

PRUNING FRUIT TREES AND SHRUBS

What to prune - DO NOT REMOVE MORE THAN 30% EACH YEAR; STOP WHEN 30% IS CUT

- Start by removing damaged and diseased branches
- Remove branches that are growing toward the center of the tree
- Remove dangerous or nuisance branches
- Remove older stems
- To improve appearance – to alter form and density

When to prune

Fruiting trees, shrubs, vines and brambles:

- Late winter, before the sap begins to flow
- Can prune in fall but late winter is best

The right tools

- Hand shears – by-pass preferred, anvil type suitable – for branches up to ¾-inch diameter
- Lopping shears – for branches ¾ to 1 ½ inches in diameter
- Pruning saw – for branches over 1 ½ inches diameter

How to prune

Removing damaged and obstructing tree and shrub branches:

- Cut back to a main stem, trunk or strong outward-growing branch
 - Cut flush to the “branch collar” without damaging it
(On larger branches, use the “three-cut” method to avoid stripping the bark.)
 - Make a clean cut
 - Do NOT leave a stub
 - Do not use a wound dressing
 - Leave branches with a wide angle to the trunk

Pruning fruit trees:

- **Train** all fruit trees when young to develop the recommended shape for the kind of tree.
 - ◆ **Apples** should be trained to a “central leader” form
 - ◆ **Pears** should be trained to a “modified central leader” form
 - ◆ **Peaches** should be trained to an “open center form”
 - ◆ **Plums and cherries** should be pruned sparingly to a “modified central leader” form
- **Prune** fruit trees **yearly** to maintain their recommended shape. Yearly pruning also serves to maintain tree vigor and to balance tree growth with fruit production.
 - *Thinning the fruit* soon after fruit set improves fruit size and quality.

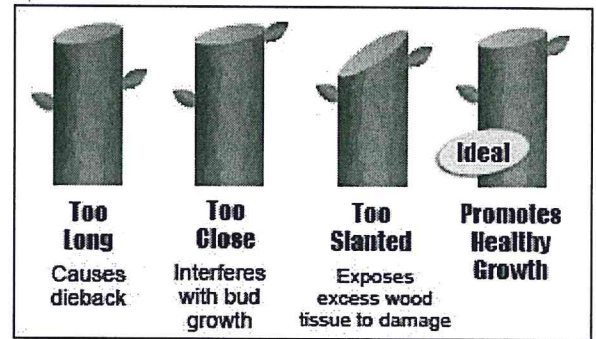
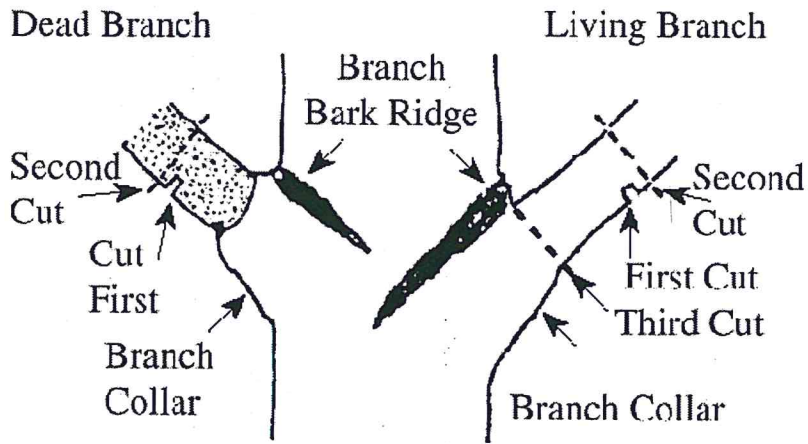
Renovation of a many-stemmed shrub:

- Cut older stems back to ground level
 - Do not leave a stub; Cut cleanly
- Remove ¼ to 1/3 of the oldest stems each year

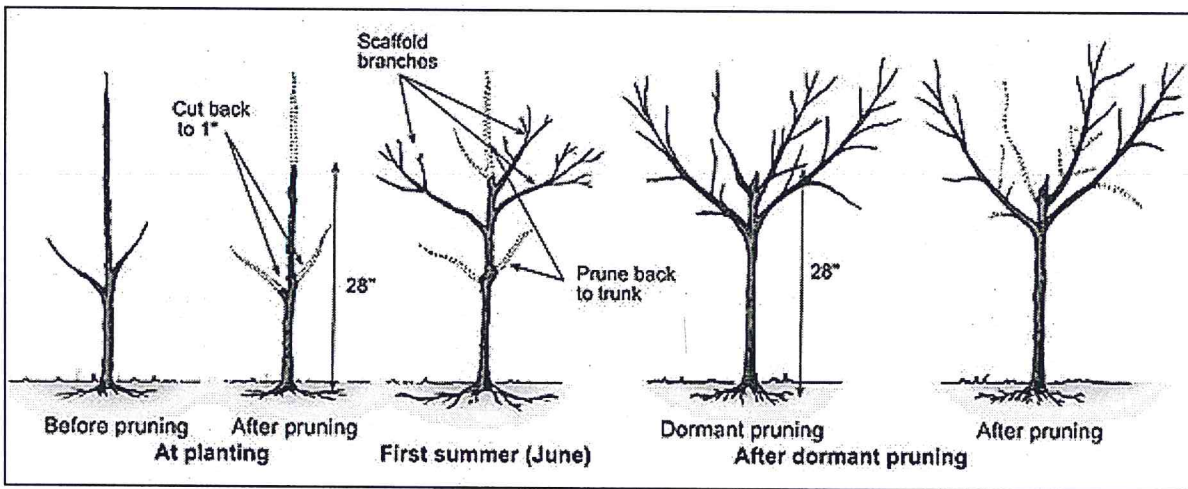
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Three Cut Method

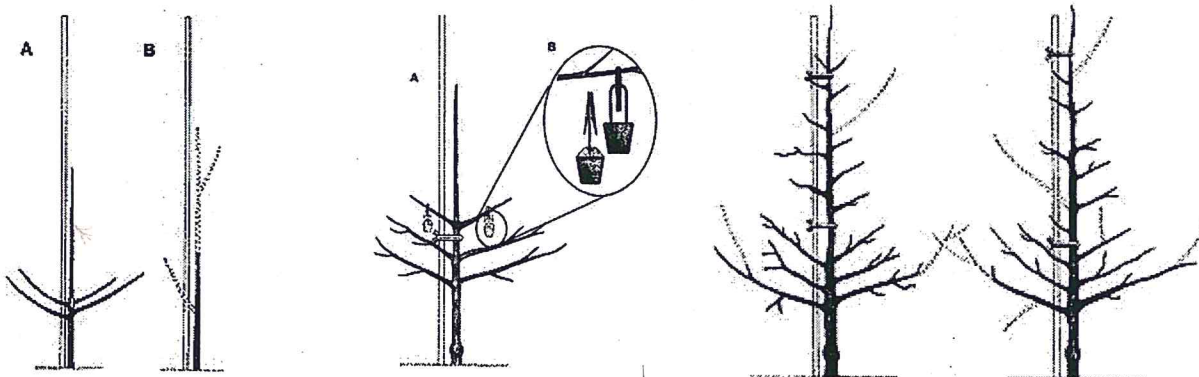


Open Center Concept: Peach and Nectarine



Cut central leader to 28" height to promote lateral branching.

Central Leader Concept: Apples and Pears



Years 1, 2, and 3 for pruning and training apples and pears.