



Parts of a Tree

Like all living things, trees are made up of different "body parts" that help them survive. Use this brochure to learn about the different parts of a tree, as well as the different stages of a tree's life.



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All trees start out as seeds that will sprout into seedlings.

A sapling is the next stage of a tree's life. Seedlings become saplings when they reach four feet tall.

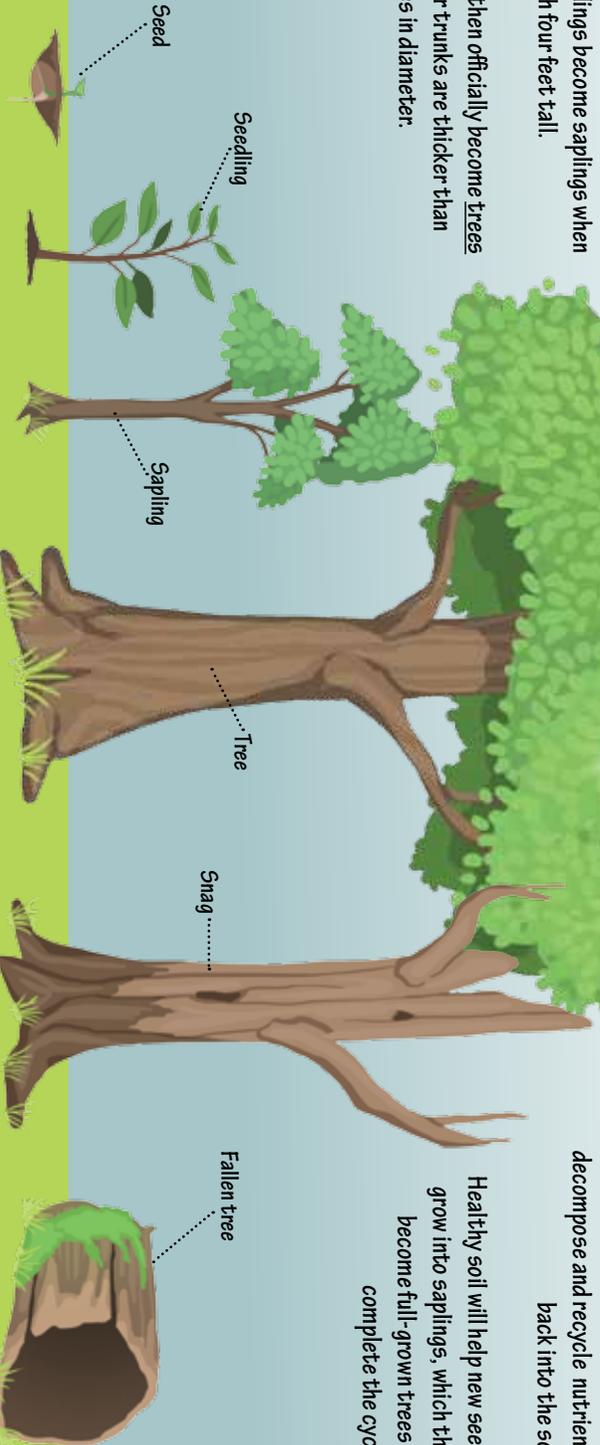
Saplings then officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than four inches in diameter.

Tree Life Cycle

When a tree dies it sometimes becomes a snag, which is a dead tree that hasn't fallen.

Fallen trees and snags slowly decompose and recycle nutrients back into the soil.

Healthy soil will help new seeds grow into saplings, which then become full-grown trees to complete the cycle.

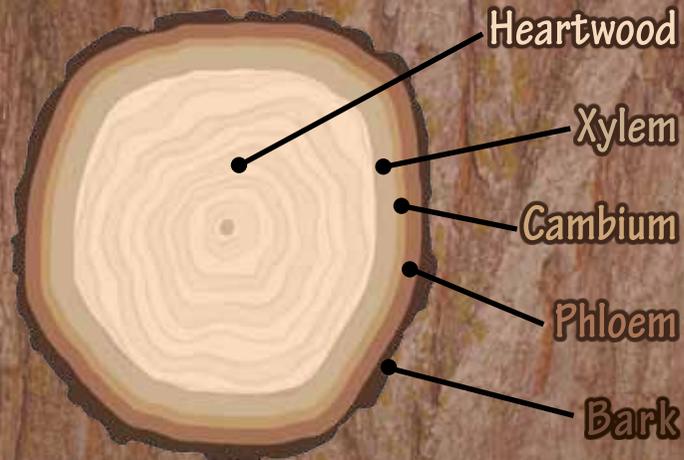


Can you find a... Seed? ___ Seedling? ___ Sapling? ___ Tree? ___ Snag? ___ Fallen tree? ___

What's inside?

Some parts of the tree you can see from the outside. Other parts are on the inside or too tiny to see without a microscope. Let's look at some of these different parts.

Inside the Trunk



Heartwood: Dead wood in the center of the tree that gives the tree its strength.

Xylem: Transports water and nutrients up from the roots to other parts of the tree.

Cambium: The growing part of the trunk that creates new xylem and phloem. When the cambium hibernates each year, it forms the rings you'd find on a tree stump. Counting the rings can tell us a tree's age.

Phloem: Transports sugars and proteins (sap) from the leaves downward through the rest of the tree.

Bark: Protects the tree from fire and insects, and insulates it from extreme heat or cold.

Crown

The crown is made up of the tree's leaves and branches. The leaves are the tree's "food factory," using sunlight to create energy for the tree and convert carbon dioxide into oxygen.

Trunk

The trunk supports the crown, and gives the tree its shape and strength. Within the trunk are different layers that contain a network of tubes that transport nutrients all over the tree.

Roots

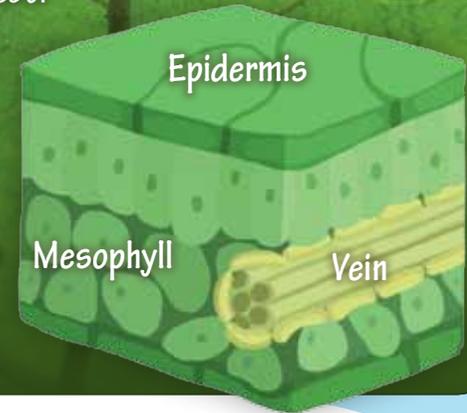
Roots anchor the tree to the ground. They also absorb water and nutrients from the soil to feed the tree.

Inside a Leaf

Epidermis: The outermost, protective layer of cells that surround the leaf.

Mesophyll: The tissue of a leaf where photosynthesis occurs. Photosynthesis is the process of how a leaf turns sunlight into sugars to feed the tree.

Vein: Contains the leaf's xylem, which transports water and nutrients to the leaf from the roots. And the phloem, which transports the sugar made in the leaf.



Leaf Shape Tic-Tac-Toe

Keep an eye out for these leaf shapes as you explore the trail. Mark the leaves you find with an X. Or play with a friend and take turns marking X's and O's. Whoever finds and marks three leaves in a row wins!

