The first characteristic you need to look at when identifying a tree is whether it has needles or broad leaves.

**Needles may grow…**

- in bunches
- or singly
- or like scales
- or in whorls

**Broad leaves may grow…**

- Opposite (across from each other)
- or Alternate (like steps going up)

**Broad leaves may be…**

- Simple (only one leaf blade)
- or Compound (more than one leaf blade – has leaflets)

*HINT: Look for the bud at the base of the leaf.*
1a. Tree has needle-shaped or scale-like leaves . . .  Go to 2
1b. Tree has broad leaves . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  Go to 5

2a. Needles grow in bunches . . . . . . . . . . . . .  Go to 3
2b. Needles are single or scale-like . . . . . . .  Go to 4

3a. Tree has long needles, in bunches of 2 or 3 . . .  Ponderosa Pine
3b. Tree has short needles in bunches of two . . . .  Scotch Pine
   Bark near top of tree is orange.

4a. Tree has short needles growing singly . . . . .  Spruce
   Cones hang down from branches.
4b. Leaves are scale-like. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  Juniper
   Berries are green or blue.

5a. Leaves are opposite . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  Go to 6
5b. Leaves are alternate . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  Go to 8
6a. Leaves are simple ................ Silver Maple

6b. Leaves are compound ................. Go to 7

7a. Leaves have 5 or 7 leaflets .............. Green Ash

7b. Leaves have 3- or 5 leaflets .............. Box Elder
    Twigs are green and waxy.

8a. Tree has thorns .......................... Go to 9

8b. Tree does not have thorns ............... American Elm
    Leaves are rough, like sandpaper and the
    bottom (base) of the leaf is uneven.

9a. Leaves are narrow with white/silver on bottom . Russian Olive
    The tree looks silvery.

9b. Leaves are not silvery and narrow. Fruit is . . . . Plum
    Large and purple when ripe.