

Vine Warning Sign Checklist

What to look for before you decide how to handle ivy on a tree

Look at the trunk first

1 Check the stem thickness at the base

A vine thicker than a broom handle has usually been established for several seasons rather than one.

2 Note how high the vine has climbed

Growth already inside the lower branches has reached the canopy, not just the trunk.

3 Look for damp bark or moss underneath

A thick vine mat traps moisture against the trunk that would otherwise dry out.

Look at the canopy next

1 Compare foliage density to nearby trees

A thinner, patchier crown than similar trees nearby is worth noting.

2 Watch for lopsided weight after wind

Vine-heavy sections catch more wind and carry more weight than bare branches.

3 Check for new sprouts in the surrounding soil

Seedlings nearby suggest the vine is mature enough to spread on its own.

Before you call an arborist

1 Photograph the trunk from a few angles

A clear picture of vine coverage helps a professional plan the visit before arriving.

2 Note anything unusual about the tree's lean

Mention any change in lean or posture alongside the vine growth.

3 Ask what the inspection will actually cover

A useful visit checks the trunk, canopy, and vine extent together, not just one of them.

Look closely, note the pattern, then bring both to the inspection.

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