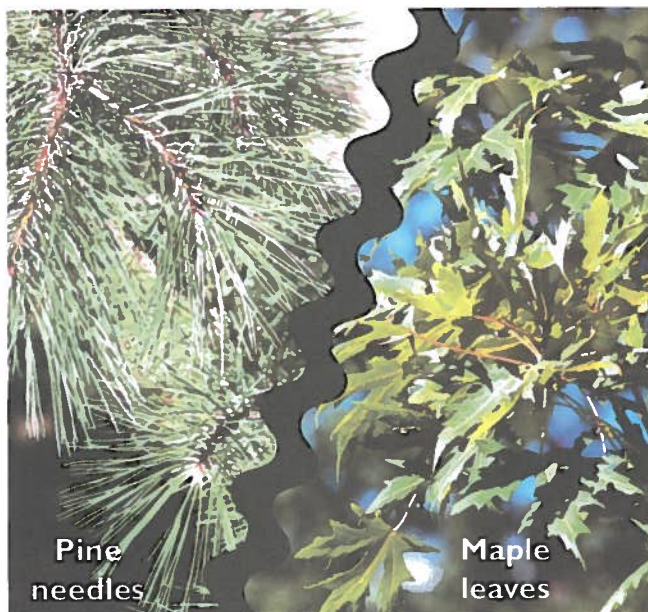


Like animals, plants must have food, water, space, and shelter in their habitats.

They survive and reproduce in habitats all around the world. How do they do it?

Green plants make their own food. They use sunlight, water, and air to make sugars. The sugars give them energy. A chemical in green plants, called **chlorophyll**, traps the energy in sunlight to make food. The process is called **photosynthesis**.

Plants must get enough sunlight to survive. A maple tree has lots of large leaves to capture lots of sunlight during the growing season from May to October. A pine tree has needles, which are its leaves. The needles are arranged on longer and longer branches so that each needle can capture the most sunlight. Because an evergreen tree does not drop its needles in the fall, it can start photosynthesis as soon as spring begins.



Pine needles

Maple leaves

**Douglas Fir**



Have you ever felt squashed in a very crowded place? Like you, a plant needs space. It must get minerals and water from soil, air, and sunlight for photosynthesis. If too many plants are growing in too small a space, some won't be able to get enough water or sunlight. They may die. This is called **competition**.

Plants must make sure they produce young plants. Some flowering plants depend upon animals such as bees to move their pollen to another flower. Wind can blow seeds far away. Some types of seeds stick to the hair of animals. Many seeds sit inside tasty fruits and are eaten by animals. The animals excrete the seeds far away from the parent plant.



**Dandelion seeds being blown away.**

Plants must also protect themselves. Many animals want to eat the plant's leaves, stems, or roots. Some plants protect themselves with sharp leaves or poisonous fruit. Some plants smell bad and others taste bad. Some plants have sharp spines.



**Cactus**