

# HOME DEPOT *Christmas*



**2023**  
**TREE SHAPING**  
**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

# Home Depot Christmas Tree Shaping 2023 Project Overview

## HOME DEPOT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Setup, assemble and connect all trees to electricity.
- Assist with major structural tree problems, major tree lighting issues, and locate missing trees.
- Provide space and ladders to safely access each tree.

## COMMUNICATION WITH WILLIAMS CREATIVE GROUP

Watch for and respond quickly to emails, text messages and phone calls. For the most up-to-date information, go to the Home Depot tab on our website. If you still have questions after reviewing all videos, texts, emails, and online updates, contact us.

**615.376.9668**

Communicate by text  
Ext 99 phone calls/voice mails

### Payment Questions:

Ext 19 office@williamscreativegroup.net

### Completion Forms:

Ext 17 forms@williamscreativegroup.net

### General Questions:

Ext 18 support@williamscreativegroup.net

### Store Assignments:

Ext 21 mandi@williamscreativegroup.net

**615.270.0561**

Text forms and/or photos  
Fax forms

## DESIGNER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Review all materials supplied by Williams Creative Group including videos, diagrams, emails, texts, and online updates found on the Home Depot tab at williamscreativegroup.net.
- Call the store one or two days prior to your scheduled dates to ensure all trees have arrived, are setup, and assembled in place. The number of trees/items expected for each store can be found on your store list.
- Shape the trees during your scheduled dates or as soon as they are ready.
- Use a completion form to confirm which trees are assembled and ready for shaping.
- Check the lights on each pre-lit tree to ensure they work prior to shaping. Fix any minor lighting issues. Ask for a new tree to be assembled if necessary. Refer major issues to store management.
- A completed project requires each tree is professionally and completely shaped according to the quality standards provided by the manufacturers as summarized in the Basics of Tree Shaping Video.
- Ask a store manager, Merchandise Execution Team (MET) manager or someone in leadership (not just any employee), to inspect your trees and sign the completion form when they are satisfied with the quality of your completed work.
- Only individuals authorized and drug tested by Williams Creative Group can work in Home Depot Stores.
- Submit your completion forms and 2-3 quality photos (see Store Layouts page for examples) immediately after completion of each store.

Email: forms@williamscreativegroup.net

Text or fax: 615.270.0561

**URGENT IN-STORE OR AFTER-HOURS ISSUES 615.376.9668 EXT.99**

# Tree Shaping Videos

To help apply your design skills for this project in a retail environment, several videos are posted on the Videos and Pictures tab on our website. These showcase a wealth of information and wisdom from past contracted designers. If you're unable to stream the videos, contact our office for a DVD.

## HOME DEPOT PROJECT OVERVIEW

Answers most questions you may have about the project.

## BASICS OF TREE SHAPING

A collection of shaping techniques to help you understand and meet the quality standards expected by retailers and tree manufacturers.

## DESIGNER IN-STORE PERSPECTIVE

A seasoned designer shares tips, tricks and experiences in a store.

# Your Tree Shaping Dates

## TREE SHAPING DATES

Trees are setup by the Merchandise Execution Team (MET) Monday through Thursday of each week. The project requires stores be shaped within the date range on your store list with the goal to shape the trees as soon as possible so they look good for the customers.

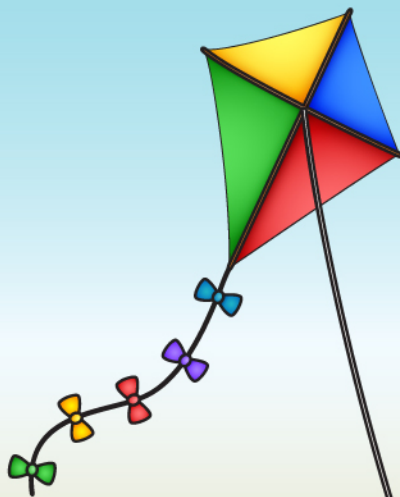
If MET reports a store is set, we will send a text message to notify you. Stores reported set are also posted at [williamscreativegroup.net](http://williamscreativegroup.net) > **Store Ready?** If you haven't been notified or don't see your store posted a day or two before the expected date for a store, it's time to call. See Scheduling with a Store for details.

