

Orchard

NURSERY

LAZY K & ATRIUM

Pruning Roses, Fruit Trees, Perennials and Shrubs January 2024 Shawna Anderson, ACCNP

Why Prune?

- **To maintain health and vigor**
 - dead wood removed
 - circulation improved
 - spray penetration improved
 - plant structure strengthened
- **To control or shape growth**
 - plants kept small, narrow or full
 - hedges, topiaries, espaliers and pollarding maintained
- **To modify fruit & flower production**
 - more fruit or flowers produced
 - fewer but larger fruit or flowers produced

When to Prune?

- **What is it? Identify the plant!**
 - Evergreen or deciduous?
 - Frost tender?
 - When does it bloom?
- **Winter pruning**
 - Roses (**exception: one-time spring blooming climbers, Cecile Brunner & Lady Banks – prune after bloom**)
 - Fruit trees – deciduous (**exception: Apricots & Cherries – prune in July/August**)
 - Deciduous trees and shrubs (**exception: Hydrangea macrophylla var. – prune after bloom, no later than September. Endless Summer Hydrangea's blooms can be pruned anytime**)
 - Hardy perennials such as Asters, Cannas, Shasta Daises, Penstemons, etc.

- **Spring pruning**
 - Almost anything can be pruned in the spring
 - Deciduous spring bloomers: Forsythia, Quince, Lilacs, Flowering Plum/Cherries, etc. **prune during or after bloom**
 - Evergreen, spring bloomers: Camellias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons, **prune immediately after bloom (exception: Encore Azaleas which bloom on new & old wood)**
 - Frost tender plants: Citrus, Fuchsias, Hibiscus, Lantana, etc., **prune after frost**
- **Summer pruning**
 - Deadheading
 - Keeping fruit trees smaller

Tools:

- Gloves
- Hand shears
- Loppers
- Pole Pruners
- Pruning saw
- Knee pad
- Trug
- Ladder

Terms to know:

- **Rose Bud Eye** – the area that lies just above where a leaf is or was attached to a cane
- **Rose Bud Union** - the area between the roots and the stems where the bud of the desired variety was grafted onto the rootstock
- **Evergreen** - a plant that keeps its foliage all year
- **Deciduous** – term used to describe a plant that drops its leaves at the end of the growing season
- **Graft Union** – a swollen area just above the soil level where one variety has been grafted onto the rootstock of another variety (note: not always swollen and on older plants it can be difficult to find)
- **Heading cut** – pruning technique by which a portion of a shoot or branch is removed, leaving only buds or tiny twigs - results in an increased number of branches.
- **Herbaceous** – term used to describe plants that have non-woody stems above ground. Their above ground growth largely or totally dies back in winter.
- **Open Center System or Vase-shaped System** – pruning method by which the center of the tree is kept free of large branches and vigorous upright shoots in order to allow sunlight to reach the lower fruiting wood.

- **Spur** - short twig that is specialized for bearing flower buds and fruit on many fruit species.
- **Sucker** - vigorous upright shoot that arises below the bud union from the rootstock or roots.
- **Thinning cut** – pruning technique by which branches are removed at their point of origin - results in a reduced number of branches.
- **Watersprout** - vigorous upright shoot that arises from a latent or adventitious bud on older wood.

How to Prune?

- **Survey the plant**
 - Step back and assess the condition of the plant
- **Remove dead, damaged or diseased wood**
 - using heading and thinning cuts, make cut ¼” above a node (outward facing)
- **Remove interior and crossing branches**
 - using thinning cuts, open up the center of plant to let sunlight in and for better air circulation
- **Prune to shape**
 - Using heading and thinning cuts, remove long vertical shoots and wayward limbs

Pruning Roses:

- **Hybrid Teas**
 - Between 1/2 and 2/3’s of healthy wood may be removed through a combination of heading and thinning cuts
 - Remove canes that are smaller than a pencil
 - Make cut ¼” above an “outward” bud
- **Floribunda Roses**
 - Floribunda roses produce clusters of blooms with compact growth
 - These can be sheared and/or have their individual canes cut back to an “outward” bud by 2/3’s or more leaving more canes than you would a Hybrid Tea
 - Floribundas will have smaller canes
- **Grandiflora Roses:**
 - Grandiflora roses are a cross between Hybrid Teas and Floribundas.
 - They have multiple blooms per stem with large flowers.
 - Prune as a Hybrid Tea
- **Shrub Roses**
 - Shear yearly or cut back hard every 5 years
- **David Austin**
 - Most David Austin roses can be pruned as a shrub or a floribunda rose
 - For David Austin’s grown as climbers, see climbing roses
- **Climbers**
 - Make cut ¼” above an “inward” bud (toward support)
- **Carpet Roses:**

