Leaf Identification Chart

43 trees with a photo, the one feature that separates each, and its size. Free to reuse with a link to orvik.app/tools/leaf-identifier/

orvik.app
/tools/leaf-identifier/

1



White oak

Quercus alba

Five to nine deep lobes with rounded tips and no bristles, pale grey-green above and whitish beneath

`Size: Leaf 12–22 cm`

2



Northern red oak

Quercus rubra

Seven to eleven shallow lobes, each ending in several sharp bristle tips, with sinuses that cut less than halfway to…

`Size: Leaf 12–25 cm`

3



Pin oak

Quercus palustris

Five to seven bristle-tipped lobes with very deep U-shaped sinuses cutting almost to the midrib, giving a skeletal…

`Size: Leaf 8–16 cm`

4

No open-licence photo that passed review

Live oak

Quercus virginiana

An oak that does not look like one: small, leathery, unlobed evergreen leaves with rolled-under edges and a fuzzy…

`Size: Leaf 5–12 cm`

5



Sugar maple

Acer saccharum

Five palmate lobes with smooth-sided sinuses that are U-shaped at the base and no small teeth along the lobe edges

`Size: Leaf 8–15 cm`

6



Red maple

Acer rubrum

HANDLE WITH CARE

Three to five shallow lobes with V-shaped notches between them and irregular teeth along the edges, silvery beneath,…

`Size: Leaf 6–10 cm`

7



Silver maple

Acer saccharinum

Five deeply cut lobes with narrow sinuses reaching most of the way to the base and a brilliantly silver-white…

`Size: Leaf 8–16 cm`

8



Norway maple

Acer platanoides

Broad five-lobed leaf, wider than it is long, with each lobe drawn out into a fine bristle point — and a bead of…

`Size: Leaf 10–18 cm, wider than long`

9



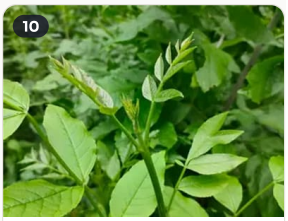
Boxelder

Acer negundo

The only maple with compound leaves — three to five coarsely toothed leaflets, opposite on the twig, on green or…

`Size: Three to seven leaflets, 5–10 cm each`

10



White ash

Fraxinus americana

Opposite compound leaves with five to nine stalked leaflets, whitish beneath, on stout twigs with a leaf scar shaped…

`Size: Leaf 20–30 cm, five to nine leaflets`

11

No open-licence photo that passed review

Shagbark hickory

Carya ovata

Five leaflets — the top three much larger than the bottom two — with tufts of hair on the teeth, alternate on the twig

`Size: Leaf 20–35 cm, five leaflets`

12



Black walnut

Juglans nigra

A very long compound leaf with 15 to 23 narrow toothed leaflets and a terminal leaflet that is often missing or…

`Size: Leaf 30–60 cm, 15–23 leaflets`

13



Paper birch

Betula papyrifera

Small oval-to-triangular leaves with doubly toothed edges — large teeth with smaller teeth on them — on slender…

`Size: Leaf 5–10 cm`

14



American beech

Fagus grandifolia

Neat oval leaves with straight parallel veins running to a small sharp tooth at the end of each one, glossy above

`Size: Leaf 6–13 cm`

15



American elm

Ulmus americana

Doubly toothed oval leaf with a strikingly lopsided base — one side of the blade starts noticeably lower on the stalk…

`Size: Leaf 7–15 cm`

16



Hackberry

Celtis occidentalis

Lopsided base like an elm, but with three prominent veins fanning out from it and teeth only on the upper two-thirds…

`Size: Leaf 6–12 cm`

17



American sycamore

Platanus occidentalis

Very large three- to five-lobed leaf, broader than long, with a hollow leaf stalk base that caps the bud

`Size: Leaf 10–25 cm`

18



Tulip tree

Liriodendron tulipifera

Four lobes and a flat, notched top as if the tip had been cut off with scissors

`Size: Leaf 8–20 cm`

19



Sweetgum

Liquidambar styraciflua

A five-pointed star with finely toothed edges, smelling resinous when crushed

`Size: Leaf 10–18 cm`

20



American basswood

Tilia americana

Large heart-shaped leaf with a strongly lopsided base and coarse sharp teeth

`Size: Leaf 10–20 cm`



Eastern cottonwood

Populus deltoides

A broad triangle with coarse curved teeth on a flattened leaf stalk, so the leaves flutter and rattle in the…

`Size: Leaf 7–15 cm`

22

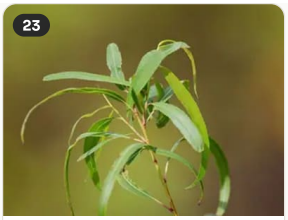
No open-licence photo that passed review

Quaking aspen

Populus tremuloides

Small round leaves with fine teeth on a flattened stalk, trembling constantly, over smooth greenish-white bark

`Size: Leaf 4–8 cm`

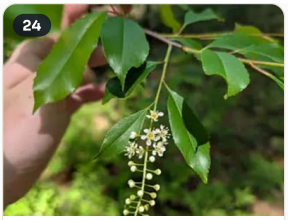


Black willow

Salix nigra

Long, narrow, finely toothed leaves that taper to a fine point at both ends, often slightly curved, on flexible twigs…

`Size: Leaf 6–15 cm, very narrow`



Black cherry

Prunus serotina

Glossy narrow leaf with incurved blunt teeth, a pair of small red glands where the blade meets the stalk, and a line…

`Size: Leaf 6–14 cm`

25

No open-licence photo that passed review

Flowering dogwood

Cornus florida

Opposite oval leaves with smooth edges and veins that curve forward to follow the leaf outline instead of running to…