## EARLY STORES

Some stores set earlier than expected. When we're notified a store is set, we'll send a text message to the assigned designer and post this information on the store ready tab on our website. This may give you the opportunity to shape trees in your stores earlier than the scheduled dates.

## DELAYED STORES

It is possible some stores may be delayed with their setup. We appreciate your flexibility in accommodating these unexpected date changes while you stay in good communication with your stores and our office.



# Scheduling with Your Store

## VITAL COMMUNICATION

- Many designers tell us it is vital to call the store BEFORE making a trip, even if the store has reported as set to Williams Creative Group. Designers typically call the store 1 or 2 days prior to their shaping window. Avoid calling too early, as you might not receive accurate information.
- The preferred option is to call the store between Monday and Friday anytime from 6 am to 2 pm when the MET is likely to be available. If an automated attendant answers, request extension 599 or 598. Otherwise, ask to speak with someone on the MET team. A MET team member can confirm that all trees are displayed, connected to electricity, and ready for your arrival. If the set isn't complete, ask for detailed information about the status and follow up accordingly.
- Outside of these hours, an option is to ask for the Lawn and Garden Department. Request they physically count the artificial trees and items out of the box and on display, both large and small. The count they provide should be very close to the expected number for the store. A hint: Don't tell them how many items are expected until they give you an actual count of what they see on display.
- When you're comfortable the store is ready, confirm when you'll arrive within your scheduled date range.

## IN-STORE HOURS

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 and reach an agreement. The estimated time it will take to complete a store depends on speed and experience. Plan plenty of time to complete your work. Safety and quality first!

## WHAT IF A STORE SAYS THEIR TREES ARE ALREADY SHAPED?

The Home Depot contract agreement requires the contracted designer go to the store, even if store employees think the trees don't need shaping. You may find trees need only a touch up or they may need to be completely reshaped to meet the quality standards expected by the retailers and tree manufacturers.

It's **BEST** to call  
**BEFORE**  
going to a store



# Safety First!

## USE EVERY PRECAUTION TO SHAPE TREES SAFELY

- When climbing and working from ladders, be extremely careful.
- Sandals or open-toed shoes are not safe while shaping. A tether harness should be available at the store to use when stepping onto a shelving rack.
- 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.
- 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 to complete the project.

## STICKERS

Some Home Depot stores use loose 2x6 wood boards, called **stickers**, as the shelving platform on the racks. These can slide, move, are **NOT SAFE**, and should not be walked on! It is best to discuss with the store manager a safer approach to reach the trees without stepping or walking on stickers.

## MERCHANDISE BOXES IN YOUR WAY

To safely shape the trees from a ladder, move it as close to the shelving as possible. Boxes of tree inventory stored under the shelves may prevent you from closely accessing the shelving. You may need to move some product temporarily out of your way to safely reach the trees. You may ask a store employee for assistance in moving these items.

*If you ever have a concern for safety*  
**STOP**

# Item Counts and Pay

## SPECIAL TREES

Some stores may have a twelve-foot tree or additional high-end specialty trees. Professionally shape these and include them on your completion form to be compensated appropriately.

## ACTUAL PAY FOR SHAPING SERVICES

The pay for shaping services is calculated based on the actual number of tips you shape. If a store has more tips than expected, actual pay will be higher than estimated; if the number of tips is lower, actual pay will be lower. To ensure you are paid accurately be sure to carefully document on the completion form which trees and items you've actually shaped.

## EXTRA TREES

Some stores display more trees than expected. For a consistent look, shape all displayed trees/items listed on the completion form. **ONLY** shape items with SKU numbers listed. Note clearly which additional trees you shaped. Williams Creative Group will compensate for any net increase of trees based on the total tip count per store.



