

Plant Profiles: HORT 2242 Landscape Plants II
WHOLE PLANT/HABIT

How to Identify a Pine, Spruce and Fir by Habit

Genera: *Pinus* (pine), *Picea* (spruce), *Abies* (fir)

Family Name: Pinaceae – pine family

Steps to take to determine pine, spruce or fir:

1. How many needles and how are they attached? This should be the first decision you make as it tells you what genus it could or absolutely could not be.
2. Cone features
 - a. Are the cones pendulous or upright?
 - b. How do the cones mature? Does it take two years for the cones to mature? Do they stay intact at maturity or do they disintegrate upon maturity?
3. Bud features – Are there terminal and lateral buds? Only terminal buds? What do they look like?
4. **Whole plant/Habit– Is it pyramidal when young, but broadens with age (loses apical dominance)? Is the tree pyramidal throughout its lifespan? Notice size, shape, form and color as you approach the tree as these features will all help to confirm the identification of the plant.**

NOTE: For complete information on all the steps listed please consult *Plant Profiles: Hort2242 Landscape Plants II - How to Identify Pine, Spruce and Fir*.

Resources Consulted:

Dirr, Michael A. *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses*. Champaign: Stipes, 2009. Print.

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Whole plant/Habit: *Pinus*

- Description: Plants in the genus *Pinus* are pyramidal when young.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: September 27, 2010
- Image File Name: pinus_habit_2104.png



Whole plant/Habit: *Pinus*

- Description: As pines mature they lose apical dominance and become more rounded, broad and picturesque.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: November 21, 2008
- Image File Name: pinus_habit_1080501.png



Whole plant/Habit: *Picea* and *Abies*

- Description: *Picea* and *Abies* are pyramidal when young and maintain that shape throughout their lifespan. A pine at this stage of maturity would already have lost apical dominance.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: 2009
- Image File Name: picea_abies_habit.png