



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

EXTENSION

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Proper Tree Pruning:

Selecting an Arborist in Miami-Dade County Charles Yurgalevitch, John McLaughlin and Henry Mayer

The inclusion of trees in our South Florida landscape adds value by conserving energy, providing a habitat for small animals, and adding to the aesthetics of property. Proper pruning of trees improves trunk and branch structure, and can increase the tree's life expectancy.

Many homeowners can properly trim low-hanging branches or palm fronds with hand tools, however most pruning should be performed by a certified arborist. An arborist is a professional who cares for trees and other woody plants by planting, maintaining and pruning trees.

Trees are pruned for the following reasons:

- to remove weak, dying, dead or diseased branches.
- to remove branches that interfere with structures, have poor structure or obstruct a right-of-way.
- to thin the canopy to lessen wind resistance.
- to reduce the size of the crown.



Topping or hat-racking a tree is an **unacceptable** practice, which makes the tree more susceptible to damage from insects, disease and strong winds. It is defined as: *the removal within a 1-year period of more than 1/3 of a tree's living canopy, or, the removal of any branch 3 inches or greater in diameter at any point other than the branch collar.*

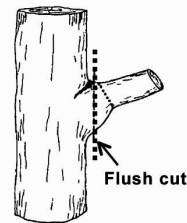
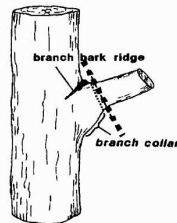
Miami-Dade County Landscape Ordinance, Sec. 18A-6(M), Pruning

Topping is **only** permitted for the following conditions:
1) if a tree interferes with the utility lines or structures; 2) if a tree has crown dieback of greater than one third (1/3); 3) if a tree has storm damage.

When selecting an arborist:

- Don't be rushed into accepting a bargain from "limited-time offers" or people working in the neighborhood.
- Unless you know and are comfortable with the arborist, get several estimates. Clearly understand exactly what the contractor will do for you for his/her fee. The cheapest price may not provide the best service. You may be able to save money by contacting several neighbors who also have work to be done.
- Ask for proof of current personal property and liability insurance.
- Ask for local references and observe examples of the contractor's work.
- Determine if the contractor is a member of any professional organization.

- Professional arborists **do not** use pruning paint, top trees, make flush cuts or use climbing spikes, since these practices damage trees.
- If the tree requires a pesticide application, ask for proof of the applicator's license. Be sure to understand what is being applied and why.
- Get pruning specifications in writing!
- Don't be afraid to ask:
 - Do you top trees? (Avoid those that do.)*
 - When will the work be started and completed?*
 - Who will be responsible for the clean-up?*
 - Is this the total price?*
 - If I would like more to be done, what is your hourly rate?*
 - When you remove an entire branch, where is the final cut made?*
 (The correct cut is shown below.)



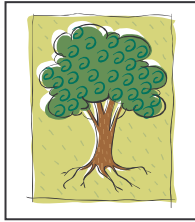
There are several professional arborist associations.


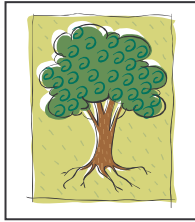
- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)** is the **only** organization, at this time, that tests and certifies arborists. They offer certification exams periodically in South Florida. www.isa-arbor.com
- Florida Chapter ISA** has a chapter in the Miami area. www.floridaisa.org
- National Arborist Association (NAA)** establishes recognized standards for tree care, including pruning. www.natlarb.com
- American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA)** consists of members that are highly trained in all aspects of tree growth. www.asca-consultants.org

To obtain a complete bulletin that explains proper pruning techniques, **Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs**, Circular #853, call the Miami-Dade Cooperative Extension Service, at 305-248-3311. This document can also be downloaded from the University of Florida's web site: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>. Go to *Search Publications Database*, then type in the title.