**It's best to use a completion form before shaping trees to determine which trees are on display**

# Tips for Shaping Trees in a Store

As skilled designers you have worked in many creative situations. The tips below address the unique challenges posed by shaping trees in a retail environment. Apply any of the techniques you find useful. It's vital the store manager is satisfied with your work, but more important to ensure you have shaped every tree according to the quality standards expected by the retailers and tree manufacturers.

## SHAPE THE ENTIRE TREE

Trees look best when the center pole is hidden, though this might be difficult for thin, low tip count trees. Displayed trees may be nested together or difficult to reach. Be safe and use your creative methods to shape the entire tree, bottom to top, and all the way around so the result is a natural looking tree.

## DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK

It's best to take several photos of your completed work and save them for your records. You're encouraged to send a few quality photos of your completed set for our files. Text photos to 615.270.0561 or email them to [forms@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:forms@williamscreativegroup.net). Please don't send "before" pictures. Send 2-3, quality pictures of the entire display for each store. See the Store Layout page for examples.

## QUALITY CONTROL VISITS

Your store may receive a visit from tree manufacturers or Home Depot corporate staff. If our clients feel the trees at a store were poorly shaped and don't meet the quality standards explained in the videos, you'll be asked to revisit and correct the issues. There is no additional compensation for a revisit, so it's best to do high quality work during your first visit.

## PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE

When communicating with store personnel, be very cordial. Keep your cool, be professional, and avoid confrontations. If you feel a situation is escalating, please call our office immediately.

## PAYMENT

Completion forms received by Sunday night are paid the next week, either by direct deposit or check. Checks are mailed on Wednesday and can take up to ten days to arrive. Direct deposit funds are available by Friday. Payment can be delayed if Home Depot contacts us about the quality of tree shaping. For questions about your payment, email [office@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:office@williamscreativegroup.net) or call 615.376.9668, x19.



# Completing Your Tree Shaping Assignment

## COMPLETION FORMS

To save time, you can notify a manager shortly before you're finished to let them know you'll be ready for an inspection when you're done. After you finish, ask a store manager, MET manager or someone in leadership to inspect your work. Once they are satisfied with the quality of the finished work, ask them to sign and date the completion form in dark ink. Remember, it's important they are satisfied, but more important to ensure each tree has been shaped according to the quality standards expected by the retailers and tree manufacturers.

Ensure all completion forms are legible and complete. Check only the boxes for the trees you actually shaped. Refer to the inside back page of this booklet for help. The store is considered **incomplete** and payment cannot be processed until an accurate and legible form is received showing the project was completed satisfactorily.

As the contracted Lead Designer, complete the designer notes section in dark ink and send to us **within 24 hours of store completion**. Forms can be emailed to [forms@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:forms@williamscreativegroup.net) or texted/faxed to 615.270.0561.

We will send a text message confirming we received your completion form **within 24 hours of receipt**. If you don't receive a text message, visit [williamscreativegroup.net/Store Ready? Form Received?](http://williamscreativegroup.net/Store%20Ready?Form%20Received?) If you do not receive a text or see your store posted, simply resend the form. Please do not call, text, or email our office to confirm your completion form was received.

It is most efficient to start shaping each limb at the pole moving outward to the end of the branch.

The most natural looking technique is to pull tips out in a clock-pattern.

front view 12:00 8:00 4:00 side view

It's best to repeat the shaping process starting at the bottom and working around all sides toward the top.

Can't reach the back of the tree? A helpful tip is to spin the tree or a section of the tree to safely reach the back and sides. When finished ensure the manufacturer's hang tag faces out for the customer.

For your safety take the top off for taller trees. Unplug the top section and remove it to fully shape it. When you replace the top remember to plug it back in.

