

Key to Forest Zones on the Mt Hood National Forest

- 1a. Mountain hemlock or subalpine fir >2% of the understory or >10% of the overstory..... Mountain hemlock zone
- 1b. Not as above..... Go to 2
- 2a. Pacific silver fir >2% of the understory or >10% of the overstory..... Silver fir zone
- 2b. Not as above..... Go to 3
- 3a. Grand fir >2% of the understory or >10% of the overstory..... Go to 4
 - 4a. West of Cascade crest..... Western hemlock zone
 - 4b. East of Cascade crest..... Grand fir zone
- 3b. Not as above..... Go to 5
- 5a. Western hemlock >2% of the understory or >10% of the overstory..... Western hemlock zone
- 5b. Not as above..... Go to 6
- 6a. Douglas-fir >2% of the understory or >10% of the overstory..... Douglas-fir zone
- 6b. Not as above..... Go to 7
- 7a. Ponderosa pine >2% of the understory or >10% of the overstory..... Ponderosa pine zone
- 7b. Not as above..... Try again, using relative percentages

Use the descriptions on the reverse side to verify that you have keyed it out correctly.

Forest zones are based on indicator tree species. That species may not be the most common tree in the area.

PLEASE ALSO SEE THE ZONE DESCRIPTIONS ON THE BACK

Forest zone descriptions

Mountain hemlock zone

This zone occurs at high elevations and is dominated by mountain hemlock and silver fir. This zone begins very approximately at 5000 ft elevation. At its upper limit, it grades into alpine meadow.

Silver fir zone

This zone occurs at middle elevations on both sides of the Cascades, usually starting very approximately at about 4000 ft. It is characterized by the presence of silver fir along with many other tree species, such as noble fir, Douglas-fir, western hemlock, western white pine, and others. Mountain hemlock is absent or in very small numbers in cold seep areas.

Western hemlock zone

This zone is found at lower elevations on the west of the Cascade crest, at lower elevations than the silver fir zone. It is often dominated by Douglas-fir. Western red-cedar can also be common in wetter areas. Silver fir is absent or in very small numbers in cold seep areas. This zone is also found in some stream-side areas east of the crest.

Grand fir zone

This zone is found at moderate elevations east of the Cascade crest. Grand fir is present, along with many other tree species, such as Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, western larch, and many others. It is too hot and dry for silver fir or western hemlock, except in very limited numbers.

Douglas-fir and Ponderosa pine zones

These zones are found at the lowest, hottest elevations on the east side of the Cascades. The only tree species that can survive are Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, and Oregon white oak. It is generally under 1500 ft in elevation.