- Carpet roses are also known as Groundcover roses
- Long-blooming, easy care roses that can be sheared
- Cut back hard every five years to get rid of dead wood
- **Tree Roses**
 - Think of as bush roses on a stem (prune as a Hybrid Tea)
- **For Pest and Diseases on roses**, see “*Bonnie’s Guide for Growing and Caring for Roses*”

Pruning Citrus:

- Prune in the spring after all chance of frost has past
- Use heading and thinning cuts to remove broken, dead and diseased branches
- Use thinning cuts to remove suckers and water sprouts

Pruning Fruit Trees:

When to Prune? – Dormant Season

- December through mid-February is the best time for dormant season pruning (before buds start to swell)
- The objective for dormant season pruning is to create or maintain desired shape and structure and to remove excess vegetative growth
- This is when you do your “detail work”
- Discard old “mummified” fruit to prevent bacteria from growing
- Apricots and Cherries should be pruned in the dry months of **July and August** to prevent a branching-killing disease called Eutypa dieback

When to Prune? – Summer Season

- **July and August** is the time to prune to maintain a smaller tree
- When excess leaves and branches are removed in the summer, growth slows down as we go into fall and winter.
- Throughout the season the tree may need some light pruning to maintain its open center
- **Apples, Pears, Cherries and Apricots**
 - Bear fruit on long lived spurs that require less pruning
 - Remove dead, damaged or diseased wood
 - Remove crossing branches
 - Thin out branches to admit sunlight to all parts of the tree (this will encourage new spurs)
 - **Note: Apricots and Cherries should be pruned only in July/August to prevent a disease call Eutypa Dieback**
- **Nectarines and Peaches**
 - Bear fruit on last year’s growth
 - Remove about 50 percent of current season’s wood annually
 - Remove dead, damaged or diseased wood
 - Remove crossing branches
 - Thin out branches to admit sunlight to all parts of the tree

- **Almonds, Plums and Prunes**
 - Require less pruning
 - Remove dead, damaged or diseased wood in the dormant season
 - Remove tangled and crossing branches
 - Remove all “mummified” fruit
- **Figs**
 - Bear fruit on current season’s wood
 - Should be pruned back heavily each year in the dormant season
 - Sometimes on mature trees you get a small crop in the spring call ‘Brebass’

Pruning Japanese Maples:

- Prune Japanese maples in February; with the leaves out of the way in winter its easy to see the branch structure
- Thin sparingly in the summer to keep the tree airy
- Use “thinning” cuts; do not “shear”
- Prune ¼” above the bud that faces the direction you want the new growth to grow

Pruning Shrubs:

- For deciduous shrubs, remove suckers and water sprouts using thinning cuts and prune back using heading cuts to shape and keep the desired height
- For evergreen shrubs, shear to keep the desired height and fullness
- When in doubt “prune after bloom”
- **Note:** lavender and rosemary are shrubs that do not grow back after being cut into the “woody” stems. These plants need to be sheared after bloom only in the green or gray foliage.

Pruning Perennials:

- Most perennials can be cut to the ground in winter (hardy perennials) or early spring (frost tender perennials).
- Some hardy perennials:
 - Agastache, Asters, Gaillardias, Penstemons, Rudbeckias, Salvias (some), Shasta Daisies, etc.
- Some tender perennials:
 - Cupheas, Fuchsia and Lantana

Pest & Diseases:

- To help control **Peach Leaf Curl:**
 - Spray with **Liqui-Cop** 3 times a year (Thanksgiving, Christmas and Valentine’s Day) or use **Liquid Copper Fungicide** during the bloom season
- To help control **Fire Blight:**
 - cut off blackened branch 18” below the fire blight (
- To help control **Citrus Leafminer:**
 - On young trees with severe cases, prune out or use **Captain Jack’s Deadbug**
- To help control **Soft Scale:**

- Most scale species can be controlled by beneficial predators; for severe infestations spray with **PestFighter Year-Round Spray Oil**

- To control other pests & diseases of fruit trees see our "*Fruit Tree Care Calendar*"

Watering and Mulching:

- Once roses, fruit trees, many shrubs and perennials are established, they need deep and not too frequent watering
- Once **drought tolerant** plants are established, they need only deep and infrequent watering
- **MULCH, MULCH, MULCH!** - 3" of mulch can save 30% of water use!
 - Prevents water evaporation and stops weeds from growing
 - **Keep mulch 4 inches away from base**
- For more information on watering, see our "*Watering 101*" guide