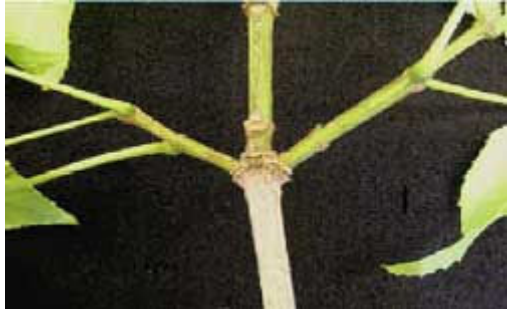


Ash Tree Identification Guide

Every tree species has a unique combination of characteristics. Variations in leaf size, shape, and arrangement can assist in identification. Use the following images comparing ash to other trees in determining if your tree is an ash.

Ash leaves and branches are located opposite from each other. The leaves and branches of most other tree species are arranged alternately.



Opposite branching and leaf arrangement of **blue ash** (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*)



Alternate branching of beech (*Fagus* sp.)

Ash leaves are compound and made up of more than one distinct leaflet. In contrast, simple leaves such as those on most maples are undivided. There is a bud for a new branch at the base of a leaf, but not at the base of a leaflet.



A compound leaf of **green ash** (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)



A simple leaf of red maple (*Acer rubrum*)

The margins of the ash leaflets are toothed and not lobed as seen on the box elder. Box elder leaves are compound and oppositely arranged, making it the closest combination to ash trees. The box elder has 3-5 leaflets instead of the 5-11 leaflets of ash trees.



Toothed leaves of **blue ash** (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*)



Lobed leaves of box elder (*Acer negundo*)

Most ash leaves have 5-9 leaflets with a single terminal leaflet. If there are less than 5 leaflets or more than 9, it is generally not an ash. However, occasionally black ash and blue ash can have up to 11 leaflets. Walnut leaves are alternately arranged on the tree.



5-9 leaflets on **black ash** (*Fraxinus nigra*) leaf with a single terminal leaflet 12 leaflets on **black walnut** (*Juglans nigra*) leaf

The largest ash leaflets occur near the middle of the leaf. The largest hickory leaflets are near the tip of the leaf. Hickory leaves are alternately arranged on the tree.



Largest leaflets near middle of **black ash** (*Fraxinus nigra*) Top three leaflets of hickory (*Carya ovata*) are largest

Ash leaves are pinnately compound. Leaflets are arranged along either side of a central axis like a feather. Palmately compound leaves such as those on buckeyes have leaves that originate from a single point, like an umbrella.



Pinnately compound leaf of **white ash** (*Fraxinus americana*) Palmately compound leaf of buckeye (*Aesculus sp.*)

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