Home Depot Responsibilities:
• Setup and assemble all required trees and connect them to electricity.
• Assist with major structural tree problems, major tree lighting issues, and locate missing trees.
• Provide space and ladders needed to safely access each tree for shaping.

Designer Responsibilities:
• Review all materials supplied by Williams Creative Group, Inc – Including videos, diagrams, emails and online Job Updates found at www.WilliamsCreativeGroup.net.
• Call the store ONE (1) or TWO (2) days prior to your scheduled date to ensure all trees have arrived and are setup and assembled in place. Know the number of trees you are shaping for each store.
• Go to the store during your scheduled dates to complete the job.
• At the store, use a Completion Form to check all trees required for your Store Type are assembled and ready for shaping. Refer missing trees to Store Management.
• Check the lights on each pre-lit tree to make sure they work prior to shaping. Fix any minor lighting issues. Refer major issues to Store Management.
• Professionally shape the trees listed on your Completion Form for the Store Type.
  You must shape EVERY TIP of EVERY BRANCH on EVERY LIMB!
• Ask a Store Manager or Manager on Duty (not any employee) to inspect your trees and sign the Completion Form when they are satisfied with the quality of your completed work.
• Submit your Completion Form by fax to 800-413-2719 or scan and e-mail to forms@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net immediately following completion.

2010 Home Depot Instructional Video: Watch our Instructional Video more than once before calling your Home Depot stores. This video answers most questions you may have about the job.

2010 Tree Shaping Video: It is critical you and your helper(s) watch the Tree Shaping Video and read all instructions BEFORE you call or go in to any store. After completing your first store watch the videos again. You will be amazed by how much helpful information is in these videos!

Store Type & Tree Count: For 2010, Home Depot has various Store Types, each distinguished by a letter A, B, C, or D, after the store number. Each type requires a different combination of trees to shape. Occasionally tree sets in some stores are changed from the original plan. This is rare and affects few stores.

Use your Completion Form to determine the specific trees to shape for your Store Type.

A+ Type = 29 trees per store*
A    Type = 28 trees per store*
B    Type = 26 trees per store*
C    Type = 20 trees per store*
D    Type = 19 trees per store*

+10 Ft. Tree: If you see a “+” after your Store Type, your store also includes a 10 ft. tree.

* Actual tree counts may vary by store. Your final pay per store is proportionate to the actual number and type of trees shaped. Each tree is paid at a different rate, based on its total tip count. Use your Completion Form to document each tree displayed and shaped, so we can accurately calculate your pay.

Shaping Dates: All stores must be shaped within the date range given on your store list. The dates cannot be changed, except by a Store Manager due to the store not being ready.
Communication with your store is vital! Stores commonly say they are "Ready" - it is up to you to ask the right questions to confirm the expected trees are displayed and the store is really "Ready" for shaping.

Call For Your Tree Count: Before going to a store, be sure to call and have an employee physically count the number of artificial trees displayed for shaping. The number they provide should match or closely match the number you are expecting to shape for their Store Type. If 1-3 trees are missing you can go to the store. If more than 3 trees are missing, talk with a Manager or Department Manager about when they expect to have the missing trees up and ready for you.

Do Not Call Your Stores Too Early: 2 days prior to your arrival, a Home Depot “MET” crew will transition the store for Christmas trees. They re-arrange shelving, stock Christmas merchandise and setup Christmas trees. The actual trees may not be fully assembled until the day before your shape date. Call within 2 days of your shaping dates to get accurate information on the tree count for your store.

Calling the Store: 1 or 2 days prior to your shaping dates, call the store and request to speak with the Garden Department Manager or Manager on Duty or a knowledgeable Garden Department Employee.
1. Introduce Yourself - Tell them you are contracted to shape their artificial Christmas trees.
2. Are Trees Up? Ask if their trees are setup and displayed. Ask if trees are plugged in and lit.
3. Count All Trees - Ask if an employee can COUNT ALL the trees and let you know how many they see. (Use your Completion Form to check if this count is correct or close for their Store Type)
4. Confirm Arrival - If all or most of their trees are displayed, confirm when you will come in to shape these trees within your scheduled date range.
5. Stepladder? - Ask if there will be a stepladder available to use.
6. Delays? If several trees are missing, ask when these additional trees will be setup and ready for shaping. Discuss your availability and schedule a new shaping date.

