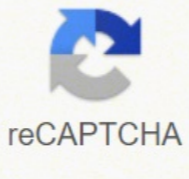




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Next

Minister's tree house inside

As he tells the story, in 1993, Minister Horace Burgess was praying when god told him, "If you build a tree house, I'll see that you never run out of material." Inspired by this vision of god, the quiet minister set out to build the largest treehouse in the world Located just outside of Crossville, Tennessee, the 97-foot-tall tree house and church is supported by a still-living 60-foot-tall white oak tree with a 12-foot diameter base, relying on six other oaks for support. For fourteen years, Minister Burgess has been adding to the tree house, spending only \$12,000 and never running out of material. Over that time, the treehouse has grown to truly monumental proportions, and the Minister may have already achieved his goal of building the world's largest treehouse. Currently, his treehouse is 90 feet tall, said to contain 80 rooms, and stretch up to five stories, complete with a church and a bell tower. The bell tower at the top of the treehouse is equipped with oxygen acetylene bottles that, repurposed as bells, chime daily. In true southern style, every story is fully surrounded by a deck. And there are no "Private Property," "Stay Off the Grass," or "No Climbing" signs. Burgess say the treehouse is god's house and everyone is welcome. To that end, there are only two signs to be found: "Welcome" and "No Smoking" which, for a house of timber, makes sense. Despite some trouble with vandals, the Minister kept the treehouse open and in fantastic and ever-improving condition. From the top — which one must be rather brave to attempt climbing to — one can see the word "Jesus" spelled out in flora on a nearby field. Unfortunately, the Tennessee Fire Marshall has closed down the treehouse until further notice, despite Burgess' insistence that there are no building codes for treehouses. Update October 2019: Sadly, the treehouse was destroyed in a fire. The Atlas Obscura Podcast is a short, daily celebration of all the world's strange and wondrous places. Check out this episode about Minister's Treehouse. HeungSoon/CC0/Pixabay People have an innate curiosity about the natural world around them, and identifying a tree by its leaves can satisfy that curiosity. In addition, many people use trees for landscaping, so it's beneficial to know what species to look for when purchasing saplings. People who acquire property sometimes find mature trees that they may prefer to sell for lumber or move to another location. In each of these situations, the ability to quickly and accurately identify the trees by their foliage is useful.Learning the Basics of Leaf Identification Like any other form of research, leaf identification goes more smoothly with some basic guidelines. There are categories or families of leaves that will help you narrow your research to specific tree types. For example, some trees, such as Maple and Oak, have single leaves, whereas others, like Walnut and Ash, have a composite with many small leaves stemming from the same branch to form a cluster or frond. The shape of the individual leaves (lobed, sinuate, heart-shaped, ovoid and others) can also help identify the tree type. Armed with this basic information about the leaves, anyone can refer to a book or electronic resource that provides a wealth of information about each species, navigating the source more quickly thanks to the prior classification. Using Field Guides Bound field guides are the classic go-to source for identifying all kinds of things in nature, including trees. These have long been a useful resource for scientists conducting research as well as travelers and new residents unfamiliar with new terrain. Field guides are typically focused on the most common species and are sometimes targeted to a specific region. They include illustrations that help readers identify the species in question as well as information about where it grows, what conditions it requires to thrive and other useful facts. One of the key benefits of a field guide has historically been portability, as they are relatively compact books, presenting a variety of information in a condensed format. Using Mobile Apps If portability and accessibility have made field guide books a favorite for centuries, mobile apps that identify leaves, trees and other natural elements take portability to the next level. With the advent of smartphones and other compact mobile devices, you can perform extensive research almost anywhere. With the caveat that devices require electricity at some point to hold a charge, they are abundantly useful for short expeditions and field research close to home. An app can guide users through a step-by-step process that starts by asking where they are located, what type and shape the leaf is, and then it presents several options from which to choose, matching a sample of the leaf in question. Choosing Trees for Landscaping Homeowners, landscapers and others who wish to find the best species to plant have a different set of criteria that guides their research. Choosing trees that will be on site for years requires research, and it helps to learn the most prevalent species in the area to determine what will thrive. Mature trees that are already growing well in a given area provide a good indicator of what species are best for the local conditions. There are still considerations for the site, such as the full size of the mature tree, which come into play when deciding where and how many to plant. But narrowing down the field of trees to choose from makes that research simpler and more expedient. Handling Mature Trees Sometimes trees can present a barrier and must be relocated or removed. Moving large trees is a specialized task that requires sophisticated equipment and expertise to ensure the tree survives. Local