`Size: Leaf 7–15 cm`



Southern magnolia

Magnolia grandiflora

Thick, leathery, glossy evergreen leaves with a rusty felt underside and completely smooth edges

`Size: Leaf 12–25 cm`



Northern catalpa

Catalpa speciosa

Enormous heart-shaped leaves in whorls of three, with smooth edges, followed by long bean-like pods that hang all…

`Size: Leaf 20–30 cm`



Black locust

Robinia pseudoacacia

Compound leaves of rounded blue-green leaflets with smooth edges, and a pair of short sharp thorns at the base of…

`Size: Leaf 20–35 cm, 7–19 leaflets`



Honey locust

Gleditsia triacanthos

Feathery twice-compound leaves of many tiny leaflets, and on wild trees vicious branched thorns up to 20 cm long…

`Size: Leaf 15–20 cm, leaflets 1–3 cm`

30

No open-licence photo that passed review

Red mulberry

Morus rubra

The leaves on one tree come in three shapes — unlobed heart, mitten with one lobe, and a three-lobed glove — all…

`Size: Leaf 8–18 cm`



Osage orange

Maclura pomifera

Glossy pointed oval leaves with smooth edges, milky sap, and a stout straight thorn at each node

`Size: Leaf 7–13 cm`



Sassafras

Sassafras albidum

Three leaf shapes on the same twig — plain oval, a mitten with one thumb, and a three-lobed glove — all with smooth…

`Size: Leaf 8–16 cm`



Eastern redbud

Cercis canadensis

Almost perfectly heart-shaped leaves with completely smooth edges and a papery texture, on zigzag twigs

`Size: Leaf 7–12 cm`



Horse chestnut and buckeye

Aesculus species

HANDLE WITH CARE

Five to seven large toothed leaflets radiating from a single point like fingers, opposite on the twig

`Size: Five to seven leaflets, 10–25 cm each`



Ginkgo

Ginkgo biloba

A flat fan with veins that fork repeatedly and never form a network, usually notched in the middle

`Size: Leaf 5–8 cm wide`



Eastern white pine

Pinus strobus

Soft flexible blue-green needles in bundles of five — one for each letter of "white" — with long slender cones

`Size: Needles 7–13 cm`



Red pine and Scots pine

Pinus resinosa, P. sylvestris

Needles in bundles of two

`Size: Needles 5–16 cm`



Norway spruce

Picea abies

Stiff four-sided needles attached singly to little woody pegs, so a stripped twig feels rough and warty

`Size: Needles 1–2.5 cm`



Balsam fir

Abies balsamea

Flat needles with two white stripes underneath, attached by a suction-cup base that leaves a smooth round scar

`Size: Needles 1.5–3 cm`

40

No open-licence photo that passed review

Eastern hemlock

Tsuga canadensis

Short flat needles of unequal length in two flat rows, each on a tiny stalk, with two white bands beneath — and a row…

`Size: Needles 1–2 cm`



Eastern redcedar and arborvitae

Juniperus virginiana, Thuja occidentalis

No needles at all — tiny overlapping scales pressed flat against flattened green sprays, aromatic when crushed

`Size: Sprays 5–15 cm`



Bald cypress

Taxodium distichum

Soft feathery needles in two flat rows that turn rust orange and fall in autumn — a deciduous conifer

`Size: Needles 1–2 cm in flat sprays`



Douglas fir

Pseudotsuga menziesii

Soft flat needles radiating all around the twig from small raised bases, with pointed reddish buds like a beech

`Size: Needles 2–3.5 cm`

Photo credits. Every photo was checked against the entry before use; 37 of 43 entries have one.

1. White oak — peakaytea, CC0, iNaturalist
2. Northern red oak — olmagon, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
3. Pin oak — Navin Sasikumar, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
5. Sugar maple — Tom Norton, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
6. Red maple — Patrice Dupont, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
7. Silver maple — Pavel Kacl, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
8. Norway maple — Patrice Dupont, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
9. Boxelder — Jay Pruett, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
10. White ash — Капрал Натурал, CC0, iNaturalist
12. Black walnut — naturalist charlie, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
13. Paper birch — Daughter Dad, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
14. American beech — Will McFarland, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
15. American elm — Patrice Dupont, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
16. Hackberry — Tom Pollard, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
17. American sycamore — Chris Stahl, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
18. Tulip tree — Douglas Goldman, CC BY-SA 4.0, iNaturalist
19. Sweetgum — Will McFarland, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
20. American basswood — Loïc Mathieu, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
21. Eastern cottonwood — Jake Rehage, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
23. Black willow — Daughter Dad, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
24. Black cherry — Brighton Lee, CC0, iNaturalist
26. Southern magnolia — Qadry Anthony, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
27. Northern catalpa — Andrew Lai, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
28. Black locust — Loïc Mathieu, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
29. Honey locust — Chris Stahl, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
31. Osage orange — Cliff Tyllick, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
32. Sassafras — Larry Jensen, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
33. Eastern redbud — ringedinlaurel, CC0, iNaturalist
34. Horse chestnut and buckeye — Siddarth Machado, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
35. Ginkgo — Matt Schultz, CC0, iNaturalist
36. Eastern white pine — Bonnie Semmling, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
37. Red pine and Scots pine — Clay, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
38. Norway spruce — Jason Grant, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
39. Balsam fir — Douglas Goldman, CC BY-SA 4.0, iNaturalist
41. Eastern redcedar and arborvitae — dinomariobob, CC0, iNaturalist
42. Bald cypress — Jo Roberts, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist
43. Douglas fir — Matt Berger, CC BY 4.0, iNaturalist

Chart: Orvik, https://orvik.app/tools/leaf-identifier/ — CC BY 4.0. Photos keep their own licences, listed above. Retrieved 2026-11-19.