

Research what it takes to become a certified arborist. Learn about education requirements, job duties, average wages and job outlook to find out if this is the career for you.

!!!Career Information At a Glance

Arborists may cut down, replant and provide maintenance for trees for national parks, city streets, school grounds and conservation areas. Look over this table to learn about job duties and certification requirements:

	__Degree Required__		<i>None required</i>
	__Certification Required__		International Society of Arboriculture certification
	__Key Duties__		<i>Tree care, including tree removal, pruning and shaping</i>
	__Job Growth for Related Occupations (2012–2022)__		<i>13% "(for all grounds maintenance occupations)"</i>
	__Average Salary (2013)__		<i>\$34,470*</i>

"Source: *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics"

!!What's the Certification Process for an Arborist?

You can become more competitive as a professional arborist by obtaining voluntary certification from organizations such as the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). To prepare for the ISA certification exam, you don't need formal education but you do need to review a list of topics covered on the test. The ISA publishes a booklet that helps get you started learning about the various topics covered on the test such as soil management, tree biology, pruning and urban forestry. The test consists of multiple-choice questions and you must score at least 72% to pass.

!!What Will I Do as a Certified Arborist?

As an arborist, you maintain, diagnose and monitor trees in public areas. You might remove tree branches, trim foliage or shape plants. You must know how to extract, transplant and move young saplings and bushes, as well as how to select appropriate trees for planting. You also improve the appearance, value and health of trees by preventing, diagnosing and helping treat common tree and shrub diseases. To perform routine tree maintenance, must have balance and physical strength; in particular, you need to be familiar with a variety of knots and rope-climbing techniques that help move you freely and safely at high elevations.

Once certified, you may be put in charge of advanced duties, such as preparing areas for routine maintenance work such as installing power lines, cables and roads. You may gain enough experience to oversee your own team, or take on additional administrative duties such as meeting with clients and creating contracts or completing paperwork for each job.

!!How Else Might I Improve My Career Prospects?

You may wish to become certified to spray insecticide on trees and bushes if your state or employer requires such certification to handle these poisonous chemicals. Since you often work in populated areas, you must be able to operate and prepare sprays and mist blowing equipment safely and in accordance to quality control methods. You must also learn about what bugs and insects are good or bad for the health of plants in order to correctly identify and treat infestation. You can learn more about these requirements through your state's agriculture department.