

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PRUNING

What is pruning? It is the art and science of maintaining the health, beauty and longevity of our trees. It should be done throughout the year based on the needs of the plant.

Simply removing spent blooms is pruning.

Snipping back new shoots that are out of balance is pruning.

Removing dead or broken branches is pruning.

Pruning can be learned and applied by anyone who values their investment in trees.

Maintenance pruning is an annual routine based on observation.

PRUNING YOUNG TREES:

Pruning is best done in late February or early March when leaves are off and the plant is not growing.

Prune out a co-dominant leader. Strong trees should have only one central trunk.

Leave lower limbs to help young tree trunks develop strength and taper.

Prune low hanging branches that may interfere with foot traffic.

Prune out branches that cross others.

Remove branches that have weak angles when they are small.

Encourage side branches that form a strong angle, one that is 1/3 off vertical or at 10:00 and 2:00 positions on the trunk.

Prune out branches that grow towards the center.

Prune out diseased, dead and broken branches anytime.

PRUNING ESTABLISHED TREES 5-7 YEARS and OLDER

Prune out fast growing branches called SUCKERS.

Prune out girdling roots from the base of the tree.

Remove lower limbs from the lower one third of the trunk.

Remove any upper branches that have grown beyond the shape of the crown.

Check spacing between branches and remove any weak angles or inward growing branches.

Maturing trees should have a strong central trunk, evenly spaced branches, no root or branch suckers, a pleasing crown shape and well established roots.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Do not use tar or pruning paint.

Do not prune in the fall as it encourages new weak growth.

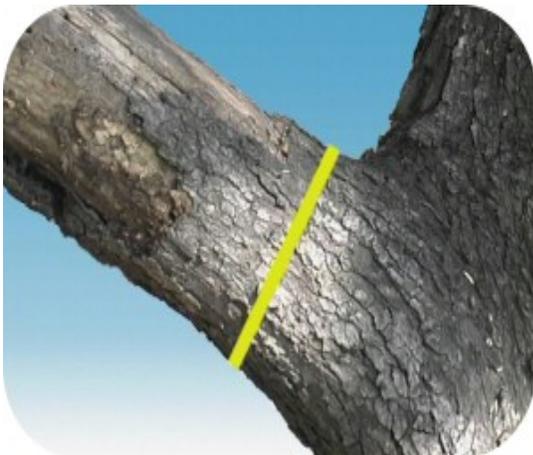
Do not prune up lower branches more than 1/3rd of the tree's total height.

Do Not Top Trees!

Never cut main branches off the top of a tree to reduce its height. It's the worst thing one can do to a tree. Ugly branches will grow back that are weak and often grow higher than the original branches.

Do not remove more than 1/3 of the trees canopy within a pruning cycle.

HOW TO PRUNE



Remove branches by cutting them back to the main trunk. Do not leave a nub/stump that can be an opening for disease and insects. Cut just outside of the collar so the bark will heal over the cut.

For Small Branches, make a sharp clean cut just beyond a lateral or side bud or other branch.

For Large Limbs make a partial cut from under the limb. Make a second cut several inches out from the trunk to allow the limb to fall and not tear the bark. Finish the job with a final cut just outside the branch collar.

For more information see: <http://www.treesaregood.com>

<http://www2.arboday.org/trees/pruning>