Arborists plant, grow, maintain, and remove trees. For some employers, arborists may also have responsibilities for the sale of trees.
I decided when I was a freshman in high school that I wanted to work with trees. I did not know at that time that the field I was interested in was called arboriculture. I talked to my parents, teachers, and counselor, and they helped me outline a plan for my education. I took the recommended high school classes and attended a college where I received the necessary training.

I have since been employed with a tree service company. I have a wide range of job responsibilities. In the course of a day’s work I may have to identify trees, identify and diagnose tree diseases and pests, and prescribe treatments for disease and pest problems. I sometimes fertilize trees. However, the biggest part of my job involves the safe removal of trees and tree limbs. I use a harness and ropes for climbing trees (some of which can be 80 feet tall) and chainsaws for cutting. Safety is a major concern because of the climbing and the power equipment used. An arborist has one of the most dangerous jobs in America.

I am happy to say that my career path has worked out well for me. I like working with the other people on my crew, and I enjoy the teamwork that is involved. I love working outdoors and the challenge of the physical nature of the job.
Arborist

overview

An arborist is a specialist in the culture of trees.

suggested high school courses

horticulture science, plant science, biology, chemistry, and mathematics

experience needed

Seek seasonal employment with a municipality or tree care company. Participate in an internship program while in school. Plan and implement a related Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Program.

degree(s) required

A bachelor’s degree in arboriculture, urban forestry, plant science, horticulture, biology, or a related field is required. Some states require a license in order to practice arboriculture.

potential employers

municipalities, private tree care companies, self-employment, universities

salary range

$39,915 to $75,330

employment outlook and trends

The rate of job growth for arborists is expected to be average in relation to other career fields.

professional organizations

Society of American Foresters www.safnet.org/
International Society of Foresters www.isa-arbor.com/

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www.mycaert.com/career-profiles
www.forestrycareers.org/
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