

# Just the Job

## Information Sheet

**Job title:**

Arborist

**Job description:**

Working as an Arborist involves the care and maintenance of trees and shrubs from seedling to maturity.

The job of an arborist is physically demanding and so requires you to be fit and able. It consists of mostly outdoor work so working in all weather conditions can be expected.

Arboriculture consists of a wide and varying amount of work to do with trees. This can be from planting to felling, climbing to sectional dismantling, transplanting to giving advice. Anything to do with trees.

A career in arboriculture is a wide and varying path with different areas that you can choose to specialise in if you wish. Examples of these areas could be general arborist, utility arborist, council arborist, consultant arborist and landclearing arborist.

Most arboricultural companies will deal with a mix of all of these areas, however some choose to specialise in one area or the other.

**Qualifications required:**

Arborist apprenticeships are open to people of any age or gender.

Most employers appreciate their employee's being of a good physical level, not scared of heights and willing to learn and work hard due to the nature of the job.

Subjects such as horticulture or of a physical nature will also provide you with good skills that will come in handy when you start working as an arborist, but is not necessarily essential as this can be learnt on the job.

Holding a current and valid drivers licence is beneficial in most instances, as it is common to go onto gaining a heavy truck licence.

**Training costs:**

The fees for apprenticeship training with the NZHITO are currently set at \$650 per year. The employer and apprentice usually negotiate and decide between themselves who pays this fee.

**Location of job:**

As an arborist you will be doing the majority of your work outdoors.

**Career path:**

Unskilled labourer >> Apprentice >> Skilled Arborist/Tradesperson >> Foreman >> Manager  
>> Consultant >> Owner/Operator

When an employer takes you on you will generally start as an unskilled labourer, then once both you and your employer have decided that you want to progress into training you will be signed up as an apprentice.

### **Wage range:**

The entry level wage for an unskilled labourer is approximately \$11 per hour but is dependant on ability, ranging through to approximately \$25 per hour for a qualified tradesperson. Arboriculture is an industry that is ability based which can control your earnings.

If you do end up becoming your own boss, you will be able to set your own pay rates.

### **Other careers this profession could lead to:**

Tree Officer for local Councils  
Project management  
Consultant  
Owner/Operator of an Arboricultural Business.

### **Tips on how to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry:**

See if you can spend some time working with an arborist in school holidays and after school. Gateway through schools can be a great way to get into an apprenticeship.

### **Other places to source information about this job:**

New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (NZHITO)  
Kiwi Careers / Career Services  
New Zealand Arboricultural Association

Talking to existing arborists and asking them questions such as; what their jobs involves?  
What they like and dislike about their job?

All of this can be a great way to find out if the arboricultural industry would be a good career for you to get into.