

Routes into forestry careers

Whether you're just starting your career or considering a change, here's what you need to know to become a practical forester

Before you begin, explore the qualifications and experience needed for key roles in forestry and then follow the right route for you

Start here

Early careers and qualifications route

Gain the qualifications you need for your future role in forestry

Career changers and professional development route

Build on your transferable skills and gain valuable forestry experience and certifications

Level 1 & 2 qualifications

(GCSEs and apprenticeships)

Choose an option:

GCSE options (Levels 1-2)

From biology and chemistry to geography and business studies, there are plenty of subjects that support a career in forestry

Forestry and Arboriculture college courses (Level 1-2)

Arborist Apprenticeship (Level 2)

Distance learning courses

Next step:

Move on to a Level 3 qualification

Level 3 qualifications

(A levels, T levels, apprenticeships)

Choose an option:

A Level options (Level 3)

From biology and chemistry to geography and business studies, there are plenty of subjects that support a career in forestry

Forestry and Arboriculture college courses (Level 3)

Forest Craftsperson Apprenticeship (Level 3)

Distance learning courses

Next step:

Move on to a Level 4-7 qualification

Level 4-7 qualifications

(Degree level)

Choose an option:

Forestry undergraduate and degree courses

You can find courses through [Royal Forestry Society](#) or [UCAS](#) course search

Professional Forester Degree Apprenticeship (BSc, Level 6)

Distance learning courses

Next step:

Consider professional development opportunities

Volunteer

Get involved in practical tasks in your local community woodland to learn basic techniques

Some volunteering suggestions to explore:

- [Forestry England](#)
- [The National Trust](#)
- [Woodland Trust](#)
- [The Wildlife Trusts](#)
- [National Parks UK](#)

Placements and work experience

Use these opportunities to build your practical skills

Look for placement opportunities on the [Institute of Chartered Foresters](#) website

Short courses

Upskill to gain valuable skills

[Lantra](#) or [City & Guilds](#) and [NPTC](#) list short courses and some may be eligible for the [Forestry and Arboriculture Training Fund](#)

Traineeships and apprenticeships

'Earn as you learn'

- [Royal Forestry Society Forestry Roots traineeship](#)
- [The National Cippice Apprenticeship Scheme](#)

For more apprenticeships follow the early careers and qualifications route

Gain professional recognition

Become a member or apply for certifications that recognise your professional skills

Get certified with:

- [Royal Forestry Society](#)
- [Institute of Chartered Foresters](#)

Chartered status

Get your professional skills internationally recognised

Get chartered status with the [Institute of Chartered Foresters](#)

Top tips for finding your role in forestry



Check out your local job boards and [Civil Service Jobs](#) for forestry roles



You can directly apply for forestry jobs with related degrees such as biology, engineering, environmental science and geography



Consider what transferable skills you can demonstrate in your job applications. Examples could be community engagement, dealing with stakeholders and problem solving



A driver's licence and vehicle, or the ability to travel to remote locations is essential for on-site forestry roles



The [Royal Forestry Society](#), [Lantra](#) and the [Institute of Chartered Foresters](#) have great careers resources on their websites for you to explore your options



Many foresters are self-employed. Visit [GOV.UK](#) for advice on [working for yourself](#) and [setting up as a sole trader](#)

Find more helpful resources on our [careers page](#) on [GOV.UK](#)

#Forestry Careers

