



# British Trees

There are many different types of trees that appear throughout Britain. They have familiar features that make them easy to identify around the country.

## Ash



Ash trees can be found in woodland environments. Older ash trees, which surprisingly are shorter than younger trees, can also be found in parks and fields. They can grow to 35 metres in height and have a cracked grey or pale-brown bark. Ash trees also have bright green leaves. Interestingly, these trees can live for around 200 years or possibly longer! Ash trees support a lot of different wildlife including:

- woodpeckers;
- owls;
- bullfinches;
- dormice.



## Oak



Two types of oak trees can be found in Britain. They are the English oak and the Sessile oak. Their bark is rough and their leaves are smooth with rounded edges and they can grow to approximately 40 metres. Interestingly, they live to be about 1000 years old. Oak wood can be used for building homes and furniture as well as ships.

### Did You Know...?

Major Oak, which is a tree in Nottingham, is one of the UK's largest ancient oak trees. Its **canopy** is around 28 metres wide!



## Lime

In Britain, there are different varieties of lime trees: short-leaved; long-leaved and common lime trees. Their bark is grey and the leaves are known for their heart shape. Lime trees can grow up to around 40 metres in height. Lime trees usually grow in areas such as parks and streets. Bees are often found by lime trees as they are attracted to the sweet smell of the tree's flowers.



## Alder

Alder trees survive best in a wet, cool environment and can often be found near streams, rivers and lakes. These British trees can grow to around 25 to 28 metres tall and live to about 60 years old. These trees have rough grey bark and the berries they produce are dangerous when consumed. Interestingly, their flowers look similar to a pine cone.

## Beech

Beech trees are easy to spot in woodlands as not many plants can grow underneath their huge shadows. Beech trees' bark is smooth and grey. The leaves of a young beech tree are shiny and green although they eventually become darker over time. Beech trees typically grow to around 40 metres tall and live to be about 400 years old.

A top tip for identifying an older beech tree is to look for its roots as these can often be spotted above ground level!

## Sycamore

Interestingly, sycamore trees are not **native** to the UK. They are thought to have been brought over by the Romans and now grow successfully across Britain. It is thought that they could have planted them for decoration in gardens as well as for practical uses. Sycamores usually grow to around 35 metres in height and they are well known for their wing-shaped seeds. Young sycamore trees have smooth bark, which gets rougher as they age. This variety of tree also lives to around 400 years old.

### Glossary

**canopy:** A layer of overlapping leaves and branches of a tree.

**native:** To exist naturally in one place.