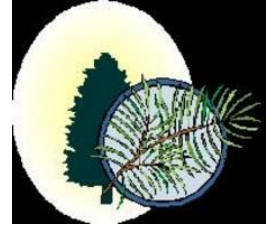


Dichotomous Key Teaching Tools



A "key" is similar to a road that forks repeatedly, and has signposts indicating what may be found along each branch. The reader selects one of the two choices. Understanding how dichotomous keys work is a very useful skill. Once you learn one, the rest are very similar. There are keys for tree leaves, twigs, and bark. There are also keys for birds, fish, flowers, macroinvertebrates, etc.

Below are some tools to help you learn how to read a dichotomous key and identify the most common found trees and shrubs in North Dakota using leaves.

1. Here is a simple exercise and explanation in a pdf file of how to make a simple dichotomous key using six people/students (then you can practice on six pairs of shoes) - [Learning How to Use a Dichotomous Key](#).
2. Next, try this [Simple Leaf Key](#) on some of the most common found tree leaves across the state, which is also in a pdf file for your convenience.
3. Here is the dichotomous [Key to North Dakota Trees and Shrubs](#) for your use. Enjoy!
4. If you would like to see a colored pictures of North Dakota's trees and leaves, and get some scientific information on the trees, this link will take you to the [ND Tree Website](#).