



Canberra Tree Work Checklist

Use this before requesting tree removal, pruning, an assessment or stump work in Canberra. It organises the evidence a provider needs without pretending to determine protected status, safety or price from a checklist.

Immediate danger: keep people clear and call 000. Fallen or low electrical lines must be treated as dangerous.

1. Safety, ownership and ACT status

☐ Keep people clear of immediate danger

Do not approach a fallen, split or shifting tree. Call 000 for immediate danger and stay clear of fallen or low electrical lines.

☐ Confirm whether the tree is public or private

Residents must not prune or remove public trees. Check the boundary and ACTmap before assuming the tree belongs in a private quote.

☐ Check current protected-tree guidance

A private tree may be protected by size, registration or another qualifying condition. A dead native tree can still require a status check.

☐ Record the approval question

Write down whether approval, supporting evidence or an urgent protected-tree contact remains unresolved. A quote is not an ACT approval.

2. Tree evidence and the intended outcome

☐ Take a whole-tree photograph

A wide view shows lean, canopy distribution, nearby structures and the target area. A close-up of one branch cannot describe the whole job.

☐ Photograph the trunk and base

Show the trunk from more than one side and include visible roots, wounds or movement without turning observations into a diagnosis.

☐ Describe what changed and what you need

Name deadwood, clearance, storm damage, decline, obstruction or the planned use of the area. This separates pruning, assessment and removal decisions.

☐ Record approximate dimensions safely

Note trunk circumference, canopy spread or a height estimate only where safe. Dimensions help organise a response but do not produce a reliable price alone.

3. Access, nearby assets and material movement

☐ **Measure the narrowest access point**

Record gates, side passages, turns, steps and slopes from the street to the tree. The open yard is irrelevant if equipment cannot reach it.

☐ **Show roofs, fences, sheds and neighbours**

Nearby assets affect working position, controlled lowering, permissions and the space available to process branches or logs.

☐ **Disclose overhead and known underground services**

Tree work near electrical infrastructure requires appropriate controls and may require authorised people. Do not leave lines out of the first brief.

☐ **Trace the branch, log and machinery route**

Photograph where material could be chipped, staged or carried. State whether access crosses shared, neighbouring or managed property.

4. Written scope, site finish and provider proof

☐ **Separate pruning, removal and assessment**

Ask for the selected pruning objective, removal method or assessment question in plain language. Do not let one vague quote stand for all three.

☐ **Define stump depth and the next ground use**

State whether the area becomes lawn, planting, paving or access. Grinding does not normally excavate the complete root system.

☐ **Agree branches, logs, mulch, grindings and clean-up**

Put what stays, what leaves, backfill and excluded repairs in writing so every quote describes the same final condition.

☐ **Verify the actual provider**

Ask for relevant arboriculture qualifications, insurance, method experience and electrical-line authority where applicable. Check the operator who would attend.

Official ACT checks

Private trees on leased land - [City Services ACT](#)

Public trees - [City Services ACT](#)

Electrical safety - [WorkSafe ACT](#)

This planning checklist is general information. Confirm current ACT requirements and the actual provider's scope, credentials, insurance, availability and terms before work begins.