



ELM MAP

ELM IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



The botanical name of elm is *Ulmus*. It forms the second biggest genus within the small, but economically important, family Ulmaceae. There are about 40 species of elm worldwide and they inhabit most of the temperate regions of the northern hemisphere.

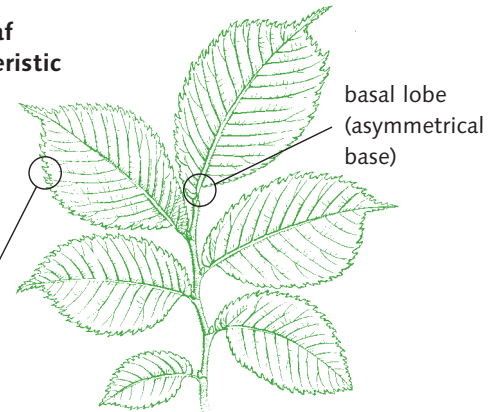
Elms occur in the UK as mature trees, young trees and suckers, the latter of which can be found as a dominant species in hedges.

Mature elms and suckers are identified by their leaf shape, specifically the asymmetrical base and the double-toothed edge (see diagram). **It is important to use leaves from mature trees for species identification, as those on young suckers have a distinct juvenile form that differs from the adult foliage.** Pick the short five-leaved shoots on the branches for identification.

Variation in the hairiness, shape and size of the leaf of mature elms can be used to identify the species of elm. If you would like to identify the species you have found, see overleaf.

The following leaf shape is characteristic of elm trees

double-toothed leaf edge (main teeth themselves toothed)



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If you would like to identify your elm to species use this guide to the leaves of the three British elm species.

1.	Leaves >7cm length, roughly hairy on upper side, >12 pairs of lateral veins; leaf stalk <3mm	wych elm <i>Ulmus glabra</i>
Or	Leaves usually <7cm, leaf stalk >5mm.	See 2
2.	Leaves usually smooth on upper side, very variable in shape, generally distinctly longer than wide, leaf stalk and shoot usually hairless at maturity.	smooth-leaved elm <i>Ulmus minor</i>
Or	Leaves rough on upper side, usually circular in shape with noticeable basal asymmetry, leaf stalk and shoot distinctly hairy at maturity.	English elm <i>Ulmus procera</i>

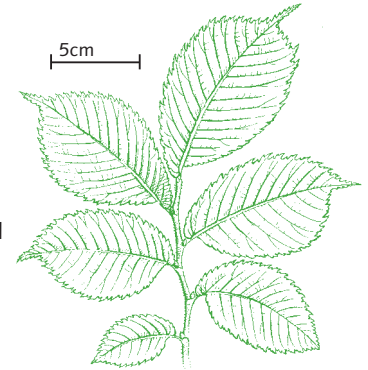
Species key by Max Coleman, *The University of Reading*

NB. If your elm leaves seem intermediate in character your tree may be a hybrid (a cross between two elm species)

This guide is only applicable to plants in the 'tree' or 'large tree' size categories, it is not suitable for sucker growth or 'small trees'.

Wych elm *Ulmus glabra*

The branchlets remain smooth and ashy grey. The leaves are 10–18cm long, larger than the leaves of other elms. The upper surface of the leaf is very rough, like sandpaper. The rounded basal lobe overlaps the short stalk. The trunk rarely produces suckers.



Smooth-leaved elm *Ulmus minor*



This vigorously suckering species rarely exceeds 30m in height and is variable in growth habit. Longer hairless leaf stalks and the smoother, glossy, bright green upper surface of the mature leaves link the many and distinct growth forms of this species. In the past, these have been recognised as different species, e.g. Plot's elm, Cornish elm.

English elm *Ulmus procera*

This suckering species is the tallest of the elms, growing to 35m. The leaves are broadly ovate or almost circular in outline. The hairy leaves have a rather buckled appearance. This species seems to have very rarely survived as a mature tree.

