



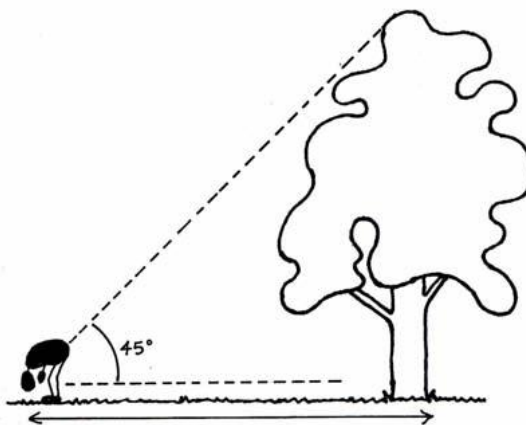
MEASURING TREES

You can measure the **height** and the **age** of a tree using a few simple techniques and a tape measure.

MEASURING THE HEIGHT

This is particularly good for children to try out!

Choose a tree to measure, and walk away from the tree. Every so often bend forward and look through your legs back to the tree. When you can just see the top of the tree through your legs, stop. Mark this point and measure the distance along the ground from the tree to this point. This is roughly equal to the tree's height.



MEASURING THE AGE



You can get a rough estimate of the age of a tree without cutting it down and counting the rings.

The girth of a tree can be used to estimate its age, as roughly a tree will increase its girth by 2.5cm in a year. So, simply measure around the trunk of the tree (the girth) at about 1m from the ground. Make sure you measure to the nearest centimetre. Then divide the girth by 2.5 to give an age in years. A tree with a 50cm girth will therefore be about 20 years old.

The rate of growth will differ according to what type of tree it is. Some types of tree, such as oak and beech, will grow quite slowly, and so you should divide the girth measurement by 1.88. Pine trees however are very fast growing, so you should divide the girth measurement by 3.13.

Other factors will affect the growth too, such as how close the tree is to other trees. If it's on its own, it has the space to grow faster than trees in a wood. An average woodland tree will only increase its girth by about 1.25cm per year.