**GREAT JOB!**

**POOR SHAPING**



G1 1007604489 4 FT  
FRASER FIR WISKEY BARREL  
POT



T1 1007655616 5 FT  
WOODTRAIL FIR INCAN  
TREE



T7 1005273009 7.5 FT  
WESLEY PINE



T13 1009528049 7.5 FT  
BROOKSIDE PINE



T19 1006248591 9 FT  
STARRY LIGHT FLOCKED



G2 1007604492 4.5 FT  
GRAND FIR POTTED TREE



T2 1007124441 6.5 FT  
FESTIVE PINE



T8 1005271537 9 FT  
WESLEY PINE



T14 1005391716 7.5 FT  
WESTWOOD FIR



T20 1005356547 7.5 FT  
JACKSON NOBLE FIR SLIM



G3 1005392312 4.5 FT  
BERRY BLISS POTTED TREE



T3 1009526748 6.5 FT  
FESTIVE PINE FLOCKED



T9 1007686694 7.5 FT  
ALTA FRASER FIR FLOCKED



T15 1006221063 9 FT  
WESTWOOD FIR



T21 1005356632 7.5 FT  
JACKSON NOBLE FIR



G4 1005405099 4.5 FT  
WOODMORE PINE POTTED  
TREE



T4 1009526749 7.5 FT  
FESTIVE PINE SLIM



T10 1007583335 7.5 FT  
BARBOUR SPRUCE



T16 1005271539 7.5 FT  
SPARKLING AMELIA PINE



T22 1006215461 9 FT  
JACKSON NOBLE FIR



G5 1007604493 5 FT  
SPRUCE LANTERN POTTED  
TREE



T5 1007124301 7.5 FT  
FESTIVE PINE



T11 1007583348 9 FT  
BARBOUR SPRUCE



T17 1005271540 9 FT  
SPARKLING AMELIA PINE



T23 1009537791 7.5 FT  
ALDON BALSAM FIR



G6 1007124703 6 FT  
SPARKLING AMELIA POTTED  
TREE



T6 479536 7.5 FT  
WESLEY PINE UNLIT



T12 1009537790 7.5 FT  
CAMDEN SPRUCE



T18 1005392317 7.5 FT  
STARRY LIGHT FLOCKED



T24 1006224634 7.5 FT  
KENWOOD FRASER FLOCKED





T25 1006224652 9 FT  
KENWOOD FRASER FLOCKED



T30 1006224626 7.5 FT  
EASTCASTLE BALSAM FIR



T33 1005391707 12 FT  
WESLEY PINE



48 LED Wesley Wreath



48 Woodmore Wreath



T26 1009514720 7.5 FT  
GRAND DUCHESS FIR SLIM



T31 1007495646 7.5 FT  
ASHTON BALSAM FIR



T34 1005232498 12 FT  
JACKSON NOBLE FIR



T27 1006248565 7.5 FT  
GRAND DUCHESS BALSAM FIR



T32 1009537506 7.5 FT  
WALDORF FIR



T28 1006193041 9 FT  
GRAND DUCHESS BALSAM FIR



T29 1007516309 7.5 FT  
ELEGANT GRAND FIR



# Typical Store Layout

## Large Tree Displays



## Small Tree Displays



Photos and diagrams depict common store layouts.

Store setups will vary.

Always write legible with black or blue ink when filling out Completion Form



# Home Depot Completion Form - 2023

Clearly write store number

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Store City, State and Street Name

Store # \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary of project requirements:**

- Only check boxes for trees/items you shaped.
- Make notes about too many or too few trees/items
- Ensure lights work on trees or ask for new one.
- Professionally and completely shape all trees/items.
- Ensure all tree/item signage faces customers.

✓	EZ	SKU	Size	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	G1	1007604489	4'	Whiskey Barrel Pot
<input type="checkbox"/>	G2	1007604492	4.5'	Grand Fir Potted
<input type="checkbox"/>	G3	1005392312	4.5'	Berry Bliss Potted
<input type="checkbox"/>	G4	1005405099	4.5'	Woodmore Potted
<input type="checkbox"/>	G5	1007604493	5'	Lantern Potted
<input type="checkbox"/>	G6	1007124703	6'	Sparkling Amelia
<input type="checkbox"/>	T1	1007655616	7.5'	Festive Spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>	T2	1007124441	7.5'	Festive Pine
<input type="checkbox"/>	T3	1009526748	7.5'	Camden Spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>	T4	1009526749	7.5'	Festive Spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>	T5	1007124301	7.5'	Festive Pine
<input type="checkbox"/>	T6	479536	7.5'	Wesley Pine
<input type="checkbox"/>	T7	1005273009	7.5'	Wesley Pine
<input type="checkbox"/>	T8	1005271537	9'	Wesley Pine
<input type="checkbox"/>	T9	1007686694	7.5'	Alta Flocked
<input type="checkbox"/>	T10	1007583335	7.5'	Barbour Spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>	T12	1009537790	7.5'	Camden Spruce
<input type="checkbox"/>	T13	1009528049	7.5'	Brookside Pine
<input type="checkbox"/>	T14	1005391716	7.5'	Westwood Fir
<input type="checkbox"/>	T15	1006221063	9'	Westwood Fir
<input type="checkbox"/>	T16	1005271539	7.5'	Sparkling Amelia
<input type="checkbox"/>	T17	1005271540	9'	Sparkling Amelia