If A Store Is NOT READY, DO NOT GO! It is better to go to a store a few days late, than go when a store is not ready for you and have to return. If a store does not have their trees up and displayed, don’t waste a trip. You must notify our office of any delay of more than two days.

In-Store Hours: We did not receive any time of day restrictions for shaping in stores. It may be possible for you to go in before the store opens or stay after the store closes. Please discuss your arrival time with the Store Manager when you call the store and reach an agreement. The estimated time it will take to complete a store is dependent on the speed and experience of you and your helper(s). Plan plenty of time to complete your work, Safety and Quality First!

Store delays: If a store is not able to be ready on your scheduled set date, they then need to be flexible with your schedule when the original time frame is missed. Discuss with the Store Manager a new date when you can get back to the store to shape their trees. If the date changes more than two days from the original date range, notify our office of the new date and reason.

Alternate Shaping Dates: You are scheduled for a 2-day window to shape your trees. You have the option to coordinate with the MET setup team and shape while the trees are being assembled. The advantage is you are able to shape the trees while on the floor instead of the shelves. The challenge is you must work within the schedule of the setup crew. Their setup is typically the two days prior to your first scheduled date. To use this option requires very good coordination and communication with the MET setup crew and may not be for everyone. We simply make this option available to you.

What If A Store Says Their Trees Are Already Shaped? We are responsible to the Home Depot Corporate Office to professionally shape the trees in all of their stores. You are still required to go to the store, even if they think they don’t need you. You may find trees need only a touch up or they may need to be completely reshaped.
**WHILE IN THE STORE . . .**

**Missing Trees:** If you arrive at a store and find trees are missing for your Store Type, discuss the specific trees with a Store or Department Manager. Ask them to have these trees setup while you shape the rest of the trees. If a Manager CANNOT or WILL NOT set out these missing trees for any reason, ask them to write a note with their reason in the Manager Comment section of the Completion Form. Home Depot requires a Manager, not an employee, take responsibility for the missing trees and clearly document this in writing. When they understand our form is turned into the Home Depot Corporate Office they often find room for the additional trees and will gladly set them up for you.

**Extra Trees:** Some stores set out more trees than we expect. For consistency we must shape all the trees displayed with the exception of SKU 205-781, the table top tree in a burlap bag. **Shape only ONE (1) for display.** All others are shelved for sale and do not need shaping. We DO NOT shape wreaths or other decorative items with SKU numbers NOT listed on our Completion Form. You may find a multi-colored and clear light version of the same tree type. You may also see a tree not required at your Store Type. Make clear notes on the Completion Form which additional trees you shaped. We compensate you for any net increase of trees based on the total tip count per store. For example, some 7’ trees may be fuller and have more tips to shape than a 9’ tree.

**SAFETY First!** Use every precaution to safely shape your trees.
- **DO NOT WEAR sandals or open-toed shoes while shaping.**
- When climbing ladders and working from ladders, be extremely careful.
- Shelves and platforms are NOT built to walk on. If you must place a foot onto a shelving unit, use extreme caution to always ensure you have secure footing.
- A tether harness should be available at the store if you need to step onto a shelving rack.
- If you ever have a concern for your safety, STOP what you are doing and contact the Store Manager or our office to find a safe alternative for completing the job.

**“Stickers”:** Some Home Depot stores use loose 2x6 wood boards - called “Stickers” - as the shelving platform on the racks. These can slide around, are NOT SAFE, and should not be walked on! Discuss a safer approach with the store to reach the trees without stepping or standing on “Stickers.”

**Cotton “Snow”:** Stores may use a cotton blanket for snow at the base of their trees. This cotton can hide a gap in the steel or wooden shelving. **ALWAYS move the cotton back before stepping onto a platform to ensure the area is safe and secure.**

**Tree Boxes In Your Way:** To safely shape the trees from the ladder, you must move the ladder as close to the shelving as possible. Boxes of tree inventory are stored under the shelves and may be longer than the shelf, preventing you from closely accessing the shelving. You may need to move some product temporarily out of your way to safely reach the trees. Ask the store for assistance in moving these items.

