

CAREER OF THE MONTH

Climber – Residential/Commercial Tree Care

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The primary duty of climbers is pruning trees of various sizes, types, and pruning needs. Climbers also must be skilled in removal techniques, cabling and bracing, and sometimes the installation of lightning protection. A climber must also be proficient with a chain saw and should possess all of the skills and training of a groundworker.

Typical Background

With few exceptions, climbers begin their careers in arboriculture as groundworkers.

Eligibility Requirements

Although not required, most climbers have a high school diploma. Many companies will require a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) or the ability to obtain one. Climbers must be in excellent physical condition.

Education/Training Needs

- General work site safety and hazard recognition
- Selection and use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Back injury prevention
- Vehicle safety, safe operation, and driving
- Understanding work orders and plans
- Job briefings
- Emergency procedures
- Electrical hazards training
- Chipper use and safety
- Basic knots and climbing techniques
- Advanced climbing techniques and equipment
- Basic knots and rope operation for rigging
- Proper equipment use and maintenance

- Advanced chain saw use and felling techniques
- Pruning principles and techniques
- Cabling and bracing (and lightning protection)
- Tree identification
- Basic tree biology
- Beginning diagnostic training

Education/Training Materials

- TCIA/ISA Video Training Series and Workbook: *Basic Training for Tree Climbers*
- ISA ArborMaster Video Series and Workbook: *Climbing Techniques*
- ISA ArborMaster Video Series and Workbook: *Chain Saw Use and Safety*
- ISA ArborMaster Video Series and Book: *The Art and Science of Practical Rigging*
- ISA: *Tree Climbers' Guide*
- ANSI Z133.1 Safety Standards
- ANSI A300 Pruning
- ANSI A300 Cabling and Bracing
- TCIA Video set: *Rigging for Removal*
- TCIA Video: *Ropes, Knots, and Climbing*
- TCIA Tailgate Safety Program
- Electrical Hazards Awareness Program
- Best Management Practice: Pruning
- Best Management Practice: Tree Support Systems
- *ISA Arborists' Certification Study Guide*

Certifications/Licenses

- Commercial Drivers License recommended
- ISA Arborist Certification recommended
- ISA Certified Tree Worker: Climber Specialist

Typical Future Career Paths

Foreperson/Supervisor, Aerial Lift Operator