

General Tree Pruning

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Winter Pruning -

Pruning during dormancy is the most common. It results in vigorous bursts of new growth in the spring and should be used if that is the desired effect. It's usually best to wait until the coldest part of the winter has passed.

Summer Pruning -

To direct the growth by slowing the branches you don't want, pruning should be done soon after seasonal growth is complete. Another reason to prune in the summer is for corrective purposes.

Pruning Flowering Trees -

For trees that bloom in spring, prune them when their flowers fade. Trees and shrubs that flower in mid-to late summer should be pruned in winter or early spring.

When NOT to Prune - FALL!

Why? Because decay fungi spread their spores profusely in the fall and healing wounds seems to be slower on fall on cuts, this is a good time to leave your pruning tools in storage.

Keys to Good Pruning

Never remove more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a tree's crown in a season.

Main side branches should be at least $\frac{1}{3}$ smaller than the diameter of the trunk.

Don't worry about protecting pruning cuts.

For most deciduous trees, don't prune up from the bottom any more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the tree's total height.

Try to encourage side branches that form angles that are $\frac{1}{3}$ off vertical that form "10 o'clock" or "2 o'clock" angles with the trunk.

Keep your tools sharp. One-handed pruning shears with curved blades work best on young trees.

For high branches, use a pole pruner.

Pruning Steps at Planting:

Leave as much of the entire leaf surface as possible to manufacture food that will build a larger root system. Roots will be larger after one year if left unpruned.

Prune broken branches, branches competing with the leader, swollen branches from insect eggs or stings, and remove tree tags.

Pruning After 3-4 years:

Root growth should be well on its way to anchoring the transplant and expanding the size necessary to nourish the growing branches.

General Tree Pruning Continued . . .

Tree Pruning After 3-4 Years Continued. . .

Cut off root suckers and sprouts in the crown
Thin excessive branches to reduce competition for light, water, and nutrients.
Remove codominant leader
Remove a few of the lowest limbs but others are temporarily left to help the trunk
develop more taper and strength.
Eliminate branches that rub or growing in undesirable direction.
Remove narrow angled branches

Tree Pruning After 5-7 Years:

Now it is time to make a good tree even better!

Lower limbs are pruned off to raise the bottom of the crown well out of the way of human heads. The lowest limbs are now permanent limbs. Please note: branches DO NOT move upward as a tree grows taller. The center of a branch at 5 feet will always be at 5 feet.

Cut back a few of the higher up branches so they don't protrude beyond the graceful outline of the crown.

Inspect tree to see if you need to remove a branch here or there for even spacing.

Pruning After 15 Years:

With proper pruning at the beginning of your trees life, your tree will have a better chance of surviving extreme conditions such as wind storms, ice and drought.

That is because proper pruning gave strength to the branches.

Early each spring, look for dead or damaged limbs.
If you do have dead or damaged limbs remove using proper pruning methods.