If you shape more than one tree, notate how many

2

✓	EZ	SKU	Size	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	T18	1005392317	7.5'	Starry Light Flocked
<input type="checkbox"/>	T19	1006248591	9'	Starry Light Flocked

Specialty Trees Only in Select Stores	✓	EZ	SKU	Size	Description
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T11	1007583348	9'	Barbour Spruce
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T20	1005356547	7.5'	Jackson Noble Slim
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T21	1005356632	7.5'	Jackson Noble Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T22	1006215461	9'	Jackson Noble Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T23	1009537791	7.5'	Aldon Balsam Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T24	1006224634	7.5'	Kenwood Flocked
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T25	1006224652	9'	Kenwood Flocked
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T26	1009514720	7.5'	Grand Duchess Slim
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T27	1006248565	7.5'	Grand Duchess Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T28	1006193041	9'	Grand Duchess Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T29	1007516309	7.5'	Elegant Grand Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T30	1006224626	7.5'	Eastcastle Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T31	1007495646	7.5'	Ashton Balsam Fir
	<input type="checkbox"/>	T32	1009537506	7.5'	Waldorf Fir
<input type="checkbox"/>	T33	1005391707	12'	Wesley Pine	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T34	1005232498	12'	Jackson Noble Fir	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T35	1009529093	12'	Kenwood Flocked	
<input type="checkbox"/>		1004304345	4'	Woodmore Wreath	
<input type="checkbox"/>		1003143801	4'	Wesley Wreath	

**Home Depot Managers:** Document missing trees, Inspect quality of work and Sign if completely satisfied.

A manager or someone in leadership should note any missing trees and accept responsibility

X \_\_\_\_\_  
 Manager Signature                      Print Name                      Title                      Date

**Designers:** Accurately Fill Out and Sign this form to be paid correctly.

- I understand I am a self-employed independent contractor and this form serves as a bill for services.
- I agree I utilized my process and design skills to shape all trees/items to Home Depot standards.
- I understand Home Depot Corporate Managers will inspect and approve shaping quality.
- If shaping is determined unsatisfactory, a revisit will be required.
- I have taken photos of shaped trees as documentation of quality shaping.

**Total Items Shaped**  
 (Count checked boxes)

Include any notes regarding this store

Ensure this number matches the count of boxes checked above

Lead Designer must sign

Clearly write your full name

X \_\_\_\_\_  
 Designer Signature                      Print Name                      Date

Text Forms / Photos / Fax: 615.270.0561 Email: forms@WilliamsCreativeGroup.net

Fax, Scan/email or take picture with cell phone and text immediately following completion of each store.

If you take a picture with your cell phone, make sure it is VERY LEGIBLE. If you can't read it, we can't.



## WILLIAMS CREATIVE GROUP

**615.376.9668**

Communicate by text  
Ext 99 phone calls/voice mails

Payment Questions: Ext 19 [office@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:office@williamscreativegroup.net)  
Completion Forms: Ext 17 [forms@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:forms@williamscreativegroup.net)  
General Questions: Ext 18 [support@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:support@williamscreativegroup.net)  
Store Assignments: Ext 21 [mandi@williamscreativegroup.net](mailto:mandi@williamscreativegroup.net)

**615.270.0561**

Text forms and/or photos  
Fax forms