research for tree estimates can help landowners and landscapers make the best decisions about where and how to move fully grown trees. In some cases, trees are too large or there is no good place to relocate them and harvesting the trees for lumber is the best course of action. When selling mature trees for lumber, it is essential to know the type of tree as there are different prices and applications for different types of lumber. After identifying the type of tree, resources such as the U.S. Forest Service can provide guidance for how and where to sell the lumber. MORE FROM QUESTIONSANSWERED.NET Photo Courtesy: Public Domain/PxHere Whether you're looking to buy your first house or moving into your dream home, buying a house always seems to take longer than expected. While it might not be so bad if the wait only meant delaying moving into your new home, the drawn-out process can cause all sorts of other complications, from finding temporary housing to the ever-present possibility that the seller will back out at the last minute. It usually takes a few weeks just to look at prospective properties, followed by negotiations with the current owners that aren't guaranteed to succeed. From that point, it still takes an average of 50 days to close on the new home. If all of that sounds like too much, however, there are a few things you can do to increase the odds of making a quick purchase.Buy the Home With CashThe fastest way to buy a home is to pay all cash for the property. Assuming that everything works out logistically, it's possible to buy a home in a couple of weeks when paying cash. There are a few reasons why an all-cash transaction expedites the homebuying process. Photo Courtesy: Alex Wong/Getty Images The reason why buying a home with cash is faster is that it eliminates the need to take out a home loan, since the process of applying and receiving approval from the bank can take a few weeks. If the lender is dealing with many homebuyers, this process can take even longer. An all-cash transaction eliminates these steps.A cash offer is also attractive to sellers since they know that you won't have to worry about securing a mortgage. Financing issues are one reason why many real estate transactions fall through, so if a seller receives both a cash offer and another that's dependent on the buyer's ability to procure financing, the cash offer will usually win out.Get Pre-Approved for a Home Loan Before You Start ShoppingEven though cash is king when you want to purchase a house quickly, most people don't have hundreds of thousands of dollars available to purchase a home outright. If you need to obtain a mortgage to buy your new home, you can expedite the process by getting pre-approved for a home loan (not to be confused with pre-qualifying, which has fewer requirements) before you start touring properties. Photo Courtesy: Scott Barbour/Getty Images To do this, you provide a bank with all the information and documents needed to approve a loan, such as proof of income, bank statements and access to your credit history. They then determine how much you can borrow and provide you with a letter that states the amount you're pre-approved for. This document shows sellers that you'll be able back up an offer you make on the house, while the bank having your information can speed up the loan approval process. Some banks may also be willing to provide you with a letter that states you're pre-approved for less than you really are. This can be helpful if you're worried about the seller thinking they should ask for a bigger offer in response to your high pre-approval amount.Work With a Real Estate Agent to Find a HomeRegardless of whether you plan to pay cash for your home or need to take out a mortgage, a real estate agent can help you find a house you love as quickly as possible. Your real estate agent will ask you what criteria you desire in a home, taking into account your ideal size, preferred location and must-have features. They'll then find properties that meet your needs and set up times for you to view the homes that you're interested in. Photo Courtesy: Joe Raedle/Getty Images When you find a property you love, your agent will assist you with preparing an offer for the home and negotiating the details of the deal with the seller. They can expedite the offer process and any subsequent negotiations by providing guidance as to whether the seller is likely to accept your deal. For example, if you're purchasing a home in a market with limited inventory, your real estate agent will likely encourage you to come in strong with your first offer.Your agent can continue to be a valuable resource even after you're under contract on a house by assisting you with scheduling inspections and an appraisal. They will also try to handle any issues that arise that may delay your closing date. And best of all? The seller usually pays the buyer's agent through a commission on the sale. While that commission is usually anticipated in the price of the house, you'll nevertheless save not only time, but also money by going with a real estate agent.Sell Your Home Before You Start Shopping for a New HomeIf you currently own a home and can afford to do so, consider selling your current house before you start searching for a new one. Otherwise, you run the risk of your old home slowing down the purchase of your new house. Photo Courtesy: Joe Raedle/Getty Images For example, you might decide to include a contingency that states your offer is dependent on your ability to sell your existing home. While this contingency gives you financial protection, it can slow down the homebuying process, as some sellers may skip over offers with this type of requirement. That in turn can increase the length of time it takes for you to find a willing seller. MORE FROM ASKMONEY.COM

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