

More Trees Please

Trees are disappearing at an alarming rate all over the world, and the tree canopy in many cities is shrinking. A study by the US Forestry Service found that the US lost 36 million trees annually from urban and rural communities over a five-year period. There are many reasons for the decreasing tree coverage, including hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, insects, and disease, but the largest environmental factor that humans can control is sensible development.

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A tree takes a long time to grow: upwards of 50 to 100 years. Once they're established, they can live to an old age, but cutting down a big tree and saying, 'we'll replant afterwards,' does not guarantee that the new tree will survive to maturity. We should therefore cultivate additional trees on our own property wherever it is reasonable, care for the trees, prune dead limbs, and observe when something is wrong, such as when branches are broken or leaves lost or when mushrooms grow on or at the base of the tree. Many cities have tree ordinances to conserve historic, significant trees; you can therefore get involved by attending city council meetings and help your city plant trees by joining local non-profit groups.

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How many trees are lost in the US each year?

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How long do trees take to grow?

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What can you do to increase the number of trees?