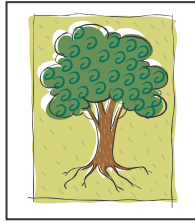
ISA Certified Arborist



 ISA Certified Arborist 	County wide?	Written specifications?	Pest License?	Transplant Trees?	Pruning Fruit Trees?	Palm Maintenance	Tree Health and Diagnosis?	Landscape Maintenance?
Alemañy, Rudy Miami, FL 33175 Tel: 305-554-8269 / Fax: 305-480-700 <i>Illusion Landscape & Design</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Allred, John Miami, FL 33161 Tel: 305-785-0180 / Fax: 305-891-5916 <i>Country Bill's Lawn Maintenance, Inc.</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Barnett, Michael Miami, FL 33186 (only commercial) Tel: 305-232-5569 Fax: 305-232-9684 <i>Miami Landscape Co.</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Bobson, Robert Homestead, FL 33030 Tel: 305-992-8593 / Fax: 305-248-3051 <i>Robert Bobson@bellsouth.net</i> <i>Biospheric Eng.</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Brennan, Bob Coral Gables, FL 33133 Tel: 305-464-2291 / 305-858-3286 <i>Brennan's Tree Service</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Corrine, Ferre Miami, FL 33032 Tel: 305-258-8011 / Fax: 305-258-0809 <i>Tropics North</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Davis, Glenn Homestead, FL 33031 Tel: 305-247-9554 <i>charmiindavis@aol.com</i> <i>Davis Landscaping & Maintenance, Inc.</i>	X	X		X		X	X	X
Douglas, Park Miami, FL 33143 Tel: 305-663-2456 786-229-9368 <i>Parks Landscape Service</i>	X			X		X	X	
Fowler, William Miami, FL 33143 Tel: 786-402-3134 <i>atreeman007@aol.com</i>	X			X		X	X	
Gnaegy, Michael J. Homestead, FL 33033 Tel: 305-245-1722 / Fax: 305-246-1379 <i>mixdgreens@klc.net</i> <i>Mix'd Greens Inc.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gerrish, Jason M. Miami, FL 33156 Tel: 305-259-1951 / Fax: 305-259-1951 <i>Tree Hugger</i>	X	X			X	X	X	
Gomez, Genesis Miami, FL 33143 Tel: 305-265-4675 <i>tree@bellsouth.net</i> <i>Tree Time, Inc.</i>	X			X		X	X	
Goes, Outran 12311 SW 110 South Canal St. Rd. Miami, FL 33186 Tel: 786-514-1282 <i>tomgoes@bellsouth.net</i> <i>Budget Tree Service</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Grubbs, William Miami, FL 33176 Tel: 305-595-2612 / Fax: 305-598-8337 <i>Golden Palm Landscaping, Inc.</i>	X				X	X		X
Miller, Paul Miami, FL 33187 Tel: 305-233-8350 <i>sunsetlawn@juno.com</i> <i>Sunset Prop. Maintenance</i>	X	X			X	X	X	X
Harden, Will 5961 SW 49 St. Miami, FL 33155 Tel: 305-332-7853 <i>Harden Tree Service</i>	X				X	X	X	



ISA Certified Arborist



	County Wide?	Written Specifications?	Pest License?	Transplant Trees?	Prune Fruit Trees?	Palm Maintenance?	Tree Health and Diagnosis?	Landscape Maintenance?
Navarro, Orre Coral Gables, FL 33134 Tel: 305-776-7574	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Navarrete, Mario Miami, FL 33033 Tel: 305-246-8649 <i>Island Tree Service</i>	X			X		X	X	
Peterson, Ed Miami, FL 33155 Tel: 305-267-1426 / Fax: 305-262-2256 <i>1,2, Tree Inc.</i> www.onetwotree.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rivera, Jorge Miami, FL 33172 jlrivera@myjoi.net Tel: 786-367-2559 / Fax: 305-220-4895 954-755-0973 <i>Tree Knights, Inc.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rodriguez, Joe Hialeah, FL 33013 Tel: 305-557-8595 <i>Arborcare, Inc.</i> arborcareinc@aol.com	X	X			X	X		
Rodriguez, Angel Miami, FL 33155 Tel: 305-264-0522 Fax 305-265-9525 <i>Tree Masters</i>	X	X			X	X	X	
Schaefer, John P. Miami, FL 33161 Tel: 305-899-0451 / Fax: 305-899-0199 <i>JPS Services</i>	X	X		X	X	X		
Sand, Pierre Miami, FL 33133 Tel: 305-448-6531 / Bp: 305-737-5663 <i>A Little Tree Service</i>	X	X			X	X	X	
Shimonski, Jeff Miami, FL 33143 Tel: 305-206-3148 Fax:305-400-7290 <i>Tropical Design of Florida</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Siler, Cedra Homestead, FL 33031 Tel:305-245-7898 <i>Siler's Tree Expert, Inc.</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Simas, Paul Miami, FL 33138 Tel: 305-758-6118 / Fax: 305-758-6118 <i>Paul Simas Tree Service, Inc.</i>	X	X			X	X	X	
Sherwood, Gene Miami, FL 33183 Tel: 305-388-6533 / Fax: 305-248-4900 <i>Sherwood Forest</i>	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Solly, Jim Redland, FL 33032 Tel: 786-256-7087 jimsolly@yahoo.com <i>Model Pest Control, Inc.</i>	X	X	X			X	X	
Tinsley, George Miami, FL 33196 Tel: 305-386-5882 / Fax: 305-386-5882	X		X	X	X		X	
Tomasetti, Dayne Miami, FL 33186 Tel:305-238-1178 / Fax: 305-238-8878 <i>A Native Tree Service</i>	X	X			X	X	X	
Urscheler, David Miami, FL 33197 Tel: 305-255-6332 Fax:305-254-6542 <i>Flora-Tech Plantscapes, Inc.</i>	X	X	X	X		X		