
 - National Arborist Association (NAA)
 - American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA)
- * Look for an ISA Certified Arborist.
- * Ask for proof of insurance.
- * Ask for references.
- * Get more than one estimate.
- * Be wary of door-to-door solicitations.
- * Good arborists only perform accepted tree care practices. For instance, some practices are not recommended:
 - Topping.
 - Removing excessive wood.
 - Using climbing spurs on live trees.
- * Get the estimate in writing.

An arborist by definition is an individual who is trained in the art and science of planting, caring for, and maintaining individual trees. ISA Arborist Certification is a non-governmental, voluntary process by which individuals can document their base of knowledge. The Certifica-

tion process operates without mandate of law, and is an internal, self-regulating device administered by the International Society of Arboriculture.

Certified Arborists have achieved a level of knowledge in the area and science of tree care through at least three years 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.



Taken from *Why Hire an Arborist*, a publication by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)

For more information contact:

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<http://www.agriculture.purdue.edu/fnr/index.html>

Local Cooperative Extension Office

International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
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<http://www.isa-arbor.com/>

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