

Choosing an Arborist

Spring is the season many homeowners need the services of a professional arborist or tree service company to [help plant, prune, treat, and remove trees](#).

One question commonly received by the P&PDL from homeowners is how to choose an arborist. Both the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and the National Arbor Day Foundation web sites have resources that can help in selecting an arborist.

The [Arbor Day Foundation](#) presents eight guidelines for selecting an arborist. The key is to make sure the arborist is insured and has professional training.

The [International Society of Arboriculture](#) provides professional training and certifies arborists. Arborists certified by ISA must pass knowledge-based tests and receive continued professional training to maintain their certification. Most arborists that are ISA certified will note this in their yellow pages ad. Also, the ISA website has a search feature that enables you to find arborists in your area simply by entering your zip code.

Homeowners occasionally experience “sticker shock” when they receive a service bid. Remember, as with most things in life, you get what you pay for. High quality tree work requires training, skill, experience, and proper equipment. Reputable arborists must also cover the costs of bonding and insurance. Get more than one estimate, unless you know and are comfortable with the arborist. Look at the bids in terms of the overall package (site clean up, wood removal) rather than just cost. 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.

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