

Healthy Forest Checklist















There's a lot going on in a forest, several different factors should be considered in order to decide its health. Professionally trained foresters take measurements and look at many types of information to fully evaluate forest health.

Here, we guide you through making simple observations about your woods to assess how healthy (or unhealthy) they are.

STEP 1: Walk through your woods and use the Healthy Forest Checklist below to look for and record different signs of forest health.

STEP 2: Calculate your Score at the bottom.

STEP 3: If you are concerned about the health of your woodlot, consider contacting a Master Forest Owner or State or Consulting Forester. You can share your observations with them and start a conversation about the health of your woods and your options for the future.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS	YES, I see it	NO, I don't see it
1. Signs of disease or damage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaves changing colors or dropping out of season. Damage to leaves, bark, etc. 	Seeing many trees damaged by insects and/or disease is a sign of poor health.		
2. Different species and ages of trees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different -looking leaves, bark, overall tree shape. Different size trees (height and diameter). 	Seeing trees of different species and ages/sizes is a sign of good forest health.		
3. Lichen on your trees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scan trunks and bark for flat, leaflike lobes or paintlike crust colored green, orange, yellow or gray. 	Seeing lichen on tree trunks is a sign of good air quality and good forest health.		
4. Different organisms in your soil <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look under a fallen log or dig holes. 	Seeing different types of soil organisms is a sign of good soil quality and good forest health.		
5. Signs of tree regeneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young trees several inches or feet tall. 	Seeing young trees in the understory is a sign of re-growth and good forest health.		
6. Standing dead trees and dead logs	Having a few dead trees and logs is actually a sign of good forest health. They provide wildlife habitat and return nutrients to the soil.		
7. Different wildlife species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mammals, birds, insects, amphibians, reptiles, etc. 	Seeing many kinds of wildlife is a sign of diversity, productivity, and good forest health.		

CALCULATE YOUR SCORE

Count the number of checks in  boxes. These are signs of GOOD forest health: _____

Count the number of checks in  boxes. These are signs of POOR forest health: _____

Take the total number of  and subtract from it the total number of  : _____

If you get 0 or a negative number, you have an equal or greater number of POOR signs than GOOD signs. In this case, consider contacting a professional to share your forest health findings and get more information and advice.