

Sizing Up a Minnesota Tree

Foresters aren't the only ones who can "size up" a tree. Here's how you can do it too.

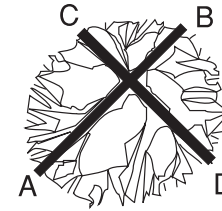
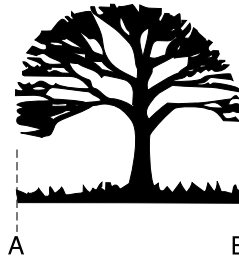
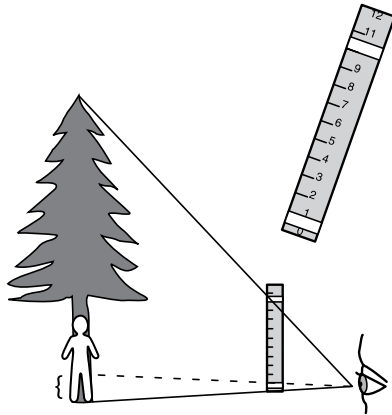
Around the Middle

Get circumference by measuring the distance around the tree to the nearest inch at $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the ground.



How High

Take a 12-inch ruler and mark the 1-inch and 10-inch lines on the ruler with tape. Have a partner stand at the tree's base. Hold the ruler in front of your eyes at arm length and walk back until you can see the whole tree from top to bottom between the 0-inch and the 10-inch mark on the ruler. Then move your body forward and backward until the base of the tree is exactly at 0 inches and the top of the tree is exactly at 10 inches. Sight out from the 1-inch mark to a point on the trunk above the base. Have your partner mark that spot on the trunk with tape. Measure the distance from the base of the tree to tape mark. Then estimate the height of the tree by multiplying by 10.



Crown Size

Set a stake directly under the outside edge of the crown farthest from the trunk (A). Set another stake directly opposite at the outer edge of the crown (B) on a line passing through the center of the tree. Rotate 90 degrees and set stakes on outside edges of the crown passing through the center of the tree (C and D).

Fun Fact

A giant sequoia in Sequoia National Park in California is largest living thing in the nation. It towers 275 feet tall and has a trunk about 36 feet wide at the base of the tree. That means it's as tall as a 20-story building and its trunk is as wide as a semitrailer is long. It's probably almost 3,000 years old.

