



PLANT IDENTIFICATION

If you were hiking through the forest & saw a plant you had never seen before, how could you identify it?

Scientists observe simple characteristics about plants in order to identify them.

1. Take a look at the plant and decide whether it is **evergreen** or **deciduous** (dee-sid-you-us). An evergreen plant will keep its leaves all year long, it is always green; it is evergreen. A deciduous tree loses its leaves in the fall and grows new leaves in the spring.
2. Next take a look at the leaves. You must decide whether the plant has **broadleaves** or **needle-like** leaves. Are they wide and broad? Are they long and skinny like needles? Usually, plants with needle-like leaves are also evergreen.

Broadleaf

Needle-like

3. If you have found that the plant you are investigating has broadleaves, you'll want to take a closer look. What are the edges of the leaf like? Are they smooth? Toothed? Lobed?

Smooth

Toothed

Lobed

4. Now take a look at how the leaves are arranged on the stem. Are they opposite each other? Do the leaves alternate on the stem?

Answer to Plant Identification Quiz on Back

Answers: 1 - Oregon Ash, 2 - Sidal,
3 - Huckleberry, 4 - Douglas fir, 5 - Oregon Oak

Leaves Opposite

Leaves Alternate

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Now that you know some things about plants, try to identify these plants below by using the plant identification key. * Because it can sometimes be difficult to tell if a plant is evergreen or deciduous by looking at a picture, we put a yellow star in the corner of the picture of the evergreen plants.



5

1



3

4

- 1a. This plant is evergreen
- 1b. This plant is deciduous

Go to 2
Go to 3

- 2a. This plant has needle-like leaves
- 2b. This plant has broadleaves

The plant is called a **Douglas Fir**
The plant is called a **Salal**

- 3a. This plant has leaves with smooth edges
- 3b. This plant has leaves with lobed edges

Go to 4

This plant is called an **Oregon Oak**

2

- 4a. The leaves of this plant are opposite
- 4b. The leaves of this plant are alternate

This plant is called an **Oregon Ash**
This plant is called a **Huckleberry**

(Answer to Plant Identification Quiz on Front)

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