



In almost every yard you can find this tree, which in winter stands in a snow-white fur coat, lowering its delicate branches under the weight of snow, and in autumn pleases with its golden foliage. Birch is a deciduous tree with light bark and heart-shaped leaves. Interestingly, the bark of a small tree is dark, and only after a few years it brightens. And there are species in which the bark is brown, yellowish, black. In our country there are no more than 70 species. They can grow on almost any soil. The most common species that can be found almost everywhere is a hanging or warty

birch. It grows up to 20 m in height, the branches are drooping, there are many resinous warts on annual branches, the trunk is smooth and white, dark at the base, the leaves are 4-7 cm long. Then long yellowish earrings with a huge amount of pollen appear on the trees, and small inconspicuous earrings of greenish color. Dwarf birch is also common - a shrub with a large number of branches, which grows no higher than 1 m. It can be found in Western Siberia and Yakutia. Birch is a monoecious plant. Male flowers peck in the summer, 2-3 pieces. They are green, but then become brown, grow up to 2-4 cm. Male earrings hibernate on the tree, and in the spring the rod of the earrings lengthens, yellow stamens become visible, from which pollen appears. If before that the earrings stood straight, now they hang. At the same time, female earrings appear in the tree. They grow on the side of the branch, much shorter and narrower. Gradually, the female earring lengthens, and after the fruit ripens, it crumbles, only the rod remains on the eyelids. They grow up to 30-45 m. The top layer of bark is called birch bark. It is very strong and durable, because it contains resinous substances. Once upon a time in Russia, birch bark was widely used in folk crafts. It was used to make baskets, tueskas, boxes, baskets, various kitchen utensils and ladles. At that time, only wealthy people could buy boots, and peasants often wore bast shoes, which were woven from bast, hemp and birch bark. They were distinguished by low cost. Once upon a time, birch bark was used to treat malaria. Residents of the North and the Far East used it in the construction of a plague (dwelling) and boats. Also on birch bark once written, in the XI-XV centuries there were so-called birch bark letters.



Once they were found in Veliky Novgorod, where the soil favored their preservation, as well as in a number of other ancient Russian cities. In Russia, there was once a feast of the Holy Trinity, which was popularly called the Trinity or Semik. It was celebrated at the end of spring, called the "girl's holiday". The birch was considered the most important tree of this holiday, because it was she who first put on her green outfit. The Slavs believed that this tree has great vitality. To

give strength to dwellings, to protect them from evil spirits, houses and temples were decorated with birch branches, and green grass was scattered on the floor. On this day, the girls wove wreaths from its branches, adding flowers to them, danced with them on their heads, and participated in games. In the late afternoon, they wondered: they threw a wreath into the water, if it floated, then a happy future awaited them. The Slavs revered this tree. It was considered "happy", protected the house from evil, but at the same time it is associated with female demons and the dead. In the North, where the birch tree grew, they never built a new house, because it became unhappy. Many were afraid to plant birch trees near their homes, otherwise the owners could be attacked by diseases, the whole family died out. Some families planted this tree next to the hut, which guaranteed the well-being of the family, it was believed that it scares away evil, brings good luck. To get a rich harvest, the branches were stuck into the ground. Birch bark products were considered amulets against evil spirits, and birch brooms were tools for ritual purification.