

**Your Christmas tree is an important decision and you want to make sure it's just right! Follow these selection tips to ensure you get exactly what you're looking for.**

## Determine where the tree will be located.

Pick a spot with low household traffic. Maintain safety by picking a location away from heaters, fireplaces and heat vents. Measure the space so you know how wide the tree can be. Also, measure the height. Remember to add six inches above the tree to allow for any tree topper decoration.

## Know what type of tree you want

Before you head to your local Christmas tree farm or lot, determine which type of tree will work best for you. Take into consideration how you decorate. Do you have heavy decorations that may need sturdy branches? Are you looking for a dark green tree or one that may have a hint of silver? Do you have children helping to decorate? Children are more successful when the tree has branches that are easily accessible. Do you have a lot of hanging ornaments? Trees with branch spacing allows for better hanging space.

## Do a walk around

When studying a tree, take 5 steps back and view from different angles. Make sure the tree looks the way you want it to from all angles.

## Check for freshness (if choosing a pre-cut tree)

Needles can tell you a lot about the tree's freshness. Test this by bending a needle in half. If it is a fresh fir the needle should snap. If it's a fresh pine the needle should bend but not break. Another test is to gently grab the branch and pull toward you, running the needles through your hand. The needles should stay on the tree and not fall off. You can also test this by picking up the tree and tapping it on the ground. Look to see if needles fall off, which would indicate a tree that is not very fresh.

## Tree Care

Once the tree is home, you will want to take steps to ensure it stays fresh as long as possible. Follow these tips to keep your tree looking perfect.

1. Cut off about a half-inch from the bottom of the tree's trunk. Having a fresh cut will allow the tree to absorb more water.
2. Place the tree in water as quickly as you can after you make the cut.
3. Keep the water in the tree stand filled. This ensures the tree does not have time to dry out. It is normal to have to add water two or three times during the first few days.

