



Why Hire an Arborist?

Arborists specialize in the care of individual trees. They are knowledgeable about the needs of trees and are trained and equipped to provide proper care. Hiring an arborist is a decision that should not be taken lightly. Proper tree care is an investment that can lead to substantial returns. Well cared-for trees are attractive and can add considerable value to your property. Poorly maintained trees can be a significant liability. Pruning or removing trees, especially large trees, can be dangerous work. Tree work should be done only by those trained and equipped to work safely in trees.

Choosing the Right Arborist for the Job

- 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). Such membership demonstrates a willingness on the part of the arborist to stay up-to-date on the latest techniques and information.
- Check for ISA arborist certification. ISA Certified Arborists are experienced professionals who have passed an extensive examination covering all aspects of tree care. To maintain certification, Certified Arborists must continue studying and learning latest in tree health and care.
- Ask for references to find out where the company has done work similar to what you are requesting. Don't hesitate to check references or visit other worksites where the company or individual has done tree work.
- Get more than one estimate, unless you know and are comfortable with the arborist. You may have to pay for the estimates, and it will take more time, but it will be worth the investment.
- Don't always accept the low bid. You should examine the credentials and the written specifications of the firms that submitted bids and determine the best combination of price, work to be done, skill, and professionalism to protect your substantial investment.
- Beware of individuals who go door to door and offer bargains on tree work. Most reputable companies are too busy to solicit work in this manner.
- Keep in mind that good arborists will perform only industry-accepted practices. For example, practices such as topping a tree, removing an excessive amount of live wood, using climbing spikes on a tree that is not being removed, and removing or disfiguring living trees without just cause are improper practices and violate industry standards.
- Get it in writing. Most reputable arborists have their clients sign a contract. Be sure to read the contract carefully. Don't be afraid to ask questions, such as:
 - ✓ When will the work be started and completed?
 - ✓ Who will be responsible for the clean-up?
 - ✓ Is this the total price?
 - ✓ If I would like more to be done, what is your hourly rate?

What is a Certified Arborist?



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 nongovernmental, voluntary process by which individuals can document their base of knowledge. It operates without mandate of law and is an internal, self-regulating device administered by the International Society of Arboriculture. Certification provides a measurable assessment of an individual's knowledge and competence required to provide proper tree care.

Certification is not a measure of standards of practice. Certification can attest to the tree knowledge of an individual but cannot guarantee or insure quality of performance.

Certified Arborists are individuals who have achieved a level of knowledge in the art and science of tree care through experience and by passing a comprehensive examination developed by some of the nation's leading experts on tree care. Certified Arborists 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.

Be an Informed Consumer

One of the best methods to use in choosing an arborist is to educate yourself about some of the basic principles of tree care. ISA offers several brochures, which discuss many of the basic principles of tree care. Your local garden center, cooperative 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.

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