



# Ask a Tree its Age

Did you know you can find out how old a tree is just by hugging it? First work out what kind of tree you have (check out [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/) for a free app or <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/tree-id-kids/> for printable resources)

Next you have to measure the circumference of the tree's trunk (how big it is around) and you can do this by hugging it!

Measure the distance between your fingertips in centimetres with your arms stretched wide apart (the average adult should be about 130cm) this is your hugging distance.

Now hug your tree and count how many full length hugs it takes to go right around the trunk at shoulder height.

Multiply this number by your hugging distance and you have the circumference in cm.

| Name of tree           | Divide girth (CM) by this number |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Oak                    | 2                                |
| Hazel, Elm, Ash, Beech | 2.5                              |
| Holly, Yew             | 1.25                             |
| Pine, Spruce           | 3.25                             |
| Sycamore               | 2.75                             |

Now use the table above to work out the age... For example, an oak tree with a girth of 260cm (2 adult hugs) would be 130 years old! But a Beech tree of the same girth would only be 104.

Some trees live a long time, an Oak could live to be 900 years old, and we think Yew trees might be able to live for thousands of years! Other trees like Birch, Maple or Rowan might only live for 100 years. A healthy woodland will have a good mix of trees of different ages and species.

If you hug a tree why not take a photo and let us know? We're on twitter as **@WildCumbernauld** and Facebook as **Cumbernauld Living Landscape**

