

## PRUNING RASPBERRIES AND GRAPES

More and more people are growing small fruit, particularly raspberries and grapes in their back yards.

Pruning helps keep these plants producing at high levels, says James A. Fizzell, Horticulturist with the University of Illinois in Cook County.

**Raspberries** produce fruit on canes which developed the previous year. Canes which have fruited need to be removed immediately after harvest.

Prune raspberries before growth starts in the spring. With red and yellow raspberries, remove all short and weak canes and thin the remaining vigorous canes to 5 to 8 per plant. If the canes are supported by stakes or a trellis, cut them off at a 5 to 6 foot height. If they are not supported, top them at 3 to 4 feet to keep them from falling over. Do not summer pinch shoots of red raspberries.

For black and purple raspberries, and erect blackberries, select four or five vigorous canes per plant and remove all other canes at the ground level. Thin out weak and diseased laterals on each cane and shorten those remaining to 10 to 12 inches. These varieties need to have new canes summer pinched when they reach 24-36 inches high. Be sure to collect and dispose of old canes and cuttings to prevent diseases.

**Grapes**, says Fizzell, need severe pruning each spring to maintain productivity. Lack of pruning creates a jungle of old canes and severely reduces fruit production.

The fruits on grape vines grow on new shoots arising from buds of one-year-old canes. According to Fizzell there are many methods of pruning and training grapes. The 4-cane Kniffin system is probably the easiest. It uses a 2-wire trellis. When trained to the Kniffin system, the average grape vine can support 40 to 60 buds, depending on the vigor of the vine.

Select four new canes growing from the main trunk near the support wires, cut them back to leave 10 to 15 buds on each of 4 fruiting canes. Fruiting canes usually need to be shortened to limit the total number of buds.

Renewal spurs are also needed to produce new fruiting canes for next year's crop. Select four small canes near the fruiting canes and cut them back to 2 buds each. One spur should be located on each arm near each trellis wire.

Neglected old vines usually have several stems or trunks arising from the root. Remove 2 or 3 of these trunks each year until only one trunk is left.

Pruning sounds complicated says Fizzell, but is really quite easy. The hardest part is convincing yourself that it needs to be done.

A booklet on pruning small fruit (and other ideas about Growing Small Fruits in the Home Garden) is available from Mr. Fizzell's office. Write him at 4200 West Euclid, Rolling Meadows, Illinois 60008.

A few minutes of pruning each year can produce an attractive plant around six feet high.

Other spring flowering shrubs such as forsythia, honeysuckle, privet, etc. should also be pruned soon after flowering by removing all dead, broken, and old stems. Cut off about 1/3 of the oldest stems near the ground line - leaving no more than a one-inch stump above ground.

Fizzell says, old, overgrown hedges of privet or honeysuckle that have become unsightly can be renewed by cutting them all the way to the ground. They will grow back in a year or so, and will be full and green all the way to the ground.

**James A. Fizzell, Senior Extension Adviser  
Horticulture**

## ART ANSWERS

**Q — When is the right time to cut back a multiflora hedge whose long canes are encroaching on a sidewalk?**

**A —** Multiflora roses can be cut back at any time without any adverse effects. However, it is much easier to do this job during the winter when the plants are leafless.

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