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How to Pick the Perfect **Christmas Tree**

For many people, the holiday season doesn't officially start until they've found a perfect Christmas tree. But for those who are on the hunt for this quintessential evergreen, how do you know which one is the right one? By following a few simple steps, you'll find an idyllic Christmas tree in no time!

Step 1. Remember to Measure

Before you set out to search for the perfect tree, you'll need to decide where you're going to display it. After you've picked a spot, measure the height from the ceiling to the ground with a tape measure. Your ideal tree should be at least one foot shorter than the ceiling height, which will provide you with plenty of room for an extravagant tree topper. Also, remember to measure the opening of your tree stand. The trunk of your chosen tree must be smaller than the stand's opening so the tree will stay straight throughout the holiday season.

TIP: Don't place your tree near TVs, fireplaces or radiators. These "hot" spots will cause a fresh-cut tree to dehydrate quickly, resulting in rapid discoloration and wilted branches.

Step 2. Feeling for Freshness

As you peruse the different types of trees, look for varieties that are full, fresh and fragrant. A good, healthy tree will last for many weeks with proper care and maintenance. When you find a tree that meets all of your measurement requirements, you'll want to assess its "freshness" with either a bounce test or a freshness test.



All you have to do is lift your prospective tree a couple of inches off the ground and drop it on its trunk. If the tree sheds only brown needles, it is perfect for purchase. But if the tree casts off more green needles than brown, set your sights on another tree; this is usually a telltale sign that the tree is severely dehydrated, meaning it probably won't look fresh for long.



Freshness Test

Inspect the branches of your potential tree. With your thumb and forefinger, gently grab one of the branches and pull it toward you. As you release the branch, examine the number of needles left in your hand. If the tree is strong and healthy, very few needles should detach.

Step 3. Shake, Rattle & Roll

Once you've found the right Christmas tree for your family, examine the branches for any insects or insect eggs. You can get rid of lingering pests by shaking or bouncing your tree a few times. Then, ask a Team Member to bind your tree with a tree baler. Tree baling is available at all Menards® store locations when you purchase a fresh-cut Christmas tree. This important step not only protects your tree from injury with tightly bond netting, but it also compresses its natural shape so you can transport the tree with ease. And finally, acclimatize your tree to its new surroundings by cutting off at least 1/2" from the bottom of the trunk with a handsaw. This will enable the tree to access water throughout the entire holiday season, so you can enjoy your Christmas display well until New Years.

For more tips and information about choosing and caring for a fresh-cut Christmas tree, CLICK HERE. And, if you prefer to buy an artificial Christmas tree this year, check out all the colors and varieties of trees that Menards® has to offer.

Article by: Marisa Christiano

Information for reference only. Items and availability may vary.



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