**QUALITY:** Make your trees look like they came out of the pages of a magazine. **Please DO NOT RUSH or take SHORTCUTS!** It is vital the Store Manager is satisfied with your work, but most importantly, ensure you have shaped every tree according to the quality and techniques shown in our [Tree Shaping Video](#).

**Shape The Entire Tree:** When completed you should not see the center pole, unless it is a thin, low tip count tree. Displayed trees may be nested together or difficult to reach. Please find a safe and creative method to shape the entire tree, bottom to top and **ALL** the way around.

**Tree Sections Spin:** Trees are typically strapped down to the shelving. By spinning an upper section of the tree you can more safely reach the backs and sides. When finished ensure the manufacturer’s hang tag faces out for the customer.

**Shape The Tops:** If it is difficult to reach the top of a tree it may be necessary to unplug the top section and take it off. You can then fully shape the top section and replace it when completed.
Quality Control Visits: Your store may receive a visit from the tree manufacturers or Home Depot Corporate staff to check the quality of our shaping. If our clients feel a store was completed poorly and not up to the quality standards of the shaping instructions, they will ask for you to re-visit and correct the problems. There is no additional compensation for a re-visit, so do high quality work your first visit.

WCG Name Badge: The lead designer must wear the Williams Creative Group ID badge while working in the Home Depot stores.

Attitude: Be very cordial when communicating over the phone or in the store. Please keep your cool, be professional at all times, and stay out of confrontations with store personnel. If you feel a situation is escalating, please call us immediately.

Leave Extension Cords At Home! In the video we mention you may need an extension cord to test lights. We are not permitted to bring in unapproved cords, so ask the store for one if needed.

 Helpers For Shaping: We strongly recommend you take a helper to complete each store. Anyone who works with you must be trained on how to properly shape a Christmas tree. Have all helpers watch the Tree Shaping Video before going to a store. Any helper must also pass the required Background Screen and Drug Test. Compensation for helpers is your responsibility as the lead/contracted designer. If you choose not to use a helper, plan for considerably more time to complete each store. As the contracted designer you need to be at each store to ensure it is properly completed. You may not subcontract this job to anyone else. Helpers must handle themselves in a professional manner. No minor under the state legal working age should ever be brought with you to a store!

AFTER YOU FINISH TREE SHAPING . . .

Completion Forms: After you finish shaping ask a Store Manager to inspect the quality of your work. Be willing to correct any shaping as requested. Once the Manager is satisfied with the quality, have them sign and date the Completion Form in dark ink. This must be a Manager, not an employee or Customer Service Rep. Remember the Manager must make a note about any missing trees. You, as the lead designer, must fill out the Designer Notes section in dark ink and fax to 800-413-2719 or scan/email to forms@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net within 24 hours of store completion. To confirm your Completion Form was received, visit www.WilliamsCreativeGroup.net ->Home Depot ->Job Updates and look for your store on the list.

Accurate Completion Forms: We cannot accept incomplete or inaccurate Completion Forms. DO NOT send a Completion Form showing missing trees without an explanation from a Manager notated on the form. Without a complete form your store is considered Incomplete and we are unable to process payment until we call you to discuss. Remember, your pay is based on actual trees documented on your Completion Form.

Payment: Completion Forms received by end of day each Friday are processed for payment on the following Wednesday. Make sure your Completion Form is completely filled out, has an accurate inventory of trees shaped, is legible and signed/dated by both you and the Store Manager. For questions about your check, email forms@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net or call 888-346-6011 ext. 17.

Communication With Williams Creative Group: Watch for and respond quickly to emails and phone calls from our office. For the most up-do-date information, go to Job Updates on our website before going to each store. If you still have questions after reviewing all instructions, videos, emails and online updates, please contact us. Send brief emails and be sure to sign each email with your first and last name. You may also call us at 888-346-6011.

- General Questions: office@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net Ext. 19
- Completion Form / Payment Questions: forms@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net Ext. 17
- Agreements / Recruiting Only: Dana@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net Ext. 16
- Fax Number for Williams Creative Group: 800-413-2719 or 615-915-3527
- Urgent In-Store or After Hours Issues: 888-346-6011 Ext. 99