

A Tree's Life

A forest fire can scar the tree until it's able to grow more wood to cover itself.

Twice a year, a tree grows a new layer of wood to its trunk. We call these layers **tree rings**. When a tree has fallen or been cut down, the layers in the trunk appear as rings of light and dark wood.

New wood formed in the spring grows faster and is lighter in color.

New wood formed in the summer is darker in color, and grows much slower.

To find the age of a tree, count the number of dark rings.

Study the shape, thickness, and patterns of the rings to learn more about a tree's life.

Wide and evenly spaced-out rings mean the tree got lots of spring sunshine and rain.

Skinny rings that repeat can mean the tree didn't get enough water or there was a drought.

Skinny rings can also hint that insects harmed the tree.