



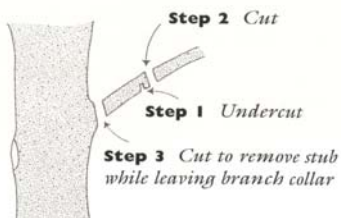
PRUNING

Timing

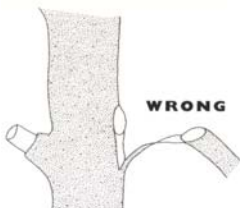
The late dormant season is best for most pruning. Pruning in late winter, just before spring growth starts, leaves fresh wounds exposed for only a short length of time before new growth begins the wound sealing process. Autumn or early winter pruning is more likely to result in drying and die-back at pruning sites. Pruning at the proper time can avoid certain disease and problems such as oak wilt disease on oak trees and fire-blight in fruit and ornamental trees.

Pruning Large Established Trees

Pruning is usually limited to removal of lower branches for clearance or removal of dead or diseased branches (*see diagram below*). Leave the pruning of large trees to qualified tree care professionals who have the proper equipment.



PRUNING TREES CORRECTLY



Pruning Shrubs/Hedges

Flowering shrubs should be pruned immediately after they finish blooming. This will prevent removal of flower buds on plants that bloom on old growth such as lilacs and encourage plants, like spireas, to bloom again.

Shrubs and hedges such as burning bush and barberry are grown primarily for their foliage and should be pruned in the spring before growth begins. Hedges may be pruned during the growing season as needed to keep them dense and attractive. Prune hedges wider at the base to allow all parts to receive sunlight.

Pruning Evergreens

Arborvitae, junipers, yews and hemlocks grow continuously throughout the growing season. They can be pruned any time through the middle of summer. Even though these plants will tolerate heavy shearing, their natural form is usually most desirable.

Spruces and firs do not grow continuously, but can be pruned at any time because they have lateral (side) buds that will sprout if the terminal (tip) buds are removed. It's best to prune them in late winter before growth begins.

Pines only put on a single flush of tip growth each spring and then stop growing. Prune before these "candles" of new needles become mature. Pines do not have lateral buds, so removing terminal buds will take away new growing points for that branch. Eventually, this will leave dead stubs. To promote more dense growth, remove up to two-thirds of the newly expanded candles. Do not prune further back than the current year's growth.

Perennials/Grasses

Dead-head (remove spent blooms) to keep a neater appearance. It may be necessary to stake some perennials if they become top-heavy. In the fall, wait several killing frosts and then prune to ground level and cover with 3" of marsh hay after the ground has frozen.

Ornamental grasses should be left over the winter to protect the crown of the plant from the cold and moisture. Plants left through winter should be cut back in spring before new growth begins.